

Articles

Silencing the Academy? Reflecting on a dispute in a corporatising university

ALLAN PATIENCE
VUT

In Part I of this article I outline aspects of the corporatising of universities. My proposition is that recent far-reaching administrative and policy reforms affecting universities are undermining their proper role in society. It could even be - as Robert Manne has suggested - that what we are now witnessing is the death of the university. In Part II, I offer a personal (and therefore necessarily partial) account of a dispute with senior management in a university, to highlight the analysis in Part I. As one anonymous reviewer has correctly noted, 'The dispute described is at one level somewhat trivial, but at another level very revealing of what appears to be a developing 'culture' within the upper echelons of university administrations in Australia.' In Part III, I suggest some strategies for countering the inappropriate corporatising of universities. My vision is of an autonomous and collegial public university, one that nurtures - before all else - the republic of the mind.

Part I

Some recent literature about universities is - to say the least - disturbing. For example, in a much praised analysis of higher education the late Bill Readings (1998, p. 2) proposed that:

[T]he wider social role of the University is now up for grabs. It is no longer clear what the place of the University is within society nor what the exact nature of that society is.

Rutgers philosopher Bruce Wilshire (1990, p. 95) bluntly concludes: 'The university is in crisis.' In a passionate and intelligent essay, historian Frank Crowley (1997, p. 190) declares: 'After a decade of explosive growth and massive upheaval, higher education is in a shambles and needs urgent attention' (see also Grayling 1997). And Raimond Gaita (1999, p. 203) has written:

The institutions which are called universities are compromised by mendacity, by a pervasive untruthfulness in their descriptions of how they have changed to accommodate the political pressures of recent years. Academics

tend to deny the extent of untruthfulness, but everybody knows that it is now widespread and that knowledge generates a debilitating cynicism about the higher ideals of the university.

Similar sentiments can be found in a wide range of scholarly warnings about universities from around the globe.

The most disturbing aspect of this literature is how little of it appears to be read - disinterestedly, even critically - by policy makers and administrators, especially senior managers in universities. There is even evidence that some senior managers may prefer to suppress criticisms of contemporary universities (see, e.g., Coady 2000; James 2000). Is it that these senior managers think the literature - thus the scholarship behind it - is without foundation, misleading, even worthless? If so, just how informed is their criticism? And if it is uninformed - or worse, if the literature is ignored for its inconvenience or for its truthfulness - what hope is there for the definitive intellectual work and scholarly integrity of universities? Are we now seeing the silencing of the academy, even its overthrow as a major cultural institution?

The situation described by Professors Crowley and Gaita is taking place in the context of a public policy framework loosely labelled as 'economic rationalism' and in a world rapidly being caught up in the complexities of globalisation (see Stretton 2000). There are three broad consequences for contemporary higher education arising from these developments:

- (i) A comprehensive shift from an elite higher education system to a mass higher education system
- (ii) Over the past decade or so universities have been subjected to radical administrative reforms. One of the results is the rapid rise in highly paid, academically inexperienced staff numbers relative to academic (teaching and research) staff members in that period. This is broadly illustrated by official staffing numbers at Monash University where there are 2391 academic

staff to 2665 non-academic staff (Monash University 2000). *However, it is the non-academic staff at senior management levels - awarded salaries and employment packages significantly different from 'ordinary' academics and administrators - that is the most striking feature of this development.*

- (iii) Higher education has been displaced from its relative autonomy within public policy practice - it is now a pawn in macroeconomic policy.

(i) The shift from an elite to a mass higher education system

In Australia, this shift has come about since the policy interventions of former Minister for Education John Dawkins (1988). It has been mainly achieved by amalgamating vocational training (mainly TAFEs) and applied educational (mainly CAEs or IAEs) institutions into larger institutions designated as 'universities.' This has resulted in the *alleged* abandonment of a binary system of tertiary education.

It has also seen the creation of 'dual sector' institutions. These are so-called universities with a special focus on vocational training and with substantial technical and further education divisions. So far they have developed as educationally and administratively schizophrenic institutions and on present indications are likely to remain so.

