

The Decline of the Prestige University

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AS IT SHOULD be obvious to anyone who has observed the flow of recent American history, the decade following the flight of Sputnik I in 1957 was an exceedingly prosperous one for higher education in America. Of course, in every year since World War II there had been a steady growth in the numbers of students enrolled in colleges and universities, but the period after 1958 became one not only of growth in numbers of students, but of a rapid, almost dizzying upswing in the prestige of the academic profession, and indeed of all things pertaining to academic life. The decade after 1958 became, in effect, almost an Augustan age of higher education, with states and the federal government pouring billions of dollars into colleges and universities, not only for high-level scientific research, but even for the more routine functionings of undergraduate education. At this same time, the long-established small colleges were also being taken better care of than they had been in any previous period—even some of the least grateful alumni being glad to open

their check books for alma mater whenever asked. For a solid decade it appeared from the perspective of the college educator that his profession was ~~one~~ a vast cornucopia of material benefits and personal prestige.

The situation of the past several years has been somewhat different. The bull market has been stifled, and it would appear that the letters of credit now being handed out to the colleges and universities are no longer *cartes blanches*, and that the endless streams of funds from state and federal sources will not be forthcoming in the near future. The states, especially have been working over the budgets of their public universities with a vengeance, much to the dismay of administrators, who until only a year or so ago had been accustomed to having gold fall off the mountain at the mere snap of a finger. A friend of mine who teaches in a large and well-known public university in California wrote me recently to say that salary increases have not been automatic in the past two years at his university, and that the legislature has been

combing through the budget requests with a certain fiendish delight, cutting into such luxuries as the professors' expenses to professional meetings (travel expenses are still available if one confines oneself to the borders of the state—doubtless a sentence of penal servitude in California). In a number of states higher education budgets have been cut in the last few years which in several instances have resulted in no salary increases for academic employees, and in fact, in the laying off of a good number of non-tenured faculty members.

Actions of this kind are largely regarded in the academic world as punitive in nature. It is vaguely felt that legislators are getting their say on the matter of student activism and student unrest, just as are the alumni of the private institutions when they fail to respond to the annual appeals of the Alumni Office. In a certain sense I think this assumption is correct; there is a punitive element in the recent financial cut-backs, although the reason for it is rather more complex than most college professors believe. Naturally public officials do not outwardly proclaim a vendetta against the university, and the reasons given for slicing funds from the higher education budgets are often plausible. The fact remains, however, that higher education is simply not in the public's good graces quite in the way it was only a few years ago.

The purpose of this article is not to prove this rather obvious point, but to probe a little more deeply into the reasons for the sudden decline in the prestige of higher education, especially, I would say, the prestige of the elite colleges and universities. Personally I think that the situation is somewhat more serious than most college professors would care to admit—not because I think financial catastrophe is in the offing, or because there is serious danger of our colleges being left orphans of the storm, since I don't believe this is likely—but be-

cause I think the present climate has rather serious implications for the future of higher education and academic profession, and because I think the reasons for the present climate are not at all as simple as our college professors have allowed themselves to believe.

Now of course it is indeed true that much of the backlash against the universities is due to a dissatisfaction on the part of the public with the handling of student disorder, and even with present permissive attitudes toward student mores and student life style. A lot of this dissatisfaction may well be due to ignorance, but personally I am inclined to think that some of the things that are bothering the public about the workings of higher education, although never fully articulated, relate to genuine weaknesses in our system of higher education which the intelligentsia is unwilling to admit. That is to say, I believe that higher education is presently in serious trouble—trouble that was spiritual before it became outwardly political—and that college professors are very largely (although not, of course, exclusively) to blame for this trouble. I also foresee that political reverberations are going to become even more audible in the near future if things are not done to improve certain manifest weaknesses in the workings of the university.

Before setting down my thesis in detail, however, let me insert a little historical interlude, the purpose of which is to put my starting point in perspective. I started out by remarking that the period after 1958 was a prosperous one for higher education, and implied in this is the obvious fact that, historically speaking, higher education has not held a place of either great affection or high esteem in American society for any long stretch of time. Except for an important period in Puritan New England, men of learning have not been highly revered members of our society at least in the mind

of the public at large. In fact, the decade between 1958 and 1968 may well be regarded as something of a fluke, and there is every reason to suspect that the college professor was deluding himself in believing that his reputation was setting forth on an endless upward swing through the firmament of American cultural history. When considering the recent inflated prestige of the universities, for example, it must not be forgotten that only a generation ago the very word "professor" was something to be chortled over by the writers of musical comedy (to say nothing of the dreamers of Professor Eustace McGargle of the sawdust trail, or Professor Quincey Adams Wagstaff of Huxley College), that a professor was one who, if old, got all the laughs, and, if young, didn't get the girl. Nor must we forget that as late as 1956 a candidate for the office of President of the United States ran on a very decidedly anti-intellectual platform—"egghead" then being the popular term of reproach for members of the opposition.

