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EDITOR'S NOTES

The spring 2018 issue of the *Journal for the Liberal Arts and Sciences* takes on an especially poignant topic, the place of a liberal arts education in the present world. Fareed Zakaria, in his recent book, *In Defense of a Liberal Education,* noted the tide that now surges against this once essential and popular higher education track, asserting, "In an age defined by technology and globalization, everyone is talking about skill-based learning. Politicians, businesspeople, and even many educators see it as the only way the nation can stay competitive." Zakaria further lamented how "An open-ended exploration of knowledge is seen as a road to nowhere. A classic education has few defenders. Conservatives fume it is too, well, liberal (though the term has no partisan meaning). Liberals worry it is too elite. Students wonder what they would do with a degree in psychology. And parents fear it will cost them their life's savings" (p. 16). Statistics certainly support Zakaria's bleak assessment, showing that students majoring in areas such as history, English, literature, and philosophy have dropped sharply and that the number of core classes requiring key liberal arts subjects are also on the wane. Many educators and administrators in higher education have joined in the fight to save and promote the liberal arts from a variety of different angles. In this spirit, the essays found in this issue of the *JLAS* offer a number of different takes on the importance of the liberal arts approach, including how declining enrollment might be addressed and discussing how jobs in the real world might be found with a degree steeped in the liberal arts.

The first article by Steven Kessler, Edmund Burke Society Fellow at the Russell Kirk Center for Cultural Renewal, is perhaps the most provocative, as it reminds us that the liberal arts are not just the propagators of the politically liberal/progressive view of the world. Stressing the importance of putting forth to the student the conservative notion of moral imagination, he makes the case that the television series,

Breaking Bad, "can or should be a modern addendum to the cannon of arts and letters due to its congruence with the definitions and qualities of the moral imagination and the liberal arts." Trish Oberweis takes a more pluralist view in her defense of the liberal arts education, as it pertains to her subject area of criminal justice, noting in her article,

> Regardless of the current cries to cut back on the so-called frivolous areas in the humanities, higher education needs the humanities, along with discipline-specific knowledge. Neither by itself is enough for our particular student body. We need literature and law. We need poetry and police history. We must study drama and discretion. With regard to the current crisis in policing, we need an educated citizenry that can embrace the concerns of Black Lives Matter but that also values the order, safety and protection that American police provide. Democracy is built on pluralism and education must be, too.

In our next piece, Robert Hill examines Allan Bloom's classic, *The Closing of the American Mind,* in light of the present anti-liberal arts crisis. Two other articles, one by Theodore Zevas and another by Antoinette France-Harris and Keisha Hudson, look at the dynamics of the decline of the liberal arts and suggest ways for schools of higher education to successfully reboot efforts to reestablish the liberal arts emphasis. Finally, Lucas Cuny offers several practical strategies to help students graduating with art majors to find jobs.

One can argue that higher education, especially in a democracy, must speak to the complexities of life, of both its beauties and its follies. I wish to thank the writers in this issue who added their voices to this summons.

Randy Mills, Editor
Journal for the Liberal Arts and Sciences

The Chemistry of Arts and Letters: The Moral Imagination of *Breaking Bad*

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"The first gulp from the glass of natural sciences will turn you into an atheist, but at the bottom of the glass God is waiting for you."
– Werner Heisenberg

Abstract
In the following essay, the liberal arts, humane letters, and the moral imagination are articulated, defined, and their significances detailed. The importance of cultivating a moral imagination is given the most attention. The value of the moral imagination and the liberal arts are then applied to a television show called, Breaking Bad (BB). The case is made that Breaking Bad can or should be a modern addendum to the cannon of arts and letters due to its congruence with the definitions and qualities of the moral imagination and the liberal arts.

Introduction

Russell Kirk (1973) once said that, "the higher learning is an intellectual means to an ethical end; that the college is meant to join knowledge with virtue. . . .The end must be ethical, in that right reason is employed to attain moral worth" (para. 9). Kirk's thoughts clearly indicated that one should pursue an education for an ethical purpose. In this same regard, Kronman, (2007) has pointed out that our colleges and universities used to be concerned with teaching the meaning of life in all disciplines, not just philosophy and the humanities, but even the hard sciences like chemistry; they taught us to live ethically in all aspects of our lives.

This ethical education is something that begins with our children in their youth. As Bettelheim (1989) argued, "Wisdom

does not burst forth fully developed. . . . It is built up, small step by small step, from most irrational beginnings" (p. 3). Bettelheim believed this was the purpose of fairy-tales and other children's stories. They teach our children, "not to be at the mercy of the vagaries of life. One must develop one's inner resources, so that one's emotions, imagination, and intellect mutually support and enrich one another" (p. 4). The goal is to provide, "a moral education which subtly, and by implication only, conveys . . . the advantages of moral behavior" (p. 5).

Cultivating right emotion and right imagination with our children does not cease upon entering legal adulthood. The thrust of the liberal arts education is ethical as well. While phrases like "the liberal arts," "arts and letters," and "a liberal education" are frequently employed, very few people are truly capable of defining them. Many people attended a university with a college of arts and letters, but ask anyone to define the terms and almost no one can properly do it.

In the following essay, the liberal arts, humane letters, and the moral imagination are articulated, defined, and their significances detailed. The importance of cultivating a moral imagination is given the most attention. The value of the moral imagination and the liberal arts are then applied to a television show called, *Breaking Bad* (BB). The case is made that *Breaking Bad* can or should be a modern addendum to the cannon of arts and letters due to its congruence with the definitions and qualities of the moral imagination and the liberal arts.

Briefly, for those unfamiliar with the show, *Breaking Bad* is the story of a high school chemistry teacher diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. On his 50th birthday, his Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) officer brother-in-law, Hank, takes him on a ride-along to a methamphetamine bust. While watching the DEA raid the drug house from the safety of a car, he sees his former chemistry student, Jesse Pinkman, flee the scene of the crime. He contacts Jesse, convinces him to go into the meth business with him, and for the remainder of the series, Walter (Walt) White, the protagonist, delves deeper into the business of drug dealing and the moral turpitude that comes with it.

The Liberal Arts and Humane Letters

The Liberal Arts

Advocates of liberal education are advocating for the prominence of the liberal arts to mold the minds of those enrolled in institutions of higher education. As most who are familiar with higher education and campus culture know campuses are politically liberal, meaning left of center. Is that was liberal education means? Indoctrination into political liberalism? Does the term "arts" in the phrase imply an education in the ways of painting, sculpting, and other mediums?

Interestingly, the phrase "liberal arts" has absolutely nothing to do with either political liberalism or the arts as described above. The term "liberal arts" actually comes from the language of labor from the Ancient Regime before the French Revolution.

For the purpose of this discussion, an oversimplification of the Ancient Regime's labor structure is articulated. There were two types of labor: the liberal arts and the mechanical arts. The mechanical arts were, "Commercial as well as manufacturing occupations were considered to be a form of manual labor and therefore to be base. They were 'mechanical' as opposed to the intellectual or learned 'liberal arts'" (Seawell, Jr., 1980, p. 21). On the other hand, "the liberal arts-defined as those arts 'whose productions appertain more to the mind [esprit] than the hand'- were ranked above the mechanical arts- defined as appertaining 'more to the hand than mind'" (Seawell, Jr., 1980, p. 23).

The liberal arts were not related to art as we understand it today. Sewell noted, "This conception of art differs importantly from the romantic nineteenth-century notion of art as the expression of creative genius unbounded by the conventions of ordinary life. Quite the contrary, art was not a matter of originality, inspiration, and genius but of rules, order and discipline" (p. 22). Sewell also observed that the rules, order, and discipline emphasized moral and personal restraint. "In this scheme of things, art was a rule giving or legislative activity; art and its rules were the means of creating and maintaining order in human life generally, of subjecting our unruly passions to reason and directing them to orderly and useful ends of whatever kind" (pp. 22-23).

It can be argued that human beings need restraints on our appetites and passions to fulfil our potential. If left to our own

devices, our evil inclinations will get the best of us and we will not lead virtuous lives. This is the purpose of the liberal arts: a higher spiritual labor emphasizing rules and restrictions to channel our appetites and passions. Without these channels, our passions and appetites will run amok.

Humane Letters.

Humane letters are designed to teach us what it means to be a human being. What about the human condition makes us different than the beasts? Kirk (1986) explained that the point of education in humane letters was "ethical. . . .the student comes to apprehend the differences between good and evil" (p.7). Kirk further noted that the goal of an education in humane letters was, "the study of the greatness and limitations of human nature" (p. 7). Thus, humane letters are designed to "teach human beings their dignity and their duties" (p. 7). Kirk's notions indicated that the goal was the study of the human condition, answering the question of what it means to be a human being, and teaching us that we, as human beings, are more than just another animal. Humane letters teach us our duties; they teach us to act in accordance with a moral order ordained for us by a being higher than we are.

Implicit in humane letters that was explicitly stated in the liberal arts is the idea of restraining our passions and appetites. Irving Babbitt articulated the importance of restraint when he said

> What is important in man in the eyes of the humanist is not his power to act on the world, but his power to act upon himself. This is at once the highest and most difficult task he can set himself if carried out with reference to a humane principle of selection, or what amounts to the same thing, to a true principle of restraint. (Babbitt, 1986, p. 100).

For Babbitt, restraint was the "the highest and most difficult task" (1986, p. 100) for a person to attempt. Restraining our passions and appetites is a struggle for everyone from the womb to the tomb.

This is the function of arts and letters as an institution: to channel our passions and appetites towards virtue and enable us to restrain our evil inclinations. As Burke (1791) once said

> Men are qualified for civil liberty in exact proportion to their disposition to put moral chains upon their own appetites. . . .Society cannot exist, unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere; and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without. It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things, that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters.

The liberal arts, the moral imagination, and humane letters are all there to teach us of our virtues and vices. They act as the "controlling power upon will and appetite" (Burke, 1791) that teach us our nature and our limitations necessitating restraint. As Claes Ryn, a scholar of Irving Babbitt, once said, "Man's true humanity lies in his ability to put checks on his desires" (1997, p. 32).

The Moral Imagination

The term "the moral imagination" comes from the Right Honourable Edmund Burke, who stated in 1790,

> All the superadded ideas, furnished from the wardrobe of a moral imagination, which the heart owns, and the understanding ratifies, as necessary to cover the defects of our naked, shivering nature, and to raise it to dignity in our own estimation are to be exploded as a ridiculous, absurd, and antiquated fashion. On this scheme of things, a king is but a man; a queen is but a woman; a woman is but an animal; and an animal not of the highest order. (paras. 128-129)

For Burke, the importance of cultivating a moral imagination was simple. "There is a boundary to men's passions when they act from feeling; none when they are under the influence of imagination" (Burke, 1791). He understood what Napoleon Bonaparte did: "Imagination rules the world" (Bonaparte, as quoted by Guroian, 2005).

When Burke said that, "On this scheme of things, a king is but a man; a queen is but a woman; a woman is but an animal; and an animal not of the highest order" (Burke, 1790, para. 129), he was articulating the idea that we, as human beings, are not

just another brutish animal. We use our moral imagination to, "conceive of men and women as moral beings that is persons, not as things or animals whose value to us is their usefulness" (Guroian, 2005, p. 55).

Kirk (1981) said that the moral imagination "informs us concerning the dignity of human nature, which instructs us that we are more than naked apes" (p. 2). We are different than animals- we are better- and it is our duty to behave virtuously in accordance with this elevation. Kirk, at a later date, said "that man is a little lower than angels, but infinitely higher than the beasts" (Kirk, 1986, p. 8).

Bromwich (2014) said the moral imagination is, "the means by which possible motives of action are winnowed in advance; so long as I choose with a moral imagination, I cannot but choose well" (p. 7). Guroian agreed with Bromwich here as he asserted, "imagination is the self's process of finding direction and purpose in life by making metaphors from remembered experiences to understand present experience" (2005, p. 53). All of these thoughts indicated that using the moral imagination as a heuristic enables us to walk the straight and narrow path of the virtuous.

Guroian (2005 believed that the moral imagination was predicated on an ethical, religious, and spiritual presence. When the moral imagination lacks this essence it, "will wither and be replaced by corrupt forms of imagination" (p. 50). These corrupt forms of imagination are the idyllic imagination of Jean Rousseau, the diabolic imagination of T.S. Eliot, and the idolatrous imagination of Guroian.

The Idyllic Imagination of Rousseau

The idyllic imagination of Rousseau derives its nomenclature from Irving Babbitt. For Babbitt, the idyllic imagination is "the imagination which rejects old dogmas and old manners and rejoices in the notion of emancipation from duty and convention" (Kirk, 1981, p. 2).

Rousseau's most important contribution to the world was his view that human beings were born good, pure, and benevolent, but society corrupts us. For Rousseau, society was the great evil that needed fixing. Rousseau wanted to return to a fictitious utopian civilization devoid of private property (Rousseau, 1753) and a pre-civil society "state of nature." His method of

accomplishing this was eliminating social institutions that imposed restraints on our passions and appetites. These social institutions were, “To Burke . . . absolutely essential to ‘cover our naked and shivering human nature’” (Stanlis, 1991, p. 165), but to Rousseau, an evil necessitating removal.

And because Rousseau believed we were born good, but society corrupts us, he changed the nature of the struggle for good and evil. As Babbitt said, “The old dualism put the conflict of good and evil in the breast of the individual . . . with Rousseau this conflict is transferred from the individual to society” (1924, p. 99). Prior to Rousseau, for every man, woman, and child, there was an angel on one shoulder, and a devil on the other. It was through our choices that made either the angel or the devil victorious. After Rousseau, society was now the culprit of evil and the dictator of our portions.

This faulty-premise allowed Rousseau to, “not distinguish between good and evil passions, and identified conscience with private feeling” (Stanlis, 1991, p. 175). For Rousseau, “he associates morality with uninhibited spontaneity. The cause of the good society is not threatened by man’s first impulse, which is always good” (Ryn, 1978, p. 13). Rousseau, “identifies the principle of moral good with positive human feelings” (Ryn, 1978, p. 14). If it feels good then we should do it. Man’s first impulses are moral and therefore we must pursue them; our passions and appetites are by their very nature good. In Rousseau’s world, “morality itself requires of the individual only that he listens to his heart and yield effortless to its present command” (Ryn, 1978, p. 145). Rousseau’s idyllic imagination is the opposite of Babbitt’s idea of restraint as the, “highest and most difficult task” (Babbitt, 1986, p. 100). According to Ryn (1978), “Rousseau regards self-discipline . . . as the very root of evil” (p. 180). This line of reasoning should be preposterous to anyone who hears it, regardless of time or culture.

When one models their imagination after Rousseau’s mind-frame, you can only expect to find trouble waiting down the road. His mind-frame supported ideas like these: “I . . . believe and always have believed that I am on the whole the best of men” (Rousseau, as quoted by Ryn, 1978, p. 98”; “Quite persuaded that of all the men I have known in my life, none was better than myself” (Rousseau, as quoted by Ryn, 1978, p. 98); and final, “I

give myself to the impression of the moment without resistance. . . for I am perfectly sure that my heart loves only that which is good. . . . And the little good I have been able to do was the result of impulse." (Rousseau, as quoted by Ryn, 1978, p. 99)

The arrogance and bald falseness of the quotes illustrates the man and the imagination that poisoned the hearts and minds of western civilization and corrupts still to this very day. The idea that we were born good, but society corrupts is a faulty premise that enabled Rousseau to justify removing the restraints on his passions and appetites, equated morality with feelings, and taught people that your first impulses were always correct.