What it has not achieved is a richly diversified tertiary education system. Perhaps we need what Alan Ryan (1999, p. 25) has identified as the strength of the American system: 'The US combines mass higher education with elite excellence (in both its state and private sectors), but it only achieves this through allowing wide diversity in standards, salaries, tuition fees and so on.'

Some scholars are unpersuaded by the glib mass society assumptions of the post-Dawkins universities. Professor Crowley (1997, p. 14) asserts:

The present gigantomania should be halted and governments made to realise that further national investment in additional undergraduates and additional degrees is unlikely to improve national competitiveness. The immediate goal of university education should be to have fewer and better, not more students; and to ensure that they are capable of benefiting from university education, and are given the best facilities for learning how to learn.

This argument is based on the highly contentious judgement that there are students now entering universities who are incapable of completing a meaningful course of academic study. It also assumes that there is probably an identifiable and finite group of people - almost certainly a minority, probably an intelligentsia - in any given society with the mental capacity to pursue intellectually demanding degree programmes. These assumptions are controversial; the more so if it is being claimed that most students prior to the Dawkins reforms were the 'brightest and the

best.' They simply weren't - in fact, many of them were run of the mill. The assumptions are also questionable in the light of Australia's still feeble attempts to catch up with tertiary education participation rates in comparable countries - e.g., the US, the UK, Japan and Canada.

But if there are significantly fewer intellectually superior university students - if the vast majority are sub-tertiary education standards - we would need to cut back on the number of universities - e.g., by closing, or amalgamating, or 'combining' many of the institutions now trumpeting the word 'university' in their titles but performing as little more than super-TAFE institutes. This would facilitate the rationalising of expensive administrative staff and the pooling of teaching and research resources (e.g., libraries and laboratories). We would also have to re-invent an explicitly *progressive* binary system of tertiary education, to counter the slide into an implicitly *regressive* binary system - e.g., where the so-called 'sandstone' universities use their status and power to confront the rest over funding shares. A range of liberal arts and sciences colleges, on the one hand, and a variety of vocational training institutes on the other, may relieve the undergraduate teaching pressures on universities to enable them to get on with research and research-related teaching.

On the other hand, it is more likely that - provided there are talented and inspiring teachers, appropriately resourced - many more people (far more than in pre-Dawkins times) can take a tertiary degree and society (and the economy) would benefit immensely from an increase in tertiary education participation rates. Indeed for Australia to prosper in a rapidly globalising world that is precisely what we must urgently work towards.

If this is true, a number of issues present themselves for immediate action:

- We need to revise curricula to ensure that high levels of literacy, numeracy, critical thinking and expression, as well as a wide range of research skills and training, and an informed understanding of cultural and global affairs, are all being achieved in the mass university system. At the moment this is not always being achieved; students are increasingly the victims of narrowing ('dumbing-down') curricula.
- We need to establish creative foundation programmes to deal with increasing numbers of students whose cultural illiteracy is inhibiting their academic progress. Increasing numbers of Australian undergraduate and graduate students - and, for that matter, increasing numbers of university academics and administrators - are inarticulate (in writing and speaking) and they are largely unconscious of the globalising world closing in on them.
- We need to educate (not train) university teachers. This will mean doing a great deal more than offering lecturers and tutors mindless training sessions in IT

gimmickry: *Powerpoint is the opiate of the pedagogue*. Despite some schemes to promote tertiary teaching (the criteria of which remain suspect), the pedagogical enterprise in our universities remains grotesquely under-valued and under-resourced.

- We have to better resource libraries, laboratories, classrooms.
- We have to reduce class sizes (tutorials of more than 25 students are now not uncommon in Australian universities) so that affective, personalised, dialogical, and humanising teaching can take place.

If we fail to address these kinds of issues, the shift to a mass higher education system will wreck the *whole* system, not just its post-Dawkins accretions.

(ii) Managerialising universities

Our contemporary universities have been captured by a 'managerial mode of control' (MacIntyre 1981). This is control by *detached* administrative specialists in which the *administrative process* takes precedence over the defining work of the organisation (Patience 1999). In universities this means teaching and research. Academics are being elbowed out at the cost of academic standards. It would be interesting to see a comparative study of the management structures of private corporations and 'corporatising' universities. Are we getting value for money here, especially as administrations gobble up ever larger chunks of university budgets, at the expense of academic teaching and research?