A college education, of course, was sometimes held in a kind of mild esteem. In the nineteenth century it was valued as a necessary training ground for the learned professions, and in time it came to be a respected institution by the genteel classes whose sons could practice the amenities of life and perhaps learn to drink properly and play football. But the prestige that belonged to a college education did not necessarily accrue to the college professor. One suspects that if we can say that Harvard held its golden age in high esteem—with George Santayana and William James in residence—what we mean by this is that other intellectuals of the time, or of later days, did so, not that the late George Apley and his offspring were valuing Harvard because of the presence of these gentlemen. The situation after 1958, however, was outwardly different. The professor was wel-

comed, as never before, into the circles of power. Not only was the value of the college degree inflated markedly in the 1960's, but the intellectual himself became an important part of the technological elite (perhaps we can use John Kenneth Galbraith's term "technostructure") of our society, although I think professors accepted this a little more routinely than the general public, who, from the beginning, accepted it somewhat uneasily.

This new image for the college professor was to a certain extent a good thing. His prestige and salary skyrocketed, he was able to enjoy some of the creature comforts that were formerly denied him, but above all he was able to move more toward center of the stage and command attention in his own right.

Still the actual results of this new era were not all to the colleges' good or the professors' good, and in a certain sense the professor had won his respect as a public figure at the expense of some of his intellectual freedom, at the expense of his being able to function as an independent man of thought. In his excellent study *Anti-Intellectualism in America*, Richard Hofstadter has gotten directly to the heart of the matter. In his view, the American intellectual of an earlier day had actually learned to survive in the face of a strongly anti-intellectual society and could function quite well in an isolated caste or segment of it. "One hears more and more," he says,

. . . that the intellectual who has won a measure of freedom and opportunity, and a new access to influence, is thereby subtly corrupted; that, having won recognition, he has lost his independence, even his identity as an intellectual He becomes comfortable, perhaps even moderately prosperous, as he takes a position in a university or in government or working for the mass media, but he then tailors himself to the require-

ments of these institutions. He loses that precious tincture of rage so necessary to first-rate creativity in a writer, that capacity for negation and rebellion that is necessary to the candid social critic, that initiative and independence of aim required for distinguished work in science We live in an age in which the avant-garde itself has been institutionalized and deprived of its old stimulus of a stubborn and insensate opposition.¹

The chief casualty of the technologizing of the intellect is, of course, the intellectual himself, but of no less importance is the fact that college education is also a casualty of the new climate. This brings me to my main point, which is that even while the material welfare and the public prestige of the professor has been rising, his spiritual influence on the young has been falling. I believe that a great deal of the dissatisfaction with college education on the part of the present generation is due to the declining quality and substance of the educational fare laid before it. Now I do not deny that many of our present students are also unhappy with the war in Viet Nam, or that many are disturbed over civil rights, the environment, and other causes as well, but I feel certain that many of the "vibrations" we are experiencing on the campus are due to the fact that undergraduate college education has become stale and flat, and that students regard their part in the whole process as a kind of unfeeling going through the motions—very much the way the professor goes through his motions. The truth is that thoroughly professionalized education does not and cannot be made to work for undergraduates, a point which it gets harder and harder for the professor to see, wrapped up as he is in his own "work."

I am aware that there is another side to this problem—that teaching the present crop of college students is not an easy chore to begin with, and would not be under the

most ideal circumstances. I quite well realize that in the last twenty years the colleges have had to face the full force of mass education and that by reason of sheer numbers alone their task has become almost unbearably difficult. I am aware, too, that we have come face to face with the television generation which would much rather participate than learn, and I am aware that the worst backwash of "life adjustment" education has reached the colleges, making the professor's job a nightmarish one from the beginning. But I still persist in believing that a large part of the problem in the colleges these days is the inability of our academic specialists to keep education alive and keep it green.

