

What Matters?

keynote by
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For reasons I will try to make clear this morning, several years ago I realized that business as usual was no longer an option in my work as the leader of a liberal arts college noted for its innovative history. My hope is that there will be some resonance between what it meant for me to rethink my world and what matters to you in yours.

During the past decade we have witnessed escalating crises in the most vital areas of our public life including: a devastating failure of our schools to effectively educate vast numbers of our young; spectacular inequities in the distribution of wealth; an extraordinary timidity, to put it politely, in our approach to providing health care; a growing reluctance to even talk about, much less confront, the potential of global warming to upend human civilization itself; an assault on the principles that define us as a people: the rule of law, the separation of powers, the relationship between church and state; a predilection for the use of unilateral force despite overwhelming evidence of its limitations; and a squandering of our ethical and material resources in less than a decade, and on a scale, that defies credulity.

And at a time when clarity of thought, respect for evidence, appreciation for complexity is especially critical, the sensationalism of the media—the other major educational institution in our society—continues undiminished. The distance we have travelled is best measured by reminding ourselves that the *Federalist Papers* were originally published in three New York newspapers and then, in response to popular demand, published in newspapers throughout the colonies. There is no more damning evidence of the failure of education in this country than the quality of what the public craves or tolerates in its media.

Incredibly, despite all of our material, intellectual, and spiritual resources, we appear to be unable to reverse or even stem the tide. No matter what the stakes we seem paralyzed by a sense of helplessness, persuaded that our role as citizen is limited to voting during elections (and our efforts even on that very limited front are rather paltry), and watching, as if a bystander, in the intervals between them. There is scarcely a remnant of the idea of the robust citizenry so vividly described by Adlai Stevenson: “As citizens of this democracy you are the rulers and the ruled, the law givers and the law abiding, the beginning and the end.”

Our current notion of citizen as taxpayer speaks eloquently of the distance we have travelled. As Daniel Kemmis, former mayor of Missoula, Montana, reminds us: “people who call themselves taxpayers have long since stopped even imagining themselves as governing.” It would appear that, in America, for all too many of us, we the people, the authority from whom this republic was founded, have become inured to our own irrelevance when it comes to doing anything significant, about anything that matters, concerning our public life. For the philosopher Hannah Arendt, citizenship is “the lost treasure” of American political life.

Equally disconcerting, from my perspective, was the fact that no one saw fit to hold the education establishment accountable for what was happening to the body politic, or to connect in any way the quality of our public life with what was going on in our schools and colleges. This, by the way, in striking contrast to the association in the public mind between education and money. While education isn't even on the list when it comes to institutions having any responsibility for the health of our democracy, its role in influencing access to wealth has become its beginning and its end.

This diminishing of the purpose of education is all the more remarkable given the extent to which the power of education was understood from the outset to play a critical role in determining the fate of this monumental experiment in self-governance. For the founders, the association between education, democracy, and freedom was a given.

Thomas Jefferson summed up the sentiment shared by his peers when he said, “if a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be.” He was not alone. George Washington:

“In proportion as the structure of government gives force to public opinion it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.” James Madison: “A well-instructed people alone can be permanently a free people.”

Given the historic association between the liberal arts and an education worthy of free men and women, it is not surprising that the United States gave birth to the idea and the ideal of the liberal arts college. Nor is it surprising that this country succeeded in making education available to everyone—a stunning accomplishment. But, alas, as access increased the commitment to an education worthy of a great democracy disintegrated—the tendency to dilute, to make accommodations, has accelerated, to the point where it is not at all clear whether our remarkable achievement in making education accessible to all has improved the general intelligence of the American public; or, in truth, actually diminished it.

As early as 1929 the president of the local school board in Muncie, Indiana, summed up the history of education in America as follows: “For a long time all boys were trained to be President. Then for a while we trained them all to be professional men. Now we are training boys to get jobs.” The content of that lament was echoed 65 years later in President Clinton’s 1994 State of the Union message, but now the tone of loss is replaced by one of triumph: “We measure every school by one high standard: Are our children learning what they need to know to compete and win in the global economy.”

