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ing programs, no more than one-third of adult classroom learning is now provided by colleges and universities. For the new generation of college students, college is frequently a business venture, a shift in focus that parallels the business like attention administrators are paying to enrollment and endowment resources. In this marketplace climate, demands for vocational relevance have increased.

William Slottman, Dean of the Division of Special Programs at Berkeley, laments the present situation. "I came here," he told a campus gathering last spring, "with the idea of trying to foster the kind of education I had received, where the liberal arts were motivation enough, and where students and teachers were engaged in a much more leisurely and perhaps luxurious kind of learning. But these days students are frequently working full-time jobs, and those take priority over their college studies."

According to a recent survey, Slottman's perceptions are accurate. Almost 50 percent of the students enrolled in the University of California system work 17 hours a week or more during the school year. These figures go up as students advance in academic level, and they are highest for married graduate students. A similar pattern applies for state and community colleges.

The problems that emerge from working through school are not solved by the increasing vocational relevance of higher education. Thoughtful mechanisms for preparing students for jobs are rarely coupled to the advertisement that this will take place. Until workers are enlisted in the design of job preparation programs, for example, formal learning will inevitably be remote from on-the-job practice. Even when workers are involved, it is exceedingly difficult to anticipate vagaries of the job market.

Almost ten years ago Ivar Berg showed in his book *Education and Jobs: The Great Training Robbery*, that colleges have failed miserably to train better workers. But if colleges do not provide vocational relevance, students will seek it elsewhere.

A variety of small programs are encouraging. Many colleges have developed administrative mechanisms to evaluate and credit learning from prior work experience. The Council for the Advancement of Experiential Learning (CAEL) has drafted guidelines for "assessing experiential learning" that are transferable from one to another of the Council's more than 300 member institutions.

In some cases external degree programs

carefully integrated with a related set of field internships.

Ironically, these programs of crediting prior learning and field internships do not coordinate well with the more mundane jobs through which students typically earn a living while they attend school. As a result, opportunities to integrate work and learning are skewed heavily towards the career professional and away from areas of more available but less glamorous employment.

Colleges and universities for some time now have played into the national drama of upward mobility and individual economic gain. They hold a delicate position. Put colleges completely into the marketplace and you demand their students' imagination and humanity, short-changing opportunities for liberal education and critical thinking. Leave them completely out and you demean students' economic needs, driving them either to less liberal learning centers (such as AT&T, the army or the local roofing company) or deeper into frustration.

The choice between vocational and non-vocational programming is the intersection of two dead-end streets. Another route needs to be developed. To date it is barely visible on the map.

Jon Wagner teaches sociology at the University of California, Berkeley.

The Student as Student

MICHAEL KATZ

American higher education, in its transformation from the old-time Christian colleges to the contemporary "multiversities," has sought to become many things to many people, if not all things to all people. For some, higher education has derived both strength and flexibility from its multiplicity of functions—functions that include pure and applied research, community service, the transmission of the Western cultural heritage and the development of professional expertise. For others, myself included, higher education might be said to have lost its bearings.

As universities expanded in the past twenty years to serve larger masses of

guage or culture (one).

The Harvard curriculum and its accompanying report have received mixed reviews. Nevertheless, as professor of American Studies Barry O'Connell reports, "Institutions as different as Amherst, Brigham Young, Emory, the University of Richmond, Middlebury, Saint Joseph's College in Indiana, and the University of Pennsylvania are considering, or have already adopted, new general education programs. The specific details differ, but the pattern is essentially similar. Each hopes to broaden students' learning and to engage faculty in more extradepartmental teaching."

What brought this movement about? In the '60s many American colleges and universities, responding to students' demands for academic relevance and freedom of choice, abandoned or watered down requirements in the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. As electives proliferated, the curricula of American universities became a variegated smorgasbord of offerings. By the mid '70s, while the smorgasbord remained rich, fewer students were indulging in prolonged tasting in the liberal arts. The job market had tightened, and the press of its utilitarian, anti-liberal arts orientation made itself felt. With introductory courses in the liberal arts no longer required, traditional academic programs and subjects struggled to maintain their viability. In some way then, the "core curriculum movement" might be regarded as a response to the curricular excesses of the '60s. Some might also view the movement as an effort to resurrect the credibility of the liberal arts in the midst of a resurgent career orientation among today's college students.

