The place of the university within society and the state is far less clear today than in previous eras when the university was inextricably linked to the idea of the university as producer, protector, and inculcator of culture. Since the Enlightenment the university idea has evolved with three key referents: the Kantian university grounded in the idea of reason, the Humboltian and Newmanian models grounded in the idea of culture, and our current techno-bureaucratic notion grounded in the idea of excellence and, more recently, innovation. By the metaphor of reformatting, I refer to the dominance of vocationalization and commercialization as the de facto referents for paideia today. As such, we must not push the metaphor too far, since the idea of liberal paideia has not completely been eradicated from the contemporary university in a way that reformatting a hard drive erases all previous content. Indeed, the techno-bureaucratic trope is not
entirely new, but may be traced back to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. What is new, however, is that during the past four decades, and corresponding to the rise of the network society and global informational economy, we have witnessed an exponential growth in the number of articles and books on the need to reform liberal education in light of technocratic goals, on one hand, or in critical opposition to the reductionist ends of specialized technological training, on the other hand. The problem with many recent analyses, which invoke either the non-utility of the social sciences and humanities or a nostalgic moralism about the good old days of liberal education, is that they often fail to identify the empirical trends that have increasingly made university paideia and scientific-technological research subservient to economic goals.

I want to stress from the outset that the commercialization of university research is not necessarily an ignoble aim. The desire to increase the return to a nation on the investment in university research made by taxpayers, and thereby raising the economic and social benefits for all is certainly a human and an ethical good. Moreover, the techno-bureaucratic reformatting of the university will no doubt continue in an age where the Internet and computer-based teaching and research methods have delegitimated traditional structures of scholarly publishing, and provide new material conditions of possibility for online learning.
I am not suggesting, then, that the techno-bureaucratic reformatting of the university is *malum in se*. Rather, I maintain that *there exists a lack of balance between education for techno-scientific specialization, on one hand, and funding for liberal paideia that has traditionally informed the scholarship and teaching of social scientists and humanists, on the other hand*. The humanities and social sciences are increasingly accepted only insofar as they promote social adaptation to new technologies. As humanist scholars, we should reject technotopian visions of higher education, but we must also provide a thicker justification for the liberal arts paideia that we offer students in a market-model university. For example, the principle of lifelong learning,\(^1\) which has become the watchword of a knowledge-based society, must not be confused with education since “one can go on learning to the end of one’s days without for that reason becoming educated.”\(^2\) The idea of educating young persons for responsibility in the world is, as Hannah Arendt notes, central to the university idea. The historical importance of the humanities for the creative arts, the world of affairs, government, trade, and the professions of law, medicine, and ministry are vital to the future, and to the flourishing of communities.

I argue my thesis in three steps. First, I trace the historical evolution of the idea of the *modern* university from the Kantian university to the postmodern
university. Second, I survey some recent diagnoses of paideia's present plight, and draw upon some North American empirical data to illustrate what I mean by the reformatting of the university along the lines of techno-bureaucratic commercialization at the expense of the social sciences and humanities. I conclude with a reflection about the ethical implications of the university idea for philosophy and the future of education.

I. The University Idea: From Reason to Culture to Technobureaucracy

What do I mean by the idea of the university? I refer to that idea that functions as the university's key referent, the meaning and telos of university activities. As an expression, the idea of the university is indebted to the legacy of Plato and Kant. Consider, for example, Plato's response to the Sophists of thinking in Ideas as an encompassing unity of the perceivable. Plato's concept of the Idea protected Being (the One) from its scattering into nothingness, even as thinking in Ideas (the many) also stands under an encompassing unity in its superlative form as the highest Idea of the One and the Good. The idea of the university is probably even more indebted to Kant's conception of the idea as a regulative principle that ought to embody and regulate rational action. Even before Kant, however, the idea of the university as a civitas came to prevail in the late middle ages. As Michael Oakeshott notes, in the universitas members understood themselves as engaged “in
a common enterprise and as sharer[s] in a common stock of resources and a common stock of talents.... The enterprise may be described in various terms: the search for Truth, the pursuit of the Common Good, or making nature yield what it has never yielded. Where the university expresses and realizes a commitment to academic freedom, the plurality of human values and ends, and elevates the virtues of civility and tolerance, then it instantiates the idea of the university as a *civitas*.

