

In any case, a promising reevaluation has been taking place of the potential of academic research for general education. What is significant about this development is that for the first time in the history of American mass education, it becomes possible to envision an end to the disastrous idea that making the curriculum more coherent and pertinent to the needs of students has to be a rearguard action against professionalism, research, and contemporary culture. By viewing their professional interests and debates as an enriching context for teaching rather than a paralyzing enemy of teaching, the programs I have discussed in this chapter suggest a way to overcome the perennial administrative stumbling block of integrated curricula, the difficulty of making courses cohere without either cumbersome red tape or a lock-step core curriculum that reduces diversity of choice in what to teach and study.

I began this chapter by quoting Leo Marx's recollection of how teaching our differences had been successful. Marx's conclusion merits the last word:

[I]t seems unlikely that anything like a consensus on literature, culture, and the teaching of these subjects is likely to be attainable soon. Anyone who has experienced the theoretical perturbations of recent years would have had no illusions on that score. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the current situation in the teaching of literature is in fact the extent of the differences that divide us.

Unfortunately, we do not take sufficient advantage of those differences for pedagogical purposes. Instead of sharing them with students, using them for what they are, a source of interest, vitality, and direction, we usually keep them out of the classroom, as if they were one of the profession's truly embarrassing secrets. But why conceal our disagreements?<sup>46</sup>

Even as Marx wrote these words in the mid-1980s, a number of colleges were already starting to do what he recommended, and more are now joining in. If we are serious about reforming education, we will watch them.

## Notes

### Chapter 1: Introduction: Conflict in America

1. Roger Kimball, "Tenured Radicals: A Postscript," *New Criterion* 9, no. 5 (January 1991), 13.
2. Quoted in Benjamin De Mott, "The Myth of Classlessness," *New York Times* (October 10, 1990), p. A23.
3. I have traced these processes of conflict avoidance in the field of literary studies in my earlier book *Professing Literature: An Institutional History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), from which I draw at times in the present book.
4. I am indebted for this point to Susan Lowry of the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee.
5. Recent articles have adduced evidence that at least one of the most sensational "PC stories" was baseless or grossly exaggerated. See Jon Weiner's account of the Stephan Thernstrom case at Harvard, "What Happened at Harvard," *Nation* 253, no. 10 (September 30, 1991): 384-88; see also Rosa Ehrenreich, "What Campus Radicals?" *Harper's* 283, no. 1699 (December 1991): 57-61. These and other pieces challenging the reliability of widely circulated PC stories have recently been collected in Patricia Auferheide, ed., *Beyond PC: Toward a Politics of Understanding* (St. Paul, Minn.: Graywolf Press, 1992), pp. 92-121.

### Chapter 2: The Vanishing Classics

1. Milton Rosenberg, "Uproar in the Academy: Deconstruction's Corrosive Role in American Higher Learning," *Chicago Tribune Books* (March 24, 1991), p. 5.

2. Dinesh D'Souza, *Illiberal Education: The Politics of Race and Sex on Campus* (New York: Free Press, 1991), p. 20.
3. Christopher Clausen, "It Is Not Elitist to Place Major Literature at the Center of the English Curriculum," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 13, 1988), p. A52.
4. William J. Bennett, "To Reclaim a Legacy," 1984 Report on Humanities in Education, *Chronicle of Higher Education* (November 28, 1984), pp. 1, 14-21.
5. Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987).
6. Jonathan Yardley, "Paradise Tossed: The Fall of Literary Standards," *Washington Post*, "Style" (January 11, 1988), p. 52. The *Times* article to which Yardley refers was Joseph Berger, "U.S. Literature: Canon Under Siege," *New York Times* (January 6, 1988), p. B6.
7. David Brooks, "From Western Lit to Westerns as Lit," *Wall Street Journal* (February 2, 1988), p. 36.
8. William Bennett, quoted by Robin Wilson, "Bennett: Colleges' Trendy Lightweightis Replace Classics with Nonsense," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 10, 1988), p. A27.
9. Mark Helprin, "The Canon under Siege," *New Criterion* 7, no. 1 (September 1988): 36.
10. Terry Teachout, "Why Johnny Is Ignorant," *Commentary*, 85, no. 3 (March 1988): 71.
11. Lynne V. Cheney, *Humanities in America: A Report to the President, the Congress, and the American People* (Washington, D.C.: National Endowment for the Humanities, 1988), pp. 11-12.
12. D'Souza, *Illiberal Education*, p. 68. D'Souza slightly misquotes Clausen.
13. Cathy Davidson, "PH" stands for Political Hypocrisy," *Academe* 77, no. 5 (September-October 1991): 14.
14. John Searle, "The Storm over the University," *New York Review of Books*, XXXVII, no. 19 (December 6, 1990): 38-39. Two Stanford sources that support Searle's information and conclusions are Mary Louise Pratt, "Humanities for the Future: Reflections on the Western Culture Debate at Stanford," in *The Politics of Liberal Education*, ed. Darryl J. Gless and Barbara Herrnstein Smith (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1992), pp. 13-31; Bob Beyers, "Machiavelli Loses Ground at Stanford; Bible Holds Its Own," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (June 19, 1991), pp. B2, B3.
15. Searle, "The Storm over the University," p. 39.
16. Charles B. Harris, "The ADE Ad Hoc Committee on the English Curriculum: A Progress Report," *ADE Bulletin* 85 (Winter 1986): 26-27.
17. Bettina J. Huber and David Laurence, "Report on the 1984-85 Survey of the English Sample: General Education Requirements in English and the English Major," *ADE Bulletin* 93 (Fall 1989): 39.
18. Harris, "The ADE Ad Hoc Committee on the English Curriculum," p. 29.
19. Phyllis Franklin, Bettina J. Huber, and David Laurence, "Continuity and Change in the Study of Literature," *Change* 24 (January-February 1992): 42-48.
20. "MLA Survey Casts Light on Canon Debate," *MLA Newsletter*, 23 (Winter 1991): 12.

