

Auburn Horizon

The Newsletter for Higher Education Issues

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Is The Public Dissatisfied with Higher Education?

Redefining the Institution

By Amy Muse
Associate Editor

Currently, the university as an institution and academics as professionals seem to occupy an uneasy position in the relationship with "the public," yet defining this body (so that we may better position ourselves) is a daunting task, for this task automatically implies a definition of the university and is therefore a matter not to be undertaken lightly. Yet the misunderstandings between "the university" and "the public" often stem from disagreements as to what is the overall purpose of a university. We then find ourselves working to articulate a definition of the university that will serve all constituencies internal and external but will not limit our possibilities.

The various complaints made against universities are familiar: our research is merely self-serving (when discoveries are not immediately materially "useful"); we are breeding discontent among our students; we do not actually "do" anything for our communities. Perhaps the complaints smart because all of them contain at least a grain of truth.

Equally, we have complaints about the public: we are trying to teach critical thinking to a public made up of bored students, fearful parents, and an unthinking business community and government, all of whom wish not to be challenged; the public wants colleges and universities to focus on quick training rather than extensive, expensive, and more complicated education.

"But we need integration even more, for that is what America is supposed to be, a place where everyone partakes of our unique mixture, where everyone is part of a greater consensus. I need white experience to understand what it means to be an American, just as whites need mine. The failure of integration has been a failure of nerve, a failure to pursue a utopian ideal simply because it demands much from both sides, especially unwavering good faith."

**--Gerald Early
"Understanding Integration"**

Community and Academia

By Barbara Baker
Associate Editor

As the public grows more and more dissatisfied with higher education, those of us who are committed to academia are forced to reconsider what role we play in a shared effort to make Alabama a better place to live. Both those inside and outside of academia share in a responsibility to try and solve our common problems. This places the university within a larger community. Both groups readily recognize that issues like poverty, drugs, and racial tension continue to dog our communities. If we agree that the communities in which we live need some shaping up and smoothing out, then we must agree that our human communities deserve to be well understood.

The first step in understanding our relationship with external constituents within our shared community is to recognize that we are not, in fact, in separate camps. The separatist relationship that academia purposefully sets up to insulate itself from outside pressures and expectations only exacerbates the tension between the two groups. We are members of a human community, and artificial separation creates the problems that we want to solve. Recognition of and respect for this fact is a significant way in which the university makes its contribution to our shared cause. While not every college and department inside academia can produce a pill that will cure an ailment, many are in the business of contributing to our understanding of ourselves as members of the human community and, thus, share in the responsibility for change.

When we explore the dynamics of communities and teach others to do the same, we contribute to curing social ills because many of the problems from which we suffer are a result of a lack of tolerance for the heterogeneity within our communities which we both crave and reject. Our willingness, as academicians, to wrestle with slippery issues like integration, an issue that continues to slip in and duck out of the light of our common understanding, is a necessary step towards a resolution with which we all can live. Becoming and helping our students to become informed, tolerant members of the human community may seem a lofty goal, but it is one we accomplish. Let me give you an example from my own recent experience.

I teach core courses in Auburn's English Department. Part of my job as a member of the English Department is to attend academic conferences. I recently attended a conference, the topic of which was "Ameri-

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William R. Gwin, Director of the Auburn University Honors Program and Professor of Architecture, provided the *Auburn Horizon* with a discussion guide entitled "Preparing for a Good Future: What Kind of Education Do We Need after High School?" which was created jointly by the National

*Please see
"Possibilities" on
page two*

Please see "Higher Education" on page eight

Possibilities for Change from National Honors Council

continued from page one

Collegiate Honors Council and National Issues Forums. It summarizes ongoing discussions they have been holding concerning the purposes for and, subsequently, different approaches to take toward higher education. Both organizations have been actively involved in reworking, perhaps even reinventing, education to suit the needs of our current public and to suit our needs as well. The discussion guide provides a framework for discussing how to improve higher education so that it serves the needs and desires of all of us.

Three approaches, or "choices," have been provided: first, "Deinventing Higher Education: Fit the Education to the Person": "Some people think we've gone overboard -- that college isn't for everyone, so we should change our educational system to put more emphasis on learning what we need to know to get a job." In this system, not everyone would be encouraged to go to college; it's unrealistic, as four out of five jobs require only a high school diploma. We would redefine "higher education" to mean any learning that takes place post-high school. More difficult would be changing the cultural attitudes, the clout that comes with a college degree. Those in opposition to this approach argue that our class divisions would only be worsened as inevitably children from less privileged families would be tracked into the vocational and technical jobs.

Second choice: "Reengineering Higher Education: Emphasize Learning, Not Degrees": "Change the way colleges and universities operate, so that they are preparing students for the future instead of teaching them about the events and achievements of the past."

Advocates argue that we should teach ways of thinking, not simply subject matter. However, those ways of thinking should be congruent with the external environment; in other words, business professionals who are in the external world may be better teachers than professors conducting "obscure" research. They argue that there should be "less

emphasis on reflection, research, and analysis, and more emphasis on relevance, performance, and practicality...The how, when, and where of higher education should fit the consumer, not the academic world." Those in opposition argue that we need to maintain academic integrity and not pander to the consumer mentality. Universities should not compete with commercial training firms who offer seminars for working people. If we stop doing research eventually our cultural identity will suffer. "All of us lose, without even knowing what or how much is lost."

Third choice: "Reinventing Learning: Education Is about More Than Getting a Job": "Everyone should have the right to study a variety of subjects and cultures...only by giving them this opportunity will our society, culture, and democracy flourish." This option champions the university's traditional purpose to provide everyone equal opportunity to a broad education which emphasizes the ability to question, to think, to speculate. A broad education shapes the whole person, rather than simply preparing us for a specific job. Exploring our and others' communities nurtures us as individuals and also our culture and democracy. "We must teach, not just train." Those in opposition argue that we must "focus resources, provide opportunities for those who can make the most of them, and set limits for others." Unemployment is the root of so many of our social problems and it is irresponsible to push everyone into college when many would be better served in a training program. Finally, who decides what a "broad" education is? People can read and find information on their own.