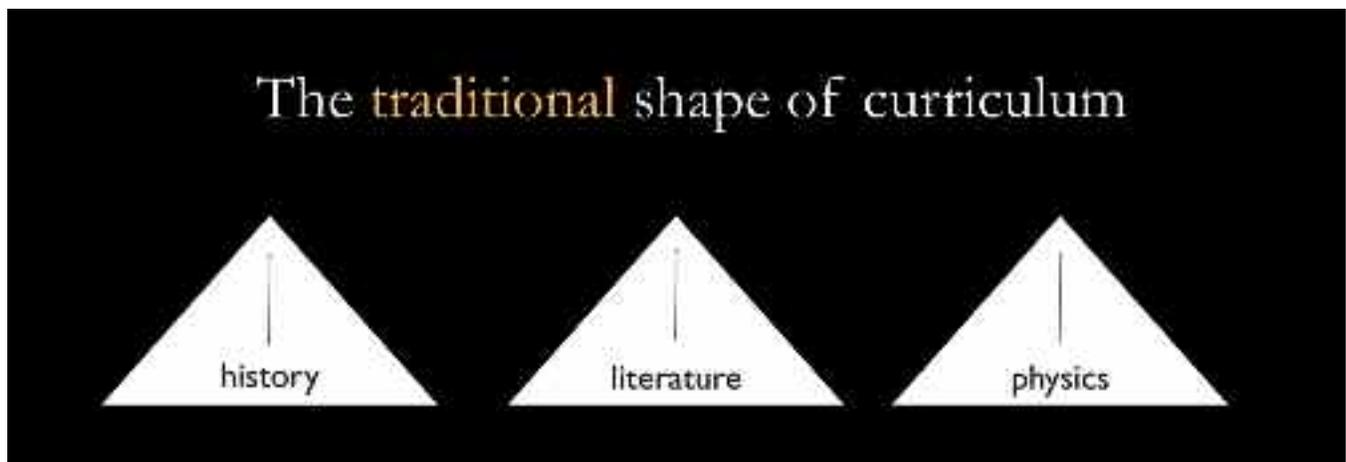
It is worth taking in the magnitude of the diminishing of values: on the individual level, self-interest, defined solely in economic terms, replaces the values of human dignity, autonomy, freedom, happiness. On the social, the aggregate of this narrow self-interest supplants the idea of a public life informed by the ideals of justice, equity, social responsibility, and a continual expansion of human possibilities.

That economic well-being should be a desired *outcome* or effect of an education is one thing; for it to be the *objective* of an education and the sole objective is quite another. As president of Bennington College I most certainly appreciate the importance of money, but it cannot be the ultimate measure of all things. The overriding metric of money is a very thin reed for any civilized world, and catastrophic for a democratic one.

In order to grasp how it is possible that such a limited and empty version of the public and private interest can become commonplace, it is especially important to consider the role of the expert as it has emerged in the last century.

During the last 100 years the expert has dethroned the educated generalist to become the sole model of intellectual accomplishment. While expertise has had its moments, the price of its dominance is enormous. The authority of experts is based on the extent to which they command knowledge that the rest of us don’t have. Put simply, the existence of experts is dependent on the existence of non-experts. Within an educational setting the purpose of higher education has been to turn the non-expert into an expert. The only available trajectory for a student is to imitate the teacher/expert in every detail in order to attain the same level of achievement or to remain perpetually at his or her feet—the novice defined by what he or she lacks. Its implications for our view of the business of governing and the possibilities for citizenship are especially devastating.

