

The Changing Character of College: Institutional Transformation in American Higher Education

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From medieval centers of faith and learning to finishing schools for the aristocracy and respectable clergy, from normal schools for teacher training to technical institutes in engineering, from intimate liberal arts colleges to sprawling multidimensional universities, institutions of higher education have changed character, constituency, and mandate over the centuries. Such institutions have been pressed into the service of many goals beyond education per se and certainly beyond teaching. They have been called on to save souls; to preserve books, documents, films, and other records of past cultural production; and to advance science, technology, and national economic competitiveness.

Recurrently, there have been waves of doubt both inside and outside higher education about how well these institutions do their jobs. Such a wave recently subjected America's colleges and universities to widespread criticism and scrutiny.¹ Much of this came from the political right (the pendulum swinging, perhaps, to the opposite extreme from the 1960s). Some of it was a result of simple misunderstanding, with institutions of higher education having been startlingly incompetent at explaining themselves to the broader public (perhaps be-

cause their leaders and faculty thought themselves above doing so). But some of the criticism also hit home.

Colleges and universities do have problems with accountability, with maintaining appropriate reward structures, and with motivating and reviewing faculty after the tenure stage. Doubts about how well undergraduates are served are eminently reasonable. So too are questions about whether all the research produced is valuable. There are problems with the internal governance systems (and external regulatory regimes) that have produced rapidly rising costs and swelling cadres of administrative staff. A striking feature of the criticisms, the self-analyses and defenses of educators and administrators, however, is that they are cast at a very general level. They do not focus with adequate seriousness on the differences in mission and nature that distinguish America's colleges and universities. Likewise, they are commonly historically naive, operating with reference to an unspecified "golden age" when all classes were small and taught by the best faculty, when all students were attentive and found good jobs on graduation, and when the content of courses was at once intellectually stimulating and universally inoffensive.

Although the golden age is mythical, American higher education has indeed been powerfully transformed in the postwar era. First, the field grew enormously. Second, the balance among different types of institutions was altered during this expansion. Third, the balance also shifted among teaching, scholarship, and research as basic components of academic work. These changes were linked, and each mattered greatly. In this chapter, I address structural transformations in American higher education that form the background to recent complaints about and attempts to improve teaching. These have changed the student population, the organization of colleges and universities, and the work and career patterns of professors. In a later chapter (Chapter 52), I take up some possible directions of further transformation now underway. Throughout, I try to draw attention to some implications of these transformations for teaching, especially with reference to my own discipline, sociology.

A Forgotten Background

Both the sheer number of colleges and universities and the population of students in higher education have grown enormously. The most dramatic phase of this growth (on most indicators) came after World War II. More than half the colleges and universities operating in the United States today did not even exist before the war (Lucas 1996:12). The pattern of growth is, however, long-standing and deeply woven into American expectations for democracy, culture, and (above all) social mobility. Growth was more or less continuous until the 1980s, when a combination of economics, demographics, and politics brought it to an end and even produced some retrenchment.

At the time of the revolution, the United States had only 9 colleges, the largest of which

enrolled only a few hundred students. By 1802, 19 more colleges were established. By the eve of the Civil War, there were 250. Religious denominations led the way in founding these colleges, but civic boosterism also played a major role.² The predominant orientations of these schools were toward training the clergy and other learned professionals, such as lawyers, and providing a classical education for the sons of the wealthy.

A wider range of practical concerns was expressed in the next phase of expansion, marking a more general and continuing pattern; growth in numbers also has brought a diversity of types of institutions (Oakley 1992; Brubacher and Rudy 1997). One of the biggest changes was the growing presence of women in higher education. A range of new women's colleges were founded, and women were admitted to some of the older schools. Oberlin College led the way, opening as a coeducational college in 1833. After the Civil War, the pace of change quickened in this area (as in other areas).

In 1862, Congress passed the Morrill Act authorizing land grants and funding to a new class of public universities. With gathering momentum, the land grant schools began to dot the country and especially the new states added west of the original colonies. The Morrill Act also provided crucial support for expansion of public institutions designed to educate African Americans. These complemented the growing ranks of private black colleges and institutes.³ While some of these aimed high in their academic programs, many initially focused on manual skills and practical crafts, reflecting not only prejudices about what blacks should study but also ambivalence about whether technical subjects were appropriate alternatives to classical education.

For most of the history of American education, a mixture of classics and religious educa-

tion had dominated with minimal challenge. Greek and Latin were considered basic to college education and often were required for graduation (although actual standards may have meant that most students achieved a good deal less than complete mastery). Modern (vernacular) literary and, to some extent, historical classics were widely added to the required curricula. But even secular philosophy was minimally taught, and science was much less so (despite the prominence of the image of Franklin's and Jefferson's scientific enthusiasms in our retrospective views of American history). This was, in many ways, a continuation of the struggle between "ancients and moderns," with antecedents as far back as Greek contests over whether learning was rightly grounded in rhetoric (and oral traditions such as that of the Homeric epics) or in philosophy (and science). The ancients were in the lead for the first 150 years of American higher education.

The bias in favor of gentlemanly classics eroded throughout the second half of the 19th century. The foundings of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Cornell in 1865 were pioneering examples of what would become a 19th-century enthusiasm for higher education in applied science and technology. The Civil War is an only partly arbitrary watershed. As often happens, the war showcased the power of technological innovation (although in higher education, economic motives may have mattered more than military ones). Thereafter, more and more place was made in college curricula for scientific education. By this was meant not only knowledge of the natural sciences but also an increasing respect for the scientific method, as codified by Bacon or typified by Newton. Above all, this meant the notion that methods of systematic inquiry could yield knowledge unavailable to the ancients. Religious support for higher education contin-

ued, but with a shift away from the dominance of the early elite Protestant groups. Expansion and upward mobility brought colleges sponsored by Baptists, Methodists, Disciples of Christ, and other "low church" denominations. Immigration expanded the ranks of Catholics and (later) Jews, who in turn founded new religiously affiliated schools. In nearly all cases, the new religiously sponsored schools also included a range of nontraditional—neither classical nor strictly religious—subjects in their curricula.

The teaching of science, and more generally of an orientation to knowledge as a matter of new inquiry rather than as mastery of classics, received a further enormous boost in the 1870s. A pivotal moment in the transformation of American higher education was the introduction of the German model university with its hierarchy of degrees and emphasis on research and specialized knowledge. This had been developing through the 19th century but took cohesive form after 1871, when it was institutionalized as an instrument of national advancement.⁴ The model was imported to America almost immediately, with its symbolic focus the founding of Johns Hopkins University in 1876. From Johns Hopkins, the model of the Ph.D. degree spread rapidly, transforming American higher education and eventually becoming the standard qualification for professorships in most fields. Master's and other graduate degrees also proliferated. Soon, it began to be common for professional education in law, medicine, and other fields to come only after a bachelor's degree. With this new model in place, older colleges transformed themselves into universities. On its 150th anniversary in 1896, for example, the College of New Jersey officially changed its name to Princeton University. King's College similarly made itself into Columbia University. Harvard University's

president, Charles Eliot, frankly acknowledged the impetus that Johns Hopkins gave to institutional transformation:

I want to testify that the Graduate School of Harvard University, started feebly in 1870 and 1871, did not thrive until the example of Johns Hopkins forced our faculty to put their strength into the development of instruction for graduates. And what was true of Harvard was true of every other university in the land which aspired to create an advanced school of arts and sciences. (quoted in Brubacher and Rudy 1997:182)

New universities also were created following the Johns Hopkins model, perhaps most paradigmatically the University of Chicago but also Stanford University.⁵ The numbers of graduate students and the proportion of faculty time spent on graduate students began to climb around the country. Associated with this change was an increasing reconceptualization of the university as a center for research and a growing view that alongside teaching, producing this research should be an expectation for faculty.

