DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

PLUS:

Supporting student vets

Life lessons from James Joyce

"Our role in sustaining democracy in the face of long-term cultural and ideological confusion can comfort us. It really does matter, it turns out, if students graduate with a broad liberal education." —Brian Murphy

The Future of Higher Education and Our Democracy in a Post-COVID-19 World

At the beginning of the 2019–20 academic year, no one could have anticipated that the world as we knew it would be upended; that COVID-19, social distancing, shelter-in-place orders, and local and national lockdowns would become part of our daily lexicons; or that the threat of Zoombombing, a catalyst for hate-filled rhetoric and intimidation, would emerge as a disruptive force in the pivot to remote learning and online education.

Faculty, staff, students, and campus leaders across the country have demonstrated extraordinary resilience and innovation in meeting unprecedented challenges. Yet, there is widespread consensus among higher education leaders that short-term tactics in response to this crisis will not suffice and must be combined with long-term strategic planning around a continuum of possible futures. In preparing for a post-pandemic world, colleges and universities face a new sense of urgency around identifying more flexible financial models while safeguarding high-quality, equitable, and inclusive learning environments. This will require creating a comprehensive vision for the future grounded in a commitment to shared governance and centered on student learning and success. Implementing such a vision necessitates enhanced professional development support for faculty and staff. It also demands returning to a focus on the civic mission of colleges and universities, reaffirming their importance as anchor institutions, whose success is inextricably linked to the well-being of their local communities.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Indeed, the coronavirus pandemic has showcased profound inequities in higher education and in our society as a whole. The sudden evacuation of residential campuses unveiled the vast number of students who are experiencing food and shelter insecurities alongside an expansive digital divide. At a time when a global pandemic has triggered an economic recession that has brought the world to the brink of a depression, paying attention to and taking action to redress the growing economic segregation in higher education becomes paramount. By mid-April, more than twenty-six million people filed for unemployment following the initial state-issued shelter-in-place orders enacted in March. In an uncertain, increasingly competitive job market, access to excellence in higher education—at colleges and universities of all types—is essential, not only for the advancement of individuals but also for the public good.

Colleges and universities across the country are fulfilling their civic responsibility by contributing academic, financial, and physical resources to their communities. From transitioning dormitories to hospitals and using 3D printers to produce face shields and other protective gear, to conducting clinical trials of medications (such as Remdesivir) that could potentially treat the coronavirus, the academy is helping lead the response to

the current health-care crisis. Perhaps most importantly, members of the higher education community are providing accurate scientific information about the spread of the virus and the disparate impact it is having on poor communities of color amid misinformation campaigns and calls to reopen states at the risk of public health and safety.

As the United States surpassed 800,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19, protesters in several states took to the streets, decrying the restrictions imposed upon them. Some reported being at the rallies out of sheer desperation following the close of their businesses, ineligibility to file for unemployment benefits, and waits in miles-long lines at drive-through food banks. However, many also gathered as part of organized campaigns spurred by militia, anti-vaccination, and alt-right movements. Within this context, President Donald Trump's economic advisor Steven Moore created a firestorm by comparing the anti-quarantine demonstrators to leaders in the civil rights movement. "I call these people the modern-day Rosa Parks," Moore said. "They are protesting against injustice and a loss of liberties."[1] Swift repudiation on social media included the following tweet by Ibram X. Kendi, founding director of the Antiracist Research and Policy Center at American University:

> Stephen Moore calls them "modern-day Rosa Parks." But Parks desired different freedoms.

> These folk want the freedom to infect, like they have wanted the freedom to enslave, lynch, deport, exclude, rob. They have always protested the "loss of liberties."[2]

The current culture wars being played out on the national stage highlight the enduring value of liberal education and how it prepares students to discern the truth and be mindful of the dangers of ideological filtering; to speak across differences; and to engage in deliberation with respect to competing arguments while cultivating personal and social responsibility. These skills and a disposition to civic involvement and lifelong learning fostered by a liberal education are essential to a thriving democracy and the creation of a more just and inclusive society. Addressing a range of persistent inequities and structural barriers that jeopardize these values, the authors in this volume illustrate why, at this moment of global crisis, AAC&U's mission of advancing the vitality and public standing of liberal education, by making equity and quality the foundations for excellence in undergraduate education in service to democracy, is more critical than ever.
—LYNN PASQUERELLA

There is widespread consensus among higher education leaders that short-term tactics in response to this crisis will not suffice and must be combined with long-term strategic planning around a continuum of possible futures.

NOTES

1. Toluse Olorunnipa, Shawn Boburg and Arelis R. Hernández, "Rallies against Stay-at-Home Orders Grow as Trump Sides with Protesters," *Washington Post*, April 17, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/rallies-against-stay-at-home-orders-grow-as-trump-sides-with-protesters/2020/04/17/1405ba54-7f4e-11ea-8013-1b6da0e4a2b7_story.html.

2. Ibram X. Kendi Twitter Post, April 18, 2020, https://twitter.com/DrIbram/status/1251549681785716736.

Democracy in Action

I'll get right to the point: Go vote. On Election Day this November, make sure you and your students cast ballots, even if it means doing so by mail.

Last fall, when I first started working on this issue's theme, "Democracy in Action," much was already at stake in the United States with regard to democratic participation, public support for higher education, more equitable systems for student access and funding, as well as a variety of other issues. Now, as I write this note, my initial inclination is to talk about how, in the midst of the current global pandemic—and a failure of public leadership to prepare for and handle such a crisis—the stakes are even higher.

But the stakes are *not* suddenly higher. Democracy is not suddenly more important than it was yesterday. When it comes to democratic systems and participation, which directly affect access to and support for education, the stakes have always been life and death. The COVID-19 pandemic is simply laying bare just how much was already at stake. It is merely emphasizing with many exclamation points the importance of higher education's mission to be on the forefront of protecting democracy and ensuring students are prepared to become engaged citizens—including as doctors, scientists, ethicists, communicators, and many other needed experts—who can address complicated global issues.

FROM THE EDITOR

Most of the articles in this issue were written before the COVID-19 outbreak, yet the challenges presented in them must be grappled with in order to handle this present pandemic, prevent future pandemics, and face other global crises. In considering the renewal of the Higher Education Act, the chairs of the Bipartisan Policy Center's Task Force on Higher Education Financing and Student Outcomes discuss federal policy recommendations for increasing higher education access, affordability, and accountability. Writers from the Education Trust look at why black student borrowers struggle more with debt than other groups and offer ways to help level the playing field. Former US Under Secretary of Education Martha Kanter talks about the College Promise Campaign's work in local communities and across states to provide more students with a college education. As the United States responds to the pandemic, Richard A. Cherwitz calls on scholars to employ visual rhetoric to combat "fake news" and to hold leaders accountable as they make policy decisions. Marisol Morales and Jacqueline Perez Valencia share their personal stories of civic transformation and look at how educators can support today's students of color in becoming empowered activists.

One of the essential things, as Brian Murphy points out in his essay on higher education's role in protecting democracy, is ensuring students are informed about the issues and that they go out to vote. It's always been imperative that we prepare students to serve in a functioning democracy—this deadly new virus is simply making what's at stake that much clearer.—CHRISTEN ARAGONI

NEWS AND INFORMATION

Accepting the Invitation

In January, more than 2,200 higher education professionals gathered in Washington, DC, for AAC&U's 2020 annual meeting, "Shaping the Future of Higher Education: An Invitation to Lead."

President Lynn Pasquerella described AAC&U's vision of "ensuring that colleges and universities are places of sustained welcome and belonging" and "affirming excellence as an inclusive process rather than an exclusive outcome." Sessions explored student-centered learning, civic preparedness, undergraduate STEM reform, and more. Participants discussed empowering students to learn from a diversity of ideas, engage with complex issues, and make political participation a lifelong habit. The conference, as one attendee tweeted, fostered "honest, practical, and hopeful conversations."

In his closing plenary, "Shaping Spaces Safe Enough for Pragmatic Liberal Education: Pressures and Possibilities," Wesleyan University President Michael S. Roth talked about why debates about what it takes to feel included are some of the most important ones to have on campus. "Confrontation with ideas," he said, "can make you stronger."

Tia Brown McNair

Sheila Amin Gutiérrez de Piñeres

Michael Ferguson

Shaun R. Harper

Michael S. Roth

Visit our website: www.aacu.org. Write to us at liberaled@aacu.org or tweet @AACU.

(Above and below) Attendees at various annual meeting sessions

Lynn Pasquerella

Joy Ann Williamson-Lott

Mariko Silver

Marjorie Hass (left) and Julia Sweig

Adrianna Kezar

2020 K. Patricia Cross Future Leaders Award winners (left to right): Edgar Virgüez, Zachary del Rosario, Douglas R. Valentine, Ciara R. Christian, María B. Alcívar-Zuñiga, Sara R. Abelson, Brett Ranon Nachman

Dawn Michele Whitehead

"Making Inclusive Music" with George Mason University's "Green Machine" pep band
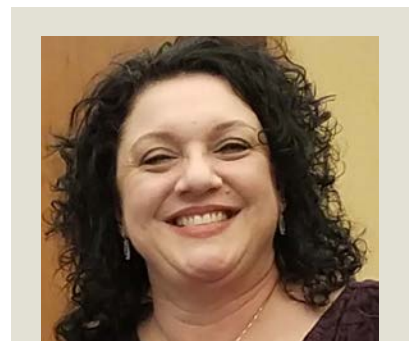
Correction: In the summer/fall 2019 issue, an incorrect photo accompanied the interview with Caroline Coward, librarian at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. *Liberal Education* sincerely regrets the error.

The Higher Education Act

Opportunities for bipartisan reform

HIGHER EDUCATION is a critical tool for social mobility, but today, students and their families face significant challenges. Since 1999, the average price paid for tuition, fees, room, and board has increased by 70 percent at public four-year colleges and universities, 21 percent at private nonprofits, and 10 percent at public two-year institutions.[1] The Pell Grant Program, the federal government's largest source of need-based grant aid, has failed to keep pace with rising prices, placing strains on low- and middle-income families. At the same time, declining state funding for higher education has led public institutions to rely more heavily on tuition revenue.

We must come together to ensure the system meets the needs of today's and tomorrow's economy for everyone.

Meanwhile, too few students make it to graduation day, and too many are saddled with debt that they cannot afford to repay. Currently, just two-fifths of first-time, full-time students graduate with a bachelor's degree within four years,[2] and 39 percent of the federally managed student loan portfolio expected to be in repayment is either delinquent or in default.[3] These problems are exacerbated by a loan repayment system that is complex and difficult to navigate.

Students and families also lack clear information to inform their decisions. Similarly, federal higher education data obscures student outcomes by key demographic characteristics, making it difficult to gauge institutional performance and the potential return on investment for degrees and credentials. Even though higher education remains a worthwhile investment for most who complete a degree, this lack of clear information leads many students to enroll in schools that may serve them poorly.

It is against this backdrop that the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) convened the Task Force on Higher Education Financing and Student Outcomes. This group has identified several areas of federal policy ripe for reform that could drastically improve the US higher education system for students and their families. With a focus on access, affordability, and accountability, the task force analyzed a wide range of relevant data. After more than a year and a half of deliberations, the task force reached a consensus on a package of recommendations for lawmakers. Importantly, the package of recommendations is roughly budget neutral, providing a blueprint for a comprehensive and bipartisan Higher Education Act reauthorization. The task force members' ability to reach an agreement on this package suggests that pragmatic and data-driven reforms are possible.

George Miller (left) and Howard P. "Buck" McKeon

These reforms aim to promote college affordability and reduce equity gaps, encourage efficiency and improve the targeting of federal aid programs, boost quality assurance and institutional accountability, and enhance federal data systems while providing better information to policymakers, researchers, and—most importantly—students and families. Ultimately, this package of reforms would work to ensure that every student shares in the benefits of America's higher education system.

The task force was cochaired by former US representatives Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (R-CA) and George Miller (D-CA). Both served as chairs of the House Committee on Education and Labor during their time in Congress. In the following Q&A with *Liberal Education,* they further elaborate on the bipartisan recommendations to make college more affordable for and more accessible to a greater number of Americans. Key report recommendations are highlighted throughout the article. To read the entire report, visit https://bipartisanpolicy.org/report/new-higher-ed.

—Jinann Bitar, senior policy analyst at the Bipartisan Policy Center

Low-income students are more than **2X** as likely as their high-income peers to drop out within two years of matriculation.

Recommendation: Provide additional Pell dollars to students who choose to attend institutions that successfully serve large numbers of low-income students.

In 2019–20, the maximum Pell Grant award accounted for **only 28% of the cost** of attending a public four-year institution.

Recommendation: Increase mandatory Pell funding by **$90 billion over 10 years**, raise the maximum Pell award, and expand eligibility for middle-income households.

Let's start with establishing the task force. What went into forming it and ensuring that it was a truly bipartisan effort?
George Miller: The Higher Education Act was last reauthorized in 2008, when I was serving as chair of the House Education and Labor Committee, and Buck was my counterpart. We worked together in a truly bipartisan way on that bill. With a reauthorization of that act long overdue and college costs and student debt in the news almost every day, I think we felt the time was right to make this renewed push for change.

BPC launched the task force with a goal of producing pragmatic policy recommendations that would dramatically improve the higher education system for students and their families. To achieve a goal that ambitious, you need every perspective in the room. We assembled a terrific group that included former lawmakers, college presidents, and higher education leaders from all points on the political compass, whose varied expertise and commitment to evidence-based reform allowed for both lively debate and the development of serious policy solutions.

Can you talk about the work of the task force on addressing the issue of college affordability and how policymakers on both sides of the aisle came together to make recommendations?

Howard P. "Buck" McKeon: From the start, our group was unified in the belief that too many low- and even middle-income students and their families are struggling to afford a college degree. Consequently, the task force's recommendations focus on reducing unmet need among low- and middle-income students primarily by reallocating federal resources towards front-end grant aid and improving the federal student loan program. These improvements would make a high-quality postsecondary education more affordable and help to ensure higher education is an engine of opportunity to drive economic growth.

What were the biggest points of agreement among task force members?

Miller: As Buck said, there was an overwhelming sense of purpose to strengthen access and affordability. There was also broad agreement that federal student aid should be better targeted and less complex, that the federal government should improve oversight over poorly performing schools, and that students and families need better information when making college enrollment and financing decisions. Most important, however, we shared a sense of urgency. We've seen the consequences of ignoring a dynamic higher education system for ten years.

> There was an overwhelming sense of purpose to strengthen access and affordability. Most important, however, we shared a sense of urgency. We've seen the consequences of ignoring a dynamic higher education system for ten years.

What were the biggest points of contention?

McKeon: The task force was philosophically divided on one key question: What level of federal resources should be allocated to postsecondary education? Some members, for example, wanted to see an increase in overall higher education spending, while others favored reducing the federal footprint, believing that loans without limits were driving up college prices, particularly for graduate and professional degrees. This dynamic led us to conclude that in order to reach an agreement, we would pursue a budget-neutral package that focused on retargeting the federal resources spent on higher education.

It's important to note that not every task member supports each of the forty-five recommendations in insolation. There are several proposals I would have preferred to leave out, such as the federal-state partnership. But each of us agreed that this full package of reforms would be an improvement on the status quo and meaningfully improve the higher education system for students and families.

Can you talk a little about the federalization of higher education and the responsibility of states in supporting higher education? The task force recommends establishing a $5 billion matching-grant program to help states improve student outcomes and make higher education more affordable. Why do federal incentives matter so much? Are there downsides to making state participation in the program optional?

Miller: States were historically the primary funders of public higher education, with the federal government playing a complementary role. More recently, however, declining state support for higher education has really shifted the playing field. Since the mid-1970s, state and local support for higher education as a share of personal income has dropped from 1 percent to 0.5 percent today. And, as state support has declined, public colleges and universities have increased their reliance on tuition revenues, resulting in higher costs for students and greater dependence on federal student aid.

Federal incentives matter because these trends are likely to continue. States face a number of challenges to investing in their higher education systems, including balanced budget requirements, and these challenges are exacerbated during a recession. Recognizing that every state higher education system is unique, the task force agreed that participation in the

Only about **50% of borrowers** are able to reduce their principal balance **within 5 years** of beginning repayment.

Recommendation: Require institutions participating in the federal loan program to pay a small premium tied to student loan outcomes.

Since the mid-1970s, state and local support for higher education as a share of personal income has been **cut in half**.

Recommendation: Reimagine the federal-state financing relationship through a **$5 billion annual matching grant** to help states reduce unmet need and improve student outcomes.

new federal-state grant program should be optional. With a $4-to-$1 match for every additional dollar invested, the program offers states a significant incentive to participate, which we believe will result in multistate participation.