Detached managers achieve productivity increases from their subordinate workers by down-sizing, by limiting contracts, by cutting wages and conditions, and by imposing stress (sometimes ruthlessly), uncertainty, insecurity, even fear, in the organisations. As Richard Sennett (1998, p. 121) notes, the consequences are ethically questionable and socially destructive: '[...] the uncertainties of flexibility; the absence of deeply rooted trust and commitment; the superficiality of teamwork; most of all the spectre of failing to make something of oneself in the world, to 'get a life' through one's work.' In the long-term, this results in increased burnout and illness rates (e.g., a rise in depressive illnesses), high workforce turnover (with the loss of experience in organisations), increased social pathologies (especially in areas like alcoholism, drug abuse), and economic decline.

In the face of this detached managerialism, universities can usefully and radically be re-imagined as courteous, scholarly and collegial communities. In this re-imagining, we need senior managers as *prima inter pares*, not members of a corporate hierarchy. As Monash academic Andrew Butfoy (1999) notes: 'Corporatisation has its place, as long as it isn't pursued by fundamentalists who either don't know what traditional university values are or who hold such values in contempt.' We should expect

senior managers to be (in Dr Butfoy's words) '[...]leaders of academics' - i.e., cosmopolitan scholars with established teaching and research reputations, profoundly committed to the republic of the mind, and capable of critical disinterest in the face of political bullying and corruption. They need to be in regular collaboration with the teaching and research functions of their institutions and profoundly sensitive to the public education and cultural roles universities need to play in a globalising world (Kohler 1998).

Wise leaders and many successful private corporations are well aware of the advantages of 'flattening' managerial hierarchies and democratising organisational structures (McKenna 1998; Limerick *et al.* 1998; see also Gottleibsen 1999). The CEO or senior manager as an unaccountable tyrant (sometimes unaccountable even to her board) is now widely recognised as a corporate dinosaur. To be collaborative with such tyranny in universities is to be shockingly anti-intellectual.

Public universities fall into a category conventionally referred to by management scholars as 'Not For Profit Organisations' (NFPs) (Bowman and Asche 1996, ch. 9). While privatisation strategies are seeking to downsize the number of NFPs, there is a limit to the extent that public universities (and other NFPs) can be privatised. NFPs are characterised by high levels of altruism, moral purpose, and citizenship. They are in contrast to the more instrumental cultures of organisations principally geared for making profits and its associated ego-centred gratifications (Butler and Wilson 1990; Drucker 1992).

NFPs function well only where their unique values are organisationally recognised and affirmed, where a culture of collegiality is continually being fostered. Collegiality in universities necessarily entails consultation, debate, dissent, deliberation, respect for intellectuals and the life of the mind, respect for academic expertise and scholarship. A tyrannical and hierarchical managerialism in universities crushes scholarly collegiality. As one of the most reputable academic writers on modern universities, Professor A.H. Halsey (1992, p. 13), explains: 'Managerialism gradually comes to dominate collegiate cooperation in the organisation of teaching and research.' He elaborates:

Research endeavours are increasingly applied to the requirements of government or industrial demands. The don becomes increasingly a salaried or even a piecework labourer in the service of an expanding middle class of administrators and technologists.

(iii) Making universities pawns in macroeconomic policy

The relegation of higher education to short-term macroeconomic policy goals means, *inter alia*:

- Maximising vocational training curricula while minimising broader (liberal) educational curricula - the result is a flawed and limiting vocational training.
- Directing public funding to tertiary education according to the narrow perceptions of specific interest groups about short-term employment/labour market requirements.
- Keeping young people in education programmes to keep them out of unemployment statistics while charging them fees through HECS.
- Limiting the conditions under which teachers and researchers can critically challenge current policies and practices.

The idea of a higher education system maximising intellectual freedom *and responsibility* has been abandoned by many politicians, senior managers and bureaucrats. They have lost sight of the pivotal role that academic freedom entails in nurturing successful 'pure' research and 'applied' research and teaching programmes (Russell 1993).