Now if the idea of the *modern university* has a beginning, it surely starts with the German university model and Kant’s vision of the university as guided by the concept of reason. The conflict of the faculties entails a perpetual conflict between established traditions in the so-called higher faculties, i.e., Theology, Law and Medicine, and the so-called lower faculty, i.e., Philosophy, guided by the free exercise of rational inquiry. Through the movement of reason and the process of unending questioning, disciplinary foundations are scrutinized and purified with the aid of the faculty of philosophy. The philosophy faculty is in reality the queen of the sciences precisely because as the faculty of critique *par excellence*, the self-criticism that is central to philosophy *differentiates* the university from a mere technical training school or specialized research academy. Moreover, there is an important and inextricable link between the university and the state. The university prepares technicians for the service of the state, even as the state’s role is to
remind men and women of affairs that they ought to submit their use of knowledge in the service of the state to the control of the faculties. Philosophy upholds the use of reason in public life and protects the university from the abuse of power by the state, even as the state protects the university in order to ensure the rule of reason in public life. The paradox at the heart of the social mission of the Kantian university, as Derrida notes, appears from the fact that the autonomy of reason is difficult to institutionalize. The conflict between reason and the state, between knowledge and power, is an aporia, perhaps overcome only by reason’s ability to combine institution and autonomy. Kant attempts to hold pure reason and empirical history apart as the state reminds the university of its service to the state while the university safeguards the rule of reason in public life by the production of republican subjects who embody rational autonomy.

The Kantian university idea evolved with German idealists such as Schiller, Schleiermacher, Fichte, and Wilhelm von Humboldt. Central to the idealist tradition is the claim that education, professional training, and research are inseparable. For Humboldt, the higher scientific institutes embodied in the university fuse the advancement of objective science with subjective spiritual and moral training (Bildung) and directly affect the national moral culture.

A similar concern to advance Russian science and culture informs Mikhail
Vasil'evich Lomonosov's idea of the university and the establishment of Moscow University in 1775. Unlike universities in the West, however, Moscow University did not have a faculty of Theology, but began with the three faculties of Philosophy, Law and Medicine. Students would begin their education in the faculty of philosophy with a solid grounding in both the natural sciences and the humanities, and then go on to specialize in either law, medicine, or philosophy.

The special system of education for the Russian clergy is a quite distinct historical phenomenon when compared to North American colleges from the seventeenth century down to the Civil War. Many small colleges were founded on religious principles and ideals resting on the Christian religion, the Greek and Latin languages, and moral philosophy. By the early 1900s, the old college system had given way to the modern research university with its emphasis on the scientific ideal of knowledge production and vocationalization for careers in business, industry, and agriculture.

In Britain the idea of the university developed, at least initially, along more uniquely religious lines. When Cardinal John Henry Newman was asked by the Irish Catholic bishops in 1852 to think out the idea of a university to be created in Dublin, he did so in a cultural context of British empiricist rationality and the secularization of culture. Newman's circle of the sciences is embodied in the
academic domains of theology, science, and literature. The goal of the university is to produce more intelligent members of society by fostering cultivation of mind, formation of the intellect, and intellectual culture.\textsuperscript{11} Newman repeatedly employs a circle metaphor to represent the unity and integrity of the universe of knowledge with philosophy constituting the science of sciences. The universe of knowledge represents facts and their relations, which, as a \textit{universitas}, constitute the ideal whole of liberal knowledge. "Knowledge is the apprehension of these facts, whether in themselves, or in their mutual positions and bearings. And, as taken together, form one integral subject for contemplation, so there are no natural or real limits between part and part."\textsuperscript{12}

Religion and science are the two great circles of knowledge for Newman. The two knowledges intersect, while remaining separate, and thus do not contradict each other. He relegates theology to the philosophy of the supernatural world and science to the philosophy of the natural world. "Whether in their respective ideas, or again in their own actual fields," he writes, "on the whole, [theology and science] are incommunicable, incapable of collision, and needing, at most to be connected, never reconciled."\textsuperscript{13} Reason is the principle of the intrinsic fecundity of knowledge\textsuperscript{14} that employs itself for knowledge of God, Nature, and Man, and, thus, we see the British contrast to the Kantian triumvirate of World, Self, and
Metaphysics. Prior to knowledge being a power in the form of instrumental reason, knowledge is a good. When knowledge is an instrument or mechanical process it is useful knowledge. When knowledge is more fully rational it resolves itself into philosophy or liberal knowledge. Both possess different attributes of truth.