Over time the hegemony of the expert has unsurprisingly led to an increasing fragmentation of knowledge into smaller and smaller bits with a marked preference for the arcane. Even literature is now routinely taught as if its mysteries were available only to those initiates who devote years of study to ever narrowing topics and ever more esoteric and formulaic questions. This in despite of the evidence every where we turn of the interrelatedness of things.



The very possibility of the educated generalist has been lost as the general becomes equivalent to the shallow and the deep equivalent to the recondite. This model of intellectual development is actually not, as some have suggested, learning more and more about less and less; it is in truth learning less and less about less and less.

Lest you think I am exaggerating here are the beginnings of the ABC's of Anthropology:

The ABCs of Anthropology

- Applied Anthropology
- Archaeological Anthropology
- Anthropology of Religion
- Biological or Physical Anthropology
- Cultural Anthropology
- Development Anthropology
- Dental Anthropology
- Economic Anthropology
- Educational Anthropology
- Ethnography
- Ethnohistory
- Ethnology
- Ethnomusicology
- Linguistic Anthropology
- Medical Anthropology
- Paleoanthropology
- Paleopathology
- Political Anthropology
- Social Anthropology
- Urban Anthropology

Most certainly knowing what you are talking about is a very good idea, and immersing oneself in a particular subject, craft, or question has great value as a dimension of the uses of intelligence. But it is extremely limited and limiting when that version of knowledge and of human capacities calcifies and dominates as it now does. We have reached the point where we can scarcely imagine any other model of intellectual prowess despite the fact that little more than a century ago this emphasis on the narrow, the technical, the abstruse, the accessible only to those initiated into its mysteries would have been unthinkable.

The most popular lecturer in nineteenth century England was Sir Humphrey Davies who spoke to huge crowds about such things as the physiological characteristics of nitrous oxide, the chemical agencies of electricity, and the isolation of sodium and potassium. Ben Franklin was in continual correspondence with everyone about everything—whether that meant corresponding with Samuel Johnson about the subject of education or Lavoisier about the discovery of oxygen.

What the reification of the expert does to diminish our values is as worrisome as what it does to constrain and distance our thinking about the complex, interpenetrating, multifaceted actuality of things. Values other than technical competence are increasingly viewed as signs of an intellectual naïveté in large measure because they can be widely held and are therefore not the special province of the expert.

Criteria that would discriminate, for example, between the relative importance of subjects of study are religiously avoided. Everything is equal; no subject is more worth investigating than any other. We have reached the point in the academy where neutrality about substantive values has come to be treated as the very condition of intellectual integrity.

One of the reasons we are so drawn to the expression “critical thinking” is that it allows us to sidestep entirely the inconvenient question: critical thinking about what? It takes a certain cast of mind, you will admit, to sever the issue of the quality of thought from the content of *what* one is thinking about.

This aversion to substantive or normative values may seem at odds with the explosion of community service programs in recent decades. But despite the attention paid to service, these efforts remain emphatically extracurricular. In effect, civic-mindedness is seen as residing outside the realm of what purports to be serious thinking and adult purposes—more a matter of heart than of mind, a choice, often short-term, rather than a commitment and a lifelong obligation.

In the 1970s we saw an especially glaring example of the difficulty the academic establishment has with values other than technical competence: namely the way in which law schools responded to the embarrassing fact that large numbers of lawyers were involved in the Watergate scandal. What the law schools did, insofar as they did anything, was to *add* an ethics course, leaving the curriculum otherwise untouched, as if ethics is an add-on rather than something intrinsic to the practice of law itself.

By failing to embed such values in the practice of law itself we, in effect, institutionalized the very divide between ethics and the law that we were seeking to collapse.

The idealization of a narrowly conceived expertise as the only model of intellectual seriousness, this ever increasing impoverishment of what are considered the highest educational and intellectual accomplishments, the disconnect between civic virtue and intellect, and the aversion to values other than competence is toxic for anyone seeking to pursue the vital connections between the public good and education, between the uses of reason and human freedom. As for the obligations of citizenship: our current educational strategies are much more likely to leave us with a learned helplessness than a robust sense of agency in the face of the undeniable challenges of civic engagement.