Describe how, if implemented, the recommendations would achieve relative budget neutrality. Would the changes to stop benefits from disproportionally aiding high-income families have support among policymakers?

McKeon: I learned early in my career in Congress that budget estimates on student loans change often and sometimes by wide margins. Nonetheless, within the framework of rough budget neutrality, our focus was to reallocate existing resources to policies that could better target low-and middle-income students. To offset the new cost of the proposed federal-state partnership and a Pell Grant expansion, the task force calls for eliminating certain higher education tax benefits under which higher-income earners receive larger benefits than lower-income earners. We also proposed eliminating the in-school interest subsidy on federal student loans because

Complex requirements of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program have led to a staggering **99% rejection** rate among borrowers expecting their remaining balances to be forgiven.

Recommendation: Restructure the PSLF to provide an up-front, flat monthly benefit of **$300 for 5 years** for any eligible borrowers working in public service or at nonprofit organizations.

the research shows this funding has limited impact on access and retention. One of the most controversial changes is likely to be the elimination of the standard repayment cap, a feature of some income-driven repayment plans, that could result in higher earners paying back more than they would have otherwise.

It's fair to say that these recommendations would represent a significant change to the ways the federal government supports higher education. I predict they will generate a lot of discussion in Congress, with some people wanting to spend more money without offsets and others wanting to save money without spending more someplace else. But the bottom line is that there are opportunities here for the federal government to get better results for the money that is currently spent on higher education.

What's the biggest takeaway about college affordability you would want *Liberal Education* readers to get from the task force's report and recommendations?

Miller: This isn't a problem that is going to solve itself. If we continue to do nothing, we'll continue to see prices and student debt rise. We need to act to ensure that America's higher education system is transformative for those who seek it and that every student shares in its benefits.

In a 2017 Pew Research Center poll, 58 percent of Republicans said that college had a negative effect on the United States, while only 19 percent of Democrats said the same.[4] What can be done at both the policy and campus levels to address the negative narrative about the value of higher education? What effects might the narrative have on implementing changes like those the task force recommends? Why do you think that this view is disproportionately Republican, and what might be done about it?

McKeon: The US higher education system has long been held up as the best in the world, but more people are questioning the payoff to graduates and society as a whole. However, despite the statistics you mention, our nation's long-term prosperity depends on a highly skilled and innovative workforce. While the threats to free speech and inquiry on college campuses are a real concern, America cannot just turn its back on higher education. We must come together to ensure the system meets the needs of today's

and tomorrow's economy for everyone. This report is a start, but there's more work to be done to restore confidence in the American higher education system, and some of that is going to need to come from higher education leaders themselves. They need to redefine their value proposition in terms of meeting workforce demands, which is something that we cannot do from Washington.

How can we move to a space with more constructive policymaking, and how do we prioritize educational policy?

Miller: It begins with members of Congress getting to know each other and developing relationships beyond policymaking. In the case of higher education, we have a luxury. There are institutions of higher education in virtually every congressional district, and these institutions are integral to state economies. This is a critical issue for policymakers to come together on to ensure our higher education system meets the needs of today's students and the modern workforce. Without action, I do not believe that Congress or American families can have full confidence in our public system of higher education. That is going to require action to address both affordability and accountability.

> **College and university presidents need to be willing to innovate and leverage the talent of their faculty and students to help offer solutions to solve problems and to focus more on the world outside of their institutions.**

Where do the policy proposals for free college fit in the conversation?

McKeon: So-called "free" college was not a policy we considered. Our focus was on providing everyone access to an affordable postsecondary education, particularly for low-income students, but there are also important issues of quality to

Students who file the FAFSA are **72% more likely** to persist in higher education than those who do not file.

Recommendation: Simplify the FAFSA through automatic data sharing and lay the groundwork for a one-time FAFSA.

Outstanding federal student loans total nearly **$1.5 trillion**.

Recommendation: Automatically enroll all borrowers in an income-driven repayment plan, implement evidence-based reforms to federal loan counseling, develop personalized, easy-to-understand disclosure forms for student borrowers, and provide an annual notification of students' remaining eligibility for federal financial aid.

consider. The task force took on both issues, redirecting existing spending toward increasing affordability and boosting capacity at under-resourced schools that serve low-income students, while also providing accountability mechanisms to ensure quality programs that provide students a positive return on their investment of time and money.

Colleges and universities currently receive roughly $150 billion annually in grants and loans from the federal government. That's a lot of money even in Washington. But when you look at the results of spending all that money each year—with too few students graduating on time and too many taking out loans for studies that don't pay off—you can't help but conclude that we can't just spend our way out of these problems. Improving access will not provide the dramatic improvements the higher education system needs unless we also have quality standards and incentives to improve student outcomes.

What do educational leaders need to be doing at their own institutions to be ready for reforms that address college affordability?

Miller: Institutions don't have to wait for policy reform to address college affordability. Improving the information available to students and families is an important aspect of ensuring an affordable and accessible higher education system. Institutions should act to provide students and families easy-to-understand financial aid offers, ensure borrowers receive personalized loan counseling, and increase student awareness of tools that inform student decision making.

What advice do you have for college and university presidents for working with policymakers?

McKeon: College and university presidents need to work on becoming a trusted resource for policymakers. They can't just be asking for money or complaining about the red tape connected to the money they get. They need to show the impact that their institutions are having on the community. They need to be willing to innovate and leverage the talent of their faculty and students to help offer solutions to solve problems, and, most important, they need to focus more on the world outside of their institutions. We have a dynamic and diverse higher education system, and policymakers face many complex issues. They could use some trusted leaders to help in navigating through all the complexity.

What is the outlook for the Higher Education Act? When might an update be passed?

McKeon: It is hard to predict. I think there have been many missed opportunities because people aren't focused enough on the 80 percent of things that they can agree on. Since the 2008 reauthorization that George and I worked on, we have found that a number of policies enacted by both parties haven't worked as they were intended. We also have a system—and students the system serves—that has dramatically changed over the past decade. We cannot afford to wait much longer.

Anything else you'd like to add?

Miller: The task force's work signals that bipartisanship is indeed possible, even in this era of political polarization. Buck and I had our disagreements over the years, but we were usually able to put aside our differences and bring our committee together to make real progress. That's what we've done again here, and we look forward to the work ahead.

　　This Q&A has been edited for clarity. LE

Keeping Institutions Accountable

Six principles guide the recommendations concerning federal accountability policies:

1. Protect student and taxpayer resources by disallowing the worst-performing institutions from accepting federal student aid dollars and by incentivizing continuous improvement among institutions that accept these dollars.

2. Preserve access and affordability for students of color, low-income students, adult learners, first-generation students, and veterans.

3. Support institutional capacity building and prevent downward spirals in which well-intended but under-resourced institutions are unable to meet performance metrics, and, as a result, are further deprived of financial resources.

4. Provide students with improved opportunities for employment and increase the likelihood that students will realize a positive return on their investment.

5. Be sector-neutral, meaning punitive measures should not be targeted at specific types of institutions.

6. Set clear and transparent goals and metrics that are simple to understand but difficult to game.

NOTES

1. College Board, *Trends in College Pricing*, Figures 8–10, 2019, https://trends.collegeboard.org/college-pricing/figures-tables/average-net-price-over-time-full-time-students-sector.

2. "Digest of Education Statistics," National Center for Education Statistics, Table 326.10, 2018, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d18/tables/dt18_326.10.asp.

3. BPC staff calculation of "Federal Student Loan Portfolio," Portfolio by Delinquency Status, U.S. Department of Education, 2019, https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/about/data-center/student/portfolio.

4. "Sharp Partisan Divisions in Views of National Institutions," Pew Research Center, July 10, 2017, https://www.people-press.org/2017/07/10/sharp-partisan-divisions-in-views-of-national-institutions/.

TIFFANY JONES, VICTORIA JACKSON,
AND JAIME RAMIREZ-MENDOZA

Borrowing while Black

Understanding what makes student debt a crisis for black students

WITH THE TOTAL STUDENT DEBT in the United States at nearly $1.5 trillion,[1] loans are affecting the lives of many students. Research suggests that despite the challenges of student debt, on average, going to college pays off because students have better social and economic outcomes than their peers.[2] But while higher education pays off for the average graduate, the student loan data illustrates a unique and severe situation for Black students that has reached crisis level, even if the same isn't true for other racial and ethnic groups.

Borrowing while Black is a different experience. Black students are more likely to borrow—and borrow more—than their peers and are also more likely to struggle with repayment.

Borrowing while Black is a different experience. Black students are more likely to borrow—and borrow more—than their peers and are also more likely to struggle with repayment.[3] For example, while other student groups who entered college in 2003–4 were able to pay off some portion of their loans after twelve years, Black students actually *owed more* than what they originally borrowed.[4] Those who cannot make the payments eventually go into default, which can lead to severe consequences such as having wages garnished, tax refunds withheld, and credit ruined, which affects the ability to buy a house or car. Unfortunately, *about half* of

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Black student borrowers in the 2003–4 cohort defaulted on their loans by 2016,[5] and up to 70 percent are projected to default by 2024.[6] Even the earnings boost from graduating from college or having a high family income does not completely shield Black students from defaulting. A Black bachelor's degree graduate is more likely to default than a White college dropout,[7] and Black borrowers from high-income families are seven times more likely to default than their White peers from high-income families.[8]

We have a crisis in which Black students are more likely to borrow, borrow more, owe more than their original loan amount, struggle with repayment, and have higher default rates even among those who earn a college degree and come from high-income families. Existing student debt policies that adjust payments based on income (income-driven repayment plans, for instance) have not made a difference for Black borrowers.[9] But to understand what can make a difference, we first have to explore exactly what is fueling this student debt crisis for Black students.

Racial income and wealth gap

Thanks to rampant employment discrimination, Black people tend to be concentrated in low-paying jobs.[10] Part of the problem is that Black applicants don't get an equitable chance at job opportunities, as résumés with White-sounding names receive 50 percent more callbacks than those with Black names.[11] This leads to a racial income gap, where the typical White household has $61,200 in income, while the typical Black household has $35,400.[12] Unfortunately, the cumulative effects of racist policies over time

Because of the racial wealth gap, Black families tend to rely more heavily on student loans to finance higher education.

do not end there. The long legacy of slavery, Jim Crow, and racist federal housing policies,[13] combined with ongoing employment and lending discrimination, have impeded Black families from building wealth through homeownership—a leading reason the typical White household has nearly ten times more wealth than the typical Black household.[14] Unfortunately, even higher education cannot close this racial wealth gap, as the typical Black household with a bachelor's degree or higher has a *lower net worth* than a typical White household with a high school education or less.[15] Due to these disparities, Black families tend to rely more heavily on student debt to finance higher education.

Housing segregation and an inequitable K–12 system

Factors and policies outside of higher education have negatively affected Black students' ability to access college. Racist housing segregation and its economic impacts are still happening today, as three out of four neighborhoods that were "redlined"—an institutionalized system of discriminatory mortgage lending toward Black people—on government maps continue to struggle economically.[16] This impacts not just Black borrowers but also Black communities. For example, majority-Black neighborhoods (determined by zip code) have higher student loan balances and default rates than majority-White neighborhoods.[17] This translates into Black communities having fewer resources to invest in local businesses and schools.

> **Black students are concentrated at under-resourced K–12 schools that are less likely to have college-prep courses and that are more likely to have less qualified teachers who have lower expectations of students.**

Then there is the rampant inequitable funding of public K–12 schools, in which non-White school districts received $23 billion less than White school districts even though they served the same number of students.[18] Unfortunately, Black students are concentrated at under-resourced K–12 schools that are less likely to have college-prep courses and that are more likely to have less qualified teachers who have lower expectations of students.[19] The combination of de jure and de facto housing segregation with inequitable funding of K–12 systems ultimately results in Black students being further segregated into less selective colleges with lower graduation rates.

Inequitable state higher education policy and spending

In the wake of the Great Recession, which began in December 2007, states slashed funding for public two- and four-year institutions, resulting in colleges increasing their tuition to make up the difference. States have still not returned to pre-recession funding levels. In 2018, overall state funding for public institutions was more than $6.6 billion below what it was in 2008, and states on average spent 13 percent less on students after adjusting for inflation.[20]

Rising costs and state budget cuts affect all students and disproportionately threaten affordability and access for Black students. In 2017, the average net price for a public four-year college was 23 percent of the typical household income but was 40 percent or more of the typical Black household income in seventeen states. And in forty-seven states, low-income students need to work more than fifteen hours per week to pay the net price at a public four-year college.[21] In addition to not having enough income, Black families do not have the wealth to shoulder the increasing cost of college.

With cuts in funding aside, states have long operated in a racially segregated and unequal system of higher education. Due to policy choices, states have funded less selective community colleges and public four-year institutions at much lower rates than selective public colleges. Since a disproportionate share of Black students attend less selective colleges, this means states are spending $1,000 less per student on Black students than on their White peers, amounting to approximately $5 billion less annually.[22]

From 1970 to 1997, many court cases found that states systematically spent less on historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) than on predominantly white institutions.[23] Yet despite HBCUs winning their cases in court, not all outcomes have led to equitable compensation for years of inequitable funding practices. For example, in 2013, Maryland was found guilty of allowing traditionally white universities to duplicate academic programs that were already established at four HBCUs in the state, effectively steering away students and funding.[24] Fortunately, the Maryland Senate recently passed a bill to provide more than $500 million to the state's HBCUs. Black students are underrepresented even at public two- and four-year colleges and universities.

TWELVE-YEAR DEFAULT RATES AND AVERAGE ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME (AGI) BY RACE/ETHNICITY FOR DEPENDENT FULL-TIME, FIRST-TIME STUDENTS AT FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS				
FAMILY INCOME	**Black Default Rates**	**Black AGI**	**White Default Rates**	**White AGI**
LOW	48%	$14,250	23%	$15,761
LOWER MIDDLE	40%	$41,920	15%	$41,940
UPPER MIDDLE	36%	$69,228	9%	$70,449
HIGH	34%	$129,291	5%	$132,348
OVERALL	42%	$38,168	11%	$71,367

Family Income: Low < $32,000, Low middle ≥ $32,000 & < $60,000, High middle ≥ $60,000 & < $92,000, High ≥ $92,000

Source: Education Trust analysis of US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2003–4 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, Second Follow-Up (BPS:04/09)

Underfunding the institutions (such as HBCUs and community colleges) that provide Black students with access to college means Black students have less access to the financial resources necessary to complete their degree.

Federal higher education policy exacerbates the crisis

The Pell Grant Program is the largest federal need-based aid program, and 58 percent of Black students are recipients.[25] Unfortunately, as Black enrollment has progressed over the decades, the purchasing power of the Pell Grant has sharply declined. In 1975, the grant covered 79 percent of the cost of college at a public university,[26] but by 2019–20 it covered only 28 percent.[27] This decline has severe consequences for all Black students—who disproportionately rely on the Pell Grant to make higher education more affordable[28]—and many have turned to student loans to make up the difference.[29]

Meanwhile, the federal government has failed to protect students from predatory for-profit institutions that disproportionately target and enroll Black students. Studies have found that three in four Black borrowers who attended a for-profit college and did not complete their degree defaulted on their loans,[30] and rules that would force for-profit schools to disclose information about graduate salaries were struck down this year.[31]

Lastly, default rates have remained high despite income-driven repayment (IDR) plans, which adjust monthly payments based on the borrower's income. While some IDR plans cover a portion of accumulating interest rates, they can be dangerous for borrowers who are on the plan for long periods of time and make few or no payments, as they will likely see their balances increase. Unfortunately, a third of Black bachelor's degree recipients are enrolled in such a plan, and of those, nearly 60 percent have a monthly payment of $0.[32]

Racial justice problems require racial justice solutions

Racial equity for Black borrowers will not be achieved by relying on proxies for race, ignoring racial discrimination, or avoiding race-conscious policies. So, how can we turn the tide? Here are a few steps:

- States should oppose using race-neutral higher education funding formulas and invest more in need-based aid and in colleges that provide high-quality opportunities for students of color. They should also remove bans on affirmative action.
- The federal government should make states work toward closing gaps in spending by race in K–12 schools and in public higher education as a requirement for any state-federal partnerships.

