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REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT
1975-1976

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The Report of
PRESIDENT THEODORE D. LOCKWOOD

September 1976

Trinity College
Hartford, Connecticut



The New Curiosity Shop

Eight years ago I delivered three lectures on the role of the independent college. The titles consisted of variations on Dickens: "Greater Expectations," "Harder Times," and "The New Curiosity Shop." Those phrases may have been more successful in characterizing the state of higher education than the texts themselves. It is painful to reread one's observations and to learn how unimaginative or lacking in prescience one can be! I have chosen to reuse the one title for the Annual Report simply because this essay probes both what has happened to the traditional liberal arts college like Trinity and how we might respond to our current situation.

Here and elsewhere institutions are questioning how they should respond to the changes which have taken place in the economics, functions and direction of higher education. Although presidents are congenitally disposed so to scrutinize their colleges, I sense the analyses may become deeper and more profound than those forced upon us by a conspiracy of happenings in the late sixties. At least from my many meetings in Washington this year,¹ I find a refreshing willingness to ask what undergraduate education is really all about. Will the present approach pass muster in 1980, 1990, or 2000? Or do we need a "new curiosity shop?"

There is always a danger in asking such fundamental questions. We may betray unnecessary anxiety. We may become fascinated with abstractions and never find the tissue connecting theory to daily operations. And, out of tiredness or a sense of having touched those bases before, we return to the old stand with diminished enthusiasm.

Despite the pitfalls, however, we at Trinity are beginning a thorough review of our academic programs and objectives. We have no grand design, no master plan that promises educational utopia. But we do have a firm conviction that thoughtful reassessment and measured change can further strengthen the intellectual life of the College. For much of this Annual Report I will give you my personal thoughts on what needs to be done. But first it might be helpful to glance at the historical background, in order to understand the context within which the process of reexamination will occur.

1. President Lockwood is currently serving as Chairman of the Association of American Colleges, an organization representing the liberal arts colleges of this country. Ed.

I

Trinity made some fundamental decisions in the late sixties: to redesign the curriculum, to become coeducational, and to expand the size of the student body. We did many other things, but these were the most significant, beyond the necessity of bringing into balance our revenues and expenses. Why were we able and disposed to make such substantial changes so quickly?

There were four main reasons. First, the design of the old curriculum did not reflect strongly held convictions within the faculty. The requirement system seemed less and less defensible. The curricular framework of that era offered so little flexibility that most faculty became persuaded that a general overhaul was necessary.

Concurrently student interests began to shift. Many of us remember vividly that the expressions of undergraduate dissent in 1968–1970 were critical not only of national foreign and military policies but also of institutional curricula. This criticism, coinciding with the faculty's growing disenchantment with our programs, provided a second reason for revision. Even though, in retrospect, we recognize that some of the new approaches failed to retain sufficient contempt for faddism, on the whole the changes we made at Trinity have stood the test of time most admirably.

A third reason was economic. Colleges had made commitments during the sixties which became increasingly difficult to manage responsibly. For most institutions the result was deficits. At Trinity it took us two years to work out the difficulties which were in prospect — difficulties which afflict many other institutions even today. Like other institutions we had had little experience with inflation. We were mesmerized by assumptions: that growth would continue, that at the state and national level no program of social benefit would assume higher priority than education, and that popular confidence in colleges and universities would not wane. We had delusions of everlasting adequacy.

The fourth reason was less obvious. The mood on campuses and in the nation made clear that colleges had to change their way of doing things dramatically if they were to retain anything like the buoyancy they had known for most of the period since World War II. In my own remarks in 1968 I drew attention to the many pessimistic comments on our national state of mind. Perry Miller's remark deserves repeating: "We today are still bobbing like corks in the flood, unable to get our heads high enough above the waves to tell whether there are any longer solid banks on either side or whether we have been

carried irretrievably into a pitiless sea, there to be swamped and drowned."² There are many who would find that metaphor still pertinent. For that time it was a reminder of the shock we had received when things seemed determined to move in unfavorable and unflattering directions.