What will come of the "core curriculum movement"? Will it, for example, reestablish an increased commitment to that elusive characteristic of the liberally educated person—breadth of knowledge. My own view is skeptical, for it is based on the belief that the core curriculum goes against the grain of American higher education.

Why does it go against the grain? First, the dominant administrative mind-set on today's college campuses is a managerial one, one that places little credence in such intangibles as the "quality of intellect." Instead there is much talk of "inputs" and "outputs," of "productivity" and "cost-effectiveness ratios," and of "FTE's" (full-time equivalents).

The tendency of this administrative mind-set has been to view the decline of the liberal arts in quantitative consumer

go distinctively against the grain of American higher education.

Michael Katz, the author of The Irony of Early School Reform and other books and articles, teaches history at the University of Nebraska, Omaha.

Academic Freedom and the Legislature

JURGEN HERBST

Despite myths to the contrary, universities have always had to assert whatever autonomy they could preserve against the claims of church or civil government to control and direct their affairs. Whether we think of the city universities of medieval Italy, the modern state universities of continental Europe, or the public universities in the United States today, tensions between university and state have been and are ubiquitous.

In the United States the concept of a public university is identified with the widely held belief that the people of a state determine the purposes and goals of their state university, just as they sustain the institution through their taxes. And yet, universities and academic concerns reach beyond the boundaries of place and time. The stage is thus set for conflict and confrontation between the university and the government of its state. At bottom lie the clashing ideals of professional autonomy and government by the people.

Proponents for the academic professionals say that expertise and specialized competence must prevail, that only professionals understand the concerns and the needs of other professionals. They must therefore be allowed to govern themselves.

Legislators and politicians insist that higher education is far too important a matter to be left to the professors or the administrators, that no group in society can be entrusted with the unchecked authority of self-government.

By and large, this conflict of interest between the universities and their state government has worked to the advantage of both parties. It provided for the people of a state not only the educational opportunities and the technical improvements they asked for, but also the often unappreciated educational facilities and preparation they needed to cope with future challenges. For the universities the state's critical oversight meant a constant spur to respond to social needs and to avoid a satisfied and complacent resting on laurels won in the past.

Consider the public demand for career education. From it resulted the mandate of many a legislature for the universities to re-schedule their classes in late afternoon and evening hours, to offer new vocation-oriented degree programs, and to facilitate the completion of such programs on weekends and during evenings.

The universities, on their part, insisted on the legitimacy and indispensability of their offerings in the humanities and in the liberal arts, and refused to sacrifice them on the altar of career education and business and technical training. Their point was simple and direct: To cut back on the liberal arts was to deprive newly arrived women and minority students of precisely those humane and basic parts of an education that for centuries had helped to introduce students to humane understanding, logical thinking, and effective communication.

Discourse between our public universities and state governments is essential for the health of higher education as well as for the welfare of society.

Learning, research, and teaching have social consequences, and the responsibility for these must be borne jointly by the universities and by society.

Jurgen Herbst is professor of educational policy studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The attempt to replace 'smorgasbord' schooling with a core curriculum goes against the marketplace mentality of the modern university.

are available, in which many of a student's credits can be accumulated outside the classroom. Only 54,000 or so students are enrolled in them, however, relatively few compared with the 3.9 million enrolled in two-year institutions and the 4.3 million seeking bachelor's degrees in all colleges.

Internships and field placements have been developed by a number of colleges and universities as opportunities to try out different kinds of jobs. The National Center for Research in Vocational Education recently drafted a set of guidelines for such experiences that parallel those of CAEL for assessing prior experience learning.