Questions such as *What kind of a world are we making? What kind of a world should we be making?* and *What kind of a world can we be making?* simply have no place in such a landscape.

As a consequence, we, the guardians of secular democracy, have ceded the connection between education and substantive values to fundamentalists, whom you can be sure have no compunctions about advancing an agenda—the absolutes of a theocracy. Meanwhile the values and voices of reason and of democracy—the very opposite of such certainties—are silent. Either we have lost touch with those values or, no better, believe they need not or can not be taught, with devastating consequences for our political landscape. Yeats nightmare vision come alive: “The best lack all conviction, while the worst / Are full of passionate intensity.”

In the face of the urgency and magnitude of the unanswered challenges that has thrown our world into crisis over the last decade, given my position as president of Bennington College, inaction became increasingly unthinkable. I hasten to add that the decision to abandon business as usual in addressing my responsibilities was not the result of any lack of appreciation for the magnitude of the forces at play sustaining the status quo. The im-

perviousness of our leading educational institutions to a world on fire and the public’s tolerance of this complacency was not lost on me.

The challenge for Bennington: to discover anew a robust connection between education and the demands of a vibrant citizenship that would do justice to our historic commitment to the promise and power of democracy.

That meant first and foremost recognizing the challenges of democracy. Democracy is not simply a matter of removing obstacles to participation, or voting on everything, any more than it is a romance about the value of folk wisdom, the innate simplicity of problems, or the self-evident nature of the values upon which democracy depends.

On the contrary, democracy rests on an appreciation of the inherent messiness, ambiguities and complexities of the world, the limitations of absolutes and especially of self-righteousness. There is no issue in public life for which there are not competing goods, competing rights, competing truths.

At the same time, it is terribly important that the absence of easy or final answers, of self-evident virtue, or the necessity of compromise, not be confused with the absence of principles. Everything is not equal, participation *per se* is not a virtue; every debate is not simply a matter of right versus left; you can not safely assume that the good is to be found in some middle ground between what we persist in treating as equally valid partisan extremes, independent of the issues at stake.

There *is* no acceptable middle ground between a politics that feeds off the hatred and fear of difference and a politics that is based on respect for difference. There is no compromise to be found when the issue is fact versus faith—or lies versus truth. However challenging it is to discern the proper limits of human freedom, they are not to be found midway between the absence of constraint and slavery.

The great and ongoing challenge for democracy is to achieve and to sustain a principled political life in the absence of absolutes or even certainties. Democracy in short is not some kind of natural condition; it is rather a remarkable accomplishment. To accomplish it requires a demanding mix of intellect, imagination and ethics. And so does the education that would make it possible.

Some things were clear as Bennington set out: enhancing the public good needed to become a primary objective of a Bennington education; the accomplishment of civic virtue had to be reconnected to the uses of intellect and imagination at their most challenging. And most difficult of all for the academy, our ways of approaching

authority and agency needed to turn inside-out to reflect the real challenges of effective civic engagement: *no one* has the answers and *everyone* has the responsibility to participate in finding them.

To pursue our shared purposes we needed both a very different organization of curriculum than that provided by the disciplinary silos and a radically different version of what constitutes the liberal arts than the lists of subject matters that define those silos.

The strategy that emerged turned out to be remarkably simple and straightforward, to make pressing social issues themselves—health, education, governance, equity, the environment, the uses of force—central players in the curriculum. We were confident that the strategic challenges these issues present would provide frameworks for generating curriculum that were every bit as intellectually challenging and demanding as those provided by the academic disciplines.

While distinguishable from one another, these organizing structures are self-evidently and dynamically interdependent, enabling us to embrace the interrelatedness of things. They provide frameworks that connect rather than divide, expand horizons rather than delimit them.