Useful knowledge possesses truth as power, whereas liberal knowledge apprehends truth as beautiful. Whether one pursues truth as beauty or truth as power, knowledge and truth are one because "all branches of knowledge are connected together, because the subject-matter of knowledge is intimately united in itself, as being the acts and the work of the Creator."\(^\text{15}\)

The idea of the university as a constituting agent of culture would undergo another transformation with the Scottish university model in the later nineteenth century. Under the guiding influence of T.H. Huxley who became Rector of Aberdeen in 1874, the Scottish model is more modern than the Oxbridge model. Uncontrolled by the Anglican church, the Scottish idea takes on a stronger openness to the natural sciences and medicine as disciplines. As Huxley says, "for the purpose of attaining real culture, an exclusively scientific education is at least as effectual as an exclusively literary education."\(^\text{16}\) What radically separates the Scottish university from our current situation is the belief in reason. Commenting on Lord Adam Gifford's presupposition that substantive rationality is unitary,
Alasdair MacIntyre notes that “the application of the methods and goals of this single and unitary conception to any one particular distinctive subject matter is what yields a science...that natural theology and the study of the foundations of ethics jointly constitute in this sense a science, just as astronomy does and just as chemistry does, Adam Gifford ... had no doubt. 17 European and North America universities seem far removed from Gifford’s idea of the university today.

In the twentieth century the German idea is best embodied and continued in Karl Jaspers’s understanding of the university as "an institution uniting people professionally dedicated to the quest and transmission of truth in scientific terms."18 The university is the locus where the original will to know (das ursprüngliche Wissenwollen) most fully realizes itself.19 Continuing the German tradition in the twentieth century is Max Scheler's emphasis on the role of teaching, and, in Spain, Ortega y Gasset's strong accent on the mission of the university to culture where the faculty of culture defines the nucleus of the university and essential nature of higher education.20

If we turn to the North America context we see the origin of what I am calling the ‘techno-bureaucratic idea’ after the American civil war, and it evolved in two distinct stages.21 The first occurred in the late 1860s when presidents, deans, and business staff sought to broaden their institutional support by soliciting funds
from local businessmen. The second stage, marked by knowledge fragmentation and bureaucratic centralization, occurred in the late 1890s, and has not stopped to this day. Both stages were based on a gamble to expand the university without advance financial guarantees and, equally significant, any recourse to shared values. By the early twentieth century there was no common intellectual formula to counter, or even cloak, institutional fragmentation. Neither the Christian religion, nor the natural sciences, nor humane culture were capable of making sense out of the expanding universe of knowledge. Thus the present plight of liberal paideia has a much older legacy than might appear from diagnoses of liberal paideia’s present plight.

II. Paideia’s Present Plight

Recent diagnoses suggest that the decline of the university results from any number of causal factors: Gross financial and ethical corruption, the political orthodoxy of liberal departments within the humanities, the illiberal politics of race, sex, and affirmative action that dominate the cultural studies agenda and stifle free enquiry and exchange, the rise and domination of scientific entrepreneurship within the university, problems concerning academic professionalism, specialism, and careerism that have taken precedence over teaching, and the loss of an understanding of how human goods are to be ordered and how the goods of
rational enquiry within the university fit within a larger societal ordering of goods.\textsuperscript{27}

