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## LP Breakthrough

1978 was the breakthrough year—for the Libertarian Party and for libertarian politics generally.

It was like magic. It began in the middle of May, when the now-famous property tax slash, California's Proposition 13, was even in the polls. Then came the typical smears of the state's political, business, bureaucratic, media and labor establishment, threatening dire calamities if Prop. 13 should pass. This scare tactic had always worked before. But this time something new and wondrous happened. The terror tactics of the Establishment proved counter-productive; the more they poured it on, the more the voters rose up in anger and disgust, until, on June 6, Prop. 13 smashed through the solid front of "respectable" opposition by a margin of 2:1.

The tax revolt soon spread across the country, and this time the politicians of all parties were scared. Many, such as California's shrewd Governor, Jerry Brown, quickly bent to the new wind. "Fiscal responsibility" filled the air. The face of American politics was sharply changed.

Then, in the November elections, the Libertarian Party vaulted toward major-party status. In 1976, Roger MacBride has gained 173,000 votes in 32 states (including the District of Columbia), amounting to 0.33% of the total vote in those states. The typical LP candidate across the country received somewhere around 1 to 2% of the votes. Now, in 1978, the story was very different. Of the 176 LP candidates for whom voting percentages are available, the average LP vote was a remarkable 6.0%.

Of all the LP races, two stand out above all the rest. One is the victory of Dick Randolph, 42-year-old insurance man from Fairbanks, Alaska, for the State House of Representatives. A former Republican state legislator, Randolph was elected for one of the six at-large seats with 35.3% of the vote. Libertarian Bruce Boyd was just beaten out for another at-large post. We have a Libertarian state legislator! The Randolph victory was presaged in the MacBride race, when MacBride gained 12% of the vote in Fairbanks, by far his best showing in the country.

But especially remarkable was the showing of Ed Clark, 48-year old Los Angeles attorney, in his Libertarian race for governor of California. Clark, founding chairman of the New York Free Libertarian Party, had moved to California, and was elected in 1977 to the LP national committee. Now Clark, in a phenomenal performance, corralled no less than 374,000 votes, amounting to 5.5% of the vote in the nation's largest and pace-setting state. It was the largest number of votes an LP candidate had ever received. Clark obtained 15% of the vote of the Republican candidate Evelle Younger, and in the San Francisco Bay Area Clark garnered a scintillating 25% of the Younger vote. We have arrived!

It began when Clark became the first LP candidate ever to show up as a separate line in the polls, with 2% in September. He rose to 3% in October. The trend was up! Cabdrivers, strangers at non-political cocktail parties, random bumper-stickers, began to announce that they

were voting for Clark. But even your editor, a veteran optimist, underestimated the actual Clark vote by about 50%.

How did Clark do it? It was with money, for his vote per dollar ratio was about 1.5:1, considered remarkably cost-effective for a "minor" party candidate. He did it, as the **San Francisco Examiner** put it the day before the election, by "captivating the media." Clark was clearly a highly intelligent and articulate candidate, he had stature and presence, and his low-key approach went over very well in his TV appearances. The contrast between Clark and the cretinous American Independent Party and Peace and Freedom Party candidates was striking, as was his obvious superiority in intelligence to Evelle Younger. Moreover, Clark had the rare ability to cleave to radical and principled positions, while coming forth with transition programs consistent with principle that sounded cogent and reasonable to the media. The media then began to cover him favorably and at length. Long and favorable articles began to appear about Clark in virtually all the major newspapers of the state. The **Bakersfield Californian**, a daily newspaper serving a metropolitan area of 200,000 people, endorsed Clark, calling him and his ideas "the wave of the future", a phrase echoed by CBS-TV commentators on election night. With Clark showing well on TV, radio, and in the press, the public then caught the Clark fever, and we were on the way to the 374,000 votes.

Who voted for Clark? A private survey of voters in the Los Angeles area revealed the startling statistic that 70% of the Clark voters had not voted since 1971, in contrast to the Brown and Younger non-voters, which totalled only 5%. In short, the Clark campaign made significant inroads into the growing legion of independent voters who, disgusted with politics and government, identify with neither major party. Here is a rich field for the LP to tap far more extensively.

Roger MacBride received 56,000 votes in California, out of a total vote of 7.6 million; Ed Clark gained 374,000 votes out of a total of 6.8 million. If we convert these votes to the presidential total, and multiply by the same ratio that the total U.S. MacBride vote displayed to his California vote, we get a projected total vote for an L.P. Presidential candidate of 1.26 million votes. And since the L.P. Presidential ticket will undoubtedly be on many more state ballots this time, 1.5 million votes seems almost probable. And much more if the breaks are right.

But for this, for the Libertarian Party's arrival as a major party about to reshape American political life, we must prove to be a mature, responsible party, interested in real world political concerns. The convention committee has scheduled a superb theme for the national Presidential nominating convention next September 6-9, at the Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles. The theme is: "Toward a Three Party System", and all the speeches and workshops are built around national political developments in the light of the imminent entry of the Libertarian Party into the mainstream of American political life. We

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# And Gladly Teach: Power and the Professors

by Justus D. Doenecke

Richard D. Mandell. *The Professor Game*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1977.

Professor X. *This Beats Working for a Living: The Dark Secrets of a College Professor*. New Rochelle, N.Y.: Arlington House, 1973.

Russell Kirk. *Decadence and Renewal in the Higher Learning*. South Bend, Ind.: Gateway, 1978.

Sidney Hook, Paul Kurtz, and Miro Todorovich, eds. *The Philosophy of the Curriculum: The Need for General Education*. Buffalo: Prometheus, 1975.

Sidney Hook. *Education and the Taming of Power*. La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1973.

"As with our colleges, so with a hundred 'modern improvements'; there is an illusion about them."

—Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*

Few areas in American life are so often criticized as higher education. After decades of celebration, the tone has changed markedly, with one book after another presenting indictments. From the calibre of the student admitted to college to the folkways of the professoriat, academe is under hostile scrutiny. And to cap things off, there are relatively few suggestions for reform, and many of these are either offered in a moment of whimsy or incapable of mass adoption. Hence today's writing often takes on a sardonic tone, with an author's indictment hiding a sense of desperation.