Certainly there is no easy answer, no one choice which will solve all our problems. Perhaps it is therefore reassuring to hear a report from the front line which emphasizes some peoples' appreciation for and understanding of our work. According to Dr. Gwin, who reiterates what he heard in meetings throughout the nation: "The public, in stark contrast to public officials, are very pleased with what colleges and universities do for them and their children. They clearly see that higher education is the key to a good future and are enthusiastic about the many valuable contributions that these institutions provide to the maturation and intellectual growth of our citizens at every level of their development (high school graduates, mid-career returnees, and the elderly). They see the value of research though would like to have more faculty teaching than doing research. On one hand they feel that these institutions should be more efficient while on the other they do not want the college nearest to them closed -- they see a real value in having easy access to this valuable asset.

"The public's support is very broad but its depth has not been plumbed. The consequences of not providing proper access to quality education is heard in their concern about being prepared for a future that all expect to be more complicated, faster tracked, and full of change. They fear that if they don't get a proper education they will not be employable, have a diminished future, and that we as a nation will lose our competitive edge."

This is a matter for public deliberation -- and here, "public" means all of us, inside and outside the university system. The conclusion of "Preparing for a Good Future: What Kind of Education Do We Need after High School?" defines public deliberation as "more than a casual discussion...different from a debate. When deliberating, we weigh the potential consequences of various solutions to community problems." Benefits include that "all of us are encouraged to share our ideas and opinions, to truly listen and understand one another -- especially those whose views are very different from our own."

"The goal of public deliberation is to make sound decisions as a community about what action is best for the public as a whole." Lest we in our rather (conscious or not) insulated community forget, we are all the public.

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Model of Integration Relevant with Public Dissatisfaction

Early, G. (1996). Understanding integration: Why blacks and whites must come together as americans," *Civilization*, 3 (5), 51-9.

Abstract by: Amy Muse

When Gerald Early was first approached by *Civilization* (the magazine of the Library of Congress) editor Stephen G. Smith to write a piece on integration, he responded, laughing, "I'm not sure I want to ruin my career just yet," recognizing that integration is a volatile subject, perhaps particularly among leading black intellectuals, who are expected to speak for their race as a whole. He did, however, feel strongly enough about the issue to agree to write the essay. Barbara Baker, in her article on page one in this issue of the *Auburn Horizon*, calls Early's argument: "equivocal in its stance." She's right. Early is clearly putting forth an argument in support of integration, but with full consciousness of the complications and distress that accompany such a project, especially in the face of the failure of the original integration project which has left us feeling perhaps more separate than ever. Early argues that we need to "reinvent integration"; and this time it needs to be a two-way street, with whites integrating with black culture as well.

The debate over integration is a good example to use when examining the tension between higher education and the external public. The lack of a set of mutually beneficial understandings and goals has led to separatist and exclusionary attitudes on campuses (a "we know what is best for you, so you should leave us alone" sort of stance) and charges of elitism and unresponsiveness from the public. The same conclusions that Early has for rebuilding a true sense of integration apply to the broken fences between higher ed and the public.

Early works from the "symbolic beginning of the age of integration," Jackie Robinson's breakthrough to major league baseball, to the symbolic end, the Million Man March, which he interprets as "an expression of frustration at the inability of blacks to come up with a compelling political or social idea to replace integration and to deal with the breakdown of their own communities" (p. 58). In between,

the stories of Paul Robeson and Sidney Poitier, of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X are told. Early's point of departure, the "microcosm of professional baseball" serves as an illustration of the "tangled loom of integration in the United States" (p. 52). It is a good point from which to start because the Negro Leagues are now a popular site for both blacks and whites to visit in order to understand segregation before the Brown vs. Board of Education decision (1954). "Both [races] sentimentalize, even romanticize, the communal power of black life before integration, in large measure because

est of all, "the seeds for the dissolution of integration were embedded in the very concept of it," Early argues, for we Americans fear conformity, fear losing ourselves (p. 57). Separation has always appealed to us as Americans; we are a nation of Separatists, after all, and "indeed, the most mythologized group of Americans, Southerners, are the arch-separatists" (p. 56).

Most of all, integration has not yet been successful because it has never operated on a two-way street. In other words, whites need to assimilate into black culture as well. The original goal had been not just "assimilating the Negro" but also "understanding the pathologies that result from oppression and giving the Negro a chance to liberate himself from his defects. In effect, racial integration was meant to produce a new race, an American prototype that transcended all previous racial groupings" (p. 54). The actual outcome was that blacks were expected to move into the mainstream American life, to be "whites of a different color" (p. 54). This has caused more problems than solutions because assimilation implies the inferiority of the one being assimilated. "Integration, rightly understood not as becoming 'white' but as a true engagement with what this country and culture have to offer, is the only way to have a vital black community" (p. 59).

The problems lie not in the idea itself but in the ways it has been applied. "Integration should be criticized for its failure to recognize what black people had to tell, from their own experience, about what it means to be an American. But this does not mean that the idea of integration is wrong. Integration should be repaired, not blamed for the failures of the black community" (p. 59).

In the end, integration is an important ideal to maintain because it is good for us as individuals and as communities. It also serves as a needed push for higher education to become more open and collaborative. "The strength of any community is its willingness to absorb things outside itself" (p. 59). The external constituents, at times, seem like barbarians at the gate, which highlights the lack of a successful relationship. While the university is a unique entity, it is not an island nor can it be freed from the expectations of those it serves. The truths of integration are relevant to this issue: it is good for us as individuals and as part of the larger community.

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they feel that integration has been a disappointment and has run its course" (p. 52).

Another powerful response to the failure of integration, also stemming from a sort of nostalgia, is multiculturalism, which has its roots in academia. "That we are now mired by multiculturalism with more rigid racial classifications than ever is due to the failure to consider the evolution of black communal life and how aspects of it could enrich the nation" (p. 54). "The effect of multiculturalism is to make people feel more different than they actually are." In the rush to claim difference, it now seems "old-fashioned, even reactionary," to discuss what Americans have in common (p. 58).

Integration as a social ideal was foiled by the naivete of early black reformers who had not anticipated such resistance, who thought problems would be over by the late 1960s and who have since largely retreated into institutional positions; and by competition with other

liberation movements which diffused the energy of the white liberals who found it easier to fight against the war in Vietnam, for women's rights, or environmental concerns. Perhaps deep-

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Time-Compressed Research

The National Debate Over Tenure: Future Decisions on Horizon

Yarmolinsky, A., (1996). *Tenure: Permanence and change. Change, 28* (3) 16-20.

