

Coastal Carolina University CCU Digital Commons

Honors Theses

Honors College and Center for Interdisciplinary
Studies

Spring 5-15-2009

Modern Sophistry: On the "Economization" of Higher Education

Michael McShane
Coastal Carolina University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.coastal.edu/honors-theses>

 Part of the [Political Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

McShane, Michael, "Modern Sophistry: On the "Economization" of Higher Education" (2009). *Honors Theses*. 150.
<https://digitalcommons.coastal.edu/honors-theses/150>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Honors College and Center for Interdisciplinary Studies at CCU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of CCU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact commons@coastal.edu.

Modern Sophistry: On the “Economization” of Higher Education

By

Michael McShane

Political Science

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Science
In the Honors Program at
Coastal Carolina University
May 2009

I. The Cave and the Noble Lie

The best way for one to begin approaching political philosophy is to do just that, not as a theorist or philosopher, but as a student who examines the various works of theorists in general and sees what is gainful in each of them. It is a thing said to be pleasant – to gain from those who possess knowledge that exceeds one's own. The theorists themselves are taxed with a kind of work that would not appear to the student pleasurable in the slightest, and he might be better off conceding the great labors and accolades that come with this work than partaking in any of them. A vast array of diverse works has been produced throughout human history, and especially in the past few centuries. Perhaps, all these works are gainful and useful. Each, glorious in its own way, could shine from its own angle to cast light upon human life in the 21st Century. In this particular instance, Plato's *Republic* will illuminate the facet of 21st Century life in America that is higher education.

Plato's *Republic*, or something within it, can be described as a sort of light, useful for elucidating truth for the eye to see in what would otherwise be its absence (*The Republic*, 508e). Beyond what is sought as this essay's stated purpose, there is an indirect aim of demonstrating this relationship to be the case. To witness it with respect to the issue of American higher education, however, requires a beginning in Plato's Allegory of the Cave. In Book VII, Socrates describes through analogy to Glaucon, his interlocutor, the limitations of human knowledge and begins both an implicit and explicit explanation of how these limitations are to be overcome:

I said, "Make an image of our nature in its education and want of education, likening it to a condition of the following kind. See human beings as though they were in an underground cave-like dwelling with its entrance, a long one, open to the light across the whole width of the cave.

They are in it from childhood with their legs and necks in bonds so that they are fixed, seeing only in front of them, unable because of the bond to turn their heads all the way around. Their light is from a fire burning far above and behind them. Between the fire and the prisoners there is a road above, along which see a wall, built like the partitions puppet-handlers set in front of the human beings and over which they show the puppets.”
 “I see,” he said. (*The Republic*, 514a)

The bonds are likened to the cultural and physiological limits placed on human beings as simple facts of existence. They are physiological in a sense that due to the fact they would not “have seen anything of themselves and one another other than the shadows cast [by the puppets]” (*The Republic*, 515a) otherwise through their own mental faculties as represented by the eyes. These men are not strong enough, at least by themselves, to break free from their bonds due to some weakness inherent in their very natures, or simply ignorance of their potential as to how to utilize such powers were they to possess them. The latter part of the dichotomy makes up the cultural component of the cave, since in that state “if they were able to discuss things with one another... they would hold that they [were] naming these things” (*The Republic*, 515b) as they actually existed instead of the shadows. If educated, though, they might be “released and suddenly compelled to stand up” (*The Republic*, 515d) and exit the cave. This release and compelling of men must elicit the question of who educates. The answer has been provided, implicitly, in the passage above. Socrates tells Glaucon to “see a wall,” instructing him and allowing him to respond, “I see.” In this command, the philosopher Socrates functions as a light source to Glaucon and enables his mental faculties to begin to grasp at education’s roots. This general order will be used to add light to the “puppet” of what may now be seen only as a shadow within the cave, potentially allowing for an evaluation of the American system of higher education as it actually *is*.