The number of students involved in these activities is small relative to total college enrollments, and the design of "field learning" programs varies greatly from one institution to the next. In most instances, they draw upon existing provisions for independent study. In some cases—such as Berkeley's Field Studies Program and Northwestern University's Semester in the City—academic seminars, readings and written work are

students (there are over 11 million students in the U.S. in post-secondary programs), one of the casualties has been the quality of general undergraduate education. In the aftermath of the '60s, we find an increasingly diminished commitment to the traditional function of undergraduate education, namely the development of breadth of knowledge and a critical intellect. What is the condition of our patient—the one called "general education"? My own diagnosis is grim: general education is well nigh moribund.

Such an apocalyptic comment demands a qualification. On the curricular horizon of a few universities, most notably Harvard and Berkeley, the star of general education appears to be rising. Some have dubbed the star the "core curriculum movement," because Harvard's faculty, after four years and much debate, recently adopted a "core curriculum" consisting of requirements in literature and the arts (three semester long courses), history (two), science and mathematics (two), social and philosophical analysis (two) and foreign lan-

guage, i.e. "smaller body counts" and "decreased credit-hour production." To tamper with the curriculum is, within this view, to tamper with the ineluctable ebb and flow of the marketplace, a marketplace in which a sacred principle informs policy decisions—"Give the consumer (the student) what he wants."

Second, at the heart of any effort to revitalize general education is a strong faculty commitment to excellence in basic introductory courses. Such teaching excellence remains the best hope for the rebirth of general education. However, faculty are predominantly rewarded for becoming specialists in their own fields. Moreover, publishing in one's specialized area remains the dominant mode for promotion, merit salary increases, and external recognition in one's professional associations. In the absence of a change in this reward system, it is hard to believe there will be much faculty enthusiasm for general education.

It may be too early to sound the death knell to "the core curriculum movement." However, it does not seem unreasonable to suggest that these efforts

LETTERS

IN THESE TIMES is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

SANE PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR FINE coverage of developments in non-commercial radio (*ITT*, Sept. 12). Some key points were missed, however.

Recent FCC proposals would release all U.S. stations (perhaps excluding non-commercial stations) from legal responsibility to serve "community interest" and to carry "public affairs" programming. Elimination of these requirements will turn the nation's radio waves into a howling commercial wilderness, with little concern for minorities, and no serious public affairs (read liberal or progressive) programming. Only the right wing can afford to buy significant air time. Opposition to these regulation changes should be expressed immediately to the Federal Communications Commission, Washington, D.C.

SANE has been producing a weekly-half-hour public affairs radio show, "Consider the Alternatives" since 1972. It is broadcast on more than 300 stations nationwide. Our staff and consultants are composed of veteran journalists and researchers who learned their trade in the anti-war movement and who provide a weekly antidote to the right wing nonsense that saturates the air waves. Recent and upcoming interviews include William Winpisinger, Jane Fonda, Ted Kennedy, Robert Lekachman, Helen Caldicott, Marc Raskin, Richard Barnett, Mike Klare, Irene Gendzier and Dick Gregory. We recently covered the May 6 Coalition anti-nuclear rally, the Conference on Alternative State and Local Politics and other important events.

We would be glad to send our monthly program guide, transcripts and more information to readers who can send a tax-deductible contribution of \$15.00 or more to the SANE Education Fund, 1411 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19102.

—Steve Shick, Michael Marchino,
Bob Musil, Diana Roese,
Marta Christensen, John Glinaven,
David Heudberg
Philadelphia

FOR AN ALTERNATIVE

THE NEW CALIFORNIA ENERGY COALITION has shown political horse sense in down-playing the anti-nuclear issue. We don't need to convince the American people that nuclear power is a bum idea; they know it. We do need to convince them that there is a practical alternative: that the country's energy needs can be met in safe, non-polluting ways.