Abstract By: Molly Hultquist

The thesis of Yarmolinsky's (1996) article reflects the sentiments of a growing faction of individuals within and without the confines of the higher education community; "that the concept of academic freedom will have to adjust to radical changes in higher education and, indeed, that some of these adjustments are already becoming visible (p.16)."

The author contends that there are two basic assumptions of tenure which are at odds with current reality: the idea of a "normal" tenure track and the belief that the number and identity of academic departments will remain constant within an institution during a faculty member's career. To emphasize his point he reminds us that faculty members of temporary status remain on the bottom rungs of the academic ladder while academic superstars jump from institution to institution claiming allegiance to the global community of their discipline. Meanwhile, as institutions struggle to survive financially, shrinking departments are forced to give up all instruction in a field or retain only those faculty members with tenure.

Despite the current reality, the author maintains tenure is not going anywhere. A survey by the American Association of University Professors (1993) illustrates why. In a sample of 16,000 institutions, 89 percent of the full time faculty were tenured or in tenured track positions.

An abolition of tenure would result in an academic revolt, exacerbate

existing litigation demands on institutions, and foster faculty unionization. Nothing will change. Elite institutions will continue to attract new junior faculty without offering them tenure and institutions without the freedom to choose will struggle along putting off decisions with regards to tenure and tenure positions.

To solve the problem the author proposes that institutions engage in a flexible tenure track procedure or "tenure to fit the accomplishments and capabilities of the individual and the projected long term need of the institution" (p.19). The positive outgrowths of such a procedure would broaden the incentive for scholarly work. "This is not to suggest that the breadth of scholarship should be rewarded over the depth. It is rather to argue that tenure can be adapted both to the capacities of the individual scholar and to the needs of the institution, anticipating so far as possible how much those needs are likely to change over a scholarly career" (p.19). Perhaps, for Auburn this will mean trying to assess institutional needs from one term of a governor to the next.

The author ponders whether his idea is too radical or not radical enough. Regardless, he maintains institutions must be guided by three principles as they experiment to reconcile academic tenure and institutional change: 1) Individual scholars need assurances that they can pursue their interests freely. 2) Institutions need to be able to allocate and reallocate resources, including resources of scholarly talent; and 3) Tenure is intended to protect the nonconformist (p.20).

In sum, "Today's arbitrary definition of tenure, often broader than the scholar's actual capacities, will only burden the institution in a time of change" (p.20).

The Management Minute

Resistance to change is something that all organizations have in common. It serves a dual purpose for individuals and organizations. Resistance tells us to exercise caution, to stop and think about an action before taking it, which saves us from taking unnecessary or foolish risks. It also keeps us from recognizing change that can affect our lives positively and create the organization that we truly desire, which guarantees that we are stuck in the situations that are less than what we hope for. In his book, *Beyond the Wall of Resistance: Unconventional Strategies that Build Support for Change*, Rick Maurer describes resistance as something that is not to be "overcome" but is something that, if worked with carefully and correctly, can help to enact the changes that we all so desire.

Maurer breaks down working with resistance into five principles or "touchstones." "Touchstones were once used to test the purity of gold and silver by rubbing metal against them. If the metal left a certain streak, it was pure....As we consider strategies, touchstones can let us know if they pass the test" (p. 54). These touchstones are:

1. Maintain Clear Focus: "When people attack your ideas, you may forget your original goal of building support for the change, and replace it with a new one -- getting even" (p. 54). This includes: Keeping both the long and short view, and persevering.

2. Embrace Resistance: "To do this, you must let down your guard and enter the world of those who resist you....Embracing Resistance requires the same counterintuitive response [as kayaking]. You must move toward the resistance or risk being capsized" (p. 56).

3. Respect Those Who Resist: "You give up nothing by treating people with Respect. Although there are never guarantees, this approach is the only way you can ever hope to build trust" (p. 57).

4. Relax: "Dealing with resistance can be very successful. People attack you and your precious ideas....Relaxation is key; the more you Relax, the easier it will be for you to Embrace Resistance....This win-at-all-costs mind set may work fine when you are engaged in a contest such as tennis. But it doesn't work when you are trying to build alliances" (p. 59).

5. Join With The Resistance: "Building support for change comes from blending your intentions with theirs. The secret is in finding ways to combine the answers to 'What's in it for me?' and 'What's in it for them?'" (p. 60).

Source: Maurer R. (1996). *Beyond the wall of resistance: Unconventional strategies that build support for change*. Austin, Texas: Bard Books, Inc.

Minority Student Persistence: Factors for Retention

Caplow, J. H., Donaldson, J. F., Hendricks, A. D., & Smith, K. (1996). A grounded theory approach to determining the factors related to the persistence of minority students in professional programs. *Innovative Higher Education*, 21 (2), 113-123.

Abstract by: Tyree McCloud

Auburn has recently updated its Mission to carry us into the next century. This process has helped to open our eyes to the complex myriad of issues facing higher education today and tomorrow. As we get set to move into the 21st century, there are many important issues facing higher education that need to be addressed. Two such issues are: (1) reassessing and addressing the needs of an ever changing workforce by examining the educational preparation of students for professional positions; and (2) assuring equity and employment opportunities for a diverse population through educational preparation. With those issues in mind, the authors of the above article examined factors which attract minority students to professional programs and factors which enhance or impede their academic progress.

Reports such as *Workforce 2000* suggest that the nation's workforce will change significantly by the 21st century. Generally speaking, those predictions seem to have been accurate. The percentage of White males in the workforce is on a decline, from 50% in 1980 to 47% in 1993. The U.S. Bureau of the Census (1994, p. 395) projects that number will decrease to 44% by the year 2000. By contrast, the number of minorities as a proportion of the workforce is increasing, from 14% in 1986 to 23% in 1994. By the year 2004, their proportion is projected to be about 26%.

The authors pointed out that prestigious professions such as engineering, education, business, law and medicine are growing rapidly. Yet, minorities are still proportionally under-represented in these areas. Minorities are, however, proportionally over-represented in such occupations as cooks, guards, and health aids. This disparity highlights the growing wage division, because these occupations do not offer above average compensation, and the unequal proportions in the professional ranks because the occupations do not provide much opportunity to move into leadership positions in society.