21. Arthur N. Applebee, *A Study of Book-Length Works Taught in High School English Courses* (Albany, N.Y.: Center for the Learning and Teaching of Literature, 1989), p. 16.
22. Chinua Achebe, "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*," in Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, 3d ed., ed. Robert Kimbrough (New York: W. W. Norton, 1988).
23. Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, p. 37; quoted by Achebe, *ibid.*, p. 253.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 253; Leavis's discussion appears in *The Great Tradition* (London: George W. Stewart, 1948; reprinted 1954), pp. 211-21.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 256.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 257.
27. *Ibid.*
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29. See, for example, the treatments of Conrad and *Heart of Darkness* in two influential works of Marxist criticism, Terry Eagleton's *Criticism and Ideology: A Study in Marxist Literary Theory* (London: New Left Books, 1977), pp. 130-40; and Fredric Jameson's *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 206-80.
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31. Dinesh D'Souza, "Illiberal Education," *Atlantic* 267, no. 3 (March, 1991): 52.

### Chapter 3: How to Save "Dover Beach"

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2. George Will, "Literary Politics," *Newsweek* (April 22, 1991), p. 72.
3. Jerry Adler, "Taking Offense," *Newsweek* (December 24, 1990), p. 54.
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7. Schlesinger, *The Disuniting of America*, pp. 137-38.
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## Chapter 8: When Is Something "Political"?

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8. *Ibid.*
9. Letters to the Editor, *Chronicle of Higher Education* (March 11, 1992), pp. B4-5; the original article appeared as "What Has Literary Theory Wrought?" *Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 12, 1992), p. A48.
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31. Joseph Epstein, "The Academic Zoo: Theory—In Practice," *Hudson Review* 44, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 17.
32. Michael Bérubé, "Political Correctness and The Media's Big Lie," *Village Voice*, xxvii, no. 25 (June 18, 1991): 32.
33. George Will, "Literary Politics," p. 72.
34. Kinsley, "P.C. B.S.," p. 8.
35. Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious*, p. 291.
36. Editorial, *New Republic*, special issue "Race on Campus," 204, no. 20 (February 18, 1991): 8.
37. For an illuminating discussion of recent debates on "essentialism," see Diana Fuss, *Essentially Speaking*.
38. Toni Morrison, "Unspeaking Things Unspoken: The Afro-American Presence in American Literature," *Michigan Quarterly Review* 28, no. 1 (Winter 1989): 19.
39. Stephen Greenblatt, "Opinion," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (June 12, 1991), p. B3.
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41. *Ibid.*, iii, 40-42.
42. *Ibid.*, iii, 51-52.
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49. Lynne V. Cheney, quoted by Christopher Myers, "Government and Politics," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (April 10, 1991), p. A22.
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56. Wiener, "What Happened at Harvard," 384-88.
57. Harvey C. Mansfield, Jr., quoted by Karen J. Winkler, "Portrait," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 16, 1991) p. A5.
58. Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction* (London: Verso, 1991), p. xiv.

#### Chapter 9: Turning Conflict into Community

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4. John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (New York: Free Press, 1944; first published 1916), p. 249.
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7. *Ibid.*, pp. 3ff.
8. *Ibid.*, p. xiv.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*
11. Programs based on the earlier model still continue at small colleges such as St. John's College, Annapolis, and are from time to time praised as emulators by critics like

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14. Lawrence Hussman, "The Faculty's Forte: 'Team Teaching' the Literature Survey," *ADE Bulletin* 99 (Fall 1991): 29, 32.
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16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*
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19. See Graff, "What Should We Be Teaching—When There's No 'We'?"
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