What are the results of this type of idyllic imagination you might ask? "Through a false conception of civil liberty, it fostered the complete freedom of private impulses and produced a state of civil anarchy" (Stanlis, 1991, p. 187). This was the opposite belief of Burke's sense of moral behavior. Burke believed that, "Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere, and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without" (1791). This quote came from *A Letter to a Member of the National Assembly*. And who, prey tell, was this member of the National Assembly? None other than, "the insane Socrates of the National Assembly" (Burke, 1791) himself, Jean Rousseau. Burke believed Rousseau's idyllic imagination was, "another form of hedonistic self-indulgence" (Stanlis, 1991, p. 187). Burke understood that this idyllic imagination, "enabled modern hedonism to disguise itself as a pseudoreligion. . . . It taught personal religion of social salvation through feeling alone" (Stanlis, 1991, p. 187). Through the idyllic imagination it, "corrupted people by teaching them to justify evil means in practice for noble ends in theory, to act without restraint or a conscious" (Stanlis, 1991, p. 187). This idea, of "justifying evil means in practice for noble ends in theory" becomes particularly salient in the context of *Breaking Bad*. T.S. Eliot feared what happened when this type of imagination runs-amok.

> When one man's 'view of life' is as good as another's all the more enterprising spirits will naturally evolve their own; and when there is no custom to determine what the task of literature is, every writer will determine for himself, and the

> more enterprising will range as far afield as possible. (1933, p. 32)

When the idyllic imagination becomes the new tradition and standard in literature, it becomes the new standard of imagination. When it becomes the new standard of imagination, every writer will determine for himself what constitutes good and evil, right or wrong, as though it is all a matter of personal opinion. This permeates the imagination of all who come in contact with it, whether it be young or old, educated or uneducated, pious or heretical, weak or strong.

The Diabolic Imagination

The diabolic imagination is one that, "delights in the perverse and subhuman" (Kirk, 1981, p. 2). T.S. Eliot coined the term in a lecture he delivered at the University of Virginia in 1933. Eliot was well acquainted with the work and thought of Irving Babbitt. In the tradition of Babbitt, Rousseau, and the idyllic imagination, he said, "I doubt whether what I am saying can convey very much to anyone for whom the doctrine of Original Sin is not a very real and tremendous thing" (Eliot, 1933, p. 57). The doctrine of original sin is exactly what Rousseau's idyllic imagination obviated. Original sin is the idea that Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, and because of their original sin, we too are all sinners now. Original sin is the source of the tragic and imperfectible nature of the human condition. Guroian said, in this regard, that

> The loss of the concept of sin and the rise of popular therapeutic justifications and excuses for things that were one thought perverse. Moral norms are redescribed as values relative to self or culture. Human nature is viewed as infinitely malleable and changing. Some go as far as to say it is merely a social construct or fiction. Good and evil are considered matters of perspective. (Guroian, 2005, p. 60)

Emanating from Rousseau's idyllic imagination where he believed humans are born good and pure, but society corrupts us came men like Condorcet, Godwin, and Macintosh. They were known as "Meliorists." These men believed in an infinite

perfectibility of mankind and society. They believed that by tinkering with our institutions, we can perfect society and eliminate the causes of evil, which are societal. They were the precursors for Karl Marx and some of the atrocities of the 20th century perpetrated by the likes of the Stalinists, Nazis, and the eugenicists (Sowell, 1987).

Those who believe in the doctrine of Rousseau believe, as Guroian said that, "Moral norms are redescribed as values relative to self or culture. Human nature is viewed as infinitely malleable and changing" (2005, p. 60). Those who believe in the doctrine of Original Sin believe the opposite. They believe, as Kirk said, "By definition, human nature is constant. Because of that constancy, men of vision are able to describe the norms, the rules, for mankind" (Kirk, 1984, p. 39). The fixed and unchanged nature of human beings means the norms, which are enduring standards that govern human behavior are fixed too.

Burke, in the vanguard of the debate on the side of the constancy of human nature, said many similar things concerning this issue over the course of his life. As he said in *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, "We know that we have made no discoveries, and we think that no discoveries are to be made, in morality" (1790, para. 144). In the trial of Warren Hastings, on the second day, Burke said, "But we think it necessary, in justification of ourselves, to declare that the laws of morality are the same everywhere" (Burke, 1788, para. 448). In his *Letters on a Regicide Peace*, his diatribe against the radical Jacobins, a group of radicals inspired by the idyllic imagination of Rousseau, he said

Is it that people are changed. . . .I hardly think it. On the contrary, I conceive, that these things happen because men are not changed, but remain always what they always were; they remain what the bulk of us must ever be. (Burke, 1796, p. 75).

The constancy of the human condition, the unchanging nature of mankind, and the sinful nature of mankind are fixed and forever inscribed in our constitutions. The Meliorists of the world will tell you otherwise, but the human condition is constant.

The Idolatrous Imagination

Guroian (2005) says that the idolatrous imagination is, "giving one's highest loyalties and devotions to objects and

things other than God" (p. 57). These objects that have our loyalty today may not be literal idols like the Golden Calf, but we worship them in the same fashion nonetheless. Guroian quotes Herberg, saying, "Our modern idolatries, are thus like the Baal practices of the Israelites . . . modes of everyday life rather than explicit confessions of faith. . . . perhaps all the more dangerous on that account" (2005, p. 58). We worship money, we worship celebrity, and the modern person now worships the "likes" and followers on social media. The difference between the Israelites worshiping Baal Peor and our idol worship today- and the use of the word "our" is important because we are all sinners with our own vices- is that their idol worship was explicit, but the idol worship of today is more subtle. That is what makes it so dangerous. Today's worship "goes undetected, its effects may be deadly to the soul. For idolatry absolutizes the relative, then it undermines the sold brickwork of the true norms of our humanity" (Guroian, 2005, p. 58). When we confuse relatives for absolutes, it rots at the foundation of good and evil, right and wrong, and sin and virtue. When we idolize athletes, musicians, movie stars, and the wealthy only for the sake of their wealth alone, we confuse their relative prominence for an absolute one. This confusion causes the moral foundations of our lives to crumble like castles made of sand.

When these strange gods that supplant a true G-d fall from grace, we are quick to tear them down. As Guroian (2005) said, "when the people grow dissatisfied with their idols, they often mercilessly turn on them and consume them with an ungodly wrath" (p. 58). Television and movie stars, Youtube stars, and professional athletes come to mind. We idolize these people, and when they make mistakes we quickly turn on them. It is our misplaced worship of people for things that are not praise worthy which precipitates the fall. There's nothing virtuous about slam-dunking a basketball, making funny videos and pulling pranks, and there's nothing virtuous about being incredibly physically attractive.

Breaking Bad

On the surface, *Breaking Bad* was so well received by both critics and fans alike because of the wonderful cinematography, the incredible acting, and the suspenseful screen-writing that did

something never before attempted in cinema: slowly turning a Mr. Rodgers-esque milquetoast man into a monster.

When we take a different approach to interpreting *Breaking Bad*, we see that it is a story about all the elements of the human condition intrinsic to human nature that all of us, no matter our age, race, or creed understand. *Breaking Bad* wrestles with the struggle for good and evil in the breast of every individual; the issue of family is front and center; loyalty, sitting on the horns of a dilemma, duty, and restraint, or more importantly, the consequences of a lack thereof, are all at the forefront. As Atwood said, "*Breaking Bad* is . . . built on the uncomfortable premise that there's an irrefutable difference between what's right and what's wrong" (2013, p. 8).

It is because of this storytelling that *Breaking Bad* is congruent with the liberal arts, humane letters, and the moral imagination. The show addresses the fundamental questions of what it means to be a human being. The moral imagination, the idyllic imagination, the idolatrous imagination, and the diabolic imagination are themes present in the show. This is what makes the show so timeless. It is not surface issues like the cinematography, but rather it is the struggle of family, choices, greed, devotion to duty, and the firm line separating good and evil that makes the show so transcendant.

As the protagonist, Walter White infrequently evokes the moral imagination while his DEA-agent brother-in-law, Hank, consistently does. Hank, as an officer of the law, upholds law and order. He maintains a firm stance on the moral imagination and his sense of duty. Hank serves as an antagonist and foil to Walt throughout the series. We know all along that sooner or later the climax of the series will lead to a showdown at the O.K. Corral between the two, yet Walt's real foil and rival is actually himself.

Walt creates an alter-ego for his drug dealing persona, Heisenberg. In the beginning of the series, Heisenberg only truly emerges symbolically when Walt dons his black porkpie hat. As the series progresses, Mr. Hyde gradually overtakes and consumes Dr. Jekyll; this occurs at a steady pace without much of a fight from Walt.

The viewers likely root for and become attached to Walt, despite the fact that he is clearly guilty of moral turpitude. He

feels he is using the moral imagination to help his family, when in reality, he straddles the line between the idyllic, idolatrous, and the diabolic imaginations. Attachment to Walt does employ a beneficial tool of the moral imagination. As the viewer attached to Walt, we learn that, "an injustice you aim to correct had better be seen not from the point of view of the victim, but from the perspective of the agent who commits the injustice, the person who profits from it" (Bromwich, 2014, p. 17). As the lead protagonist to the show, the emotional connection is strongest with Walt. We feel empathy and pity for his victims, but truth be told, the emotion we most strongly relate to is vicarious guilt from Walt's actions.

Throughout the series, Walt justifies his actions as a means to an end. He enters the meth world to provide for his family. We, as the viewers, rationalize Walt's actions with him. The problem with this is that

The use of moral imagination is to gauge self-deception that intervenes. . . . The human creature loves to justify itself. It will generate adequate explanations of any conduct, however brutal, in order to show itself uncontaminated by the evil it has set out to cure. (Bromwich, 2014, p. 32)

Walter White's rationalization is something we can all relate to. Through Walter, as with other characters in the cannon of arts and letters, we see our own reflection: "In them we meet ourselves and all other human beings" (Ryn, 1997, p. 153).

Walt not only rationalized his actions to himself, but to his wife, Skyler. In the series finale, Walt connects with his wife one last time. He begins to tell her why he went down the path he did. She screams in anger that she is sick and tired of his rationalization. He finally fessed up to her and said, "I did it for me. I liked it. I was good at it. And . . . I was. . . really. . . I was alive." The use of Walt's rationalization and justification that ultimately lead to his ruin serves a purpose: "They caution against the destructive consequences if one fails to develop higher levels of responsible self-hood" (Bettelheim, 1989, p. 183).

The rationalization of immoral decisions is not a new theme in popular culture and literature. Himmelfarb (2006) said, "For Dickens, morality always trumped class" (p. 43). For Charles Dickens and Vince Gilligan (the show's creator), they emphasize

that we are products of our choices, and not victims of our circumstances. In Atwood's (2013) commentary on the show, he agreed, saying, "All we know is that our inevitable end depends on our current choices. We can choose to be good or evil" (p. 91). We can blame our circumstances, we can blame our upbringing, or we can take personal responsibility. For Gilligan and Dickens, we must take responsibility for our choices and not rationalize immoral behavior.

Walt was able to rationalize his immoral behavior using the idyllic imagination. The idyllic imagination is the one employed the most in the first and second season. Walt did not start out as murderous drug dealing kingpin. He started by enjoying the thrill of breaking from his 9-5 grind as a high school teacher and becoming a drug-dealer. Atwood (2013) agreed with the analysis of Walt's departure from convention as he said, "Having cast of the moral restraints of a high school chemistry teacher, Walter White's depravity is most clearly seen in his blatant disregard for life" (p. 53). Walt takes noticeable pleasure in casting-off the duties and obligations of his everyday life. As Nardi (2014) says of Walt that, "He realizes (and we with him) that there is an element of excitement in crime, and that this excitement can be an end itself" (p. 178). In the season one finale, Walt and Skyler have sex in their car in the parking lot of the school where Walt works. When his wife wonders what caused his aroused excitement, he says, "Because it was illegal." Walt is clearly taking pleasure in the perversity of his criminal activities.

Walt gradually and incrementally approaches the idolatrous and diabolic imaginations from the idyllic. T.S. Eliot may as well have been taking about Walter White almost 100 years before the show aired. He said, "Economic determinism is to-day a god before whom we fall down and worship all kinds of music" (Eliot, 1933, p. 17). In season 1, episode 3, *The bag's in the river*, a flashback of Walt and his former love interest, Gretchen Schwartz, shows the two of them listing the chemical elements that make up the human body. They account for 99.88% of what makes up a human being. Gretchen suggests that the missing percentage is the human soul. Walt denies this. Murphy (2012) commented on this when he said

Walt never says that there's no God, but it's implied. . . . From Walt's materialist point of view, nothing is more or less evil

than anything else. Evil, fear, guilt, and the like are no more than chemically induced feelings that serve the human organism in its drive towards self-preservation. (p. 19)

Walt chooses chemistry, science, and then money and power as the strange gods he follows. In doing this, he is able to subvert his sense of morality in an ostrich-like fashion as mere chemical reactions. This willful blindness enabled him to further pursue his vice driven passions.

Walt's devotion to science, money, and power are the false gods he pursues. Guroian understands this affliction, as he said, "Modern man not only commits deicide in his heart and mind, but homicide with his hands and machines" (2006, p. 35). As Walt adopts the false gods of money and power, he commits deicide. This deicide quickly leads to destruction through his meth dealings and the carnage it leaves behind. And as always, "the idol inevitably fails to satisfy the soul. It cannot fill the soul with meaning or joy" (Guroian, 2006, p. 59). In season 5, episode 9, *Buyout*, Walt, Jesse, and Mike Ehrmantraut are all presented with an offer to sell their methylamine and walk away with $5,000,000 each. Walt is unsatisfied with the offer and engages his diabolic imagination and chooses to pursue a criminal empire instead. In his quest for his own empire, he led himself and his protégé, Jesse, down the path of the idolatrous and diabolic imagination. He, "uses his poetic gifts to lead himself and others into mazes and illusion" (Ryn, 1997, p. 157).

In his lust for money, consumed by greed and his pride-driven ego, Walt destroys and loses everything he holds dear. As Eliot said, "We become conscious of those items, or conscious of their importance, usually only after they have begun to fall into desuetude, as we are aware of the leaves of a tree when the autumn wind begins to blow them off"(1933, p. 18). Walt is painfully aware of what he has lost only after it's gone. This happens repeatedly, like when he returns to his home after the government seized it and boarded it up, when Hank is killed in front of him, and when he is alone- so truly alone in every sense of the word- in the cabin in the woods in New Hampshire. As Kirk (1986) said, "The purpose of studying humane letters was to seek after the Platonic ends of wisdom and virtue: that is, to develop right reason and sound character. The purpose of the rival utilitarian disciplines was to acquire power and wealth" (p.

10). As Walt chased after the strange gods of power and wealth, his life crumbled around him; had he used the moral imagination, he would have had the, "right reason and sound character" (Kirk, 1986, p. 10) to live virtuously and keep what is truly important in life: his family.

It is only through loss that Walt, and we as the audience vicariously through him, learn the hard truths of life constant throughout all of human existence. As Felton (2011) said, "the one enduring, universal law is that knowledge comes by suffering. Men learn discretion only by the 'torturing recollection of woe'" (p. 57). Felton's analysis of *Agamemnon* is fitting for a tragedy like *Breaking Bad*: "Someone is being wronged, and there's no making it right" (2011, p. 57). There is no rectification after Walt's actions. In the series' climax, *Ozymandis*, Skyler knew that Hank arrested Walt and detained him in the New Mexican desert. When Walt somehow returned to the White household, she knew Hank was killed either directly or indirectly by Walt. Skyler attacks Walt with a knife, and their son must make the heart-wrenching decision to choose between his parents. He chose to protect his mother by attacking his father; his father then fled in a fit of fear, rage, guilt, and anguish.