Mandell's book is typical of this genre. A historian at the University of South Carolina, Mandell deals with many aspects of faculty life, including tenure, sabbaticals, and publication. The bulk of the book is perceptive, although the work is marred by an almost unrelieved cynicism and obsession with sex. In his fictionalized profiles of faculty "ideal-types," Mandell shows signs of becoming a Grace Metalious when we need a Nathanael West.

## Never a Golden Age

From 1762, the year Rousseau wrote his *Emile*, the academy—Mandell notes—was based upon certain liberal premises: that man is essentially good; that environment either fosters or perverts this goodness; and that learning should be pleasant and natural. In America, we have the notion that all "real" campuses should take the form of well-tended parks, for bucolic surroundings are bound to generate both discipline and wisdom.

Yet Mandell denies that there was ever a golden age in higher education, correctly stating that relatively few American students have ever been genuinely interested in their courses. Until the 1950's, Ivy League students could get by with studying ten to fifteen hours a week; at many other institutions, the pace was even less, and the "honest grind" was a social pariah. Graduation, in fact, was difficult to avoid. (When this reviewer went to college, a straight-A average made any student an object of curiosity; only participation in contact sports and frequent use of latrine language permitted admission to some of the more prestigious fraternities.)

Mandell, of course, could trace ignorance much further back. In 1845, Thoreau wrote, "Even the college-bred and so called liberally educated men . . . have really little or no acquaintance with the English classics; and as for the recorded wisdom of mankind, the ancient classics and Bibles, which are accessible to all who will know of them, there are the feeblest efforts any where made to become acquainted with them"

Even now, so Mandell notes, many institutions are dominated by a loose anti-intellectual atmosphere, where students sleep often, professors act like genial buffoons, and administrators assume a "take-it-or-leave-it" attitude towards all who come their way. It is ironic that a leading Shakespeare scholar has to defend standards against the very administrators that should be supporting them. For Ronald S. Berman goes even further than Mandell, writing that "The sooner that pass-fail options, late withdrawals from courses, incompletes, and other practices that evoke sympathy but do little for productivity are dismissed, the sooner intellectual work will find its natural relationship to standards of performance." ("Teaching and Academic Life," *Imprimis*, Jan. 1979).

## The Lost Bonanza

There are, of course, occasional periods of bonanza. During the 1960's for example, our government was so eager to sink billions into a general crash program that we had branches of state universities built in practically every county. During the middle of the decade, for example, community colleges were opening at the rate of one per week. Amid such scare rhetoric as "disastrous shortage," "major national scandal," and "frightening gap," any decent Ph.D. candidate could choose among several juicy positions. In a seller's market, candidates were bribed by competitive salaries, lowered teaching loads, and generous research grants. In the better universities, the number of teaching hours was cut in half, while salaries increased at rates faster than the cost of living.

One example tells the story. A public college that did not even have a sociology department in 1962 might hire a chairman in '63. This chairman, the following year, would attend the national sociological meetings, where—on the spot—he was authorized to hire two full professors, three at the associate level, three assistants, and two instructors.

## Parsons Writ Large

Only in the late sixties did the job market dry up, and campuses begin the retrenchment we know today. A declining birthrate, soaring inflation, and disgruntled state legislatures soon took their toll, and now even some well-published scholars find permanent employment difficult. Perhaps a third of our students put in their time at institutions inferior to that of the now-defunct center of learning and scholarship, Parsons College of Parsons, Iowa. "One can almost assume this," writes Mandell, "of the black colleges and the financially strapped private and (to a lesser extent) public colleges that admit and cherish anybody who might be called 'a student.' The trained attendants who staff these colleges are called professors, but they are usually demoralized opportunists incapable of doing other work at anything like the same pay."

By now, Mandell claims, much of the university has become hopelessly corrupt. Tenure, originally designed to protect academic freedom, is "often used as a shield for indifference." Grade inflation goes hand in hand with lower performance, and both have permeated the best of institutions. In June 1975, seventy per cent of Harvard's graduates made Phi Beta Kappa, and in the same year 49 per cent of the grades given by the history department at Northwestern were A's. Such courses as "communication skills" have high enrollments, while the numbers of students in French and German steadily drop. (Incidentally, Mandell notes that the greatness of a graduate department can be measured by its hard line on the language requirement).

The outlook is bleak. Student judgements of faculty are usually so kind, Mandell argues, as to draw little line between good instruction and bad. If earnings remain good, faculty salaries have not kept pace with inflation. Because of the job crunch, the median age of professors in 1990 will be 48, and one can only wonder how many of these people will keep up in their fields.

## Class, Caste, and Status

Mandell does much with the institutional rankings made by the professors themselves. You have ten universities at the top (e.g. Harvard—really in a class by itself, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Stanford, Chicago, Berkeley), twenty-five in the category of "great": (e.g. the Big Ten, Cornell, Duke). Two minor points: less than one-fifth of the professoriat are in these two groups, and faculty here pride themselves on being called "Mister," not "Doctor."

Private colleges are in a different category. We begin with a small number of outstanding ones (e.g. Swarthmore, Reed, Oberlin, Smith, Bryn Mawr, Williams) where professors "have considerable self-respect, but they are a little aside from the usual pyramid of prestige. Once accustomed to these pleasant places, the teacher tends to stay in the league, for the demands on one's time and a quiet prejudice against outside fame are such as to work against his or her establishment of a

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## Gladly Teach — (Continued From Page 2)

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Immediately below, one finds about a hundred respectable colleges and universities (e.g. Wayne State, Notre Dame, most of the state campuses of the California and New York systems). Mandell defines "respect" in a charming way: when you go to a convention, you don't have to explain where the place is located. Perhaps a thi

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But beneath all, there is "academic Siberia"—the under-endowed church-related college, the regional branches of many middle-ranked state schools, those black colleges emphasizing social life, certain experimental schools, the many private women's college that are really finishing schools. (Mandell suggests that Alaska might be a more accurate term than Siberia, for Siberia "undoubtedly has many institutions of superior quality.") Such places keep those enrolled out of the employment agencies and offer "some sort" of education, but they continually demoralize the competent teacher, who wants to leave.