The reason that professors have gotten into a position where they cannot reach undergraduates is that they have lost sight of the main intention of undergraduate education, which is to produce an educated man, a thinking human being, a citizen of a republic. In the rapid acceleration of their own professionalism, college professors have forgotten that specialties exist to be at the disposal of general culture, not as ends in themselves. The fact that a man becomes a historian should not mean that he is giving up his humanity; rather his profession should be a heightening, an intensification, of his personal interests. Professionalism on the other hand is the idea (never explicitly stated of course) that the educated man is an English professor, a psychologist, a biochemist, or whatever, and that general education is a nicety that goes along with these things if one is lucky enough to have taken several of the (usually poor) general education courses as a Freshman or Sophomore. But this is a substantial and tactical error on the part of our educators. Education which gets one to think, to reflect, to have a taste "for the best that has been thought and said" is not a mere accretion, not simply that which

would be nice to have, but the very heart and soul of education itself, a necessary goal of all higher education.

Largely, however, the college professor has forgotten this in his precipitous advance toward the inner circles of power. And since he has forgotten it, it's hardly likely that in his busyness he is going to be able to muster a healthy respect for undergraduate education. There are exceptions among the ranks of college teachers—even a good many of them—but one gets the distinct feeling that the prestige years of higher education bred a disinterest in the aims of pure education at the expense of the professionalizing of all college study. This may well be less true of the older and better liberal arts colleges than the large public universities, but here as elsewhere there is a growing belief on the part of the professor that before everything else students must be indoctrinated in one's own subject matter, one's own specialty, and that this is the main function of education. Mindlessly the instructor in Freshman Composition has his Engineering students trying to scribble something original on "Symbolism in the Poetry of Ezra Pound." And down the hall, the lecturer in Elementary Psychology is trying to instill his own patois and habit of thought on the latest crop of students—hoping of course that all will see how obvious it is that in psychology, and in social science, one may find the most congenial possible profession, as well, of course, as the very heart of scientific truth.

This is to say, along with his growth in prestige as specialist the professor's first instinct was to specialize all undergraduate education—to think of it always as preparatory to graduate education where one actually wins one's wings. The rule of thumb, then, is: undergraduate education low prestige, graduate education high prestige; undergraduate years, a time of busy-work where the student must choose what he is

to do, graduate years, a time of accomplishment where he finally is allowed to do it. But it is obvious that one can't keep alert and active adolescents in a holding pattern year after year; they've had a dozen years of schooling already which they believe to have been devoted to do-busy chore work, simple assimilation of cold storage pablum. What they want is something they can actually sink their teeth into.

But of course the professor, as we now know, is much too busy for undergraduates. Since they cannot yet be taken into the guild (and I suppose we dare not even mention those who will never be taken in), all that the professor can do is whet his students' appetites, although this is definitely not what they need and want. And even if this is all students did need, the professor has nearly rendered himself incapable even of whetting appetites. But this is only the beginning of the difficulty. From here undergraduate education takes an even further tumble from its original glory to the condition or set of conditions which has recently put all of higher education into disrepute, and has largely been responsible for the recent grumblings from almost every quarter of the public.

As soon as it is perceived, by educators and students alike, that undergraduate education is nothing but a continuation of high school education (and, of course, both perceive it—one can't deceive students in these matters), then it is obvious that all parties concerned are going to want to be relieved of the burden of this artificial system. The professor seeks not to have to meet undergraduates, he tries to avoid contact with them whenever possible, and students on their part attempt to avoid contact with the curriculum. The aim of the present generation of students has largely been to unburden itself of the drudgery of college work, and of the seemingly meaningless collection of standardized hurdles and requirements.

Indeed the history of undergraduate education in America in the last five years has been progressively one in which students have campaigned relentlessly for the elimination of requirements or of courses in which the work load is excessively heavy, or in which the grade of A and B is not taken as a birthright, or for the adoption of other routes of escape from scholastic accomplishment, such as the institution of pass-fail courses, and so on. The effect of all this has been to give undergraduates more time and incentive to interest themselves in other, and usually non-intellectual, pastimes.

Professors, of course, have been pliant, and rarely say boo to anything undergraduates propose. To raise any objections means trouble and trouble means less time for the professor to bustle in his own chosen sphere. The rule of thumb is that it's always easier to give in than to protect old academic standards. And, in fact, marked disinterest in the actual progress of undergraduate education, its aims, goals, philosophy, has become a salient characteristic of our time. Students do the leading, that's the rule. Having been on a university faculty for the past ten years, I could record numerous instances where the most outlandish schemes of student pressure groups—the kind that would have been met with two hoots and a raspberry from a faculty committee a generation ago—are listened to with almost reverential seriousness.