Skyler, as the matriarch of the family, faced the same dilemma as her son throughout the series, albeit much earlier and for much longer. Walt put her in an impossible position: turn her immoral and evil natured husband in to the police, thereby destroying her family and implicating herself in his crimes, or keep quiet and be a coerced, yet active participant in his crimes. As San Juan said

This is the dilemma Skyler White is put in repeatedly. She is forced to choose between getting out of the way and letting her family face the fallout of Walter's increasingly poor decisions, or to step in and do what has to be done to minimize the damage, even at the cost of her moral purity. (2013, p. 51).

The intensity of the drama can drain your emotions, leaving the viewer sad and depleted. Despite the sorrow and guilt we feel, there is still a benefit to the drama: we learn the value of failure. We learn more through failure than we do through success. Failure is only truly a failure if we fail to learn from it. As T.S. Eliot said in *The Four Quartets*

> Do not let me hear/ Of the wisdom of old men, but rather of their folly/ Their fear of fear and frenzy, their fear of possession/ Of belonging to another, or to others, or to God/ The only wisdom we can hope to acquire/ Is the wisdom of humility: humility is endless. (pp. 26-27)

Walt's true failure is his failure to exercise moral and personal restraint; his behavior shows a complete absence of humility. Walt had numerous opportunities to walk away. His family was provided for and his brother-in-law confident that the real master-meth-chef was killed, but his pride, ego, and greed, all sentiments he could not restrain, were his, and more importantly, his family's undoing.

Babbitt quotes a Buddhist proverb to articulate the necessity of restraint as a guiding principle in humane letters: "'if one man conquer in battle ten thousand times ten thousand men,' says the Buddhist proverb, 'and another man conquer his own self, he is the greatest of conquerors'" (Babbitt, 1986, p. 101). Had Walt been capable of restraining himself over and over again, he would have walked away with the things that truly matter in life. However, "Napoleon showed his energy by conquering Europe; he would have shown his will if at the critical moment he had been capable of curbing his own lust for power" (Babbitt, 1986, p. 101). In the same fashion as Napoleon, Walt showed his energy by climbing the ladder of the drug world; had he shown his will to conquer his lust for power, money, and one-upping his contemporaries, he would not have ended up such a tragic figure.

The ultimate aim of education is ethical. The primary goal of the liberal arts and humane letters it to teach right mind, character, imagination, and reason. McDonald (2004) said, "Education must conserve and transmit 'the permanent things,' those enduring norms without which social order cannot endure" (p. 175). We teach the liberal arts and humane letters to impart their lessons of the consequences of unrestrained passions and appetites. We teach sound imagination through literature, poetry, and now film and television.

Great books and poetry teach us our place within the eternal order of things and about our ends and purposes as members of a human community; shape the normative consciousness of an

age, thereby enhancing the prospects for humane social order; and reveal our essence, both our magnificence as well as our baseness, through their imaginative visions. (McDonald, 2004, p. 201)

And herein lies the thrust of why *Breaking Bad* should be included in the cannon of arts and letters. "Great books and poetry teach us" (McDonald, 2004, p. 201), but without a guide, the point may be missed. In season 4, episode 4, *Bullet Points*, Walt and Skyler rehearse Walt's phony confession to their family. They lie, saying Walt earned the money to pay for Hank's medical bills gambling.

> Walt: I don't like it. I don't want Junior thinking less of me.
>
> Skyler: At least you won at gambling. I'm just the bitch mom who wouldn't cut you any slack.

"The bitch mom who wouldn't cut you any slack" is a misguided label that many of the shows fans give to Skyler. In San Juan's (2013) book on the show, a chapter is titled, "The 'I hate Skyler White' club is misguided" (p. 5). He took the time to write this chapter because so many fans passionately hated Skyler. Skyler White is not the bad guy: Walt is. Skyler is not wrong for hating Walt's complete 180 in life from normal husband and father to murdering drug dealer. This is what happens when the idyllic, idolatrous, and diabolic imaginations run amok. This is what Eliot meant, as quoted earlier, when he said, "When one man's 'view of life' is as good as another's. . . . every writer will determine for himself, and the more enterprising will range as far afield as possible" (1933, p. 32). Without a formal educational experience to guide us the appropriate conclusions, many of the nuances and subtleties our authors are trying to convince us of will fall on deaf ears. Too many people will walk away thinking Walt was the hero and Skyler or Hank the villain.

Ryn (1997) sums up the issue well:

> The primary intellectual need of the modern world . . . is to expose certain qualities of imagination pervasive in society which distort the essence of human existence and draw man into behavior destructive to his happiness. Without the

> revival of the moral imagination in the mind of Western man, reality will elude him, and he will bring destruction on civilization. (p. 174)

A person watching *Breaking Bad* may cheer for Walt and boo Skyler, missing the point. This is what Ryn meant when he said, "Without the revival of the moral imagination in the mind of Western man, reality will elude him, and he will bring destruction on civilization" (p. 174). This is the real and true reason *Breaking Bad* belongs in the cannon of arts and letters today: to deliver the message of the stark reality of the tragic nature of the human condition when devoid of a moral imagination. So long as the idyllic, idolatrous, and diabolic imaginations have supplanted the moral imagination as our norms, we will become our own worst enemies without ever knowing.

Conclusion

Despite the incorrect assertion progressivists or Meliorists may push, human nature is fixed. It is unchanged since our eldest ancestors. Great works of literature have withstood the test of time because they speak to this constancy of human nature. As Russell Kirk (1981) once said,

"Fiction is truer than fact: I mean that in great fiction we obtain the distilled wisdom of men of genius, understandings of human nature which we could attain . . . unaided by books, only at the end of life, after numberless painful experiences" (p. 7).

Through fiction, we are able to learn of the follies and vices of men and women who dictate the norms of human behavior through trial and error. These lessons are passed down from generation to generation. This is the beauty of the liberal arts cannon, or what T.S. Eliot referred to as the, "the permanent things." The "permanent things" are the enduing standards that have been passed from generation to generation because they teach us valuable lessons about ourselves, about family, about duty, and about unrestrained passions and appetites. The permanent things are predicated on the doctrine of original sin and the fixed nature of man. This is the reason of why the liberal arts cannon is still valuable today: they remind us what is truly permanent in life.

The rules for mankind are contained in the liberal arts tradition, the tradition of humane letters, and the moral imagination. Because the human condition is constant, these lessons and rules are just as applicable today as they were yesteryear. These works provide a shortcut for us so we can learn the important life lessons without the painful trial and error process.

Breaking Bad is regarded as one of, if not the best, television shows of all time not for its novelty and ingenuity, but for its conventionality. T.S. Eliot can be understood as summing this up. “One error, in fact, of eccentricity in poetry, is to seek for new human emotions to express; and in this search for novelty in the wrong place it discovers the perverse. The business of the poet is not to find new emotions, but to use the ordinary ones” (1919, p. 42).

The show’s creator, Vince Gilligan, said he wanted to do something never done in television before, which was to tell “a story about a man who transforms himself from Mr. Chips into Scarface” (MacInnes, 2012, para. 1). Many believe the novelty of this idea is what made the show so compelling. In reality, it was his use of the ordinary emotions universally shared by us all that made it compelling.

Gilligan, in creating *Breaking Bad*, did not create something new, but rather something perennial. He created a show that articulates the eternal struggle for good and evil that exists in the breast of every individual. While many casual viewers believe the Mr. Chips to Scarface transition was so novel, in truth, Gilligan had Walt do what Shakespeare once said many years ago in *Henry IV, Part 2*: “commit the oldest sins the newest kind of ways” (Shakespeare, N.D.).

Breaking Bad speaks to the constancy of the human condition. From Walter White, we learn not from his successes, but from his failures. *Breaking Bad*, while a contemporary show, should be a modern addition to the liberal arts cannon because of its use of the moral imagination and because above all, *Breaking Bad* helps us answer a question that has plagued mankind since the dawn of time: what does it mean to be a human being/

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Why Criminal Justice (and Everyone) Needs the Humanities

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Abstract
This informative essay, by a professor of criminal justice, argues that regardless of the current cries to cut back on the so-called frivolous areas in the humanities, higher education needs the humanities, along with discipline-specific knowledge. As the author notes, "Neither by itself is enough for our particular student body. We need literature and law. We need poetry and police history. We must study drama and discretion. With regard to the current crisis in policing, we need an educated citizenry that can embrace the concerns of Black Lives Matter but that also values the order, safety and protection that American police provide. Democracy is built on pluralism and education must be, too."

Introduction

Being In my University system, though not on my campus, there is some emerging discussion about "considering whether some academic programs are necessary." Given the financial situation here in Illinois, I accept that all budget options must be considered, but allow me to make a case for continuing to offer the kinds of programs that are often first on the list of "unnecessary" programs: arts and humanities education.

I teach in Criminal Justice at regional public university. We are among the busiest of programs at this moment in history, with double digit growth in majors. I enjoy enthusiastic students in full classes. Our majors are often vocationally driven and eager to get into their fields. They know what they want to study and, very often, have clear career goals in mind. They are not generally exploring other options, and they do not necessarily share a passion for art, poetry, literature or drama. They crave investigation, order and the trust of society.

These realities of my job and our students position me—and others who are similarly situated—to turn a blind eye to the talk of gutting less self-sufficient programs during this era of budget cuts and program appraisal. Mine is a field balanced between two worlds: on the one hand, our field is based in the abstract, broad idea of "justice" and, at the same time, can be a vocationally-oriented, employment driven field of study. We have a foot in each world of higher ed—we could define ourselves broadly as liberal art and social science, or we could elect to be a more professionally-oriented program. After all, how does poetry make a better prosecutor? How do plays enhance policing?

But it is precisely this moment in history in which a need for deep and broad exposure to humanities is most plainly obvious, especially in my field. I believe, as Wesleyan President Michael Roth suggests, "it is more crucial than ever that we not abandon the humanistic frameworks of education" (2014: 10). The current events involving police shootings of citizens have seared headlines and galvanized national discussions about race, violence, police work and justice. Unfortunately, though, the "discussion" is polarized and, often, not even recognizable as discussion, but rather comes across as editorial venting. A schism is opening up between factions of the citizenry and in that gap, I think, lays the place where humanities can make a difference.

On one hand, the well-publicized deaths of several black men and women at the hands of police have powered a social movement, formed to consciously recognize that Black Lives Matter. Skepticism about the justice enacted by our nation's police is increasingly a part of mainstream analysis. Challenges to the legitimacy of police and law itself are entertained routinely in editorials, as well as in Department of Justice reports about Baltimore, or San Francisco. Concerns in other cities have made national headlines. Every police shooting seems to be publicly scrutinized and tried in the court of public opinion. Protests move this framework beyond mere words, and at the extreme edges of the skeptical paradigm are riots, and the murders of police officers in Dallas, Atlanta, St. Louis, Palm Springs and Des Moines.

On the other hand, the voices of unwavering support and admiration for police challenge the public perception of police as racist or unjustly brutal. Other analyses tell a different story than the one espoused by some Black Lives Matter activists, explaining why disproportionate shootings of black citizens do not equate to racism. A second movement has formed to acknowledge that Blue Lives Matter, and some have challenged the legitimacy of the Black Lives Matter, and even called for a boycott of a business that spoke in support of BLM. At the extreme edge of this movement are those who assert that we need not attend to police violence, given that black Americans murder each other more often than police do.

Recent letters to the editor have reminded citizens that compliance with police will keep everyone safe. Other editorials, especially those documenting the shooting death of Philando Castile, have denied the voracity of this claim by recounting his immediate and direct compliance with police. The growing antagonism serves no one well, and exacerbates tensions between pro-police and anti-racist communities. These communities need not be mutually exclusive, but the polarization of language is concerning.

I am not going to suggest that education is the only or the final means to solve the problem of injustice in America. Injustice undoubtedly has a far more tangled set of roots than that. But I am going to suggest that insofar as education can help restore a mutual sense of trust and justice, it can do so best through a broadly based education that is packed with exposure to the humanities. In other words, our current context should underscore the continued need to support humanities and the liberal arts.

Education experts dating back to the birth of our nation have articulated the belief that broad based education is necessary to serve the interests of democracy. Thomas Jefferson himself plainly espoused this ideal, and believed that “history may properly be called the common school of mankind” (Wilson, 81). In this instance, a thorough knowledge of history would necessarily include recognition of the very real historical connection police have to oppression, through the slave patrols and other historical enforcement of racist laws. This includes a documented history of brutality against African Americans.

Similarly, a deep knowledge of the history of crime in the United States reveals a narrative that ties race, poverty and criminality tightly together.

A close study of the history of race, crime and policing in American history yields a complicated tale of antagonism, poor behavior, and strained relations. Knowledge of this history is enough to problematize **both** the narrative of racist cops routinely murdering young black men and the narrative of hyper-aggressive "thugs" whose lack of compliance justifies any and all violence perpetrated by police. Jefferson's ideal that history can school us all certainly applies deeply in this context and a populace trained in these histories would be well positioned to reject either narrative, and to cannibalize elements of both. Such a cannibalized narrative might help move our perspectives beyond the impasse of acrimony and toward an analytical framework useful for addressing wrongs and creating a safer, more just future. Historical knowledge matters in understanding everyday life.

But the role of humanities education extends far beyond history; that is, history is not enough. Philosopher Martha Nussbaum writes that humanities education develops a set of skills essential to democratic fairness and problem solving, including "the ability to think critically; the ability to transcend local loyalties and to approach world problems as a 'citizen of the world'; and, finally, the ability to imagine sympathetically the predicament of another person" (2010: 7). Humanities education fosters the ability to think critically and with empathy, and to see events from more than one perspective, not just from one's own vantage point.

Of course, history can help to document how actions impact different segments of people differently, and can reveal unintended consequences of actions, perhaps allowing better forethought when faced with new or repeated problems. Knowledge of history can help us think more deeply and better anticipate consequences of various courses of action for different group of people. But, the events we study may not even need to be based on anything true to enhance our ability to develop an empathic imagination, as the connection between literature and empathy skills are becoming better understood.

Literature's impact on empathy has long been theorized and, more recently, has been repeatedly empirically demonstrated (see, e.g., Johnson, 2012). Immersing one's self in a fictional story of human relationships can help build the social skills necessary to understand real life interactions as they are happening, and to develop a deeper sense of empathy to understand how someone else is feeling in real social interactions. In the present example, how much acrimony would remain if each faction understood the complicated problems faced everyday by the other side? Surely some anger would remain, but polarization is difficult to achieve when listeners understand both sides of an argument. How much more effectively could a resolution be identified and planned if each side reflexively practiced empathy? While that may be idealistic, reducing opportunities to develop empathy through the study of literature seems an ill-advised choice.

Beyond history and literature, proponents of the humanities argue that studying and creating art can nurture a creativity that fosters innovative thinking in the face of challenging problems. Studying a foreign language may help foster the ability to understand different perspectives by revealing the cultural difference embedded in language and exposing the variety of perspectives that impact discussion or issues, sometimes as a subtext and not overtly part of dialogue.

Perhaps most relevant to the situation unfolding in today's current policing events is the potential for theater and drama to assist in creating true understanding. Nussbaum emphasizes the importance of "cultivating a participatory type of education that activates and refines the capacity to see the world through another person's eyes" (96), a task spectacularly well done by role-playing and drama. In any dramatic art, the student must imagine in an active and immersive way "what it might be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself, to be an intelligent reader of that person's story, and to understand the emotions and wishes and desires…" that another person who is different from oneself might have (Nussbaum 96).

Repeatedly playing the role of a founding father, a slave, a poor rural American, an urban youth, a single mother, a cop with a family, and so on, provides opportunities to better understand social issues through more than one lens, and so to be

thoughtful in considering the range of reasonable solutions. The value of the arts is the "cultivation of sympathy" in which students develop an understanding precisely by taking up "unfamiliar postures of thought" (Nussbaum, 104). Nussbaum argues "Instruction in literature and the arts can cultivate sympathy in many ways, though engagement with many different works of literature, music, fine art, and dance" (106). Not only can such sympathy be cultivated as relates to the specific roles one takes up, but that structure of thinking—the practice of empathic imagination—may itself become a guide for lifelong learning and curiosity.