This reviewer notes that professors here are almost always called "Doctor" (or lovingly "Doc"), and if they never receive the Ph.D., there is no fear. At some time in their career, their students (who will never be corrected) will bestow the degree upon them. Some faculty even list "Doctor" in phone books or put it on stationery envelopes, and more than one professor has signed his name "Howard Jones, Ph.D."

### The Disciplinary Pecking Order

Professors, however, not only rank institutions but disciplines as well. Historians and political scientists rate highly, for they dress conservatively and intrigue with skill. Philosophers are just as articulate but often stay out of power struggles. Sociologists, psychologists, and anthropologists rank low, possessing coarse manners, wearing acrylic knits, seducing coeds, and sweating under the arms. English professors are of high to middling prestige, being "apt to develop tics, to fight like sopranos, and to carry grudges for years." Foreign language faculty rate low in the hierarchy, for they are "likely to dress like tropical birds and are even whackier." (Their departments, says Mandell, are often called "zoos.") Scientists possess high prestige, although "they are rarely able to sound convincing when they explain just what they teach or how they do research."

The lowest of the low are the professors of education, and Mandell's description is a classic: "These isolated and scorned souls are bewildered in committee meetings, where they tend quietly to grind their teeth and to blink their eyes slowly. When challenged or otherwise required to say something, their mouths go dry. They speak as they write, in passive voice with added filler words of 'situation,' 'process,' 'meaningful,' and ceaseless 'y'know's.'" Among this group the title "Doctor"—usually an education degree, not the Ph.D.—knows no bounds, and educationalists "glow appreciatively when they hear it."

### An Overpaid Profession?

But prestige is not the only factor that makes people prefer university teaching to working for Sears or Three M. "For what they do," argues Mandell as he looks at salaries on an hourly basis, "professors are very well paid and they have great amounts of time to dispose of exactly as they please" (emphasis his). The academic year is short and, in large institutions, teaching assistants do much of the grading. (In many schools, both large and small, many teachers give only perfunctory attention to term papers, which are returned to students without any comment at all—only a letter grade).

The busiest professors subscribe most enthusiastically to "academic self-government," fritting away their lives on issues really decided elsewhere. (A Brockport economist aptly calls them "whirling dervishes.") The committee system is a bane, unless some needed lobbying is in order. Indeed, according to Mandell, disillusioned professors write "so much about silliness in committees because only at these times do they see in action those of their colleagues who are not close friends."

### Publish or Perish: A Major Myth

To Mandell, the phrase "publish or perish" might be a myth, indeed a paper tiger. One would hope, he writes, that "the professor's self-respect as an intellectual, a scientist, a professional, or a worker" would induce him to "think hard and creatively," but such is seldom the case.

He offers some damning statistics to prove his claim. "Roughly half of the professors now in place," he observes, "have never published anything—not even a two-page book review, a pasted-together chapter in a textbook, an edited document, an anecdote for a genealogical journal. Another twenty-five per cent never publish anything of substance that was not originally in their doctoral dissertations. Roughly 15 per cent of the professors labor along perhaps publishing a second book (or its equivalent in a nonbook field) requiring ten or more years of work. Fewer than 5 per cent of the professors who have been on the job five or more years are indeed strenuously engaged in scholarly work." In short, about three-fourths of our faculties publish little or nothing.

True, some twenty to thirty leading universities set such guidelines as an article a year, a book every five. (If an article is twenty pages and a book 400, we have a total of 500 pages in five years, a figure that equals a hundred pages a year or two pages a week. Many professors certainly expect more than an average of two pages a week from students requested to submit term papers.) However, due to tenure, this rule is impossible to enforce anywhere, and it is little wonder that less than five per cent of the Ph.D.'s in history maintain this pace.

### One Scholar's Claim

Historian Thomas C. Reeves, an able and rigorous scholar (and, as this reviewer can testify, a most generous one), gave his interpretation as to why. He writes, "The great majority of us toil in obscure institutions that passively if not actively discourage the labor related to research and publication. Rewards are distributed to those who, regardless of means, win student popularity and maintain high enrollments. Moreover, college teaching is much less demanding than the production of articles and books—as any honest professor will admit. To be increasingly rewarded for doing little is almost irresistibly attractive."

To Mandell, many such individuals are just plain lazy. They will "just not think hard and consecutively, pull their chairs up to their desks, return to their quiet laboratories after supper or during the summer vacation. Nor do many of them read with care the newer journals in their fields or attend scholarly congresses for the purpose of finding out where the exciting problems in their fields are likely to be in the years ahead." Mandell here makes some telling points, for many a student has witnessed seminars led with no preparation and has heard really "in" professors continually claim that leading journals were worthless. The facts never change, the pseudo-scholar will pontificate, as he boasts that he has read little in his discipline in ten, fifteen, even twenty years.

### The Case of the Adored Amateur

One can only elaborate on this point. Books get unwritten, then unread, and we end up boasting about it all. Often, incidentally, such flippancy is combined with *ex cathedra* pronouncements on everything from Brueghel paintings to the quantum theory, or a desire to teach advanced courses in at least five different, and quite diverse, disciplines. One distinguished historian of the American Civil War refuses to read

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seminar papers not grounded in primary sources, remarking that "Any one who has not done the required work has no right to any conclusions." Now, so it seems, formal ignorance denotes an intuitive wisdom, and no Transcendentalist of Emerson's day celebrated the untutored spirit with greater fervor.

One is reminded of the comment of historian John Lukacs: "There are many symptoms which suggest that the dangers of professional intellectualism are now the opposite from what people thought: instead of pedantry, sloppiness; instead of the narrow burrowing of the parochial bookworm, the sleazy superficiality of the professional intellectual."