Times have changed; and, although the landscape may still be uninviting, colleges have gained strength from having come through a difficult period. At Trinity we have done very well indeed. Our academic programs enjoy a popularity and strength that are encouraging. Coeducation has been successful, although our efforts to attract and to make room for women on the faculty and administration have been less successful than we had hoped. Increasing the size of the student body has permitted us to retain a diverse faculty and to use our physical plant at an appropriate level. All of these changes have also helped sustain a level of revenues sufficient to assure a basic financial strength which many institutions envy.

Therefore, any analysis of the present climate for change must reckon with the absence of the pressures which were critical earlier. This College is well off at the moment. The excellence of Trinity is better known, and the success of our fundraising efforts provides some assurance that we shall not be placed in a situation where the threat of contraction or severe austerity could sap the vital morale of the institution. That is not to say that there are no real problems: we face a troublesome future if only because there are too many unresolved issues in society which could fundamentally deflect this nation and its communities. For example, as John Filer, chairman of Aetna Life and Casualty, has noted, the city of Hartford is faced with being "choked geographically by the suburbs and fiscally by the State, absolutely unable to provide minimal acceptable services to its residents...with a confiscatory tax structure, with residential neighborhoods increasingly in a state of physical and personal decay." Should the city gain authority to tax Trinity and other similar institutions, as some political leaders have proposed, we would not be able to exist for long.

Despite the comparative calm which the College enjoys, there are factors which influence any look ahead. Two-thirds of the faculty are now on tenure, and there will be few retirements over the next five years. Although that provides assurance of continuity and excellent teaching, it limits the College's ability to adjust to changing interests among students. For example, this year

2. Perry Miller, "The Responsibility of Mind," *The American Scholar*, vol. 31, #1 (Winter, 1961-62), p. 55.

we graduated the largest number of economics majors in the College's history: 69 individuals completed the requirements. Next year the figure will rise again. Biology and mathematics have bounced back to the numbers they had in the late sixties. The arts and humanities have fallen off in popularity, from 50% of the graduating class to approximately 45%. Other shifts will occur as students gauge the opportunities for rewarding careers.

The future of graduate studies at Trinity raises the issue of how wide a range of educational services we can provide. We have been faced with declining enrollments as fewer people in this region seek advanced degrees in the fields of study we have provided. We are now experimenting with new approaches, and we are participating in a joint study with other institutions in the area to see whether it would be mutually advantageous to coordinate graduate programs. We shall know the results of that study this fall. Since our faculty wish to continue to offer advanced courses, Trinity will try to find the most promising way to remain in graduate studies without unfairly draining resources from undergraduate instruction.

So much has been written about the financing of higher education during the last few years, including my own analyses, that I hesitate to mention again this recurrent theme. But appropriate financing does pose dilemmas: we seek to maintain — even to enhance — the quality of our faculty, the quality of our programs; we seek also to put prices upon academic and other services so that we are certain we will use endowments justly and charge undergraduates fairly. Quality comes at high cost, however, and increasingly those costs limit our ability to achieve an undergraduate body which is diverse. Diversity is important to us: it provides stimuli and engenders the comparative self-examinations which are vital to education in and out of the classroom.

In addition to these trends still another troubles us. Trinity affords an ideal physical setting for the education of young men and women: the campus and many of its buildings are appropriate to the learning and teaching that take place here and to the needs of a college that is home to nearly 1500 residents. Unquestionably the beauty of the College enhances the education and the personal experience of the undergraduate, and it helps to develop a pride in Trinity and in self that is vital to the College and to the student. But our dedication to maintaining this setting poses increasing problems annually. We must, for example, repair the pinnacles on the Chapel before they collapse! We must improve certain dormitories, and our heating plant needs substantial modification.

Because all these factors have troubling implications for the fiscal health of Trinity, we shall do another special analysis of our economic prospects this summer. No educational institution, independent or public, will be immune to fiscal pressures. We must understand them; we must appreciate our limits; and, however paradoxical it may sound, we must not allow such considerations to blunt our willingness to take reasonable risks in the interests of those whom we educate.