According to the authors, institutions of higher education are the primary source for training individuals for the professional workforce. However, in 1993 only 17.6% of the students enrolled in higher education were minority students (African American, Hispanic, or Native American). Of the 292,000 students enrolled in professional degree programs, only 12% were minorities, according to *The Almanac of Higher Education*, (1995, pp. 14, 20). This data indicates that there is a void between the expressed needs for diversity in the 21st century and the current level of preparation of minorities for professional positions. This void presents a significant obstacle for meeting those expressed needs.

The authors found that there was little research available on the experiences of minority students in professional programs. The authors' study which addressed the issues from the students prospective found that the primary reasons for the persistency of minority students in professional programs were: a personal desire to succeed, academic self-confidence, support and interest from a primary advisor, participation in professional activities, a strong desire for knowledge, and support from a person (usually another minority) other than then one's advisor.

These findings are in contrast to the efforts of many institutions and governmental agencies who have sought to remedy the problem almost

solely through financial assistance. They also provide data to counteract the assertion that the "playing field" has been made level.

The authors stated that previous research suggested that individual social and academic integration with the institution were important factors in the persistence of minorities in higher education. However, the authors' interviews suggested that factors such as family and church and the students' background may play a larger role in the persistence of students in higher education than those of the university environment, which leads one to wonder if the university services are seen as inadequate or unnecessary by minority students. The three primary themes which seemed to most influence the students' choice of a professional program and their belief in the likelihood of their success were: (1) family support, (2) service to community, and (3) determination.

As Auburn University grapples with a court order to deal with the under-represented minority population in its faculty and staff, perhaps a broadening of focus is in order. One possibility is to combine a more altruistic approach with current efforts to improve our ability to attract and retain qualified minority faculty and students. Another is to rethink and restructure the methods employed to attract, retain, and build connections with our minority students and employees.

Note: Grounded theory was developed and applied in the 1960s. It is often used by social science researchers to provide a procedure for organizing and categorizing information, connecting and coding analytic categories of data to form a set of theoretical propositions, and finding associations among categories. The main objective of studies using the grounded theory approach is to construct a theory grounded in the views and experiences of the participants in the study.

World Wide Web Resources for Higher Education

1. New England Resource Center for Higher Education: dedicated to improving colleges and universities as workplaces, communities, and organizations.
<http://www.nerche.org/>
2. Alternative Higher Education Network (AHEN): A networking tool providing a forum for philosophical discussion, for collaborative assessment, for individuals' networking needs, and for the creation of new programs in the alternative higher education community.
<http://hampshire.edu/html/cs/ahen/ahen.html>
3. Association of Governing Boards of Universities & Colleges (AGB).
<http://204.91.63.241/frames/>
4. IBM Kiosk for Education: IBM site for Instructional Technology.
<http://ike.engr.washington.edu/ike.html>
5. TQM In Higher Education Discussion List: Info for subscribing.
<http://galaxy.einet.net/cgi-bin/edit-entry?/galaxy/Social-Sciences/Education/Higher-Education/data.7282>
6. The Globewide Network Academy: Site for an accredited on-line university.
<http://uu-gna.mit.edu:8001/uu-gna/index.html>

Testing the Limits of Social Responsibility for Higher Ed

This section is designed to present attitudes and possibilities for change voiced by faculty, administrators, students, and external constituents on important emerging issues and trends in higher education that will affect Auburn University and all other higher education institutions in Alabama. The views are gathered from a call for statements and observations made by the *Auburn Horizon* centering on a particular question. The question posed for this issue was: **What role, if any, does the university play in social change and what role does the public expect us to play?**

We received many excellent responses and the ones displayed here represent the extent and range of the views around our state. The *Auburn Horizon* believes that discussing the performance expectations inevitably placed on universities will only allow our institutions to become stronger and experience the environment of autonomy and widespread support that we desire.

“While the public often expects the university to play no role at all, or to remain neutral (as David Fraunces suggests), on a practical level that is virtually impossible. Even if a (specific) university pursues an official ‘no position’ position, it cannot refrain from impacting the social milieu. What is it that the university does, anyway? At the most basic level, is it the effort to turn out graduates who can think critically, who can analyze problems and determine appropriate solutions? So what are these graduates supposed to think about? What problems did they examine while still students which would adequately prepare them for ‘the real world’? Educators (and universities) have been criticized for filling students’ heads with the ‘wrong’ ideas at least since Socrates. And the criticism will continue long after we are all gone. (I just hope it won’t be by hemlock!)

The very nature of the university requires constant interaction with and analysis of the world. Social change occurs at least in part because of the university. One of the first acts of a new dictatorship is to shut down the education system and throw out or even murder the academics. Another is to shut down the press and other media. Why? The new regime recognizes the threat of the open exchange of ideas. Even in the free and open society of the U.S., the temptation exists to control education so that only the ‘right’ ideas are examined and supported. Who gets criticized (and blamed) most -- politicians, the press, or education? Most of the time it seems like a tie.

A lot of rambling comes down to this: while the public expects the university to play whatever role the public wants when it wants it, the university can’t help but affect change. It’s the nature of the beast.”

--Sarah D. Carrigan, Ph.D.
Coordinator of Institutional Studies
Auburn University at Montgomery

“Universities, since the beginning of time, have played a role in social change whether they wanted to or not. These entities of higher learning have produced millions of graduates throughout the years who have gone on to have positive and negative impacts on society. These graduates have definitely been major players in social change. Therefore, with that fact established, today’s universities should realize even more that they are vital players in social change today and tomorrow.

Call this mass production of college graduates the ‘revolving door effect.’ Young minds enter the college door, learn from older, greater and experienced minds, and exit to make a further impact somewhere in society. Therefore, the educational role of a university in impacting social change should not be underestimated!”

--Rennie Jones
Satellite Uplink Manager,
Telecommunications

“The University, as an organization, should remain neutral if publicly funded and respond to the will of the People. The University as a whole plays an active role in social change from the individual perspective. College is a time of self discovery and questioning. The University atmosphere breeds this free thought mentality. As for what role the public expects, I believe they expect the organization to stay above social issues and simply teach their students. However, the University acts as the testing ground for larger ideas in society, practical or impractical.”