This new model of the university set the stage for a further expansion and transformation of the field of higher education in the United States. Even so, higher education remained unusual and mainly an option for elites until the 20th century. Fewer than 3 percent of the nation's population at the close of the 19th century had ever attended college, let alone graduated. By contrast, more than 20 percent of Americans have college degrees today, and 65 percent of young adults at least start college (about two-thirds of these graduate). Between 1840 and 1970, college enrollments rose 417 times, while the population of the country multiplied only 12 times (Carnegie Commission on Higher Education 1972). Most of this growth came in the 20th century and especially in the postwar period. Not only has baccalaureate education spread through the population, post-

graduate education also has grown exponentially. Many more Americans get *graduate* degrees today than received bachelor's degrees 100 years ago.⁶

Another important restructuring currently is under way and likely will prove to be a crucial phase in this longer term history. The implications of these transformations for teaching and learning, as well as for the nature of specific institutions and the character of the entire field of higher education, are very great. They also are commonly underestimated or altogether unrecognized. This is so largely because two of the most distinctive features of American higher education have been (a) a greater degree of institutional heterogeneity than any other country in the world and (b) a tendency to mask institutional differentiations and deny their significance.

U.S. higher education both perpetuates and obscures dramatic differences among institutions in financial and other resources. It reproduces and, at least to some extent, conceals a profound prestige and reward hierarchy. Because so many institutions give the same basic degrees—B.A. and B.S., M.A. and Ph.D.—and because these degrees have been offered for such a long time, it often is hard for people to keep in mind that they mean different things at different institutions and at different points in time. It is almost as though people thought that to call attention to these differences was to challenge the very democratic impulse of American education and society more generally.

Growth and Differentiation

After World War II, returning veterans supported by the G.I. Bill flooded American colleges and universities, helping to spark expansion even in relatively hard times. On a smaller scale, the same thing happened after the war in

Korea. Even more dramatically, the veterans of both wars (and their generational cohorts) produced a sustained baby boom. This, combined with economic growth and advancing technology, led to an explosion in demand for higher education in the 1960s. New colleges and universities were founded, and existing ones were expanded. In 1947, there were 2.3 million students in U.S. colleges and universities, up from 1.5 million before the war; by 1994, the number was 14.2 million. The proportion of young adults graduating from high school rose from less than 7 percent at the turn of the century to about 50 percent at the end of World War II, peaked at 77 percent in 1968-1969, and (although it has fallen back) remains at more than 71 percent. The proportion of these high school graduates going on to college rose from 45 percent in 1960 to 65 percent (exclusive of vocational and trade schools) in the mid-1990s. Some 43 percent of high school graduates go on to four-year schools, and another 22 percent go on to two-year colleges. Well over 1 million bachelor's degrees are granted each year. To offer these higher levels of education, the number of faculty grew from 246,000 in 1949-1950 to nearly 1 million today. Graduate education grew more than commensurately. As late as 1920, only 615 Ph.D. degrees were awarded in the United States. Today, more than 43,000 are awarded each year (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1976; National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES] 1996, 1997). Both the educational meaning and job market value of college degrees changed, as did the relationship of higher education to social class and social policy.

This story of growth has profound, but surprisingly often overlooked, implications for teaching. The students of the 1990s are strikingly different from those of earlier periods. They are more diverse, less exclusively upper and middle class, and more commonly immigrants and members of minority groups. Of at

least equal importance, however, they are not in any similar aggregate sense an elite. Neither is a college degree training them for membership in an elite. A college degree is increasingly *standard*—at least for the middle class—rather than a mark of distinction. Having one sets one apart from only a little more than half of one's generation. As we know from studies of credentialism, college diplomas are increasingly required for positions that earlier were held by high school graduates or even dropouts (Collins 1979). This in itself does not mean that students gain only the same level of education in college that previous generations gained in high school (a common but false assumption). Today's college students learn a great deal, but (at least for liberal arts majors) much of this learning is not directly and narrowly related to their post-graduation jobs. Rather than establishing specific skills, graduating from college (like graduating from high school earlier) establishes an overall capacity to perform—a matter of discipline and will as much as learning—that employers value.

College education remains important to elite status; indeed (a few billionaire dropouts notwithstanding), it is more so than ever. Nearly all upper class Americans are college educated, but only a minority of colleges and universities train such elites—and a much smaller minority do so than in the past. This pattern already was apparent in research conducted in the 1970s. Coleman and Rainwater (1978) studied the impact of college graduation on lifetime earnings potential (from paid employment, i.e., already putting aside the question of where those with inherited wealth went to gain education commensurate with that wealth). The 15 percent of students who attended the country's most elite private institutions could expect to earn 84 percent more, on average, than those who had not graduated from college. The 45 percent who attended the

next tier of still somewhat selective private colleges and leading state university campuses could expect an earnings boost of 52 percent. But—and this was the shocker—those who graduated from the rest of the country's colleges and universities could expect, on average, no net earnings gain compared to those who did not complete college. The differences remained significant even when controlled for father's education, race, and region.

This pattern has changed in two crucial respects (although there is no new study with comparable data to document changes precisely). First, the gap between the average earnings of college graduates and the rest of the population has widened. This is a result of both credentialism and the disappearance of well-paid (especially unionized) manual jobs in favor of often poorly paid service sector work. This means that less prestigious colleges might pay off better than before compared to failure to attend college.⁷ Second, however, there has been an increasing inequality in earnings of college graduates that has increased the advantage of elite education compared to nonelite education. This applies independent of choice of major (although, of course, some majors also result in higher earnings [Kominski and Sutterlin 1992]). Rewards flow very disproportionately to those at the top of most lines of work (Frank and Cook 1995). These top positions go disproportionately to graduates of about 10 percent of America's colleges and universities (and, indeed, disproportionately to the most prestigious within that 10 percent). Thus, the shift away from educating elites—either those of inherited position or those who aspired to become elites through entering learned professions—has happened in most of the higher education sector but not in its most prestigious institutions.

This shift (where it has occurred) is of basic significance. It changes how well students are

prepared for college, what students (and their families) want out of it, and what they in fact get out of it. I do not want to imply a “night and day” contrast; college students had career aspirations 100 years ago as well. After graduation, many students of earlier generations also entered occupations in which they could make relatively little use of what they studied.

