

EDUCATION FOR HIRE: A CRITIQUE OF THE BUSINESS/CORPORATE MODEL
OF HIGHER EDUCATION

THESIS

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

But for theory, at least for the theory that forms a philosophy of education, the practical conflicts and the controversies that are conducted upon the level of these conflicts, only set a problem. It is the business of an intelligent theory of education to ascertain the causes for the conflicts that exist and then, instead of taking one side or the other, to indicate a plan of operation proceeding from a level deeper and more inclusive than is represented by the practices and ideas of the contending parties.

-John Dewey, *Experience and Education*

Higher education in the United States has changed significantly over the past half century. Originally designed to help cultivate citizens intellectually and socially in ways that would allow them to participate in democracy, as well as to provide the social and economic advantages that come with a university degree, universities increasingly are being viewed as just another form of big business. Students now focus on obtaining a degree for employment more than personal growth. Consider the results of the following freshman survey:

A record-low percentage of college freshman said it is very important or essential to “develop a meaningful philosophy of life.” Meanwhile, interest in being “very well-off financially” was at the highest level in 13 years, according to the Annual Freshman Survey released...by the University of California, Los Angeles. Slightly less than 40 percent of current college freshman said it was important to develop a meaningful philosophy, compared with 86 percent in 1967.¹

Students are not the only ones affected by this shift. Administrations have changed their policies and structures to mimic the way a business organization is run, and try to figure

out ways to market the results of research in order to enhance their budgets and replace or supplement government support.² Teachers, too, are being affected by this educational shift and are often encouraged to regard their students as consumers or customers.³

As a result of these societal changes we have seen an alteration in the way colleges operate, from the president of the university down to the first semester freshman working to make a little extra spending money. We will see that many of the changes have been driven by an attempt to recast higher education into a quantitative, management-oriented business model.

The purpose of this thesis will be to investigate this change in the educational paradigm from a philosophical perspective. Toward this end I will use the tools of philosophical analysis to argue that the current business-based model of higher education is flawed because it reduces the nature and overall purpose of education to a narrow, hyper-utilitarian, cost-benefit paradigm. I will further argue that this recasting of higher education limits the autonomy and creativity of both students and teachers, creating a paradigm that threatens to deprive them of the flexibility and growth necessary for authentic education experience. In narrowing the scope of education, the business model leaves out many important aims and values that are intrinsic to the learning process and to education as a whole.

To make my case I will examine the aims and underlying values of other models of education that have been prevalent in American education, showing their importance to the overall purpose of education, and to participatory democracy. A wide range of educational theorists from classical thinkers such as Aristotle, J.S. Mill, and John Dewey,

to contemporary thinkers such as Amy Gutmann, Martha Nussbaum, and Michael Sandel, will lend support to this thesis.

It should be noted at the outset that this thesis is not intended to be a reactionary critique against educational change or reform. Rather, my goal is to diagnose the problems created by the business model and to argue that the reductionist thinking evident in it actually hinders or impedes the creativity, innovation, and adaptability necessary for higher education to remain viable and to flourish. This thesis is also intended to explore the issues that are relevant to public education as a part of an education in a democratic society.

My investigation of the business model in education will proceed by first examining in Chapter One the forces that have led to the emergence of the business model and its growing influence on higher education. The discussion will focus on such factors as economic pressures and social/cultural expectations resulting in calls for reform involving efficiency and accountability. These factors have converged with other factors, such as the “culture wars” within the humanities and the introduction of Total Quality Management into institutions of higher education to pave the way for the ascent of the business model.

Chapters Two and Three will provide the conceptual and philosophical foundation for my argument. Chapter Two will identify and discuss the educational aims for three models of education that embody principles and themes prominent in American society. These models are: the freedom model, the virtue model, and finally, the business model. I will show that the business model is actually a subset of one version of the freedom

model, a version that combines a narrow form of utilitarianism with economic libertarianism.

Chapter Three will deepen the analysis of Chapter Two by attempting to distill the underlying values that are implied by the aims of the three models. In this chapter we will also raise the question of compatibility or “commensurability” of the aims and values discussed. To what extent can they function in a relation of complementarity in a system of democratic education?

Finally, Chapter Four will attempt to formulate a set of adequacy conditions that constitute necessary conditions for a viable educational system. These adequacy conditions might be used to assess the merits and flaws of various educational models, and for our purposes will provide us with a method for assessing whether and to what extent the business model is consistent with the inclusive aims and values identified in Chapters Two and Three. We will further consider whether and how certain aspects of the business model might be preserved in a positive synthesis that meets the adequacy conditions we have identified. Finally, after summarizing my argument and explaining how the business model falls short of educational adequacy, I will briefly highlight some related educational issues that might usefully be examined by references to the values, aims, and adequacy conditions developed in this thesis.

Endnotes

¹ UCLA Survey, *Austin American-Statesman*, January 26, 2004.

-Of course, the attitude reflected in this survey is not shared by all students. Nevertheless, the increase in those who marginalize the relevance of higher education for a meaningful life is noteworthy. A provocative question involves whether current student attitudes are linked to structural changes in the universities themselves. For a recent and thought-provoking account of this issue see Anthony T. Kronman, *Education's End: Why Our Colleges and Universities Have Given Up on the Meaning of Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

² Jennifer Washburn, *University Inc The Corporate Corruption of Higher Education* (New York: Basic Books, 2005).

³ Parker Palmer, *The Courage to Teach* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 93-94.

CHAPTER TWO: HOW WE GOT HERE

For most students, the college years mark a time of awakening to a larger world: to history, art, science, culture, to unknown capacities in themselves, to new aspirations and dreams. In the face of spiraling tuition costs, millions of Americans put aside money each year so their children can enjoy these educational riches. For many families, getting a child into a good college is their single greatest priority. Since 1980, however, and especially over the past decade, a foul wind has blown over the campuses of our nation's universities. Its source is not the stifling atmosphere of political correctness that has received so much attention from the pundits and journalists, but a phenomenon that has gone comparatively ignored: the growing role that commercial values have assumed in academic life.

-Jennifer Washburn, *University, Inc.*

A business model is a data-driven system used by organizations such as corporations to increase efficiency and productivity. Quantifiable data are collected and analyzed with the goal of maximizing profits and increasing competitiveness in the marketplace by using the results to deliver a better product to its customers/consumers. This approach is often described as “quality control.” In addition, workers are “incentivized” through rewards (bonuses, promotions, etc.) and “accountability” measures (demotion, transfer, or in the worst case, being fired) in order to improve performance. This description is vital to the context of our discussion.

Similarly, when applied to systems of higher education, the business model uses the practices associated with the corporate world as the basis for decision-making. Quantifiable data and surveys are gathered and used to determine productivity and performance levels (such as excellent or subpar teaching) within all facets of the university, including faculty, staff, and administrators; changes and modifications in

policies and practices (including funding for programs and research) are based on the results of this constant monitoring of the entire system.

Several underlying assumptions of the business model in higher education should be made explicit. First, higher education is regarded as a product and students, teachers, parents, and citizens assume the role of consumers of this product. Secondly, it is assumed that there are structural parallels or equivalencies between a market-based business or corporate entity and the “educational enterprise.” Thirdly, there is an assumption that “quality” in some sense either emerges from quantitative measures or is reducible to it. All of these issues will need to be addressed in what follows.

Let us begin, then, by identifying some of the forces that have converged to pave the way for the ascent of the business model in higher education.

Social Expectations: An *Ethos* of Success

Many factors have contributed to the ascendancy of the business model as the dominant educational paradigm. Today, higher education is viewed as a necessary requirement for a successful life. We live in a society of expectations and conventions. Children are exposed to expectations that parents, teachers, and other adults have about their future. A major expectation is that receiving a college education is one of life’s most important milestones. As Jennifer Washburn points out in *University, Inc.*, “a college education increasingly marks the dividing line between fulfilling the American dream and falling short.”¹ Half a century ago students were expected to earn a high school diploma; now they are admonished to go to college in order to get a good job and provide for a family.

The employment world has also contributed to this mindset, especially over the past few decades. Most entry-level positions now require a degree from an accredited institution of higher education. These alterations in both society and the business world have perpetuated the view that if one wishes to live well and become a positive contributor to society, he or she must go to college and receive some form of higher education. Earning a college diploma has been shown to make the long-term lives of graduates more fulfilling in multiple areas as compared to their non-graduate counterparts.² A clear-cut example of how higher education correlates with security and financial success is the unemployment rate. The current unemployment rate for those holding a bachelor's degree is at 4.5 percent; 2 percentage points lower than all other workers.³

As a result, there has been substantial growth in enrollment rates in degree-granting institutions in the United States over the last 20 years. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (a subsidiary of the Department of Education), as of 2010, enrollment percentage rates in degree-granting institutions in the United States have grown 11% from 1990 to 2000 and 37% from 2000 to 2010, with the numbers of enrollees growing from 15.3 million to 21.0 million over the 2000 to 2010 period alone.⁴ The numbers support the idea that children are being told they have to go to college to succeed. Because of what economists refer to as "economies of scale," the rapid growth in university enrollment has had a profound effect on the shift to a business model. However, this is not the only factor that has led to this change.

Economic Pressures

Recent issues in economics have also contributed strongly to the transition to a business model. Funding levels for universities have steadily been on the decline over the past few years, making it necessary for higher education institutions to find other ways to acquire the money necessary to provide adequately for students, as well as faculty and staff. Cuts in funding have resulted in hardships for students and faculty alike. In 2011, the Texas legislature cut \$15 billion from the state budget, resulting in higher education cuts of around \$1 billion and adversely affecting universities across the state.⁵ For example, the University of Texas at Austin was hit very hard by these cuts, losing \$90 million as a result of them.⁶ Public universities throughout the United States have had similar financial difficulties, especially since the economic downturn of 2008.

As a response to limitations on funding from government entities, universities have seen tuition costs spiral drastically out of control in order to keep up with the current higher education environment. Tuition and fees for students in Texas have grown 55 percent over the last decade.⁷ As of October 2012 the average cost of a 4-year degree at a public institution in the state of Texas was \$30,000, with the national average being \$34,620.⁸ Clearly the cost of a college education has risen dramatically within recent years. What has caused such a rapid and expensive increase in the cost of college? The following figures illustrate how rising enrollment and funding cuts have led to steadily rising tuition costs in universities: States have cut the amount of money they are giving to colleges by a total of \$15.2 billion since 2007, or 17.4%. At the same time, the number of students enrolled in college has risen 12%. That means the average public college gets a tax subsidy of only \$6,600 per student, down from \$9,300 just five years ago.⁹

Rising tuition costs have become necessary for universities to compensate for lost tax subsidies that in the past would have been available, but tuition increases are not the only way that universities are attempting to make up the difference. Universities have turned to intellectual property commercialization, or technology transfer.

The Bayh-Dole Act of 1980 made it possible for non-profit entities (such as universities) to retain the title and rights to any inventions made under federally-funded research programs.¹⁰ This legislation enabled universities to commercialize any research involving discoveries, inventions and advancements made by faculty in order to supplement funding provided to their respective faculty or staff. Bayh-Dole allows higher education institutions to partner with companies in order to share knowledge and, as a result, increase revenues through developing new technologies. Since its inception, universities across the nation have set up technology transfer offices with the express purpose of patenting and protecting innovations made on behalf of the university. Technology transfer programs have become an important aspect of higher education with the number of patents issued to universities rising tenfold since the enactment of Bayh-Dole, generating a \$2.1 billion rise in funding to universities as of 2001.¹¹ These partnerships between universities and corporate entities have proven fruitful for universities. According to Washburn in *University, Inc.*, industry now directly influences an estimated 20 to 25 percent of university funding overall.¹²

While technology transfer has lessened the burden of finding funding and resources for institutions, it has not completely solved the economic problems confronting universities today. In fact, these education-business partnerships have had

some negative consequences for education in ways I will briefly discuss in the last section of this chapter.