The Noble Lie illustrates the differing types of souls, as well as their roles within the cave analogy. The Lie is a tale meant to confirm among men that the different souls emerged from the earth, and are hence natural. To illustrate, Socrates describes to Glaucon a scenario occurring within the actual earth, in a cave. Socrates describes what occurs within, but omits exactly who does what. However, some men must be tasked with pulling others out of the cave, aware to some extent of the daylight but not enough to make them appear blind and foolish to those within the cave's depths. The philosopher, standing outside of the cave, directs these men who uphold a code of spiritedness (*The Republic*, 375e7) and proper opinion aimed ultimately at what they can see outside of the cave. For those who are like the silver auxiliaries, or even more fit to observe the light, they may begin being dragged outward from the cave. Some of these souls are the golden ones that report to the silver souls based on what they view from the sun's daylight. The silver souls take the advice of the golden ones, and are thus moderate. They dwell at times in the adjustment phase, or thought, but spend most of their time honoring and being honored within the realm of opinion. Reaching within the realm of opinion, but usually dwelling within imagination are the bronze souls – the lovers of wealth. The iron souls most prone to the images are to be directed by a proper ordering of the hierarchy that sits above them. Thus, the silver must give the bronze the proper opinions by honoring them, setting into motion laws governing the bronze. The silver soul is directed by the golden soul that ultimately follows the sun. Again, Plato's cave is used to demonstrate "our education and want of education." Education is, therefore, society's emulation of this model of assigning souls appropriately to their roles.

There are also five regimes that coincide with the types of souls. In descending order of their type and virtue, there are Kingship, Timocracy, Oligarchy, Democracy, and Tyranny. Kingship is governance by golden souls. Timocracy is governance by silver. Oligarchy is governance by bronze and Democracy is governance by iron. Both the Oligarchy and Democracy are ruled by money-makers, but they are distinct as Aristotle helps illustrate:

As for the life of a money-maker, it is one of tension; and clearly the good sought is not wealth, for wealth is instrumental and is sought for the sake of something else. So, one might rather regard as ends those mentioned above, for they are liked for their own sake. (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1096a7-11)

Above, Aristotle lists pleasure, honor, and wisdom as three potential ends. Thus, the distinction between the iron and bronze man can be considered the purity of the love for pleasure as mitigated by the end of honor. Democracy and Tyranny will be most important, however, for the discussion of education. Socrates' description of the democratic man, being governed by the aim of Democracy, will be the beginning:

And, I suppose, he makes the calculating and spirited parts sit by it on the ground on either side and be slaves, letting the one neither calculate about nor consider anything but where more money will come from less; and letting the other admire and honor nothing but wealth and the wealthy, while loving the enjoyment of no other honor than that resulting from the possession of money and anything that happens to contribute to getting it. (*The Republic*, 533d1-7)

In the description of the democratic man, the spirited part of the soul is leveled with the calculating part. He is bronze, but without the spirited part exceeding the calculating. Thus, honor of wealth becomes privately rather than publicly aimed as words of wisdom and honor for those parallel ends become extinguished (556a). Sensation of good within one's work and public life falters. There is only the individual and his appetitive desires, and these desires are the dominant portion of his soul.

Once a man or regime is complete in this democratic characteristic, tyranny results with either one of the many pleasures or the single divine one left to rule the regime only to unfasten the ties of reciprocity:

And rulers chosen from them won't be guardians very apt at testing Hesiod's races and yours – gold and silver and bronze and iron. And the chaotic mixing of iron with silver and of bronze with gold engenders unlikeness and inharmonious irregularity, which, once they arise, always breed war and hatred in the place where they happen to arise. Faction must always be said to be 'of this ancestry' wherever it happens to arise. (*The Republic*, 547a)

With respect to the many desires, the silver is subject to the iron. In terms of the singular or divine desire, the gold is subject to the bronze. On both extremes, a private desire is fulfilled at the expense of the public good with the latter making only an image of the public good in speech rather than actualizing it. Both the democratic regime and soul consider all desires equal, and the only real desires to be appetitive ones. A multitude of democratic souls espouses a tyranny with a multitude of objects, whereas a democratic regime incites viciousness and the tendency to lash out at the moneymakers with the aim

of subjecting them to dominance. Yet, in doing this, the golden soul also allows their golden part to be dominated with respect to what is effectively another bronze desire with a hue of spirited honor for the public good. This tendency fails to move downward through the hierarchy of souls. Thus, to establish a fitting education and regime averse to tyranny this characteristic is necessary.