But students will not develop this imagination without practice; it will not happen accidentally. Now is the time to cling to the core value of education, which has less to do with employment and more to do with the future of democracy. This is not to suggest that employment concerns are not relevant. In fact, liberal arts education offers certain advantages for employment, not the least of which is the ability to be flexible and reinvent ones self in the fast changing world of employment. Stuart Rabinowitz points out "The virtue of the liberal arts education is that it provides the graduate with enduring communication and critical thinking skills that are less susceptible to the consequences of job erosion in an area where a student has devoted years of pre-professional training" (2013: paragraph 12). In other words, in the event that the job an undergraduate student chooses to pursue no longer exists 15 years later, the purely vocationally-trained student is less able to adapt, relative to the liberal arts student, whose broadly based skill set can be reimagined and repurposed. Certainly, jobs matter.

Many of the nation's innovative employers espouse the value of liberal arts graduates. The most innovative employers of our day- Jeff Bezos, Steve Jobs, Mark Zuckerberg and others--are vocal supporters of liberal arts, arguing that "you still need to know how to learn, think, and even write" (Zakaria, 2015, paragraph 12). Employment skills are not mutually exclusive to broad based education, and hiring someone who can think and learn and has some vocational training may be more attractive than hiring someone who arrives with the fully functional

technical training of the day, but who is unlikely to innovate beyond that.

Zakaria writes, “Critical thinking is, in the end, the only way to protect American jobs” (paragraph 16). But he argues that the economic benefits of broad based education are not the only—or even the most important—ones. The future of democracy itself rests on citizens who “learn how to manage their own societies and practice self-government” (paragraph 18). We are witnessing that today as we wrestle with polarizing issues that require empathy, creativity and critical thinking. Without those skills, it is all the easier to divide Americans from one another, to polarize our discourse along our differences and to break down our democratic values. But a deeply ingrained humanities education may very well vaccinate against such polarization, because a reflexive, empathic approach resists those fracturing polemics by definition.

This is certainly not the final polarizing issue that Americans will face. Although it is certainly a primary struggle of our day, it is not the last, and probably not the most difficult of all the struggles our diverse, multicultural, plural society will be forced to work through. Indeed, our polarization has produced one civil war already, threatening the very success of this Great Experiment. We must consider not only what our choices for education will do to support our success in grappling with today’s issues of equality, safety, racism, bravery and service—all lofty issues in their own right—but we must also consider how those choices will support citizens’ ability to avoid the pitfalls of polarization in the future.

Criminal justice as an academic field of study may hold a key position in the future of broad based education, at least at my institution. Our growth and the revenue associated with that growth leave us uniquely positioned to either embrace the professional elements of our field; that is, to tuck and run into a vocationally oriented future, or to use that momentary power to reinforce the value of liberal arts programs that may be less efficient from a budgetary point of view, but may play the key role in enabling our students to conceptualize justice, to hear the stories—in history, literature and drama—and to think critically and creatively to resolve current and future conundrums of justice.

We must decide if our main goal is to prepare our students for employment alone, or if it is to prepare them for citizenship. Nussbaum aptly points out, “Every modern democracy is a society in which people differ greatly along many parameters” (9). So, is it ultimately most important that our graduates can recite the most famous Supreme Court cases defining what the Bill of Rights means in our day, or is it more important that our students can imagine what is at stake in those decisions for various groups of Americans both now and in the future? Is it more important that they can understand the current legal precedents establishing the boundaries of police discretion, or more crucial to be able to hear and visualize the impact of the use of discretion on people who are both similar and different from us? Is justice best served when students master the great legal writings of contemporary America, or when they conceive of the law as a work of art, one that is evolving and that can only be more nearly perfect and never actually perfect?

To me, the answer requires a both/and approach. Criminal justice students—and all students--need humanities, and we also need discipline-specific knowledge. Neither by itself is enough for our particular student body. We need literature and law. We need poetry and police history. We must study drama and discretion. With regard to the current crisis in policing, we need an educated citizenry that can embrace the concerns of Black Lives Matter but that also values the order, safety and protection that American police provide. Democracy is built on pluralism and education must be, too.

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Thirty Years after Allan Bloom's Classic *The Closing of the American Mind:* The Liberal Arts and the Question of What It Means to be College Educated

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"The end result is that there can be no more truth or goodness and no need or even ability to make tough choices. Where the purpose of higher education once was to enable the student to find truth, the modern university teaches that there is no truth, only 'lifestyle."
-Allan Bloom

Abstract
The author, a university professor for many years, ponders the important question of what academic Allan Bloom would make of recent developments in higher education such as the disappearance of many liberal arts colleges by either closings or changing the academic mission to add graduate or professional degree programs.

Introduction

It has been thirty years since Allan Bloom wrote the controversial 1987 runaway bestseller *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students*. The seasoned professor of philosophy and political science at the University of Chicago and defender of the "great books" curriculum penned what would become one of the major critiques of contemporary higher education. His trenchant analysis provided a traditional view of what it meant to be an educated person and it became somewhat divisive in the academy and a catalyst in the culture

wars. He opened his preface with the line, “This essay -- a meditation on the state of our souls, particularly those of the young, and their education – is written from the perspective of a teacher.”

His iconic book was written during the height of the MTV-watching generation, but long before the disruptive and distracting technological cell phone era and age of social media competing for students’ attention. Bloom died just five years later in 1992, long before the age of political correctness, trigger warnings, micro aggressions on campus, and challenges to basic free speech. One could only wonder what he would think of the state of today’s university and if he would be as pessimistic now as he was then about the plight of the current undergraduate student. Certainly, he would be critical of the growing and disturbing trend of vulgarity and anti-intellectualism that permeates American society.

What would Bloom make of recent developments such as the disappearance of many liberal arts colleges by either closings or changing the academic mission to add graduate or professional degree programs? Liberal arts colleges (schools that emphasize undergraduate education and award at least half of their degrees in the liberal arts fields of study) once numbered over 200. What would Bloom think of watering down the long established general education requirements; the discontinuance of many liberal arts majors; ranking colleges based on the starting salaries of their graduates; or conservative governors (FL, TX, & WI) wanting to charge more in tuition for liberal arts degrees than STEM degrees at their public universities?

In the fall of 2011, Governor Rick Scott of Florida went further and counterproductively said, “We don’t need a lot more anthropologists in the state. It’s a great degree if people want to get it, but we don’t need them here.” It turned out that his daughter had received an anthropology degree from the College of William and Mary but did not pursue an anthropology career. Even President Obama criticized liberal arts majors in a speech made on January 30, 2014 when he said (and then later walked back), “I promise you folks can make a lot more, potentially, with skilled manufacturing or the trades than they might with an art history degree.”

How did the liberal arts disciplines go from once holding tremendous cachet to become a punching bag for politicians who continue to propagate the notion that liberal arts degrees cannot lead to jobs? In the 1985 popular Hollywood movie, "Mr. Holland's Opus" there is a scene toward the end where the vice-principal says, "If I'm forced to choose between Mozart and reading and writing and long division, I choose long division." In response, the protagonist quipped, "Well, I guess you can cut the arts as much as you want, Gene. Sooner or later, these kids aren't going to have anything to read or write about."

Since its inception with the original nine Colonial colleges, the purpose of American higher education has been debated, along with who attends college and what is studied in college. Landmark federal legislation such as the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890 (land grant colleges) and the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (the GI Bill of Rights) were two influential drivers of change. Along the way, the role of the liberal arts in the core curriculum has been questioned going back to the Yale Report of 1828 in which the faculty staunchly defended the classical curriculum and its role in educating well-rounded students. The faculty asserted that the mental discipline students derived from studying the classics was the best preparation for getting them to think for themselves about problems they would encounter later. Today the meaning of the term liberal arts has changed somewhat and the student body is much more diverse. However, there is still the same debate as to what college students need to learn in order to be educated and become civically-engaged members of society.

The liberal arts were originally the subjects or skills that in classical civilization were considered appropriate for the training of free men (hence the term, liberal). They were an essential part of the curriculum to enable a citizen to take an active part in civic life. By late antiquity, they numbered seven and were divided into two groups: the *trivium* (grammar, logic, and rhetoric) and the *quadrivium* (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music). They were long the linchpin to general education requirements and to undergraduate education, albeit for a mostly-homogenous elite student body.

Correspondingly, a liberal education came to be described as the opposite of a vocational education and expressed a belief

that colleges should develop students' broad intellectual capacities, and not simply train them for specific jobs. With skyrocketing tuition and fees, there is a growing sense among the public that higher education is overpriced and under-delivering. It should be noted that the diverse American system of public and private higher education is still the envy of the world and attracts the most international students. However, the very mission of colleges and universities has gradually changed as they have wrestled with this dichotomy of whether higher education is a societal public good or an individual private gain. To put it more simplistically, do colleges now educate their students or train them to get jobs? For many students (and their hypervigilant parents) who seek a bona fide return on their investment, relevance in securing future employment is of paramount importance and probably the main reason why business has been the most popular undergraduate major for many years.

Since Bloom's landmark work, there has been a spate of other scholarly books defending the humanities and the importance of studying the liberal arts. Hanson and Heath wrote *Who Killed Homer? The Demise of Classical Education and the Recovery of Greek Wisdom* in 2001. That same year Veith and Kern published *Classical Education: The Movement Sweeping America*. In 2009, *The Well-Educated Mind: A Guide to the Classical Education You Never Had* was published by Susan Bauer. The next year, Nussbaum contributed *Not For Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities.* Cote and Allahar in 2011 then added *Lowering Higher Education: The Rise of Corporate Universities and the Fall of Liberal Education. That same year* Arum & Roksa's also released their seminal *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses,* a critical book on undergraduate education and the lack of rigor. Among their alarming findings based upon extensive research was that almost half of all undergraduates studied showed no measureable improvement in knowledge after the first two years of college.

Many others also warned about the demise of American higher education. Just last year conservative commentator Charles Sykes wrote *Fail U: The False Promise of Higher Education*. Yet before this recent searing indictment on

postsecondary education, back in 1995 he also wrote *Dumbing Down Our Kids: Why American Children Feel Good About Themselves But Can't Read, Write, or Add* attacking secondary education and criticizing the required curriculum.

This past May on his weekly HBO-cable show, comedian Bill Maher was riffing on the President's statement that "Nobody knew health care could be so complicated." Mr. Maher then said of the opponent, "She knew. She loves complicated. She's a *reader*" as he put air quotes around the phrase "a reader." Are people either too lazy or too busy just trying to keep up with daily pressures to read for recreation sake?

Almost ten years ago, Mark Bauerlein, professor of English at Emory University, expressed this same fear in *The Dumbest Generation: How the Digital Age Stupefies Young Americans and Jeopardizes Our Future (Or, Don't Trust Anyone Under 30*). He wrote, "the intellectual future of the United States looks dim." He further said the youth has developed a "brazen disregard of books and reading." Even the U.S. Army had to lower its recruitment standards, and not just for physical fitness. The number of "high-quality" recruits -- those with a high school diploma and who scored in the upper 50th percentile on the Armed Forces' aptitude tests -- has plunged.

Additionally, the average American adult does not read a book a year after leaving school and being required to do so. This is not too surprising if one remembers the regular funny, yet sad "Jaywalking" bit on *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* which asked people on the street simple trivia questions. The Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan American "fact tank" consistently reports that about a quarter of American adults say they have not read a book in whole or in part in the past year whether in print, electronic or audio form. In fact, the number of adult non-book readers has steadily increased since the 1970s despite national K-12 school initiatives such as Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) or Silent Sustained Reading (SSR) that regularly set aside time to read. A love for reading starts early, and parents and educators need to do everything possible to promote and model this important and pleasurable lifelong pastime. Besides the many educational advantages of mastering reading at an early age as it relates to all other learning, there

are also health benefits of practicing daily silence while enjoying a good book.

Philosopher and leader of the progressive educational movement and pragmatist John Dewey said, “The most important attitude that can be formed is that of the desire to go on learning.” All educators, no matter what level they teach, have a professional responsibility to foster curiosity in their students so that they can go on to become lifelong learners. The potential for college graduates, regardless of major, to achieve any professional success depends on their ability to become lifelong adaptive learners. Hence, if the new norm for today’s college graduates is not just frequently changing jobs, but changing industries altogether, a highly-specialized undergraduate degree might not be the best preparation for personal and career happiness. A broad undergraduate liberal arts degree emphasizes skills such as communication, creative and critical thinking, information literacy, problem solving, and analyzing data, all competencies that employers value.

So, who are today’s widely-respected social commentators vis-à-vis public intellectuals? Two generations ago, William F. Buckley and Gore Vidal championed the conservative and liberal agendas respectively. Although one disagreed with the other polemic’s political position, it was hard to dismiss their gravitas as they clearly conveyed erudition. Since then who would be recognized to similarly carry the torch? Christopher Hitchens, who died six years ago at just 62, was certainly worthy of this public intellectual moniker. However, it would be difficult to find consensus on both sides of the political aisle regarding who are today’s intellectuals. Many popular authors and scholars have their own audiences, but due to the current toxic nature of social media, cable television networks, and talk radio stations, it is hard for them to be heard beyond their own followers. It is indeed sad that someone like social critic and “the father of modern linguistics” Noam Chomsky, (age 88), cannot be part of a civil discussion with widespread appeal.

Today’s higher education institutions have responded to the new market-driven student consumerism and they are actively competing for the same students who now have many more options available to earn a degree. Yet, higher education is very much steeped in tradition and often slow to change. Some even

regard the curriculum at universities as an “academic graveyard” because it is where innovative ideas for educational reform go to die as faculty often resist change. Education, like life, is more of a journey than an actual destination. Thus, policymakers and academics would be wise to review studies by the American Association of Colleges & Universities and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences before drastically overhauling the core curriculum in favor of a practical training, career preparation approach.

Conclusion

Separate from community colleges or vocational-technical schools which have a specific mission, four-year institutions are at crossroads. Perhaps the best approach for today’s colleges and universities to use in dealing with the two opposing curricula missions would be to apply both philosophies in the classroom. Faculty should make practical connections between the “real world” and the subject matter by bridging academic theory with practice. The curriculum should address questions of social responsibility and ethical standards for behavior while also exploring active civic engagement with the local community and the world. Nevertheless, one can only conclude that if Bloom was around today to see the state of higher education in 2017, he would not be too impressed and he no doubt would continue to think that higher education is failing both democracy and the students.

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The Unexamined Life is not Worth Living: Why the Liberal Arts Matter

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Abstract
This paper begins by discussing the liberal arts in a cultural context. It follows with a discussion of the liberal arts in political and global contexts and within the field of education. Although I consider the natural sciences as part of the liberal arts I cannot speak for them since I feel I do not have a sufficient background to do so. I feel the same about the fine arts and economics even though I consider these fields to be part of the liberal arts. I later discuss why a liberal arts education is important to all students. In my final section I conclude with the importance of books. This last section may feel a bit disjointed from the rest of this paper, but I felt it was important to discuss the importance of books and reading since they both play an important role in a liberal arts education.

Introduction

Over two and a half millennia ago, Socrates said, "The unexamined life was not worth living." Socrates said this in a time when his great city of Athens struggled in maintaining its democratic system of government. Democracy to Socrates meant freedom. But more importantly it had afforded Socrates the right to examine life without fear of being persecuted. When Socrates's found that this freedom was being challenged, he found no real reason to live---for a life without the ability to examine it, was not worth living.