Mournful lamentations abound concerning the bankruptcy of liberal paideia.\textsuperscript{28} Following Newman’s idea, Jaroslav Pelikan calls academics to return to the lost mission of liberal education in advancing knowledge through research, extending knowledge through undergraduate and graduate teaching, training professionals through knowledge and professional skills, preserving knowledge in libraries, and diffusing knowledge through scholarly publication.\textsuperscript{29} Allan Bloom’s \textit{The Closing of the American Mind}\textsuperscript{30} ridicules the facile relativism among university students that entails both an epistemological position about the limits of reason and truth, and a moral position that is opposed to any absolutist moral stance. Such soft relativism has extinguished the desire and will for truth and the good life as authentic motives of paideia. What passes for student virtue is mere openness which, ironically, has led to greater student conformism. For Bloom, North American colleges and universities ought to direct more attention to the history and cultural traditions of western civilization at a time when cries against Western ethnocentrism, imperialism, and patriarchy are ringing in the academy's halls.

At another end of the diagnostic spectrum stand works by American Gerald
Graff and Canadian Bill Readings. Both agree that the move from philosophy to literary studies marks the major disciplinarity of the university today. Graff argues that the solution to curriculum conflicts over culture is to “teach the conflicts themselves, making them part of our object of study and using them as a new kind of organizing principle to give the curriculum the clarity and focus that almost all sides now agree it lacks.” Graff’s analysis brings to mind C.P. Snow’s distinction between the two cultures of the arts and the hard sciences, the distinction between the literary intellectuals and the scientists, and the dialogical role of mutual respect in the academy.

For Readings, in contrast to Graff, real communication across the two cultures is now impossible. There can be no ideological unification of the university’s diverse language games. Following Derrida and Lyotard, Readings argues that the university is a community of dissensus. There exists no ultimate transparency to communication since a common cultural identity, which provides the condition of possibility for communication, no longer exists in post-modernity. If there is a communal identity, then it is to think without identity. There can be no final consensus about the social bond or even about a consensus that would permit the determination and transmission of the conflict over disciplines as a unified object of professorial discourse. Why? Because the decline of the nation-state, as
the primary instance of capitalism’s self-reproduction, has voided the university’s social mission to produce national subjects and to inculcate culture. Once the notion of national identity loses its political relevance, the idea of culture is effectively unthinkable. Indeed, the institutional rise of cultural studies in the 1990s illustrates the acknowledgment that “there is nothing to be said about culture as such...” 34 Readings calls for a revaluation of teaching and the question of value in relation to teaching. His post-modernist university idea rephrases teaching and learning as sites of obligation or loci of ethical practices. Teaching must be accountable to the question of justice, rather than to the criterion of truth. As such, he displaces the historical telos of the university as the search for truth by insisting on the search for justice.

Readings’s emphasis on justice begs the question of the epistemic truth of appeals to justice. Moreover, while I disagree with Readings that “we must seek to do justice to teaching rather than to know what it is,” 35 I agree that Bakhtin’s dialogism is a far better model for paideia than Saussure’s model of communication in which a sender (the professor) transmits to a receiver (the student) who is silent and exists only as an empty vessel to be filled. Saussure’s model does not overcome the problem of interlocutors who merely take turns being monologic senders. Bakhtin rightly reminds us that dialogue is not a mute,
wordless creature that receives such an utterance, but a human being full of inner words. All his experiences his so-called apperceptive background exist encoded in his inner speech, and only to that extent do they come into contact with speech received from outside. Word comes into contact with word.  

Finally, Jean-François Lyotard's discussion of education and its legitimation through performativity in The Postmodern Condition is well known. Lyotard attempts to salvage the coherence of scientific research and experimentation by recasting their postreferential epistemology in terms of legitimation by 'paralogy'. His vision of science and knowledge amounts to a search for instabilities as the practice of paralogism. The point, as Fredric Jameson notes, is not to reach agreement but to undermine from within the very framework in which the previous normal science had been conducted. Universities and the institutions of higher learning have lost their earlier grand narratives embedded in the ideas of the liberation of humanity in the French tradition, and the speculative unity of all knowledge in the German tradition. All universities today attest the functional ends of paideia. Commercial exchange is the dominant sign of post-modern paideia: Knowledge is and will be produced in order to be sold, Lyotard writes, it is and will be consumed in order to be valorized in a new production: in both cases, the goal is exchange.
I maintain that humanists ought to protest the dominance of exchange value in educational productivity unless we end up committing the naturalistic fallacy: what is, is ethically right. Neither do I endorse Lyotard’s polemic against Habermas’s vision of a rational society per se. The trumping of a communicational adversary may be necessary given the primacy of narrative in both the *naturwissenschaften* and *geisteswissenschaften*, but it is insufficient to say, as Lyotard does, that human beings are *essentially* tricksters. Similarly, Derrida insists that every attempt at communication is attended by a foundational violence defined by the reduction of the Other to the status of addressee and a structurally implicit failure of representation. Surely, however, the quest for non-instrumental communication remains a great ideal of university discourse, however difficult to realize given human historicity and finitude.