Professor Sheila Slaughter (1998) has shown that late-modern universities are subject to government pressures to play an economic role in conformity with globalisation. This entails a shift of (especially public) capital into specific niches within the private sector. These niches include the construction industry, and media and IT conglomerates, many of them multinational and transnational corporations. It also favours 'industries' such as casinos and gambling, horse racing, and 'big events' like the grand prix, international sports (the Olympics, the Commonwealth Games), movies and entertainment, and fashion shows. It curtails the maintenance of public enterprise and public infrastructure (e.g., telecommunications, water and gas supplies, roads, transport, schools, hospitals, post offices, community services).

It is not at all clear in what sense the policy outcomes are successful. We need to ask at least three questions about them:

- Are they appropriate? (In fact they are largely taken as given; they shouldn't be.)
- If they are appropriate, are they being usefully and regularly measured? How transparent and convincing is the measurement?
- Are they achieving their stated goals or are they actually undermining them?

We need to know whether the postulated economies of scale and the gains in efficiency and quality promised in the post-Dawkins era of amalgamations and up-gradings of TAFE colleges, CAEs and IAEs into universities have actually been achieved. Some work is being done on this. But what is noteworthy is the huge silence from academics - especially economists, political scientists and sociologists

- about these realities. Academics who are keen to investigate and measure other groups and institutions in society seem strangely reluctant to turn their various analytical spotlights on themselves. Why?

The proponents of macroeconomic reforms in higher education have also concluded that 'expensive' academics could profitably (in strictly financial or accounting terms) be replaced by computers and by expanding distance learning facilities. If this illogic persists, eventually there will be one professor of law, for example, left in the whole world, presumably at Harvard, 'teaching' millions of students on the Internet.

These attacks comprehensively under-estimate the pedagogical and psychological importance of the teacher-student relationship which in itself ought to be valued - and honoured - by society as being similar to the profoundly affective relationship between parents and children. Herbert Kohl refers to this as 'the daily, intimate and complex interaction between teacher, students, and the content and process of learning' (Kohl 1998, p. 9).

To imagine that you can electronically virtualise these sorts of relationships takes us into a Brave New World of appalling possibilities. And it grossly over-estimates the effectiveness of distance learning and on-line teaching programmes (Chaudhry 1999; Faust 1999; Launder 1997). Michael Arnold (1999, p. 91) cite to evidence suggesting that '[...] digital technologies do not of themselves make a critical difference in enhancing the teaching and learning process.' He continues:

It is therefore to be expected that whilst distance education suits many students, and whilst many academics are pleased to make certain course materials available on the web, to communicate with students via email, and to employ multimedia products in the place of certain 'live' activities, these innovations are modest rather than dramatic, are heavily qualified, and are often undertaken in support of traditional methods rather than in place of traditional methods.

Those who demean face-to-face teaching in universities have often failed to understand the important philosophical distinction between education and training. This has led to a decline in meaningful degrees in universities, an issue raised by Professor Robert Manne (1999) following a deal between a university and a supermarket chain in which students are taught everything, from supermarket management to shelf stacking:

The fact that shelf stacking can be accepted as a suitable university subject is no minor matter. It is a conceptual catastrophe - one telling sign that the traditional idea of the university in Australia is now dead.

Thus 'irrelevant luxuries' like Classics or Music or Fine Arts or Literature are soon identified for eviction from university curricula via budget pruning.

The problem with this sort of reasoning, is that it confirms

the prejudices of [...] people disinclined to believe that an activity can be justified without a concrete, preferably financial result, a 7 per cent per annum yield or an increase in the general health of the population. Measured against such criteria, scholarly work - indeed most artistic work - seems a waste of time (de Botton 1998).

If we can't speak convincingly of the civilising and humanising role of scholarly and artistic work, we don't deserve to be heard. The American philosopher Professor Martha Nussbaum (1997, p. 10) has given us an impressive lead:

Citizens who cultivate their humanity need [...] an ability to see themselves not simply as citizens of some local region or group but also, and above all, as human beings bound to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern. The world around us is inescapably international [...] Cultivating our humanity in a complex and interlocking world involves understanding the ways in which common needs and aims are differently realized in different circumstances. This requires a great deal of knowledge that [...] students rarely got in previous eras, knowledge of non-Western cultures, of minorities within their own, differences of gender and sexuality [...] One of the errors that a diverse education can dispel is the false belief that one's own tradition is the only one that is capable of self-criticism or universal aspiration (see also Taylor 1994; Honneth 1996).