The introduction of business-university partnerships through technology transfer agreements was one way of dealing with the financial crisis in higher education. These economic pressures on universities also prompted a call by vocal critics of higher education for a change in the mindset of how the university is run. In addition, fragmentation within the university academic community allowed those advocating for a business mindset to step up and have their points regarding the administration of universities heard without any kind of unified challenge within academia.

Campus Culture Wars: Postmodernists vs. Traditionalists

A major but unintended factor contributing to the rise of the business model in higher education involved ideological rifts within the humanities. Tension regarding the so-called “Western canon” began to build in the 1970s and exacerbated in the 1980s and 1990s. Both the issues and the history of the controversy are complex, but here it will suffice for our purposes to simplify. Scholars in what may be called the modernist/traditionalist group were found in both the hard sciences and the humanities and defended the “enlightenment” intellectual values of truth, reason, objectivity, and impersonal scientific inquiry. Challenging these values was a group of thinkers who were suspicious of such ideals and saw them as fostering intellectual elitism, discrimination, and hegemonic perpetuation of existing power structures.¹³ These thinkers called for greater access to education by people and groups who have historically been marginalized and for more multiculturalism and diversity in curricula. In their recent

book *Lowering Higher Education* Côté and Allahar summarize these tensions within academia as follows:

Building momentum in the 1980s and 1990s, those who can be referred to as ‘postmodernist academics’...challenged the so-called European canon and called for a democratic ethos to be extended to the university.... Within the academy, this postmodernist group is identified by its rejection of modernist ideals of objectivity as well as standards that can be universally shared....These ‘radical’ postmodernists embraced the ‘political correctness’ that emerged at this time and raised the cry of ‘democracy’ when they charged that as a public institution the university ought to reflect the composition and broad interest of the public at large. At the same time others increasingly saw a university education as ticket to a better life, and when the call for democratic access gained traction, the public also began to demand that their tax dollars be spent on more practical and results-oriented pursuits.¹⁴

While many, including scholars who did not consider themselves to be postmodernists, agreed with the call for increased access to education for the sake of justice and the public good, within the context of the internal academic skirmishes described above, this call had a rather paradoxical consequence, inasmuch as it indirectly paved the way for the rise of the business model. In spite of their differing intellectual frameworks, humanities scholars might plausibly be expected to unite as natural allies against the encroachment of the business model, “traditionalists” because they would perceive a threat to disinterested research in both science and the humanities, and postmodernists because they would be concerned about corporate (capitalist) colonization of the educational environment or “life world.” However, the field was divided and a unified front did not materialize. The result was a university environment that was more hospitable and less resistant to the introduction of a business model for higher education. Côté and Allahar write:

Regrettably, the distraction of this infighting has allowed a corporatization of universities to go uncontested for decades...eclipsing the citizenship function and converting the contemporary university into an extension of the corporate world: where research and development are geared to the market; where generous, targeted private-sector grants drive the creation of research centers; where corporations endow professorial chairs; and where sustained critiques [of] this transformation have only recently emerged.¹⁵

Tax payers felt that if they are going to be contributing to higher education through their annual taxes, then the funds should be put to use in those activities of the university that can be quantified and measured, thereby providing politicians and policymakers with all the ammunition they needed to begin to effect change in the way higher education administrations structured the educational process. This backlash led to a second paradoxical result: the way in which grant funding was dispensed throughout academic departments. Calls for access, transparency, and quantifiable results fed into the views of those who opposed the liberal arts. As a result, more university funding began to be directed toward the STEM disciplines (i.e., science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), while fewer grants were channeled into the liberal arts disciplines that the postmodernists tended to favor. And within the social sciences, where political correctness took firm footing, the contradiction was evident when those branches of specialization that are driven by the more positivist and modernist assumptions regarding the nature of truth and knowledge, and that focused more on the production of quantitative knowledge, came to be privileged over those that had more humanistic, qualitative pursuits. So even in today's grants-driven social science faculties, a two-tiered system has emerged: the 'upper tier' emphasizes specialization, utilitarianism, and a more immediate, results-oriented curriculum, while the 'lower tier' embraces generalization, reflexivity, and a more humanistic stock of knowledge for its own sake.¹⁶

Confronted with the demand for results as well as for less elitism and greater access to education (and the attendant increase in enrollment), institutions of higher education began to look for an organizational paradigm that placed emphasis on generating results with the maximum amount of efficiency. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that they turned to an organization model that inundates the business sphere, Total Quality Management.

Total Quality Management and Higher Education

Total Quality Management, or TQM, is a method of organizational management that focuses on using tools and techniques to constantly monitor the quality and efficiency of products and services being provided to customers. The goal of this style of management is to provide the highest possible level of customer satisfaction by carefully monitoring, inspecting, and altering protocols and procedures to create a better overall product.¹⁷ While TQM as a term did not catch on until the 1980s, its origins began in 1911 with Frederick Winslow Taylor and his work *The Principles of Scientific Management*.¹⁸ Taylor's ideas of management revolved around controlling the quality of products being created by focusing on thorough inspection and monitoring of each phase of work done to the product. This enabled Taylor to ensure that each product was up to previously created standards and also allowed for Taylor to make changes to parts of the production phase that were inadequate. Ford Motor Company used Taylor's methods of industrial efficiency in the early part of the twentieth century. In the 1950s more modern interpretations of his model were developed by W. Edwards Deming and Armand V. Feigenbaum; their work served as the predecessor for our current manifestation of TQM.¹⁹ As of today, TQM serves as the general philosophic name for a systemic

approach to managing organizational quality. Within this notion of TQM is the underlying assumption that “quality” itself is a quantifiable idea.

TQM in higher education is not a new venture. Some form of quality management in higher education administration has been around since the 1930s, but it is only fairly recently that TQM in its current form has become pervasive in universities. The TQM now used in universities has strong associations with that used in business and industry.²⁰ To please the "customer," (in this case students) four factors are measured: competition, costs, accountability, and service orientation.²¹ Total quality management allows institutions to gauge these four factors as they relate to students and the “product” (i.e. education) they are receiving. In addition to assessing how well the university is serving the students, TQM also provides administrators with a basis for determining what institutional changes need to be made in order to create a quality learning environment. TQM is used to analyze and evaluate what aspects of the university experience are valuable to students and which aspects may need to change, as well as how they need to change.

Total Quality Management provides higher education leaders with a set of tools that can document the results that are expected from the government, and justify funding requests for research and operational aid. The allure of TQM for higher education is understandable, as it is a method of monitoring major aspects of results-based administration. As Ronald R. Sims and Serbrenia J. Sims point out in *Total Quality Management in Higher Education* (1995), TQM provides the perfect organizational platform for tallying results and efficiency.

While Total Quality Management is lauded as an effective organizational paradigm by those focused on results, quality of service, and efficiency; some leaders of higher education, as well as educational thinkers, have not bought into the effectiveness or the appropriateness of TQM in the university setting. Common objections to Total Quality Management include, but are not limited to: lack of managerial commitment, poor timing of implementation (retroactive implementation may not solve problems), and lack of immediate, short-term results.²² More importantly, TQM is a system that serves as a management strategy for pushing work downward from higher level administrators to lower level workers (i.e. professors and departmental staff). TQM also acts as a containment strategy. On its surface TQM offers the appearance of openness, encouraging everybody to be active and collaborative in solving institutional issues, but underneath this exterior layer, TQM acts as a form of cover that justifies a more traditional top-down administrative decision-making structure. In short, the question is whether TQM is a suitable model in higher education, or if it is a case of trying to fit "a square peg into a round hole."

Many opponents of TQM in higher education see its widespread usage as evidence that higher education has ceased to be an educational entity and has become a commercial entity. As Bill Readings points out in *The University in Ruins*, importing business practices into the university structure is not a simple substitution:

Now what this suggests to me is that excellence is not simply the equivalent of "total quality management" (TQM). It is not just something imported *into* the University from business in an attempt to run the University *as if* it were a business. Such importations assume, after all, that the University is not really a business, but is only like a business in some respects....When Ford Motors enters into a "partnership" with The Ohio State University to develop "total quality management in all areas of life on campus," this partnership is based on the assumption that "the

mission[s] of the university and the corporation are not that different,” as Janet Pichette, vice-president for business and administration at Ohio State, phrases it.²³

While TQM may be effective in some aspects of university administration, most critics believe that complete substitution of business does not fit well into universities or serve their mission and goals.

The Business Model Ascends

The effects of the business model are already beginning to manifest themselves in the university, and the results are not of the positive nature intended. Confronted with the desire to patent and own intellectual property discovered within the university, we are seeing what Washburn referred to as a “disappearing knowledge commons.” Under Bayh-Dole universities are allowed to patent or trademark intellectual property that is created with university funding. The resulting patenting forces those in the field at other institutions to go through the correct legal channels and pay for rights to use the knowledge in their research as well. This means knowledge is harder to gain access to as innovations are made due to technology transfer agreements, thus hindering the free flow of knowledge between scholars.²⁴

Another ill effect of the business model’s inclusion in higher education is the devaluation of the humanities. Teaching at the higher education level is being increasingly outsourced to adjunct professors in lieu of tenure-track professors. Employing primarily adjuncts to teach students is less valuable than if students are taught by tenured faculty. Adjuncts are often over-worked and underpaid, and at times, lack the expertise to competently teach students. Students suffer by paying exorbitant amounts of tuition to receive an education that is less than optimal.²⁵

Finally, the inclusion of the business model of higher education has begun to undermine the academic sphere and potentially endanger academic freedom. We see corporate influences prevalent on college campuses in all forms and fashions. It is plastered on buildings, such as the Ken Lay Center for the Study of Markets in Transition at Rice University, but names on a façade are superficial and only scratch the surface of corporate influence in academia. Professors are now being hired by many corporations to conduct research for them in order to aid the company's goals. This not only undermines the sanctity of the academic sphere but also endangers it. By enlisting faculty to conduct research projects (often with a considerable financial interest involved), corporations remove the ability of a researcher to be disinterested and objective, an important characteristic of academia that needs to be preserved. Corporate interest can threaten one of the purposes of the university, to seek the truth.²⁶

A more direct example of business' encroachment into higher education can be found in the proposed reforms of Jeff Sandefer. Jeff Sandefer, a self-proclaimed educational reformer and founder of the Acton School of Business has formulated "Seven Breakthrough Solutions" that would make higher education "better." Sandefer's proposals follow the mindset and are couched in the language of business, advocating efficiency and effectiveness based upon results compiled over time. Some of his proposals include tying teacher compensation to how effective (and popular) they are as instructors (based on grade reports and student surveys) and splitting research and teaching budgets for faculty, among others. Sandefer's reforms have met stern opposition from some and time will tell how integrated they might become.²⁷

The business model has is becoming prevailing educational paradigm for higher education. In it students are viewed as customers, and special attention is paid to monitoring educational systems in order to promote efficiency, results, and quality, as quality is conceived by the Total Quality Management method. We have seen that factors such as rapid increases in enrollment, calls for more democracy and transparency in higher education, the expectations of society, and economic pressures have led institutions of higher learning to implement TQM as its primary organizational method, and adopt a business paradigm as a conceptual model. The key question involves to what end this serves individuals in higher education as well as a democratic society as a whole. What is the aim of a business model of higher education and how is it similar to or different from other general models of education used throughout history? Most importantly, is a business model of higher education consistent with the goals and values of democratic education? In the next section we will discuss the aims of education in three different models of education, one of which will be a business-based model of education.

Endnotes

¹ Jennifer Washburn, *University, Inc : The Corporate Corruption of Higher Education* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), ix.