- The federal and state governments should invest more in HBCUs, tribal colleges, and other minority-serving institutions (MSIs) and ensure enrollment-driven MSIs are truly serving students of color.
- The federal government should restore the purchasing power of Pell by at least doubling the maximum amount, index it to inflation, and make 100 percent of funding for the grant mandatory, all while making it available to currently and previously incarcerated individuals.
- In order to close the racial wealth gap, policymakers should commit to large-scale, equitable student debt forgiveness that is based on both income *and* wealth. For example, a recent Education Trust report suggests that debt forgiveness policy should identify eligible students under a particular income threshold but allow a higher income threshold for Black students who can demonstrate limited wealth.[33] Additionally, other factors should be included to further target forgiveness to Black, Latino, and Native American borrowers, who, because of the effects of structural and institutional racism, struggle more to repay their loans.

Despite the crisis they have created, student loans have been important in giving opportunity to Black students who may not have had other means to finance their education. Some would argue that in today's knowledge economy, the most expensive education is the one not earned. Unfortunately, with racism and inequity manifesting itself in the forms of income and wealth gaps, separate and unequal segregation, inequitable funding, and ineffective policy, Black borrowers are paying that unjust price. Therefore, it's critical to fix the Black student debt crisis, and this requires recognition that there is a crisis and an understanding of how it uniquely affects Black students.[34] While there is no single quick fix to the complicated crisis of borrowing while Black, these race-conscious recommendations are important first steps in ensuring we recognize the plight of Black borrowers, not only in how we diagnose the problem but also in how we craft the solutions.[35] LE

It's critical to fix the Black student–debt crisis, and this requires recognition that there is a crisis and an understanding of how it uniquely affects Black students.

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MARTHA KANTER AND ANJANA VENKATESAN

The Promise of College

Opening new pathways to the American dream

For a College Promise to truly benefit students, a program must go beyond simply allowing students to attend college—it must give them the tools and supports to persist, achieve, and graduate.

OUR DEMOCRACY WAS BUILT on the belief that education would drive our collective economic, social, and civic responsibility and prosperity—that it was a public good. A century ago, we as a nation made high school education our minimum standard. Times have changed. Today, a high school education is not enough to lead Americans to a good job and a decent quality of life.[1] Education beyond high school is critical for success in our global economy, for our social fabric, and for our personal and collective well-being. Every student should have the opportunity to attain an affordable quality college education, regardless of income, race, ethnicity, geography, or background, but rising college costs have placed higher education out of reach for too many of today's students and burdened others with often insurmountable amounts of debt.[2]

One solution to this problem that has found traction locally—and increasingly statewide—is the development of College Promise programs. These place-based initiatives aim to promote a college-going culture, increase access to higher education, and improve student and postsecondary outcomes by removing the barrier of college

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tuition and fees while providing academic, student, and community supports that enable students to flourish in college, in work, and in the rest of their lives.

A College Promise is a *commitment* to fund a college education for every eligible hardworking student advancing on the path to earn a college degree, a certificate, and/or credits that transfer to a four-year university. A College Promise is a *public assurance* to prepare students for the twenty-first century workforce and the pursuit of the American dream without the burden of unmanageable college debt. A College Promise is also a *trust* to make the first two years of college—at minimum—as universal, free, and accessible as public high school has been since the twentieth century.

Local resonance

The College Promise Campaign (CPC) was launched on September 9, 2015, at Macomb Community College in Michigan by President Barack H. Obama, Second Lady of the United States Jill Biden, and the thirtieth governor of Wyoming (1995–2003), Jim Geringer. The CPC's mission is to increase the social, economic, and civic mobility of students by advancing College Promise programs in communities and states across the nation, starting in America's community colleges. The CPC's work falls into three main categories: building widespread public awareness; tracking, collecting, and promoting Promise research, high-impact practices, and policy solutions; and encouraging cross-sector Promise leaders to establish new programs or make innovative and evidence-based improvements to existing

The College Promise Campaign's mission is to increase the social, economic, and social mobility of students by advancing Promise programs across the nation, starting in community colleges.

The Long Beach City College (LBCC) Promise program partners with Long Beach Unified School District students. Participating students enroll at LBCC and are guaranteed transfer admission to California State University–Long Beach in ten different majors.

Promises. At its founding, the CPC identified fifty-three Promise programs nationwide. Today, it is tracking more than three hundred local programs and twenty-nine statewide Promise initiatives actively serving millions of students across the United States.

The explosive growth of the movement speaks to a widespread recognition of the need for improved access to and success in higher education, but perhaps the most unique aspect of College Promise programs is how strongly their message has resonated in local communities. Education, business, philanthropic, and government leaders have joined together with students and families to develop and sustain their Promise programs. Local Promise programs offer students place-based scholarships, meaning they serve specific geographic or institutional areas. They are designed and implemented by drawing on the community's available resources and keeping particular student needs in mind. As a result, College Promise programs differ community to community in terms of funding sources, service area, and the type or amount of support offered. Local Promise programs across the country have developed many unique solutions to help their students:

Removing tuition as a barrier of entry for higher education is a crucial first step to expanding education access, but alone, this step is frequently not enough.

- utilizing public, private, or mixed funding streams
- providing scholarships that are first dollar (upfront cost of tuition), last dollar (remaining cost of tuition after federal/state funding applied), or last dollar plus (adding a first-dollar bonus)

- covering tuition for specific colleges, or enabling students to take their scholarship anywhere in the country
- providing mentors, tailored wraparound student supports, and/or intrusive advising to accelerate progression to and through college and career
- offering guided pathways, community service opportunities, job-shadowing, and/or paid internships

Wraparound supports

While College Promise programs vary across the country, most share a few common features. First, Promise programs have an explicit policy to engage students, institutions, policymakers, and the public on the importance of postsecondary education. Second, Promise stakeholders send a clear message that college is attainable for every eligible hardworking student advancing on the path to earn a college degree, a certificate, and/or credits that transfer to a four-year university. Third, in addition to providing the financial award and stakeholder framework for postsecondary education, quality Promise programs acknowledge that additional support services are critical to improving college outcomes and student success.

As College Promise programs have become more widely accepted and embraced, the third feature of wraparound support services has become a key focus of Promise administrators and the CPC. Removing tuition as a barrier of entry for higher education is a crucial first step to expanding education access, but alone, this step is frequently not enough. The students helped by Promise programs often come from traditionally underserved populations struggling with barriers beyond tuition.[3] Many of these

COLLEGE PROMISE PROGRAMS

WE STARTED WITH

53

WE NOW HAVE

320+

STATEWIDE PROMISE
AVAILABLE FOR
ELIGIBLE STUDENTS
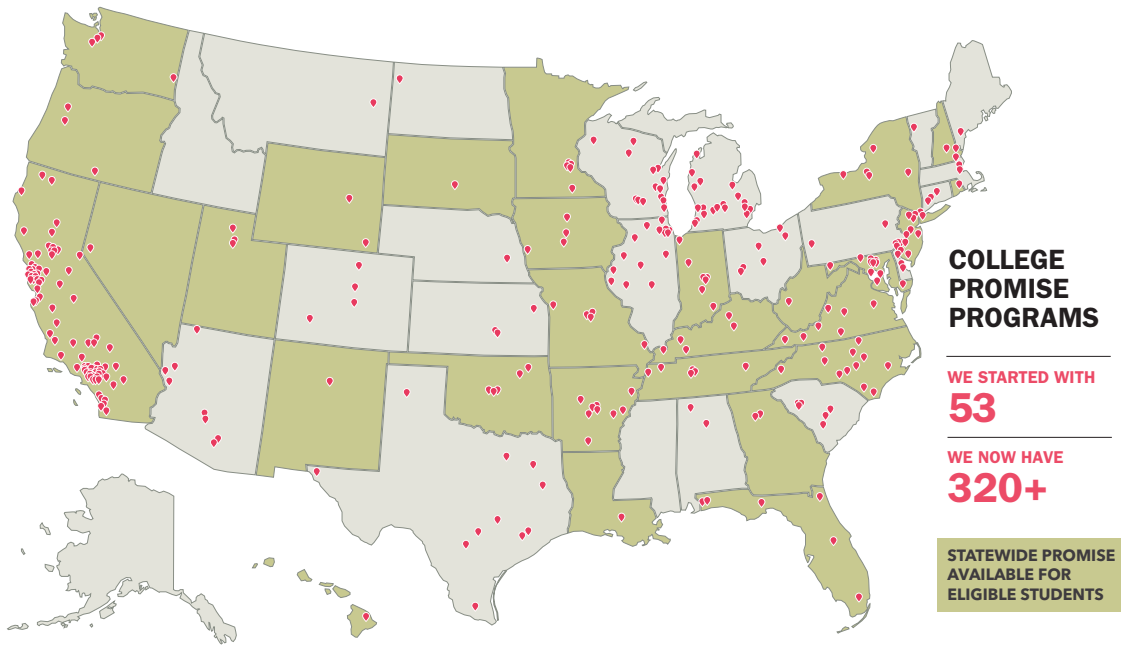
students are able to enroll in college thanks to tuition-free options but then still struggle with the full cost of attendance, which includes expenses for housing, childcare, food, transportation, and books. Some students aided by Promise never expected to be able to afford higher education and lack the knowledge or social supports necessary to navigate the college experience. In order for a Promise to truly benefit students, a program must go beyond simply allowing students to attend college—it must give them the tools and supports to persist, achieve, and graduate.

By actively assessing the needs of their Promise students, programs now more than ever are investing in the specific supports that will benefit the students in their community. A range of College Promise programs offer book and/or transportation stipends to supplement the Promise, and some provide a level of housing benefit. The Campaign has now identified programs that have invested in developing food banks or drop-in childcare access on campus. The Detroit Promise has established a robust network of volunteer mentors who use a series of proactive and high-touch interactions, such as scheduled in-person check-ins and regular text message exchanges, to guide students through the transition to college and help them stay on track once enrolled.[4] Frequent meetings with their mentors, monthly financial incentives, text messaging, and schedule management are several features to help students navigate the college experience. The Tennessee Promise has an entire independent network of supports made possible through its independent nonprofit, TN Achieves, which works with students to help them access the full breadth of services from

the statewide Tennessee Promise.[5] Some well-designed programs are utilizing support services that extend deeply into the K–12 system (early messaging, integrated college savings accounts, summer bridge programs, counseling and mentorship programs before and through college enrollment) and up through job placement (career counseling, job shadowing, internship opportunities, industry exposure).

To support local and state innovations taking wraparound support services to the next level, the CPC is identifying the specific "ecosystem" of supports needed by particular subsets of students to progress to, through, and beyond college. The CPC and the nonprofit ETS partnered on the College Promise Ecosystems project with the support of philanthropy, bringing together higher education scholars, practitioners, and finance experts to identify practical solutions to better support specific student populations (disconnected adults, veterans, DREAMers, traditional college-age youth). By conducting intensive focus groups and reviewing current practices that have been shown to benefit different student populations, the CPC supports Promise programs to provide evidence-based targeted services to improve retention and graduation rates. Examples include establishing cohorts of Promise students, promoting guided pathways, providing mentors, and offering specialized counseling and financial aid advising, to name a few.

State participation

While the flexibility and variability of College Promises are certainly a strength that enables local and statewide Promise programs to better meet student needs, comparing Promise programs

and supporting research that is applicable to the movement as a whole is a continuing challenge. In the past few years, the CPC has increasingly focused on identifying and disseminating high-quality, high-impact Promise features, but oftentimes Promise research and findings have been highly localized and case specific.[6]

In order to streamline and collect research efforts, as well as help identify general best practices, in 2019 the CPC launched the College Promise Research Network (CPRN). The CPRN consists of a steering committee and a series of working groups built around major topics of Promise research, all composed of researchers actively engaged in studying local and state Promise programs. The goal is to identify gaps in current Promise literature, facilitate national collaboration for prospective or ongoing Promise research, and distinguish the most effective high-impact practices to be widely shared among Promise researchers and practitioners alike. So far, the CPRN has documented an extensive bibliography of more than 150 Promise research studies and gathered researchers across the country into four working groups: Workforce/Economic, Financial Sustainability, Program Design, and Metrics and Evaluation. Looking ahead, the CPC will develop a robust system of communications to share research findings with the larger Promise community and its partner institutions and organizations for continuous program improvement from research to practice based on evidence garnered by the growing number of Promise scholars from across the nation.

While all programs are unique, many regions share particular challenges, and communities often find inspiration in and opportunities to learn from the successes and challenges of their neighbors.

Perhaps the most exciting new frontier for the College Promise movement is the intense interest we are now seeing at the state level.[7] At the start of 2020, there were twenty-nine statewide Promise initiatives, all differing dramatically in structure and implementation but all affirming a commitment to expanding access to and success through higher education, reducing the barriers of tuition and fees, and bolstering critical student supports. Some states directly structure and design their own programs, determining eligible students, K–12 schools, community colleges, universities, and programs of study for their College Promise. Others, such as California, choose to instead provide a general funding stream to enable the College Promise to grow, allowing local colleges and universities to then tailor programs to student needs.[8] Many state programs, like Kentucky's Work Ready Scholarship Program, focus on the economic benefits of a Promise and target specific high-demand workforce programs geared toward certain industries or underemployed populations. Others, such as the Washington Promise, approach Promise with an equity lens and structure their programs to act as expansions of existing state need grants.

The growth of statewide Promises is a testament to the innovation, success, and significance of local programs. Although the scope and scale of a statewide Promise might overshadow the capabilities and outcomes of local Promises, community-based initiatives provide an unmatched level of flexibility and a much deeper understanding of how to meet student needs.[9] As states continue participating in Promise programs, it will be increasingly important to identify the best ways for state and local Promises to interact. At worst, a system with little communication between state and local Promises will duplicate efforts. At its best, effective state and local partnerships can dramatically increase the impact of Promises and successfully serve the students who can most benefit from Promise resources. Certainly, the federal-state partnership envisioned years ago in America's College Promise, which is increasingly in the public discourse, may well be on the horizon in the years ahead and could add value and sustainability to local and state Promise programs if properly designed and implemented.[10]

A promising future

The CPC strongly values communication between and among local programs and states. While all programs are unique, many regions share particular challenges, and communities often find inspiration in and opportunities to learn from the successes and challenges of their neighbors. With this in mind, the CPC helps foster regional coalitions to identify, share, and address concerns; celebrate and promote local triumphs; and encourage positive regional growth. Over the past two years, several Promise coalitions have formed in California, Texas, and Michigan, doubling down on the exciting momentum in these regions. Moving forward, the CPC aims to foster and support further

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coalitions across the United States to create self-reinforcing communities of practice to grow the Promise movement.

The College Promise movement's early results demonstrate increases in progression, equity, and achievement outcomes in well-designed, independently evaluated Promise programs. The CPC has several major projects in design to support the movement going forward, including an updated financial sustainability assessment and series of financial sustainability guidelines for Promise programs; a value impact profile that offers students, families, researchers, and policy leaders the opportunity to locate and compare Promise programs and provides general guidelines for improving overall program impact; and an expansion of the Promise Ecosystems work to include more subpopulations of students. The CPC will continue to serve as the College Promise movement's national clearinghouse and systems integrator, supporting the growth and quality of individual local and statewide Promise programs while connecting Promise leaders and stakeholders from education, government, business, philanthropy, and other sectors to beneficial Promise resources.

Education has never been more important for social success and for the future of our democracy. While the dream of a freely available college education might have been unimaginable only a decade ago, today it is already a reality for hundreds of thousands of students. By growing, supporting, and improving our local and state College Promise programs in the years ahead, we will do all we can to move our nation toward a better educated, more inclusive, more just, and more prosperous America. ⏹️

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BRIAN MURPHY

Democracy under Siege

What are colleges and universities to do?

VERSION 1: Young people are registering in record numbers, wanting to exercise the franchise in this most fraught of elections. They look for clarity in the policies of the two parties and for candidates who speak to the issues most on young people's minds: climate change, inequality, and access to and the cost of education. Young people are repelled by the hyperpartisan drama in Washington and don't know what to make of the deepening chasm dividing the country. They, and we, decry the lack of civility.

What can colleges and universities do to better prepare our students for democratic action in the face of conflict and ever-sharper disagreements? Why have we buried our civic commitments so much that they don't even register in accounts of the "public narratives" regarding higher education?

VERSION 2: The 2020 elections hurtle toward us under a cloud of fear and uncertainty. An impeached president, supported by a party indifferent to his crimes, wages a campaign that smacks of old newsreels from the 1930s. Meanwhile, outside his base, hundreds of thousands of voters across the country struggle to register in the face of Republican efforts to narrow the franchise and the vote. Can the rhetoric of white supremacy and nativism capture the electoral college? What happens to the rest of us if it does?