To that end I am proposing a national conference on renewable energy sources, to be held in Washington (say) next February. Aim: consciousness raising on a national scale, through speeches, panels, films, industrial exhibits (i.e., from manufacturers of solar generators, windmills, methane generators, etc.) and so on. The idea is to put forward a detailed, step-by-step program for the transition from fossil-nuclear to renewable energy, along the general lines of Barry Commoner's *The Politics of Power*, to which both Congress and the various presidential candidates will have to respond.

I have talked to several people, including Commoner and Alan McGowan of the Scientists Institute for Public Information. They like the idea, but for various reasons have not been able to take practical steps toward implementing it. Nor can I—among other reasons, because I lack the political clout to get such an operation moving.

I am therefore putting the idea up for grabs by any group or groups who feel like picking it up and running with it. (I will be glad to help in planning and publicizing such a conference.) Time is obviously of the essence—not least because of the upcoming elections.

I believe the energy issue may well turn out to be the lever by which we can turn this country around during the 1980s. But only if we grab hold of it and push. How about it, friends?

—Robert Claiborne
New York, N.Y.

JOE HILL

WE APPRECIATE THE ITEM ABOUT the Joe Hill posthumous pardon campaign and the 100th birthday party to be held in Chicago; but you omitted some vital information which we are sure some readers want to know: How to get involved? The Joe Hill pardon petitions may be ordered from the Illinois Labor History Society, Box 914, Chicago, Ill. 60690.

In Chicago, the birthday party will be a Centennial Songfest at 3:00 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 7 at North Park College, Foster and Kedzie. Fred Holstein leads the list of performers. The ticket is \$2.00. Readers in other cities are urged to organize their own local celebrations!

—Les Orear
President, Illinois Labor History Society
Chicago

PUERTO RICO, AT LAST!

RAMON E. DAUBON'S ARTICLE ON Puerto Rico (*ITT*, Sept. 5) was long overdue.

Anyone who has lived in Puerto Rico for some time, and then in the mainland, is struck by the widespread lack of knowledge concerning the history and nature of the relationship between the U.S. and Puerto Rico. The tragic consequences of 60 years of neocolonialism in Cuba has not taught any lessons or led to more concern over the 80 years of evolving colonialism in "the island."

As the debate over political status is extended from the island to the mainland, it is important to bring out the extraordinary degree of economic and cultural penetration the Puerto Rican people have been exposed to over the years. And also the strong resistance of the people: a clear consciousness of Latin American nationality still exists in spite of attempts at "conversion."

If and when the question of a transition to independence becomes an item on the agenda, a lengthy debate in the U.S. will be needed. An economy tailored to serve U.S. interests (everything imported, almost no agriculture left) will collapse if the cord is cut abruptly.

—Ramon A. Bueno
Brighton, Mass

PUERTO RICAN SOCIALIST PARTY

I WAS SURPRISED BY YOUR REFERENCE to the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (*ITT*, Aug. 22) which read as follows: "Chicagoan Marilyn Katz, one of NAM's three person leadership, claimed that Barkan's NAM led revolutionary movement could contain 100,000's of potential revolutionaries. Katz included in this category...the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (which lost many of its leaders after a disastrous split)."

The parenthetical comment has implications that are not correct. We assume that Katz was referring to the U.S. Branch of the P.S.P., which has its main body in Puerto Rico.

In the U.S. Branch of the P.S.P. there has been no loss of many leaders. Following an intense two years of evaluation following the 1976 elections in Puerto Rico, one member of the seven member U.S. Branch Politician Commission, and two of the 30 member U.S. Branch Committee quit. The U.S. Branch Political Commission member who split was Jose La Luz, now active in the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC), and in the liberal Americans for Democratic Action.

The U.S. Branch maintains its organization in most U.S. cities with substantial Puerto Rican populations, and held its second Congress in December 1978. In Puerto Rico the P.S.P. has been able to collect in six months what it took us two years to do in 1970-71—more than 40,000 (almost 3 percent of the electorate) notarized signatures on petitions. The Party has been strengthened by the defection of ultra-left members in Puerto Rico.