² James Côté and Anton Allahar, *Lowering Higher Education. The Rise of Corporate Universities and the Fall of Liberal Education* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 12.

³ Bill McBride, "Graphs for Duration of Unemployment, Unemployment by Education and Diffusion Indexes." <http://www.calculatedriskblog.com/2013/06/graphs-for-duration-of-unemployment.html> (accessed June 27, 2013)

Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Earnings and Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment." United States Department of Labor. http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_chart_001.htm (accessed June 27, 2013)

⁴ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics (2012), *Digest of Education Statistics*, 2011 (NCES 2012-001), Chapter 3.

⁵ Jim Vertuno, "Money, tuition, graduation rates top higher education," *Herald Democrat*, December 28, 2012, Local section A6; Ralph Haurwitz, "Chancellors Urge More Funding for Universities," *Austin American-Statesman*, November 11, 2012.

⁶ *Ibid*

⁷ *Ibid*

⁸ The College Board, "Average Published Undergraduate Charges by Sector, 2012-13."

<http://trends.collegeboard.org/college-pricing/figures-tables/average-published-undergraduate-charges-sector-2012-13> (accessed May 15, 2013)

-Number is based upon semester average of \$8,655 x 4 years and is only representative of tuition and fees (other expenses not included)

⁹ Kim Clark, "Tuition at Public Colleges Rises 4.8%," CNN Money.

<http://money.cnn.com/2012/10/24/pf/college/public-college-tuition/index.html> (accessed June 20, 2013)

¹⁰ Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM), "Bayh-Dole Act."

http://www.autm.net/Bayh_Dole_Act.htm (accessed December 20, 2012)

¹¹ Washburn, *University, Inc.*, 9.

¹² *Ibid*.

¹³ Côté and Allahar, *Lowering Higher Education*, 20. Examples of postmodernist thinkers are French intellectuals such as Derrida, Lyotard, and Foucault; on the Anglo-Saxon side Richard Rorty is a contemporary example.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 10-11. For a fuller account of the culture wars and their effects on academia see Louis Menand, *The Marketplace of Ideas* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010), especially Chapter 2, "The Humanities Revolution;" Anthony Kronman, *Education's End* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), especially Chapter 4, "Political Correctness."

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁷ Serbrenia Sims and Ronald R. Sims, *Total Quality Management in Higher Education Is It Working? Why or Why Not?* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 1995), 1.

¹⁸ Business Performance Improvement Resource (BPIR), "Total Quality Management: History of TQM and Business Excellence."

<http://www.bpir.com/total-quality-management-history-of-tqm-and-business-excellence-bpir.com.html> (accessed June 18, 2013)

Taylor's TQM came as a result of his work meticulously inspecting and monitoring every single product for defects and for quality.

¹⁹ American Society for Quality (ASQ), "History of Total Quality Management."

<http://asq.org/learn-about-quality/total-quality-management/overview/tqm-history.html> (accessed June 20, 2013) Deming's involvement in the increased productivity and quality associated with his work with Japanese engines for cars earned him the nickname the "Father of TQM," whereas Feigenbaum created the predecessor to our modern day interpretation of TQM in his book Total Quality Control.

²⁰ Sims and Sims, "Total Quality Management in Higher Education," 8.

²¹ *Ibid*, 10-11.

²² *Ibid.*, 19.

²³ Bill Readings, *The University in Ruins* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1996), 21.

²⁴ Washburn, *University, Inc* , 145-149.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 199-223.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, xv-xx.

²⁷ Jeff Sandefer, *7 Solutions Strengthening Higher Education for Texas' Future*.
<http://texashighered.com/7-solutions> (Accessed May 10, 2013)

CHAPTER THREE: WHAT'S IN AN AIM? THREE MODELS OF EDUCATION

The function of education in a democracy is . . .to liberate the mind, strengthen its critical powers, inform it with knowledge and the capacity for independent inquiry, engage its human sympathies, and illuminate its moral and practical choices.

-Israel Scheffler, *Moral Education and the Democratic Ideal*

In Chapter One we explored how the landscape of higher education is changing due to a shift in the educational paradigm toward business practices. In order to access the merits and faults of such a shift it is necessary first to ascertain the aim or aims of higher education. In democratic societies this is a complex task, as the pluralistic nature of such a society gives rise to multiple and competing aims.

In this chapter we will examine the general nature of aims, apply this analysis to education, and then explore the nature and aims of three models of education: the freedom model of education, the virtue model of education, and the currently ascendant business model of education. We shall review the theoretical basis behind each model, give some commentary on the educational implications of the model, and finally, attempt to extract some aims from each model that might be used in constructing a synthesized, general aim of democratic higher education.

Check Your Aim: Dewey on Educational Aims

Before embarking upon a discussion about the models of education and their aims, it is important that we first discuss what is meant by the term ‘aim’ and how it pertains to education. American pragmatist and educational philosopher John Dewey

gave criteria for what constitutes a good aim in his 1916 masterpiece *Democracy and Education*.

Dewey considered the following to be conditions, or characteristics, of a good aim:

1. an aim must be an outgrowth of existing conditions
2. aims must be flexible
3. an aim must represent a freeing of activities¹

Aims must be an outgrowth of existing conditions because a purported aim that does not take into account the resources available or the complexities of a situation will generate superficial activities that are foreign to the context of the environment.² According to Dewey, such disconnected, external aims “are not the expression of foresight, observation, and choice of the better among alternatives. . . .They limit intelligence because, given ready-made, they must be imposed by some authority external to intelligence, leaving the latter nothing but a mechanical choice of means.”³

Applied to education, this condition requires that an aim must be rooted in the activities and needs of learners; such an aim makes possible continuity between the learning environment and the lived experience of students. If an aim engages intrinsic continuity, then each activity is a piece of a progressive educational process. As a result an aim should include some notion of foresight as to what the end of the process should be. Dewey’s example of the work of bees illustrates the idea of intrinsic continuity as well as the important distinction between unconscious ends and aims. Bees work together in steps towards a progressive end of growing and increasing the hive. Bees are therefore engaged in an end-related process, but this activity is directed by instinct. On the other hand, human aims, including educational aims, are intentional processes involving self-awareness.⁴

Given the importance of purpose and intention for human aims, Dewey's first characteristic of an educational aim further illustrates that a successful aim must have a foundation rooted in the interests and passions of the learner. A flawed aim will limit the growth of intelligence and reduce knowledge to a mechanical process devoid of interest. Learning is not something that can be uniformly administered across the board. Growth and knowledge acquisition will vary depending on the person, the time, and the environment in which the person is involved in the learning process.

The condition that aims must be intrinsic to a situation and an outgrowth of existing conditions has important implications for teachers, and, by extension, the institutions in which teaching and learning occur. Unlike some educational theorists, Dewey does not maintain that only the interests of the student should determine the course of education. Rather, teachers have enormous responsibilities for providing guidance and direction to learners who may be unaware of the rich opportunities possible for them. However, part of that responsibility is figuring out ways to make subject matter and educational activities relevant to the interests of students by connecting these activities with their lived experiences.⁵

Dewey's second condition is the requirement for flexibility of aims. Aims must be flexible in order to be able to adapt when the circumstances of a situation change. "The aim as it first emerges is a mere tentative sketch.... The aim, in short, is experimental, and hence constantly growing as it is tested in action."⁶ By contrast a rigid aim imposed by an external authority lacks adaptability because it fails to consider current circumstances and make the necessary changes for growth.

This characteristic of a good aim also has important implications for designing and maintaining teaching methods and educational structures that facilitate learning. "An aim must be capable of translation into a method of cooperating with the activities of those undergoing instruction. It must suggest the kind of environment needed to liberate and organize *their* capacities."⁷ The aim associated with the learning environment needs to be one which is pliable and able to shift and change with the learners who are in the midst of instruction. Creating a situation that is inflexible and fixed places limitations on a teacher's judgment. A flexible educational aim, on the other hand, creates an environment in which those being educated are given the chance to grow through their own personal experience, thus countering the tendency to homogenize the learning process. Dewey concludes:

This distrust of the teacher's experience is then reflected in lack of confidence in the responses of pupils...[who] are constantly confused by the conflict between the aims which are natural to their own experience at the time and those in which they are taught to acquiesce. Until the democratic criterion of the intrinsic significance of every growing experience is recognized, we shall be intellectually confused by the demand for adaptation to external aims.⁸

Dewey's third condition for a good aim is that it involves a "freeing of activities." Such an aim enables the learner to view an activity not as a termination but as a means of reaching the next phase towards reaching an end. If an aim is activity freeing, then the focus on an end is not on an isolated object or a product, but on the active process of engaging and interacting with objects and persons within the environment. Dewey provides an excellent example in the following passage:

Thus one aims at, say, a rabbit; what he wants is to shoot straight: a certain kind of activity. Or, if it is the rabbit he wants, it is not the rabbit apart from his activity, but as a factor in activity; he wants to eat the rabbit, or to show it as evidence of his marksmanship—he wants to do something with

it. The doing with the thing, not the thing in isolation, is his end. The object is but a phase of the active end,--continuing the activity successfully. This is what is meant by the phrase, used above, 'freeing activity.'⁹

If an aim is one that is imposed via an external source, then the end is considered as fixed and static, resulting in the activity being considered as nothing more than an unavoidable means to the end. Aims should involve using activities as a means for progressing onward towards an end while taking care to remember that an aim should not separate the means from the ends.

Having discussed Dewey's criteria for good aims, two other related points need to be made. One is the importance of the notion of growth as the key aspect of Dewey's educational philosophy. Good aims, on his account, nourish further growth while bad aims stifle it. Secondly, Dewey's caution about over-generalization should be mentioned for its pedagogical significance.

Dewey uses growth of a certain type to distinguish between sound educational aims and practices and those he describes as "mis-educative."¹⁰ After acknowledging that in some very broad sense every experience is "educational" (as in the school of hard knocks), some experiences open up new horizons for students while others severely limit or impede future possibilities. (Consider child abuse as an extreme example.) Good aims are also important due to their influence on growth. For Dewey a good aim is an aim that provides an opportunity for learners to engage in continued learning and growth. As we have noted, good aims are intrinsic to the learner while bad aims are external and focus on results rather than ends. Rather than providing opportunities for growth, external aims further the motives of others, not of the individual him/herself. Dewey writes:

But from the standpoint of growth as education and education as growth the question is whether growth in this direction promotes or retards growth in general. Does this form of growth create conditions for further growth, or does it set up conditions that shut off the person who has grown in this particular direction from the occasions, stimuli, and opportunities for continuing growth in new directions?¹¹

The second point to be made involves Dewey's caution to educators about forming aims that are overly general. He writes:

Educators must be on their guard against ends that are alleged to be general and ultimate. Every activity, however specific, is, of course, general in its ramified connections, for it leads out indefinitely into other things. So far as a general idea makes us more alive to these connections, it cannot be too general. But 'general' also means 'abstract,' or detached from all specific context. And such abstractness means remoteness, and throws us back, once more, upon teaching and learning as mere means of getting ready for an end disconnected from the means.¹²

It is important to note that in this passage Dewey is not speaking against formulating and using general principles, but is warning against the disconnect between theory and practice that he criticizes throughout his body of work. Educators working on establishing educational aims should do so with the purpose of creating generality only as a mechanism to broaden the outlook of the learner. Generality, in regards to educational aims, aids in helping those being educated make more connections with the world. True generality enables those learning to view their environment in a wider and more expansive way, while excessive generality creates empty abstractions that limit the ability of learners to make the connections that are necessary for problem solving. Dewey offers the example of a farmer, who must have some general knowledge about farming, but must also be able to look beyond just the basic principles of ideal farming (i.e. ideal climate, soil, technique, etc.) in order to create a myriad of successful alternatives based upon his/her current situation.¹³

Similarly, good educators, whether in the classroom, or in designing curricula and practices that enhance learning opportunities, are like good farmers in paying attention to the three criteria necessary for formulating aims that take account of context and situation. They must make sure their aims involve intrinsic processes, are adaptable, and make possible a freeing of activity.