Which of these versions is most likely to begin an essay in a higher education journal? On the

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other hand, which language captures the depth and seriousness of the current passage through which the country moves? Version 1 is safe, it distributes blame widely, it has no named enemies of democracy. It reassures us, subtly, that the system isn't really in peril, merely marked by "divisiveness" and bad behavior. It implies equivalency between the parties and political leaders. It implies an answer: engage in civil discourse, be polite, educate, vote.

Version 2 has the virtue of saying what is actually on my mind and names the proximate threat to democracy. It allows me to talk about the very real possibility that the president of the United States will not honor the results of an election that goes against him, just as he refused to participate in a legitimate congressional impeachment inquiry. This all hints at authoritarian tendencies that most of us recognize. While avoiding too many rhetorical gestures to Weimar, it sees the current struggle as an existential moment for American democracy.

Version 1 avoids the partisan trap. If the threat to democracy is the alienation of our people from government, the loss of faith in politicians, or the ignorance of voters—all true—then we can act as if no agents are working to end or limit democracy. If we begin with the public opinion findings over the past two decades—only a third of American adults can name a branch of government, one in six Americans now believe military rule is acceptable, only a bare majority vote[1]—then the answers are long-term and (happily) almost curricular. If the issue is structural inequality and low voter turnout among low-income citizens, we can

In 2016, 50.8 percent of millennial voters (20 to 35 years old at the time) cast a ballot, up from 46.4 percent in 2012 (when they were 18 to 31), according to the Pew Research Center.

believe others outside the academy will address it. Our job stays the same as it has always been: the education of our students, best-case scenario, in the facts and arts of democracy.

But what if democracy is in peril because powerful political forces are actively working to limit the franchise, maintain the hegemony of big money and corporate power, and create a politics of minority rule by oligarchs? What if the threat to American democracy is part of a multinational, faux-populist attack on liberal democracy itself, and Donald Trump is only one actor (and symptom) in a much larger struggle being waged across Europe, Turkey, India, Brazil, and elsewhere by antidemocratic forces?

A struggle between worldviews

The belief that we are engaged in a worldwide battle between liberal democracy and autocracy is advanced by both Russia and the more candid of the alt-right theorists. In their view, liberal democracy is a dying system, corrupt and weak, to be replaced by authoritarian regimes. Steve Bannon is not some peripheral figure on the fringes of the fake-news world. He was, after all, the chief strategist for Trump and now among the chief consultants working the far-right across Europe. Bannon and his colleagues are nothing if not clear that the current struggle is between different worldviews. He appears entirely familiar with Russian President Vladimir Putin's favorite theorist of the new world order—Aleksandr Dugin—and his chief theoretical antecedent, the Italian fascist Julius Evola.[2]

These are the theorists of "traditionalism," who see the current political struggle as between a secularist liberalism and a Judeo-Christian patriarchy needing to assert its authority and fight against both Islam and modernity.[3] What a happy coincidence for the international alt-right that one of theirs actually has state power in the United States and appears determined to hold on to it by any means necessary—including accepting the active intervention of a foreign totalitarian state.

It is, of course, entirely possible that both versions of the "crisis of democracy" could be simultaneously true. The levels of alienation and anger animating contemporary politics, the lack of commitment to democratic institutions, the distance ordinary citizens feel from

> **All of us can do far more this electoral season to make the election matter, to bring public urgency to the issues that matter to us individually.**

government—all are issues of enduring danger and also form the ground on which actual enemies can act. And, the willingness of the Republican Party to abandon principle to maintain power, to distort reality in the name of what the Polish writer Ryszard Kapuściński called the Great Yesterday,[4] means the partisan divide in the country is actually more than bad behavior and bad opinion. One party depends on expanding the franchise and widening democratic engagement; the other depends on narrowing it. One embraces the demography of the new America; the other appeals to a resentful nativism.

Facing the crisis

If these are the stakes, how are we to act? How do institutions committed to the broadest liberal education of students respond to "democracy under siege"? Does it matter what kind of crisis this is? Maybe colleges and universities will act in expected ways no matter what the nature of the crisis.

Our default position, if you'll excuse me, is to duck and cover. Or, more charitably, to fall back on our traditional nonpartisanship, avoid any explicit engagement with campaigns or candidates, and then provide some small support for programs to register students, help efforts to get out the vote on and off campus, and believe that the system can survive without our public voice or any other institutional initiatives.

That's not enough this time around.

Let me suggest two things. First, of course, the commitment to nonpartisanship is not just cultural; it's mandated by regulation. Our avoidance of a direct institutional critique of one party or the other is born of more than prudence; it's legislated. We threaten our funding and our political support if our colleges or universities favor one party or another, one candidate or the other. This is not trivial. But is it all there is to say?

Second, it is possible that colleges and universities might not actually have much of a role in defending democracy during an immediate and urgent crisis. If the crisis is, at least in part, the emergence of a reactionary populist demagogue thoroughly disinterested in democratic values or norms, higher education can't do much about it. Even if we are under fundamental threat (to academic freedom, institutional autonomy, science, the independent judgment of scholars and teachers), we depend on the political mobilization of others outside the academy to protect us.

In the 2020 election, members of Generation Z, on track to be more racially and ethnically diverse than previous generations, are projected to make up one in ten eligible voters, according to the Pew Research Center.

But, within the confines of institutional nonpartisanship, and with a certain modesty about our role, what might we do this electoral season? However dire we see the circumstances, what can we do? We can do a lot more than we've been doing. We can act as if we actually believe there is a crisis.

First, of course, we can find ways to make clear our policy preferences: we support DACA, we oppose deportations of undocumented students, we believe in science and support initiatives to address the climate crisis, we want increased access and lower fees for students, we support student voting and want polling places on our campuses, we oppose white supremacy and misogyny and expressions of hatred even while supporting free speech. These are all appropriate institutional positions, in keeping with our commitments to a robust liberal education.

Second, even if we have to avoid institutional partisan expressions for any particular candidate, university and college leaders do not have to remain silent in our personal capacities. All of us—faculty, staff, administrators, presidents, chancellors—can do far more this electoral season to make the election matter, to bring public urgency to the issues that matter to

us individually: writing op-ed pieces, giving public speeches, participating in demonstrations, engaging in nonviolent and civil disobedience. It'd be encouraging to see university and college leaders who really do believe the climate crisis is an existential threat take a much more public stand to draw attention to the crisis (perhaps joining the demonstrations with Jane Fonda or the Extinction Rebellion).[5]

In short, we should not be silent or passive on issues that matter to us personally. Our moral obligation to speak out for social justice and equity, the rule of law and democracy itself, may come into tension with our institutional commitment to nonpartisanship. But during this political passage, we must err on the side of expression and principle.

Third, with regard to our institutional practice, we have to do much more to educate and engage students in the issues and the campaigns, however last-minute and hurried our efforts. There will be roughly six to ten weeks between the start of classes and the election this fall. The election ought to be the centerpiece of campus life for all those weeks: public forums and debates, local candidate and referendum events, massive voter-registration drives, and

the establishment of polling places where it's legal to do so. Institutional resources can go to student interns and student-run events. If colleges and universities can (and will) spend hundreds of thousands of dollars for temporary staff for football season, we can spend a share of those dollars for voter registration and voter education.

Then, go further. How can colleges and universities use the urgency of the campaign to spark substantive learning on what's at stake? What are the policy priorities of the two parties? Can students learn to discern fake news? What historical analogies help us understand the emergence of antidemocratic movements? Looking forward, can this election cycle prompt a review of the degree to which our programs prepare young people for the political debates that will dominate the next decade? This pivot from the immediate to the long term will matter if we actually make the pivot to "centering" the civic and political in our work. No matter who wins, democracy will continue to be contested terrain. We might use the postelection moment to reflect on what we wish we had done better long before we reached this difficult moment. What can colleges and universities do to better prepare our students for democratic action in the face of conflict and ever-sharper disagreements? Why have we buried our civic commitments so much that they don't even register in

This pivot from the immediate to the long term will matter if we actually make the pivot to "centering" the civic and political in our work.

accounts of the "public narratives" regarding higher education?[6]

Nowhere is this more critical than the climate crisis. This issue clearly matters to our students, and candidates who address the climate crisis will disproportionately gain the support of young voters. What more might we do to better prepare them for the tough political choices that will be forced by the climate crisis? How many are familiar with the science with which we understand the largest existential threat to the planet? None of this can be addressed adequately in the run-up to the 2020 election, but the election can surely be a time when we assess how well we've done in developing curricula that educate all students in understanding the climate crisis.

Protecting a democratic future

Our role in sustaining democracy in the face of long-term cultural and ideological confusion can comfort us. It really does matter, it turns out, if students graduate with a broad liberal education. Even if they don't know the difference between 1.5 and 3 degrees Celsius, they have a deep and intuitive sense that climate catastrophe is threatening their world. Poll after poll shows that today's students celebrate their diversity, support expanded rights for groups and persons long marginalized, and believe in democracy. They want to protect these values, and they will be among those who protect a democratic future. They are a massive voting block for democracy.

That is, if they vote. Our role is to do everything we can to facilitate their political education, facilitate their engagement, and be clear about what we care about. This time around, the stakes could not be higher. Can you imagine four more years of relentless attacks on equity, diversity, the rule of law, the climate, and the institutions of democratic governance themselves? LE

AFTERWORD

This essay was written before the country was struck by the coronavirus pandemic and before higher education was convulsed by the sudden need to exercise social distancing, close campuses, and move to online learning. Sadly, nothing in the essay's main argument has changed. Indeed, the crisis only makes more pressing the need for broad democratic engagement among our students, as the national election will come upon us no matter what stage of "recovery" we are in. The challenge for higher education will be how to devote the resources and energy required to encourage students to engage national political issues—and vote—when campuses are absorbed in the daunting logistics of recovery.

NOTES

1. See Yascha Mounk, *The People vs. Democracy: Why Our Freedom Is in Danger and How to Save It* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019), esp. 4.

2. See Jason Horowitz, "Steve Bannon Cited Italian Thinker Who Inspired Fascists," *New York Times*, February 2, 2017.

3. See Aleksandr Dugin, *The Fourth Political Theory* (St. Petersburg: Amphora, 2009).

4. See Adam Hochschild, "Another Great Yesterday," *New York Review of Books*, December 19, 2019. Hochschild, following Kapuściński, points to the similarities of populist movements that hark back to a mythical past of supposed virtue and (usually) a racial and/or ethnic identity.

5. The Extinction Rebellion movement began in the United Kingdom, advocating civil disobedience to bring attention to the climate crisis.

6. Debra Humphreys, "Reframing Narratives of Value in the New Media Landscape," Lumina Foundation, presentation of research commissioned by Protagonist, Inc., at the Association of American Colleges and Universities' Forum for Presidents and Foundation Leaders, January 2019.

We Voted!

Check out these resources to get students to the polls:

ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge
allinchallenge.org/how-it-works/how-work/#

Campus Vote Project
campusvoteproject.org

Fair Elections Legal Center
fairelectionscenter.org

Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tufts University
circle.tufts.edu

Institute for Democracy and Higher Education at Tufts
idhe.tufts.edu/electionimperatives

Rock the Vote
rockthevote.org

TurboVote
turbovote.org/register

U.S. Vote Foundation
usvotefoundation.org

MARISOL MORALES AND JACQUELINE PEREZ VALENCIA

Seeding the Garden

MORE THAN FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AGO, on July 30, 1619, the Jamestown Colony in Virginia opened its General Assembly. A few weeks later, in August, the first enslaved Africans arrived in the colony. These events marked the beginning of both representative government and slavery in English-speaking North America. That both events occurred as part of the founding of the United States is evidence that the nation's democracy has not served all equally.

Despite or because of this, the commitment to the construction of a diverse and equitable democracy is even more imperative than ever given our changing demographics, growing inequality, and the eroding of gains of the civil rights movement. For instance, we've seen the criminalization of communities of color, with Blacks imprisoned five times more than Whites, and Hispanics nearly twice as likely as Whites to be imprisoned, according to the US Census.[1] Since the 2013 Supreme Court decision in *Shelby County v. Holder*, which invalidated the coverage formula in the Voting Rights Act and limited the law's enforcement tools, voter suppression has been on the rise.[2] In 2018, according to the FBI, hate crimes hit a sixteen-year high.[3] All of these examples indicate the need for drastic change if we are to reconstitute a nation that embodies its ideals. The most direct path to that is through community empowerment and civic action—especially for communities of color.

There are many ways beyond voting to take part in democratic action, and educators can, for example, motivate young people to participate in social activism and serve as election poll workers.

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The conversation about democratic engagement is often reduced to voting rates. News reports on voter participation in communities of color and among youth too often employ a narrative of apathy and disengagement and attempt to shame people into voting. While it is true that people died for our right to vote, it is also true that people of color have died for just existing and that these narratives are neither accurate nor consider the entire picture. In the 2018 midterm elections, for instance, all major ethnic groups saw a historic increase in voter participation, with the voting population the most diverse, both ethnically and racially, ever for a midterm election, according to the Pew Research Center. The turnout rate for black voters was 10.8 percentage points higher than in the 2014 midterm elections. The 2018 rate of participation among Asian voters, at around 40 percent, increased from 2014 by 13 percentage points. The Latino voter turnout went from 6.8 million in 2014 to 11.7 million in 2018, nearly doubling.[4] The youth vote was also up in 2018. Voter participation among college students (with an average age of 24) was 40 percent in 2018, up from 19 percent in the 2014 midterms.[5]

This momentum challenges the notion that people of color and students are apathetic to voting. It also strengthens the ability for institutions of higher education to become realms of democratic practice that develop civic leaders and an informed and engaged citizenry. There are many ways beyond voting to take part in democratic action, and educators can, for example, motivate young people to participate in social activism and serve as election poll workers. A study looking at how the youth of different racial and ethnic backgrounds become civically engaged found that providing students with the opportunity to engage in democratic activities offers them tools and examples on how to challenge the systemic and structural racism in their lives and communities.[6] Pathways to civic engagement, according to the study, vary between youth of color and their White counterparts, and most models for civic engagement are structured around

Civic transformation and youth of color stepping into their power

University of La Verne students participate in the Cesar Chavez Pilgrimage in Pomona, California, organized by the Latino and Latina Roundtable of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley.

White experiences. To increase civic participation among youth of color, the study recommends that educators include content and curriculum that speak to structural racism in communities and issues youth face in their own communities. Organizations like Mikva Challenge and Generation Citizen empower youth to identify challenges in their communities and to learn about civic strategies to address those challenges. Educators at colleges and universities can tap into the community cultural wealth that students of color bring into the classroom, connecting community experiences to structural racism and policy issues.

Educators must also create spaces for students to lead and personalize civic engagement—everyone cares about something, so how can we use that to reimagine what civic participation means? As an educator, community activist, and higher education professional, I, Marisol Morales, have witnessed the sort of transformation I experienced with my own students. Jacqueline Perez Valencia was one of the first students I met when I began at the University of La Verne as the founding director of the Office of Civic

> **The class and the community experience allowed me to better understand my family's need to migrate and their subsequent encounters with racism and housing discrimination.**

Marisol Morales (left) and Jacqueline Perez Valencia

and Community Engagement. In working with Jacqueline, I watched the process of awareness, agency, and action occurring within her. We remained in touch after she graduated, and it has been fulfilling to see her civic transformation, passion, and love for her community continue to develop.

While our paths to civic engagement had different beginnings—mine, academic, and Jacqueline's, cocurricular—the critical frameworks showing discrepancies between our lived experiences and prominent narratives about American democracy, as well as mentorship and opportunities to practice engagement, were all crucial for our success. Below, we share our own stories of civic transformation and how they are seeds in a garden that cultivates and harvests the fruits of a diverse democracy.

Marisol's story
Community engagement as a tool for civic transformation

My involvement in civic and community engagement began the spring quarter of my sophomore year at DePaul University, while I was taking a course on the US colonialization of Puerto Rico. That class changed my life. It transformed me from a disconnected student on the verge of dropping out to an engaged student and community activist. It sparked my intellectual curiosity, exposed me to people in the community who were challenging systems of oppression, and gave me a better understanding of my own family history. This class also exposed me to the history, culture, politics, and economics of Puerto Rico, something I had never learned in all my years of schooling.

The class assignments included a community service component. I was tasked with volunteering at the Puerto Rican Cultural Center's Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos Puerto Rican High School in Humboldt Park, Chicago. I provided classroom support to a teacher and tutored students in writing. I also learned about alternative education, Paulo Freire, and culturally relevant curriculum. The high school was created to address the high drop-out and push-out rates affecting the Puerto Rican community. It affirmed our Puerto Rican culture and taught students their history as a matter of pride and empowerment. I also learned about how communities that engage in institution building to meet their self-determined needs develop resilience and civic power.