Socrates uses an analogy comparing the tyrannical shift from democracy to a dreamlike state:

You know that in such a state it dares to do everything as though it were released from, and rid of, all shame and prudence. And it doesn't shrink from attempting intercourse, as it supposes, with a mother or with anyone else at all – human beings, gods, and beasts; or attempting any foul murder at all, and there is no food from which it abstains. And, in a word, it omits no act of folly or shamelessness. (*The Republic*, 571c7-d3)

What Socrates describes is a predicament similar to that in the story of Gyges. In the story he discovers a hollow sculpture of a bronze horse beneath the earth, representative of a society and its structure. In this case, since it is represented by bronze, it is most probably analogous to the bronze soul. Gyges finds a dead body within the horse, wearing a golden ring. He finds, upon putting the ring on and turning it, that he is capable of becoming invisible. Emboldened with this new power, Gyges kills the king and commits adultery with his wife. He becomes a tyrant. To further illustrate the meaning of the excerpt and story, yet another parallel must be drawn. Aristotle's regimes, six in number and three in form, may be used to describe regimes in name. Among these are Kingship and Tyranny, to describe one ruler, Aristocracy and Oligarchy to describe a

few, and Polity and Democracy to describe many. The names deviate from the numbers based upon whether the rule is public or privately interested. Plato's souls, on the other hand, are regimes in essence. Overlaying the two allows for the interaction between them to be witnessed, giving an explanation to the disjunction that occurs within the text's most well-known statement:

'Unless,' I said, 'the philosophers rule as kings or those now called kings and chiefs genuinely and adequately philosophize, and political power and philosophy coincide in the same place, while the many natures now making their way to either apart from the other are by necessity excluded, there is no rest from ills for the cities, my dear Glaucon, nor I think for human kind. (*The Republic*, 473c11-d7).

Glaucon chooses the former, simpler, option for its own sake while the prescription is actually for a regime in essence rather than one in name. To help illustrate [Appendix A], each of the four types of souls can be scaled in terms of the desires, and also the four levels of knowledge, and the places where they might effectively overlap, within *The Republic*.

Imagination is made up of the imitation or reconfiguration of a thing's image. It is the weakest part of knowledge in that it requires the greatest number of contingencies. This is ultimately perception, and is first subject to deception depending upon how a thing is approached, or method, in addition to trust that the interaction of accidents around a thing is an absolute. In natural science this is a hypothesis. Hypotheses, typically based upon personal viewpoints, are all regarded as being equal in truth value by the scientific method. A computer program acts as an example of an image, since its

purpose is generated in the mind but it is captured in a computer as a process comprised of digital instances. Interface, platform, and screen resolution variation make up differences in method or viewpoint. Computer programs possess no knowledge, but only do as they are programmed in accordance with their input. They are ruled as men rule beasts. Thus, reliance solely on imagination and perception's pleasures from input exceeds the Aristotelian idea of the golden mean and can result in the knowledge of *nothing* in the absence of movement upward. In relation to the cave, it represents the perception of the shadows.

Opinion consists in the trust that on some level the interaction of accidents around a thing – or its image – is the case everywhere and at all times. In other words, the seeking of an absolute as its image forms opinion. There is some judgment in it, but not as much in comparison to thought or complete knowledge. Determinations are not absolutely certain, but appear inductively so to a higher degree than not, hence the requisite element of trust to make them useful. In natural science this is a theory or law. Similarly, despite instances that produce undefined answers in the field, when a Math class receives its variety of test grades, and compares them, it manages to learn that some opinions may be better than others. The academic realms of opinion, attempting to determine absolutes, may tend to equivocate upon what differs, erring by calling those things opinion instead. Opinion, with no higher level of knowledge, deems itself to be the highest form of knowledge but is not. It contains a component of judgment, but has not transcended any other actual form of judgment. Opinion represents the judgment that the shadows on the walls are, at least to some extent, *real* things.

Thought is the part of knowledge concerned with the interaction of absolutes, or things, and the understanding of the purpose behind the resulting accidents by realizing them both as being distinct. Taking a step out of time's river (*The Republic*, 621c), or what may be called the "arrow of time" (Hawking 1996, 184), thought determines what is truly gainful from this interaction. This exceeds and contains natural science, and the absence of thought may be considered "a comedown from the great tradition of philosophy" (Hawking 1996, 233) by even some of the most eminent scientists. Thought transcends culture, expression, and era. However, it quickly decays into opinion or imagination via exclusive focus on method, the definitions of words, or arguments over meaning and purpose that lack the *Good*. Thought represents the painful or unpleasant transitioning vision of the eyes once exposed to the outside of the cave.