The cultivation of humanity is an art far beyond the capacities of a computer and virtual (largely narcissistic) fantasies. *Only humans can cultivate humanity, and that entails taking the vocations of parenting and pedagogy seriously.* Much of the *duty* of academics is pedagogy in the very best sense - i.e., teaching, mentoring, personal engagements with, and pastoral care for, students. This can only be performed successfully in a richly humane context which is richly informed by on-going research. This duty balances academic freedom nicely. As a former President of Stanford University notes:

The lists of tasks for which faculty are held responsible has grown from moral teaching to include knowledge production, technical assistance, community outreach, and many others. Faculty members enter an arena full of personal and professional challenges that result from that cargo of expectations (Kennedy 1999, p. 23).

Part II

Some of the tensions in contemporary academic life are illustrated by a dispute in which I figured early in 1999. The dispute highlights the tension now evident in universities between academic freedom and the commitment to an intellectual culture on the one hand, and the mass education challenges, managerialism and macroeconomic shifts confronting universities on the other.

My personal involvement in the affair certainly needs critical reappraisal; but the dispute showed that traditional forms of contestation in universities - robust intellectual critique, scholarly irreverence, irony, testing the very limits of policy discourse - are now constrained.

Early in 1998 I was elected to a university council. From the outset I observed several things about the council:

- It was made up mainly of people with limited experiences of academic life and limited understandings of the 'idea of a university.'
- Insofar as they did have tertiary education experience, council members appeared more comfortable with a technical and further education focus.
- This background meant that the council mostly took an instrumental approach to directions the university was taking. One could be forgiven for believing that council saw the university principally as a kind of super-TAFE training institute.
- This TAFE focus was shared by most of the other elected members of council - especially the students (the main representative being from the TAFE sector of the university). I was the only elected higher education representative on the council. The vast bulk of council was from business and vocational backgrounds. Thus there was little common ground for caucusing before or during council meetings.
- Council seemed to me to rarely question executive committee recommendations, policies and decisions.
- Council often appeared unwilling to encourage the role of academics and students (in both the higher education and TAFE sectors of the university) in policy making at senior levels in the university - e.g., the executive committee warned council about the dangers of 'politicising' the 'election' of the chancellor, by consulting or otherwise involving academics and students (on that alarming grounds that 'suitable' chancellorial appointees would be dissuaded from making themselves available if academics and students had a say in their appointment).

I began to feel that senior management's perception of my role on council was ambiguous. I suspect that this was partly because I was the only *elected* academic member - i.e., from their perspective 'politicised.' It was also partly because I assumed that academics should question and criticise. In other words I came from a 'collegial' approach to administration. Senior management (and the majority of council) seemed to prefer a corporatising - or managerialising - approach. I was out of step with '[...] changes to university governance arrangements to allow existing institutions to be more businesslike' (Storey 1998; see also Office of Higher Education 1997).

This became especially evident late in 1998 in council discussions about a strategic plan for the university.

Former Monash Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mal Logan (1999, p. 79) has said of such plans: 'There is already some bewilderment about so-called corporate plans devised by some vice-chancellors, long after the corporate sector jettisoned them as fatuous management exercises.' The strategic (corporate) plan we were considering seemed to me to be tangential to the work of the teachers, researchers and students in the university for which it was being prepared. From a senior management perspective, this probably seemed heretical - and there appeared to be little council sympathy for the view that heresy is one thing that universities probably should be tolerating, if not nurturing.