--David Fraunces ('92)
Account Executive
Yyx Advertising Distribution Services

"I think it important first to reiterate that the role the university should play in the larger society, and the role it is expected to play by the 'public,' are often two entirely different things. In the 1960s, universities served as truly educational systems in this larger sense -- they were a flashpoint for discussions of civil rights and just war theory that the larger society had long needed to deal with, even if the 'public' did not want to and thought that universities ought to stick to more traditional topics. Accordingly, the university, through the process of consensus gained through academic freedom, slowly formed a moral consensus that then affected the larger society.

Our problems today are at least twofold -- there is probably less of a consensus in the academy today about any particular set of issues than there was about civil rights, and what consensus there is often appears to overreach in its attempt to return to the halcyon days of the '60s. For example, a recent conference at the U. of Alabama hosted by the gay, lesbian, and bisexual alliance caused a furor because it appeared 'evangelical' (in the gay, not Christian, sense!) and hosted workshops on topics such as 'coming out of the closet', dressing in drag, and Wicca and 'goddess rituals.' While I imagine there is a consensus in academia that buzzwords like 'diversity', 'tolerance', and 'decreasing bigotry' are laudable goals and ways in which we should act to lead rather than follow public opinion, such consensus quickly breaks down in discussing topics such as these. In particular, when such academic discussions use public funding, as this conference did, things become even more difficult. In conclusion, I disagree with David that 'The University, as an organization, should remain neutral if publicly funded and respond to the will of the People', because I think the university cannot escape the major social issues of the day if its education is to be relevant. But I think David is right (particularly in this state!) to write that: '[the] role the public expects, I believe they expect the organization to stay above social issues and simply teach their students.'

I believe that the impossibility of the University actually doing that will always cause conflict, and the academy is best served not by giving up the good fight, but by making its arguments for its positions as clear, concise, and intelligible to the larger society as possible. This is the positive impulse behind the sorts of popularizations we discussed at the last meeting [of the *Auburn Horizon* Discussion Group]."

--Keith Abney
Instructor
Philosophy

"Our Introductory course has 800+ students in it [and is] taught by a student because the professor 'bought out' her contract with federal grant money so she doesn't have to waste her valuable time with students. There are now nearly 25,000 students here. Being on a quarter system it's a madhouse. Most students don't even know the names of their instructors, much less each other. They like the quarter system because all they want and think they need is the credit for the class, not the information, so they can get their 12+ units every quarter and get on with their lives.

Most of the classes are taught by TA's. The professors teach Graduate classes of from 3 to 10 students. So until you are 'serious' about getting educated (going for a Ph.D.), don't count on getting the quality of instruction that is advertised in the catalog where they list the faculty and all of their accomplishments. The professors only need to teach 2 classes a year, and as mentioned above, most of these are very small. They spend the rest of their time writing so they can add more publications to their CV making them eligible for merit increases, and offers from other universities. Then, when they threaten to leave, the University strikes other 'deals' for them. This would be fine with me if the students benefitted, but from what I've seen so far, it's very one-sided.

The Ph.D. candidates are paid more per month than most non-faculty department staff. I suggested to my friend [name withheld], that she get into the program to increase her income and get the credentials (she has lots of other degrees and credentials, but not a Ph.D.) The Admissions people said she would need a sponsor and suggested (a well-known senior 'old school' professor). When she met with him, he talked her out of it as being a waste of her valuable time. He is very disillusioned about what it going on there. Being at the University has been quite an education!"

--Anonymous opinion from an employee in a "nationally-ranked 'Top 25 dept.' at a prestigious state university.' The message was forwarded to us from:

Dr. Paul Starr
Professor
Sociology

Higher Education and Community: Exclusion or Integration

continued from page one

can Communities.” I was particularly interested in this conference for two reasons.

First, as a teacher of Great Books, I use the idea of “community” as an interpretive tool, as well as a pedagogical resource. I am always interested to hear the opinions of others who share a sort of intellectual fascination with the notion that looking at the groups represented in texts tells us a great deal about ourselves. And as a teacher of a required literature course, I’m also interested in ways to help my students find the value in what they sometimes initially consider less than valuable, namely anything we English-types consider to be a great book. In addressing their concerns, “community” is an appropriate idea that makes literature useful to almost everyone I teach.

Thus we come to the second reason I was interested in the conference on “American Communities.” Gerald Early was one of the conference’s plenary speakers. Early recently published an article, “Understanding Integration,” (abstracted on page three in this issue of the *Auburn Horizon*) which raised, in my mind, some critical questions about how integration really works in the human community. I find “Understanding Integration” fascinating and frustrating because it opens questions about the success, failure, and future of the reality of racial diversity in an ideal American community.

The article, however, is somewhat equivocal in its stance. Early’s advice seemed to me a rather hopeful prescription for our racial ills, and it left me feeling somewhat unsure of how, in reality, such advice could be implemented. So, I went to the conference looking for a resolution to my mixed emotions. You could say, I went looking for a cure.

At the conference we got down to the business of defining the problem with American communities. Speakers offered nightmarish descriptions of what the small towns in which they grew up have become. I don’t need to repeat the descriptions; we all know Mayberry is gone. Just take a drive through any boarded up, abandoned Alabama town and you will have a sense of what is going on all across America.

In searching for solutions to our shared sense of loss we came to the conclusion that what our present day, so-called communities lack is density and diversity. Everyone has jumped in their cars and moved out to the suburbs. The result is that people only pass in traffic. We really don’t talk to one another anymore. But what we also discovered is that Mayberry wasn’t everything it was cracked up to be either. While small town America of yesteryear might have offered community members enough density to allow friendly conversations on the street, it did not offer diversity. What became painfully obvious is that many people do not want the poor, or blacks (they are often perceived as being the same) in their communities.

This is a difficult statement to make. And the silence of the unsaid was deafening at the conference as well.

When it was finally Early’s turn to speak he started by saying, “I’m not really sure why you invited me here. I’m not an anthropologist or a historian. I’m an English professor.” He went on to offer a few models we might consider if we truly are dedicated to recovering a sense of community. He offered the black community as an example of a group who has struggled against incredible odds in an effort to build community. And he referred specifically to Harlem as a magical place that, for a short period in the early part of this century, had both the density and the diversity to produce an amazing outpouring of art. He referred to Detroit which, for a brief period in the 50s and 60s, was so developed that it could support the American success story that Motown became. He said that for a moment after World War II, before housing projects, the black community in Detroit “realized a high level of expression and civility.”