At this point I would be remiss were I not to thank all those who contribute to Trinity through the Annual Fund and the Capital Campaign for Trinity Values. We are indeed fortunate in having so many friends and loyal supporters. To them we owe a constant debt of gratitude; for them I hope we have conveyed how significant their generosity is.

II

If conditions are so different than they were during the late sixties, then why should the College take a critical look at itself? It is always wise to reexamine what an institution or a business is doing. Such a process may well reassure us of the worth of our enterprise. Certainly at Trinity we have accomplished so much over the years that we should assess the consequences. It helped us in that task to prepare for the reaccreditation visit by the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. (The visiting team came in early April to evaluate the last ten years.) Dean Nye, Dean of the Faculty, did a superb job in assembling the requisite information. The members were most favorably impressed with Trinity. But perhaps the most salutary aspect of the visit was that it made us record in detail our various programs, and thus enabled us to see just how much has happened over the past decade.

There are other reasons for self-scrutiny. On the national scene the liberal arts colleges have been on the defensive. They represent a diminishing part of post-secondary education in this country. Some charge us with not relating liberal learning to the career expectations of students. Other commentators observe that we have not clearly demonstrated our concern with values. And still others maintain that our approach to education relies too heavily on the separate academic disciplines at the expense of broader concerns of understanding and sensitivity. As I indicated earlier, people are asking questions about the basic substance of learning. What is it and what should it be? I have tried to express this unease to the newly created Trustee Committee on Institutional Planning, and I should like to share those thoughts with you.

In a memorandum to the Committee I pointed out that we all know that knowledge will continue to expand; that new areas of research will open up; that new books will fill the library; and that new programs, from the most practical to the most esoteric, will be proposed. We shall have to make decisions as to which things are worth doing, what changes are truly necessary. Within the liberal arts and sciences in this country, we shall have to make peace with the fact that education is not only for personal development but also preparation for work of some kind. Certainly we should cease talking as if there were something irreconcilable between preparing for a career and liberal learning. At Trinity that means we should understand clearly how we carry out both obligations.

An historical footnote may be reassuring. Dean Neil Rudenstine of Princeton observed that we err if we assume that there was a golden age sometime in the past when all American colleges were truly liberating, unified, and intellectually rewarding by comparison with their modern counterparts. "The quality of education [offered in the 19th century, for example] was rarely better than middling — and sometimes much worse. . . . Even when the world seemed simpler and more unified, the educational results in terms of curricula and pedagogy were not necessarily simple, nor coherent, nor very satisfying." (*University, Fall, 1975, p. 5*)

It is not simply slippage in the liberal arts college or a lack of purchase on today's needs that has placed us on the defensive. To the contrary: beyond this concern, we know that we, as a people, face a period of radical change in our ways of thinking, in our habits, in our standards for decision-making and in our institutions. I am not a devotee of futurism, but no reading of the newspaper or speculation about our communities can avoid the conclusion that we must soon learn how to approach our problems in ways that offer better hope for effective solutions. As we celebrate the 200th anniversary of this country (which coincides with Trinity's 150th Commencement), we realize that the passage of time has not simplified the task of deciding what is in our best interests as a people. Perhaps the smallness of the early American community, when measured against the vastness of the land, permitted us the zest and arrogance with which we sought our independence. Certainly size and complexity so awe us now that we sometimes question if we can bring ourselves once again to that fine edge of conviction and commitment that makes a people great. No doubt we find ourselves torn by a recognition that, much as we wish our children to enjoy the privileges of individual accomplishment, we must find ways to join together at all levels of society if we are

to master the problems confronting this nation. As the Founding Fathers would tell us if they could, we need an enhanced sense of the commonweal, a renewed willingness to moderate self-seeking in favor of larger considerations of the public welfare. Otherwise, promising beginnings will issue in disappointing consequences.