We were surprised by Katz' mention of the P.S.P. being part of a NAM led movement. This is absolutely not true.

Jose Alberto Alvarez
First Secretary

OUTRAGED

I WAS REALLY OUTRAGED BY JOHN JUDIS' review of the NAM Convention (*ITT*, Aug. 22).

The report was incredibly distorted; by focusing on a couple of debates Judis gives the impression that the NAM convention was all at some abstract level of sectarian debate.

The snide tone really pissed me off. I'm glad that John thinks we have so many together left groups in the U.S. that he can afford to write off a group like NAM.

I have significant differences with the August 7 Caucus in NAM. But unlike Judis, I believe in the conception of a multi-tendency organization where socialists struggling for common goals can have both debates and work together.

—Mike Rotkin
Santa Cruz NAM, City Council

APPALLED

I AM APPALLED BY JOHN JUDIS' ARTICLE about the New American Movement convention!

I won't go into the many small distortions in Judis' article, but I can't help commenting on the accompanying picture of what looks like "Chairman" Healey turning over the leadership to "Chairman" Kunnes! An important part of NAM is our attempts to build a democratic and collective organization, which is not run by any one person.

—Katharine Kennedy
Brooklyn, N.Y.

DISTURBED AND ANGRY

JOHAN JUDIS' RECENT ACCOUNT (*ITT*, Aug. 22) of NAM's Milwaukee convention and its decision there not to pursue the possibility of a merger with

DSOC left me disturbed and angry. Right or wrong, our decision not to pursue merger with DSOC was based on essential differences between NAM's work and goals and DSOC's, especially in the communities where we work and live. In Columbia, Mo., for example, where I lived until recently, the DSOC local was relatively strong, with 12-15 active members, while those of us in NAM struggled along in a "pre-chapter" of four, whose presence was barely felt or noticed publicly. But while the DSOC people worked on a watered-down piece of legislation to make minimal improvements in Missouri's scandalous health-care system, working the same old letter-writing and lobbying strings, one of our NAM members, a young doctor, was staffing a free clinic and training midwives. While DSOC meetings were visited by well-coifed union leaders in suits and shades, ours were attended by people who work at the power plant or on a city garbage truck, who feel about the same toward their union officials as they do toward their employers.

—Fred Pfeil
Corvallis, Ore.

TAKES EXCEPTION

AS A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE New American Movement, as a current member of both NAM and the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, I want to take exception to John Judis' coverage of the NAM convention. The purist and subcultural trends he described were in evidence—products both of NAM's new left antecedents and also of certain theoretical premises permeating much of the left as a whole.

Yet the convention was considerably more complex, multi-dimensional—and hopeful—than one would gather from reading his description. Several workshops (e.g. in labor, community, feminist organizing, energy controversies) reflected chapters' grounding in many key areas of contemporary social struggle and movement. The resolution responding to DSOC's proposed "merger and joint work-discussion" committee represented a sharp and generous break with left sectarianism and a step toward left wing unity. Perhaps most important, NAM's convention demonstrated a capacity for self-reflection and change—in Roberta Lynch's major keynote, in resolutions changing long-held positions, in informal discussions—that is the precondition for socialist growth and power in the 1980s.

—Harry Boyte
Minneapolis, Mn

John Judis replies again:

Since my report on the New American Movement convention appeared we've received several angry letters from NAM members. Normally, I like to get letters, angry or otherwise; it shows that people take seriously what I've written. But this time I'm worried that my polemical report of the convention did not accomplish what I wanted it to.

Despite NAM's relatively small size (.00045 percent of the American population), it is one of only two national democratic socialist organizations. Its successes and failures have to be taken seriously by anyone concerned with building a socialist movement in the U.S. And given the relative weakness of the socialist left, it has to be given respect and recognition, even within the framework of a critical report. I don't think I did this.

I presented NAM as a kind of paradox: some local chapters and leaders have matured and have some impact on local politics, but other chapters remain stagnant, and the national organization has been consistently paralyzed and lacking a national presence by periodic invasions

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