In Latin liberal or *Liberalis* means "suited for freedom." It also means to be generous and concerned about others. In education "liberal" typically means to open one's mind to the endless possibilities of learning, to the point where learning is not merely used for personal growth, but for the improvement of

one's entire community. Socrates was too concerned about his community. He was concerned that Athens's youth were not being taught the truth, but rather that the truth did not matter. By asking his students questions, Socrates's taught his students to seek truth and knowledge; two virtues that Socrates found were the only good things in his world. Socrates was imprisoned for his beliefs and charged for corrupting Athens's youth and not believing in the gods. He was later sentenced to death. While in prison Socrates was encouraged by his friends to escape, (it was common in those days to pay off a magistrate and be set free) but Socrates choose to die. In his final days Socrates said,

> And now I depart hence condemned by you to suffer the penalty of death,---they too go their ways condemned by the truth to suffer the penalty of villainy and wrong; and I must abide by this award—let them abide by theirs. I suppose that these things may be regarded as fated,---and I think that they are well.[1]

Socrates would never be forgotten. His philosophy would help shape western civilization. Other great thinkers that came after him would be influenced by his teachings. Today, our world is shaped by the teachings of people like Socrates. Most of these individuals were interested in examining the cosmos to make better sense of their own world. Thier discoveries led to progress in almost all aspects of life. They often looked to the past for answers, and ended up building upon a preexisting body of knowledge that latter generations would learn from. They cared about learning new things, and when they found that what they learned conflicted with their own beliefs; they only searched deeper for answers. The liberal arts were at the center of their learning and today we attribute our own educational foundation to them. I can't think of any field today that is not influenced by the liberal arts. Nor do I think that most people today have not been impacted by the liberal arts in some way.

I have a liberal arts education and I like to think that the liberal arts have prepared me to seek knowledge, and truth. But it is more complex than just that----the liberal arts have also taught me how to live. This means to be imaginative, to seek

answers to life's big questions, and to be concerned about my fellow world and man.

As a college student, I studied the liberal arts. I majored in History, but I also took courses in Philosophy, Literature, Geography, Anthropology, Art History, Politics, Sociology, Psychology, and Religion. But my education in the liberal arts began even earlier than that. It began when I was a child and in the presence of my grandmother. I remember my grandmother singing and telling me stories. She read stories to me from Greek mythology, the Old Testament, and Aesop. As a child, my imagination was filled with a sense of wonder and awe in an environment that was caring and loving. Mysterious worlds came to life and figures and characters became personal to me. It was during these early experiences that I began to acquire a moral capacity, a curiosity of my world and an understanding of who I was. Martha Nussbaum says,

> As children explore stories, rhymes, and songs---especially in the company of adults they love---they are led to notice the sufferings of other living creatures with a new keenness. At this point, stories can then begin to confront children more plainly with the uneven fortunes of life, convincing them emotionally of their urgency and importance.[2]

When I think of my own education I often wonder if my education, which I like to think is a "good" education has given me the tools to live a happy and virtues life. I like reading, I like travel, and I like art. If you asked me what I would do with a million dollars I would tell you that I would not buy an expensive sports car, or a big house, nor would I stay at the most luxurious hotels in the world. I may though use the money to buy a private viewing at the *Louvre* (that way I could take in all the great art without feeling rushed). I may buy season tickets to the opera. I might go back to school and I may finally find the time to read those books I've always wanted to read. I would definitely travel. I would try to visit the world's great museums, and historical sites like *Machu Picchu* and the *Taj Mahal*, two places I've always wanted to see in person. Like a cultural anthropologist, I would also try to immerse myself in the culture and people I was visiting, or do as the Romans do, so they say. I have to be

honest though, I would buy the occasional expensive bottle of wine if you consider twenty-five to fifty dollars expensive. I would give some money to charity and family, but I would never think that I was happier because of my newfound wealth.

It is hard to measure happiness and what you have and how much you have doesn't necessarily equate to happiness. In his best-selling book *David and Goliath*, Malcolm Gladwell argues that there is really no difference in the level of happiness in a household that makes seventy thousand dollars a year and a household that makes three-hundred thousand dollars a year.[3] If anything the more money you have the less likely you are to be happy.

Be as it may, there are a great many people in the world today who have a lot of money, but do not know how to enjoy life. I know of one such person who worked hard all his life, made a lot of money, but nothing that he does seems to make him happy. When he goes to a museum he cannot stay for more than ten minutes and enjoy its exhibits. When he goes out to dinner he orders the most expensive item on the menu, and when he goes on vacation he rarely ventures outside of his hotel. His life sounds like a Greek tragedy, "A man's goal in his life was to one day be wealthy, but when he achieves great wealth he does not know what to do with it, because he never learned how to enjoy life."

The real question for many today is whether the liberal arts prepare students for the real world and for our current job market. Finding a job is a good reason to go to college, but it is not the only reason. We have to remember that college is expensive and students want to get their money's worth from their college education. Students have naturally become more selective when deciding what to study in college. Business, Engineering, and Computer and Information Systems, are the most lucrative fields and more and more students are choosing to study these fields.[4] The least desirable majors are philosophy, music, and theater. Students majoring in these fields are less likely to find a job and more likely to be in long-term debt after college.[5]

It is difficult to convince students to major in the liberal arts for their intrinsic rewards. "Major in the liberal arts and you will be a happier and better person tomorrow." Many students have

a hard time grasping this idea. They want something that is more tangible such as "Major in this and you will find a job after college, pay off your debt, and live a comfortable life." In our current economic environment students need more concrete reasons for the type of education they are seeking. Thus, those that support the liberal arts need to come up with meaningful ways in articulating the importance of a liberal arts education. We cannot blame students and their parents for being skeptical of a liberal arts education. During the 1950's and 1960's it was not unusual, that after college you would find a job. In the early 1990's, when I was in college, my friends and I all believed that we would be all millionaires after college. For many students today unfortunately, a college education is no guarantee. This is a reality of the world today.

Liberal Arts in Global Contexts

Over thirty years ago Alan Bloom wrote that the liberal arts were gradually being replaced by what he called "vocational fields." [6] Bloom found that these so called vocational fields were inferior to the liberal arts because they did not teach students how to think. To Bloom and many others of his generation the liberal arts were the best way to prepare students for life after college. The liberal arts taught students to be analytical, to be creative, to problem solve, and to apply what they learned to the real world. It was for these reasons that Bloom believed that the United States remained ahead of its competitors during the Cold War.

By the 1980's some feared that the Soviet Union would surpass the United States. The 1983 report *A Nation at Risk* stated, "Our Nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world."[7] Since the beginning of the Cold War in the 1940's the Soviets had competed with the United States in almost every way possible. The Soviets put the first satellite and man in space. They had developed the hydrogen bomb and had nuclear submarines and other sophisticated military weapons that matched those of the United States. The Soviets saw Americans as wasteful and too freethinking. Soviet engineers even laughed when they learned that NASA had spent

thousands of dollars designing a pen that worked in space (because the lack of gravity in space made pens ineffective). One Soviet scientist even commented, “So what did we do to solve this problem? We used a pencil.” So, it was natural for many Americans to fear that their country would be surpassed by the Soviet Union.

But while the Soviets were resourceful and able to come head to head with the United States for much of the Cold War they did not surpass the United States. In fact, their institutions collapsed. Historians have attributed the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s to its autarkical and repressive government and its inability to keep up technologically and economically. Surely, there are many valid reasons as to why the Soviet Union and communism collapsed, but it was also the Soviet Union’s educational system that caused them to fail---this was a system of education that was not interested in teaching its students on finding ways to apply what they learned to the real world, but how to preserve the *status quo.* American education on the other hand did just the opposite.

In most schools in the United States, teachers help students find their strengths and good teachers help students build upon those strengths that were naturally gifted to them. We also welcome new ideas and look to find the best talent. Merit is important to us. It is not so much who you know, but how well you are at something. Consider this example. A friend of mine that was educated in China once explained to me the difference between Chinese and American education. His elementary and high school education was in China. Later he came to the United States for college. He recollected to me that while he was a student in China all he was taught was to memorize and copy. He felt that this was all he learned. Most schools in China teach their students in this way. Reading and writing are important in Chinese society. The Chinese alphabet is composed of more than forty-nine thousand characters. So, starting in primary school, students begin to memorize each character’s meaning. This process continues through high school and university, because if you don’t know your alphabet you will not know how to read and write. But what does this do to the student. If a student is constantly memorizing characters it teaches the student that rote memorization is important to the

learning process and that coming up with new ideas is secondary. My friend says, "If you give a Chinese student something to copy they will do so without a problem, but if you ask them to come up with a new idea they do not know where to start." This is where the American student has always had an edge-----coming up with new ideas and applying those ideas to the real world.

Recent global tests such as the *Programme for International Student Assessment* (PISA) have shown just the opposite---American students falling behind in Math, Reading, and Science to other industrialized nations. This is not something new though. Since the inception of these global tests American students have always been behind, but the United States has managed to stay ahead. So why is this the case? While there is something to be learned from these tests, we have to remember that these tests do not measure creativity. It is this creativity, fostered within our schools and culture that has helped the United States succeed. Our reactions to the results have nonetheless remained the same. "Let's revamp our entire educational system! Let's make schools and teachers more accountable! Let's put more money in education!" We set new policies expecting them to work, only to find in the end that nothing has changed. We feel discouraged and blame our teachers and schools for failing our students.

In higher education, the United States is still the number one destination for foreign students. Last year there was a record number, 820,000 foreign students who entered American colleges and universities.[8] The biggest chunk came from China, with 235,000 students. It is estimated that this brought in 24 billion dollars to the U.S. economy. American education is a hot commodity. To have a degree from an American university opens doors in many other countries.

An overwhelming number of these foreign students are studying, engineering, computer science, and business and not the liberal Arts. The liberal arts are seen as counterproductive and impractical for economic and national development in many nations. Some governments will go so far as pay for their students' education so long as it not in the liberal arts. But more than impracticality the liberal arts are a threat to many nations. They are seen as potentially challenging the traditional *status*

quo and opening the door for the spread of western ideas such as democracy and human rights.

Education and the Liberal Arts

My own field of education is often called a professional field. A professional field is defined as a field of study that usually prepares one for a career in such occupations as journalism, business, engineering, social work, nursing, education, architecture, law, and medicine. Typically, we like to think that if one studies these fields he/she is more likely to find a job after college. While my field of education is considered a professional field it draws mostly from philosophy and psychology. I suppose that few would argue that philosophy does not deepen or broaden one's thinking. Similarly, psychology although seen as linked to the social sciences, draws mostly from philosophy. A great many philosophers and developmental psychologists, contributed to our field's foundation and the liberal arts still resonate in the School of Education through these fields.
Let me provide you with some examples of what I teach in the School of Education at North Park University. In my Introduction of Education course (which is required for all incoming education majors, both undergraduate and graduate) students read portions of Plato's *Republic*, Jean Jacque Rousseau's *Emile,* John Dewey's *Democracy and Education* and Web Dubois's *The Education of Black People*.

In Plato's *Republic* students examine the question of "How do students learn best?" Plato argues that students learn best through this process called "Turning the Soul" or tapping into students' prior knowledge in order to help students retain and come up with new knowledge.[9] Plato best illustrates this in one of his other books the *Meno.* In the *Meno* Socrates, Plato's teacher and friend, proves to one of his skeptics that an uneducated slave-boy is capable of doing geometric equations even though the boy has not been formally taught geometry.[10] Drawing on the boy's prior knowledge Socrates asks the boy a series of questions on the length and size of squares. Socrates carefully crafts his questions so that they relate to the boy's life experiences. In the end, the boy is able to solve the geometric problem and Socrates proves his critic wrong.[11] What is important here is that the boy feels that he came up with the

answer himself. As such the boy is able to remember what he learned.

When students see the *Republic* on the syllabus they are not quite sure what it has to do with education. Many students have already read bits and pieces of it in a Political Science or Philosophy course. The *Republic* begins with a kind of mundane scene, Socrates walking home with Plato and Glaucon after praying to a female deity in Piraeus. While walking back to Athens, a slave boy, sent by Polemarchus, asks them if they would care to join him and his master for food, drink, and conversation. Once Socrates and his friends arrive to Polemarchus' house, that's when a dialogue. The *Republic* is set up like a play. Socrates opens up the conversation at the house with a question and follows up throughout the book with more questions. There are no real answers. Just a lot of questions that gets you thinking.

When students begin reading the *Republic* they are first unsure of what to make of Socrates. Is Socrates playing the devil's advocate? Why does Socrates always contradict himself? Does Socrates really mean what he says? While students often struggle with the dialogue, beneath the lengthy yet logically grounded conversations, Socrates is attacking the Sophists, traveling teachers who went from Greek city to Greek city to teach young men about politics. The Sophists taught their students rhetoric and how to change people's minds. Socrates on the other hand taught his students to rise above opinion and to seek the truth. To Socrates it is the Sophists and their teachings that have brought injustice to Athens.

One of Socrates' basic questions in the *Republic* is "What does it mean to be just?" There is a long discussion about justice in the *Republic*. Socrates goes back and forth on this question with a number of his discussants. He introduces the old age tale of *Gyges Ring* about the mythical figure Gyges who is able to make himself invisible after putting on his special ring. Would you still be ethical Socrates asks if you were able to make yourself invisible? Or would you steal and cheat? In the end Socrates offers something new and unfamiliar to his Greek counterparts: It's wrong to do harm to others, and it is better to be the victim than the agitator, because in the end it all works out better for the victim. The "end" that Socrates is talking about has

nothing to do with what awaits one in the afterlife or that there is some type of *karma* in world. It has to do with happiness and that being just and ethical will help one live a happier and virtuous life.

The Republic is an extremely influential text even today, and it is not easy to read and understand. You really have to push your way through it. It was written over two thousand years ago, so it is natural for students to feel that they can't apply it to their own lives. For me, the *Republic* is going back to basics. It is about being a human being, a citizen, and what it means to be a good teacher. It is about how our educational system could teach our students how to be just and civil to one another. It is truly a work on education or as Jean Jacque Rousseau says, "Do you want to get an idea of public education? Read Plato's *Republic*. It is not at all a political work, as think those who judge books only by their titles. It is the most beautiful educational treatise ever written."[12]

Later in the course, we continue our discussion of how students learn best with Rousseau's *Emile*. We look at how Rousseau's argument that children should be exposed to a great many things in the world, and the more a child sees, hears, touches and tastes in the early stages of life, the easier for a child to learn. Rousseau says, "To perceive is to sense; to compare is to judge. Judging and seeing are not the same thing. By sensation, objects are presented to me, separated, and isolated such they are in nature."[13] I see this in my own son's learning today. When my some Elenios was just over two years old---around the time that Rousseau argues children begin to fully understand their senses. Our living room floor was littered with toys. We had all sorts of toys lying around: This did not include the pots, pans, and spoons that Elenios dragged into the living room. There were wooden blocks, Legos, dolls, puzzles, a drum, a miniature toy piano, all sorts of plastic shapes, a toy vacuum cleaner and a few battery-operated toys that recite the alphabet and make funny animal sounds at the touch of a button. Among Elenios's favorite toys were several balls. A beach ball, a big blue exercise ball (that my wife and I occasionally used to try to get into shape) and a stuffed soccer ball. Anytime Elenios saw a ball he said "ba, ba, ba, ba". It could be almost any ball of any size or color (excluding a football since it does not look like

all other balls.). So how did Elenios know these were all balls? Elenios used his senses. He compared so he could make sense of the objects. Is it round? Does it bounce? Is it like other objects I have seen or played with? In the end, he deduced that size and color did not matter since all balls pretty much due the same thing. This seemingly simple yet complex comparison of objects shows how our senses help us learn during our earliest stages of life. Our comparisons get much more complex as we get older because we are able to see, hear, touch, and taste more things. But later in our lives we find that learning becomes more difficult. Most of us are not as interested in learning new things, and when forced to learn something new we struggle. Our senses are partly at fault for this. They have been worn out over time. We no longer see as far, nor do we hear as well, and when we eat we find that our taste buds are not as robust as they use to be.