This last point brings me to another troubling development of this period of the defreighting of undergraduate education. Even though everything imaginable has been done to make college education a pleasant burden for the undergraduate so that he will keep out of the professor's hair, this has been gained at a serious price. In order to comply with every undergraduate whim, the professor has had to adopt the attitude that everything the undergraduate

has to say is worth listening to. And all this in spite of the fact that accompanying this assumption is another, seemingly contradictory one, that undergraduates are not yet mature enough to learn. The professor's perspective seems to be that while a 20-year old has nothing worth saying about Shakespeare (if one is an English professor), or learning theory (if he is a psychology professor), he has something worth saying about everything else, most especially all of the big moral problems of our time, and even, of course, what his own education ought to be like.

Somehow or other, and I am not sure in detail how it came about, the idea has intruded itself that there is a kind of superlative adolescent wisdom surrounding the person of every college student, that the present generation of college students have, in their primitive innocence, all of the sage qualities of mankind, and that their every pronouncement must be listened to with utmost gravity as if delivered by some last surviving oracle. What do we make of this strange situation? The college student is not mature enough to be inducted into the world of specialized learning, but seemingly he is wise enough to be the foremost authority on everything else. And quite the contrary to days of old, we seem to have reached a point where the moral attitudes, and intellectual ideals of college professors are largely apings of those already held by undergraduates.

The result of this is a very strange and potentially dangerous situation—dangerous not only because of the detrimental effects it may have on youth, but dangerous to the power and prestige of the intellectual in society. First of all, it is not going to be possible for college administrations to continue to make the public believe that the only thing that is troubling students is the war in Viet Nam, the complacency of society, or the despoiling of the environment. The

students' own college environment doesn't make them too happy and doesn't even seem to be educating them.

And as I said, a public that traditionally was not well disposed toward professors and who tolerated them for a time mainly because of their ability to turn out computers or improve soybean production, will have its ear to the ground for the slightest vibration indicating that the academic establishment is crumbling. And a trained ear is hardly needed. Imagine, if you will, the average suburban father who loads his daughter and her expensive wardrobe into the family car and takes her down to the state university only to retrieve her at Thanksgiving with her choice wardrobe thrown over in favor of the new "fancy proletarian" dress (as Malcolm Muggeridge so aptly calls it). I am afraid that this disenfranchised father is going to find little but exasperation in the good news that daughter's professor now takes her every wheeze as a sign of primeval wisdom and perspicacity—yes, this very daughter who only six months previously was mooning over her movie magazines and the neighborhood juke box. That such a creature could be catapulted into the nation's intellectual elite in but a few months defies all but the most gullible imagination. (I realize that freshman sons and daughters have always come home at Thanksgiving knowing more than Dad—but not, as at present, with professor's imprimatur.)

In time the repercussions are heard everywhere. The job market, for example, has become sensitive to the watering down of the college curriculum. As I write this article, for example, I have before me the lead editorial of *Science* for April 17, 1970 which bemoans the college degree as a credential on the job market. The feeling is becoming very widespread in industry that one no longer really knows what one is getting in a college graduate. A lot of em-

ployers have started to find higher turnover rates among the college educated than the non-college educated; they have found that the college educated are more discontented with working conditions than others less qualified. The editorial concludes:

In the future, the relation between years of schooling and occupational performance may become even less close, for the disruptions that now afflict schools and colleges and the growing demand for ungraded courses and completely free elective programs are likely to make the time a student is enrolled in school and college an even poorer predictor of his adult competence.²

Last, but not least, state legislators and private benefactors are beginning to get a hint of the trouble, and, as I have already indicated, are making themselves heard. In the private colleges and universities the angels are flying to new perches, a situation which could well become fatal to a number of institutions. More and more, parties who are concerned with the handing out of large sums of money are asking: what are the professors doing down at the university?—why can't they educate the kids, or at the very least, keep them quiet?

Of course there is a great deal of ignorance about what college professors actually do, and even more about what they ideally should do, but interestingly enough the sorts of actions being taken to discipline professors (and, hopefully, through them, students) have a lunatic, but still an honest and truthful logic to them, although as a member of the academic community I naturally profess myself appalled by them. I have already mentioned a few—the cutting off of funds for salary increases and research, the reducing of fringe benefits, and other actions that will touch the pocketbook, and thus speak quite authoritatively to any middle class American, including

professors. Let us look at another current form of this same kind of retribution that in its way is even more symbolic. Bills are alive in several state legislatures, notably California, to compel professors at state universities to teach a certain number of hours per week. Laws, if passed by these legislatures, would specifically prescribe a stated number of contact hours, so that professors would actually be compelled to teach in the classroom rather than spending most of their time on research, the value of which cannot actually be quantified, especially by an outsider.