Knowledge's most *precise* part is the consideration of a thing in its purest form in relation to the *Good* itself. Also, this part is the understanding of the purpose and necessity of the things that actually *are*. It sees the light of the sun shine on the actual things, revealing them pristinely, and traces upward almost to stare into the sun itself. This is the fullest extent of real knowledge, transcending all things and including each of the aforementioned aberrations. This level of knowledge may be a dangerous kind of thing, or at least one that is extremely powerful. It is characterized by perfect sight and the vision of everything, or, in exceeding the pleasure of its golden mean with consideration to the entire soul, blindness and the effective knowledge of *nothing* due to the absence of movement downward. Perhaps any city or man on earth once exposed to it entirely, or too directly, would cease to exist. To ensure the caution of the knower, Maimonides prescribes:

The perfect man needs to inspect his moral habits continually, weigh his actions, and reflect upon the state of his soul every day. Whenever he sees his soul inclining toward one of the extremes, he should rush to cure it and not let the evil state become established by repetition of a bad action. (*The Eight Chapters*, 73)

Knowledge's *precise* part can be the most fearsome of masters or the best where the aforementioned downward movement emanates from it, not only within the individual but also the whole of society. However, to this end moderation is required through understanding the whole of knowledge, adherence to the prescribed mean, and avoidance of both knowledge and imagination improperly directed.

II. The Dialectic

The Republic would not exist without the dialectic, and if Plato's work contains within it something worth understanding about education, then the dialectic should be worth discussing as well. Essentially, the dialectic amounts to the understanding of what something is through demonstration of what it lacks. It is being in combination with non-being to reveal what could be, and what each thing is in relation to this possibility. It is life and death, truth and falsehood, and also light and darkness. Likewise, it is only appropriate that the primary discourse that occurs in *The Republic* would be between the king and the tyrant. The seemingly innocuous Glaucon is Socrates' primary interlocutor, who agrees with Socrates that their journey together constitutes dialectic (*The Republic*, 532b). Fixed upon the fact that the philosopher must rule, he is goaded by Socrates into constructing a city in speech that is created only with that end in mind despite the city's

initial description as “a feverish city” (*The Republic*, 372e). The city must overcome many obstacles, Socrates is aware, that make its success dubious. For the city’s guardians, the waves of obstacles include the sharing of labor between both men and women, and also the sharing of women and children in common among men. The curiosities of knowing one’s kin or of knowing a wife of one’s own are forbidden, depriving the city of a human element upon love of the familiar. Also, people “with natures that are as similar as possible” (*The Republic*, 458c-d) live amongst each other but not amongst the others. Glaucon claims he is willing to give these things up, and to impose upon other groups of men the same restrictions. He demonstrates his own love for the familiar, akin to Socrates’ ironic description of the dog as being philosophic in the sense that it despises what it does not know and loves what it does know whether this knowledge is good or bad (*The Republic*, 376a). Glaucon agrees with this description (*The Republic*, 376b). He is a man who despises those who do not partake in what part of wisdom he has discovered, as revealed by his disgust at the work of the artisans and mathematicians (*The Republic*, 531a). To amplify the Socratic irony, Glaucon’s love of the familiar is based upon a love similar to what characterizes philosophic wisdom’s transcendence of social norms and similar to what provokes the warrior Leontius in Socrates’ story to look at the dead strewn across the battlefield despite his knowing it to be deemed forbidden (*The Republic*, 439e). Glaucon loves both what is similar to him and forbidden, but not what is different, eliciting Socrates’ mockingly pointing him out as being in this sense an “erotic man” (*The Republic*, 474d). Glaucon concedes this glib assertion by Socrates that he is a homosexual “for the sake of the argument” (*The Republic*, 475a). As such, he does not truly love the whole of wisdom but rather the

portion concerning the rule and will of those possessing the golden soul. He is the unwitting advocate of privately interested rule. To him, any golden soul will do as a ruler whether corrupt in this fashion or otherwise. He enjoys the truth insofar as it is the truth, but not the part of truth that would make it practically advantageous. This is the nature of tyranny. What could be considered Socrates' the most chilling description of the tyrant occurs in Book IX:

"Now if he enslaves the most divine part of himself to the most godless and polluted part and has no pity, won't he then be wretched and accept golden gifts for a destruction more terrible by far than Eriphyle's accepting the necklace for her husband's soul?"