My most dramatic - and certainly most stressful - moment as a member of council happened early in 1999. I was aware that cuts to teaching and research budgets, and to basic services like the postal department (which included redeploying or making redundant several very loyal female staff members), were undermining morale of the lecturing and general staff. I tried to make this clear to senior management. Guarantees of new efficiencies and new economies through out-sourcing were barely apparent to academic staff and students. Thus I was bemused at a council meeting to learn that senior management intended to outlay some \$100,000 (annually) to rent a corporate box at the new Docklands stadium. (Later this figure was increased considerably.) This, we were assured, would be economically neutral, it would help the university in fund raising and 'friend raising.'

The day after the council meeting, I e-mailed a report about the corporate box to the members of the university. In the e-mail I referred irreverently to senior management as 'boynos' and I singled out one senior manager for some lampooning. The chancellor who severely criticised the 'undergraduate tone' of my e-mail telephoned me to convey his displeasure with my action. Soon afterwards I had my access to the university e-mail system cancelled, without warning. Later on I received a letter from the vice-chancellor alleging that I had infringed regulations for the use of the university's IT facility. The letter noted that a legal opinion had been obtained by the chancellor advising that my e-mail message had defamed senior managers and council members. It warned - or threatened? - that formal defamation actions against me could be forthcoming. That threat has not been removed.

Senior management subsequently requested that I sign a prepared written guarantee that I would abide by the regulations governing the university's IT facility. I declined to do so and protested my innocence when senior managers (and the chancellor) accused me of breaching them. I was at no stage given an opportunity to answer the charges, nor was I allowed access to due process or to legal advice from the relevant university authorities. After some weeks of e-mail blackout I was reconnected. Senior management announced that a committee would be set up to revise e-mail regulations and dispute procedures.

One impressive outcome of all this was the strong support I received from my academic and administrative colleagues throughout the affair, both from within and outside the university concerned. In media reports, letters, and public discussions senior management's actions were portrayed as bullying, an attack on academic freedom, and a worrying departure from traditional forms of debating in universities.

The affair has certainly soured my relations with the council, the chancellor, and with senior management. I would nonetheless welcome an opportunity to debate the affair publicly with those senior managers involved in the dispute. This would be best pursued in an open scholarly forum with an impartial chair. I believe such a forum would not work with the threat of defamation actions hanging over any of its participants. Nor could it work in a context that did not respect the values of academic freedom and the intellectual culture of a university.

Part III

Is there anything to be done? I think so.

First, public funding for education in general and universities in particular has to be increased appropriately and urgently. Without proper public funding universities will continue to go down the managerialised, TAFE-like road.

Second, academics need to re-imagine - comprehensively re-think - the concept of scholarly collegiality and community. John Henry Newman (1982, pp. 76-7) laid the foundations for this re-imagining in the nineteenth century and we have yet to catch up with him (if not with his gendered language):

This I conceive to be the advantage of a seat of universal learning, considered as a place of education. An assemblage of learned men, zealous for their own sciences, and rivals of each other, are brought by familiar intercourse and for the sake of intellectual peace, to adjust together the claims and relations of their respective subjects of investigation. They learn to respect, to consult, to aid each other. Thus is created a pure and clear atmosphere of thought, which the student also breathes [...] He profits by an intellectual tradition, which is independent of particular teachers, which guides him in his choice of subjects, and duly interprets for him those which he chooses. He apprehends the great outlines of knowledge, the principles on which it rests, the scale of its parts, its lights and shades, its great points and its little, as he otherwise cannot apprehend them [...] A habit of mind is formed which lasts through life, of which the attributes are, freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation, and wisdom [...] This then I would assign as the special fruit of the education furnished at a University [...] (see also Coady and Miller 1993).

Academic collegiality entails a richly diverse and tolerant intellectual community that is highly conscious of its

fundamental value to a civilised society. Contemporary scholars need to refine the praxis of this collegiality and start fighting for it, seriously and consistently, against the corporatising and managerialising tendencies that have been imposed by short-term planners on the public domain.

But, to achieve this praxis we have to avoid a distracting nostalgia about universities. Some of the corporatising problems now facing universities are a back-lash against inefficiencies and dishonesties in the old tenure system, banal and self-serving research programmes, nepotism in recruiting, gender discrimination (which results in women being still under-represented at senior levels), cultural and class exclusivism, constricted political agendas, the moral failure of academics to stand up publicly against injustices within and outside the university, the detachment of universities from their tax-paying communities. And, most importantly, *many* of the attacks on universities grow out of parents', bureaucrats', managers', politicians', and media commentators' myriad bad memories of inferior teaching, uncommitted and lazy academics, doctrinaire or otherwise irrelevant curricula, alienating campuses, and poorly resourced libraries, laboratories and class rooms.