These defining issues are also subject to change as the challenges of the world change. Building the necessity of change into the very structure rather than seeking structures whose value is their permanence is, we imagined, a good deal more likely to generate a culture of self-renewal than of self-perpetuation.

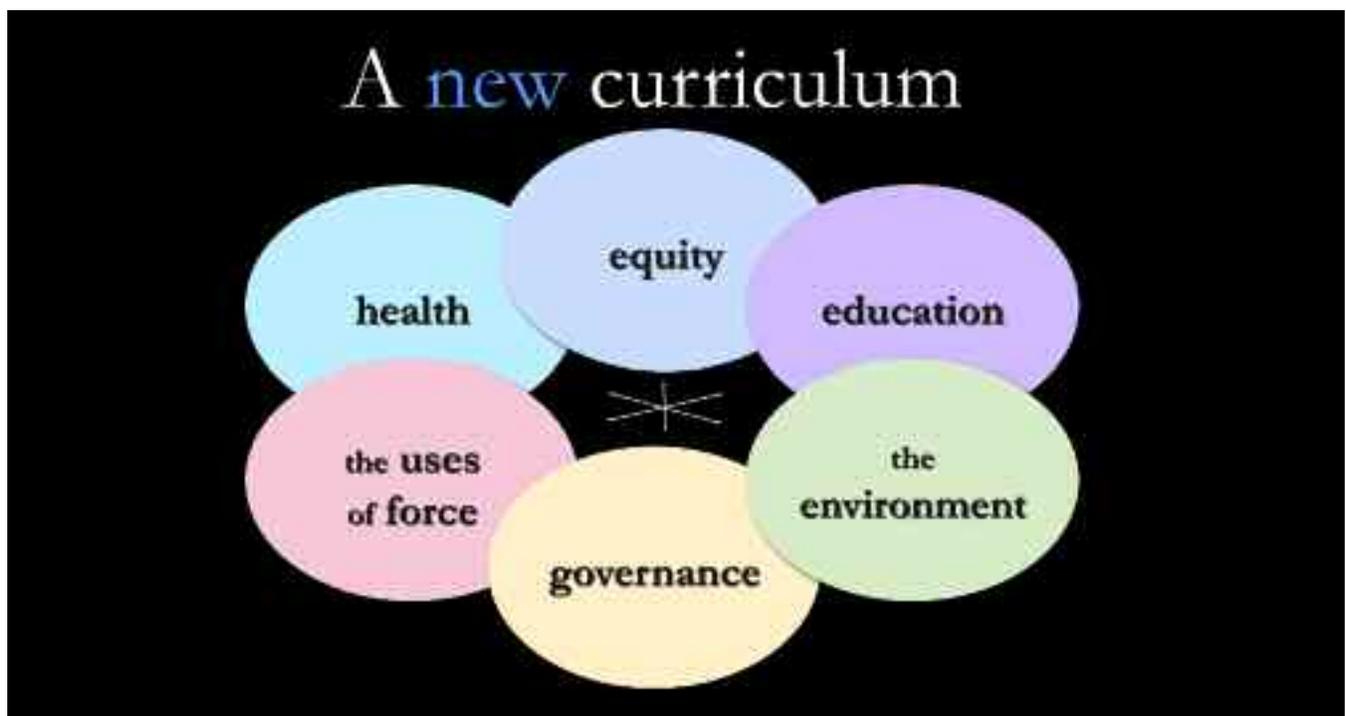
It is important to emphasize that these issues enter the curriculum not as objects of study as the end, but as arenas for action. The motivating force is not to better understand poverty, the failures of education, misguided uses of force, but to do something about them.

In its essentials the idea was to face outwards to the world, to let its challenges define our work, and in confronting the world's challenges as directly and unequivocally as possible, to reinvigorate the intellectual vitality and integrity of liberal education.