With these considerations in mind let us now turn to discerning the educational aims of three different models of education.

The Freedom Model of Education

The first model of education that will be examined is the freedom model of education. Although themes of freedom are clearly pervasive in democratic systems of education and people “freely” use the term, it is notoriously complex and ambiguous. It is associated with social-political concepts such as individual rights, property rights, consent of the governed, and minimalist and non-intrusive government, as well as more metaphysical concepts such as respect for persons, human dignity, autonomy, equality, justice, and liberty of conscience. Carried into the educational sphere, these themes coalesce in a model of learning centered upon the multifaceted idea that educational institutions should cultivate capacities and skills that will enable learners to achieve their own self-actualization, engage in a constructive way with the world, make choices that are in their own interest as well as the interests of the larger society, and to perpetuate the ideal of freedom in all its complexity to future generations.¹⁴ A freedom model of education focuses on raising and nurturing mature individuals who are able to make their own decisions regarding morality and life. While there are many advocates for the

freedom model of education, the focus of our discussion will be on the ideas of John Locke, John Stuart Mill, and Immanuel Kant.

Locke's emphasis on education built upon both his political and epistemological views. His *Two Treatises of Government* (1690) has been a major influence in the "libertarian" view of minimal government interference with individual rights, property, and choice.¹⁵ Locke believed that state-run education was both unwise and unwarranted because states might have ideological agendas that could be used to indoctrinate children at a young age with the values the state deemed necessary for continuation. With regard to knowledge Locke was an empiricist who believed that humans are born as blank slates (*tabula rasa*) and learn everything from their experiences and environment.¹⁶ Coupled with this view of learning, Locke's political theory led him to the conclusion that state education would likely result in conflicts over ideals and practices and might inappropriately mold young minds. On his view parents, not the state, were the best teachers for students because they were closest to children and would best protect their children's futures. Further, Locke argued that in a society that values freedom and the individual, parents should be able to determine what values are taught to their children. In her discussion of various democratic education theories, Amy Gutmann referred to this notion of letting parents guide their children's education as the "state of families" approach to education.¹⁷ We currently see these ideas manifested in the practice of home schooling and the notion of "school choice." At higher levels of education it is reflected in parental decisions to send children to institutions that reflect and reinforce their values in order to avoid perceived threats of indoctrination or brainwashing.¹⁸

The writings of Robert Nozick provide a contemporary example of the libertarian strand of freedom. In *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* he argued that any form of state interference, other than enforcing contracts and protecting the physical well-being of people, was unjustified, including any attempt to dictate the education of its learners.¹⁹ Along with Nozick economist Milton Friedman has also advocated a form of libertarianism calling for limited involvement in education on the part of the government and promoting self-activity and self-ownership.²⁰

Although the clear libertarian aim is to develop individual freedom through minimal state interference on its members, this aim is viewed as a way of developing the capacities that would allow individuals to make moral decisions on their own.²¹

John Stuart Mill shared many of Locke's views on freedom. In *On Liberty* (1859) Mill forcefully defended freedom of speech, thought, and action, and argued for strict limits to the authority of the state over the individual. According to Mill, "As long as I am not harming anyone else, my independence, is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign."²² Mill's views are often considered a primary source of the "marketplace of ideas" metaphor that is frequently used to characterize the ideal intellectual environment for institutions of higher education.²³

In contrast to Locke, Mill believed that the responsibility of educating the individual should fall neither to the state nor the parents, but to professional educators or experts. Parents, according to Mill, did not possess the intellectual knowledge or the neutrality necessary to properly teach children. His fear was that parents would pass on particular prejudices to their children while states would "teach children to appreciate the basic (but disputed) values and the dominant (but controversial) cultural prejudices that

hold their society together."²⁴ This "state of individuals," to use Gutmann's phrase, would provide the neutrality needed to provide children with the kind of education that would enable them to engage in free thought upon maturity.

Mill thought that a form of education allowing for dissent and unconventional thinking would create the type of free thinkers needed for a society that could engage in creating the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Thus, education is connected to the other aspect of Mill's political and ethical philosophy, utilitarianism, a theory that adds the notion of the general welfare to that of individual liberty. Mill believed that citizens who actively practiced their own individual freedom would ultimately contribute to the common good and create the greatest overall happiness for society.²⁵

For our purposes it is especially important to note that Mill's form of utilitarianism differs from the original formulation of utilitarianism by his predecessor, Jeremy Bentham. Bentham's theory focused on quantifying what was good or bad based upon the happiness (defined as pleasure) that was created; it relied on a type of "hedonic calculus" to determine what decision was better. Michael Sandel notes two objections to Bentham's utilitarianism: 1. it fails to accept the individual rights of people, and 2. it creates a "common currency of value" in which everyone's preferences count equally.²⁶ Bentham's utilitarianism was the sort of narrow utilitarianism that we will discuss in the business model.

When it came to Bentham's version of utilitarianism, Mill modified the theory to address the objections made to its narrowness. The biggest change that Mill made was the importance of making a distinction between quantitative versus qualitative pleasures when attempting to find the greatest good for the greatest number of people. This

included noting that some pleasures are worth pursuing more than others, such as pursuing intellectual and political pursuits over those that are more physical (i.e. higher vs. lower pleasures).²⁷ Mill also believed that part of promoting the general welfare of society was to use utilitarianism as a means of determining whether something was better for society in the short term or the long term. His example involves silencing dissenters. In this example, Mill illustrates that promoting individual freedom is beneficial in the long run for society. If we were to silence dissenters now (a short-term good) it would be bad for society in the long run because it would create a stunting conformity that would limit the potential for social improvement.²⁸

A third philosophical strand of freedom can be traced to Immanuel Kant, whose ethical theory provides a more metaphysical interpretation of freedom. Kant's focus is on acknowledging and respecting the inner freedom of oneself and others because, as rational beings, all people have intrinsic worth. Echoes of Kant's type of freedom arise in regard to questions about human rights and the just treatment of individuals.²⁹

Kant's interpretation of freedom is much more stringent than that of Mill or Locke. As Sandel notes, we often consider freedom to be the "absence of obstacles to doing what we want."³⁰ For Kant, freedom is much more than not having anything to prevent us from doing what we wish. To act freely is to act autonomously, from a rational and universal moral law that you give yourself, not one that society imposes on you. We will come back to this important notion of autonomy in our discussion of values in the next chapter. For now it is sufficient to point out that Kant's supreme moral law, the categorical imperative, requires a deep freedom that comes through exercising rational principles that lie outside the realm of human inclinations, desires, needs, wants,

or what Kant referred to as the heteronomous realm. Kant's theory of freedom as autonomy requires that moral decisions are made consistently, without double standards, and with regard for the intrinsic worth of all human beings. According to Kant, humans have the capacity for this deeper sense of freedom, while other creatures and objects do not.³¹

Freedom plays an important role in the educational process. Education is designed to provide learners knowledge as a means of pursuing their own moral freedom.

The aims of a freedom model of education are to preserve the individual rights of learners, maximize the possibility of freedom of choice, and respect the intrinsic worth of all human beings. These aims take an individualistic perspective. We will now turn our attention to the communitarian model of education, the virtue model.

The Virtue Model of Education

The virtue model of education focuses on teaching and cultivating moral character. As Richard Taylor has said, virtues are not just about what a person does, but rather reveal what a person *is*.³² Virtues are character traits that link individuals with their community; they make it possible for a person to both “fit in” to a society and to excel in it. The underlying assumption is that persons are not “disembedded selves,” but are part of a community that in large part determines who they are and how they function within that community.³³ Virtue education takes seriously the development of character traits that make it possible for individuals to achieve a good and satisfying life as well as to use their “excellences” (well-developed virtues) to contribute effectively to their society. Creating good citizens has often been a primary goal of this type of education.

For our discussion of this educational model we will focus on two versions of virtue education from distinctly different time periods, with Aristotle representing the classic view of virtue education and Robert Solomon representing a more contemporary incarnation of virtue education.

Aristotle mentioned that the highest form of life is one in which humans strive for a flourishing life, or *eudaimonia*. The means by which one reached this flourishing life was dependent upon the cultivation of the moral character, or virtues, of each and every person. Education's role in this process was two-fold. Learners were introduced to virtue education by those whom Aristotle referred to as moral exemplars. These exemplars—teachers, parents, and, in some cases, peers—were responsible for teaching children about the virtues, but teaching virtue is not enough. Learners had to engage in or practice these virtues in order to cultivate them to their fullest potential. The final cultivation of a virtue resulted in the attainment of moral excellence, what Aristotle called *arête*. In *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle succinctly explained the difference between the two types of virtues: "We call some virtues 'intellectual' and others 'moral': theoretical wisdom, understanding, and practical wisdom are intellectual virtues, generosity and self-control moral virtues."³⁴ Intellectual virtues are those virtues that are taught to us so that we may have a foundation to make moral decisions. Moral virtues are the result of utilizing intellectual virtues and practicing them to the point where they become habit, or are cultivated in the person. This process of cultivating virtues is what Aristotle considered to be the process that education should follow in order to meet a larger purpose: to create citizens who are able to share a common moral character.

For Aristotle, education served an important means of developing the community (the *polis* or city-state). Education was relative to the type of constitution of the state and an ideal education would develop the moral character of its citizens. Believing that citizens did not belong to themselves, but to the community, Aristotle condoned a form of education that would unify its citizens and satisfy the common ends of society. This form of education would allow citizens to become active, participatory members of the community. If citizens shared in the cultivation of virtues that best served the goals of the community, then it would be easier for them to achieve happiness and to contribute to their society.³⁵ In *Nature, Justice, and Rights in Aristotle's Politics*, Fred Miller, Jr. nicely summarizes Aristotle's view of the importance of education for creating a virtuous citizenry:

The aim of the best constitution is the happiness of each and every citizen, and happiness is an activity essentially involving ethical virtue and practical wisdom. Therefore, the lawgiver of the best constitution must bring about it that every citizen is excellent or good. The lawgiver must, therefore, be concerned with education (*paideia*), a process in which the younger are ruled for their own sakes, i.e. so that they may become virtuous and rulers themselves.³⁶

The best states are those that are able to create virtuous citizens and promote human excellence. A moral, virtuous education, as Aristotle prescribed, promotes the natural ends of those being educated by developing the tools necessary for reaching this excellence.

Although Aristotle's classic version of virtue ethics is not specific to democracy, it is clear that many of the basic notions of the classic theory—for example, the notions of community, excellence, integrity, and common goals—have carried over and play a large role in democracy. These notions have been used by contemporary thinkers as

different as Alasdair MacIntyre and Martha Nussbaum to temper the hyper-individualism of classical liberalism and to emphasize the importance of Aristotelian ideas for education.³⁷

Robert Solomon is another contemporary thinker who provides an interesting bridge between our discussion of the Virtue and Business models of education. He draws on an Aristotelian perspective to develop a form of business ethics that would be appropriate for democracy and argues that such an Aristotelian model should be used in educational institutions. Solomon notes that while business entities do consist of individual pieces and often consider themselves as on independent entities, it is important to remember that their interests serve a function within a larger community.³⁸ In order for a business entity to develop the individualism and integrity that so many corporations claim to have, they must accept that their individualism comes as a result of being a part of a larger community. Only through recognition of its place in society can any business entity be considered virtuous. Solomon illustrates how an Aristotelian mindset can be used in determining what influence the business sphere should have on society, in the following excerpt:

The bottom line of the Aristotelian approach to business ethics is that we have to get away from “bottom line” thinking and conceive of business as an essential part of the good life, living well, getting along with others, having a sense of self-respect, and being part of something one can be proud of.³⁹

An Aristotelian perspective on business reduces the emphasis on doing what is necessary to generate the greatest profit from a product, and focusing more on doing what is necessary to help make society better. With this in mind, what position does a Business

model of education take? Does it focus on a “bottom line” approach to education or does it work to serve the interests of the community?