### An Academic Jonathan Swift

Mandell's remedies are desperate, perhaps serving as a kind of counterpart of Swift's "modest proposal." Making employment conditions less attractive will cut into recruitment, thereby alleviating the job glut. For example, one could increase teaching loads by one third, and demand an eleven month working year and a thirty hour week. Technical education would be shunted to community and junior colleges. All but elite institutions would abolish attendance requirements and credit, and professors would be required to engage in a variety of tasks, ranging from ushering at rock concerts to clinical counselling. Tenure would be available to those willing to accept a one-third cut in salary; for others, successive three year contracts would be the norm.

Mandell, however, is not the only cynic. "Professor X," evidently a professor in Western history at a Great Plains institution, offers a short, emotional indictment based upon personal experience. Much of his book is impressionistic, bordering on the shallow and sensationalist; it should be seen as a gossipy, occasionally amusing tirade. Permeating the volume is a political conservatism, not surprising in a man who backed Nixon in 1968 and who deplora a "my-country-may-it-always-be-wrong" attitude he finds pervading the campus.

To X, the Ph.D. has become "a license to steal, inasmuch as the position of college instructor demands little work, less intelligence, and no courage." Writing as one who has just discovered sin, he berates his colleagues for pomposity, elitism, and obsession with power at the expense of truth.

### The Slothful Scholar

Sloth, X finds, is the greatest academic sin. "The professor," he writes, "spends very little energy revising his lectures or grading or researching or writing—or even reading. Especially not reading in his own field of specialty." X quotes the distinguished frontier scholar Walter Prescott Webb, who said, "When you publish, never expect understanding and appreciation from the people you most normally would expect it from, your own colleagues. They will make fun of your efforts, carry tales about you, belittle you. This they did to me—until I became president of the American Historical Association. Then they were glad to drop my name."

On several items, X is particularly perceptive. The first deals with committees. Contrary to myth, so he claims, administrators encourage these peculiar institutions. Why? Because they realize that committees provide excellent therapy, give participants the illusion of power, and allow faculty to plead business when questions concerning productivity are raised. He writes, "Any professor who has a gripe, legitimate or otherwise, can be referred to a committee where his proposal will be buried under an avalanche of words, or procrastination, of debate. And should his proposal get favorable action in one committee, it can always be referred to yet another one. By the time a solution or change is recommended, the passage of time has lessened to such an extent that no action is needed. Thus the committee becomes a means of keeping faculty discontent at a minimum."

X also calls the shots correctly when he defends publishing. His claim that "the producing scholar is also the best lecturer" is quite overdrawn,

for many distinguished scholars cannot keep an audience awake for five minutes. However, X is on firm ground when he asserts that "Without any exception the professor who would do well in the classroom must continue to research. Advancements in every discipline make it necessary for the professor to research constantly, else he will become hopelessly outdated (emphasis his)"

Indeed, to elaborate on X, those very faculty who are the most behind boast the most that they have long ago mastered the fundamentals of the discipline; such people now claim to be engaged in more cosmic issues, ranging from the rise and fall of the West to the food service in the college cafeteria. We all seem to forget Chaucer's classic description of the scholar in the *Canterbury Tales*, with his phrase "and gladly teach" prefaced by "and gladly would he learn." Real teaching, of course, is always dependent upon continual learning.

### Models Needed

We all, of course, have our cynical anecdotes that could match any by Mandell or X. And we can all produce some damning statistics. But if higher education is ever to change, models are needed. Some of us have had the privilege of attending lectures in which the material is updated to the very moment of delivery. (Here the names of such historians as David Herbert Donald, Wesley Frank Craven, and Arno J. Mayer come to mind). Or we have had research rigorously criticized page by page, paragraph by paragraph, line by line by professors who saw painstaking rigor as integral to their vocation as scholars. (One thinks of a host of individuals—Arthur S. Link, David Herbert Donald, Forrest McDonald, James T. Patterson, Alan Peskin, Thomas Reeves). One pious academic, writing in another age, called rigorous criticism of his own quite distinguished work "an art of grace." Now the slogan is second-thought, no matter how deep the ignorance, and even the pointing to grammatical faults can be grounds for bitter enmity.

Perhaps those of us who studied under a curriculum that stressed a common corpus of humanistic learning will always remain dissatisfied. This reviewer found the core program of Colgate University crucial to his intellectual growth; his wife had a similar experience with the University of Chicago's extension curriculum required of all students attending the Art Institute of Chicago.

Most memorable of all were those faculty who saw their vocation in humanistic terms. This reviewer will never forget Earl Daniels, literature professor at Colgate, who once snapped, "You know, in the *Nigger of the Narcissus*, Conrad, doesn't give a damn about racial problems!" Or Jonathan Kistler's empathic treatment of Eliot's "Gift of the Magi", Or Rodney L. Mott's exposition of Marbury vs. Madison, Or M. Holmes Hartshorne on Dostoyevski's "Grand Inquisitor".

Secondary schools too had their greats, perhaps more of them. One thinks of Walter Clark and Miles Kastendieck at Brooklyn's Poly Prep, Pierson Curtis and D. Bruce Lockerbie of Stony Brook School. Then there are such headmasters as Allan B. Healy of Lawrenceville, Lewis Perry and William Saltonstall of Exeter, the late Rowland Cox of Groton, Claude M. Fuess of Andover, and George Van Santvoord of Hotchkiss. They had a range of learning, a degree of personal integrity, and an ease in communication that put many of our college administrators today to shame. In a very real sense they were eighteenth century men, men of broad diffuse culture; now it is a rare administrator who writes without jargon, much less draws upon the cultural traditions of the past.

### Enter Russell Kirk

Of the few Americans perpetuating this great tradition, the name of Russell Kirk is foremost. Those who celebrate the joys of traditional, humanistic learning should find his book the most helpful. It is Kirk who addresses himself time and again to the curriculum, and who even offers models of what good education should be.

"One the whole—to express myself mildly—the higher learning in America is a disgrace," he says. "A great many are schooled; very few are educated." His indictment is legion, and with much of it we are familiar: the "open" curriculum, the swelling empire of the educationalist, quasi-professional sports, gigantism of all sorts at Behemoth U. Today's college, he writes, has something for everybody—except for the student concerned with wisdom and virtue and the professor who adheres to some coherent body of knowledge.