The classroom and community components of the course opened my eyes to my own identity and ignited a deep appreciation of what people coming together could do. It was my first real exposure to the power of democracy. It helped me see the differences between what was happening in the United States and in my community and what I was told to believe about the United States. The class and the community experience allowed me to better understand my family's need to migrate and their subsequent encounters with racism and housing discrimination. The class exposed me to the injustice of colonialism and how it continues to affect Puerto Rico. It also taught me about the discrimination and racism that Puerto Ricans faced when first migrating to Chicago, as well as about Puerto Rican political prisoners and campaigns for human rights.

The class gave me the knowledge and tools to exercise my own agency in shaping the world I lived in—the point of democracy and democratic participation. I joined campus Latino student leadership programs, created cultural programming, and worked with other Latino students to push the university to create a Latino cultural center. Although we did not succeed in our bid for the Latino center, the university did create a multicultural center, which still exists today, and dedicated funding for student organizations to offer cultural programming.

I also became active off campus, taking part in efforts for immigrant rights, affordable housing, the release of Puerto Rican political prisoners, voter registration, and get out the vote campaigns. I gained confidence and grew as an activist as I learned to organize, lead, and speak publicly. Along the way, I had powerful mentors—professors, community leaders, elected officials, nonprofit leaders—who were some of the most hard-core and committed Puerto Rican activists in Chicago.

As I became more involved, I saw that a career in education and community engagement was my calling. It was my *ikigai*, the Japanese concept that speaks to the intersection of your life's purpose and what you are good at.[7] Working for community-based educational programs like the Lolita Lebron Family Learning Center, where I served as director for five years, allowed me to partner with higher education to create transformative service-learning experiences like the one I had in college. When I became a

higher education professional, I sought to take the lessons I'd learned as a community partner to engage authentically with communities to create meaningful experiences for them and for our students. Community as co-educator should be about relationships and real voice and decision-making. Both the community and the educators need a clear understanding of the restraints and possibilities that can make the partnership fail or thrive. Conversation and communication are incredibly important for creating real and sustainable partnerships. I was able to take seeds of social awareness and civic action that were planted in me and share them with students, especially students of color, to realize their own agency.

Jacqueline's story
How do we activate civic engagement?

When I was younger, I never raised my hand in class even when I knew the answer. At the thought of speaking in front of an audience, I would turn tomato red. When I entered college, I knew that I had to lose the imposter syndrome no matter how scared I was in order to get as much out of my higher education experience as I could. I couldn't afford to fail. The pressure as a first-generation student to walk across the stage with my degree in hand was always present. The sacrifices made to get me there were a constant reminder to keep going, because there was no other option for me.

During my first semester at the University of La Verne, I decided to join as many clubs and organizations as possible. I challenged myself to break away from my shyness and try new things. No longer could I live in the shadows and be voiceless. Even though my hands got sweaty and my legs trembled, I approached the leadership of organizations that interested me. I began to attend meetings for the Interfaith Club, Latino Student Forum Club, and College Democrat Club. They were all welcoming and challenged me to be a student activist and ambassador. A semester later, I was serving as director of fundraising on the board of the Latino Student Forum and as secretary of the College Democrats. I was eventually elected president of the Latino Student Forum due to my love for the organization and commitment to its members. I collaborated with the organizations' boards to create and run programming, present at conferences, and research scholarships and internships for students. I helped run

Students from Marisol Morales's course "Farm Workers and Grassroots Activism" at the University of La Verne meet with activist and labor leader Dolores Huerta (in white hat) during a four-day trip to Bakersfield, California.

civic-engagement events like a Cesar Chavez community day. I never took my positions in either club for granted. I was tasked to bring heritage and voter engagement to campus and knew that I had to be creative to fight against student apathy. In the Latino culture, breaking a pinata brings a sense of pride and joy, and so I decided to combine a voter registration drive with a piñata-breaking celebration.

I also took part in organizing a rally of support for the forty-three students from a teacher-training school in Ayotzinapa, Mexico, who were abducted in September 2014 and have yet to be found. In December 2014, the media exposed the fact that, after two months, no progress had been made on finding the students. When this news broke, it was a campus "dead week," which meant that because of finals we couldn't schedule any events. This also prohibited us from using any school chairs, speakers, or other resources and equipment. Although I agree that students should focus on our studies during finals, as campus leaders, members of the Latino Student Forum and

Living 2,292 miles away from home, being surrounded by people that didn't always understand my culture, taking up space in places like the Capitol where you don't see many Latinos, all taught me to be comfortable with being uncomfortable.

First-Generation Club had the social responsibility to not let such a heartbreaking moment pass unnoticed. In less than forty-eight hours, we organized a rally in honor of the missing students and invited the media, students, faculty, and staff. Despite initial push back to host an event during dead week, nothing stopped us from sharing space to express the pain we felt. After multiple conversations with different administrators, we garnered support for the event and made it happen. We learned an important lesson: when advocating for change, we need to understand that we will face opposition but must continue to fight for what we believe in. When people see why what you are doing matters, they will support you.

In fall 2012, I was selected to attend a conference in Washington, DC, as an ambassador of the La Verne Interfaith Club. I was invited to have lunch with Marisol and the president of La Verne, who were also attending the conference. I told them what I was passionate about, and they believed in me so much that they offered me a work-study position at La Verne's new Office of Civic and Community Engagement, where Marisol was the director.

I wasn't really interested in politics or policy before entering college, but Marisol encouraged me to apply to programs and take a chance on

learning something new. During my junior year, I was selected to be one of twenty-two students from around the country to represent my community as an intern at the US Capitol for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI). That semester was the most enriching of my undergraduate career because I learned and experienced firsthand how federal legislation is created and passed. Living 2,292 miles away from home, being surrounded by people that didn't always understand my culture, taking up space in places like the Capitol where you don't see many Latinos, all taught me to be comfortable with being uncomfortable. Unfortunately, interning in DC isn't something that many people of color can afford to do. If it hadn't been for the paid internship through CHCI, I could never have afforded to move cross-country. I learned how privileged I was and took it as a responsibility to be brave and take a seat at the table.

After graduating, I moved back to DC to begin my journey into the politics and policy world. Fast-forward to three years after graduating with my bachelor of science in sociology and business management: I have worked on congressional and mayoral campaigns, taught civics and government to middle school students, worked at an affordable housing unit as an administrative assistant, served as a full-time volunteer immigrant rights organizer, and managed programs that expose more Latinx students to careers in technology.

Recently, I was selected to be part of the Women's Foundation of California's 2019–20 Women's Policy Institute. This will give me the opportunity to work on a state assembly bill with colleagues from throughout California. With the goal of increasing access to noncustodial checking and savings accounts for working minors, this bill sets baseline requirements for financial institutions to offer quality checking and savings accounts paired with financial education programming at a school or youth agency.

Going to college, participating in clubs and organizations, and taking internships and job opportunities all allowed me to hone skills in the policy, political, and nonprofit worlds. These experiences set me up to be a lifelong, civically engaged learner. It isn't easy entering the predominantly white male field of policy-making, but it is crucial to defy the odds and ensure that our policies are reflective of a diverse democracy. Mentors like Marisol, my supervisors at Solidarity Strategies (a Latino-owned and operated political consulting firm in DC), and a family that keeps me grounded in my culture have encouraged me to take risks. Without the guidance and encouragement of other powerful Latina women, I wouldn't be in the rooms I am privileged to stand in, and I take that with great honor and responsibility to represent *mi comunidad*. LE

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STEPHEN KAPLAN

Combating Transition Stress among Student Veterans

Building a community from the ground up

EVERYONE HAS HEARD about the problematic and sometimes tragic post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) that affects many among our military and veteran populations. There is no question that this nation needs to more fully address PTSD. What is less known, but statistically more prevalent, is transition stress.[1] Leaving the military and entering civilian life presents serious challenges. The military is highly structured; time is not one's own; group cohesion is paramount; reliance upon others is a necessity; and a shared mission is sine qua non.

There is no question that this nation needs to more fully address PTSD. What is less known, but statistically more prevalent, is transition stress.

Entering civilian academic life, in particular, presents a radically different environment from military life. Typically, and certainly at Manhattan College (MC), a veteran's entering classmates are eighteen years old, away from home for the first time, and just out of high school. Those entering college directly from high school are in immediate recall of the processes of high school math and acclimated to studying for exams and writing papers—all of which may be a distant memory for a veteran who has been out of high school for four, six, or more years. Add to this list the fact that

a typical full-time college student takes fifteen credits, leaving countless hours of the day and week unstructured and at the discretion of the student, and we can see how different the collegiate life is from the structured, cohesive life of military service. Combining all of these factors, one begins to sense the roots of transition stress.

Relying on friends or peers can mitigate such stress, but the predominant entering class of eighteen-year-olds is not the natural peer group for student veterans. Crudely put, while the typical entering student may be searching for phony documents to go drinking, our student veterans are very often seeking to catch up for missing academic years. Peers who can provide classroom assistance, emotional support, and knowledge about how to navigate college procedures are not easily found for student veterans, who may be reluctant to self-identify as such.

To give more support to student veterans, MC has spent the past five years building a student-veterans program from the ground up. We began a series of interrelated programs under the umbrella Veterans Success Program. One component of that endeavor is called Veterans at Ease, which brings first-semester student veterans together in a required college course and then offers them the opportunity to participate in a multiday retreat program, at no expense to them. The Veterans at Ease program and other aspects of the Veterans Success programs are aimed at fostering a sense of community among our student veterans, building a peer group that supports each other academically, socially, and emotionally. These efforts are aimed at reducing student veterans' transition stress and promoting their academic retention to lead to their graduation and a successful postcollegiate life.

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Nicholas Narvaez

Manhattan College student veterans gather at a barbecue, just one of several social, service, educational, and career-oriented events that allow veterans to connect with each other and the campus community.

During a multiday retreat, Moses Asomaning and other Manhattan College student veterans learn yoga postures, breathing practices, guided meditations, and other techniques to manage stress.

Support and serendipity

Manhattan College, located in the Bronx in New York City, is a Catholic college in the Lasallian tradition with nearly 3,300 undergraduates and 600 graduate students. While MC has a long and rich history of serving veterans, dating from the Civil War and continuing through all the major conflicts of the past century,[2] we did not have a veterans center nor a designated professional whose sole responsibility was overseeing student veterans programs. That has all changed during the past five years. As our programs grew over this period, our support system has concomitantly grown. We now have a Veterans Success Center, a director of the Veterans Success Program, a director of Veterans at Ease, a coordinator of Veterans at Ease, two graduate assistants, and eighteen Veterans Affairs–funded work-study students. This is a story of growth and serendipity.

The *Bhagavad Gita* provides a forum for a discussion of the meaning of duty, or *dharma*, but also introduces three types of yoga to manage the restless, anxious mind of Arjuna, the main character.

Five years ago, a student veteran came to me, a professor of Indian religious thought. After his last deployment, his commanding officer had taught him and a group of his peers some yoga, and he wanted to know more. Days later, I was introduced to the new director of transfer admissions at MC, Troy Cogburn, who then introduced me to a group of incoming student veterans. Twenty minutes into that meeting, we decided to enroll all eight of those students in my introductory religious studies course, a required MC course with a syllabus that included a section on yoga.

Since I was already scheduled to spend spring break at the Sivananda Yoga Retreat in the Bahamas, I asked William Clyde, provost and executive vice president at MC,[3] if I could take these eight students to the Bahamas for four days, explaining that such a trip fit MC's mission and would enhance retention of these students. Despite the fact that I was then merely dreaming this stuff up, Clyde thought it was a great idea, told me to make it a program, and we were off to the races. We have not looked back, continuing to build component upon component of an evolving and enriching veterans program.

Successful integration

The foundation of our Veterans Success Program is a required introductory course. At MC, each undergraduate is required to take three courses in religious studies, including the 100-level course, Nature and Experience of Religion. This course, which introduces students to the diversity of ways to study religion and to the diversity of religious experiences within the world, provides us with the platform to place student veterans together. Each semester, we offer more than twenty sections of this course in a variety of formats, including a writing-intensive option, listed as RELS 151. We now also offer two sections, designated RELS 161, specifically for student veterans. These sections give veterans the opportunity to meet other veterans. Each RELS 161 section shares a common time and classroom with a general education section, RELS 110. Approximately half of the total classroom population of twenty-five students is made up of student veterans and the other half consists of traditional undergraduates. The union of these two sections helps assimilate veterans to the traditional student body. We want a successful integration, not an isolation.

Syllabi for all sections of the Nature and Experience of Religion provide an introduction to at least three different religious traditions, including one non-Western tradition. As such, educators have ample latitude to introduce ideas about the nature of mind and techniques to calm the mind—an essential process in dealing with all sorts of stress. Frequently, I have used

the Hindu classic the *Bhagavad Gita,* a battle-field story of a warrior anxiously facing his enemies, in this case his uncles and cousins. The text not only provides a forum for a discussion of the meaning of duty, or *dharma,* but also introduces three types of yoga to manage the restless, anxious mind of Arjuna, the main character. The parallels between this story and the issues confronting all human beings, and our student veterans in particular, are obvious.

This text allows student veterans to reflect on these ideas, knowing other student veterans have their back, and also allows traditional students and veteran students to share their insights with each other. For example, when discussing the need to breathe properly according to yogic theory, one student veteran somberly indicated that the failure of some of his men to breathe properly during a firefight might have tragically led to their inability to react and to their death. He clearly wished he had learned about yogic breathing techniques before his extensive military career. (It should be noted that as an academic course, we examine the theory behind the different types of yoga with no expectation of practice or belief in these theories.)

Beyond the classroom

The requirements for my sections of the Nature and Experience of Religion include a term paper. Each student must attend a variety of out-of-class events—such as visits to places of worship or practice, museums, and on- or off-campus lectures. Integrating the knowledge acquired at these events with the material studied in class is the foundation for the paper. Given our New York City location, students often incorporate trips to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where they can view centuries of Christian art and compare that to a series of Christian creeds, spanning centuries of theological development, that we discussed in class. Others incorporate visits to the museum's South Asian galleries, which include artifacts representing Hindu deities, and reflect on these images in relation to the ideas about Hinduism about which the students have read.

Since one part of the Veterans at Ease program is a multiday trip to the Sivananda Yoga Retreat run each semester for only those student veterans enrolled in RELS 161, the retreat can serve as the required outside events for their papers.[4] The course subject matter offers a strong platform for the goals of the retreat program.

The latter focuses on how our minds experience stress and offers a variety of techniques to manage stress. On the retreat, student veterans experience yoga postures, or *asanas,* a dozen or more breathing practices, guided meditations, and the ritual life of a yoga retreat center. All of these activities are resources for the students' term papers. The retreat also offers group bonding time, which includes the simple acts of sharing meals together, swimming in the ocean, joking, more joking, and a half-day excursion such as a snorkeling boat trip. (The latter is the fiscal responsibility of the individual student veteran.)

One of MC's partners in this project has been Warriors at Ease, a nonprofit founded in 2008 with a mission of bringing the healing power of yoga and meditation to military, veteran, and traumatized communities. Robin Carnes, cofounder of Warriors at Ease, has been our beloved and admired program architect, who also runs our daily activities, such as guided meditations, a variety of different breathing techniques to calm and to energize, lectures to explain the neuroscience behind the issues of stress, and other barrier-breaking activities. The Sivananda Yoga Retreat has been our other partner. The senior leadership includes Israeli citizens who have served in their country's military, and their concern for and graciousness to our US veterans are palpable. Sivananda provides the daily asana practice and a peaceful, beautiful natural setting for our student veterans, faculty mentor, and Warriors at Ease trainers to bond with each other.

"We now have people we can trust," one participating student veteran wrote about attending the retreat. "I've always been a very anxious and hyper person due to my ADHD. The meditations and breathing techniques have helped me clear my head since we've gotten back."

"I want to say that I am happy, and I do not know the last time I was happy for no reason," wrote another student veteran after going on the retreat.[5]

A cohesive community

The common religion course and the retreat have served as a foundation upon which MC has added other programs to build a cohesive student-veteran community from the ground up. Over the past five years, MC has more than tripled its student-veteran enrollment, growing from approximately 40 student veterans in 2015

to approximately 130 in 2020. It seems that admissions recruiting efforts, word of mouth, and the attractiveness of a vibrant student-veteran community for those who visit the campus have been positive factors in our increasing enrollment. Narrative evaluations—eighty-six to date—of the retreat have been overwhelmingly positive. Each semester, the numerical evaluations to our questions about the value of the retreat experiences consistently rates around 9.2 or higher on a scale of 10.