That affects our view of higher education. Historically the approach of American colleges has been individualistic, as befitted a people who cherished the views of individualism. We have sought to cultivate the talents, understanding and sensitivity of individuals. This will remain an important concern at Trinity. Yet we know that the successful resolution of issues in today's world often requires some muting of individualism. What is wanted is a keener sense of the common good and a heightened capacity for cooperative action. The College would be remiss if it did not find ways to address this need, not only in its curriculum but in its modes of governance and its extra-curricular life. For, however we describe the goals of liberal learning, it must concern the human predicament.

What impresses me is that a feeling of incompleteness does pervade much of the discussion about the future of liberal arts institutions. Perhaps we have been too busy as managers, as mediators of the mysteries on a college campus, to decide how to respond. Our best rhetoric about the aims of education looks too often like the scattering of stardust. Too seldom do we try to relate what we are doing daily to our view of the world at the end of the next decade or quarter-century. No doubt we sense that such an assignment is elusive. It moves us to a level of abstraction that seems uninformative. But that does not mean we can ignore the challenge.

III

In the beginning of our long-range review we asked ourselves whether Trinity should fundamentally alter its mission. History, tradition, and a strong conviction about our present strengths led us to conclude that we should seek to remain preeminent among the smaller liberal arts colleges. We have too long stood for an excellence possible only in the selective, national undergraduate college to shift our emphasis now. Therefore, our planning is concentrated on how we may best improve our standing as a liberal arts college and contribute to the education of the young people who elect Trinity.

If failing to propose a radical redefinition of our mission seems anticlimatic, it need not appear as insignificant. As I have already suggested, higher educa-

tion has failed to portray effectively enough its broad contribution to a democratic society. Sometimes we question whether we are educating too many people. It is ironic to talk in these terms at a time when there is so urgent a need in society for persons to have the best possible preparation "for reaching sound judgments in pursuit of the general welfare." (Eric Wormald in remarks to the Association of American Colleges) But so long as we lack consensus within the Academy about the relevance of humanistic learning to our daily lives, then society will continue to question. Therefore, it would be gratifying indeed if this college could develop a coherence within its curriculum that would serve as an example. That is what we seek as we review the particulars.

With members of the faculty and other administrators we are identifying the key problems. Dean Ronald Spencer, newly appointed as Dean of Studies, will assist Dean Nye and me as we work forward; and my assistant, Miss Kathleen Frederick, will continue her research studies on student choices, attrition, and similar institutional profile projects. In this section of the Annual Report I want to express at modest length two other major concerns which I have and which, I know, trouble my colleagues.

The first has been with us throughout this century: general education versus specialization. This year I read an intriguing reformulation composed by our visiting administrative intern from Trinity College, Quezon City, Philippines,³ Professor Achilles del Callar:

"In a period of not-so-long ago, the imparting of a well-rounded education could be likened to the processes by which a diamond cutter transforms a rough stone into a precious jewel. At that time, all stones received just about an average of six highly polished facets: History, Science/Mathematics, Religion/Philosophy, Literature, Classics and the Fine Arts. The cubical products were known as 'squares.' The tremendous explosion in the body of knowledge to be assimilated and the branching off into narrow fields of specialization stemming from the technological advances in the post-World War II era spawned curricular diversity in the Liberal Arts colleges. It was a good thing then. Jewelers attempted to cut more and more facets into the raw stones. Facets took on a variety of shapes and dimensions. True, the greater the number of facets, the more brilliant the product. Forgotten, however, was the fact that the number of facets which can be cut in a gem is limited by the

3. Trinity College (Quezon City) was founded in 1963 in part by the efforts of Bishop Lyman Ogilby and has long had an exchange program with this institution.



size of the stone. As a result so many potential jewels wound up as so much grit for industrial grinders. No curriculum can be tailored to educe the best light out of each and every student, but curricula can be designed so that majority of the raw material can absorb and reflect an acceptable degree of brilliance.

"Then there is the lurking danger of the ever increasing and ever narrowing specialization in the Faculty. Combined with the framework of an open curriculum, this danger could turn Liberal Arts education into a disaster area. Like a rough stone exposed to the danger of receiving an inordinately large cut in any facet (who loves a lop-sided jewel?), a student in this setting is exposed to the danger of receiving a narrow specialized, not-so-rounded, not-so-liberal, education."