### Porn Queens and Thurgood Marshall

But if his is a story that has long been told Kirk still tells it well, and some of his revelations are "marvelous" in the generic sense of the term. His brief sketch of Goddard College, or of the porn queen who enrolled at

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Michigan State, can match anything Mandell or X can offer. And outside of Dwight MacDonald, few could offer the kind of damning critique given to insipid high school English anthologies. One editor, Marjorie B. Smiley, not only filled her collection with absolute trivia but modestly included one of her own poems as well. "A judge is a man/ is where he's come from/ is what he's done/is/where he aims to go," the latter the concluding lines of "Mr. Justice Marshall." (Deep, deep). "For my part," replies Kirk, "I'd rather not be judged by a magistrate who 'is where he aims to go'; I'd prefer one with knowledge of law."

For Kirk, World War II began it all. At that time, many intellectuals abdicated their professional responsibilities to serve uncritically the patriotic cause. Said philosopher George Boas of Johns Hopkins, for example, concerning the soldier, "All the learning of the world is not worth the experience he will gain from his military career; and if he is killed, at least he will not have asked some one else to die for him." John Erskine, who pioneered in general education at Columbia, claimed not to dread the blows the war struck at humane letters.

### John Hannah and George Eliot

To Kirk, it was in 1953 that deterioration really began to set in, for many administrators sought increased enrollment at any cost. Symbolizing this surge was John Hannah, president of Michigan State and a booster worthy of Sinclair Lewis's Gideon Plantis. Although he only possessed one earned degree, a B.S. in poultry husbandry, he bore proudly an honorary doctorate conferred by MSU when he became its head. He had married the daughter of the former president.) Not a man of particular learning, he would for example, refer to "that great man" George Eliot. Under Hannah's aegis, writes Kirk, "MSU's fat catalogue offered curricula for every taste except refined taste." (To read Kirk's essays in the fifties, one would not think there was a worse administrator in the nation. There were some, and there still are).

By the sixties, higher education was experiencing a great barbecue, with bonanzas offered to private and public schools alike. Who pays the piper calls the tune, of course, and soon the price was to be paid. And now administrations who were so eager for the abundant soft money are facing federal regulations that make serious faculty recruitment, not to mention decent teaching, more and more difficult.

Recently state interference has taken some particularly grotesque forms. To receive money from New York State, Roman Catholic institutions must rid themselves of required chapel services or theology courses, remove any religious statement of purpose from university publications, eliminate hierarchy officials as trustees, and permit Protestant theologians to examine libraries and interview faculty. One almost wishes for the none-too-benign influence of Cardinal Spellman, who at least would not back off from a fight.

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### The Myth of Relevance

Kirk's comments on student demands are equally telling, particularly the demand for relevance. "In the long run," he writes, "the sort of education which most profoundly affects the civil social order is that education which lifts the student above the confusion of the hour's quarrels. The function of the college is not to gratify material desires, but to introduce students to long views. The function of the college is not to rouse the young to revolt against the nature of things, but to acquaint them with the wisdom of their ancestors. The function of the college is not to promulgate an extravagant ideal of human perfectibility, but to teach us the joy and the tragedy of the human condition. The function of the college is not to inflame the passions, but to lead us toward right reason."

Hence, to Kirk "the calm analysis of Tocqueville was more relevant to 1968 than the buring of draft-cards or the Poor People's Campaign in Washington; Virgil's advocacy of *labor, pietas, fatum* had more meaning for 1968 than the black flag waving above the Sorbonne." No authors are more relevant to our predicament than Augustine or Plato. Confucius remains more significant than Mao, Aristotle than Sartre.

Kirk's remarks on academic freedom are particularly telling. "Every right is married to a duty," he asserts. "The duty which corresponds to the right of academic freedom is that the scholar must be dedicated to the conservation and the advancement of truth. He must be the guardian who reconciles permanence and change, and the active thinker who remembers the wisdom of our ancestors . . . He must be a temperate man of intellect, in short; and though he ought to hold steadfastly by his principles and ought not to be a mere trimmer to the breezes of the hour, still he ought to remember that, by his vocation, he has forsworn the lust after power. If he wishes to be an ideologue or a sophist, he should take himself out of the academy into the market place."

### Demythologizing the Past

Nothing if not an iconoclast, Kirk challenges the prevailing notion that the great universities of the past were governed only by undergraduates. Ordinarily they were religious institutions, subject to ecclesiastical authority with students as acolytes. Jumping ahead several hundred years, Kirk denies that any McCarthyite reign of terror took place in the 1950's. And on quite a different point, Kirk—like Mandell—sees no Golden Age in the fifties. In 1955, the dean of Columbia Law School suggested that many liberal arts colleges teach next to nothing. Their graduates were not only ignorant of literature and American history; they did not know how to use a dictionary, much less read with dexterity.

Many of academe's woes, claims Kirk in an argument that goes back at least as far as Albert Jay Nock, are rooted in over-enrollment. Too much of the student body is a purposeless mass, a bewildered and bored Lonely Crowd that would be better off in vocational training. Just before the intense activism of the late sixties, Christopher Jencks estimated that only one per cent of the student body sought to master a serious intellectual discipline, two per cent a more general education, and perhaps five per cent an introduction to middle-brow culture. (Except for a relatively few institutions, one doubts if the ratio has increased today).

Yet for a man so conservative, Kirk has some surprising notions. He by no means endorses promiscuity, but concedes that in loco parentis has been interpreted too strictly. He recognizes that teaching and research assistants have long been exploited. And he praises anarchist writer Paul Goodman, finding Goodman's attacks on Philistine administrators particularly valid.

### A Model Institution

Kirk takes much time outlining what an ideal institution should *not* be. It should avoid building more physical plant, drop out of quasi-professional athletics and vocation training, refuse to admit substandard students, and prohibit permissiveness. His ideal college would not engage in depth psychiatry. Students with serious emotional problems, he says, "should be transferred to another sort of institution: despite its recognition of moral worth, this model college should be engaged in the improvement of intellects, not the curing of psychoses." A school of business administration might be the greatest snare. Denying that a business degree means anything to today's employers, he writes, "I declare it a very odd concept that in a time when junior executives stand by the thousands in the unemployment-compensation queues, we ought to turn out more of the breed by forced draft, at the expense of liberal learning."