Five years ago, when this endeavor started, I assumed that the yoga, meditation, and breathing techniques would be the most important takeaways from the retreat. Back then, I assumed that PTSD was the issue. I was ignorant and oblivious to the more ubiquitous transition stress that seeps into the daily life of those going from the military to college life. Now I believe that the bonding that occurs on the retreat, combined with the stress-reduction techniques and the continued classroom interactions, has been instrumental in creating a vibrant student-veteran community that is essential in combating transition stress. The most recent comprehensive tracking study, conducted in fall 2018, shows that 91 percent of "student veterans who attended a retreat" have either continued their education or graduated, and 84 percent of "student veterans who enrolled in RELS 110" (SV 110) have continued their education or graduated.[6] In a 2018 online survey conducted by the MC Student Veterans Organization (SVO), 81 percent of the retreat participants report using the Veterans Success Center, and 91 percent of retreat participants report using one or more stress reduction techniques since returning from the retreat.[7]

This survey also revealed that 28 percent of retreat participants have joined non-veteran organizations and clubs—an indication that student veterans are becoming integrated into the wider college community. During the 2018–19 academic year, our SVO chapter ran or cosponsored more than sixty events

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How can other institutions similarly support student veterans?

1. The MC curricular model, with a required religious studies course, will not be applicable to many colleges. Other institutions need to find a course or list of courses that nearly all student veterans would be required to take. This list could include an English, math, or introductory science course, or a combination of such courses that suit the nature of your student-veteran population and your institution's curricula. Different retreat programs with different locations and different lengths of time can be tailored to the specific curricular goals of the courses. Explore your options; there are many.

2. Others might proclaim that their school could never afford to pay for a retreat program. MC derives 82 percent of its revenue from tuition and has a modest endowment, which does not afford the Veterans Success Program any funding. Therefore, to implement this program, focus on return on investment.

   • Become a Yellow Ribbon Post 9-11 institution. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) currently reimburses Yellow Ribbon schools up to $24,476 of a student veteran's annual tuition. A Yellow Ribbon institution also receives 50 percent of additional tuition costs if that institution matches the additional VA dollars, above the $24,476. Compare this revenue stream with your institution's average discount rate and calculate the difference that can be put aside to help fund these retreats.

   • Consider the extra costs an investment, not charity. These retreats help retention and graduation numbers, thereby ensuring that your student veterans stay enrolled and are successful—all part of ROI.

   • The VA does not reimburse for student-veteran travel, nor for room and board on such travel. But educational costs, such as laboratory fees, instructional fees, and museum fees, can be added to the costs of a college course and, therefore, submitted to the VA. These reimbursable fees can help defer some of the costs of this program.

   • Don't be shy about fundraising to help student veterans successfully manage transition stress. Show people that you are helping veterans, and see if they will help you.

3. People have asked whether we've seen "jealousy or hostility" from our traditional RELS 110 students, who might also want to go on the retreat. To date, we have not been confronted with this situation. Our traditional students are supportive of MC's service to our student veterans.

4. Finally, proudly affirm to your colleagues that your institution will "do well by doing good," and see who supports you in your efforts to build a program that can ease transition stress for student veterans.

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highlighting the vibrancy of a community willing to support each other and speak out. Each semester, our student veterans have organized several academic panels on such topics as "War and Peace," "Women Who Served," and "Challenges of Engineering and Mechanics in the Military." These panels, cosponsored by academic departments, are presented to other students, faculty, and administrators and highlight the service and voices of our student veterans.

Other events are social and include barbecues, holiday parties, and an "open table" at a local coffee house/pub, where a faculty member invites all student veterans to get together once a week to talk, socialize, and share a glass. Other events are career-oriented, such as résumé-writing sessions and sessions with job recruiters seeking veteran applicants. Service events, including Adopt-a-Highway clean-ups, relief fundraising events for a hospitalized vet or a national hurricane crisis, the 22 Push-Up Challenge for suicide awareness, and Toys for Tots gift distribution, have become routine. Our annual participation in the New York City Veterans Day Parade and our on-campus Veterans Day Appreciation Luncheon bring the community together. We also invite a Warriors at Ease representative to campus during midterm and finals weeks for "stress buster" sessions. Each hourlong session includes introductions, a breathing exercise, a guided meditation, and a bit of food for socializing.

All of these events bring together different segments of our student-veteran community, and this togetherness eases transition stress. The success of this program is palpable when student veterans openly declare their appreciation of MC in front of the entire MC board of trustees and when faculty from across academic disciplines continually say how much they enjoy having our student veterans in their classes. Five years ago, twenty-five years ago, faculty did not notice our student veterans and did not comment about their presence in class. They were an anonymous cohort. That is no longer the case. LE

NOTES

1. "One of the primary reasons for past failures in veteran treatments, arguably, is that the dominant focus on PTSD has obfuscated other, often highly pressing transition issues. Research has documented, for example, that many returning veterans may struggle regardless of whether they have PTSD or not. Recent population survey studies have suggested that 44% to 72% of veterans experience high levels of stress during the transition to civilian life." Meghan C. Mobbs and George A. Bonanno, "Beyond War and PTSD: The Crucial Role of Transition Stress in the Lives of Military Veterans," *Clinical Psychology Review* 59 (2018): 137–144, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2017.11.007. On this topic, see also Corri Zoli, Rosalinda Maury, and Daniel Fay, *Missing Perspectives: Servicemembers' Transition from Service to Civilian Life—Data-Driven Research to Enact the Promise of the Post-9/11 GI Bill* (Institute for Veterans & Military Families, Syracuse University, November 2015).

2. MC archives has a photo and the July 19, 1865, discharge papers of Private Ernst Spanger, who served in the Civil War before enrolling at MC.

3. I must express my sincere gratitude to Manhattan College for its support of this program. Troy Cogburn, Bill Clyde, and Tiana Sloan, hired as director of the Veterans Success Program, have been the most dedicated and wonderful people to work with and the success of this program rests on their shoulders.

4. For a variety of reasons, including work and family obligations, not all student veterans choose to attend the retreats. Those who do not attend the retreats write their term papers like the traditional RELS 110 students. In the statistics provided later in the article, the distinctions between these two groups are noted by *SV@R*, for those taking the RELS 161 and attending the retreat, and *SV 110*, for those who take the concomitant RELS 110 section and do not attend the retreat program.

5. These two quotations first appeared in Robin Carnes and Stephen Kaplan, "Fostering Veteran-Student Health through Stress Management: Creating Belonging and Success in a College Setting through the Veterans at Ease Program," *Bulletproofing the Psyche*, edited by Kate Hendricks Thomas and David L. Albright (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2018).

6. Our extensive study regarding retention in college includes students who enrolled in our program and then continued their education either at MC or another college, the latter often due to a change in major or to relocation. Included are only those for whom we could verify continued educational status.

7. Students in the School of Continuing Education were not included in the numbers tabulated here. Students in the other five schools at MC responded to a non-required survey at a 61 percent rate.

RICHARD A. CHERWITZ

Seeing Is Believing

Timely lessons from communication research in the wake of COVID-19

THROUGHOUT ITS LONG AND STORIED HISTORY, the discipline of rhetoric has documented the power of the spoken and written word. Of late, however, we are being reminded about the rhetorical significance of visual images—that pictures, videos, and other visual works also are part of what Aristotle called the "available means of persuasion." Visual imagery also may provide a good test of whether, as some scholars have argued,[1] rhetoric can create reality and truth, a thesis my own research over the past four decades has disputed.[2]

It is essential for more scholars to leverage their knowledge for social good and to educate the public— to expand their classrooms beyond the walls of academic institutions.

There is no better example of the power of visual rhetoric than the current coronavirus pandemic devastating our country and the world. And there may be no better illustration of how persuasive resources have the potential to lessen the negative outcomes of this crisis.

For example, many Americans worry whether our leaders at the state, local, and federal levels will begin to more clearly and accurately address the seriousness and magnitude of the COVID-19 pandemic in their policies and rhetoric.

The question is, Will the country survive this pandemic with as few fatalities as possible? Put differently, What are the available means of persuasion and how might scholarly research help us?

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Worth a thousand words

Perhaps I am naïve but, at the end of the day, the answer depends in part on whether and how the media and photojournalists do their job: to share, no matter how graphic and difficult to view, the horrific reality of what's happening on the ground. From a rhetorical perspective, the more we "see," the better the chances are that those who are cavalier and uninformed will be shocked into a nonpartisan rationality and become accountable for their behavior.

It frequently is said that a picture is worth a thousand words, that seeing is believing.

This oft-repeated adage is more than a cliché. Several years ago, Lester Olson, Cara Finnegan, and Diane Hope, scholars in communication, wrote *Visual Rhetoric: A Reader in Communication and American Culture*.[3] The book presents a critical perspective that links "visuality" to the academic discipline of rhetoric, helping readers unpack the meaning of visual images in American history and understand the persuasive force of imagery. This research is especially timely and informative today.

For instance, photos during the Vietnam War—including hundreds of flag-draped caskets being flown into Delaware's Dover Air Force Base on a daily basis and images of soldiers fighting with little success in the jungles—had an enormous persuasive impact. The images resulted in CBS News anchor Walter Cronkite, regarded as the nation's most trustworthy voice, to declare to an audience of millions on February 27, 1968, that the United States could not win the war. These kinds of images also ultimately helped persuade the country, perhaps more than the words of politicians opposing the war, that it was time for American boys to come home.

Cornell University turned its Bartels Hall gymnasium into a surgical mask–making factory. Cornell employees, community members, and Cayuga Health System staff have been sewing thousands of masks a day for local medical workers and emergency responders.

A sign in front of Tanner Medical Center in Carrollton, Georgia, honors medical staff as they serve patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Similarly, I think—though cannot prove—that photos and videos showing the shocking reality of the consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic ravaging New York and many other states will hold our leaders' feet to the fire and turn the tide against ineffective approaches to the pandemic. Put simply, visual images—including photos and graphics—provide a truthful understanding of what is happening. They can also change individual behavior—for example, the widespread "flatten the curve" graph has helped convince people to stay home and take seriously the safety measures needed to slow the pandemic.

The question is, Will the country survive this pandemic with as few fatalities as possible? Put differently, What are the available means of persuasion and how might scholarly research help us?

To be clear, I am not advancing the partisan argument that visual rhetoric will or should change the popularity of public figures. That is a political irrelevancy. However, visual rhetoric might just be what produces policies and behaviors to help us emerge from the pandemic with a lower death toll than originally expected.

It is reasonable to assume that some citizens, elected officials, and political pundits will continue to back faulty and inaccurate policies until they personally see and feel the consequences of the current crisis. Only then will people fully grasp the actual reality of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Moreover, the politics surrounding the pandemic are a good test of the argument advanced by scholars in many disciplines that rhetoric can literally create not just perceptions of reality but reality per se. The COVID-19 pandemic offers an example of how at some point, we will learn the hard way that politicians, no matter how rhetorically proficient, cannot conceal or even construct the truth on vitally important issues—that visual rhetoric intrudes, can overwhelm, and can be more persuasive than words. As my own research on communication and epistemology contends, rhetoric is essential to discovering the truth—but it cannot literally create truth.[4]

Scholars in action

Regardless of the outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic, I hope this crisis will provoke more academics to follow the lead of Lester Olson, Cara Finnegan, and Diane Hope by studying the significance of visual rhetoric. Other academic disciplines—including history, political science, and psychology, to name just a few—remain poised and uniquely positioned to help explain what is transpiring in the current political environment. Historians, for example, can

provide perspective, showing us how crises and problems were successfully resolved in the past. Similarly, political scientists can delineate the available institutional mechanisms and resources that might assist government officials in addressing a national crisis. And psychologists can highlight the frailties and tendencies inherent in the human condition that often compromise our response to adverse conditions—responses that if acknowledged might be placed in check.

Finally, as I argued in a previous essay in *Liberal Education*, it is essential for more scholars to leverage their knowledge for social good and to educate the public—to expand their classrooms beyond the walls of academic institutions.[5] For example, in the past few years, the National Communication Association (NCA) has spotlighted how the work of communication faculty informs our understanding of a variety of current political and personal issues confronting the public. NCA's "Communication Currents" draws on published articles and ongoing research to help the public and press understand the significance and relevance of scholarship to issues in the world.[6] I continue to believe that, if we use our academic research to engage the public, it will be possible to shape and improve public policies. Given the seriousness and complexity of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as other problems in the twenty-first century, engaged scholarship is essential. [LE]

NOTES

1. Barry Brummett, "Some Implications of 'Process' or Intersubjectivity: Postmodern Rhetoric," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 9, no. 1 (Winter 1976): 21–51.

2. Richard A. Cherwitz and James W. Hikins, "Rhetorical Perspectivism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 69, no. 3 (1983): 249–66.

3. Lester C. Olson, Cara A. Finnegan, and Diane S. Hope, eds., *Visual Rhetoric: A Reader in Communication and American Culture* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2008).

4. Richard A. Cherwitz and James W. Hikins, *Communication and Knowledge: An Investigation in Rhetorical Epistemology* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1986).

5. Richard A. Cherwitz, "Why Become a Public Intellectual: Reflections of a Communication Scholar," *Liberal Education* 105, no. 1 (Winter 2019): 38.

6. "Communication Currents," National Communication Association, accessed May 11, 2020, https://www.natcom.org/communication-currents.

NANCY CANTOR

Transforming the Academy

The urgency of recommitting higher education to the public good

Transforming the academy is a hard problem, requiring both cumulative work and all hands on deck.

IN HIS 1990 BOOK *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*, Ernest L. Boyer set a stage of precedents for what we now see as the pressing challenges for higher education, particularly as we urgently and collectively strive as a community of scholars to (re)commit higher education to the public good. Consider the following points from that groundbreaking treatise:

1. "A new vision of scholarship is required, one dedicated not only to the renewal of the academy but, ultimately, to the renewal of society itself."
2. "Now is the time to build bridges across the disciplines, and connect the campus to the larger world. Society itself has a great stake in how scholarship is defined."
3. "The conclusion is clear. We need scholars who not only skillfully explore the frontiers of knowledge, but also integrate ideas, connect thought to action, and inspire students."
4. "One last point. This report has focused largely on faculty members as individuals. But professors, to be fully effective, cannot work in isolation. It is toward a shared

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vision of intellectual and social possibilities—a community of scholars—that the four dimensions of academic endeavor should lead."[1]

Transforming the academy, as Boyer asks us to do, is a hard problem, requiring both cumulative work and all hands on deck. This approach is the opposite of what we often lionize as "disruptive innovation," which involves a search for quick outcomes-focused approaches to reversing what Charles Tilly called the "durable inequalities" of our world.[2] But the elite, detached, monastic model of the university developed over generations, and we will not counter it with a model of engaged, inclusive, anchor institutions overnight. In the same vein, the architecture of segregation and durable inequalities are just that—architected to be durable—and so the promise of the university as an engine of social mobility and social justice (that is, for equitable growth in communities) will only be fulfilled brick by brick, scholar by scholar, generation by generation.

Universities as public goods

Boyer—who served as chancellor of the State University of New York, as US commissioner of education, and as president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching—called for "a new American college that is connected and committed to improving, in a very intentional way, the human condition."[3] Taking off from this appeal, I'd like to consider how close institutions of higher education can

Ashaki Rouff, an earth and environmental sciences faculty member at Rutgers University–Newark, helps remediate soil pollution in a community garden.

get to being public goods, if not in a purely technical sense, at least in the spirit of an aspirational metaphor. In economics, a public good is non-rivalrous and non-excludable, meaning one person's consumption of the good does not prevent or make it impossible for another person to consume it. A public good is also non-rejectable—once it is supplied, people cannot refuse it.[4] Therefore, although technically "higher education is not a pure public good," as Sandy Baum and Mike McPherson have written, clear positive externalities benefit the public beyond those for whom it is also a private good.[5]

Today, the public needs us to be much closer to a public than a private, purely market-driven good. This is true both in terms of access for more of the talented public (to the university) and in terms of contributions (beyond the university) by our community of scholars—producing positive externalities, benefitting the collective good beyond just those who pay for it.

By contrast, recent national public opinion polls suggest that the current public view of higher education is that it both excludes too many (making it exclusive) and hoards opportunity only for those connected to it (making it rivalrous). In turn, therefore, if we can move closer to the public-good end of the continuum by opening more, working in public more, and benefiting the public more, we may actually help defuse some of the legitimacy crisis reflected in those polls. So how do we transform our institutions, our mores, our practices, our disciplines, our student bodies, our professoriate to be in line with this model?