Of course this is traditional American anti-intellectualism rearing its head, but the motive is not actually insincere. In fact, more than anything else actions of this kind seem to be asking a question rather than taking a stand. And the question is far from naive. For consider the lowly community college. What do legislators know, in states like California, about this kind of institution? They know that the teachers who teach in them work harder at teaching than do their counterparts at the more prestigious state university. Community college teachers put more hours in the classroom for no more pay. What's more, the students who attend these colleges seem to be a much better behaved lot than the intellectual elite who are chosen to attend Berkeley. They seem to want to learn, they have better rapport with their teachers, and all of this healthy beneficence can be attained for much smaller expenditures on the part of the state.

The state after all does not have to support anything but a modest educational enterprise—no expensive research programs, no fleet of airplanes to carry \$35,000 professors around the country, no expensive centers for advanced study designed to keep professors free from the clutches of students. Community colleges are, alas, little more than extensions of high school,

with much the same intellectual atmosphere as a high school, but they do seem to be achieving something. And since they are achieving something, state legislatures are interested in them and there are signs in a number of states that proportionately more money is going to be spent on these colleges in the next few years and less money is going to be sent down to fatten the purse of the prestigious state university.

What this adds up to is that our most elite intellectuals have weakened their own establishment in the pell mell rush to bedeck themselves with every last trinket of professionalism. Unfortunately, this is not clearly perceived by most college professors today. Most of them blithely dismiss the signs of feeling against the university as being due to a few noisy students or to the nature of our unenlightened, priggish and conservative society. Few even begin to acknowledge that much of the noise on the campus is their own as they rattle the newest piece of equipment or chase down a new research grant.

Here, then, is the source of the problem. We Americans live in a goiterous high-pressure age, and our urban, industrialized society has to it few pockets of quiet and rest. Traditionally the college campus has had something of a spiritual quiet about it—even the yells before the football game or the stumble and thud of the fraternity boys on the way home from a Saturday night brawl had something soothing about them. But we have reached the point, and I think the college professor must take most of the blame, where colleges just don't offer to the young the kind of thing which was their original reason for being—a quiet environment, an enclave, a refuge from the most accelerated tempo of life, a place where one may learn by having the opportunity to reflect, reason in an adult manner, and above all come in close contact with minds more mature and cultivated than one's own. In-

deed one suspects that the professor had a lot more influence with the young as the benign fuddy duddy of popular legend than he does as a man of affairs.

Of course, I do not profess to know how we can get just the right tempo in higher education, but I think I do know what direction we ought to go. It was perfectly described a number of years ago by Stephen Leacock in his charming essay "On The Need for a Quiet College." The college I would like to found, said Leacock, is really a very simple thing:

If somebody would give me about two dozen very old elm trees and about fifty acres of wooded ground and lawn—not too near anywhere and not too far from everywhere—I think I could set up a college that would put all the big universities of today in the shade

I would need a few buildings, but it doesn't take many—stone, if possible—and a belfrey and a clock. The clock wouldn't need to go; it might be better if it didn't. I would want some books—a few thousand would do—and some apparatus. But it's amazing how little apparatus is needed for scientific work of the highest quality: in fact, "the higher the fewer."

Most of all, I should need a set of professors. I would need only a dozen of them—but they'd have to be real ones—disinterested men of learning, who didn't even know they were disinterested. And mind you, these professors of mine wouldn't sit in "offices" dictating letters on "cases" to stenographers, and only leaving their offices to go to "committees" and "conferences." There would be no "offices" in my college and no "committees," and my professors would have no time for conferences, because the job they would be on would need all eternity and would never be finished.³

Arcadianism, idle dreaming, impractical musings? Yes, of course. And I am perfect-

ly aware we can never go back to anything like the setting dreamed of by Leacock. But if undergraduate education is to get back on its feet we must at least know what kind of thing should be striven for. We may not be able to get away from bigness but we can at least edge away from hardness. We need to move in the direction of human and general education, and above all away from prepackaged special education. In doing so we will at least be heading toward a quiet college, even if we never capture its shimmering essence. What we need to do in our American colleges and universities, at least as a beginning, is to deaccelerate the commercializing and professionalizing of undergraduate education, we need to get it back to the level of the human spirit.