But a school is better defined by what it is than what it is not, and here

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Kirk justly stresses the curriculum. In his model curriculum, he calls for study of the nation's past, claiming that a people uninterested in its history might cease to be a people. Political theory he finds equally crucial, and here he gets quite specific. Names are named, and students would have a working familiarity with Sophocles, Thucydides, Plato, Virgil, Cicero, St. Paul, St. Augustine, Gregory the Great, Burke, and Adam Smith. Although a Roman Catholic, he includes both Luther and Calvin. Grecian glory, Roman virtue, Christian wisdom, the growth of European order, the Reformation, British constitutionalism, those movements in our own time that stress "authority and freedom, the inner order of the soul and the outer order of the commonwealth, the complementary character of permanence and change"—all would be essential to the curriculum.

### Community: Cliche or Reality?

Kirk is at his best in redefining that much over-worked word "community." Genuine community, he notes, is knit together by certain enduring norms. Without these, people pursue only selfishness or hedonism, and the weak innocents (to use the words of Shaw) "stand by in helpless horror."

To foster a sense of true community in the academy, the basic disciplines—literary, philosophical, and mathematical—must lie at the core. The study of literature would encompass both classical and modern languages, with the philosophical meaning of great works stressed. Much history would be subsumed under literature. Philosophy would be equally sweeping, as it would include metaphysics, ethics, and politics. As sociological knowledge is "the crown of social studies, not the footing," it—and psychology—would be treated as aspects of philosophy. Economics would stress the great economists and their theories, biology the philosophical understanding of organic life. All the arts would be taught philosophically as aesthetics; there would be no studio work. Such "practical" courses as public administration, technical engineering, or education would go by the boards. Instead, the effort throughout would focus on the development of young people who want to cultivate intellect and conscience, and who are willing to give up immediate specialization in order to do so.

Kirk even outlines an ideal high school literature program, one that includes study of St. Paul, Shakespeare, Milton, Twain, Melville, Dickens, Eliot, Conrad, and Swift. (This reviewer would not have eliminated Beowulf, some short Anglo-Saxon poems, Everyman, the Second Shepherd's Tale, the Canterbury Tales, and Hardy.) Noting the decline in reading proficiency, Kirk comments that "all the Xhosa children in the autonomous republic of the Transkei, in South Africa, study *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, by the way; but that is too much to expect of New York Children."

Such concern with literature at all levels of schooling reveals one of Kirk's major concerns: that is that genuine relevance is related to things that are permanent, not to the potential issues of the moment. We are dealing, he continually maintains, with nothing less than the splendor and tragedy of the human condition. "When images of Dante are rejected, the images of LeRoi Jones will be applauded," and political order—not just the cultural one—will become nihilistic.

### Great Programs and Great Books

Kirk praises certain educational programs and institutions: the Integrated Humanities Program of the University of Kansas, International College in Los Angeles, St. John's College, Cardinal Newman College, Thomas Aquinas College, St. Mary's of northern California. Yet he is not totally uncritical, even of these. For example, he finds that the Great Books program of St. John's can neglect historical continuity, not include enough imaginative literature, omit such conservatives as Burke and Newman, and employ its methods a trifle pedantically. Thomas Aquinas College, which Kirk sees as the best college in the nation, does not do enough with history and humane letters, too much with metaphysics.

Most helpful of all, in some ways, is Kirk's recommended reading. On the purpose of liberal education, C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*; Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*; William Oliver Martin, *Order and Integration of Knowledge*; and T. S. Eliot, *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*; On religion and education, Alexander Miller, *Faith and Learning*; Robert Elliott Fitch, *Odyssey of the Self-Centered Self*; Denis Baly, *Academic Illusion*; and Philip Phenix, *Education and the Common Good*. On able pedagogy, Gilbert Highet, *The Art of Teaching*. On syllabi, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, *The Art of Reading*. Indeed, one may safely say

that Kirk's reading suggestions are an education in themselves.

### Where the Reviewer Differs

There are some claims with which this reviewer differs. Small colleges can be just as much of a wasteland as Behemoth U. and many are. Michigan State, Kirk's whipping boy, has harbored some distinguished scholars—Russell B. Nye, Paul A. Varg, and Warren I. Cohen come to mind—and has pioneered in the concept of an honors college. Research need not be a retreat for a scholar but integral to serious intellectual development—and to teaching. The John Dewey attacked by Kirk bears little resemblance to the man of disciplined intelligence eulogized by Sidney Hook. Kirk may rarely have heard a union official "speak of wisdom and virtue," but one wonders what wisdom and virtue lie in the bureaucratic fight. Not all integrative courses substitute facile generalization for serious knowledge; some pursue selected topics intensely and with rigor.

A more fundamental difference concerns the whole role of skepticism. Some doubt of established verities is crucial to growth, for the intellectual life—at its heart—involves the asking of questions. A reading of Hume's "Inquiry into Human Understanding," or Bertrand Russell's "A Free Man's Worship," or John Dewey's "A Common Faith," or Sidney Hook's "The New Failure of Nerve" can lead to far more religious and philosophical maturity than exposure alone to Augustine, Aquinas, and Luther. (See also my comments concerning Kirk in "That Noble Dream," *Libertarian Forum*, Oct. 1977.

But more than any other educational critic, Kirk has shown us the way. We are permanently in his debt.

This is not to say that there are not other efforts, and some are quite perceptive. The president of Amherst College, addressing the opening convocation in September, 1977, said, "Name any decent college or university in the United States these days, and you will find a committee on the curriculum at work." The Hook anthology testified to this observation, made by John William Ward, and it is a work that should be continually consulted. The volume is based on a conference held by the University Center for Rational Alternatives at Rockefeller University, New York, in September 1973.