One implication is simply that students of a much wider range of abilities and preparation go on to college. This is not simply a question of their level of knowledge in specific subject matters but rather of their capacities for following lectures, reading textbooks, analyzing problems, writing expository essays, and so on. A significant part of the decline that teachers report in their students' skills actually is better described as an expansion in the proportion of students going to college. One of the reasons for misperception is that teachers often tacitly compare their current students and contemporary institutions not to others they have experienced as teachers but rather to their own college and graduate school years. Because most teachers attended schools more prestigious, selective, and academically rigorous than the ones in which they teach, it is easy for them to confuse differences in types of institutions with changes over time. This effect is enhanced by the fact that teachers' impressions of their own college years do not involve systematic data or even widespread observations (such as those they make of students today) but rather are recollections of their own peer and reference groups.

Second, sheer growth in numbers of students and in the proportion of students in each age cohort to go on to college had an impact on the differentiation of educational institutions and settings for instruction. Although the full impacts of this were not felt at once, an increasing proportion of postsecondary education began to be carried out in two-year schools,

whether or not oriented to eventual transfer into bachelor's degree programs.⁸ By 1972, public four-year institutions (including universities) taught 48 percent of U.S. students in higher education, private four-year schools taught 22 percent, and public two-year schools taught 28.7 percent.⁹ In the 1990s, the proportion taught in public four-year institutions has fallen to 40 percent, that in private four-year schools has slipped slightly to 20 percent, and that in two-year public institutions has risen to 37 percent (NCES 1997). The growing prominence of two-year schools was not the only result. Universities gained in proportionate enrollment compared to liberal arts colleges, and with the dramatic expansion of multicampus state university systems, the internal character and social role of universities changed even while the name held constant. The University of North Carolina, for example, originally was a single campus at Chapel Hill. That campus did not reach the 10,000-student mark until the 1960s, then quickly doubled again. In the same postwar period, the university was expanded to a 16-campus system for which the Chapel Hill campus is a flagship but is neither the largest nor the most typical campus. "Commuter" or "comprehensive" campuses became the fastest growing parts of many state university systems (and in some ways represented a step between community colleges and flagship research campuses).

Consider the disparity that is introduced between the students at the most elite and least elite institutions. Differences in grades, test scores, and other indicators vary dramatically. So do differences in parental socioeconomic status (SES) and "cultural capital." The gap continues to widen. With regard to SES, for example, between 1972 and 1992 there was an approximately equal gain in postsecondary enrollment for both high- and low-SES students, but this was recorded almost entirely in differ-

TABLE 2.1 Percentages of All Students in Achievement Test Quintiles Attending Two-Year Versus Four-Year Institutions within Two Years of High School Graduation

	Test Quintile	1972	1992
Four-year institutions	1 (low)	10	12
	2	22	27
	3	40	50
	4 (high)	70	77
Two-year institutions	1 (low)	13	27
	2	17	30
	3	17	25
	4 (high)	11	12

SOURCE: National Center for Educational Statistics (1997).

ent types of institutions (NCES 1997). Enrollment of low-SES students increased at two-year institutions only, while enrollment of high-SES students increased at four-year institutions. This was a period when the number of public two-year or community colleges quadrupled to account for more than 40 percent of all institutions in American higher education (Oakley 1992:78). Within two years, 65 percent of high-SES 1972 high school graduates attended four-year colleges, whereas for 1992 graduates that figure had risen to 70 percent. Low-SES students continued to attend four-year colleges at the rate of just under 19 percent. By contrast, low-SES enrollment in two-year schools rose from 11 to 22 percent, but high-SES enrollment at two-year schools edged up only from 15 percent to a little less than 17 percent. The contrast in achievement test scores is equally striking (NCES 1997). Table 2.1 shows the widening gap between the two types of schools. (Note that these data lump together all four-year schools from the most selective to the majority with nearly open admissions policies.¹⁰)

Table 2.1 reveals that the population of students entering two-year schools has become increasingly skewed toward the lower end of achievement score results, while that at four-year schools has become increasingly skewed

toward the high end. This is not necessarily a problem. This disparity might suggest an appropriate division of educational labor. Either way, there are important implications for teaching. The same textbooks, techniques and styles of instruction, and assignments are unlikely to be appropriate for both sets of institutions. Whether the same standards of educational attainment exist is a distinct question; indeed, whether the standards *should* be the same is open to debate. Is it reasonable to expect students at schools where the majority of students enter in the bottom 40 percent of national achievement test takers to achieve at the same level as those at schools where the majority come from the top 20 percent of such test takers? If not, then what does this mean for the notion that community college credits should be accepted for transfer to four-year schools? What does it mean for the production and use of textbooks? The market for textbooks lies disproportionately at the lower end of the higher education prestige hierarchy but also includes some higher end schools, especially relatively large ones. Publishers have an interest in stopping authors from introducing content that will be deemed too complex, or at too high a reading level, for students in two-year schools. Introductory sociology, in particular, is taught very disproportionately at two-year institutions. This contributes to the tendency for textbooks to present sociology at relatively low levels as well as in highly standardized form and content. This happens more with sociology than with subjects more disproportionately taught in four-year schools, such as physics and history, and the resulting textbooks help to shape the image of the field.

Among four-year schools and universities, there also are great disparities, many the result of recent structural changes in American higher education. Perhaps the most basic transformation has been the increasing numerical domi-

nance of public institutions.¹¹ This is not just a matter of number but also a matter of size. "Almost 90 percent of the institutions enrolling more than 10,000 students are public, whereas 87 percent of those enrolling 1,000 or fewer are private" (Oakley 1992:79). Although public institutions dominate numerically, they are underrepresented among the most elite institutions by almost any ranking. This means that students who can pay for education at private schools can receive an extra benefit in the struggle over class positions. Private schools are more likely to offer small classes, personal attention, and a variety of support services. They also are much more likely to provide their students with the experience of residence in a college community. Although some state universities are able to offer this, the majority of students enrolled in public higher education attend commuter schools, many with only a fraction of the extracurricular activities and institutional support available in residential schools (NCES 1996).

The character of private colleges also has been changing. Most basically, there has been a decline in the number of traditional, freestanding liberal arts colleges. These are perhaps the most distinctively American institutions of higher education. Their key feature is that they focus overwhelmingly—usually entirely—on students seeking bachelor's degrees. Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and many others of the country's oldest and most famous schools were founded as liberal arts colleges, but as I noted earlier, they transformed themselves into universities, mainly in the late 19th century. The same thing happened at many of the older state universities such as Rutgers University and the University of North Carolina.¹² This means centrally that they added graduate and professional programs. They continued to teach liberal arts curricula but within the context of much larger institutions. This usually meant that faculty had

divided responsibilities, teaching both graduate and undergraduate students. Undergraduate liberal arts programs were commonly administered in a "College of Arts and Sciences."