The foregoing survey of paideia’s present plight reveals how far the British, American, German, and French ideas of the university differ from each other in our present historical situation. One element that unites the various diagnoses is a recognition of the decline of the social science and humanities, so we now turn to some empirical data that illustrates the disinvestment in the humanities in relation to the applied technosciences and the dominance of technology over liberal paideia in our present historical situation.
III. Disinvestment in the Humanities

Economic pressures and rewards have led to a severe disinvestment in the humanities in North American universities during the past 30 years. From 1965-1992 scores on graduate record exams in chemistry and biology tests remained virtually unchanged, yet english literature scores dropped by some 60 points. The teaching and mastery of foreign languages have declined steadily since 1977. Between the years 1970-1994, english, foreign languages, history, philosophy, and theology/religious studies have all declined in stature. It is remarkable that on the preliminary SAT (the Scholastic Aptitude Test) exam, only 9 percent of students indicate an interest in the humanities today. Even more significant is the fact that most students no longer believe that education entails the formulation of a philosophical worldview. Instead, the proportion of freshmen entering college today who expect their higher education to enhance future job security and assure high-wage employment is significantly higher than those who would "seek to develop values, form a broader social vision, experiment with varied forms of knowledge, and formulate a philosophy of living."

Ironically, however, vocational courses fail to demonstrate that students are actually better prepared than liberal arts and social science students for associated occupations and professions. Medical schools, for example, do not prefer particular
majors, not even biology, as long as basic pre-med courses are taken successfully.

The Association of American Law Schools recommends courses that stress reading, writing, speaking, critical and logical thinking. Law schools report that by yardsticks of law review and grades, their top students come from math, the classics, and literature—with political science, economics, pre-law, and legal studies ranking lower.

The data may be debated in the case of particular institutions, but one datum is clear: The primary task of higher education is no longer to educate undergraduates. In both Canada and the United States the university reserves its highest rewards for published research, and, increasingly, commercial innovation. Few empirical studies are able to conclude that research correlates positively with teaching quality, and when they do, the correlation is statistically significant only at four-year colleges—not at doctoral or research institutions.

The subordination of teaching to research has spread from the major research universities, where it is justified, to four and two-year institutions. Humanists' teaching loads are highest, with the least amount of release and research time. Humanists are expected to publish in order to secure professorial posts, and are increasingly compelled to settle for adjunct, part-time, non-tenured appointments that pay less, have little or no job security, and carry reduced benefits or none.
Because the tuition paid by humanities majors is basically the same cost as the tuition paid by students in the social and natural sciences, parents and students associated with the humanities are actually subsidizing parents and students associated with other disciplines.

The humanities now unfold in what has been called the ‘age of money,’ with reference to the primacy of technology and commercialization in the university and to the dollar influx of research grants, higher tuitions, and capital improvements to sustain the techno-bureaucratic-commercialization model. Money is the secret key to prestige, influence, and power in the academic world, and a university’s success is now predicated on three criteria. First, a promise of money in which the academic field is popularly linked, often erroneously, to an occupation or profession that promises above average salary earnings, such as health and computer sciences, law, business, engineering, and applied sciences. Second, success is linked to a knowledge of money, i.e., fields that study money practically or theoretically such as fiscal, business, financial, or economic matters and markets. The third criterion of success is that the university offers itself as a source of money. Its prestigious fields must receive significant external money via research contracts, federal grants, or corporate underwriting.