### Student Irrationality

The present picture, as many of the contributors note, is a dismal one, and fault in part lies with the students. Many are doctrinaire ideologues, suffering—not from an overdose of skepticism—but from a total lack of it. Others tend to celebrate the private, personal, and mystical to such an extent that they hold conventional rationality in contempt. All too often, so the contributors argue, young intellectuals take their own personal experiences, not reason or tradition, as the sole touchstone of truth. Such sages as Charles Reich, for example, advocate a Consciousness III that stresses what is vaguely called "the total experience of life" at the expense of logic and analysis. (One college president was so enthusiastic about Reich's work that he bought multiple copies for faculty reading).

If a college responds to the interests of certain vocal students, the curriculum cannot help but be distorted. As Nathan Glazer of Harvard writes, "In the social sciences unfortunately it is possible, and even respectable, to respond to students' interests by changing what one teaches: to give up Max Weber for Frantz Fanon or a pluralistic approach to American society and culture for a Marxist one; to replace Western civilization with Eastern or African studies." Such foolish pandering reaches absurd lengths when, as noted by Brooklyn College sociologist Ernest Gross, excellent New York City institutions advertised courses in astrology and pornography.

### Faculty Irresponsibility

Yet professors too are at fault, and Hook—now with the Hoover Institution—makes no more telling point than his comment that many academicians do not believe in the validity of what they are doing. (To

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push the point even further than Hook, academe provides a haven for those who find their own businesses, the stock market, pro football, deep-sea diving, and social activism their true calling). Far too often, professors see their role as the training of apprentices only, not novice students, and communicate in a technical language understood only by the initiated. As the Columbia economist Charles Issawi notes, "We social scientists excel at producing turgid, flatulent, pretentious paragraphs, full of jargon that, at least four times out of five, is quite unnecessary."

And even bookstore owners are not immune. Physicist Gerald Holton of Harvard notes that students who wander through the Harvard Coop "will find the whole category 'Science' is banished to one distant set of five-foot shelves, largely devoted to ecology, Issac Asimov, gardening, Immanuel Velikovsky, and manuals on the care of cats and dogs. To reach that section, in this and most similar stores, one must take care lest one gets lost in labyrinthine spaces given over to what really seems to sell today—the occult, sci-fi, transcendental musings, handbooks on shamanism or mushrooms, and the achievement of joy through various types of athletics."

### Experiment: Encounter Group over Augustine

Many experimental programs only compound the problem. "In the name of all that is new and relevant," claims Herbert I. London of NYU's University Without Walls, "Plato and Confucius become the flotsam and jetsam of history and Malcolm X and Hermann Hesse the only heroes. In the name of egalitarianism, academics ignore their roles and let students decide what is worth reading. And in the name of self-actualization, an encounter session leads to personal growth while an evening reading *The City of God* is considered an exercise in Futility."

Traditional expectations, such as research papers, are lost, and students receive credit for irrelevant life experience. Non-directed field work is defined *per se* as possessing a learning experience, ignoring the adage of George Bernard Shaw that "You can take an ass around the world and he won't become a horse." Sometimes students spend so much time deciding what to do that they never get around to mastering specific material of any sort. The comment of André Gide, "Art is born of discipline and dies of freedom," would find few adherents among some devotees of experiment, including those young people who deny the possibility of objective standards. When London asked a group of them how to make professional judgments, one replied, "Man, you know, you just know."

### The Need for Requirements

To assure a serious education, requirements are necessary. Hook aptly comments, "The proposition that most students, upon immediate entry, know what their genuine educational needs are seems to me quite

#### LOST CAUSE

Sixty thousand men  
Laid down their only lives  
For the Johnsons  
And the Nixons  
Who made them  
Take their ride

Whoever will remember  
Their futile bloody gore  
When the history books  
Are opened  
In fifty years  
Or more

\*\*\*

—Agustin De Mello

dubious. As a rule, they no more know what their educational needs are than they know their medical needs." The prominent philosopher continues, "The notion that the generality of students . . . can make an informed and intelligent decision about their abiding educational needs before being exposed to the great subject matters and disciplines of the liberal tradition is highly questionable." For an administration to say this, of course, and to prescribe minimal requirements, takes courage.

For Hook, essential to liberal education is the need to communicate clearly, to possess knowledge of one's body and mind and of the world of nature, to have historical perspective, to be aware of contemporary conflicts of value, to master principles of inquiry, and to be familiar with the artistic and cultural legacies of civilization. Such mastery, Hook argues, involves mastery of fact as well as method, and it is the whole concept of fact that is too often on the defensive. Such goals might appear utopian in today's peculiar environment, but they are truly indispensable to serious pedagogy. Stress on "intuitive knowledge" and "residual concepts," this reviewer argues, irresponsibly downplays mastery of substance, cheapening the entire academic enterprise.

Hook makes another point. It is, in Hook's eyes, particularly mastery of scientific principles that permits one to be "truly sane," for some knowledge of our place in "an orderly, noncapricious cosmos" is needed for survival. Unfortunately, he notes, there are more students enrolled in astrology than in astrophysics.

Hook fortunately is not alone. Philosopher Ernest Nagel of Columbia concurs: knowledge of natural science method is essential; for centuries, it has been regarded as "the most effective way men have yet devised for acquiring competent knowledge of the nature of things." Ronald Berman, in a different but equally valid insight, stresses that "education means access to the best of what is thought and said" (emphasis his), and here he notes Milton and Shakespeare. If a student does not know why he is a Western man, asks Aldo S. Bernardo of Verrazano College, can he ever expect to realize what it means to be a non-Western one?

### History: The Shame and the Glory

Several contributors stress historical consciousness. As Wm. Theodore de Bary, provost at Columbia, notes, "If the past should not be sacrificed to the present, neither should the present be sacrificed to the past." Conscious neglect of the remote and unfamiliar, writes Frederick A. Olafson, philosopher at UC-San Diego, ends up ultimately with the only voice heard being our own. On the other hand, as Issawi notes, history shows how people actually behave—not how the utopian theorist or the amateur politician says they do.

Even history, however, can be taught irresponsibly, as Gertrude Himmelfarb of CUNY tells us. True, most historians cannot compete with the president of the Modern Language Association, who declared the study of all literature (or was it only Milton?) obsolete. Yet, a form of historical relativism—stressing the "interesting" nature of an interpretation at the expense of its truth—is dangerous. So is the claim that the psychic character of the historian necessarily enters into the history he writes. And so too is the assertion that "only Black historians are competent to write the history of Blacks, and women historians the history of women."