Early agreed that American communities are falling apart because of

their lack of density. He said that because people are abandoning our cities, there are not enough people left to sustain any sense of community. But he also said that we must remember that black people are leaving too: “black people bought into escape as much as other Americans.” In short, we are all trying to escape from each other when we should be engaging one another and learning from each other.

Early told the audience that American cities in the past, like Harlem, Detroit, and Philadelphia during the 50s and 60s when he was growing up there, were powerful integrative forces. All kinds of people “bumped and bonded” in these cities. But “society never fully endorsed integration.” The government willfully ended the bumping and bonding among Americans of all races and classes when it built housing projects that separated blacks and whites and the haves and have-nots.

Early concluded his comments by stating that integration efforts “drew people back and finally hurt cities.” I suppose he was implying that integration was good until American groups had their differences pointed out to them by housing projects. I was left with the same questions that Early’s article “Understanding Integration” left me with. Is integration good or bad? How can groups really engage one another again? Other audience members expressed my frustration. And the last question from the audience was almost a plea: “How can we regain the fluidity of the city?” Early answered, “I’m not in the cure business.”

Gerald Early is in the business of remembering the past, of respecting art and the communities who produce it. He is in the business of wrestling difficult questions and teaching others to carefully consider the illness before they jump to a cure. His business is Literature.

Early renewed my sense of the value of my profession. I realized that I had been engaging the black community all along. For instance, almost every quarter I teach Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. And almost every quarter at least one student from my typically homogeneous classroom asks me why I spend so much time on black issues. This question puzzles me because I do not teach *Their Eyes Were Watching God* because Hurston was black; I teach it because it is one of the best books I have ever read. It is a great book because it teaches me and my students about both black communities and our own communities. Reading Hurston’s truthful representation and celebration of black communities in Florida teaches us something about ourselves as members of the human community. By coming to some realizations about what all communities share, students are given an opportunity to observe and assess the reasons behind some of our differences.

The normal course of action when problems arise, not just at universities but throughout society (which Early painfully underscores), is to divide the people involved into groups and make pronouncements on what the other groups have to do. This is, again, painfully present in the relationships between higher education and its external constituents. Both sides are in the business of curing the other, and so the dance continues. When Early emphasizes the death of communities, we can see the same things happening here. The statements and actions that, directly or indirectly, affirm that the public’s wants and desires are not welcome in higher education’s community, naturally lead to the contentious treatment that our colleges and universities currently receive. These battles are not the results of a mutually beneficial relationship, but are testaments to how far apart we truly are.

Like the failures of communities, the larger community that higher education is a part of suffers from a lack of density. When my students question a particular book because it does not belong to or is not welcome in an exclusive “community,” we all clearly can see the breakdown of community. When someone in higher education questions the concerns of various sectors of the external world (business and industry, governmental, parents, students, etc.), we should come to the same conclusion.

AH

When the Issues Start to Come Together

By Van Muse
Editor

By now, you are probably wondering what the issue of integration has to do with higher education. When the Gerald Early article was brought to our attention, we wondered the same thing. The article certainly was making points that were very important to all of us as a society, but the question still remained: "Where does higher education fit in with this?"

One of the results of environmental scanning is that an individual can better see the intricate connections between issues and events. By analyzing seemingly disparate issues and connecting them with more generalized "major issues," one can start to see the similarities inherent in the issues. Such was the case with Early's article.

An issue that has been consistently emphasized in this decade is the "public's dissatisfaction with higher education." From the Pew Roundtable article (page ten) to the brand new National Honors Council document (summarized on pages one and two), one can start to see how important this issue is to the continued success, and even in some cases the existence, of higher education institutions.

The subject of integration can be seen as a clear metaphor for the sometimes contentious relationship between higher education and its external constituents. The existence of separatist attitudes, the "one-way street" of expectations projected by both sides, and the desire for total autonomy and full support from higher education all relate well to the dynamics Early described. Certainly, as a important part of our society, we should be leading the debate of renewing the practices of integration, but we also should be willing to look inward as much as we look outward.

The opinions over who exactly is angry at higher education and what

exactly they are angry about vary widely. It is easy to come up with a few examples, characterize them as "unthinking," and simply pass the blame around. But what purpose does that serve besides creating a strawman to hang all of our collective frustrations on? That practice only creates a higher education system that passively waits for the "good old days" to return. It does not allow us to examine the conditions and occurrences that have shaped the situations we find ourselves in, nor does it allow for institutions to work to make change.

Like integration, the same conclusions about the relationships between higher education and its external constituents can be reached: the practices of the past were well intentioned, they have not worked and new practices need to be created rather than abandoning the whole enterprise altogether. The long-standing tradition of dichotomizing the relationship between higher education and business, government, parents, students, and our communities has contributed to the eroding support for higher education nationwide. It is natural for groups who believe that they are at odds to not support each other.

The emphasis of this and every issue of *Auburn Horizon* is to highlight important issues that are being discussed on a national level and provide the information necessary to start our own discussions in Alabama. The Panel Discussion that we will be hosting on May 5 can add to this as well. Regardless of where you stand on this issue, or if you completely disagree that the public is dissatisfied (or even if you don't care whether they are dissatisfied or not), the reality of our situation calls for changes. They can either be dictated to us, which can be interpreted as a frustrated show of power from a body that grew tired to being ignored, or they can be created by us, which should (this time) include partnerships with our external constituents. I don't know about you, but I would always choose the latter.

The Management Minute

Despite the widespread press of many emergent management innovations (quality management, learning organizations, change agents, systems management, flat or dynamic organizations, etc.), many organizations have yet fully to replace the traditional hierarchical model for management. Perhaps it is a case of old habits dying hard or the reluctance to buy into the latest "management fad," or it can exist more in the thinking processes and habits of how we think about organizations. Edward Lawler, in his book From the Ground Up: Six Principles for Building the New Logic Corporation, states that the "logic" of organizations (i.e. how everything is ordered, defined, and operates) is still largely based upon the traditional hierarchical paradigms. But the traditional approach cannot operate in today's dynamic organizations. "Unfortunately for many of those who use it, the hierarchical command-and-control approach works best only as long as work is simple and stable. As work becomes more complicated and more knowledge based, it runs into problems" (p. 12). Thus he proposes the model of "new logic" organizations. "In order to be successful, organizations must have capabilities that allow them to coordinate and focus behavior in ways that are tuned to the marketplace and produce high levels of performance -- ways that differentiate them from competitors. Every organization must understand what capabilities it needs to compete in its market and then develop them by creating the appropriate organizational designs and management systems" (p. 13).