"Far more terrible indeed," said Glaucon. "I'll answer you on his behalf."

(The Republic, 589e)

Before the reader's eyes, Glaucon speaks on behalf of the tyrant to affirm only what he may know. He is willing to give up the whole of humanity, and its human elements, in return for wisdom's "golden gifts." Again, this nihilism is precisely what he acts upon in earlier in constructing the feverish city. It is not for the betterment of the many, or the auxiliaries, that Glaucon acts since their ultimate intent is something other than wisdom for its own sake by their very natures. The lesser ends are said to also be necessary for Man's function as a whole in actuality, and without them wisdom is destroyed insofar as it is attainable in praxis. The city is then closest to knowing *nothing*. To avoid this, the recommendation is that all pleasures are to be enjoyed properly in consideration of the practicalities of existence, so that all men may properly enjoy their pleasures "and, to the greatest possible extent, the truest pleasures" (*The Republic, 586e*). Thus the tyrannical

effort appears doomed to fail and is not revelatory of what Thrasymachus describes as rule in *precise speech* – a term which shall be elucidated later.

Friedrich Nietzsche's aim is quite similar to Glaucon's with respect to the dialectic, perhaps allowing for the apprehension of a dialectical history to establish the roots of modern education. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche speaks through his character to describe the Übermensch:

Where is the lightning to lick you with its tongue? Where is the frenzy with which ye should be inoculated? Lo, I teach you the Superman: he is that lightning, he is that frenzy! (*Thus Spake Zarathustra*, 6)

Only the Übermensch's -- the Superman's -- words validate the slave morality of the many. Nietzsche, calling the many the just in accordance with this slave morality, describes them simply as "fervour and fuel" (*Thus Spake Zarathustra*, 6). Thus, the Übermensch is to utilize their fervor and fuel but for his particular ends alone – his rule and will. Nietzsche describes to his readers how he wishes to accomplish this:

Unto these men of to-day I will not be LIGHT, nor be called light. THEM -- will I blind: Lightning of my wisdom! Put out their eyes! (*Thus Spake Zarathustra*, 281)

Nietzsche's view of those possessing a different object than himself is one that can be characterized as misanthropic on some level. He does not function as a light source as Socrates is seen doing before Glaucon. Conversely, Aristotle describes the relationship between master and slave being a friendly one, distinct from Nietzsche's wishes only for those who see somewhat beyond the lower parts of knowledge to dominate:

To rule badly... is harmful to both [master and slave by nature]... for what is beneficial to a part is beneficial to the whole also, whether this be the body or the soul or both, and a slave is a certain part of a master, so to speak, an animate but separate part of the body [of the master]. For this reason, the relation between master and slave, whenever they deserve by their nature to be called such, should be one of friendship and of benefit to both; but if their relation is not such but exists by law or is forced, it leads to contrary results. (*Politics*, 1255b9)

Toward the end, Aristotle describes the effects of tyranny. Similarly, Nietzsche does not wish to better those who may naturally be lesser with respect to wisdom, rather only that they be ruled by men with as much of it as he has. Glaucon wishes the same, and fails the time-enduring test of the eternal return (*The Republic*, 614c-d). He does not possess the whole of wisdom, though, and the complete guardian and philosopher must love the whole thing unlike the selectivity that characterizes other arts (*The Republic*, 475b).

Perhaps a similarity of nature is demonstrated in Nietzsche's praise of Cesare Borgia, also mirroring the sentiments of *The Prince* (*The Antichrist*, 61). The dialectic speaks like a two-edged sword to reveal the Form of the Good as symbolized by the Sun.

Although substance follows form according to Aristotle, it may be necessary to witness what the form is not in order to discover that form. The good may be the word in the beginning epistemologically, but it cannot exist only by itself and be discovered by those possessing the human element nor separate itself from the whole of humanity. The entirety of the two-edged sword that must come forth from the mouth of those seeking to explain the "fountain" (RSV, Prov. 18:4) of wisdom, as opposed to the tongue of

lightning Nietzsche mentions, and may be among the most useful descriptions of the dialectic. The best depiction of the dialectic in combination with the Form of the Good may be present in John's description of God's appearance before him:

And in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden girdle round his breast; his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters; in his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth issued a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength. (RSV, Rev 1:13-16)

The two-edged sword of the dialectic may be depicted here in Revelation, acting also as the means by which Plato reveals the fundamental teachings of *The Republic*. It is not only the guardian of truth, but also the means by which ideas from any standpoint are rendered knowable (RSV, Gen. 3:24). The fire of the eyes is similar to the fires that would reveal the images within the cave, allowing them to be known more closely in terms of what they actually are. However, in this context where the face is described as being like the sun, fire seems to represent a light allowing more things can be seen and is also used repeatedly in the Bible to represent pain (RSV, Joshua 6:24). The relationship between the revealing of ideas and pain shall be fully discussed in due time.