My students seem to agree with John Dewey the most. For John Dewey "learning by doing" was perhaps the best way for children to learn.[14] Dewey, an advocate of progressive movement of education argued that in order for learning to be meaningful to the child it had to be applied to the real world. Dewey believed "hands on learning" or as he called "experiential learning" was the best way to teach children how to problem solve. At the Laboratory School on the campus of the University of Chicago children were encourage to apply their geometry skills to building a tree house. If students were learning about early American colonial life they learned to sew, farm, and do woodwork. In this way learning became tangible to the child and not abstract, as was the case from learning out of the textbook. Group work and collaboration were also incorporated because they helped children develop their social skills. Dewey was criticized for this teaching approach. He was accused of undermining the liberal arts and favoring vocational fields. Dewey on the other hand, had no issue with the liberal arts. He felt that if anything, *experiential learning*, helped students understand the Liberal Arts better by applying what they learned to their own lives.

Our final reading in the course is Web Dubois's *The Education for Black People.* In *The Education for Black People* Dubois gets to the heart of why the Liberal Arts were important to

the African-American community.[15] According to Dubois, a Liberal Arts education helped free the black slave. It was through the Liberal Arts that the black slave was able to advocate for his/her freedom in a language that was familiar to their privileged white slave owners. Dubois is insulted when his alma mater of Fisk University considered introducing vocational track programs for its students. According to Dubois, the African American community had fought long and hard to learn what white people were learning. As such, to Dubois, vocationalism was a step back for the African-American community and the liberal arts were a step towards racial equality.

Schooling and the Liberal Arts

In the School of Education at North Park University we prepare both undergraduate and graduate students for the rigors of teaching in elementary and secondary schools. Most of our students end up teaching in the city of Chicago or nearby Chicago suburbs. State and university guidelines require most of our students to have a foundation in the liberal arts prior to receiving their teaching licensure. For elementary candidates the state of Illinois requires that candidates have at least sixty credit hours in the liberal arts or Natural and Physical Sciences before beginning a teaching program. At the secondary level the same rule applies although most of our secondary candidates both at the undergraduate and graduate level have completed majors in disciplines in which they plan to teach. This is the case for most states in the United States. Thus, the liberal arts are important if we expect our teachers to have a sound background in them. Moreover, our society continues to put a great emphasis in the liberal arts. Parents and communities across the country continue to support a liberal arts education at the elementary and secondary level.

One needs only to look at the curriculum of most schools today. For example, in both public and private schools the liberal arts dominate much of the curriculum. In most elementary schools, students learn reading writing and grammar. They touch upon the natural sciences and mathematics, learn about our nation's history and the histories of peoples from around the world and read well-known authors. Art, music, physical

education is still found in most schools, but usually these subjects are the first to be cut when funding issues arise. At the secondary school level the liberal arts are just as important. In the 1990's most schools in the United States decided to refocus their curriculum around the liberal arts. It was believed that this was the best way to prepare students for college.[16] In the case of Chicago, which is the third largest school district in the country, the new curriculum required students to complete four years of an English/Literature course, three years of mathematics, three years of science, three years of social studies/history, two years of a foreign language, two years of physical education, and two years of fine arts. The decision for the change was based on the question "How do we best prepare students for college?" To do so educational specialists, teachers, school administrators, politicians, parents, and community leaders looked at colleges for the answer. They found that the liberal arts were important in achieving this goal.

Books and the Liberal Arts

Just a few months ago I was curious which books were on Amazons' bestseller list. Under the general category of books, it was mostly comprised of self-help books, popular novels, and recent biographies. In the history section, most of the top sellers consisted of biographies of more contemporary historical figures like, Lyndon B. Johnson, John F. Kennedy, Theodore Roosevelt, Rosa Parks, Jesus, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Winston Churchill, Anne Boleyn, Elie Wiesel, Martin Luther King and Henrietta Lacks.

The literature and poetry section (from descending order) included Edgar Alan Poe's *Complete Tales and Works*, followed by Shakespeare's *Complete Works,* and Homers' *Odyssey*. Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* was number five, *Beowulf* eight, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* nine, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* twelve, the *Iliad*, sixteen and *The Norton Shakespeare,* seventeen. I have a feeling though that when I checked the list, which was at the beginning of the semester, college students were probably scrambling to buy their books before the start of the academic year. Be as it may, it was still reassuring that the classics were still popular.

Let's look for a moment at the list of best-selling books since sales of books began being recorded. The *Bible*, *Quran* and *Chairman Mao's Quotations* have been the most printed books in history. No one is really sure how many of these books have been sold.

At number one with a whopping two hundred million sales is Charles Dickens *A Tale of Two Cities.* This is the most sold book ever recorded. It has been surely the best of times for Mr. Dickens even if though it has been the worst of times for many publishing companies. At 150 million is *The Lord of the Rings* followed by *Le Petite Prince* with one hundred and forty million in sales. Other books *The Hobbit, Harry Potter* (Which interestingly enough has been translated in every language including ancient Greek), *The Da Vinci Code, The Catcher and the Rye, The Alchemist* are just a few that have exceeded the fifty million mark. Many of the books on the list are children's books. These include, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar, Good Night Moon, Charlottes Webb, and The Poky Little Puppy*.

People have been reading for a long time. With the mass production of books beginning in the fifteenth century, there were more books to choose from to read. By the late nineteenth century with compulsory education in most nation-states more and more people were learning to read. Today, literacy rates are at their highest levels worldwide and more people know how to read in more than one language than ever before.

I see people reading all the time, on the airplane, at work, on the train, walking on the sidewalk and even in the men's bathroom. But reading is not easy. When we read we often dose off, daydream, or even think about what we have to do when we get home. We sometimes skim through the words or do not fully take in what we just read. We often avoid reading by dabbling on the Internet, opening the refrigerator door or turning on the TV. There always seems to be distractions or some sort of disruption when we are reading. Without discipline and concentration reading is difficult. It is sometimes a struggle like getting ourselves out of bed.

Sometime in our near recent past reading was not just for the purposes of learning but people read because it was their only source of entertainment. It was a temporary escape and one found enjoyment from the act of reading. But, today it

seems harder to get people to read and to read for pleasure. This may be anecdotal on my part, but I have noticed newspapers articles being much shorter than years past, advertisements often do not include words, just pictures, and I am seeing more and more abridged versions of famous books. Are publishing companies just responding to our shorter attention spans? It sure seems like it.

When I read books as a child I often created these fanciful worlds in my head. Most of the time the author of the story helped guided me, but I had to do most of the legwork with my imagination. Tall, slender, brimming with joy or short, swarthy, walked with a limp. O.K. so what would they look like for real. I had to work hard to create these characters. It was fun to do so and in the end they were mine, created by my own imagination. This may be why we often become disappointed of the movie version of a great book we read, because the movie is not quite the way we imagined it. It seems today even our imagination is being imagined for us. And if you have not guessed it already, I am talking about video games, television, and the Internet. Trust me I like trashy television shows, but after watching them I do not feel better about myself. Our imagination keeps us human, and from going into a state where our thoughts, dreams, and hopes become confined.

Reading for me is training the mind and about developing one's imagination. The better books you read the better it is for your brain. Memory is important and I think that reading also helps preserve our memory. Before the Internet and those lighting responses on our smart phones when someone did not remember something they had to work really hard and force themselves to remember. Often, they dove into the subterranean depths of their memory to find what they were looking for, and when they found it, it felt like finding a precious jewel.

The liberal arts are about reading and there are a great many books used in liberal arts courses that teach students to be imaginative. David Denby says, "A liberal temperament, whether religious or not, assumes that the young can hear about evil and still be brought to embrace good. In fact, they must hear about evil or else they cannot love the good—or love it truly."[17]

But what are good books and what are bad books? And what books teaches students to love good? For a long time, at least until the 1960's, what was called Dead, White, Men dominated much of the liberal arts cannon. Some even called the traditional cannon as chauvinistic, sexists, and racists. At the epicenter of the argument against the traditional liberal arts curriculum was that it did not reflect the experiences and traditions of peoples from diverse backgrounds. Latino, Africans American, Asian and women voices had been largely silenced by what was seen, by many, as privileged white males. A solution was to be more inclusive and to consider the diverse backgrounds of students and faculty. Those that defended the cannon argued that the books were merely representative of their influence and superior intellectual and creative power, and to include many traditions would result to just more questions and issues and nothing concrete for the student.

Later the cannon was expanded to include the voices of marginalized groups and traditions. At most universities, a sort of happy medium was negotiated. Here is the list of classes you need to take, but be sure that three of the courses are non-western-----if you plan on graduating. From a political perspective, the change made sense for many. Not only were students more likely to learn from peoples they shared a common cultural background, but revisions merely reflected the cultural pluralism that had been extant in American society for some time. For the defenders of the cannon it came down to the question: "At what expense and what will be the results to this change?"

Table I

The Great Books Scheme: Mortimer J. Adler and the Cannon of Western Civilization

Homer	Shakespeare	C. Lyell	B. Russell
Aeschylus	Galileo	A. Comte	Santayana
Sophocles	Kepler	Balzac	E. Gilson
Herodotus	W. Harvey	de Tocqueville	J.P. Sartyre
Euripides	Hobbes	J.S. Mill	J. Ortega y Gasset
Thucydides	Descartes	Darwin	Max Planck
Hippocrates	Milton	Dickens	Einstein
Aristophanes	Moliere	C. Bernard	N. Bohr
Plato	Pascal	Kierkegaard	E. Schrodinger
Aristotle	Huygens	Marx	J.H. Woodger
Epicurus	Spinoza	George Eliot	J.H. Poincare
Euclid	Locke	H. Melville	T. Dobzhansky
Archimedes	Racine	Dostoevsky	G. Sorel
Apollonius	Newton	Flaubert	Trotsky
Cicero	Leibnitz	Ibsen	Lenin
Lucretius	Defoe	Tolstoy	W. Sumner
Virgil	Swift	J.W.R. Dedekind	Max Weber
Plutarch	Congreve	M. Twain	R.H. Tawney
Tacitus	Bishop Berkeley	W. James	T. Veblen
Nichomachus	Montesquieu	Nietzsche	J.M. Keynes
Epictetus	Voltaire	G. Cantor	**1945-present**
Ptolemy	Fielding	Freud	A. Camus
M. Aurelius	Johnson	D Hilbert	G. Orwell
Galen	Hume	G.B. Shaw	T. Pynchon
St. Augustine	Rousseau	James Joyce	Solzhenitsyn
St. Thomas Aquinas	Sterne	Proust	S. Bellow
Dante Alighieri	Adam Smith	T. Mann	Beckett
Chaucer	Kant	Joseph Conrad	Wittgenstein
Machiavelli	Gibbon	Faulkner	Heidegger
Erasmus	Boswell	D.H. Lawrence	M. Buber
Copernicus	Lavoisier	T.S. Elliot	W. Heisenberg
Thomas Moore	Goethe	Kafka	J.Monod
Luther	Dalton	Chekhov	Feynman
Rabelais	Hegel	O'Neill	S. Hawking
Calvin	Jane Austen	Henry James	Toynbee
Montaigne	von Clausewitz	Kipling	Levi Strauss
W. Gilbert	Stendhal	J. Dewey	Braudel
Cervantes	Schopenhauer	A.N. Whitehead	Le Roy Ladurie
Bacon	Faraday		Virginia Woolf
			Hemingway

I think most of us would agree that some books are better than others. It is not just a matter of taste or preference. There are critics and professionals who are experienced in evaluating a books quality. One could find great books written from the lens of many cultures and traditions. At the same time, while some books make best-seller lists or are made into Hollywood blockbusters it does not mean that they are great. It is the books

that have withstood the test of time, and that are still as relevant today as they were when they were first written. It is the books that have inspired humankind, shaped cultures and societies and led to a better understanding of humankind. This is what makes them great.

We also have to remind students that when they read something they need be critical. Only then are they true thinkers. Just because something is found in a book does not mean it is true or should be "taken as read." Books too are not living objects and as such they may be put under scrutiny. They are sources of knowledge and examples of humankind's creative capabilities. They are not just resources to finding answers, but about making new discoveries.

Students also need to discuss what they read with others in order to be able to see what others see, and to connect what they learn to their own world and lives. During one of my philosophy courses in graduate school we had residents of a halfway house in Chicago read Plato. We quickly learned from the residents (who were mostly poor and uneducated) how much more they understood the text than we did. Life experience does matter because it gives new perspective and meaning to things we thought we knew. Socio-economic, racial, religious, and ethnic or national background as well as gender and sexual orientation all could afford a new perspective and understanding to both students and faculty. Ultimately, it is the liberal arts that helps sustain our imagination and while life would still be worth living without an imagination; it would certainly not be as interesting.

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Saving the Liberal Arts and Humanities: Possible Solutions to the Decline in Enrollment

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Abstract
Recent data indicates an overall decline in American college enrollment. Specifically, there has been a tremendous reduction in students enrolled in liberal arts and humanities programs. Some attribute the slump to recent shifts in the economy. Others blame an increasing lack of regard for the usefulness of these degrees. In the meantime, administrators at colleges and universities throughout the United States struggle to find solutions. In this essay, the authors analyze the underlying issues related to the decline in enrollment in liberal arts and humanities programs and propose potential answers for those concerned.

Introduction

Colleges and universities throughout the United States have witnessed decreased enrollment numbers in general, and for liberal arts and humanities majors in particular. According to one source, college enrollment peaked in 2010 at over 21 million students. (Long 2016). Unfortunately, it has dropped every year since. In fact, as Tomar (2015) noted, "[b]etween 2011 and 2013, enrollment in America's colleges declined, by nearly one million students" (p. 2). This decline has been particularly salient in the areas of the liberal arts and humanities. A recent study has found that "[t] he number of bachelor's degrees conferred in the "core" humanities disciplines (English language and

literature, history, languages and literatures other than English, linguistics, classical studies, and philosophy) declined 8.7% from 2012 to 2014, falling to the smallest number of degrees conferred since 2003" (American Academy of Arts & Sciences 2016).

A similarly troubling trend existed for the field of liberal arts, which has traditionally included literature, philosophy, mathematics, and social and physical sciences. Ferrall (2011), for example, studied 225 liberal arts colleges throughout the United States experiencing this enrollment decline and found the following.

(1) The vast majority of these institutions made a significant shift to more vocational curriculums as the enrollment slump began;
(2) student demand for liberal arts majors waned; and,
(3) the institutions of higher learning became increasingly concerned about their financial well-being.

These assessments suggest the gathering of a perfect storm, a storms of which college and universities may need to understand the dynamics.

What Has Caused the Decline?

For many years, colleges and universities throughout the United States had experienced tremendous enrollment growth. For example, from 1990 to 2011, college enrollment exploded by a whopping 54 percent. (Tomar 2015). Due to this increased demand, American institutions of higher learning were able to raise tuition annually and gladly welcomed eager students of various ages and social and economic backgrounds in record numbers.

However, recent years have not been as kind to college administrators and admission officers. Researchers into this trend have posited a myriad of reasons for the enrollment slump.

In his study of liberal arts colleges, Ferrall, mentioned above, suggested diverse reasons for the crisis in enrollment, including:

- the economic recession,
- inadequate financing,

- a shrinking market for liberal arts education, and
- competition from larger, richer public colleges and universities

Similarly, many other observers have noted that the Great Recession of 2008 left millions of Americans unemployed. (Jones 2016; Kroeger et al. 2016; Long 2016). Overall, enrollment numbers dipped drastically, particularly in the areas of liberal arts and humanities, as our economy suffered (Jay 2014). Recovery has not helped much. Long noted an interesting irony. "The drop was happening because the economy was improving, with many people going back to work instead of signing up for additional degrees. Nonetheless, low enrollment immediately after an economic downturn is not a new phenomenon. On the contrary, "[t]he current trend also parallels historical patterns of behavior which suggest that peaks and valleys in college enrollment are inversely proportional to the health of the American economy" (Tomar 2015). Kroeger et al. (2016) found that as students lived through the recent downturn in the economy, many could no longer afford the luxury of paying high tuitions and amassing student loan debt. As the economy rebounded and Americans returned to work, college enrollment declined.