In embarking on such a struggle, we need to understand that we are engaging in an intellectual contestation with what can be described, in shorthand, as 'economic rationalism' (Slaughter 1998) and 'globalisation from above' (Falk 1993). This could well be the principal intellectual challenge for the late-modern university. In determining to be genuinely collegial communities, researching and teaching universalising scientific and humanistic knowledge, universities are among the most important agencies for advancing 'globalisation from below' - *the creation of a world where people matter, above all else.* This means advocating human rights, freedom from hunger and violence and disease, sound environmentalism, and helping to facilitate access to health care, housing, education, and social justice. For the academy to be concerned with anything less is an unconscionable attack on humanity itself. And such complacency will mean the silencing and ultimate death of the university.

Third, academics need to take back some central scholarly responsibility for their universities from the non-teaching, non-researching bureaucrats who are running graduate studies committees, student welfare committees, curriculum committees, and research committees. In part, it has been slothfulness on the part of academics that has permitted the shift of responsibility for running universities to non-academics. Good teaching and good research are inextricably and creatively entwined with conscientious administration. The first step towards taking back this responsibility should be ensuring that university councils have substantially increased academic and student representation.

Fourth, academics need to form mutually supportive alliances with other knowledge producers, writers, artists, musicians, dramatists, media people, and especially teachers in the wider community - particularly in primary and secondary schools. By developing these alliances, a public recognition can be developed of the crucial work of educators as public pedagogues. A society lacking this recognition is one that is on the edge of barbarism.

Fifth, teachers everywhere - whether in schools, universities or in other public institutions - need to take stock of the centrality of their role in a civilising world. The demoralisation of the teaching profession - at all levels - is one of the gravest dangers presently confronting contemporary society, especially Australia. As noted above (and it needs to be repeated often), good teaching is every bit as fundamentally important to society as good parenting. By developing a reasonable and creative pride in their work - as educators, as mentors, as responsible role models, as 'attached intellectuals' (Patience 1999) - they will encourage the wider community to rethink the devaluing of education that has started to undermine community life with very destructive consequences.

Years ago the sociologist Herbert Marcuse (1972) warned us about the dangers of a 'one-dimensional' mindset in capitalist societies. The silencing of the academy and the stifling of academic freedom - with all the fertile intellectual untidiness and contestation that that freedom necessarily entails - is one treacherous way of imposing one-dimensionality on the contemporary world. It is the responsibility of all academics to resist it.

References

- Arnold, Michael, (1999), 'The virtual university,' *Arena journal* (New Series, No. 13).
- Bowman, Cliff, and David Asche, (1996), *Managing strategy*, London, Macmillan.
- Butler, Richard J. and David C. Wilson, (1990), *Managing voluntary and non-profit organisations*, London, Routledge.
- Butfofy, Andrew, (1999), 'Unpalatable truths behind the cloisters,' *The Age*, 11 November.
- Chaudhry, L., (1999), *Distance Learning No Bargain?* Wired News Report (Downloaded: <http://www.wired.com/news/email/member/culture/story/21595.html>).
- Coady, Tony (ed.), (2000), *Why universities matter*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin.
- Coady, Tony and Seamus Miller, (1993), 'Australian higher education and the relevance of Newman,' *Australian Universities' Review*, 36 (2).
- Crowley, Frank, (1997), *Degrees galore: Australia's academic teller machines*, Port Macquarie, Frank Crowley.
- Dawkins, John, (1988), *Higher education: A policy statement*, Canberra, AGPS.
- de Botton, Alain, (1998), 'What is academia For?,' *Prospect*, August/September.
- Drucker, Peter, (1992), *Managing non-profit organizations*, London, Harper Business.
- Falk, Richard, (1993), 'The making of global citizenship,' in Jeremy Becher *et al.* (eds.), *Global visions*, Montreal, Black Rose Press.