III. Shame and the Examination

Socrates, in the dialogue *Gorgias*, demonstrates two conceptions of shame. Christine Tarnopolsky provides a compelling description of both, as well as their

differences and similarities. Tarnopolsky describes what she sees in Gorgias the sophist's view of shame, and the Socratic differences:

In this kind of politics of shame, a rigid and unitary norm of the democratic citizen works to implicitly shame any forms of engagement or argument that contest this norm. In contrast to this, and utilizing the analogy of medicine, Socrates argues that his own 'true political art' requires certain painful and bitter procedures that aim at the health of the patient. (Tarnopolsky 470)

Hence, Gorgias' notion of shame is taken to focus on the aim of the one who shames – to win approval from many at someone else's expense. Aside from honor-loving, Socrates prescribes shame as a useful tool that is actually helpful to the person who is the target of that shame. Tarnopolsky evaluates Jean Bethke Elshtain's work *Democracy on Trial*, commenting on her articulation of a "fear that a mass, consumerist democracy, which relentlessly publicizes every personal ascription or grievance, will ultimately dehumanize the individual" (473). Tarnopolsky implies this to be among the beginnings of a politics that is vertical rather than horizontal, differing also from the model of friendship Aristotle advocates in *The Politics* for the master-slave relationship. This is the isolating, or potentially tyrannical aspect of culture and the positive law. It is very much tied to the idea of shame Gorgias seems to possess. Similarly, evidence suggests society has seemingly found a refuge in forbidden knowledge in "[appealing] to an abstract and universal right to know" (Smith 30), and looks for ways to bring each prospective bastion of virtue down to its knees on the basis of unrelated flaws which are not at all fatal. What truths or goods these people bring may be simply disregarded or forgotten in the public

pleasure lying in the wake of misplaced condemnation. These are not the types of flaws or humanizing traits typically brought into the public sphere by argument or action. Neither are they the basis for reciprocity, since the intermediate objects and means to attain these in the short-term will at best differ or will otherwise come into conflict in the longer-term.

The forbidden, where it is revealed, is not freed from judgment, however neither is it sought outside of dialogue. David Smith mentions the publicity of sexuality as an example in his article *Scientific Knowledge and Forbidden Truths*, which he finds typically regresses into "fevered and worried gossiping and comparing of notes." The private is collapsed onto the public, or as Tarnopolsky cites Elshtain, "he or she lives a lie as the self is given over to the 'social auto-totality'" (Tarnopolsky 2004, 473). Social constructs, formulated around passions alone, enslave the one unfit for certain types of knowledge where *episteme* cannot be of service. This happens since "instead of [allowing] a unique and special sharing with a partner, an environment in which nothing is secret is created," (Smith 1978, 32). No one is allowed the private satisfaction of *knowledge*, and boasts bringing the private into the public sphere replace the Socratic nature. Modern society has tasked itself with doing this to its own and its own culture by "[assessing knowledge] by quantification: the more the better" (Smith 1978, 30) with little regard to its quality. One can never be satisfied, as infinity does not cease and can be used to derive any numeral. Ultimately, this can be used even to create the speculative knowledge about goods or people that deprives the more pious listeners of their ears and is reminiscent of Plato's *true lie* (*The Republic*, 382a4). It is what Jim Fowler means when he says that "without paideia, individuals and their community live embedded in an

illusion” (Fowler, 264). *Paideia*, the Greek word for education, involves a facet of morality. The idea that knowing for the sake of knowledge is not an assumption upon which Socrates acts, finding instead both shame and the truth of knowledge to be founded on its relation to the *Good*. Thus, Socrates intends to attach pain to the base and the flawed so it might be properly directed in a given individual. He does not criticize for the sake of criticizing, nor deconstruct for the sake of deconstructing. In fact, the whole of Socrates’ venture is an attempt at the opening and cauterizing of humanity’s wounds with respect to the aberration of souls, indicative of his rationale in telling Crito at his final moment “we owe a cock to Asclepius” (*Phaedo*, 118a8-9), the god of healing. Whether humanity has recognized this cure is another matter.