To revisit this debate sounds depressingly cyclical unless we realize that the discussion must be placed in a new perspective; namely, the future in which today's students will work and live. Can we not agree upon those qualities of education which they will need? That is quite a different question from what we should require in the way of courses. We are talking about literacy.

One of Trinity's goals has been to provide students with the rudiments of literacy in all four areas of knowledge represented in the curriculum — the arts, humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. When we had distribution requirements we made our expectations clear, even though we attained our goal all too seldom. Now there is only minimal assurance that Trinity graduates will be familiar with the language and perceptions of all four areas. There is no easy solution to this problem, especially in an age that places a premium on specialization. Nevertheless, I find it unacceptable that an English major not develop some understanding of how science describes the natural world. Similarly, the chemistry major ought to become familiar with some of the insights into existence which the humanities provide.

One obstacle may be that many introductory courses are premised, consciously or otherwise, on the assumption that the students are preparing for advanced work in the field. Thus they stress mastery of factual detail instead of examining underlying assumptions, modes of thought, contrasting methodologies and the like. It is not my purpose to denigrate essential content. But I wonder if the other emphases may not be equally important for the non-specialist. If so, perhaps we should design a new type of introductory course quite consciously intended for students whose primary interests lie in other fields. Faculty would ask themselves, what do I want the student to know who is not apt ever to take another course in my discipline? Does it

differ from what I want the beginning major to know and, if so, in what does the difference consist? In some instances introductory courses might best be team-taught by faculty in different, though related, fields. An economist and a sociologist, for example, might devise a course primarily for non-social science students. Instead of emphasizing the specialized concerns of their respective fields, they would seek to explore broader issues common to the social sciences. This approach may have intellectual and practical drawbacks. Perhaps the greatest risk is a tendency to pull our minds away from the human implications to abstractions floating formlessly above the particulars. But that is no reason not to undertake at least a few modest experiments in the direction I have outlined. The results could be enlightening for students and stimulating for faculty.

At bottom the issue is how to foster humanistic learning, a term I use as an alternative to the classic phrase "liberal education," and by which I mean the ability of the individual to feel that no broad category of knowledge is utterly alien. Thus I am especially pleased that a group of faculty will join this year in teaching a course, entitled "Horizons," which will explore in a non-technical fashion the important ideas and perspectives of the various disciplines represented at Trinity. Participating students should gain a sense of the sweep of intellectual endeavor on the campus. Furthermore, "Horizons" may help us overcome the feeling of isolation which departmental structure sometimes induces in both faculty and students. It is a good example of the kind of faculty initiative which makes me optimistic that our self-scrutiny will produce positive results.

There is another way of looking at this problem. A different illustration may help to point up the issue. For most tasks in business and public life an understanding of the computer language that touches us in our banking accounts, our insurance policies, or in sophisticated industrial production analysis has become virtually a necessity. Many Trinity students have become proficient in programming, and we are adding to our computer capability this summer with new hardware. All of today's undergraduates need, it seems to me, to understand the principles on which the computer is based. And given society's mounting emphasis on quantification, they would be well advised to gain familiarity with other forms of mathematical language. The pocket calculator may have come down in price, but it will not provide all the answers.

I have already mentioned the necessity that students have a feel for those areas of knowledge outside of their specialties. When I was writing about the

curiosity shop eight years ago, I cited the brilliant study by Daniel Bell on *The Reforming of General Education*.⁴ Now, as then, the question is whether a common intellectual experience is possible at the undergraduate liberal arts college. Although it is true that any study can free the mind and spirit of the inquirer if it is self-conscious, aware of contingency, and open to a continuing quest for truth, Professor Bell rightly wondered whether specialization — the emphasis on the major within a discipline — militated against our hope for humanistic learning broad enough to combat “intellectual fragmentation.” Times have changed; curricula have undergone substantial revision; but the problem remains.