The Business Model of Education

In comparison with our first two models of education, the business model of education is fairly young. The notion of the business model of education, as it has been represented in this thesis, began in the 1930s with the first implementation of Total Quality Management in institutions of higher education.⁴⁰ As mentioned earlier, TQM evolved from the work of Frederick Winslow Taylor regarding industrial efficiency and scientific management techniques. Taylor’s industrialized measures of quality control are structurally similar to Bentham’s narrow utilitarianism because they calculate quantitatively the efficiency of a plant’s workers and its processes, and then alter the processes in order to create the greatest possible production using the company’s resources.⁴¹ While Bentham’s calculus targeted maximization of pleasure, one might think of Taylor’s “calculus” as targeting maximization of efficient production. Examples of Taylorism in business include: standardization of best practices, mass production (in lieu of craft production), and knowledge transfer amongst workers into tools, documents, and processes. The increased efficiency and production results from TQM proved to be an interesting possibility for higher education in its attempts to become a better (*i.e.* more productive) experience for those involved in its process.

The business model as applied to education draws inspiration from both the business world and from the educational world. From an educational perspective, the business model has connections with the freedom model of education, especially in its leanings toward economic libertarianism and personal choice. It also reflects

characteristics of business in viewing students as consumers and emphasizing quantitative growth, measured both by increases in enrollment and the amount of funding that can be generated.

From a managerial standpoint, the business model takes business practices such as TQM and blends them, primarily, with Bentham's narrow cost-benefit version of utilitarianism. In a business model of education, the success of a higher education institution is based almost exclusively on quantitative analysis conducted as a part of total quality management.⁴² This quantitative analysis provides visceral data that can be used to improve, alter, or cut processes within higher education to make the overall system more "effective." Examples of this form of business-oriented utilitarianism in higher education include: hiring adjunct professors vs. hiring tenure-track professors, cutting programs, and creating classes with large student-to-teacher ratios, among others, all of which are often cited as cost effective (i.e. more efficient based on limited resources) measures in higher education.

The business model does incorporate aspects of our other models and transforms them with the introduction of business practices. Some pieces of the models remain intact, while others are lost with the influx of the business mindset. Is it possible that all of these models can be incorporated together to form a single aim? Can they truly be synthesized? We will discuss this possibility next.

A Synthesized Aim of Education

All three models we have discussed in this chapter each have their benefits and their deficiencies. Even though they may not fully solve the problem of "what is the aim of education," they do each contribute important aspects to figuring out the answer to this

perplexing question. Can these models be synthesized to create a stronger educational perspective? Authors such as Martha Nussbaum and Robert Solomon illustrate that such a task is possible.

Contemporary philosopher Martha Nussbaum synthesizes a model of education that combines both the freedom model, as represented by Kant, with the virtue model. Nussbaum argues that a "humanistic" education is important for the citizenry of a society, but her interpretation of citizenry goes far beyond the city-state conception that Aristotle had for Ancient Greece. In her book *Not For Profit* Nussbaum highlights the need for using education to facilitate a global citizenry. Nussbaum extends Aristotle's virtue theory by noting that we should recognize that all of humanity contains the capacities for virtue that Aristotle found essential to people and their education. Those fundamentals are reason and moral capacity. Nussbaum's educational perspective is focused on developing better citizens by increasing the sensitivity and understanding of other cultures as a means of creating good citizens.⁴³ Nussbaum's criteria for creating a democratic global citizen include: developing the ability to view the world from multiple points of view, teaching that weakness and need are not shameful, developing empathy and concern for others (both near and far), decreasing the tendency to diminish minorities within a society, teaching the realities of different cultures in order to lessen stereotypes and their negative consequences, promoting virtue and responsibility by viewing children as responsible moral agents, and strenuously promoting critical thinking needed to raise the voices of dissent needed in the democratic process.⁴⁴

As noted in our discussion of the virtue model of education, Robert Solomon argues for a business ethics that aligns with the Aristotelian approach. Solomon's

approach to business ethics illustrates how practices associated with the business model can be linked with the Aristotelian perspective in an attempt to make business practices both more humane and more consistent with democratic values. Solomon succinctly illustrates why combining business with virtue ethics is an important synthesis for the business world to make:

But what gets left out of these well-plumbed studies and arguments is an adequate sense of personal values and integrity. What is missing from much of business ethics is an adequate account of the personal dimension in ethics, the dimension of everyday individual decision making.⁴⁵

Solomon's focus may be on addressing issues of teaching business ethics in both the corporate world and in universities. However, the conceptual changes he suggests in the business model have important implications for how some of the shortcomings of the business model might be corrected. More will be said on this matter in Chapter Four, when we discuss the adequacy conditions for a good education.

For now let us summarize our overview of the various aims found in democratic education. The freedom model of education views the goal of education as cultivating the capabilities needed to actively pursue and practice individual freedom and, in the Kantian form, honors the dignity and worth of all human beings. The virtue model of education aims to create a citizenry that serves the common good through the cultivation of moral character and common virtue. Finally, the business-based model focuses on extending the idea of individual freedom by providing an education that develops the capabilities of its constituents through efficient practices.

So, can these models be synthesized? I believe the answer is yes. All of the aims are compatible with, and necessary for an overriding aim of democratic education: the opportunity to flourish.⁴⁶ The aim of education is to provide an environment that nurtures

human flourishing by supporting the development of both individual freedom and communal participation.

In Chapter Three we will continue our discussion of the nature of education by examining important values that are presupposed by the aims of democratic education.

Endnotes

¹ John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1916), 121-124. For the full discussion of aims, see Chapter VIII, "Aims in Education."

² John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Touchstone, 1938), 42. Dewey uses "situation" in a technical sense to capture the interaction between external and internal factors in experience. After discussing the continuity of experience, he goes on to write: "The word 'interaction'...expresses the second chief principle for interpreting an experience in its educational function and force. It assigns equal rights to both factors in experience—objective and internal conditions. Any normal experience is an interplay of these two sets of conditions. Taken together, or in their interaction, they form what we call a *situation*. The trouble with traditional education was not that it emphasized the external conditions that enter into the control of the experiences but that it paid so little attention to the internal factors which also decide what kind of experience is had."

³ Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 122.

⁴ *Ibid*, 118.

⁵ Dewey, *Experience and Education*, 44-45. Although he stresses the responsibility of educators at all levels for making educational experiences relevant to the learner, Dewey's view differs significantly from advocates of open, student-directed education, such as A. S. Neill, the founder of the Summerhill school in England.

⁶ Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 122-123

⁷ *Ibid*, 126-127

⁸ *Ibid*, 127.

⁹ *Ibid*, 123.

¹⁰ Dewey, *Experience and Education*, 25. He writes: "The belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other. For some experiences are mis-educative. Any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience."

¹¹ Dewey, *Experience and Education*, 36.

¹² Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 127-128.

¹³ Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 124-125. Here are three other examples of the importance for pedagogy of avoiding overgeneralization and abstraction in curriculum and instruction. (1) In *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902) Dewey uses the example of a map to contrast the difference between a formal approach to teaching “geography” and an approach that awakens students to the processes and purposes of map-making as it has played out in human experience. (2) In his lab school at the University of Chicago Dewey was one of the first educators to experiment with a “projects” approach to integrating the curriculum in a way that helps students make connections among various subjects. (3) At the level of higher education a good example is the “case studies” approach to teaching ethical theory. Students are first introduced to ethical dilemmas involving concrete human situations, and are then led by these problem cases to see the relevance of ethical principles. Michael Sandel uses this approach in his Harvard course “Justice.” See <http://www.justiceharvard.org/>

¹⁴ Daniel R. DeNicola, *Learning to Flourish. A Philosophical Exploration of Liberal Education* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2012). DeNicola structures his recent book around five competing yet complementary educational paradigms: transmission of culture, self-actualization, understanding the world, engagement with the world, and the skills of learning. Although his work is a defense of the “liberal arts,” much of his argument is applicable to education in general.

¹⁵ John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government* (excerpt), in *The Mayfield Anthology of Western History*, ed. Daniel Kolak (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield, 1998), 492-499.

¹⁶ John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (excerpt), in *The Mayfield Anthology of Western History*, ed. Daniel Kolak (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield, 1998), 468-491.

¹⁷ Amy Gutmann, *Democratic Education* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987), 28-33.

¹⁸ Joseph S. Spierl, “Justice and the Case for School Vouchers,” in *Classic and Contemporary Readings in the Philosophy of Education*, 2nd edition, ed. Steven Cahn (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 315-322.

¹⁹ Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (Basic Books, 1974). See especially Chapter 3, “Moral Constraints and the State.”

²⁰ Milton Friedman, “The Role of Government in Education,” in *Philosophy of Education*, ed. Randall Curren (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007) 194-199.

²¹ John Locke, “Some Thoughts Concerning Education,” in *Classic and Contemporary Readings in the Philosophy of Education*, 2nd edition, ed. Steven Cahn (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 105-121.

²² John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, in *The Basic Writings of John Stuart Mill*: New York: The Modern Library, 2002), 11-12. Though variously interpreted and controversial, Mill’s “harm principle” has been widely used (for example in U.S. Supreme Court cases) to preserve individual freedoms.

²³ Rodney A. Smolla, *Free Speech in a Open Society* (New York: Random House, 1992), 6-8.

²⁴ Gutmann, *Democratic Education*, 33-41.

²⁵ John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, ed. George Sher (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1979).

²⁶ Sandel, *Justice*, 37-48.

²⁷ Mill, *Utilitarianism*, 6-11. Mill famously wrote: “It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, are of a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question.”

²⁸ Sandel, *Justice*, 50.

²⁹ Sandel, *Justice*, 103-111.

³⁰ Sandel, *Justice*, 109. Philosophers have sometimes called this absence of constraint merely “negative freedom.”

³¹ *Ibid*

³² Richard Taylor, *Virtue Ethics* (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 2002), 4-6.

³³ Robert C. Solomon, “The Aristotelean Approach to Business Ethics,” in *Ethics and Excellence Cooperation and Integrity in Business* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 101-111.

³⁴ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book I, Section 13

³⁵ Aristotle, *Politics*, Book VII. Aristotle discusses education in Book VIII; he strongly defends public education as crucial in order for a society to become a unified community able to provide an environment in which its members can aspire to achieve a good life.

³⁶ Fred Miller, *Nature, Justice, and Rights in Aristotle's Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). 225.

³⁷ Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981). MacIntyre's work has been influential in the resurgence of “virtue ethics;” he draws from Aristotle in challenging the notion of the “unencumbered” self of classical liberalism (associated with the enlightenment) and stresses that we live our lives in “narrative form” as a part of a community. Martha Nussbaum also draws heavily from Aristotle, as well as Kant. She thinks the importance of virtue is also important to enlightenment thinkers and that the classical and enlightenment traditions can be synthesized. See Martha Nussbaum, “Virtue Ethics: A Misleading Category?”, *The Journal of Ethics* 3:163-201, 1999.

³⁸ Solomon, “The Aristotelean Approach to Business Ethics.”

³⁹ *Ibid*. 104.

⁴⁰ Serbrenia J. Sims and Ronald R. Sims, *Total Quality Management in Higher Education Is It Working? Why or Why Not?*, Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 1995), 8.

⁴¹ This differs from Mill's form of utilitarianism that distinguished between quantitative and qualitative goods. The utilitarianism employed by entities using scientific management (TQM) base decision-making primarily upon quantitative data.

⁴² Although some qualitative instruments are used, such as student surveys, the data is converted into quantifiable “metrics.”