- Faust, Beatrice, (1999), *Managing change: Information technology in a loosely coupled system*, Unpublished paper (Higher Education Partnerships in Communication and Technology [HEPCIT] Project, Monash University).
- Gaita, Raimond, (1999), *A common humanity: Thinking about love and truth and justice*, Melbourne, Text Publishing.
- Gottlieb, Robert, (1999), 'Darwinism at its best: survival of the talented,' *Business Review Weekly*, 15 October.
- Grayling, A.C., (1997), 'Intellectual or academic?,' *Prospect*, January/February.
- Halsey, A.H., (1992), *The decline of donnish dominion*, London, Oxford University Press.
- Honneth, Axel, (1996), *The Struggle for Recognition*, Cambridge, MA, MIT Press.
- James, Paul (ed.), (2000), *Burning down the house: The bonfire of the universities*, Melbourne, Association for the Public University and Arena Publications.
- Kennedy, Donald, (1999), *Academic duty*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press.
- Kohl, Herbert, (1998), *The discipline of hope*, New York, Simon and Schuster.
- Kohler, Martin, (1998), 'From the national to the cosmopolitan public sphere,' in Daniele Archibugi *et al.* (eds.), *Re-Imagining political community*, Cambridge, Polity Press.
- Lauder, T.K., (1997), *The trouble with computers: Usefulness and productivity*, Cambridge Mass., MIT Press.
- Limerick, David C. *et al.*, (1998), *Managing new organisations*, Warriewood NSW, Business and Professional Publishing.
- Logan, Mal, (1999), 'Ubiquitous Excellence,' *Quadrant*, XLIII, June.
- MacIntyre, Alasdair, (1981), *After virtue*, London, Duckworth.
- Manne, Robert, (1999), 'The Death of the University,' *The Age*, 21 June - reprinted in James 2000.
- Marcuse, Herbert, (1972), *One dimensional man*, London, Abacus.
- Marginson, Simon, (1997), 'The limits of market reform,' in John Sharpam and Grant Harmon (eds.), *Australia's future universities*, Armadale, University of New England Press.
- McKenna, Richard J., (1998), *New management*, Sydney, McGraw-Hill.
- Monash University, (2000), *Monash Magazine*, 5, Autumn/Winter.
- Newman, John Henry, (1982), *The idea of a university*, Notre Dame, Indiana, Notre Dame University Press.
- Nussbaum, Martha C., (1997), *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press.
- Office for Higher Education, (1997), *University governance in Victoria: A report of a committee of advice to the Minister for Tertiary Education*, Melbourne, Victorian Department of Education.
- Patience, Allan, (1999), 'The treason of the universities: Late-modernity versus intellectuals,' *AQ: Journal of contemporary opinion*, 71 (2), March-April.
- Readings, Bill, (1998), *The university in ruins*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press.
- Russell, Conrad, (1993), *Academic freedom*, London, Routledge.
- Ryan, Alan, (1999), 'The American way,' *Prospect*, August/September.
- Sennett, Richard, (1998), *The corrosion of character: The personal consequences of work in the new capitalism*, New York, Norton.
- Slaughter, Sheila, (1998), 'National higher education policies in a global economy,' in Jan Currie and Janice Newson (eds.), *Universities and Globalization*, London, Sage.
- Storey, Haddon, (1998), *The changing role of university councils*, Occasional Paper No. 9, Melbourne, Public Sector Research Unit, Faculty of Business, Victoria University of Technology.
- Stretton, Hugh, (2000), *Economics: A new introduction*, Sydney, University of New South Wales Press.
- Taylor, Charles, (1994), 'The politics of recognition,' in Amy Gutmann (ed.), *Multiculturalism and the politics of recognition*, Princeton, Princeton University Press.
- Wilshire, Bruce, *The moral collapse of the university*, Albany, State University of New York Press.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: This paper was completed while the author held a Visiting Professorship in the Department of Social Inquiry, Adelaide University, during the first semester of 2000. The members of that excellent department are warmly thanked for their collegiality. Thanks, too, are due to two anonymous reviewers for their constructive suggestions.