Probably the greatest task has been, not to gain agreement on the goal of a common learning experience, but to agree on how we induce coherence within undergraduate education. At Trinity we adopted guidelines to suggest the breadth we thought appropriate. I doubt, however, that we have fulfilled our intentions. Is it not time to consider new means of achieving that coherence? Certainly very few wish to return to distributional requirements. What can be done is to build upon the departmental base a commitment to explicate the philosophical presuppositions and the particular methods of inquiry used within each discipline so that every student taking courses senses the manner in which the subject can provide a perspective relevant to other fields of study. It is not only the student who needs to be self-conscious; the faculty must also recognize the place of each discipline within the perceptual order we call the curriculum.

Can we move beyond that exhortation? I think we can. Working off the departmental base once again, I see no obstacle to expecting as an adjunct to the major the taking of courses in the three other broad areas of knowledge (e.g., the arts, social sciences, and natural sciences for the humanities major) and the linking of those studies to the anticipated concentration of the student. For instance, our concern about the use of the genetic code would permit a student majoring in the humanities to link the biological background to the political implications of any decision on population control. There is even an aesthetic element involved. My main point rests on our coming together to see if there are new ways in which to achieve the indisputably civilizing goals of general education.

The problem does not end there, however. If we also assume that liberal learning should draw attention to the future — that is, undergraduate education should help students to understand the world they will be living in and

4. Daniel Bell was then a professor at Columbia University. He has since written most perceptively about decision-making in the future.

their responsibility for its future course — then we need to give some attention to that future. Whether or not we believe the predictions of those who see us exhausting our resources within this century, it is apparent that we need a clear understanding of our global predicament if we are to help young people appreciate the effect of their own values on any social, political or economic decisions made in the future. For example, continual economic growth and environmental quality are both reasonable social objectives — at least for now. Yet they conflict with one another when pursued separately, without regard to their implications. How do we help young people analyze such complex situations and simultaneously recognize the values at stake? That wonderful new word, the *ecosphere*, is an appropriate reminder that we must put it all together if we are to make proper decisions.

In one sense liberal education has always believed it should show “how everything affects everything else.” If we concur in believing that a holistic view has become mandatory, then we shall have to figure out how to teach this interrelatedness. Existing interdisciplinary programs are important in this regard.

In recent years we have developed several interdisciplinary programs: Urban and Environmental Studies, Intercultural Studies, American Studies, and individualized interdepartmental majors. In a sense these were in response to the fact that increasingly liberal education is cross-disciplinary in nature. For example, as I indicated in remarks to the faculty this spring, we know that questions of energy allocation and use cut across a host of issues; similarly, food production, global population growth, and the future of our cities all involve considerations to which undergraduate education must give some attention. The problems reach beyond the province of any one department. Fortunately the curriculum is sufficiently flexible that students may, with faculty guidance, develop other interdisciplinary approaches to meet their special interest. For instance, by judiciously combining courses in economics, political science and sociology, an imaginative student could attain a good grasp of the issues involved in public policymaking. Another example is the new, non-major program in Medieval and Renaissance Studies, which draws upon the courses and faculty of a dozen different disciplines.

But the future of our commitment to interdisciplinary studies is unclear. We must decide how to expand these opportunities; for, as I have argued earlier, such an approach offers one of the most promising ways through which to relate the liberal arts and sciences to the central social issues of our times and to the nature of intellectual inquiry today. Happily Trinity has the kind of

teaching faculty that can rally great imagination in refashioning undergraduate studies.

My next concern requires less extensive commentary. Parents and students have wondered whether their investment in a college education will lead to a satisfactory career. At one point it was fashionable to deprecate such concerns. We have been saying that we prepare a student for life, not train him for a job. There is much validity in such a claim. Yet, in our zeal to de-emphasize vocationalism, we risk losing sight of the possible relationships between education and careers. It is as if a college degree were an entitlement to be exempt from productive labor. Of course, that has not been the case. We need only remember, for example, that a large number of Trinity graduates go into the professions and that the rest are productive in a great variety of jobs. Despite the gloomy headlines about prospects, Trinity students are getting into graduate schools and jobs as successfully as ever. Equally important is the fact that students base their career choices in part on how they perceive the lifestyles of those around them. Often these perceptions are distorted. Do we not have an obligation to help undergraduates gain a more accurate picture of the occupations they are considering? While we do not want to emphasize technique at the expense of true learning, we do owe students some understanding of the connections between their academic training and the ways in which they will spend their lives, both at work and at leisure. Once again, the problem is how best we can do this.