Four aspects of transformation

Boyer argued that universities are actually often driven by external concerns, just the wrong ones. One need only think of the ranking wars, the narrowly defined dimensions of merit for students and for faculty (both as defined by standardized tests and by disciplinary norms) to see how much we fall prey to what social psychologists call an "exclusion mindset" of competition, distancing us further and further from the full public. Moreover, this seems exactly what needs changing if we are to realize in any way the idea of universities as institutions that provide some good to everyone.

We need institutional transformation (from the outside in), as Boyer argued, to transcend boundaries within the academy and between the academy and the world, with an eye toward the collective work to advance *equity* and *impact* and cement the identity of our institutions— each in their own way—as indispensable partners in improving the human condition.

I suggest that there are four inextricably intertwined aspects to the necessary transformation, all aimed at the public good. First, we need to diversify the student body and faculty (building a critical mass of representation). Second, we need to recognize and reward publicly engaged scholarship (giving, as Boyer said, "scholarship a richer, more vital meaning"). Third, we need to cultivate genuinely reciprocal, sustained relationships between our universities and our communities (as stable, committed anchors of equitable growth and opportunity). Fourth, we need to learn to overcome our competitive instincts and collaborate across an ecosystem of institutions, organizations, and sectors (all committed to a movement of change).

Resetting our institutional tables

Institutional transformation begins with who is sitting at the various tables of our institutions, which simply must include a genuine representation of the public. At both the student and faculty levels, the trend has been to look for "exceptional children" rather than recognize the massive demographic shifts and the accompanying imperative to genuinely reset the homogeneous tables we typically set.[6] As the late Katherine Phillips compellingly urged, it is time to ask why we so passively accept homogeneity as the default norm for our institutions, when we endlessly ask for justifications of the value of diversity.[7]

The need to reset the full table of representation at the student level is urgent and especially poignant as higher education is such a critical lever for social mobility.[8] Our institutions, even our major public institutions, simply are not meeting the mandate.[9] Not surprisingly, public distrust is growing, as too many low-income students and students from communities of color—all of whom face systemic obstacles in the way of cultivating their many talents— are being repeatedly sidelined by business as usual. We need to get serious, quickly, about resetting the student table in higher education as the composition of America dramatically changes.

The need to substantially reset the table at the faculty level is equally urgent. Even in the

> **Institutional transformation begins with who is sitting at the various tables of our institutions, which simply must include a genuine representation of the public.**

face of genuine proclamations of commitment to diversity, and even as, for example, the STEM fields produce a reasonably diverse potential talent pool for the professoriate in many disciplines,[10] we have seen painfully slow shifts in the composition of the professoriate. Small numbers of diverse faculty (along many dimensions, but certainly along gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, ability, and nationality) leave underrepresented students without sufficient role models and mentors to encourage belongingness, and, as critically, underrepresentation leaves diverse faculty endlessly subject to the scrutiny of "solo status" and "stereotype threat" in their departments and disciplines.[11]

Inclusion of a new, more public-facing diverse demographic in the up-and-coming professoriate adds enormous value for publicly engaged scholarship. As George Sanchez argued in his piece on civic engagement and the retreat from inclusiveness, "The very 'public' in the United States we will seek to engage in community partnerships will shift dramatically, and will look less and less like the faculty in our colleges and universities over the next 25 years."[12] If we do not assertively recruit and reward this active and engaged talent pool, and do it soon, as immigration and birthrate trends make obsolete our normative professoriate, we will fall short as authentic partners in evidence-informed social change.[13]

Recognizing publicly engaged scholarship
As we genuinely reset the table of our campuses to represent a much broader and more diverse public, we should expect and welcome an expansion of the ideas, interests, questions, and innovations that become the focus of scholarship and pedagogy. As Boyer argued, "It is our central premise, therefore, that other forms of scholarship—teaching, integration, and application—must be fully acknowledged and placed on a more equal footing with discovery."[14] This is particularly true as more questions of public interest, seen through more varied lenses, are brought to the table for consideration, and a diverse "community of experts," including frontline community partners, is engaged in the cocreation of knowledge. We are also, then, likely to expand our default definitions of what constitutes "discovery."

The expansion of what counts as knowledge and productive scholarship also requires a genuine mindset shift, as we need to pay as much attention to questions of importance that emanate from the "outside in" as to those seen as internally critical by our disciplines. We need to shift from the tendency to privilege what others in the field have found as interesting to what the public wants to know. As a social psychologist, I have seen my field somewhat obsessed of late with the quick answers about social behavior that an MRI produces, and I say this with no animus in mind. By contrast, I look to the great tradition of Kurt Lewin and action research that emanated in part from the burning need of a shocked public to understand the intricate and hard-to-measure dynamics of group behavior in the wake of the Holocaust and the fascist domination of continental Europe.[15] This tradition involves anything but quick, hard-and-fast answers, and, as Lewin noted, the best way to understand something is to try, difficult and time-consuming as it may be, to change it. Accordingly, we would all do well today in this divisive national and global moment to pause and think deeply about what the public needs us urgently and patiently to study and to teach the next generation.

We also need to re-envision how we produce scholarship, who produces it, and where it lives on. While the lone genius has never been the model of how we actually produce scholarship, especially in fields like STEM, the reward system in the academy still acts as if that myth is reality. We cling to it in promotion and tenure evaluations, looking for instances when the scholar "really" was the lead contributor. Moreover, there is a parallel to the hegemony of "inside-out" evaluations of quality and interest (discipline to the world versus world to disciplines) in who we consider an important scholarly partner in cocreation. This is a debate, for example, frequently seen as scholars evaluate, reward, and support community-engaged science, which increases the inclusive representation of scientists and improves the science produced.[16] Analyses of climate change effects provide a trenchant example of the value of broadening our understanding of who, how and where knowledge/discovery occurs, as vividly demonstrated in recent work at the National Science Foundation in which indigenous populations play a key role in understanding the "new Arctic."[17]

Similarly, where the scholarly product appears also figures in the valuation of its worth, as seen in the comparison between peer-reviewed articles in top journals and K–12 curricular

modules or policy reports for community use. We see the value of a wide range of scholarly products all the time, even if promotion and tenure committees may still lag behind in fully embracing it.[18] Placing, as Boyer desired, other forms of scholarship on an equal footing by necessity must mean that we expand our appreciation of what scholarship looks like and where we see it in action.

Anchor institutions as community collaborators

Fully realizing the anchor institution model requires a thorough change in attitude, shifting from the university (and those in it) as the leader, expert, and progenitor of solutions to being a coequal partner with our community. It requires responding to suggestions from all sectors—cultural, business, government, community—about critical issues to work on, and being willing to see the challenges through a broad racial and economic equity lens of systemic discrimination.

Highlighting the voices and legacies of the citizens of Newark is a large part of what we need to do as cocreators of change in a seamless two-way street between Rutgers–Newark and the City of Newark.

Moreover, to reckon with history, we need to be willing to step forward as *place-based institutions* and understand the specifics of the (racialized) inequality map of our communities. For history plays out differently in each place, as we see if we compare the narratives today between urban and rural communities, even as shared economic insecurities should unite, not divide, the largely white rural and black and brown urban centers. Not to forget, as we too often do, the particulars of the narratives of our many indigenous Native American communities profoundly affected by the racist history of our country.

Much as colleges and universities have traditionally adopted a distanced relationship with their communities, veering more to the monastery than the marketplace, we have been especially allergic to tackling the thorny questions of local racial equity (broadly defined) at home.[19] This is true even as many of our disciplines rightly support and reward such efforts abroad, as seen in the recent, uplifting award of the Nobel Prize in economics to three economists who study solutions to inequality in global contexts.[20]

Creating ecosystems for impact

As potentially trusted agents of opportunity and equitable growth, universities as anchor institutions also best serve the public good when we eschew the goal of competitive, individualistic success (embedded in the rankings war, for example) and embrace a collaborative model of "stackable institutions" to maximize impact. As Boyer noted, "The team approach, which seems so necessary for individuals, applies to institutions, too." He also called for "diversity with dignity in American higher education—a national network of higher learning institutions in which each college and university takes pride in its own distinctive mission and seeks to complement rather than imitate others."

This fourth dimension of institutional transformation into actors within an ecosystem inevitably means even more democratization of higher education. This calls for working together across the continuum of educational impact (pre-K–20) and across types of institutions (school districts, community colleges, universities), as well as across sectors (private-public, educational-business-nonprofit), and across locations (schools, prisons, neighborhood centers, libraries) to enlarge the circle of opportunity. Additionally, as we broaden this reach, we redefine place-based work as expansive not only in its networks of actors and institutions but also in the resonance of its implications, from local to national to global. We are seeing this resonance, for example, in the engagement of global partners in the Anchor Institutions Task Force and the Talloires Network of community-engaged institutions.[21]

An equitable growth identity

The work that we have been doing at Rutgers University–Newark is an attempt to tie all four aspects of transformation together via an institutional identity as an anchor institution committed to creating social mobility and public impact as two sides of a single coin—equitable growth. When we are at our best, we hope this equitable growth identity permeates top-down and sideways in the institution and in the community. It informs the diversity of the backgrounds of the academic leadership we hire and the publicly engaged faculty members whom departments recruit. It underlies the commitments we make to hiring local citizens and procuring our goods from local women-, minority-, and veteran-owned businesses. It energizes the research centers

Rutgers students conduct ecology research in the New Jersey Meadowlands.

we support, including those providing data and new models to city hall and those using evidence-based research to advocate statewide for social justice. For example, this work includes support of undocumented populations, of those entangled in the criminal justice system, of the need for diverse and inclusive public schools.[22] Our faculty and staff work tirelessly with partners from all corners of the city, including the Newark City of Learning Collaborative, the city's Equitable Growth Advisory Commission, the Newark 2020 Hire-Buy-Live Local Collective, the Newark Public Safety Collaborative, and Express Newark, a university-community arts collaboratory, located in a 50,000-square-foot space for cocreation in downtown Newark.[23]

Highlighting the voices and legacies of the citizens of Newark is a large part of what we need to do as cocreators of change in a seamless two-way street between Rutgers–Newark and the City of Newark. This is so clear when our faculty, students, and staff team up with the Newark Public Library and the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice in our Campus Center for Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (supported by the Association of American Colleges and Universities)[24] to hold intergenerational dialogue circles and community artists' events in the *Healing Sounds of Newark* program

all around the city.[25] It is what happens when the archivists of our world-renowned Institute of Jazz Studies and our creative writing faculty and graduate students team up with the jazz artists and arts presenters of Newark's New Jersey Performing Arts Center and the educators of Newark Public Schools.[26]

It is often all about raising the voices already there, which brings me to the kinds of major commitments that travel the other direction of the two-way street—from the community into the university. Our team has been very deliberate in trying to set and reset our institutional table to bring the broad public inside, as well as taking our show "outside" (even as we eschew those geographical boundaries). For example, when we made a significant institutional commitment to create a "revolutionary" Honors Living-Learning Community (HLLC), it was dedicated to *local citizenship in a global world* and accordingly recruits a highly diverse set of students on the basis of their social justice leadership potential to engage and change the equity map locally, nationally, and globally.[27]

These future leaders include local citizens (61 percent are Newark residents) from a city with an ethnic-racial makeup tied to generations of American migration and immigration from all over the world. They include those journeying

Rutgers University–Newark Chancellor Nancy Cantor at AAC&U's 2020 annual meeting

on a pathway at odds with higher education's usual strangleholds of intergenerational wealth and privilege, as 76 percent of the HLLC students are eligible for Pell Grants, 46 percent are first generation, and 30 percent transferred from community colleges. These students bring the authentic knowledge of lived experience, including but not limited to having been in prison, living with the fears of an undocumented family, representing faith communities often shunned as outsiders, aging out of foster care, and raising families of their own.

It is important to note that these students are not rare birds fitting the "exceptional child" model. Instead, we see such local talent with global roots and vision for an equitable future all over our region. Our Rutgers University–Newark Talent and Opportunity Program (RU-N to the TOP) financial aid program (providing last-in full tuition and fees scholarships to any Newark resident or New Jersey community college associate's degree transfer student with an adjusted family income of $60,000 or less) has helped Rutgers–Newark increase the representation of students from Newark to 14.5 percent of undergraduates (a hundred percent increase since 2013). Our multifaceted institutional programs for financial aid and legal and social support of our undocumented students are in line with New Jersey's landscape as the third-most immigrant-dense state in the nation. We have substantially grown the support and opportunities for New Jersey DREAMers with the on-the-ground advocacy and engagement of students, faculty in our legal clinics, student affairs staff, and partners in the immigrant rights advocacy community.[28]

Similarly, our New Jersey Scholarship and Transformative Education in Prisons (NJ-STEP) program, coordinating multiple "stackable institutions" across the state to teach in six New Jersey prison facilities, is also bringing generations of formerly incarcerated students to gain bachelor degrees at Rutgers. Working together with nonprofit groups like the New

Jersey Institute for Social Justice and the Vera Institute of Justice, our publicly engaged faculty and staff in NJ-STEP advocate for voting rights, train re-entry entrepreneurs, and push the state and our nation to step up to the plate and provide equitable growth pathways, especially for those from communities of color disproportionately experiencing the criminal justice system.

Blurring the line between private gain and public good

As we create this ecosystem of educational opportunity and anchor institution engagement, the line between private gain (for some) and public good (for all) blurs, as does the false distinction between education for a career and education for citizenship, between scholarship and service, between research and pedagogy, and between local and global. Indeed, Boyer argued that higher education had a responsibility to enable students to live responsibly: "This point, properly understood, warns against making too great a distinction between careerism and the liberal arts, between self-benefit and service."[29]

Ultimately, if we succeed in intertwining these four aspects of a model of a university aimed toward maximizing the public good, then we will come closer to what Boyer envisioned in *Scholarship Reconsidered*. As he said, "A new vision of scholarship is required, one dedicated not only to the renewal of the academy but, ultimately, to the renewal of society itself." It also means that the aim of equitable growth in communities is to spread the map of opportunity as widely as possible, redefining quality and merit as inclusive (not exclusive) and recognizing the dynamics of progressive growth that takes a windy road toward progress in the face of entrenched institutional practices and historically defined community challenges. This is hard but worthwhile work, and I deeply believe that we owe it to Boyer and our current and future students to try to make it happen. LE

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STEPHANIE KRUSEMARK AND GEORGE WHITE

Relationships Drive Success
How peer mentoring empowers students

THIS YEAR, the global COVID-19 pandemic changed every area of the higher education experience, from enrollment to commencement. One of the greatest threats has been to relationships and community. Without classes, dorms, dining halls, clubs, and study groups, college students lack the points of social connection integral to student satisfaction and success. Peer mentorship is a solution: a location-agnostic support network in which every student is empowered to form the relationships they need to build resilience, self-efficacy, and a sense of belonging in a chaotic time.

What peer mentorship is and is not
Within higher education, mentoring is often used interchangeably with other strategies, such as advising, counseling, and coaching, though the goals of these strategies are all distinct from the goal of peer mentorship.[1] Faculty advising is a directorial, hierarchical relationship in which students often do not feel comfortable admitting challenges. Some students seek mentoring through LinkedIn or alumni networking platforms, but these tools offer little opportunity to establish structured personal relationships over time.

A peer mentor/mentee relationship provides students with someone who offers empathy, trust, some core knowledge and understanding of the institution, and a shared point of view often lacking in traditional advising.

Students may consider their academic tutor a mentor, but the goal of that relationship is solidly rooted in academic coursework, often with no other areas of a student's life addressed. A peer mentor/mentee relationship provides students with someone who offers empathy, trust, some core knowledge and understanding of the institution, and a shared point of view often lacking in traditional advising. The 2018

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Strada Gallup Alumni Survey data shows that college graduates are two times more likely to be engaged at work if they had a mentor in college who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams.[2] Another study found that "mentorship can have a positive impact upon the learning experience by improving assessment performance, reducing stress and anxiety, enhancing participation and engagement in the academic community and [adding] value to student outcomes."[3] Based on this and other research, peer mentorship should not be considered an optional service but a required pillar of an institution's student success strategy.[4]

Mentor Collective (MC) partners with universities to match students with relevant trained peers, professionals, or alumni mentors through MC's customized online platform and program team. Since its founding in 2014, MC has conducted extensive research on more than forty thousand peer mentoring relationships to isolate the value of peer mentoring. While typically underfunded relative to other student support structures, peer mentoring often has an outsize impact on student success, particularly when institutions leverage technology and design a program to fit the size and needs of their specific student population.