The Socratic articulation of shame has been disregarded as dehumanizing by the likes of Nietzsche, who repeatedly condemns shame throughout *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and *The Gay Science*:

Whom do you call bad?— Those who always want to put to shame.
 What do you consider most humane?— To spare someone shame.
 What is the seal of liberation?— No longer being ashamed in front of
 oneself. (*The Gay Science*, 273-275)

Nietzsche agrees with Gorgias about the value of shame, or rather the lack thereof. Shame acts only as the vehicle for *slave morality*, according to Nietzsche and exists to be overcome by the greatest of men. However, Nietzsche’s works are now widely published along with these effectively anarchical distinctions. Nietzsche was not an anarchist, but wished only for those best to overcome what he deemed social constructions and be served by the credulous just. However it is easy to see how, under such widespread maxims, Nietzsche's philosophy would later be democratized under an existentialism that ironically would have enraged him. The Dionysian impulse had been captured in a sort

of Apollonian establishment, but this should have been no surprise. After all it had already shown signs of being palatable to Athenian democrats centuries before as demonstrated in the case of Gorgias. Additionally, the seeds of positivism had been sown by Descartes in his *Discourse on Method*, preparing the modern fusion. Nietzsche would have despised these opinionated slave moralists, governed primarily by trust. They would be considered but the latest generation of the faithful and pious (*The Eight Chapters*, 60), exposed to the most recent transient cultural development. Although his words were intended for who he called the *Übermensch*, common man would usurp Nietzsche's prescriptions either directly or indirectly. Nietzsche, in several bouts of unbridled *eros*, would unintentionally promulgate a tyranny of the masses extending into the 20th Century to be tamed by existentialists operating under the principle of equality. Thus an unintended Hobbesian paradigm was espoused and peace deemed the greatest and most agreeable end, and greatest mostly for the fact that it was most agreeable to more of the many than not. Opinion was the cure for warfare, as it could be seen by many and was deemed an inoculation for the ideological bouts of the past. Talking amongst themselves, those in the cave had named the shadows to be the actual things that *are*.

From the positivist-existentialist mixture, the radical conceptions of philosophy either emerged or were cushioned. The new truth of the will to power transmuted into substance, being the individual, and preceding essences became the accepted doctrine. Afterwards the question turned only to how it could best be harnessed. The study of power of some individuals over others began with the individuals, but was more easily applied to studies of the behaviors and relative power of certain groups. Likewise, the

resulting increased propensity for statistics amounted to something that would repulse neither Comte's recommendations of value neutrality nor his three stages of knowledge on the same basis. The science of politics became regarded as a historical process, progressing where it became seen as more positivistic and utilitarian. Thus, Marxism and all its hues were deemed recognizable as legitimate depictions of reality. Critical theory emerged, as well as many of the premises of modern international relations theory, and also modern feminism. Many of the fields were useful in increasing awareness of the various disparities within these groups of individuals. Marxism increased awareness of the worker's struggles, critical theorists examined majority motives, and modern feminism produced especially an increased awareness and compassion toward others. Positivist schools of economics and psychology emerged as well. Thus, the existential struggle had many fronts and was to be dealt with in a multitude of ways. While majority motives, equality, labor relations, empathy toward others, and women's status in society are matters with numerous applications, on some level each of them deals with the same thing. Simply, the topic matter consists of interactions between people within cultures as they behave, or descriptive interactions among people within their respective societies. They are evaluated by their power, quantity of opinions organized under the identity rule for integers, and sheer number. In sum, it yet again amounts to but a discussion of what is witnessed on the walls of the cave since only the social construction of language and behavior underlies the existential essence by its very definition.