Trinity's location is advantageous in this respect. We have had excellent experience with internships in local businesses and in state and city government. Students can work with research teams at the Institute of Living and the Newington Children's Hospital. Practice teaching in a variety of settings is readily available. The new Shelby Cullom Davis Chair in Economics will permit us to fund more internships. Participation in the Venture Program has afforded some students the option of testing their career interests. With another adviser in our Career Counseling Office we will be able to assist undergraduates more effectively in sorting out the possibilities. These are appropriate steps in drawing attention to the relationships between formal academic study and future careers.

Other curricular concerns reinforce our belief that a reassessment is in order. At the most basic level is the problem of declining verbal aptitude among high school students. Our experience with bright undergraduates who cannot write competently points up the need for corrective action. Already we have increased the number of "English 100" sections and given greater

emphasis to composition in freshman seminars. Now we contemplate the creation of a "writing laboratory" where the student can get immediate help tailored to his particular deficiency. On a different plane we wonder about the student's grasp of his or her area of academic concentration. Is a major too often only a collection of courses with little overarching meaning? Or does the whole usually add up to more than the sum of the parts? In the past Trinity addressed this issue through a college-wide requirement that seniors take comprehensive examinations. Today only a few departments retain this requirement. We need to evaluate the aim and suitability of comprehensives for all established majors. A prime objective would be to insure that each senior undertake some type of culminating exercise which encourages him to draw together the diverse elements of the major into a coherent whole. In a similar vein and in keeping with some of the suggestions I have already made, now may be the appropriate time to recommend that no more than fifty per cent of a student's program can be in his major field.

In short, we shall be asking ourselves whether the curriculum addresses the right issues in the most provocative manner. We shall be testing our convictions about the content and design of humanistic learning.

IV

In addition to these academic challenges, I increasingly worry about the non-academic aspects of undergraduate life. All agree that an important part of a Trinity education takes place outside the formal course of study. But are we fully realizing the potential that comes from being a predominantly residential college? The question reminds me of a delightful slip in translation which occurred at the United Nations. The speaker was describing the kind of world we all would prefer. "We must create a society in which men can enjoy the fruits of their neighbor without interference." Presumably he meant fruits of their "labor" without interference. More seriously, does the informal life of the College reflect and reinforce our academic commitment as effectively as it might?

This is a difficult time for undergraduates, especially as they examine choices and make decisions about their futures both during and after college. Perhaps that is why both seriousness and fun appear in exaggerated forms. On the one hand, we observe, in certain quarters, a chilly acquisitiveness about grades and an insistence on credit for experience not really related to the academic. On the other hand, some see college as a last fling. As I re-

marked last year, for some undergraduates life takes on a frenetically hedonistic quality. Good taste and good judgment should inform both individual behavior and the conduct of extracurricular activities; but on occasion the beer bash, time-hallowed as that ritual may be, exceeds appropriate restraints or an event intrudes on others' rights and dignity. Fortunately still others become deeply involved with theater, the outing program, sports, or student government.

It is easy to argue that a college is no different than society. Today communities have trouble maintaining a climate hospitable to an open life free of fear. There has been a notable decline in civility, that essential glue of the good society. "Self-seeking, self-indulgence and just plain aggressive selfishness" have increased alarmingly, as Irving Kristol, editor of *The Public Interest*, points out. Such developments inevitably make themselves felt on campuses. For instance, there is too little sense among some undergraduates of their obligation to respect the rights and feelings of others. The absence of that awareness leads, at a minimum, to a host of petty annoyances; and on occasion it can result in actions that deprive others of their right to use the College freely and without distraction.