To define this model, Lawler uses "new logic principles" and contrasts them to the principles of the traditional model. These include:

- 1. **Old Logic Principle:** Organization is a secondary source of competitive advantage.
- 2. **Old Logic Principle:** Bureaucracy is the most effective source of control.
- 3. **Old Logic Principle:** Top management and technical experts should add most of the value.
- 4. **Old Logic Principle:** Hierarchical processes are the key to organizational effectiveness.
- 5. **Old Logic Principle:** Organizations should be designed around functions.
- 6. **Old Logic Principle:** Effective managers are the key to organizational effectiveness.

- New Logic Principle:** Organization can be the ultimate competitive advantage.
- New Logic Principle:** Involvement is the most effective source of control
- New Logic Principle:** All employees must add significant value.
- New Logic Principle:** Lateral processes are the key to organizational effectiveness.
- New Logic Principle:** Organizations should be designed around products and customers.
- New Logic Principle:** Effective leadership is the key to organizational effectiveness" (p. 22-23).

Source: Lawler, E. E. (1996). *From the ground up: Six principles for building the new logic corporation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Dancing with Public Expectations: Renewal and Rebirth of Purpose

In 1994, The Pew Higher Education Roundtable (senior officers from 400 colleges and universities nationwide) released a document called "To Dance With Change" (AGB Policy Perspectives, 5 (3), Section A). It addressed many hard questions that higher education had to face in relation to the external world. The document centered around providing enough contextual and theoretical evidence to support this statement: "*The changes most important to higher education are those that are external to it. What is new is the use of societal demand -- in the American context, market forces -- to reshape the academy. The danger is that colleges and universities have become less relevant to society precisely because they have yet to understand the new demands being placed upon them.*"

The intent of the group is to fully recognize the inevitability of this demand and to eradicate the traditional university strategy of simply "waiting it out." Their argument is: "no institution will emerge unscathed from its confrontation with an external environment that is substantially altered and in many ways more hostile to colleges and universities." If one accepts this argument, that the current situation of decreased tolerance for the "business as usual" of universities and increased calls for measured accountability and responsiveness to the public, that higher education in Alabama (and many other states as well) face is not some aberration of a particular government, but the inevitable result of decades of anger and frustration towards higher education from many segments of the public, then the time to move was yesterday. If one dismisses this argument as alarmist and unsubstantiated, then we must simply wait until a new, more university-friendly, government is in power and higher education can return to "business as usual." To determine which side to take, an examination of the true expectations that the public has toward higher education needs to take place and, along with that, an honest assessment of our success in meeting those expectations is in order. The following are excerpts from the document.

"Some institutions have understood well just how much and how fast their world is changing; others are only now feeling the shock of diminished resources and the rising demand for alternate services and a few genuinely believe that they will best serve the nation by changing as little as possible."

"The most visible and in many ways the most relentless pressure on colleges and universities derives from the changing nature of the American economy and the nearly singular role a college degree has come to play in providing access to good jobs....The prospects for most college graduates have been very different. With most of the growth in jobs in general -- and top-paying jobs in particular -- coming in the service sector, which has increasingly provided employment to holders of the baccalaureate degree, the gap in expected earnings between college and high school graduates has increased by 20 percent through the past decade....For the 'rite-of-passage' student who proceeds directly from high school to college, the fear of not finding a job is redefining the college years in ways that would not have been imaginable a decade ago. Even among the nation's most selective residential institutions, vocationalism is now affecting everything from the choice of an academic major to the demand for student services that focus on job placement."

"The good news is that the vocational purposes now being attached to higher education translate into increased demand for a baccalaureate degree - with the result that higher education enrollments are on the rise. Among many employers -- and hence students -- there is a growing demand for an education designed for 'the whole person' -- a kind of careerism that enables graduates to succeed in a variety of jobs. The bad news is that much more of the rising demand for a higher education derives from a narrowing vocationalism that has brought with it increased public scrutiny and a new willingness to 'trust the market' to

define educational effectiveness."

"Even if the competition for public funding had not intensified and tax increases had not become politically abhorrent, colleges and universities would still have faced not just increased but increasingly punitive regulation. The end to higher education's 'roaring 80s' was inevitable not just because the economy changed but because a small but powerful contingent of those responsible for funding higher education developed a real anger at institutions and their faculty."

"Probably the toughest lesson collegiate communities are learning is that there is no sense in arguing with markets or legislatures. Notwithstanding the rhetorical firepower of institutions, neither legislative critics nor would be customers are interested in hearing detailed explanations of why things cost so much, why the processes of research and discovery are so important, or why it is best to do things in the future as they have been done in the past. The public is even less interested in being reminded of the special values that collegiate institutions claim to enshrine....This time the makers and shakers of public policy are not looking for reasoned discourse; they have spelled out their concerns, often with brutal clarity, and what they say they expect in return is changed behavior."

"When external inducements -- that is, when changing markets and shifting political attitudes -- are cast as external threats, most of higher education has responded not with a sense of urgency but with the impulse to resist, to counter the need for change, to stand on the prerogative of process."

"The need for academic restructuring owes much of its urgency to tough financial times....The lesson still to be learned is that such restructuring is only possible once the decision has been made to operate with smaller, more flexible staffs and simpler, less convoluted processes."

"Such re-engineering requires that an institution take steps to ensure that 'process' does not become an end in itself but remains a contributor to productive outcomes. It means challenging the conventional though outmoded 'wisdom' that educational quality is linked inexorably to class size and student-faculty ratio. It means reducing the number of transactions while achieving a better understanding of how different processes can fit together to yield greater efficiency and better quality. It requires hands-on management along with a willingness to demystify bureaucracies, academic as well as administrative, that preserve turf largely by sustaining procedures that are sufficiently idiosyncratic to defy combination and hence reduction. Above all, the kind of restructuring we have in mind requires an explicit commitment to getting the job done -- and a willingness to use smaller staffs, simplified procedures, and technology as a first measure of progress."