⁴³ Martha Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1997), 58-59. Nussbaum's desire to focus on developing people who understand the feelings and points of view of others expands upon Kant's position that we must respect and recognize that everyone has a life with intrinsic worth.

⁴⁴ Martha Nussbaum, *Not for Profit Why Democracy Needs the Humanities* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 45-46.

⁴⁵ Solomon, “An Aristotelean Approach to Business Ethics,” 111.

⁴⁶ DeNicola, *Learning to Flourish. A Philosophical Exploration of Liberal Education*, 51.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE VALUES OF EDUCATION IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

Now we have seen how such a review not only isolates quality and excellence from the complex system of values of which they are a part, but it also conceives quality and excellence as independent objects toward which we strive rather than identifying them as byproducts of value-laden work.

-Vincent Luzzu, *Some Dissatisfaction with Satisfaction: Universities, Values, and Quality*

At the closing of our discussion of Chapter Two, we attempted to synthesize the aims of the three models of education into a general aim of education. What values are vital for an adequate educational experience? Why are they important to this experience? Now I would like to deepen our discussion by transitioning to an examination of some values that are presupposed by the general aim purported in Chapter Two: to help learners flourish. These values underlie and provide support for pursuing a flourishing life for both the individual and the community. These values are well exemplified in the world of higher education. In this chapter we will focus on some of the important values that should be cultivated throughout the educational process: autonomy, democratic participation, and human dignity, and briefly discuss their contribution to truth-seeking and the common good.

Autonomy

A fundamental value in democratic education is autonomy. This term has been used interchangeably with "freedom" throughout history, but it carries a deeper, more

philosophical sense, as was pointed out in our discussion of Kantian freedom in the last chapter.

Although in the common progression of education the learners are guided by parents and teachers completely at the beginning of their educational journey, as they progress through the educational system they are afforded more and more opportunities to choose the direction of their education. We see this same concept in parenting. As children, our parents control almost all of our decisions because we have not yet reached the level of moral agency necessary for making informed decisions. With each progressing day, though, we learn more about the world we live in through experience and the tutelage that we receive from our parents and teachers (and in some cases, peers), or persons Aristotle would consider to be moral exemplars. As we progress toward maturity, we begin to understand the complex thinking necessary to make important decisions and thus reach the moral agency needed for successful self-governing.

Although there are similarities to parenting, the university must take care not to become too focused on constraining the opportunities and choices of its students. Assuming the role of *in loco parentis* not only limits the developing autonomy of the student but may also result in disenchantment and disdain for the institution of education, as well as hindering imagination and creativity.¹ In *Learning To Flourish: A Philosophical Exploration of Liberal Education*, Daniel DeNicola succinctly explains the need for autonomy on the part of the learner:

The process of learning should honor the value of autonomy; only then can the means be consistent with the ends. Just as the basic task of parenting is to nurture the child into adulthood in which she is capable of making her own choices, so a liberal education should yield a person who is autonomous in a more profound sense, something beyond normal ascription of adult responsibility. That profundity is a function of the

scope and quality of one's choices, a measure of an individual's live options and empowerment. The person who believes and acts and feels as he does because he knows no other way is, from this perspective, the antithesis of a liberally educated person. His prospects for a flourishing life are sadly constrained. Autonomy in the fullest sense requires a reservoir of imaginative possibilities of thought, action, and emotion--possibilities of content and of style as well--that can be deployed in determining one's will and one's own choices.²

Autonomy in education is necessary because of its importance to the cultivation of a flourishing life. In order for learners to grow in the Deweyan sense, they must be allowed to choose their educational path or paths. Being forced or coerced into an aspect of education that one has no interest in ultimately contributes nothing to the growth of the individual. As an adult, autonomy is an essential part of life. As adults, autonomy is exercised in every facet of our lives from where we live, to what we eat, to where we choose to work...it is an inherent part of our adulthood.

Autonomy is a part of our identity as well as an important aspect of how society functions. Many structures in modern society presume autonomy as a part of their workings. The presumed notion of autonomy affects everything from laws governing financial regulation or healthcare to the idea of moral responsibility within a society. Considering autonomy's pervasiveness in modern democratic social structures, it is important that autonomy be maintained within the realm of education.

Autonomy in education allows us to choose what we believe is best suited to help us grow in all facets of life: intellectually, emotionally, and socially.³ Without autonomy in education, and in life, there can be no moral responsibility, according to Immanuel Kant. In his description of autonomy and freedom, Kant argues that anything that acts as an outside force on our decisions renders us non-autonomous or not free. We need autonomy as a core value in education so learners can learn how to become morally

responsible agents. As Sandel notes, from a Kantian perspective, autonomy is necessary to the development of morality in humans, in addition to illustrating what distinguishes us from other things in the world. "Here, then, is the link between freedom as autonomy and Kant's idea of morality. To act freely is not to choose the best means to a given end; it is to choose the end itself, for its own sake--a choice that human beings can make and billiard balls (and most animals) cannot."⁴ A learner must be afforded the opportunity to choose what the best course of education would be for him/herself, with minimal guidance from the university. Only the learner can decide what educational path will create his or her best possible life. It is not possible to accomplish this if the educational system strictly attempts to steer students toward a generalized and pre-established end; rather, the end must be organic and individualized. Autonomy promotes this by allowing learners to determine those ends that flow from their own experiences rather than being imposed on them by some external authority, as we discussed in the last chapter.

Democracy and Democratic Participation

Universities in democratic societies have valued and encouraged democratic participation and civic engagement as a part of their educational setting because such participation is vital to the development of the aforementioned value of autonomy. Without active participation a democracy may fall into the hands of a select and powerful few who decide what may or may not be best for group, what Walter Lippman and Joseph Schumpeter called "elitist democracy."⁵ Under this form of democracy, the mass citizenry is allowed very limited power to influence governmental (or institutional) systems, with the most important limitation being on the ability to choose and vote for elites for an office or agency.⁶ The possibility of this type of democracy is the reason that

instilling democratic participation in students in the higher education system is important. Promoting what Dewey referred to as "participatory democracy," empowers the citizenry to be involved and have an active say in the way their society is governed.⁷ "From the standpoint of the groups, it demands liberation of potentialities of members of a group in harmony with the interests and goods which are common....A good citizen finds his conduct as a member of a potential group enriching and enriched by his participation in family life, industry, scientific and artistic associations. There is a free give-and-take: fullness of integrated personality is therefore possible of achievement, since the pulls and responses of different groups reinforce one another and their values accord."⁸

Encouraging democratic participation in education contributes to the conception of the good in society. DeNicola notes education's role in developing democratic participation:

The moral climate of democracy, understood in the Deweyan sense, in which each individual's experience is valued as relevant to the construction of the good, a society in which virtually all adults may shape their own lives--and therefore the lives of others--depends on liberal education for its very survival as well as thriving. In such a climate, the concern for one's life as a whole and for what it is to live a flourishing life becomes a live issue for all.⁹

Education not only serves as a public or private good, it also becomes a political imperative.¹⁰ Dialogue, debate, discussion, and other forms of democratic participation in education create an environment in which differences among individuals are respected, allowing cooperation and collaboration regarding issues of societal good. Nussbaum follows a similar idea in valuing an education that will help generate citizens who are committed to mutual respect and reciprocity, thus encouraging democratic equality and hindering domination and control.¹¹ This equality allows democracy as a political institution to survive and work successfully.¹²

Humanity and Dignity

At the foundation of any discussion of democratic equality and freedom/autonomy is the recognition of the humanity and moral worth of all individuals. A humanistic view values every person as a moral being capable of rational thought and moral contemplation and respects all individuals as having their own goals, inclinations, and moral codes. The denial of the humanity of others creates a system of inequality in which some are subjugated to the whims of others and not respected for what they may contribute to the society. Kant's second formulation of the categorical imperative noted the importance of recognizing the humanity of others in morality: "The practical imperative, therefore, is the following: Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only."¹³

According to Kant, the ability to engage in reason makes each of us valuable and worthy of respect. The existentialist Martin Buber also described the importance of respecting humanity in his examination of human relationships in his work *Ich und Du*, or *I and Thou*.¹⁴ Buber distinguished between two types of human relationships, the "I and Thou" relationship of human interaction and the "I and It" relationship. Buber's "I-Thou" relationship emphasized the equality of individuals as the basis for mutual respect and acceptance of the humanity of others. The "I-It" relationship, on the other hand, is the type of relationship where one individual (or group) is objectified or marginalized, viewed as inferior, and subjugated, lessening of the notion of human dignity. I-Thou relationships honor equality and personhood, while I-It relationships subject one group to the level of objects, which Kant warned against doing in his discussion of humanity and the categorical imperative.

From an educational perspective, one philosopher who has used humanity as a basis for creating an ethics of care is Nel Noddings. Noddings stresses the importance of cultivating moral concern for each individual and argues that education requires the honoring of the humanity of each person, especially when it comes to the student-teacher relationship. In Noddings' view, being morally concerned with the humanity of the student enables the teacher to free the students' educational passions.

The special gift of the teacher, then, is to receive the student, to look at the subject matter with him. Her commitment is to him, and he is--through that commitment--set free to pursue his legitimate projects.¹⁵

It is important to note that Noddings is using an extension of Buber's "I-Thou" relationship when it comes to the student-teacher relationship. This extension has come under fire from other thinkers who say that the type of caring relationship that Noddings calls for "cannot be the kind of caring demanded of teachers." While Noddings acknowledges Buber's influence, her notion of humanity and caring in education is focused more on respect and attention than on close, personal, emotional relationships. "I do not need to establish a deep, lasting, time-consuming personal relationship with every student. What I must do is to be totally and nonselectively present to the student--to each student--as he addresses me. The time interval may be brief but the encounter is total."¹⁶

The recognition of humanity in education allows for the acceptance and practice of other values such as freedom and democratic participation. Cultivating humanity in education serves the purpose of creating equality among people within a society.

Truth-Seeking

All of these values aid in the process of truth-seeking. In order to engage in the search for truth; people must be able to choose what path they believe will lead them there, for seeking the truth is an aspirational part of life. Learners must be able to constantly and critically question and think about the current nature of their society and attempt to effect change and to flourish.

DeNicola notes truth-seeking is an essential part of education, citing that it would be ridiculous to live a life that was predicated on “falsehood and deception.” Truth is directly tied to what he calls the supreme aim of a liberal education which is to flourish. Seeking the truth is necessary for growth and the values associated with education should work to support that aim. The search for truth serves as an aspiration for all learners in their attempt to have a flourishing life.¹⁷

Mill also stressed the importance of seeking the truth in *On Liberty*. It is worth quoting Mill at length here on the importance of freedom of expression for truth-seeking, in addition to illustrating the fallibility of humans.

First: the opinion which it is attempted to suppress by authority may possibly be true. Those who desire to suppress it, of course deny its truth; but they are not infallible. They have no authority to decide the question for all mankind, and exclude every other person from the means of judging. To refuse a hearing to an opinion, because they are sure that it is false, is to assume that *their* certainty is the same thing as *absolute* certainty. All silencing of discussion is an assumption of infallibility. Its condemnation may be allowed to rest on this common argument, not for the worse for being common.¹⁸

Members of a society must be able to question and discuss the prevailing opinions.

Without freedom of expression the thoughts of a few powerful members are viewed as infallible. To seek truth in society is to question the infallibility of the prevailing statutes

and ideas that govern its citizens. This helps to make society better by allowing for critical questioning of what is good or bad for society.

The Common Good

The applications of the aforementioned values to the process of truth-seeking can also further the common good. As both Mill and Aristotle pointed out, in different ways, a proper education can aid in transmitting the common goals or end of the community to its citizens, thus strengthening the community. Mill stressed that an open society would allow dissenters to speak up. This kept society from becoming conformist, ultimately enabling growth and the greater, long-term good for all. Aristotle's view was that the community was greater than one person, therefore education (and the values it instilled) should work to create citizens who could actively aid in reaching the community's common goals, or ends.