We also imagined that those capacities fundamental to addressing issues of this urgency, complexity, and magnitude could generate a new liberal arts capable of responding to the multiple challenges of real world situations.

The arts of taking things in—seeing, reading, drawing—assume a central role as do those of communicating what has been seen with power and economy. Rhetoric, the art of organizing the world of words to have maximum effect, re-emerges as fundamental; design, the art of organizing the world of things so that structures are compatible with the purposes they are meant to serve, assumes an equal importance.

Mastering the arts of listening exists on a par with those of speaking. Mediation and improvisation, the capacity for empathy also join this new pantheon—their power no longer treated as being limited to particular careers or arts on the one hand or presumed to be unteachable on the other. Quantitative reasoning, understood as the craft of measurement, moves to center stage be-



cause of the critical importance of measurement if we are to distinguish intentions from outcomes and its even greater importance if we are to effectively address the challenge of what we are measuring no less than how.

We also quickly discovered that as the stakes and challenges of real world engagement loom large so too does the difference between ideology and ideas, the importance of evidence, the limitations of unexamined assumptions, the distorting power of preconceptions, and the self indulgence of treating the triumph of our opinions as the end-all of intellectual community.

Beyond curriculum, the focus on advancing public action expands the ranks of people who teach at Bennington to include those whose lives give shape to our public life: business leaders, journalists, lawyers, doctors, soldiers, politicians, social activists.

Students in turn continue to move outside the classroom in the course of their education to negotiate the world directly, but now that experience is in an especially dynamic relationship with what is going on inside the classroom, in effect two sides of a coin—each mutually reinforcing the other.

All of this activity in its multiple dimensions and forms does not preclude maintaining opportunities for students and faculty to continue to immerse themselves in traditional subject matters, disciplines/crafts. This immersion is now juxtaposed with experiences that emerge out of a very different and equally powerful principle, defined by the challenges of putting things together rather than differentiating them and focusing on what connects us to a broader community instead of the personal and professional objectives and dreams that distinguish us from one another. Both are of course profound dimensions of a human life.

As the Bennington community at every level increasingly confronts the rich dynamic between the public and the private good, the individual and the collective, the collaborative and the solo, these dialectics will undoubtedly transform one other. The unifying objective: to change the odds that our graduates will be committed to—and capable of—effective action in the world about matters of great human concern.

The aim of a Bennington education, in sum, would be to be the capacity to live a good *and* a successful life. This way of seeing the Bennington initiative also catapults us beyond its walls and those of education altogether. The extent to which we act as if we inhabit a world made of either/or, one or the other is ubiquitous, most especially so when it comes to the good and the successful.

The presumption is that the choice is *between* them

—alas the very opposite of seeing the choice as figuring out how each one of us will manage to put them together. That in turn means being able to imagine a world in which the good and successful can reinforce each other.

The extent to which we live with a dichotomy between the good and the successful became particularly evident in some of the reactions to Bennington's determination to make the advancement of public action a prominent part of its mission. A few examples:

A recently retired business man, who is working with an organization designed to promote civic engagement, decides that the best way for him to understand and effectively communicate the essence of our conversation about what Bennington is doing is to define precisely what a successful Bennington education would look like. To my amazement his definition is that our graduates, should they succeed in making enough money to retire early, will choose to devote themselves to public life rather than spending their money and time on something else.

A psychoanalyst at the end of his career, temperamentally very different from the retired businessman, upon hearing about the Bennington initiative, responded by saying somewhat ruefully, "The truth is, Liz, I sold out—when I was younger I was politically active, but then I chose to become a successful physician."

Finally, a person in the midst of a highly successful career in the entertainment industry responded by presuming that the implication was that he should have chosen work that involved making public policy.

In each case you can be sure that every word I was uttering emphasized an idea of citizenship as something that informs lives whatever the particulars of one's professional and personal life. The point is such a synthesis was simply unimaginable. It matters not that I was talking about the importance of assuming a place at the table where public rather than private interests is the subject.