Although the rhetoric of most such universities (both public and private) still stresses that these undergraduate colleges are "the heart of the university," in fact over the years funding and attention have flowed disproportionately to other parts of the university. The biggest gains have not come in graduate schools of arts and sciences with their attendant research programs, some recent critics notwithstanding.¹³ They have come in professional schools; these have been impressively successful in attracting both students and especially financial resources.¹⁴

Recent years have seen a substantial decline in the number of liberal arts colleges. How steep depends on the definition one uses. Between 1970 and 1987, there was a decline from about 715 to 570 in the number of private, independent four-year schools (Carnegie Commission on Higher Education 1987). Most of this was due to reclassification, as many grew large and came to be incorporated into universities. Quite a few others simply closed their doors. While community colleges and large universities grew in the 1960s and 1970s and gained substantial new resources, most liberal arts colleges did not. This left many vulnerable when the economic and demographic environment grew less favorable in the 1980s. Those colleges that remained small and autonomous were divided by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education into two groups. The first, about 140 of the total, consisted basically of those that offered primarily liberal arts bachelor's degrees and were more or less highly selective in admissions. Prestigious examples included Amherst, Carleton, Reed, and Williams universities. These schools also often were relatively well endowed financially, and in any case were able

to attract students willing to pay high tuition because of the educational experiences the schools offered (both curricular and extracurricular) and their success in placing students in graduate and professional schools.

The second group of liberal arts colleges offered a similar mix of degrees in earlier years but were generally not very selective in admissions and had much less in the way of financial resources. A key result was that they came into direct competition with what the Carnegie Commission calls "comprehensive universities and colleges," particularly the less selective branch campuses of public university systems but also a number of relatively small private universities. Competition over tuition costs was debilitating to many small colleges, as students and their families chose less expensive public institutions or attended private ones only when they could get financial assistance. More transformative, however, was competition over courses of study. The less selective small colleges moved away from their traditional emphasis on the liberal arts, adding more and more courses and majors in business and other directly job-related fields. "Their survival threatened in a rapidly shifting marketplace, the bulk, it seems, of the institutions we are accustomed to think[ing] of as liberal arts colleges have in fact transformed themselves into 'something else'—for want of a better term—into 'small, professional college[s]'" (Breneman 1990, quoted in Oakley 1992:77-78). Breneman (1990) estimates, in fact, that no fewer than 317 of what had been liberal arts colleges stopped granting even 40 percent of their degrees in liberal arts subjects. This reduced the total number of "real" liberal arts colleges from 540 to 212.¹⁵

This was one dramatic institutional manifestation of the general rise in popularity of professional, career-oriented baccalaureate programs. This combined with the growth of

community colleges to mean that the majority of students in American higher education, and the majority of those taking sociology classes, no longer was comprised of liberal arts students.

Teaching, Research, and Career Tracks

A common weakness in discussions about teaching is that participants often assume teaching to be a single skill, with the same techniques—and even content—appropriate to students of different levels and in different types of institutions. No doubt, there are considerable continuities, but there also are important disjunctures.

One could start with a catalog of basic questions about differences in preparation:

- Do students know how to grasp arguments in or take notes on lectures?
- Are students ready to read primary source materials or only textbook presentations?
- Are students at ease with basic graphical and tabular presentations of statistical material, or is the ability to understand this material one of the things they need to learn in a sociology class?
- Do students have basic computer skills to enable them readily to incorporate specialized software or computer-based research efforts into their classes?
- Do students know (or have reason to know) much about other disciplines or interdisciplinary fields, thus making it important for their teachers to situate sociology among these?
- Have students studied any significant amount of (or specific content in) world history or comparative cultures? Put an-

other way, how much and what type of knowledge should instructors take for granted? (This is a question not just about “level” of school but also about whether or not sociology is taught after a common core of general education classes.)

- What proportion of students live on or have easy access to a campus environment, with its learning resources (and common cultural referents)?

To this, one could add differences in racial, ethnic, and class mixes. Schools also vary greatly in the patterns of aspirations that motivate their students.

A somewhat related question is whether there is any reason for undergraduate classes to mirror and attempt to cover the basic fields of scholarship and research into which a discipline is divided. The primary rationale for doing so lies in the notion that one is mastering the field for the purpose of continued intellectual activity in that field. The major, in this sense, developed in the context of the modern research university and as a counterpart to its organization of graduate education and scholarly publication. But changes in the nature of undergraduate education suggest that this might not be very relevant.

Sociology is a good example. Relatively few students within liberal arts programs major in sociology. The most important teaching sociologists do in such programs often will be for nonmajors (although these nonmajors might take more than one course, and there might be no reason for those they take to start with a conventional introductory survey). It might be appropriate to design courses that introduce sociological thinking and modes of inquiry in relation to various topics without attempting to cover literatures or subfields. In non-liberal arts schools, sociology might be taught more often

to majors, but these majors seek preparation for specific types of jobs (few, if any, of which carry the title "sociologist"). In some settings, sociology is closely tied into criminal justice or law enforcement majors; in others, it might be tied into labor or industrial relations. Sociologists teaching in more professional majors have special obligations to be able to impart specific job-related skills, of course, but also to bring a sociological perspective to bear on the applied field. Again, this suggests teaching that is not precisely a mirror of the research enterprise.¹⁶ Knowledge of sociology as a discipline might matter little to students in such settings, but contributions of sociological knowledge to certain types of job performance might matter a great deal. In such cases, the teaching sociologist takes on an obligation continually to renew his or her knowledge of how professionals in the given field actually work and not only how sociology works as a research enterprise.

The more general question of whether there is in fact a mutually supportive relationship between teaching and research is, of course, a vexed one. Virtually no one is absolutely against research, of course, yet virtually no one maintains that high school teachers should be evaluated on their performance as researchers. It is clear that their jobs require teaching skills and effort and are enhanced by keeping up with new developments in the fields they teach, but high school teachers are neither given facilities and time nor given incentives for original research. This is generally true even for those who teach high school students more talented and better prepared than those at many colleges (either because of the overall character of the high school in question or because the teachers are assigned honors classes). The question appropriately arises: Why should we have different expectations of college teachers? Unfortunately, the question is not readily answerable in that form.

To get a more precise understanding of the issue, we should abandon the notion that college teaching is one task. We could then ask the question: For which college teachers should we consider research requirements appropriate? This would be largely a matter of taking seriously differences among institutions of higher education but also could vary among levels and programs within individual institutions. In fact, many institutions already have tacitly recognized this (although few will announce it publicly). Large universities, for example, apparently do not believe that being a researcher in linguistics, literature, or education is necessary for success as a teacher of foreign languages. This is demonstrated by the extent to which such teaching is done by adjunct or non-tenure-track faculty or by foreign graduate students who are native speakers but not necessarily researchers in fields related to their teaching.¹⁷ Similarly, to the extent that universities employ adjunct and temporary faculty to do a large part of their teaching, they would appear tacitly to acknowledge that they do not see research as an important complement to teaching, at least at introductory levels. Of course, in both cases the universities could be making mistakes, responding inappropriately to economic pressures. But the point remains valid, I think, that the positive link between teaching and research does not reasonably apply equally across types of institutions, levels of instruction, and levels of student preparation.