Several of the contributors would differ with Russell Kirk, or at least modify his classic and Christian emphasis. Hook, for example, warns against attempting to derive the curriculum from some overall view of "first and last things," claiming that no consensus on such matters is possible. M.H. Abrams, professor of English at Cornell, warns against converting disciplines into dogmas: "the humanistic search for truth," he writes, "is always in process and is never finished." Paul Kurtz, editor of the *Humanist*, repudiates obedience to what he calls "dicta or law", but stresses that freedom from authority and tradition need not lead to anarchy or promiscuity. One's own experience and reflection, he argues, can lead to responsible moral judgments, an inescapable ingredient of any serious education.

### The Problems Within

Such position papers often suffer from a surfeit of rhetoric. It is easy to invoke the muses, more difficult to plan concrete programs. One wishes for more concrete examples, more model syllabi, of the type that Kirk provides.

Then there are some confessions of weakness. Glazer, for example, confesses to a general foundering among the social sciences. He admits that "We are well past the enthusiasm for social planning and engineering of the New Deal period, past our self-confidence about

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reshaping a democratic and productive world with the aid of the social sciences in the post-World-War-II world." However, he finds no principle for determining what social theories should be put aside, what ones should become the basis for serious work. And if the fellows at Stanford's Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences are fragmented, what hope is there for the average college curriculum committee? To UCLA economist Thomas Sowell, many general education courses encourage diffuseness and dilettantism, with those in the social sciences particularly prone to misinformation and low standards. Arguing for depth, not breath, he claims that "a course devoted solely to William James has more chance of success than a course that sweeps across the centuries in a semester." (This reviewer must dissent here. A thorough introductory course is often a much-needed guide into an area. Otherwise, how would the student know where James stood vis a vis Plato, Kant, Hempel, and Ryle?)

### The Taming of Power

Hook elaborates on his ideas in his own 1973 anthology, a collection that encompasses essays written from 1939 to 1972. Here again, we have Hook's long-standing opposition to politicization of the campus, and his equally long-standing defense of John Dewey, Hook's mentor and a much misunderstood man.

If Hook opposed a totally fixed curriculum, he finds that demands for "revelance" are often politically inspired or the product of a narrow utilitarianism. "Relevant to what?," he asks, noting that Einstein's theory of relativity—when first propagated—had no practical use. Moving to the problem of tenure, he stresses that tenure should be "considered an accolade to the earned" (emphasis his), not a right automatically conferred. "Where there is doubt, the answer should be 'no,'" he writes. Indeed, administrators who seek to give everyone tenure will only destroy the system, thereby placing everyone's job in jeopardy.

### Two Vocations?

Hook deals with many other subjects, but my remarks will now remain limited to his comments on the teaching vocation. He distinguishes between teaching on the graduate and undergraduate levels. Graduate teaching, he notes, focusses upon primary research, with the instructor operating on the frontiers of knowledge and leading and inspiring co-workers. The undergraduate teacher, on the other hand, has quite a different task. "He must try to develop persons who are intellectually sensitive, emotionally mature, and methodologically sophisticated at the same time he helps them to find themselves and to make the choices of calling and career that are so decisive in their lives. The good teacher at the college level must be not only a schoolmaster but, as Karl Mannheim put it, a lifemaster, by which he means not merely a purveyor of knowledge but a directing, inspiring, correcting force in the life of those he teaches." But Hook continues that no one starts out to be primarily a good college teacher: "He resigns himself to it only when he surrenders his hopes to make a distinctive or creative contribution to his field."

This reviewer concurs with the thrust of Hook's distinction, but makes one qualification. The college teacher must engage in some research, that is some primary investigation, even if this reasearch does not always lead to publication. Otherwise, he can fall into the role of a genial "Mr. Chips," regurgitating old material year after year in a way that—no matter how dynamically or cleverly presented—can only mislead students. Eloquent testimony to "lifemasters", in short, can apply to some excellent classroom teachers who have never published a line in their lives. But it can, and often does, hide a multitude of sins, permitting the incompetent and the banal to justify sheer laziness. Sociologist Robert Nisbet stated the case eloquently when he said that the most able pedagogues from Abelard to Marcuse were listened to not because they were "great teachers"; rather it was because they had something to say.

In conclusion, there are probably as many different philosophies of education as there are educators. The followers of Kirk will always seek a different kind of education than the followers of Hook. This reviewer finds both thrusts necessary: stress on the scientific method can only supplement the classical tradition, and vice versa. The important thing is not to fall into the kind of cynicism engendered by the findings of Mandell and X. For no matter how many disappointments we face, and no matter how many times we have been subject to exploitation, there is hope so long as such people as Kirk, Hook, Berman, and Nagel continue to articulate educational philosophy and plan programs.

One line in Frost reads "One could do more than be a swinger of birches." Perhaps the poet was talking about more than trees.

## LP Breakthrough —

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must endorse this theme, and repudiate the last-ditch efforts of "futurists", fantasts and space cadets to deflect the convention to the contemplation of the lotus-land of their looney fantasies. And, above all, we must select a Presidential candidate with great care. We must select someone who will look like a credible Presidential candidate, who will make fine showing on national television, and who is knowledgeable about all the important political issues of our time. The LP presidential candidate must be a man of stature and not a showman. He must be able to "captivate the media" on a nationwide scale.

The choice of Presidential candidate is one of the most important decisions we shall ever make. If Roger MacBride had not been nominated in 1976, the Libertarian Party would have collapsed and never reached its current stature. Now our choice will determine whether we are to burst forth into a major party or remain waiting in the wings. We must make our decision, not on the basis of factions or personal resentments, but after giving a long and objective look at which candidate is best equipped to bring the Libertarian Party into the mainstream of American life.

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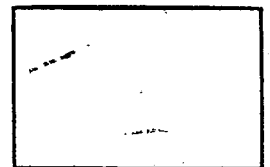
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