Everything is a specialty, and, clearly, you have one of those at a time. Being sidelined by the idea of the expert as the only one capable of doing anything in the world, despite the overwhelming evidence of the limitations of experts, clearly extends far beyond the academy. It would also appear that treating life as a matter of choosing a major does not end upon graduating from college.

The extent to which we have lost a sense of the multi-faceted and the multi-dimensional in what we are, and what we do, matters. One thing you can count on: the disconnect between the good and the successful is deadly for the good. When success is on one side of the ledger whatever is on the other side is doomed. It is no

great surprise that given this view of the world our three respondents to Bennington chose the way they did.

As they make clear, the challenges of citizenship are quite sufficient without having to carry the burden of requiring something akin to sainthood. But success suffers no less than virtue when severed from values. Whatever it is, it is hopelessly uni-dimensional.

One stark example of the impoverishment of this mindset is the astounding prevalence of the idea that college admission is *the* measure for determining the value of an education. In a stroke we manage to empty all that happens before attending college of any intrinsic value, second only in its breathtaking mindlessness to asking no questions whatsoever about what happens once you get there. I would hazard a guess that more questions have been asked about access to what when heaven is the destination than when college is.

The presumption of course behind this astoundingly empty headed and empty handed view of education is that a college degree increases your earning opportunities. And that apparently is sufficient. The rest is silence. Aside from what purposes that perspective leaves out, it blithely overlooks the piles of evidence that reveal college to be a good deal less of an economic panacea than it is touted to be.

As for the idea that the college graduate does better economically than the drop out, the many devastating reports of what actually goes on in most colleges—more precisely what doesn't go on—strongly suggests that the surrounding economic, cultural and social forces at play when one is forced off the education treadmill are a good deal more relevant to limiting job access than what is actually being accomplished with the minds of those who stick it out.

What this means for me is that what matters is likely to elude us until we recover our capacity to connect the good and the successful, civic engagement and the most demanding uses of intellect and imagination, values and substance, thought and action.

That in turn is most likely to happen by focusing on content much more than is currently our custom—persistently, relentlessly insisting on answers to the question “about what?” Our obsessive focus on technology per se, as if it, by itself, can solve problems, is a particularly dispiriting instance of our penchant for avoiding questions of substance.

But substance matters; it matters terribly. When the complexities, scale, and ambitions of the problem are driving things, the need for making connections, for putting things together, for working with other people, emerges with a special intensity.

High stakes are important for another reason: it is impossible to sustain the effort required to take on the daunting challenges of meaningful action, the certainty of being overwhelmed, the continual encounter with the impossible, unless you are engaging issues that you simply cannot abandon. By contrast, in the absence of high stakes, the huge temptations and inevitable tendencies to perpetuate what is, or worse, are virtually certain to prevail.

Beyond the importance of substance and scale I think there are some rules of thumb, shards of insight, general principles that might hopefully prove useful in getting at what matters.

The questions that guide us matter—they matter a lot. We have all had the experience of encountering dazzling answers to the question what *should* be but in the absence of as keen an understanding of what *is* and an honest confrontation with what *can* be, such efforts are unlikely to change anything. And it is doubtful that we need more exhortations about what *must* happen without reference to how it *can* happen.

Actually “must” is a word that is probably best used sparingly. When it starts appearing with great regularity, as it often does when the subject becomes recommendations for change, it has the opposite effect on me of what is intended. It keeps reminding me that there is likely to be an inverse proportion between the dependence on must for why things need to change and the likelihood of anything actually changing.

And if we are to address the question of what kind of world *can* we make, we had best pay very special attention to an analysis of what is; the chances for the success or failure of our efforts to act with maximum effect depend hugely on the penetration and completeness of our answer to that question. If we get the realities wrong of the world we are in, or fudge them, we are unlikely to get anything else right. And getting those realities right is no easy task.