In addition to the negative effect that the ebbs and flows in the American economy have had on college enrollment, some researchers have pointed to a growing disregard for the value of degrees in the liberal arts and humanities as a possible reason for the decline. (Ferrall 2011; Jay 2014; Nugent 2015). Historically, students and employers have placed tremendous value on liberal arts and humanities majors as providing a well-rounded education. Hill (2016) assessed in this regard that "The state of the economy, technology and a broader global perspective have made liberal arts majors – and the broad range of skills they learn – even more essential." Other research found that for some time, employers have welcomed students with these college majors, as they have produced graduates who possess excellent creative, critical thinking, communication and problem-solving skills (Gehlhaus 2008; McNutt 2014). There are also still groups – traditionalists and revisionists – who continue to tout the liberal arts and humanities educational experiences,

to promote the inherent value of these degrees, and to embrace the idea that higher education should continue to be concerned with fostering the skills that they develop. (Jay & Graff 2012).

Unfortunately, in recent times, higher education has shifted toward a relentless focus on the employability of students, sometimes to the exclusion of recognizing the continued value of humanities and liberal arts degrees. DeLong (2014) found that there was a growing belief among students, parents, and employers that today's young liberal arts graduates lacked the skills necessary to succeed in the post-Recession world. Moreover, "prevailing wisdom and research indicate a growing emphasis on and necessity for career-ready degrees such as computer science, engineering and finance – often included as part of STEM disciplines…." (McNutt 2014). Hence, there is a trend and increased pressure for students, colleges and universities to focus on education geared towards ensuring job readiness and honing practical skills and away from majors in the liberal arts and humanities. (Jay & Graff 2012). However, at this pivotal time, we must take heed to recent studies which have indicated that "[i]n today's tepid labor market, employers are seeking candidates with a combination of *both* workforce-specific skills and broad-based knowledge." [emphasis added] (Burning Glass Technologies 2013, p. 2).

How Can We Save the Liberal Arts and Humanities?

The authors of this publication contend that a drastic shift away from the liberal arts and humanities in favor of the more practical STEM programs is unwarranted. Instead, they propose supplementing the rich liberal arts and humanities curriculums to serve students more effectively. The authors suggest the following practical steps that students, educators, and administrators can employ to revive interest in these fields of study, without straying too far from their original underpinnings. While the following list of recommendations is by no means exhaustive, it provides a critical starting point for dealing with an extremely important issue.

Arm students with soft skills to meet employer expectations.

Liberal arts and humanities teach a broad range of soft skills. These include problem solving, teamwork, critical reasoning,

empathy, communication, work ethics, interpersonal skills and initiative (Gehlhaus 2008). Employers seek out these traits routinely, recognizing them as transferable to a wide range of employment opportunities (Jay 2014). As one observer puts it, "[L]iberal arts graduates are particularly, well-suited for today's job market" (Hill 2016). Consequently, faculty, students and administrators should make a more concerted effort to understand and to convey more fully how these "soft skills" are beneficial in the job market.

In a recent survey conducted by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), researchers found that "a job candidate's demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems is more important than their undergraduate major" (2013). Moreover, AAC&U's survey revealed that employers routinely identify qualities such as communication, writing, interpersonal skills and critical thinking as key qualifications for entry-level hires. Liberal arts and humanities educators are in a unique position to develop these abilities in students. The following are specific examples of how they may do so.

First, assignments intended to strengthen a student's writing abilities are extremely valuable. Faculty should assign not only essays and research papers, but also teach students how to draft an email, business letter, and office memorandum properly. Students whose education emphasizes writing have much more to offer an employer than students whose focus has been solely on technical studies. For any major, the ability to communicate in writing is essential. The best programmer in the office, who lacks strong communication skills, will find his or her long-term professional success limited. The key to student success is "to achieve a balanced education rather than one that is purely technical or career-specific" (Think Tank Learning 2015).

Second, research projects promote resourcefulness and critical thinking. Employees who can "find" answers on their own and are intellectually curious are highly sought after in today's job market. "This is evident in recent studies that show that college graduates who can think, reason, and write – typical liberal arts skills – are better off financially than students who score low on these skills" (Markelein 2012). Research projects require students to think critically. This gives educators the

opportunity to enhance these skills and increase student employability after graduation. "[C]ritical thinking, analytical abilities and problem-solving skills are all enhanced by undergraduate research" (Levenson 2010).

Third, liberal arts classes lend themselves well to public speaking assignments. As some observe, the "ability to communicate effectively is the quality employers most want to see in new recruits" (Massengale 2014). Oral presentations give students the opportunity to build their confidence when expressing their ideas. Learning how to make eye contact, think extemporaneously, articulate ideas, and speak with conviction improves a student's chances of success during the interview for employment and throughout his or her career (Massengale 2014).

Fourth, emphasizing group projects in liberal arts and humanities courses will help strengthen a student's interpersonal skills. In the classroom setting, students can learn how to deal with conflict, trust others on a team and advocate for their own ideas. These skills are essential for new hires. Students who gain this experience and convey the same on a resume or in an interview can increase their chances of employment. It is important to learn how to program the new software; however, can the programmer work as part of a team in the new corporate-wide roll out of an upgrade? "Employers look for people who not only know how to work well with others, but who understand that not every player on the team can or will be the one who gets the ball" (U.S. Department of Labor 2016).

To summarize, liberal arts and humanities faculty are in a unique position to help willing students learn soft skills that will prove invaluable to any employer. Students, in turn, must communicate the successful acquisition of these skills both on a resume and during a job interview. These steps will assist students in conveying the usefulness of their degrees to potential employers. Faculty who teach, and students who make it a priority to learn, soft skills will minimize the perceived lack of a career path of the liberal arts graduate (Brooks 2009).

Encourage internships/externships for students to gain practical work experience.

Advocating for liberal arts and humanities majors to participate in internships or externships is an excellent opportunity for these majors to demonstrate transferable skills. Historically, educators have stressed and students in professional fields have recognized the importance of experiential learning (Grasgreen 2015). On the other hand, internships and externships have, "struggled to gain legitimacy in the liberal arts" for some time (Eyler 2009). Fortunately, this trend is changing. In fact, many institutions of higher learning have begun to "expand their focus to emphasize the importance of internships across all majors, and some even make the experience a requirement for graduation" (Grasgreen 2015).

The job market continues to be competitive for any college graduate. Students who can include actual work experience on their resumes will have a huge advantage. This is especially true for liberal arts and humanities students whose "future career paths are less defined" (Grasgreen 2015). Internships give students a tangible way to apply the skills they have learned in the classroom to specific jobs. Moreover, experiential learning provides students with a concrete path to ease the transition from school to work (Eyler 2009).

In addition, students with internship or externship experience have a better chance of employment. According to the National Association of Colleges & Employers' most recent Internship and Co-op Survey, "[C]onverting students who have taken part in an internship or co-op program to full-time employees is a primary goal." (2016, p. 3). During their period of experiential learning, liberal arts and humanities students were able to demonstrate the strong communication, writing and reading skills that their majors emphasize. As mentioned previously, employers cite these skills regularly as highly favored for their entry-level employees. Recently, a CEO of a Pennsylvania electrical manufacturing company expressed his preference as follows, "We want task-oriented people who have disciplines in critical thinking….I find people that have a liberal arts background have a broader view of the world and will go farther in business" (Koba 2013).

Colleges can also increase the enrollment of liberal arts and humanities students by increasing the number of internships available and thereby improve post-graduate employment numbers. Clemson University was so committed to providing internships for its students that it went into in the process of rigorously expanding its on-campus internship program. The University offered a significant amount of off-campus opportunities and requires internships in some majors. The expansion to on-campus activities represented another resource for students who have difficulty in finding an internship to gain this valuable experience. Grasgreen (2012) said as these efforts, "By 2020, Clemson aims to have at least 500 opportunities for students to work in myriad areas of the university – students who may have been unsuccessful in finding work off-campus."

Create networking opportunities for students.

Building a professional network is essential when looking for employment. According to one assessment of surveys on the subject, networking was one of the best ways to find a job (Adams 2011). As mentioned earlier, a specific career path is not always evident with a liberal arts education. Therefore, faculty and administrators should attempt to introduce students to business representatives who can provide them with personal insight on the value of a liberal arts degree. Students will learn how to market their skills and interact with industry leaders who can refer them for possible opportunities. This is a critical connection to make since studies reveal, "Most employers hire nearly 40% of their staff from employee referrals" (iCIMS, Inc. 2015).

One way for educators and administrators to create networking opportunities for students is by inviting industry professionals to campus for speaking engagements. It is particularly motivational for students to see graduates with similar backgrounds doing well. Learning how a liberal arts degree helps successful alumni and/or local community leaders in their careers can be very inspirational. It can also give students tangible ideas on how to leverage their degrees in a variety of fields.

In addition, colleges and universities can host forums and roundtable discussions where students can ask questions and "professionals [can] reflect on how they formed their career path and how, specifically students from liberal arts and humanities backgrounds might explore these careers" (Brown 2015). These types of interactions with students, Brown believed, provided opportunities to "discuss the connections between college majors and career paths."

Partner with the Career Services Department.

Liberal arts and humanities educators and their college or university career services advisors should work together to help students identify specific career paths and support students' efforts to articulate the value of their degree both during an interview and a networking event. Career Services is a valuable resource in any educational institution. However, there has been some hesitancy to embrace a partnership between faculty and career services as it may be seen as "encroaching on vocationalism" (Brooks 2009). Moreover, a study conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers in 2012, revealed that fewer than 10% of college students met with someone in Career Services to discuss their choice of major. Nonetheless, given the trends we are now observing, liberal arts faculty need to proactively communicate to their career services department, "what is truly distinct about the curriculum, what students are learning, and how to make employers care" (Brooks 2009). This will give Career Services representatives the tools they will need to speak with prospective and current students as well as potential employers about the advantages of a liberal arts education.

Moreover, partnering with Career Services is an excellent way for faculty to learn about job opportunities available to current students and alumni. Faculty can then pass this information on to students. Routinely disseminating these opportunities bolsters the proposition that there are many career paths open to the liberal arts and humanities students.

In addition, educators need to discuss employment in the classroom and in advisement sessions and encourage students to visit Career Services. Career service advisors are a valuable resource to teach students how to draft effective resumes and

cover letters. These documents are a job seeker's primary means of getting an interview. For liberal arts and humanities students, it is vital that they learn early on how to articulate their value proposition both during an interview and in writing. Educators can include drafting a field-specific resume and cover letter as an assignment in an introductory course or a first-year seminar. Career Services can be there to assist the student in highlighting the skills potential employers will value and to critique completed documents.

Lastly, through Career Services, faculty can form partnerships with local business leaders. These partnerships can lead to on-campus job fairs and preferential treatment when internship and employment openings become available. Employers may also be willing to serve as mentors for students. These connections can be mutually beneficial for students, educators and administrators.

Consider Expanding the Curriculum

One final option that college and university administrators may want to consider is increasing the flexibility of the humanities and liberal arts curriculum so students have the option to take courses with more industry-specific content. For example, some institutions have begun offering credit-based career courses geared toward emphasizing how knowledge in the classroom translates into a specific career path (Brooks 2009). Educators asserting that teaching students how to apply their knowledge to a profession is outside of their bailiwick do a disservice to their students. Oftentimes, students pursuing liberal arts and the humanities cannot make this connection as clearly as their counterparts in other majors, like nursing or engineering (Gehlhaus 2008). Therefore, "[i]n addition to emphasizing the skills developed through liberal arts programs – such as communication skills, research skills, and critical thinking – students can build workforce-specific competencies that will increase their labor market value" (Burning Glass Technologies 2013, p. 6). In this manner, students will be able to have the flexibility to build a balanced schedule – one that simultaneously illustrates the well-roundedness of a humanities or liberal arts degree and that manifests a mastery of much-coveted technical skills.

Allowing students to attain this combination of skills will not only serve them well as they enter the workforce, but will also assist in the effort to draw students into majors in humanities and liberal arts. High placement rates are a significant selling point that college administrators and admissions officers can use to attract new students and retain current students. In fact, research has found that "[b]y coupling a field-specific skill set with the soft skills that form the foundation of a liberal education, Liberal Arts graduates can nearly double the number of jobs available to them" (Burning Glass Technologies 2013, p. 2).

Conclusion

In the United States, the drastic decline in enrollment of humanities and liberal art students in undeniable. As we slowly recover from the Great Recession, the numbers have not moved much. Hence, the question with which many colleges and universities are now grappling is "How do we reinvent the humanities and liberal arts curriculums? In this article, the authors have set forth some alternative responses to the crisis. In the end, it is crucial that administrators, educators and students know what employers are asking of their employees. Are they prepared? Are they learning relevant soft and hard skills? Education in a vacuum, without an eye on how the curriculum is contributing to a student's employment opportunities, is short sighted. As Brown (2015 noted, "concerns with the employability of our graduates need not be read as an invitation to erode the liberal arts values underpinning public higher education" (p. 49).

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Finding a Career with Arts and Letters Majors

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Abstract
Finding a job with a degree in some area of the arts can prove trying. Many of the students the writer worked with showed a great deal of talent and promise but every time they were asked about their resumes or asked them about their career development, they were lost. Based on the writers own experiences with helping students find jobs in their art major areas, this essay offers some detail ideas for developing a strategy to find jobs.

Introduction

In 2013, in the middle of my MFA in Screenwriting program at California State University Fullerton, I attended the annual 'Comm (Communications) Week'. This is a fantastic event that allows students to meet and listen to a wide array of speakers and guest lecturers. At this same time, I worked for another state university's career center. As fantastic of an event as the 'Comm Week' was it lacked the opportunity for students to network with potential employers. Working in the career center and running career fairs I saw a perfect opportunity to do something similar for the students I served, so I launched College of Arts and Letters week. Working in collaboration with students, clubs, faculty, and the College of Arts and Letters, we were able to bring speakers and, of course, host a career fair at the end of the week as culminating event.

One of the things I noticed from this experience, as well as my time as a club advisor was the huge gap between their knowledge-set and how they were able to find and maintain employment. Many of the students I worked with show a great deal of talent and promise but every time I reviewed their

resumes or asked them about their career development, they were lost or worse yet stated, “I’ll do anything.” In many cases these were first generation college students and products of No Child Left Behind. It is not merely students who struggle as artists to find and maintain employment but also some of my contemporaries. Basic questions of copyright, contracts, and networking seem to escape extremely talented people.
This brings me to this moment, exploring the nature of career development for artists. Our American education system puts an emphasis on STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) but needs to add the Art to that acronym to make it STEAM (Science Technology Engineering Art Math). Without the ART the innovations of Apple lose their gloss. Think about this quote from the Second President of the United States:

> I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history, naval architecture, navigation, commerce, and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry, and porcelain.

I guess in the age of enlightenment they had a better understanding of the importance of art in later generations then we have now. It is the creatives in our world that often move it to another level. In the book *A Whole New Mind,* one of the book’s thesis is the importance creativity plays in any profession in the 21st century (Pink 2012).