During the Cold War, theoretical physics met this third criterion, but because
it produces little of immediate utility now, the discipline is often cut from funding and high-paying jobs. Psychology falls somewhere in the middle of all fields, and sociology and anthropology slightly below. The fine arts, languages, literature, history, religion, and philosophy, generally satisfy none of the above criteria, with a concomitant loss of respect, students, and funding. Note, moreover, that this reality unfolds during an age when the United States spends more to support “beer and shaving cream commercials on one Super Bowl Sunday... than the government spends on music, painting, and theatre in a year.”

On the bureaucratic side of the techno-bureaucratic idea, university administration has been a booming industry. Indeed, administration has actually outpaced the growth, if any, in the size of faculties. With more administrative and middle-level management jobs at higher pay, administration continues to be the leading growth sector of higher education, even as support-staff positions that directly help faculty members are often cut. Parkinson's Law makes it clear that if administrative and executive personnel increase by x percent, then their subordinates will grow at twice that rate. It should come as no surprise, then, that from 1985-1990, in more than 3,000 U.S. colleges and universities, full-time faculty grew 8.6 percent, administrative personnel rose by 14.1 percent, and their subordinates increased by 28.1 percent.
Canadian data corroborate the American empirical picture concerning the privatization and commercialization of university research. Research funding during the past decade breaks down into four main fields from highest to lowest funding, respectively: The health sciences, pure or basic sciences, applied sciences focused on technology transfer, and the social sciences and humanities. From 1990 to 2000 funding for health sciences soared, the pure and applied sciences increased slowly, but funding for the social sciences and humanities decreased. Increases in both the health sciences and pure and applied sciences came almost exclusively from the private sector rather than the government. The transformation of research funding has had significant repercussions on the way research is developed and directed. The trend is away from the earlier model of self-regulating scientific communities who independently evaluate the originality or scientific pertinence of research projects as part of the granting agencies. Increasing private sector funding has led to serious conflicts of interest between researchers, major research universities, and drug companies.

The case of Dr. Nancy Olivieri is illustrative of the problem. Against the advice of the Toronto Sick Children’s Hospital and the University of Toronto, she wanted to publish an article on the negative and dangerous results of a toxic drug tested in clinical trials. Olivieri, the university, and the hospital were bound to the
pharmaceutical company Apotex by a confidentiality clause. The hospital, the university, and Apotex were in a conflict of interest, however, because Apotex was to give the University of Toronto $20 million. Both the hospital and the university failed to support Dr. Olivieri when, despite the confidentiality clause, she took her stand on the basis of scientific integrity. The hospital and the university applied the confidentiality clause in order to secure the funding from Apotex. The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario fully vindicated Dr. Olivieri against complaints filed by the hospital.

Moreover, governmental science policy now orients research toward applied technology and so-called targeted research, i.e., highly specialized areas of technology that are for the benefit of private sector companies. This trend is clear in both Canadian and Quebec policy statements. In fact, innovation, which is defined as “the process of bringing new goods and services to market, or the result of that process,” is defined now as the fourth mission of the university, along with research, teaching, and community service. Not surprisingly, innovation as commercialisation, increasingly becomes the condition of possibility for academic tenure and promotion in rank.

In 1972 an influential report by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education held out a vision of a “national interconnection of independent
information, communication, and instructional resources, with the combined capacity of making available to any student, anywhere in the country, at any time, learning from the total range of accumulated human knowledge. The Carnegie vision was realized in the 1990s with the advent of technological convergence formed out of the merger of globalized, customized mass media and computer-mediated communication. One must wonder, however, if the Commission could have anticipated the huge range of paideia or shadow education’ that would become housed outside the academy. By the early 1990s, for example, in-house corporate education pushed computerized multi-media CD-ROMs throughout corporate training divisions as a substitute for live instructors on a cost-benefit argument, especially for large organizations. Some 8500 corporate expert systems were in development by the late 1980s; by 1998, there existed at least 1,200 so-called corporate universities in the United States. Many of these corporate universities were partnered with traditional accredited universities, with the top 100 corporate universities teaching more than 4 million students.