The university is not an entity all to itself, but a part of a larger community that is interconnected with society. Both the community and the university have a role to play in one another's development. Under the tutelage of the university, learners engage in a form of "service learning" that enables them to play a role in actively shaping the community. Community service projects and programs on campuses also strengthen the ties to the community and reinforce Aristotle's notion of accepting that the community is of more importance than a single entity.

Allowing individuals to exercise autonomy, developing an appreciation for democratic participation, and recognizing that each person should be allowed to act according to what he/she feels believes to be the proper educational path, creates a society

in which the interests of the individual are appreciated and the interests of the community are cultivated, thus creating a balance between conflicting goods for a democratic society.

Conclusion

Education in a democratic society presupposes a network of core values. These values are reinforced and passed on by an educational environment that provides opportunities for practicing these values. Autonomy affords learners the ability to choose the course of education best suited for their interpretation of a flourishing life. Democratic participation helps empower citizens to take an active role in the management of their society, thus encouraging equality and limiting the possibility of control and domination by a select few. Recognition of the humanity of others encourages empathy and compassion and stimulates the desire to create equality and mutual respect among individuals within society.

Amy Gutmann eloquently sums up how this network of democratic values is preserved and passed on by institutions of higher education.

Control of the creation of ideas-whether by a majority or a minority-subverts the ideal of *conscious* social reproduction at the heart of democratic education and democratic politics. As institutional sanctuaries for free scholarly inquiry, universities can help prevent such subversion. They can provide a realm where new and unorthodox ideas are judged on their intellectual merits; where the men and women who defend such ideas, provided they defend them well, are not strangers but valuable members of a community. Universities thereby serve democracy as sanctuaries of non-repression. In addition to creating and funding universities, democratic governments can further their primary purpose of higher education in two ways: by respecting what is commonly called the “academic freedom” of scholars, and by respecting what might be called the “freedom of the academy.”¹⁹

In Chapter Four we will use our discussions from Chapter Two and Three and attempt to formulate some "adequacy conditions" for education in an institution of higher learning.

Endnotes

¹ David A. Hoekema, *Campus Rules and Moral Community: In Place of 'In Loco Parentis'* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowen & Littlefield, 1994)

² Daniel R. DeNicola, *Learning to Flourish: A Philosophical Exploration of Liberal Education* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2012), 148-149.

³ The context of "autonomy" in our discussion as it is linked with education is not an absolute form of autonomy in which students have full power and control over their entire education. Such control might prove detrimental to development. Autonomy, in this sense, means allowing students to exercise educational choice with guidance from the university (faculty and curriculum design). Students should be able to practice autonomy with the goal of full autonomy in an environment that properly nurtures the intellectual and moral growth process.

⁴ Michael Sandel, *Justice. What's the Right Thing to Do* (New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 2009), 109.

⁵ Lee Benson, Ira Harkavy, and John Puckett, *Dewey's Dream: Universities and Democracies in an Age of Education Reform* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007), 52.

⁶ Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty" in *The Proper Study of Mankind*, eds. Henry Hardy and Roger Hausbeer (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1997), 191-242. In this essay Berlin cautions against allowing a select few who claim to have special knowledge and power make decisions for others "for their own good."

⁷ Benson, Harkavy, and Puckett, *Dewey's Dream: Universities and Democracies in an Age of Education Reform*. 51-53.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ DeNicola, *Learning to Flourish*, 151.

¹⁰ Dewey claimed that all experience was potentially educational, thus the practice of democratic participation is potentially a form of education. Democracy, as a way of life, can only exist when it is cultivated within its citizens and their individual lives. Voting or formal governmental processes do not result in enough engagement to be called democracy.

¹¹ Martha Nussbaum, *Not For Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 29.

¹² The notion of democratic participation also borrows from Mill's expositions in *On Liberty* (1859). Engaging in democratic participation is an example of exercising the individual freedom that Mill believed would result in the greater good for society.

¹³ Immanuel Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis, IN.. Bobbs-Merrill, 1980), 47.

¹⁴ Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (Hesperides Press, 2006).

¹⁵ Nel Noddings, *Caring* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 177.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 179-180

¹⁷ DeNicola, *Learning to Flourish*, 152-153.

¹⁸ John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, in *The Basic Writings of John Stuart Mill*, (New York: The Modern Library, 2002), 19.

¹⁹ Amy Gutmann, *Democratic Education* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987), 174-175.

CHAPTER FIVE: AN ADEQUATE EDUCATION

It takes fifty years or more to build a great university, but it only takes a year or two to tear it down.

-Paul Burka, *Storming the Ivory Tower*

The higher education experience is not akin to shopping on iTunes or visiting Banana Republic... the campus is not a marketplace.

-Ralph Haurwitz, *UT Critiques Policies Put Forth By Think Tank*, Regent

Conditions for an Adequate Education

Freedom and autonomy are key aspects of an education regardless of the level of institution one examines. This is especially true of higher education. Choice and the ability to be educated in the way that best fits the personality of those being educated is key to developing the fullest potential of human beings. Being able to choose one's educational path proves important not only for personal growth and development but also for the development of society. Developing the greatest capacities of the individual allows for knowledgeable and critical participation in all aspects of society, thus enabling the democracy in question to thrive and survive, but, as Nussbaum noted in both *Cultivating Humanity* and *Not For Profit*, part of truly developing a democracy is training its citizenry in cultural equality and understanding. Democracy in the current era is not the homogenous collective that was present in the democracies of ancient Greece. Modern democracies are diverse, and the democracy in the United States may be the most diverse amalgamation of them all, thus it is important for education to develop a

citizenry that not only engages in democracy but also has a understanding and empathy of other cultures to prevent cultural inequity (which could result in control or domination of one group by another, as our history has illustrated), or what she referred to as "a clash of civilizations that is internal in every society."¹ A condition of education must also take into account the aspect of the moral worth, or the humanity, of every individual involved in the educational environment. Education has always been viewed as a personal experience, an experience in which the intimate relationship between the student and the educational entity was one of respect and equality. The notion of equal respect led to a learning environment that proved beneficial to all parties involved. Persons involved in the educational paradigm have their own ends, so the educational environment in which they aspire to reach those ends should be respectful of their moral competency and worth. A final condition for higher education revolves around the self-actualization of the individual. In order to produce an individual capable of engaging in society, higher education institutions must create an environment of learning that exposes learners to a diverse educational experience. Learners need to be immersed in various disciplines and subjects that promote growth in all aspects of intelligence, not just those that provide specialized, practical, procedural intelligence. A diversified curriculum in higher education provides the opportunity for exposure to different subjects, various models of learning, and various engagements/practices in critical thinking by questioning the points of view of prevailing thought within each subject, among others. The development of critical thinking is especially crucial as many employers now cite a lack of critical thinking skills as the major flaw with students who have been taught primarily procedural knowledge involving training in specific skills. With those notions developed from our

discussions of the aims of education and the values distilled from education, here are four basic adequacy conditions that are necessary for conducting education at the higher education level:

1. The institution advocates freedom and autonomy for all learners in the university setting
2. The institution provides opportunities for engagement in democratic participation and promotion of cultural equality and understanding
3. The educational environment is conducive to the acknowledgement of the humanity of its participants
4. The institution promotes the creation of well-rounded individuals through a diverse curriculum that stimulates the critical thinking necessary for innovation and growth

These four conditions work together to promote the search for truth and aids in the cultivation of the common good.

These conditions can manifest themselves in an institution through the core values and aims that a university professes to uphold. As a brief example of an institution working to integrate the values we discussed earlier, the University of Texas at Austin recognizes six core values as a part of its mission as an institution of higher education: Learning, Discovery, Freedom, Leadership, Individual Opportunity, and Responsibility. Each of these relate to the values we discussed in Chapter Three. Learning and discovery relate to the value of truth-seeking, freedom and leadership tie into the notion of autonomy, and individual opportunity and responsibility are values that relate to the notions of virtue and the community (or finding the common good for society).

A mission statement serves as a declaration of what the intentions of the university are, and, like the declaration of core values, can elucidate whether or not the university is meeting some (if not all) of the adequacy conditions. The mission statement proclaims that the goal of the university is as follows:

...to achieve excellence in the interrelated areas of undergraduate education, graduate education, research and public service. The university provides superior and comprehensive educational opportunities at the baccalaureate through doctoral and special professional educational levels. The university contributes to the advancement of society through research, creative activity, scholarly inquiry and the development of new knowledge. The university preserves and promotes the arts, benefits the state's economy, serves the citizens through public programs and provides other public service.²

The University of Texas at Austin is just one of many institutions working to make sure that the type of educational experience being offered is an adequate one, but what do we mean by “adequate?” Now we will delve deeper into each of our conditions.

A Further Examination of “Adequacy”

Our first adequacy condition states that the institution advocates freedom and autonomy for all constituents in the university setting. There are two ways to view this condition. The first would be to examine the number of degree programs within the institution in order to determine the amount of choice for students entering or within the university. Maximizing choices and the ability to choose was an aspect of our freedom model of education. Promotion of autonomy and freedom on the part of the individual also serves the common good. Fostering autonomy and freedom creates learners that are able to develop their own ideas and opinions on the state of society. It also affords them the possibility to speak up against structures of society that may be viewed as less than useful for the citizenry. Cultivating freedom and autonomy in the learner aids in the long-term good of society by quelling the possibility of conformity and social stagnation. The development of freedom and autonomy is also an important aspect of our second adequacy condition regarding democratic participation.

For our second adequacy condition, a university should provide opportunities for engagement in democratic participation and promotion of cultural equality and understanding. These could include student organizations, religious organizations, professional organizations, various campus governments (student government, faculty government, committees), and community outreach programs. Most of these groups are composed of many different members of many different cultures thus providing the opportunities to learn about various cultures. This promotes cultural understanding. Most organizations also have a structure that enables them to practice democratic ideals such as voting and dialogue. Other groups, such as the Panhellenic Council and Student Government, offer more in-depth opportunities for democratic participation that are similar to what we see in democratic politics today. These activities provide learners with the possibility to practice and engage in the type of thinking that is needed in order for a democracy to keep from becoming stagnant. Creating an environment that encourages democratic participation and cultural understanding not only prepares learners for their role in a democratic society, but also works to develop an understanding of our third adequacy condition: the recognition of humanity in others.

The third adequacy condition of acknowledging the humanity of the participants involved in the educational system manifests itself through the student-teacher relationship and the teacher-administration relationship. Nel Noddings' theory on the student-teacher relationship was one predicated upon respecting the humanity of each party. For Noddings, the best educational experience was one that created an intimate setting between teacher and student.³ This enabled the teacher to shift and change the learning environment in order to create the greatest possible learning experience for the

student. Realistically, this is only possible in a classroom setting with a small student to teacher ratio. Within a large student-to-teacher classroom setting, the possibility of an intimate educational experience as Noddings prescribed is nearly impossible. While some professors may be capable of learning the names of upwards of 100 students, to have the same intimate interaction in classes of 200-400 students is unlikely. Thus the quality of education becomes more generalized and less conducive to the unique learning style that each student has.

The fourth, and final adequacy condition for examination is to promote the creation of well-rounded individuals through diverse curricula that stimulates critical thinking necessary for innovation and growth. This is primarily accomplished in the United States using a two-tiered educational degree guideline where learners are exposed to an eclectic mixture of courses in the beginning of their education; followed by a more specialized set of courses that are designed to provide the tools and skills necessary to adequately work in an occupation. This is a marked difference from instruction in European countries where specialization is the brunt of the coursework. Schools in the United States tend to engage in a more diverse, liberal education encompassing many different subjects. Courses such as philosophy and political science are designed to facilitate critical thinking on a more abstract level whereas the sciences and mathematics stimulate practical knowledge of the world. Specialized courses ideally act as courses with the goal of providing practical knowledge about the subject while stimulating scenarios that require critical thinking to solve issues and conflicts.