Many students and professional artists must attempt to navigate the long road towards career development without any real guidance in school or out of college. The fact remains that while all State Universities in California (Cal State 2015) require a lab science for all majors not all California State Universities require a resume as a graduation requirement or any sort of career development. I administered a survey to all 23 campuses in the California State University (CSU) system. The results indicated that 75% of those that responded did not require a resume in order to graduate and 45% of those surveyed reported that there was no formal instruction on resume writing. With an

increasing emphasis through new fees on student success in the CSU system (Student 2015) those numbers should be reversed. "What is success?" is maybe the ultimate question. Joseph Campbell would say it is to "follow your bliss" (Campbell). How we currently measure that success is by one's ability to acquire and maintain employment.

Of course, one of the knocks against liberal arts degrees is that they just are not that employable regardless of the students' talents. That was one of the main reasons why, during my employment at California State University San Bernardino, the Dean of Arts and Letters and I decided that we needed this arts and letters week. If for no other reason we needed to expose our current and potentially future students to what it means to have a liberal studies degree.

As that guru of modern business, Stephen J. Covey once wrote, "First Things First," (7 Habits of Highly Successful People). One of the 7 Habits that Stephen Covey points to in that book is to start with first-things-first. Well, a first-things-first approach to career development for any major is to understand resume development. Obviously, one cannot have an effective resume without great experience. One thing that the faculty does so well with their liberal arts majors (Eyler 2009) is to help them find internships and part time jobs. However, this activity does not seem to translate into resume development and critique. So once this student completes the part time job or internship, how that translates on paper for the rest of world is somewhat confusing or, in many cases, simple, unrefined, and sloppy. While working at CSUSB, and on my own time, I have personally reviewed several hundred resumes. One great mistake students make is that they do not point out accomplishments and how they have used their knowledge (The Pitfalls 2017), meaning, they go for style over content. A job seeker might state where they worked or interned but not state what they did and how they did the job. Based on Under Cover Recruiter (Undercover 2015) most employers are interested in a chronological resume that notes your job experience. Within that job experience are your achievements and knowledge. Often first-time job seekers will present a functional resume or skills-based format (The Muse 2015). A functional resume might list a couple of jobs or work experience activities in one section but then list duties and

responsibilities in other sections. Based on study that ABC news reported on, the average recruiter looks at a resume between 5-6 seconds. I used to tell my students 10 seconds. But either way if utilizing a functional resume, it will take longer to find the needed information that a recruiter needs for moving a resume on to the hiring manager. This is why I pushed the chronological resume all the necessary information in one location.

The sad truth about resumes and college is that for liberal arts students, there lacks a strong emphasis in their programs to develop those resumes. As a career advisor, we often face the challenge of getting students to visit our office. In truth, students will do what they are compelled to do. From the survey I conducted of the 23 California State Universities shows a lack of accountability for resume development within the various liberal arts programs. Only about 50% of the schools surveyed state that their students learn about resume writing in their program and only about 30% make it a mandate of graduation to complete a resume. This lack of emphasis on career seeking during a student's time at university compared to emphasis on meeting a math and science lab requirement is disturbing. Not to teach that student how to appropriately write a resume is a huge disservice to student success as it is a form of writing and any writing needs constant revision (Kathryn 2012).

A resume for any industry, especially art, needs to show off your work. I am reminded of a quote from one of my favorite filmmakers Alexander Payne, "Do good work and the network will come to you" (Payne 2014). The College Art Association states that a good art resume is broken down into two or three main categories. Education, group exhibitions, and solo exhibits. I thought it was interesting to read that if you have more exhibits than education you need to list that first. It is the same premise I used when working with other students or job seekers interested in the more conventional industries. The biggest struggle for any job seeker in the first stages of the career search is in the illustration of what they have accomplished. It is important to seek out any opportunity to illustrate one's action and passion towards a career path. I recommended to students is that they develop their own quarterly or semester Art Walk. An Art Walk is essentially an exhibit and the school or college can determine the vetting process. Any sort of exhibit of your work to

professionals along with a resume demonstrates professionalism and seriousness for that career.

Interestingly enough, the format of resume for a visual artist is much the same as it is for the performing artist, writer, and media artist (Myers 2015). List education if applicable, but more importantly, list your work. The old adage is true: sometimes it is about “who you know versus what you know”. The more you work, the larger your network becomes. There is no more entrepreneurial pursuit in this country then deciding to be an artist (Burbet 2015). Beyond the aforementioned sections for an artist's resume, there exists, what I would refer to as, bonus sections. These sections add to your credibility and give you weight in the eyes of the recruiter. Some of these sections would include a bibliography section, or work cited in other’s work. Also, an artist can list publications and grants received for work. All of this adds to your overall knowledge and expertise. Finally, as an emerging artist, a great job to obtain is a teacher (Berret 2011). This can be as easy as volunteering at a local school or parks department. A positive to emerge from No Child Left Behind is the expansion of after school programs in many states. Many of these types of programs need artists to teach young students.

When you develop your media arts resume, it is again very similar (Myers 2015). You will notice the term media arts. I use this term to categorize television, film, radio, and of course, new media, podcasts and YouTube. Studs Terkel, the author, radio persona, and sometimes actor, did everything as a media artist to develop his career (Simonson 2009). His, along with Howard Stern’s (Stern 1993), is a great example of what means to work at the craft. Artists, this is essentially what needs to be done; work at the craft then be sure to reference it after the fact. Media artists’ resumes need to indicate experiences in chronological order.

An aspect that is differs for artists from other concentrations in the job search is in the resume. It is that often times the job you seek is so specific that the key is to obtain those specific credits that highlight that experience. A credit is a job role on a Television or film program [18]. Take every opportunity you can to work your craft. I was often amazed while at a university how disconnected the art programs are from one another. As a

former film student myself who went to a small school for the undergrad, I would have relished in the studio like atmosphere that a university provides for a media artist. Here in one location you have set designers, musicians, visual artists, and of course actors. These groups never seemed to play with one another. Theater trained actors need to know that it does not pay to be merely a theater actor. Theater students need to get in front of the camera (Rodya 2013).

A Real Time Method to Develop Your Career as an Artist

My MFA program at California State University, Fullerton did an adequate job of not only teaching us about screenwriting but also insisting that we complete a resume or CV and cover letter prior to graduation. Also, we left the program with a portfolio of work. This is one of the great aspects of a Liberal Arts major. In many cases you have product to show potential employers. As the artist it is your responsibility to develop the experiences required for your resume or portfolio. Again, volunteer and get an internship. This is where nursing majors in specific or general medical fields have an advantage, as it is part of their program, such as with teachers, to obtain practical experience.

As a student, it is important to find out when and how you can schedule that internship into your program. Sometimes your intern search will need to be very proactive in that you may have to sell the idea of creating an internship to a potential employer or seek out newer non-profits in your area whose resources are limited but are in extreme need for energetic students. Recently, internships have been a very hot button issue. Do for-profits have to pay or not (Mathews 2013)? Well, based on the letter law, no. However, they cannot simply call 'running errands' for a company an internship. You need to learn and not displace another worker. I think as well-meaning as the stricter adherence to the law is, in many cases it kept students from getting some real solid experience. Many small companies and businesses have a narrow profit margin. So, like a non-profit, it can be difficult to carve out the minimum wage required to pay an intern and many students miss out on a great experience because of university policies [21]. But the cool thing is you are an artist, writer, or filmmaker. Therefore you are not bound by the policies that some of your fellow students may be bound to. As an art

student you can create whenever you want. As a writer you can blog, as a filmmaker you can shoot on your phone, and as an artist you can create. Take every opportunity you can to do those things because your finished work from those experiences translates into your portfolio.

So, your portfolio is complete or your resume is done and you find that working for yourself really provides you with purpose. However, your parents and other family members feel that you need to go work somewhere. Sometimes though, you work better as your own boss. A friend of mine recently left his safety net to focus his time on himself as a full-time artist. As scary as it has been for him he works consistently and pays the bills. Sometimes though, it is more than just a leap of faith when you decide to work as an independent artist. You need a plan, specifically a business plan.

A business plan is just what it says, a plan for a business. But within this seemingly simple concept you as the artist will become the entrepreneur needed to map out your priorities. This plan will not only be for you but also for potential investors. This is not only something you will show to a bank for loans, but a template for grants which are available throughout various government and private foundations. There are keys to a business plan such as:

- Mission / Vision
- Values/ Beliefs
- Internal Strengths and Weaknesses
- External Opportunities and Threats
- Competition
- Your Products, Customers, and Markets (Bolden 2015).

These components must have a strong goal to guide them. Part of the business plan is to define in very detailed fashion, what exactly that goal is and how you will obtain that goal. I wrote a business plan for a not for profit company I started. If you love figuring minutia you will love to write out a business plan. Maybe love is too strong a word. The secret to the business plan is in the goal and your mission. That mission is what you will find yourself arguing for on a nearly consistent basis. Chances are, like in my case that the idea of a business is a challenge to an

artist in that it involves numbers to produce a budget. A great tool in our modern era is Google. There are sample business plans for everything. Look at them and see how they may fit your needs. A key to getting any enterprise off the ground is to determine the resources already accessible to you (Mycoskie 2011). This is where networking comes in handy.

Networking is key to the beginning of any enterprise. The social media platforms that you utilize are critical in this process. Between LinkedIn and Facebook there will undoubtedly be enough people connected to you from whom you can seek advice and feedback as you produce your plan. Be active within your network. It is not enough to merely obtain a ton of business cards. Be sure to always speak of your business (Mycoskie 2011). Know thy mission as that is your mantra. Chances are your passion will come through in how you speak of that mission. There are some keys to networking, developing relationships and being able to show your work. A professor of mine in film school used to talk about what you need to do in a lunch meeting when you are trying to get financing for a film or TV project. Alan Gansberg says, “The last thing you talk about in the first meeting is business.” Get to know the person you are seeking advice or money from as it makes it that much easier when you decide to make, “the ask.” When I started my not-for-profit, my first fundraiser occurred because of the people I knew. All the things I needed to pull off the event I was able to get through my relationships; in other words no money was spent. Now moving forward, I have a track record of work that increases my ability to succeed with my business goals.

Besides sales and opportunities to do sanctioned works of art, another funding stream to support your business goals are grants. There are grants for a multitude of activities and from a wide range of topics and concentrations. Again, Google is a great tool to start the search. Also, become familiar with grants.gov, the federal website which lists grants from all the federal agencies. The ones you need to know first are National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities. Both organizations have grants for companies, not-for-profits and for individuals. Other resources for grants are through your own state, local organizations, and for-profit companies. Large and small banks are great places to look, as

well as big box or chain retailers. As a starting point you can research Google for some grant writing examples, how to's, and the like. This is where the business plan comes in handy as it maybe the template for which you write your grants. Most grants will ask about your goal and how you plan to achieve that goal. Also, most grants will want to see a budget and most certainly how you plan on spending that money over the period of the grant, so your business plan will act not only as your personal guide for your business but a model for the grants you seek.
So here is the situation. Now, you either just received a grant or are rolling along doing commissioned art, or work as a freelance designer for some local companies. Whatever your circumstance, legal issues will arise. It is important as the old Clash song says, "to know your rights." Establishing contracts is key (Borbet 2015). Often times (Borbet 2015) artists will begin a project and not write down what they will and will not do for a potential client. Also, it is important to note that you have control over your property. An entertainment lawyer I know always says to, "copyright everything." Copyrights are important as they completely protect your work (Copyright 2015).

Your options for employment are just as broad as any other concentration or industry. In 2015, at California State University San Bernardino (CSUSB) I ran a week long series of events centered around Arts and Letters majors in the same way as our center that year ran events centered around STEM programs that year. At that fair we had almost 50 different vendors ranging from a casino, regional magazine, and a local TV station. Beyond those vendors that seem specific to arts and letters majors, we also were glad to have government agencies and other large corporations. Companies and government agencies need writers and public relations staff. That is another gap Liberal Arts majors fill. You can inform your parents and family that the notion of the "starving artist" is over. There are a myriad of pathways you can now follow.

For instance, until recently, I worked for a local Human Resources office as a communications specialist. Part of that job was to write, to produce videos, and some graphic design. While at that company I conducted a survey of our company recruiters. I found that like other concentrations they want to see accomplishments and examples of your creative work. Finally,

they want to see passion, which most likely will connect to your accomplishments. That passion is key. During an interview I conducted with the film producer Adam Ripp, I asked the question I did of my recruiter colleagues. Adam's response was similar in that he looked for personality and passion. As he stated, "Their goals should stand out."

The job search needs to be as broad as possible in that you do not want to limit it to simply companies that fit your industry. What happens often when a recent graduate or anyone for that matter begins to look for a new professional opportunity is that there is a blinder effect as they enter the job market. Job seekers tend to look only for companies that seem to match their specific major or skill set (Augustine 2013), job seekers must look at all industries where their talents are needed. Understand that a government agency needs communications and public relations. Know that a tech company will need designers and videographers. Realize that hospitals and logistics companies need tech writers (Paz 2013). Finally, it is important to note that your job search does not need to take you out of your current location. Part of your responsibility as job seeker is to research your home. I tell students that their job search needs to break down into three categories; the perfect organization that matches your major, an organization that is really close to your major, and an organization that has a job to offer. I created this rule to help students from self-eliminated themselves from a potential career path. Basically, students need to know not let their goals or perceptions dictate the career search.

In more recent times a huge societal and technological boom has been responsible for an expansion of creative jobs, not just within creative based companies or industries, but in all companies, and that boom is social media. It opens doors to creative professionals through various business facets. Because of social media, as indicated through a simple job search on indeed.com, so many companies are in need of social media managers to develop content and manage those accounts. These positions do not just entail the posting of the written word but also rely on a design, photography, writing, and cinema skills (Kulowich 2015). In the course of a day, Kulowich found that an organization may produce 10 posts a day. Those require copy writing and a creative mind to develop the brand's campaign.

Kulowich also related that access to an outside company to run this can be limited the amount of Social Media managers has increased greatly.

As a current communications coordinator in my department at California State University, Los Angeles, I oversee the creation a couple of videos a week that promote Career Center related topics. Those pieces play on multiple platforms to reach our audience. In the course of that week, I will analyze and interpret complex education concepts and create a narrative around those that is accessible to multiple audiences. All of these skills require a creative mind and instinct (Goldenberg 2015). The overriding question is not where my liberal arts degree will take me, but where will it not take me. Companies need more and more in-house creatives to support their visions. Instead of "Mad Men" divided into several departments, companies need both a Draper and Sterling right in their own office.

Conclusion

In conclusion, establish a plan. Maintain your resume and portfolio. Do not rest on work from a couple of years ago but maintain relevancy in your content. Your work is your calling card and will ultimately get you in the door, but you must catalog that experience on the resume. As Alexander Payne said, "do good work and the network will come to you" (Payne 2014). Lastly, the tried and true practice of door-to-door resume drop off will always work. Chances are that this is the best place to get started, because the employer did not know until you walked in the door that they needed you.

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The editor of *Journal for the Liberal Arts and Sciences* welcomes manuscripts related to a broad spectrum of academic disciplines and interests. Submissions should range from between 2000 and 5000 words in length, written in Times New Roman font (12 point) and must be accompanied by an abstract of up to 100 words. Manuscripts submitted for a special issue should include a reference to the theme of the issue. Authors can choose to submit their manuscripts as an email attachment to jlas@oak.edu or to the mailing address below. Email submissions are to include a message indicating that the manuscript is not under consideration with any other publisher but *JLAS*. Submissions by mail are to include a cover letter indicating that the manuscript is not under consideration with any other publisher as well as an electronic copy of the manuscript on either CD-ROM or diskette. All manuscripts must be submitted in MS Word format.

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Originals of tables and figures, such as graphs and charts should be supplied. Graphics should be prepared and captioned as exactly as they are intended to appear in the journal. All explanatory notes should be avoided whenever possible and the intonation incorporated in the text. Essential notes should be gathered in a section following the text and listed under the heading “End Notes.” End notes should be identified with consecutive numbers assigned in keeping with the superscript numeral used at the point requiring the note.

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