**Conclusion**

I intend herein no assault on the natural sciences, scientific-technological practices, or the use of innovative technologies in humanities and philosophy paideia. Indeed, cuts in funding to the natural sciences represent a grave danger to
research universities and to us all. Scientific research and its technological exploitation is indispensable to national intellectual, political, and economic life, as well as to health care. However, the idea that externally funded programs will trickle-down to undergraduate instruction or to the humanities is difficult to verify. Not all boats are lifted by the rising techno-bureaucratic and commercializing tide. Many established higher education institutions now find their positions eroded or expanded by the reformatting of the university idea along techno-bureaucratic lines. A Darwinian process has emerged with some educational institutions devouring their competition in hostile takeovers.\textsuperscript{58}

Will universities continue to pursue innovation at the expense of other core responsibilities? If so, the idea students are in university to prepare for full participation in culture, civil society, and the \textit{polis}, and not solely to enlarge their bank accounts, will soon become extinct. The humanities in general, and philosophy and theology in particular, ask how societal changes affect our lives and values as human beings individually and socially. Our most difficult problems remain precisely those that do not admit of solutions by quantitative or technical means alone. Nor are they susceptible to solution by one traditionally defined profession working alone. Ethical debates in medicine, environmental crises, and moral and legal issues involving the history of race relations require eloquent
language, critical thinking, persuasion, and the combined insights of science, history, religion, business, medicine, and ethical traditions. For three millennia in both the east and west, the humanities have been associated with the creative arts, the world of affairs, and professions of law, medicine, trade, and government. Philosophy informs every deliberative social, political, and economic body. Ethics and aesthetics, language and rhetoric, religion and the arts, and our indebtedness to and knowledge of history are vital to the future. As Professor John Silber rightly notes, following an idea of Gabriel Marcel, there appears to be “an inverse relation between material and spiritual well-being. When the former flourishes, the latter tends to wither.”

We reduce the richness of paideia if we give primacy to only what will produce direct economic or exchange value. An essential problem for paideia in the twenty-first century will increasingly turn on the meaning and role of human ‘productive agency’ in relation to knowledge production. The current reformatting of the university idea must not eliminate the idea of educating young persons for productive agency, precisely in the sense of taking responsibility for the world. If higher education becomes the sum total of a series of separate professional technological specializations, then we will be forced to settle for the narrow confines of an industry-led, techno-competency bound paideia. As terrorist
attacks in New York showed on September 11, 2001, however, technology cannot provide an ethical ‘operating system’ for the deeper problems that plague communicative reason across cultures. If scientific activity becomes mere technological expertise defined by exclusively economic goals, and if information processing and knowledge production become divorced from a love of wisdom and the quest for truth, they will do so at tremendous social cost, and to the humanum that has characterized the idea of the university for centuries. Perhaps the following best captures my sentiment:

   Stand tall, Oh universitas,
   Recall your civitas,
   Renew your humanitas.
   We cannot truly Live,
   with their loss.
ENDNOTES


bestimmt sind, die Wissenschaft im tiefsten und weitesten Sinne des Wortes zu bearbeiten, und als einen nicht absichtlich, aber von selbst zweckmässig vorbereiteten Stoff der geistigen und sittlichen Bildung zu seiner Benutzung hinzugeben...Ihr Wesen besteht daher darin, innerlich die objective Wissenschaft mit der subjectiven Bildung, äusserlich den vollendeten Schulunterricht mit dem beginnenden Studium unter eigener Leitung zu verknüpfen, oder vielmehr den Uebergang von dem einen zum anderen zu bewirken.


12. Ibid., pp.52-3.

13. Ibid., p.348.


15. Ibid., p.94.


20. See José Ortega y Gasset, Mission of the University, ed. and trans. by Howard Lee Nostrand (New York: W.W. Norton, 1966 [1944]), p.75.


32. Ibid., p.12.


34. Readings, *The University in Ruins*, p.89-90.

35. Ibid., p.154.


38. Ibid., p.4.

39. Ibid., p.48.


50. Karen Graamuck, “Throughout the 80s, Colleges hired more non-teaching staff than other


60. I have developed the idea of productive agency in relation to the information age revolution and the global informational economy at length in Gregory J. Walters, *Human Rights in an Information Age: A Philosophical Analysis* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2001).