Confronted by such behavior, should we throw up our hands, pleading our inability to control forces and counteract attitudes generated by the larger society? I think not. While it is true that a college should not (in fact, cannot) isolate itself from its social milieu, it ought to foster what is best in society, not acquiesce in what is worst. If civility, respect for others and similar virtues are lacking in society as a whole, all the more reason why collegiate institutions should seek to cultivate them. For if we cannot, given our commitment to the primacy of reason over passion, what institution can? With this thought in mind, I believe it is important to undertake a careful review of the nature of social relations within the Trinity community and to devote special attention to questions of mutual responsibility among undergraduates. It is entirely possible that this review may suggest new ways of reaching decisions. And in the process we may help students to gain useful insights into how they ought to relate as individuals to their fellow citizens and what obligations they have to society as a whole. Nothing could be more appropriate to our stated goal of preparing students for life in a free society.

The undergraduate experience should be intellectually and culturally broadening. Thus the College sponsors numerous special lectures, symposia, concerts, etc., each academic year. Frankly, I am disappointed by the often poor student attendance. Equally troubling is the fact that substantial numbers of

undergraduates are not very venturesome in their extracurricular choices. Instead of trying new activities they prefer to stick with interests which antedate college. Thus they short-change themselves. As our process of reassessment unfolds, perhaps we can find ways to jog such students out of the ruts into which they have fallen.

An encouraging development in the extracurricular realm is the "free university" program going into effect this autumn. Initiated largely by undergraduates, it will enable students, faculty and staff to offer "courses" of varying lengths on numerous topics, most of which are not included in the regular curriculum. The proposed subjects range from bread making to poetry reading to political analysis. The free university is a step in the right direction, since it promises to bring an extra measure of excitement and creativity to our informal life. It is particularly heartening to observe that these non-traditional courses carry no academic credit and thus will rely solely on the interest of the participants.

V

In closing this Annual Report, I should like to return to the purposes for which this kind of college stands. One has only to compare a Catalogue of, say, 1912 with this year's to realize how different are the principles which now govern our teaching and our management of a liberal arts college. When we combine those changes with the shifts which have brought about our postindustrial society, we begin to sense how important it is that we restate our educational objectives. Certainly that effort must draw upon the perspective which experience offers and current realities define; then we can decide how best to choose among the future possibilities.

As I have thought about the many attempts at redefinition, I have concluded that any statement should be succinct and that it should relate to our conviction that our colleges still serve as the arenas in which we review our basic social values. Therefore, learning should be essentially humanistic and practical, attentive to the individual and alert to the setting in which we apply wisdom. Such a goal may not require a fundamental restructuring of the curiosity shop, but it makes advisable a new look. When all is said and done, liberal arts colleges like Trinity probably have only three choices. We can seek to cater to new markets, the most obvious of which is the demand for specialized career preparation — a kind of upper-level trade schooling. But career needs change; manpower projections wander; and apprenticeship neg-

lects the most durable of the contributions of humanistic learning: wisdom, literacy, and a sense of values. A second option might be to conceive of our future task as the delivery of various educational services in a definable region, with or without the normal credentialing system. Others may try to meet this demonstrable need, but it is uncongenial to Trinity, however sensitive we may be to what is so infelicitously called continuing education.

The third choice is to concentrate on the mission of liberal education. To succeed we should always remember that graduates will not long recall the financial problems of independent colleges or those other operational concerns which so divert our attention from time to time; what they will remember is the quality of the education they received. Their support of our goals will also depend upon their understanding the purpose of Trinity. Therefore, it is most important that we convey to them that "man is again invited to strive for the highest excellence of which he is capable, to push back the boundaries of what is possible, to regard himself and the world with pride and confidence."⁵

We are proud of what Trinity has done and we are confident in her future.

I wish to dedicate this Annual Report to a person who has served Trinity with conspicuous skill and dedication for forty-four years: Miss Doris Merwin. She is the type of person on whom our success depends. We wish her well. . . .

Theodore D. Lockwood

5. Moses Hadas in remarks he made at Columbia University in 1961.



Mr. & Mrs. Adolf Seibel
16 Henry St.
Hartford, Conn. 06114