The issue extends beyond the teaching-research link. It is desirable that all teachers at all levels of instruction from elementary grades to postgraduate keep up with scholarship in their fields of instruction. It is desirable, in other words, that they engage in both scholarship and teaching, whether or not they engage in "original" research (or "the production of new knowledge"). But this is a desideratum that applies unequally. We expect different levels of

mastery and continual expansion of knowledge on the parts of seventh-grade social studies teachers and college sociology instructors. We do, I think, also expect different levels of scholarship from those who specialize in teaching introductory sociology and those who also teach a range of upper division undergraduate classes. Not least, we expect—or should expect—a considerably different level of scholarship to be demonstrated by those who teach graduate classes and supervise master's and doctoral work.¹⁸ Whatever our empirical expectations, however, an ideological commitment to the notion that college teaching is a single occupation weakens our ability appropriately to differentiate norms for teachers called on to do different types of work.

Good teaching is valuable at all levels and in different types of institutions, but it must mean somewhat different things and imply different types of work. The extent to which an instructor should focus time and energy on the mastery of teaching techniques, for example, might vary. A variety of special techniques might be appropriate at the introductory level that are not appropriate at the graduate level. At the graduate level, substantive mastery of the latest research in a field might count for more relative to teaching technique than it does at the introductory level. A similar differentiation might apply to different levels even of introductory teaching where different student populations have been enrolled. At present, we muddle the issue by seeking to place some requirements for research on and offer some rewards for research to all types of college teachers. A simple bit of evidence is the way in which many (I suspect most) institutions decide whether to pay for a teacher to attend a scholarly meeting. The teacher gets financial support only if he or she is presenting a paper, not if the teacher proposes to listen to papers, learn from them, and incorporate the new knowledge into his or

her teaching. This is, remarkably, true of entirely undergraduate institutions as well as research universities. It not only seems to be a questionable allocation of institutional resources and a curious signal, it makes scholarly meetings less effective by encouraging more speaking, less listening, and less selectivity for presentations of the best research.¹⁹

The point is not that faculty at community colleges or four-year schools focused on applied skills rather than on liberal arts might not in fact be good researchers; this does indeed happen, just as some professors at research universities do no research. It also has been the case that high school teachers publish noteworthy scholarly works. More impressive is the relatively strong research performance of teachers at the more selective arts colleges. Good research is valuable to the discipline wherever it is produced. It might not be equally valuable, however, to all the different types of institutions that employ sociologists. Research is much more supportive of the specific mission of some schools than others, and it is more likely to make an instructor helpful to some populations of students than others.²⁰

Despite this, however, research accomplishments are the most readily marketable of academic credentials. Graduate education is organized accordingly, and the pattern continues through the production of articles and books and the winning of research grants by professors. Those who see publications as the primary ticket to career mobility are not wrong, although this does not mean that the system that makes them right is in all regards a good one.

Lewis (1996) argues that published research is the most effective "capital" in academic job markets for understandable reasons. First, it is relatively easy to measure, directly in volume and by means of reputation in quality. Second, whether or not it contributes much to teaching, it can contribute a good deal to insti-

tutional reputation. This is significant because schools inevitably are in the business of marketing degrees. That is, students (and their families) choose and pay for colleges on the basis of expected labor market returns, not just for the pleasure of learning. The research productivity of faculty is relatively strongly correlated with the value of degrees. This might be partly because the same institutions with the resources to support strong faculty research (and, in effect, to buy strong faculty) are able to be highly selective in their admissions policies. This not only means that the more able students they enroll go on to predictably greater career success simply for that reason but also means that each student gains from having more able classmates. A large part of education actually comes from fellow students, not from teachers, and what teachers can offer is shaped by overall preparation of those in their classes. If the students in selective schools also are from higher class backgrounds, then so much the better for their value as members of the social networks through which graduates seek jobs and make business connections.

This suggests why institutions “buy” researchers, even when they assign them to work largely as teachers.²¹ Lewis’s (1996) explanation works better, however, for relatively elite liberal arts colleges and research universities. Other schools, from community colleges to comprehensive universities, depend less on and gain less from competition in the market for research-based reputations. This is partly because other sources of distinction remain salient (e.g., percentage of faculty with Ph.D. degrees, which is basically invariant among more elite schools). It also is because modest productivity can achieve local distinction, and applied research linked to local concerns might be of greater value than national reputation. The prestige of research might matter more when a nonselective school seeks to change its niche

(e.g., to shift from two-year to four-year or from four-year to graduate) than it does in competing for students within its established niche. Even where research adds relatively little to an institution’s competitive position, it might be a priority for some instructors. This might be because they harbor other ambitions. Even where these professors do not have immediate intentions of seeking to change employers, many are shaped by the ambitions they harbored while in graduate school. They seek to make the professorships they hold live up to those that they observed or to which they aspired while students. The long drought in academic employment centered on the 1980s (longer in some fields than others) made this issue more acute. Many scholars whose graduate school performances would (a decade or two earlier) have landed them in research universities or selective liberal arts colleges found themselves in branch campuses of state universities, nonselective colleges, or community colleges.

Research is important not only to the careers of individual scholars but also to the prestige of graduate departments. These are evaluated not only on the research of their own current members but also on the research and placements of the students they train. As a result, they have an incentive to overvalue placement in universities and to undervalue primarily teaching institutions. In addition, grant income has become important to the budgets of a whole class of universities. The presence of Ph.D. programs along with substantial funded research was used to distinguish an elite of *research universities* from the rest of the institutions called *universities*. These institutions continued to attract a disproportionate share of the best prepared students and offered the greatest return to student (and family) investment in educational credentials (compared to other universities, not independent liberal

arts colleges, which have their own internal hierarchy). To a considerable extent, however, this dominant group of universities began to reward their faculty more for research and publications and less for teaching.²²

The differentiation of academic institutions has produced differentiated labor markets for teachers and researchers. Lewis (1996) generalizes that "teaching, what most faculty are hired to do and what most do most of the time, does not figure prominently in the academic labor market" (p. 27). Aside from the emphasis on research at the more selective and better funded schools, the biggest reason probably is difficulty rendering teaching skills demonstrable, transferable, and sufficiently distinctive. Let me take up each point briefly.

Recognition as a good teacher is largely local. Although teaching awards and formal evaluations help teachers demonstrate their skills more broadly, there is very little common understanding of how to evaluate these compared to the pecking order among journal and book publishers. Teaching, moreover, is something done for and addressed to students, whereas research is done for and addressed to colleagues. This means that publishing good research directly generates recognition (even if we sometimes complain that it does not do so accurately enough); citation indexes are a measure of this direct generation of recognition. By contrast, most recognition of teaching achievements is indirect. This means that capacity to identify good teachers at a distance is limited. Most jobs (almost by definition) are located at a distance. An important (if slightly ironic) approach to this problem comes in attempts to demonstrate teaching skills by publishing articles about teaching. These not only disseminate useful knowledge to other teachers but also advertise an author's commitment to and possibly innovation in teaching.²³

Second, teaching skills might not be readily transferable across populations of students and types of schools or programs. What makes for success in a small liberal arts college might not work well in a large, minimally selective school and might bore or frustrate students in a highly selective school.²⁴ There are instructors gifted as seminar leaders who handle larger classes poorly, and (perhaps less often) there are superb lecturers who do less well at maintaining a high intellectual level in the "give and take" of small classes. If this is so, or even if it is simply perceived to be so, it inhibits the potential for upward mobility of instructors through movement to different levels of types of institutions. Excellent research will be more effective at moving someone from a branch campus of a state university to a flagship campus than excellent teaching will be at moving someone from a nonselective liberal arts college to a highly selective one.