For one thing, it means avoiding the huge temptations of following the paths of least resistance. In my world, for example, all of us pay a high price when we believe that pieties about the importance of critical thinking will solve the problems of mindlessness in our intellectual life.

It is even more dangerous to presume that our concerns about the limitations of the academic disciplines will be addressed by combining a bunch of fragmenting perspectives into some patchwork (referred to typically as interdisciplinary). Seeing the world as made up of fragments that need to be properly bundled is the problem, not the solution. Trumpeting the value of the interdisciplinary has the further disadvantage of leaving the stranglehold of the disciplines intact.

The very existence of the interdisciplinary rests on the existence and hegemony of the disciplinary; their role in defining the ways we can imagine thinking about the very shape of the world remains intact.

When we turn to the question of what kind of a world *should* we be making, the importance of design emerges with special force. Design refers to the structures and procedures within which we work; the contours that, in fact, determine the direction and define the limits of what is possible. Aligning structures and purposes is an enormous challenge—in its way a formidable capacity—and a critical one if you are to avoid the divide that often yawns between intentions and outcomes. Because design is silent, it is more easily ignored. To do so is a huge mistake.

Resources no matter how vast, talent no matter how deep matters not if you get the design wrong. So, for example if you are serious about attending to what we like to refer to as the *whole* student, don't departmentalize the faculty; if you want to develop a penchant for intellectual courage don't insist that people spend the first seven years of their professional lives in work where doing anything outside the box is extremely dangerous.

A word on the other side of the ledger that has to do with recognizing what we potentially bring to these challenges. It is time we began to realize and develop the dimensions of human resourcefulness that remain untapped in the siloed world of self-perpetuating guilds, fragmented perspectives and either/or worlds. It is time for us to be a good deal less amazed that people can do more than one thing and a good deal more amazed that we would imagine intellectual and imaginative maturity to be defined by jettisoning all but one thing.

Finally. Tempting as it is to start small, to focus on symptoms, given the daunting challenges of getting at causes, don't succumb. Drops in the bucket may be better than nothing, but they are not going to do the job. In some sense they are a distraction; and a dangerous one, for until we address systemic issues in ways that are sustainable, we remain in free fall.

I can think of no better place to start than by addressing the challenge of achieving a much richer and more realistic relationship to this democracy we hear so

much about and do so little to perpetuate in this country. We can I think assert with confidence that a vibrant democracy is unlikely to persist when it is composed of experts; politicians; zealots and spectators.

Two things are increasingly evident however much we persist in evading them. One: what is currently at stake are overwhelmingly matters of principle, not of left or right, Republican or Democrat, liberal or conservative. When the issue is whether accumulations of power are to be tolerated which translate into a world where might makes right, principled accommodation is not an option. Two: if we are to sustain democracy at this moment in this country's history, it is a fight; it is most certainly not a tea party. And from everything I can tell democracy is losing—badly; what is at stake is not civility but justice, freedom, human dignity, decency, and a modicum of equity.

For those of you who remain tempted to leave well enough alone, to stay above the fray, or to start small, some final thoughts:

One. In my experience, you take as much punishment if you dare even to think about change as you do for doing something genuinely radical. In other words, contrary to what might appear to be the case, you get no credit for moderation when you are doing anything other than applauding the status quo. So, if you are going to enter this arena at all, you might as well go for the gold.

Two. It is worth reminding ourselves that doing things in ways that narrow our horizons—undermine and fragment the potential for creating a vital, and decent human community—demand as much energy, if not more, and cost as much, if not more, than doing them in ways that create such community and extend our sense of what is possible.

Three. We, not God or nature, made the constraining frameworks of expertise, of silos, of either/or we currently submit to; hence, we can unmake and remake them.

Finally, we have scarcely begun to tap into the range and depth of our intellectual imaginative and ethical resourcefulness; imagine what will happen if we do; imagine what will happen if we do not.