With these conditions in mind, we can address the issue of how well the business model meets these conditions.

An Analysis of the Business Model

The business model of education places an emphasis on the learning process as it is described by Mill, and borrows its organization and management style from Bentham, in the form of Total Quality Management. The added emphasis on efficiency in the educational process does aid in creating a system that effectively moves students rapidly through the education system, enabling them to become contributing members of society sooner rather than later. From an instructional standpoint, this model of education follows Mill's notion of teaching by having instruction of students conducted by experts, unlike Locke's idea of parents being the teachers. The possibility of learning from experts, who presumably advocate neutrality, allows students to be better equipped to exercise their own freedom by allowing them to formulate their own opinions on subjects. Exposure to multiple subjects offers a well-rounded student the opportunity to engage in society with their own ideas about how society should work, thus concurring or dissenting with regards to the prominent state of society. This serves to further the utilitarian principle of creating the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people, to some extent.⁴

The flaws in the business model arise regarding the moral considerations of its learners. Within the freedom model, Kant underlines the importance of recognizing and understanding the intrinsic worth of all people as a part of their freedom. As a result, all people are to be respected and treated with the utmost dignity and respect. The business model of education views its workers and patrons in a context that reduces them to objects (or "customers" who are to be satisfied) and fails to fully recognize them as

human beings, as evidenced by student ID numbers and the pushing of administrative issues down through the ranks to departments and professors.⁵

It also limits developing a diverse community within the system. The focus of a business model is pushing each student through specially-designed curricula that is formulated particularly for them, with minimal exposure to the vital practice of critical examination. Specialized curriculums can create an environment with like-minded people, limiting opportunities for dissention regarding their education. This can result in developing learners who are experienced in accepting conformity. Failure to develop this crucial skill in an educational environment not only undermines the moral standing of learners, but also works against the common good in a democratic society by promoting a standard of conformity.

An example of the business model's shortcomings involves the student-teacher relationship. The interaction between a student and a teacher is not equivalent to that of a customer and a merchant. The relationship between the customer and a merchant is one of minimal interaction, where the purpose of the interaction is a simple purchase. A relationship between a student and a teacher is an interaction that requires closeness and connectedness that far exceeds a simple business transaction. The student is in a process of maturing, whereas the teachers are considered as morally and intellectually mature. What the teacher is providing to the learner is of more import than a simple product. The role of the teacher is not synonymous with the merchant, nor is the student simply a customer (and should not be thought of as such). Vincent Luizzi notes this distinction:

Teaching is not directly dependent upon fees for services (although sometimes it has been), but upon tuition that is paid to establish a special community to which both teachers and students belong. This suggests

why we shouldn't speak of students as 'clients,' let alone as 'consumers,' nor think of our relationship to them as merely commercial or contractual.⁶

A model of education that views students as “customers” undermines the nature of the relationship between teacher and student, the relationship of mature to the maturing, and hinders the vitality of the educational environment. Interaction between teachers and students that goes beyond a contractual relationship creates a scenario that vitalizes the educational community by encouraging inquiry, discovery, innovation, and creation.⁷ The result of education is “process,” not a “product.” One cannot buy truth...one must search for it through the educational process.

While the business model of education does provide a method of management that is effective at solving some of the issues mentioned earlier that have altered the higher education landscape, at its core, the business model conflicts with fundamental conditions that are a part of the educational process. While a business model may equip a person to do a job, it fails to uphold and accept the moral aspects of personhood. This places limitations on aspects of education that are vital for the growth of learners, in the short-term, and society, in the long-term.

A business model of education should clearly recognize those conditions that encourage citizenry and equality that is valuable in our societal structure in this day and age. It also tends to cast down those more fundamentally moral aspects of education such as humanity and freedom. It does not entirely eliminate them but it does place more emphasis on those aspects that increase the individual's presence in the society. The negative manifestations of the business-based model of education that we see in many universities today, I believe, are marking a point in the history of education in which we are reaching an extreme. We are testing the limits of education to see how far we can

integrate with business. Business makes sense as a model to use because it has proven to be essential for the growth of our society. Higher education has reached a new point in its evolution where it is attempting to make a large leap forward...much like a species makes evolutionary leaps forward. Higher education is adapting to the society in which it is being provided. Our society is very focused on the importance of business. Capitalism is prevalent in our democratic society so it is only natural that this notion will be extended into higher education. Nevertheless, education is not business. Promoting efficiency can be a positive goal for education but should not become the primary aim. While it is important for universities to remain responsible stewards of public funds, any aim that relates to business efficiency should remain subordinate to the more fundamental aims and values of higher education that we have discussed in this thesis. Business and education serve different purposes for society. One cannot be easily substituted for the other, but they may be melded together. The effect of the business-based model in education, I believe, is currently representative of an extreme (in the Aristotelian sense) in education. Continuing on a path in which all higher education is predicated on business will ultimately undermine what education should do. It will elicit a change in vernacular from higher education to higher training. The history of education shows that even new models of education retain aspects of older models and the same should be true of the business-based model of education.

Endnotes

¹ Martha Nussbaum, *Not For Profit Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 29.

² "Mission, Core Purpose and Honor Code," *The University of Texas at Austin*, 2013, Accessed on February 21, 2013, Available at <http://www.utexas.edu/about-ut/mission-core-purpose-honor-code>

³ Nel Noddings, *Caring*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), 181-182.

⁴ While a well-diversified subject pool may enable autonomy and freedom on the part of the learner, these subjects must also provide an avenue for critical thinking.

⁵ Vincent Luizzi, "Some Dissatisfaction with Satisfaction: Universities, Values, and Quality," *Journal of Business Ethics* 25 (2000), 359.

-The business model's basis in TQM proves to be an inconsistent idea that results in the abdication of the responsibility of educating in the university. The focus on TQM is to satisfy; this abdicates the responsibility of education to promote growth through critical analysis and reflection. In essence, a business model of education rooted in TQM fails to uphold one of the most important aspects of learning, critical examination, by aiming only to satisfy learners, not challenge them.

⁶ Ibid, 361.

⁷ Ibid, 362.

CHAPTER SIX: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

The independence of higher education is no less vital than individual freedoms, which in truth owe their first existence and no small part of their continued survival to the life of the mind, and to those who pursue and defend it.

-James Engell and Anthony Dangerfield, *Saving Higher Education in the Age of Money*

Education, as a subject of discussion and study, is expansive and ever-evolving.

The latest model to influence education has been the business-based model that places increased emphasis on incorporating aspects of business practices into the educational paradigm. This thesis has attempted to explore both philosophical and practical aspects of educational theory and has investigated their effect on higher education. Chapter One served as the introduction to our topic, that the current hyper-utilitarian business model is undermining the aims and values of higher education. With rapid enrollment increases and economic pressures, administrators and governments alike turned to the business world as a means of increasing efficiency in the higher education setting.

In Chapter Two we turned our attention to a philosophical analysis of the aims of education. In addition to analyzing the business-based model of education, we also examined a freedom model of education and a virtue model of education. Each theory emphasized different educational aims. A final synthesized aim of education in a modern democratic society is to provide an environment that nurtures human flourishing by supporting the development of both individual freedom and communal participation.

Our examination in Chapter Three investigated values associated with these various aims of education. While there are many different values that education is expected to uphold, the discussion focused on autonomy, democratic participation, and humanity/human dignity, as well as their role in truth-seeking and promotion of the common good.

Chapter Four served as our application of theory chapter. In it, we proposed four adequacy conditions for education distilled from the aims and values discussed in Chapters Two and Three. These conditions were then used to discuss how the business model fails to fully create a positive educational experience. As a model of education, the business model is not necessarily as destructive as recent debates have made it out to be. The flaw is that business practice does not equate with educational practice because the ends of each are different. Business influence may be beneficial in some arenas (such as the financial administration of the university), but if the business model becomes too invasive in higher education it undermines the moral status of those involved in the educational process and hinders the development of the values and aims established in Chapters Two and Three.

Other Issues of Higher Education

While the focus of our investigation has been the tangling of business and education, there are many other related issues within higher education that should not be overlooked. Many of these issues come as a byproduct of the influence of business methods being imprinted onto the higher education landscape. Issues such as accountability measures (both students and teachers), rising tuition costs, student loan debt, athletics administration versus academic administration, and administration politics (namely appointments), are just some of the other issues that should be examined in

greater detail to determine what their contribution or detriment to higher education really is. Recent phenomena such as student disengagement, attitudes of entitlement, and the increase in cheating might also be examined with reference to the influence of the business model. Educators, theorists, politicians, or anyone else who cares about the future of higher education should pay special attention to some of the current issues arising from calls for reform in education, and do what they can to help solve the issues at hand.

Parting Thoughts

Education, in general, is a quintessential aspect of life. Education serves many important functions for humanity such as the transmission of culture and stimulating the growth of individuals within a society. Higher education, as the highest and most rigorous level of learning in society, places an especially important role in a democracy. In the United States, business reigns supreme, but one institution that business cannot and should not rule over is education. They each serve different purposes for society, and while it may seem appealing to translate the practices of businesses into higher education, it is not as simple as switching one practice for another. We are seeing the consequences of business' intrusion into higher education and it is leading to conflicting interests and values among governments, administrators, teachers, and students.

The key issue is how far business practices should attempt to be integrated into higher education. This will depend on how the business model of education is interpreted. Several related questions need to be considered in regard to the business model:

1. Is it simply a management model?
2. Are corporations using the business model to “colonize” universities?

3. Does the business model tend to turn universities into “feeder systems” that prepare people for jobs and meet the needs of employers?
4. Does the business model see the university as a business itself?

Depending upon the interpretation used, the level of intrusion will be different. Although too much involvement can be detrimental, some aspects of business can prove to be useful in education. Using Total Quality Management to monitor the effectiveness and quality of the institution can be beneficial in some aspects and accountability measures, if used properly, can provide enlightening and helpful data for all parties associated with the institutions. If carried too far, though, business can have a limiting effect on higher education. Examples of this are already manifesting themselves in the form of a disappearing knowledge commons due to technology transfer agreements, large classrooms of students with minimal faculty to maximize resources available, and threats to cut faculty due to some misplaced idea that low productivity equates to freeloading on the university's bill.

In her book *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* educational historian Diane Ravitch summarizes why corporate reform is a flawed assumption for education,

The new corporate reformers betray their weak comprehension of education by drawing false analogies between education and business. They think they can fix education by applying the principles of business, organization, management, law, and marketing and by developing a good data-collection system that provides the information necessary to incentivize the workforce—principals, teachers, and students—with appropriate rewards and punishments.¹

Higher education is undergoing an evolution. The business-based model of education is higher education's latest attempt at change. The environment surrounding higher education (American society) clamors for results and efficiency. As an adaptation

to this environmental pressure, higher education is undergoing an evolutionary societal shift in the concept of what education should be. Time will tell how far business will become integrated into higher education. The business approach to higher education, in my opinion, is an extreme of how education functions. Higher education is currently engaged in an Aristotelian search for the appropriate integration of business with education. With time and patience, higher education should incorporate the appropriate amount of business philosophy in its own philosophy, as has been the case throughout the history of education. No matter how influential business may be, it is important that higher education always maintain its purpose: to provide an environment that nurtures and cultivates human flourishing, that enables them to thrive as individuals, and, through their pursuits, to foster the common good.

Endnotes

¹ Diane Ravitch. *The Death and Life of the Great American School System How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education*, (New York: Basic Books, 2010), 11.

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