All this has been said before, of course, and I am not claiming any originality for my prescription. Readers will perceive that I am doing nothing more than writing an apology for old-fashioned liberal education. But, still, I often find around the college campus that there is small understanding of what is meant by this term. I have actually encountered students who believe that a liberal education is an education in liberal (*i.e.*, left of center) views and attitudes—an indoctrination in the prevailing ideology of their professors. And I have met professors who proclaim that a liberal education is available to anybody who wants it, for after all, the catalog has plenty of general education courses listed in it, and what more does one need than a listing. But this is to miss the point completely. An English professor can carry out his teaching duties just as rigidly and mechanically as a professor in any other curriculum, so there is no guarantee that an English major will come through with a solid general education just because he has been an English major. A true education is not a label for a division of a university, not a word in the college catalog, but, more than anything

else, an attitude of mind—a receptivity, an openness to the rich heritage of human culture. This receptivity must, of course, be an activity of both student and teacher.

There are, I believe, a great many things that could be done to set undergraduate education on the right track. The giant university can institute more tutorial type courses, it can sponsor decentralization of the large and unwieldy colleges of liberal arts, making it more possible for students to come into close contact with teachers, as often they could in days of old at the small college when the professor's rickety but picturesque house was often situated right on the campus.

Most important of all, however, the general education courses must be revitalized and adapted to present conditions. By this I mean *made better* not eliminated or watered down. I am not in agreement, for example, with Harold Taylor (whose analysis of our present student unrest in *Students Without Teachers* otherwise closely parallels mine) that there are too many general education requirements, that students will be more happy if let to flit at will from painting easel to dance stage or history class. The trouble with the general education requirements is not that there are too many of them, but that the courses themselves are no longer any good, that the life has been drained out of them. In their mad rush to catch the brass ring of professionalism professors have forgotten how to teach such courses as Freshman English, or Introduction to Philosophy. As a result, these courses have had the heart cut out of them—or sometimes they are written out of the curriculum altogether. Before it dies completely "Freshmen English" becomes, instead of the noble course it once was, a simple-minded rehash of high school English. Or "Introduction to Philosophy" sounds forth as nothing but the death rattle of contemporary analytical philosophy—simply

because this happens to be music to the ears of the professor. And so perforce the student goes away having no knowledge of why one ought to study philosophy or how it relates to human culture.

If we can put some life back in the general education courses that today are so often mere husks of their former selves we can dispel another recent misconception about liberal education. I am speaking about the false idea that liberal or general education is somehow synonymous with easy-road education. Professors of engineering, for example, are often anxious to believe that liberal arts courses are the places where students go who aren't bright enough to be in engineering. And well they might believe this since the people who run the course sequences in the humanities seem very often to adopt this kind of attitude themselves. And as if to accentuate this idea, they have rushed in recent years to drop all the requirements—such as in foreign languages for example—that seem to require any kind of mental effort or strain. (Incidentally, it can hardly be lost upon university governing boards and legislators that the great numbers of discontinued students in the large universities are in the colleges of Liberal Arts.)

Undergraduate education, if it is to be worth anything, must be rigorous adult education. I am quite well aware that students are ceaselessly pressing for the watering down of the curriculum, for the easing up of course requirements, study loads and the like. But it does not follow, as many college teachers believe, that faculties will be respected for surrendering on every point. One of the main reasons college students are contemptuous of their college experience is precisely because they find it intellectually unchallenging. Naturally they will campaign with vigor for more time to do their own thing (just as professors squirm around to find ways to do their own thing),

but it hardly means that they won't be secretly scornful of professorial weakness and indifference.

But no ground can be gained and no improvement is possible unless professors once again take undergraduate education to heart. Present signs indicate that it is not likely they will, since they have largely misread the storm signals that have sounded from all points of the compass. Unless they do, however, it is likely that the large pres-

tigious institutions of higher learning will be in for a number of years of rough weather. We are very likely to enter a period in our history wherein the public will be largely interested in supporting kinds of institutions of higher education that are dedicated to goals much different, and even antithetical, to those cherished by the scholar and researcher. And if this is true the scholar and researcher will have largely himself to blame.

¹Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in America* (New York: Vintage Book, 1962), pp. 416-18.

²Dael Wolfe, "Overeducation," *Science*, Vol. 168, 17 April 1970, p. 319.

³Stephen Leacock, "On the Need for a Quiet College," *Model Memoirs* (New York: Dodd-Mead & Co., 1938), p. 169.