Third, and perhaps most troubling, teaching has become increasingly commoditized. That is, it is bought on the basis of volume rather than quality. Differentiations among teachers matter relatively little once some basic threshold of performance is passed. There are many faces to this; increasing reliance on adjunct, temporary, and term contract faculty is perhaps the most extreme. The current pattern reflects the conjuncture of several factors.

Colleges and universities face fiscal constraints, leading them to economize by making instruction more of a volume production process; larger class size and cheaper teachers seem to spell efficiency. At some institutions, this means a change in the full-time equivalent load and pay for teachers generally. At others, it means an increasing differentiation between classes of faculty. Some faculty are rewarded and/or assigned the time and resources to do work that enhances the institution's reputation;

others, especially non-tenure-track faculty, teach more and are paid less. Enrollment growth in recent decades has come disproportionately in fields outside the traditional liberal arts. This means that teaching in many traditional liberal arts fields has been reduced primarily to introductory-level courses. Community colleges are the extreme examples of this, but versions exist at all levels of institutions. For example, even Ivy League schools rely on non-tenure-track faculty to teach foreign language courses or expository writing. At a wide range of schools, temporary faculty are used to teach large enrollment "service" courses in many fields. At many nonselective institutions, which compete with each other for students in job-related tracks and compete partly on price grounds, low-cost and low-level liberal arts courses became especially attractive. Costlier investments have to be limited to the fields that attract the students. More than 40 percent of college and university faculty today work on a temporary basis, double the percentage of the early 1970s (Brubacher and Rudy 1997:402; NCES 1997).

In addition to temporary and adjunct faculty, graduate students play a substantial role in the teaching of sociology—mainly, of course, in the larger, Ph.D.-granting institutions. The role of graduate students in teaching is a common target for critics of American universities. Most, however, speak in ignorance. It is true that using graduate students saves money compared to hiring more faculty. It is possible that in the absence of graduate students, faculty would teach more undergraduates, but it is unlikely that additional assignments to current faculty could come close to making up for the loss of instructors. Most basically, however, the critics assume that graduate students are poorly qualified to be teachers or perform poorly in the classroom. Both assumptions are false. Gradu-

ate students who teach today typically have master's degrees, their equivalents, or still higher level educations. What critics fail to recall is that before the 1960s, most college and university faculty in the United States also lacked doctorates. The spread of the doctorate as a standard faculty credential has taken place only in the past 40 years (albeit starting from roots in the late 19th century, as discussed earlier). Today's graduate student teachers are highly educated and in most cases have been chosen for admission to Ph.D. programs based on highly selective criteria. Moreover, graduate students generally get good teaching evaluations.²⁵ Graduate students are more likely than faculty to have received formal instruction in how to teach, largely because such instruction has proliferated only in recent years. At many universities, it is mandatory for graduate students before they are given responsibility for a class, but it is not mandatory for faculty.

Despite all of this, most faculty in all but the most research-oriented schools spend most of their time teaching. The National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty showed that teaching takes up more than 70 percent of the working time of instructors in two-year schools, 65 percent of working hours of those in liberal arts colleges, and only 45 percent of the working hours of those in research universities (NCES 1996). Most spend much more time on teaching than extrinsic rewards would dictate, suggesting that they find it intrinsically rewarding or at least identify with the task. Not least of all, surveys suggest that most faculty think of themselves primarily as teachers and that not only do few shirk teaching in favor of research, the vast majority make little effort to produce research.

There is, however, an evident oversupply of potential faculty. Whatever the economic wisdom of the career choices individuals have made, this has been exacerbated by faculties

that have promoted the production of many more Ph.D. holders than the labor market could easily bear. To a lesser extent, the same pursuit of prestige and rewards associated with research helped drive the expansion of graduate programs. Colleges sought to turn themselves into universities; campuses founded with only undergraduate degree programs first demanded the right to offer master's degrees and then Ph.D. degrees. When the job market turned down in the 1970s, many long-standing graduate programs were very slow to cut their student intake (even while worrying about student quality). Faculty had become accustomed to teaching graduate rather than undergraduate courses, to having students to supervise, and to having teaching and research assistants. Institutions often depended on graduate students for inexpensive teaching. In addition, the creation of new Ph.D. programs continued at a rapid rate. This has been driven by ambitions of faculty, institutions, and localities with relatively little attention to the labor market. Tending to faculty egos in this way not only deflated the market value of a Ph.D. with the award of increasing numbers of new doctorates but also led to a muddying of the distinctions among the mandates and niches of different types of academic institutions. Although the University of North Carolina system continued to designate only two of its campuses as research universities, for example, in the 1980s and 1990s it authorized a number of other branch campuses to award doctorates. This was done in the face of advice that isolated departmental Ph.D. degrees would be weaker than those embedded in full-fledged, multidisciplinary graduate schools. More to the point, it happened even in fields such as history, in which the job market already was revealing a tremendous excess of new Ph.D. holders over jobs. Nationally, sociology has gained the distinction of being the social science

in which the largest proportion of degrees are granted outside the most prestigious programs (D'Antonio 1992).

This might reflect a different pattern of quality control compared to other disciplines, but it also reflects a minimally acknowledged substantive differentiation of the discipline of sociology. At the major Ph.D.-granting universities, research is paramount and ever more specialized. Students commonly develop a strong command of only a single subfield of the discipline. Elsewhere, knowledge of multiple subfields and an orientation to sociology in general may be stronger. Indeed, some graduate departments, clear about the likely teaching positions in which many of their graduates will find work, explicitly encourage students to gain enough knowledge to teach in several different branches of the discipline.

There also are differences in the subfields emphasized. Some branches of sociology that are prestigious and powerful in the research universities are not even taught in many undergraduate schools; demography is one example. At the same time, some other fields of sociology are much less likely to be taught in the most prestigious departments but are prominent in less prestigious schools; criminology is perhaps the prime example. There is a robust market for sociologists prepared to teach in criminal justice programs or able to offer relevant courses. Yet, in the dozen most prestigious Ph.D.-granting departments of sociology, there are only 3 faculty members who list criminology as a specialty in the American Sociological Association (ASA) *Guide to Graduate Departments*²⁶ Including people who list deviance and social control as areas only raises the number to 5 out of some 300 faculty members.