In February 2020, MC conducted a meta-analysis across fifteen of its programs from 2016 to 2019, investigating the impact of mentorship on retention. The institutions with the programs varied in size and type, from small, private liberal arts colleges to large, public state schools, with a total sample size of 9,203. In analyzing the effect of mentorship on mentored and unmentored populations, MC found that on average retention increased 3.84 percent.

Peer mentorship at Lehigh University
In the fall of 2017, Lehigh University's Center for Student Access and Success conducted a series of focus groups with first-generation, lower-income, and other underrepresented students. The goals of the focus groups were to

determine how to reduce the loss of prospective students during the summer between the end of high school and beginning of the fall semester and how to increase a sense of belonging once students were enrolled. A big takeaway was the need for large-scale peer mentorship. While small pockets of informal mentorship existed throughout campus, Lehigh's leadership decided that a formalized peer mentorship program, with clear goals, tracking, and assessment, could address feedback that transitioning to campus life was difficult because students felt different and disconnected.

"We wanted the incoming students to have a deep relationship with someone older who had experience and training, someone who could help guide them through those early weeks and that whole first year," says Donald Outing, vice president for equity and community at Lehigh University.

Lehigh partnered with MC to develop a mentorship program for all 1,500 incoming first-year students. Email and text-message campaigns engaged students and communicated the benefits of having a mentor. Every volunteer mentor attended a live online training focused on setting expectations and understanding concepts like self-efficacy and active listening. After the matching process was complete, the online platform facilitated easy communication between students and mentors. The platform also provides access to more than forty discussion guides, as well as other relevant research-based content. Mentors can also use the platform to alert administrators to larger challenges a student may be facing, such as academic or financial troubles, and the help desk responds within twenty-four hours.

Now, in its second year, the peer mentorship program at Lehigh boasts more than 1,110 peer mentor/student matches in the undergraduate program, a 70 percent opt-in rate. These pairs have logged more than five thousand conversations through the online platform.

"We installed the program as a key tool in bringing, and connecting, all students to the

Lehigh University's mentorship program for incoming first-year students has had a 70 percent opt-in rate.

Lehigh campus," Outing says. "We were particularly excited to see the tremendous quality of engagement between mentees and their peer mentors."

"It's been really comforting to know I have someone to turn to for help and guidance for both small and big things," says one Lehigh student.

Another student says that his mentor has been a helpful guide down the challenging path of starting college. "Having someone you can relate to," he says, "allows for less stress and lets me plan out my steps more carefully." LE

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KEVIN P. REILLY

Get a Job and Get a Life—

Why reading the "jocoserious" Joyce is useful fun

THE LAST TIME I TAUGHT JAMES JOYCE was in 2010, when the questioning of the "usefulness" of the humanities was already underway. A bit before then, the University of Wisconsin System and the University of Wisconsin–Madison both had developed purposeful statements on what baccalaureate-degree earners ought to know and be able to do. These essential learning outcomes included ethical reasoning, international knowledge and competence, critical and creative thinking, and other valuable traits and abilities the humanities can help foster.

When I asked the thirty-five or so bright Madison undergraduates in the course if they had any acquaintance with these learning goals, my heart sank amid the solid silence. So instead of talking in that class session about why *Finnegans Wake* does not sport the possessive apostrophe, we discussed what studying James Joyce had to do with developing qualities and capacities college graduates would find useful in the world beyond the campus.

We scrutinized the moral paralysis in *Dubliners* to get at ethical reasoning, also discussing the determination of the anti-hero Stephen Dedalus in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* to "forge . . . the uncreated conscience of my race." We talked about how ethical living for the budding artist Joyce required him to fly by what he saw as the "nets" of conventional Irish nationality, language, and religion. What more dazzling way to cultivate the international knowledge and competence outcome than to struggle with the many languages in *Finnegans Wake*—which the border-hopping Joyce said was "basically English" but is filled with multilingual puns? For the critical and creative thinking learning goal, what about analyzing how the structure of *Ulysses* transposes the challenges and lessons of Homer's *Odyssey* to a modern urban setting? Students reading *Ulysses* for the first time are often amazed at how Joyce's working the ancient Greek epic poem into his radically new novel exploded future expectations of this modern genre.

You get it. You can acquire knowledge, understanding, and habits of mind by studying Joyce that are invaluable in a variety of ways and that many employers would like to see in their employees. What multinational organization, for instance, does not want professionals who, blending accepted wisdom with forward thinking, can critically assess business problems and find creative solutions—ones that do not compromise the organization's ethical standing in a complex, diverse global economy? And what are some of the grander, more satisfying and stimulating reasons one might want to take on this difficult author? Are the big rewards commensurate with the degree of difficulty? I say they are.

The big rewards are profoundly *vivifying.* At the end of *Portrait,* Stephen Dedalus proclaims: "Welcome, O life!" Molly Bloom, the larger-than-life female lead of *Ulysses,* closes the novel with her lusty embrace of life and sex and love: "and yes I said yes I will Yes." When some criticized Joyce for writing dirty books, he retorted: "If *Ulysses* is not fit to read, life is not fit to live." With all the focus in higher education these days on job preparation, we can forget that our job as educators is not only to help ensure the *livelihood* of our students but also to enhance their *liveliness* in all its human manifestations. We can forget that these two purposes are mutually reinforcing in helping students find their way in the world.

So, in this context, what makes Joyce so worth reading? Why do I like him so much? I'll mention three reasons, each triggered by a snippet of his own language.

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MY VIEW

We can forget that our job as educators is not only to help ensure the *livelihood* of our students but also to enhance their *liveliness* in all its human manifestations.

Ryan Bloom

with James Joyce
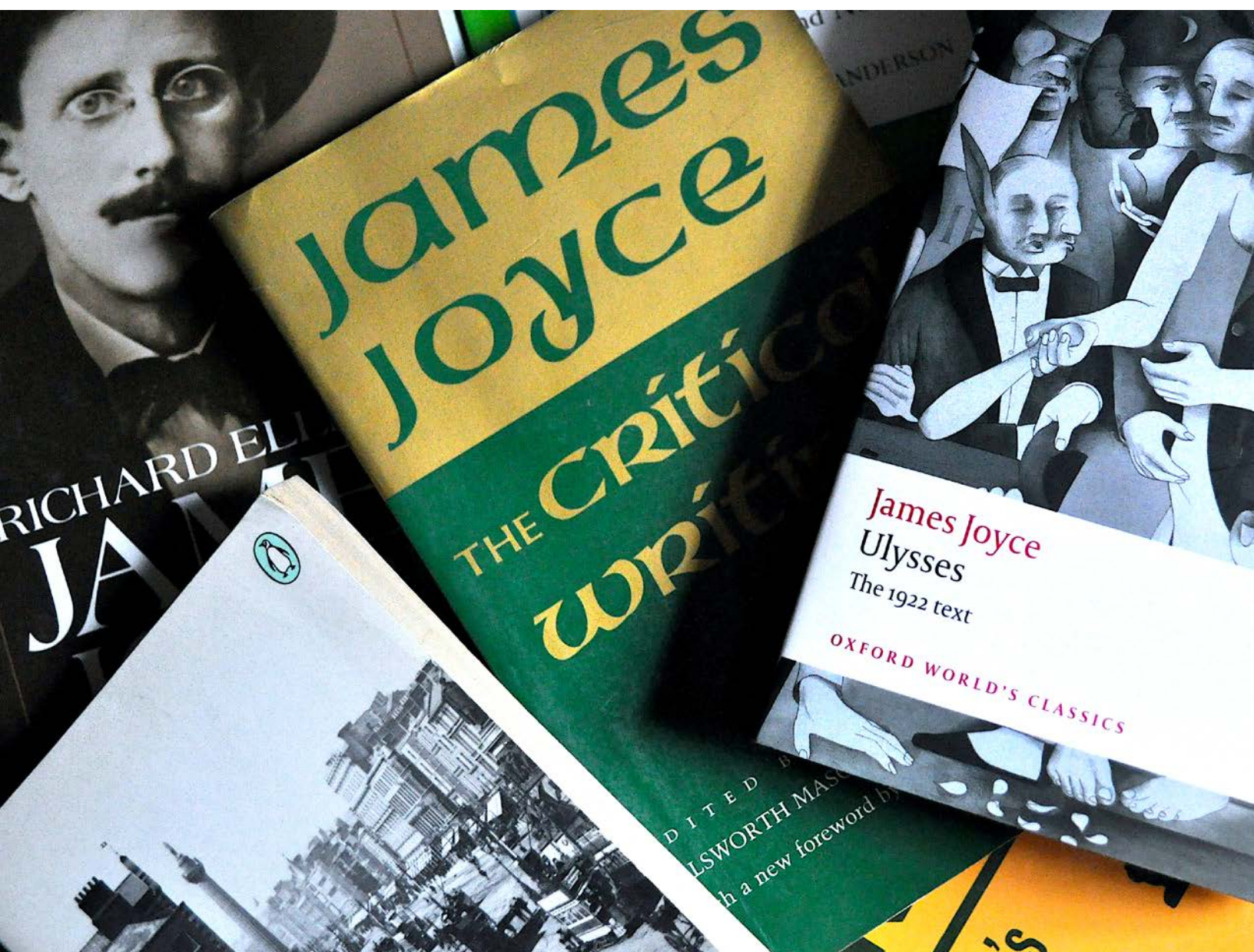
1. Joyce encourages us to not take ourselves or our place in the universe too seriously and to see the individual's connections to the regeneration of the life around us.

> a way a lone a last a loved a long the
>
> riverrun, past Eve and Adam's, from swerve of shore to bend of bay, brings us by a commodius vicus of recirculation back to Howth Castle and Environs.

The first quotation is the ending of *Finnegans Wake*, the final words on its last page. The longer, second quotation comprises the first words on the book's opening page. To read *Finnegans Wake*, we have to start at the end and end at the start. As the First Woman of the *Wake*, Anna Livia Plurabelle, is passing away alone, while her watery parallel, Dublin's River Liffey, is passing out into Dublin Bay to begin the recirculation cycle of water. The individual may die, but life and renewal in other individuals and in the natural world go on (indeed, Anna Livia is thinking about her children right to the end).

Reading Joyce now can help young Americans form their own considered positions on how their nation should relate to the variety of its residents and to other peoples around the globe.

The form of *Finnegans Wake* is circular. Things come round again. New Finnegans wake. *That's* why the title has no apostrophe. It's about the big-picture comedy of new beginnings, not the tragedy of the unbending, unconnected, singular straight line.

It's a roundly un-self-centered book. It suggests we need to look beyond ourselves to make sense of the world. In a time when technology enables our students to create increasingly customized bubbles of their own interests, their own friends, their own beliefs—maybe even their own facts—it insists on the power of constantly renewing wider horizons.

The optimal way to read the dense language of the *Wake* is out loud as part of a group. Bringing multiple eyes, voices, and ears to make sense of its sounds—ideally with people with knowledge of different languages—opens its wonders and sparks roiling discussions.

2. Joyce has his main character in Ulysses, Leopold Bloom, stare down the threat of narrow, ethnic- and religion-based nationalism, while asserting his pride in identifying with the country to which his family immigrated.

> "Force, hatred, history, all that. That's not life for men and women, insult and hatred. And everybody knows that it's the very opposite of that that is really life.
>
> What? says Alf.
>
> Love, says Bloom. I mean the opposite of hatred. . . .
>
> By Jesus, I'll crucify him so I will."
> (said by the nationalist Irish "Citizen")

For the slippery Joyce, this passage is a disarmingly straightforward, explicit declaration by Bloom of his attitude toward humankind. Bloom makes it a sharp poke in the eye of the anonymous "Citizen," a modern version of the one-eyed Cyclops, who in Homer's *Odyssey* eats two of Odysseus's sailors and threatens to consume the rest. Lacking the perspective that two eyes provide, the Cyclops-like Citizen is a brute of a man who sees in his limited, insular way the world divided into us and them. Bloom, a Jewish Irishman whose father was a Hungarian immigrant, is definitely "seen" as one of "them" in Celtic Catholic Ireland. The irony of the strongly Catholic Citizen wanting to crucify his Jewish countryman is not lost on Bloom. Nevertheless, when the Citizen tauntingly asks him what nation is his, Bloom retorts emphatically: "Ireland. . . . I was born here. Ireland."

Joyce has lots of fun with references to eyes throughout this Cyclops chapter: "He rubs his hand in his eye" and "with his cod's eye on the dog" and "the sight nearly left my eyes." Alluding to Odysseus's final blinding of the Cyclops by driving a pointed stick into his eye, Joyce has Bloom say to the Citizen: "You don't grasp my point."

Joyce came from an Irish nationalist family who were avid supporters of the nineteenth-century Irish Parliamentary Party leader Charles Stewart Parnell. One of the most famous pieces of Joyce's writing, the Christmas dinner scene in *Portrait*, is a fierce debate over the meaning of Irish patriotism. Though a voluntary exile on the Continent, Joyce looked back to Ireland throughout his life, even as his physical vision failed. As Seamus Heaney's poem "Gravities" has it:

> Blinding in Paris, for his party-piece
> Joyce named the shops along O'Connell Street

But he warns, with eye jokes that mock the one-I/one-us-alone mindset, that blind patriotism of the Citizen's variety is ignorant and self-defeating.

At this very moment our students find themselves in the middle of a virulent shouting match about what it means to be an American. Does a true American patriot welcome or turn away immigrants? Should America play a larger or smaller part on the world stage? What roles, if any, should race, ethnicity, and religion have in determining just how genuinely American one is or can become? The thoroughgoing internationalist and committed Irish patriot Joyce, who started his life in an Ireland that had been in revolt against English colonization off and on for centuries and who lived most of his life as an emigrant in a Europe riven by two world wars, had sophisticated views on these kinds of questions. Reading Joyce now can help young Americans form their own considered positions on how their nation should relate to the variety of its residents and to other peoples around the globe.

3. Joyce relishes the old, reaches for the new, and charms with his language and learning.

Wring out the clothes! Wring in the dew!

These words are from a scene in *Finnegans Wake* in which two Irish washerwomen perch on either side of the River Liffey, gossiping as they wash out their employers' clothes and dirty sheets. They are airing their dirty linen in public, so to speak. Always the ardent and supple punster, Joyce undoubtedly has variants of this exchange in mind: "Bring on the close. Then start anew." Specifically, he echoes here: "Ring out the old. Ring in the new." That catch phrase refers to the New Year's practice of ringing church bells to send out the old year and welcome in the new one. The calendar makes time new when it marks the beginning of another twelve-month cycle. Just as laundering is a way to make clothes new to be freshly worn again, Joyce's punning is a way to fill old language with new meaning.

Flowing water is always new. The Greek philosopher Heraclitus proclaimed that when you stepped into the same spot in a river a second time, it was new water and in effect a different river. But in dewy Dublin, when the washerwomen pull the clothes from the river to wring them dry, they can't avoid wringing back

in some moisture from the atmosphere. Students are often impatient with the old. They can press to know just how much of the past—history, dead languages, geology, old grammatical forms, and so on—they need to absorb in the course of their education to clearly see their way forward.

Joyce's friend Ezra Pound famously said: "Make it new." Joyce was determined to take the form and substance of literature to places they had never gone before. He was, in today's parlance, an unparalleled "disrupter," and a gleeful one at that. Yet he understood that hard-won knowledge of tradition is the ground for serious innovation. To wring in the new, you need to know something about the old you're wringing out, or what's a college for— whether it's Joyce's University College Dublin or the University of Wisconsin?

Thinkers like Heraclitus, Pound, and Joyce were always thinking through what they knew to grasp at what new thinking they could build upon it. It's a habit students can learn from the likes of them.

4. Only more games
Joyce's wife Nora would scold him about drinking too much on nights when the parting glass never seemed to arrive. But Jim could never swig enough alcohol—or life. His fellow Irish modernist and disciple, Samuel Beckett, said that while he himself was "working with impotence, ignorance," Joyce was "tending towards omniscience and omnipotence." Indeed, the title of one of Beckett's more famous plays makes the point about how he saw his own artistic material: *Endgame*. For Joyce, there is no endgame, only more games.

Reading him always reminds me of two lines from Robert Louis Stevenson's *A Child's Garden of Verses*: "The world is so full of a number of things / I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings." Joyce seemed to want to name more than his fair share of those things, to show us in language things that had not been shown that way before, in all their glory and folly. Struggling to comprehend the what, how, and why of that kind of very human, yet herculean, effort is no small part of getting a good higher education.

Incidentally, it can help students in preparing for a demanding job, too—one that might well require an other-centered emotional intelligence, an international perspective, an eye for the future based on an understanding of the past, and an appreciation for the fluidity of language.

Thank you, Jim. LE

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