"We believe the way to begin is by redefining and thereby rebuilding the academic department. Some [will say]...that departments enshrine the disciplinary and professional fragmentation...; that departments tend to protect and isolate faculty both from one another and from the pressures for change that bear upon most institutions....Nonetheless, departments are the basic building blocks of most academic institutions....The task, as essential as it is difficult, is to make departments work....Departments need to become effective service providers that collectively design, monitor, and control the delivery of effective, cost-efficient courses and programs....We believe that the department should become a kind of instructional collective in which the compensation of individual members, and even their prospects of winning permanent place within the institutions, is a function of the department's collective performance....None of these changes can be commanded, legislated, or regulated. They must instead come from the sense of internal discontent that, when combined with external inducements, yields a purposeful recasting of institutional function." **AH**

QuickStats

The Continuing Affirmative Action Debate: A Level Playing Field?

The Regents of the University of California System recently chose to eliminate the use of race or gender as a factor in hiring, promotion, and admissions decisions. This move was based upon the perception that Affirmative Action programs are unnecessary and constitute “reverse discrimination” by giving women and minority candidates an “unfair advantage.” The assumption is that the “playing field” has been leveled so that all candidates are treated fairly and equally regardless of race, gender, or socioeconomic class. While decisions like the one in California are interesting and provide a clear perspective for debate, the discussion should not end there. Continued debate on these subjects is needed, not to paralyze us from making decisions, but to make sure that these decisions really do benefit everyone.

<u>Percentage Difference in Minority Applications to Univ. of California System After C.C.R.I.*</u>	
Number of Applicants	46,682 (+1.6%)
<u>Student Group (by race)</u>	<u>% Difference</u>
White	+ 1%
Asian-American	+ 3 %
African-American	- 11 %
Native-Americans	- 15 %
Mexican-Americans	- 5 %
Latinos	- 7 %

Source: The Chronicle of Higher Education, Daily Report for February 5, 1997.

* C.C.R.I. stands for the California Civil Rights Initiative voted in as an amendment to the state constitution which bars public colleges from using gender or racial preferences in hiring and admissions.

Event Announcement

On May 5th, The *Auburn Horizon* will be hosting a Panel Discussion

“What are the Public’s Expectations of Higher Education?”

*Who is the Public?
*How Can We Meet Multiple Expectations?
*How Can We Control Accountability?
*What Partnerships Can Be Created?

The Panel will include:
Dr. Wayne Flynt
Dr. Bill Gwin
Dr. David Wilson

Monday, May 5th 4:00-6:00 p.m.
Room 019 in Lowder Business Building

Around Academe Soundbites

We Couldn't Think of a Title

"Thinking is the hardest work there is, which is probably the reason why so few engage in it."

--Henry Ford

Honoring Resistance as Necessary

"Resistance kills change....New ideas often fail, not on their relative merits, but on how well we are able to handle resistance. Since change...is intensifying in all organizations every day, that rate of failure will continue to grow. Organizations will pay for these failed dreams in dollars and lost opportunities."

Maurer, R. (1996). Beyond the wall of resistance: Unconventional strategies that build support for change. Austin, Texas: Bard Books.

Environmental Compatibility

"Some critics charge that since TQM was developed for industry, it cannot be applied to education. But TQM is a concept that can have value in schools. The fact that it came from business and industry should not disqualify TQM from being used in schools. After all, many would argue that schools are in place to prepare students to function in society, and business and industry are important parts of the society that the students will graduate into. Much of the growth of secondary school came about as a result of the industrial revolution and the need for educated workers for industry. Perhaps schools should follow the lead of industry and adopt a method of improving the quality of output to the school environment." Schafer, M. D. (1997). TQM is more than just the "Programme du jour." Contemporary Education, 67 (2), p. 79.

Accountability is Nothing New

"It is not only what we do, but also what we do not do, for which we are accountable."

--Moliere

Info Technology as Civilizing Force

"We're living at a very special moment in humankind's long ascent toward civilized behavior. It is the consequence of the enormous advances of science and technology, sparked by information science and information technology, which have now made the human species, for the first time, the lead actor in its own evolution."

Cleveland, H. (1997). Information is the critical resource of the future. In, "Information Technology Revolution: Boon or Bane," article in The Futurist, 31 (1), p. 13.

Evolving Our Organizations

"Knowledge of evolutionary change should be a source of hope for managers in that, now that the forces that shape organizational forms are understood, they can search more vigorously for adaptive strategies. Understanding the trial-and-error principles of adaptation will help managers go beyond the 'fad of the week' strategies. Not least, the evolutionary view of organizational change helps managers recognize that the best source of adaptive advantage lies in the company's workers who will create new behaviors as selection pressures demand. Managers who keep workers focused on long-term goals and allow behavioral 'mutations' to play out will likely find many mutations that will lead to new competitive advantages."

Duening, T. (1997). Our turbulent times? The case for evolutionary organizational change. Business Horizons, 40 (1), p. 8.

Seize the Day

"All life is an experiment. The more experiments you make the better."

--Ralph Waldo Emerson

Actions Speak Louder Than Words

"It is well to think well; it is divine to act well."

--Horace Mann

TQM is Consistently Misapplied

"While TQM focuses on mechanical *methodologies* associated with Deming's work, the real benefits can be realized only when *fundamental assumptions* about people, organizations, and management are challenged. Deming's work is predicated on the belief that *everyone* is intrinsically motivated to learn and that no one wants to fail. Most organizations, however, are designed with the opposite in mind. That is why top-down authoritarian approaches are used to control rather than to facilitate people's natural desire to learn and succeed....TQM is not synonymous with Deming's principles. Using the TQM tools and calling the outcome 'quality' is like analyzing the contrapuntal motion of a Bach chorale and calling the resulting discoveries 'music.' In both cases, the tools become confused with the reason for using them. Deploying mechanical techniques created to help implement Deming's philosophy should not become a substitute for understanding the philosophy. The outcome would be more of the same, with an 'exciting' new label on it: TQM."

Blankstein, A. (1997). Eight reasons TQM can't work. Contemporary Education, 67 (2), p. 65.

Drowning in Information

"Infoglut is not a static matter. It's been estimated in the Encyclopedia of the Future that scientific information doubles about every 12 years and general information doubles about every two and a half years. But the really good stuff, the most important knowledge that should steer society, communities, enterprises, and individual lives, is increasingly in short supply relative to other information devoted to entertainment and commercial interests."

Marien, M. (1997). Top 10 reasons the information revolution is bad for us. In, "Information Technology Revolution: Boon or Bane", article in The Futurist, 31 (1), p. 11-12.

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