The point can be extended. It is not simply that some specialties are high prestige and others are low prestige, it is that the development

of an active job market for graduates of programs with an applied emphasis actually is correlated with low prestige for the relevant field of study. That which comes to be taught as an applied specialty at the undergraduate level is not taught much in the most prestigious graduate programs. Applied emphases apparently have some of this effect even when not linked so heavily to faculty in top graduate departments. Thus, there is a sharp disjuncture between the concerns of the elite graduate programs and those in which the majority of sociologists actually teach. This is not just a disjuncture between graduate and undergraduate programs in which criminology, medical sociology, and (to a lesser extent) sociology of education are prominent fields of study. These train the faculty for the relatively large number of positions available in those fields as well as for nonacademic jobs. Likewise, there is a great deal of research in each of these three areas; funding might actually be more readily available for work in these fields than in many specialties associated with higher prestige institutions—comparative historical sociology, collective behavior and social movements, and stratification.²⁷ But the research in criminology, medical sociology, and education seems to have less impact on the field of sociology as a whole and to remain more compartmentalized within each subfield. This is not, of course, because the topics lack intrinsic interest; each has been the subject of widely recognized sociological classics, and each also is one of the areas of greatest public concern in the contemporary United States.²⁸

What we need to grasp is that disciplines seem surprisingly different when viewed from the vantage point of different types of institutions. Here, as in many regards, it is relevant to note that the highly publicized battle over teaching versus research actually obscures the

issue. The major distinction in what is taught lies, as Oakley (1992) summarizes,

not between the universities with a substantial commitment to graduate education and the four- and two-year undergraduate colleges, but between the universities and top tier of four-year colleges, on the one hand, and the less highly selective four- and two-year colleges, on the other. (p. 116)

We can be more precise.²⁹ Those universities that are highly selective and the highly selective liberal arts colleges teach a different sociology, by and large, from the rest of the institutions of higher education. The difference is not only a greater preponderance of introductory over specialized courses, it is a difference in what types of specialized sociological knowledge are taught.³⁰ The reason lies largely in the preparation and aspirations of the students who attend the different institutions.

Conclusion

I have suggested that perhaps the single most salient feature of American higher education is the enormous differentiation among institutions. Different in form, function, size, mandate, prestige, selectivity, and resources, colleges and universities nonetheless project a surprisingly common and confused public image. This has contributed to a lack of clarity among funders, students, and critics of various perspectives. But despite the confusions, American higher education also is enormously vital and impressively successful in meeting the needs of a very wide range of students and of other constituencies such as purchasers of research. The diversity of institutions is a crucial basis for this vitality.

I have argued that poorly recognized transformations in institutional patterns and student enrollments have dramatically altered teaching

and academic employment in the postwar era. Changes in who is enrolled in higher education and in the types of institutions that enroll them account for many differences in the overall field of higher education that are poorly perceived as declines. But these changes also demand that those who would improve teaching and learning take seriously the differences among the environments in which these occur and the student populations with which different teachers work. A populist tendency to mask the structural and cultural differences behind the words *college*, *university*, and *professor* makes this hard to accomplish.

Notes

1. See, among many, Bloom (1987), D'Souza (1991), Kimball (1990), Smith (1990), and Sykes (1990). These (and other) major book-length critiques launched a wave of investigations and attacks from foundations and local interest groups. It is worth noting that the peak phase of the attacks, like that of the "culture wars" and rebellion against a changing literary canon with which both were associated, seems to have passed.

2. One of the major transformations in late 19th- and 20th-century American higher education has been its overwhelming secularization. See Marsden (1994).

3. Schools also were created to educate Native Americans, although their history is quite different. The most famous private effort to create a college for Indians resulted in the creation of Dartmouth College, one of America's oldest and most prestigious schools, which quickly shifted its mission. Others were founded by the federal government, many as boarding schools designed to educate talented Indian youths for lives away from their tribes and reservations or for leadership in transform-

ing the lives of their people in accord with the orientations of the dominant powers.

4. The University of Berlin had been founded in 1810 and became a showplace for Prussian leadership and reform of state institutions. After the unification of Germany, Prussian models became still more influential. Berlin was not uniquely responsible for the "German model" imported to America, however. Indeed, under Münchhausen, Hanover's Halle University initiated partly similar trends even earlier, including pioneering in the recruitment of "star" professors based on their publications. See McClelland (1980).

5. Clark University was founded as an all-graduate university, although this model did not take root. Clark soon opened its doors to undergraduates. The leadership of distinguished psychologist G. Stanley Hall and the demand for possessors of the new higher degrees were not enough to provide the institution with an adequate income, mission, or identity (Veysey 1965). This foreshadows a continuing ambivalence about graduate education in American research universities—an eagerness to embrace the conception of knowledge that places research and specialized graduate education at its core and a desire to "sell" institutions to funders and the public on the basis of their role in undergraduate education. This is no doubt due in large part to the ambivalence of the (ultimately funding) public itself about science, specialized research, and the balance of different roles in the mission of the university. Oddly, although Chicago was perhaps the most important direct follower of the Johns Hopkins model, its reputation today is at least equally shaped by its later adoption of the "great books" teaching format that flourished as a reaction against the emphasis of "new inquiry" in the research universities.

6. More than 400,000 Americans receive master's degrees each year (U.S. Bureau of the

Census 1997). To get an idea of the continuing speed of this change, consider that as recently as 1985, only 289,000 Americans received master's degrees.

7. Research is needed on this point. It seems likely that if tendencies toward polarization of the labor market continue, then the extent to which degrees from nonselective colleges will qualify graduates for "middle-class" jobs will decline.

8. A prominent early model for community colleges stressed their role as "junior" counterparts to four-year institutions and universities and promoted the idea that typical students could be conceptualized as "freshmen" and "sophomores" destined, if successful, to transfer into baccalaureate programs. As Brint and Karabel (1990) show, this ideal was not fully realized—partly, they argue, because local business groups seized on the community colleges as tax-supported providers of training closely tied to corporate skill requirements rather than to broader educational agendas. An implication of this was that community colleges often extended the vocational tracks of secondary schools more than opening up new paths to bachelor's degrees and (with them) to social mobility. Whatever the ultimate degree objective or attainment of students, community colleges came between the 1960s and 1990s to play a proportionately larger and larger role in the teaching of introductory sociology. Predictably, they exerted a significant influence on the preparation and development of introductory sociology textbooks. In the 1990s, community colleges have once again been targeted for extensive development (boosted by proposed tax credits).

9. Private two-year schools taught between 1.2 and 2.1 percent of students throughout the postwar period.

10. The National Center for Educational Statistics does not differentiate among four-

year colleges and universities in this regard, but only about 200 are selective, and they probably account for most of the high-SES students.

11. This has been a striking change among two-year and community colleges as well. We now tend to take public funding of these for granted, almost as definitional. In fact, private two-year schools once were fairly widespread but declined in the postwar era, while the rest of higher education grew. In the 1970s and 1980s, the number of private two-year colleges decreased by 50 percent, while the number of public two-year institutions quadrupled (Ottinger 1989; NCES 1997).

12. Thus, the recent trend of establishing public, elite liberal arts colleges is something of a return to an earlier pattern under changed circumstances. The University of North Carolina at Asheville aspires to something of the instructional mission of Chapel Hill in an earlier day, although this now means a different niche in the overall ecology of higher education. The College of New Jersey has adopted not only the original name of the school that became Princeton but something of the institutional design that characterized Rutgers in an earlier day.

13. The mistaken notion that research-oriented graduate schools rather than professional schools have been the primary beneficiary of a shift in focus away from undergraduates is prominent, for example, in Sykes (1990).

14. It is common for academics committed to the liberal arts to complain that this is an altogether new phenomenon, conceived by upstart quasi-intellectual professions and unfairly relegating teachers of the liberal arts to a lower status. In fact, the issue already was old when Kant intervened into the "conflict of the faculties" at the end of the 18th century. As academic guilds gave way to universities in the late Middle Ages, "they came customarily to be divided into 'faculties,' with the faculty of arts being

regarded as preparatory to the 'superior' professional faculties of medicine, law, and theology" (Oakley 1992:18). Indeed, for a long time, the terms *doctor* and *professor* were used only for those who taught (and were formally *masters*) in the superior faculties, not in the arts (Rashdall 1936). Thus, the 19th- and 20th-century American pattern in which liberal arts bachelor's degrees became a common foundation for graduate professional degrees was, to some extent, a reconstruction of an earlier pattern.

15. Breneman's (1990) figure of 540 small colleges (before deducting those no longer classifiable as liberal arts schools) is slightly lower than that of the Carnegie Commission because of differences in classification. A common criticism is that some such colleges teach material that should be taught in high school. A somewhat oblique support for this comes in Arum's (1998) finding that states that spend more on high school vocational programs spend less on college-level ones and vice-versa.

16. Likewise, it is important to avoid fetishization of the new. One example comes in college textbooks. Bringing out ever more frequent editions (largely to defeat the used book market), publishers are at pains to demonstrate that each is truly an advance over those that came before. Many make a point, for example, of the proportion of citations that reference works published since the previous textbooks. One effect of this, however, is to shift the contents of such textbooks away from presentations of enduring sociological knowledge and toward more emphasis on current events (and semipopular or ad hoc sociological interpretations of them). This fetishism of the new oddly accompanies a conservatism about some organizing devices such as the long outdated and never quite coherent notion that theory comes in three schools—functionalism, conflict, and

symbolic interaction—or the organization of tables of contents.

17. Whereas being a researcher in literature might be only distantly related to teaching language, research in linguistics and language acquisition might be important. Schools do well to develop career tracks for language teachers and incentives to acquire and exercise those skills.

18. In the fight over teaching versus research, scholarship sometimes is all but forgotten. As funded research projects and ostensibly original publications became the primary indexes of academic achievement, the value traditionally placed on *having*—as distinct from *producing*—knowledge was eroded. Command of a broad field—or of multiple or interdisciplinary fields—and depth of specialized knowledge both lost proportionate rewards. Even teaching was easier to measure, at least with student appreciation or sheer numbers of students "processed" as indicators. A key impact of the declining prestige and reward accorded scholarship was to undermine the unity and intellectual coherence of intellectual fields including sociology. There was not much payoff for investment in learning about sociology in general (Calhoun 1992). To the extent that such knowledge was pursued, it often was by the writers of introductory sociology textbooks and instructors specializing in introductory sociology, and both activities became somewhat declassé. This happened, in significant part, precisely because of the emphasis on creating new knowledge rather than on transmitting, reproducing, and interpreting existing knowledge.

19. The American Sociological Association, in particular, operates a policy motivated by antielitism. This not only ensures a very wide access to chances to present scholarly work but also selects members for committees based on criteria of representation. In some cases, these

criteria run directly counter to recognition of distinct missions of different types of schools (as in mandates that committees to judge scholarly achievement always include faculty from non-research-oriented schools).

20. Here I speak only of research to advance sociological knowledge as such, not research on the teaching of sociology. The latter is a welcome, relatively new development and, of course, may appropriately be distributed differently.

21. There are, of course, other reasons including the extent to which researchers bring in outside money. This clearly is valued by administrators, although many do not examine it carefully enough. Some large grants are "profitable" for institutions receiving them, but many are not. They call for matching funds and other commitments of institutional resources. This is an especially problematic issue away from the most active research institutions. Externally funded research might appear to be more valuable where it is rarer, but it also might cost much more to administer because of lack of economy of scale and differences in the nature of the research itself and the preexisting institutional facilities. A further issue is the increasing shift to proprietorial research as universities and their faculties try to join forces with private industry. Who benefits and how are questions needing much more careful research. For one helpful account buttressed unusually by comparative data, see Slaughter and Leslie (1997).

22. Often denied by top administrators, this reward structure is evidenced both in the fact that leading researchers commanded higher salaries than leading teachers (even disregarding differential opportunities for supplemental pay) and in the criteria for promotion and tenure. The administrators, in what has become one of their major public rituals, not

only deny the reality of differential rewards but also declare that teaching and research clearly and unequivocally reinforce each other. It is likely true that many of the same qualities (e.g., intellectual vitality) go into the makeup of both good teachers and good researchers, but the administrators disingenuously ignore the impact of the incentive structure under which faculty work and the fact that with both days and careers relatively short, faculty have to make judgments about where to invest their time and energy.

23. An emphasis on innovation might be more important to getting articles on teaching published than to actual teaching. Many of the most useful skills and approaches, after all, already are known if inadequately disseminated or practiced.

24. Let me make clear that this does not mean that work on teaching skills and performance does not matter as much in more selective schools. On the contrary, skills matter everywhere—but sometimes different skills. Also, the common pattern of learning how to teach by conscious or unconscious imitation of one's own good teachers probably works better for those who teach in schools similar to those they attended.

25. Teaching evaluations at the two universities where I have been a professor and an administrator suggest that some graduate students are among the most successful and highly praised teachers, whereas the mean for graduate students falls only slightly below that for faculty.

26. I examined the data listed in the 1997 ASA guide for every faculty member listed as holding a regular full-time appointment in sociology for any department that was listed in the top 10 in *either* the National Research Council or *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. There are about 300 faculty members in

the 12 departments; they list a median of three fields each.

27. In each of these fields, there are several times as many faculty members in the top graduate departments as there are in criminology, medical sociology, and sociology of education. Here are the tallies from this quick review (obviously hardly a detailed and systematic study, but the variance is substantial) compared to 1996 membership in the ASA section most closely identified with the subfield in question:

	Faculty in Top Departments	Section Membership
Criminology	3	625
Medical Sociology	9	948
Education	12	550
Collective Behavior and Social Movements	23	555
Stratification	33	n/a
Comparative/Historical	45	540

Interestingly, there is no ASA section on stratification.

28. The cynic might actually assert that prestige in sociological work is inversely related to relevance to applied careers or public discourse. Without cynicism, one can see that greater esteem flows to studies that address problems pointed up by other sociologists' work than to those that directly tackle public issues or apply sociological inquiry to practical problems.

29. Oakley (1992) is at pains to distinguish selective from nonselective liberal arts colleges but tends to lump universities together as research institutions, at least in this part of his analysis.

30. The more selective schools also tend to sponsor different interdisciplinary fields from the less selective schools—cultural studies, social studies of science, and gender and sexuality, for example, rather than criminal justice, family development, and recreation and leisure stud-

ies. Likewise, the “culture wars” have been disproportionately a dispute in the more selective schools. Behind some of the differences lie not only market niches but also the contrast between settings in which faculty determine curricula and appointments to a greater extent and those in which administrators act with more complete authority.

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