To avoid straying into what Nietzsche called "the abyss," an illumination also of deconstructionism itself is now necessary. It will not proceed without prescribing a replacement, however. The replacement can be observed as the tool by which this

illumination occurs. Concerned primarily with language, deconstructionism has no definition by virtue of what it is according to Jacques Derrida. Thus, the thing would seem shielded from any attempt at analysis or critique, or more importantly the assertion that something exists that could supersede its revelations. Those who simply deconstruct to deconstruct act invisible to the many and to the fires which provide the shadows for the vision of others, as Gyges himself becomes invisible upon donning his newfound golden ring. The light of the sun, though, falls even in places of which people do not speak. Derrida's primary reasoning behind deconstruction relates to a shortcoming in the written word. *Logos* as the Ancients understood it, he claims in his essay *Speech and Phenomena*, can be most proximate in speech partly because:

The “apparent transcendence” of the voice... results from the fact that the signified, which is always ideal by essence, the “expressed” *Bedeutung*, is immediately present in the act of expression. This immediate presence results from the fact that the phenomenological “body” of the signifier seems to be effaced at the very moment it is produced; it seems already to belong to the element of ideality. (Derrida 1967, 20)

The words are immediately alienated from the body, and the physical. However, something metaphysical beyond the effaced body is yet present. Derrida may be onto something, since basically the entirety of Plato's works consisted of dialogues and nothing was ever written by Socrates himself. It is consistent with the notion that the written word mandates the adoption of social construction, whereas speech is personal and contains the aims of the speaker. As aforementioned, the study of motive seems to have its place (*The Republic*, 338c). Each of the dialogues, *The Republic* inclusive,

demonstrates which of the souls and regimes each person is taken to be or to represent. Souls are assigned in accordance with a person's motivation, since it is by the motivations of wealth, honor, or wisdom in combination with the type of regime present that one is ruled – by the cultural in combination with what may be called the physiological. Perhaps this is the purpose that deconstruction has; it reveals the shortcomings of the written word to uphold *logos* and ensure that things are spoken in what Plato termed *precise speech*. It is this standard that provides the possibility of Socratic refutation in spoken argument with the speaker present to clarify, superseding even what may be revealed by deconstruction alone. So that in the absence of social constructions the will to power does not replace them, it is a mandate that something greater than individual will be revealed. It is the only means by which it can be ensured the education provided does not produce the murder of this unnamed King, or commit adultery with those who would otherwise in some way be wedded to it.

IV. Irony and the Form of the Good

There is much to be proposed in relation to Socrates' irony in Plato's dialogues. He is said to "make the weaker speech the stronger" (*Apology of Socrates*, 18c), and does so through what the logician or mathematician would opine to be a kind of equivocation or misrepresentation. However, thought extends beyond formal syntax. Socrates equivocates upon intent only to represent men better than they represent themselves. *Logos* is distinct from logic's formalities and is considered the means for reaching man's ultimate end. Knowing this, it soon becomes clear that Socrates' interlocutors could only wish to be as loyal to themselves as he is to them. Since he speaks to others who are not

like himself he is tasked with descending to their level and making them affirm their words in more than one sense, thereafter exposing them to the resulting contradiction. Transcending them, though, he literally makes their arguments stronger. The dialogues that occur thus reveal a certain kind of irony that “consists in speaking differently to different kinds of people” (Strauss 1964, 51). Socrates’ words can be said to aim at something that is true forever, and is tautologous with respect to all things. Ludwig Wittgenstein provides what Socrates might have termed a just speech in simply saying that “tautology follows from all propositions: it says nothing” (*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 5.142). Socrates claims he is wise in that he knows that he knows *nothing* noble and good and does not suppose he does (*Apology of Socrates*, 21d). To put it most precisely, Socrates knows on some infinitely true basis that he has not been properly educated. The claim occurs after he asks for the jury’s compassion in understanding his way of speaking as if he were a foreigner that “spoke in the dialect and way in which [he] was raised” (*Apology of Socrates*, 18a). This is a useful illustration of Derrida’s proximity condition for *logos*. Socrates speaks as a citizen, highlighting the losses of the common man. He utilizes speech in the dialectic, an ironic venture in the near presence of the many, to aid in the apprehension of something stronger.

The Form of the Good is revealed first in Book I, allowing the reader to grasp how it is upon this that truth and meaningful epistemological claims are founded. The form is first articulated in the initial dispute with Thrasymachus, who makes the claim that “the just is nothing other than the advantage of the stronger” (*The Republic*, 338c). Essentially, he means the just does not exist on its own but is dependent upon the will of those who rule. In a display of what the typical Ancient sophist might require of one

making a positive claim, Thrasymachus prefaces his demand of Socrates to identify justice by telling Socrates not to “tell [him] that it is the needful, the helpful, the profitable, the gainful, or the advantageous” saying he will not accept it “if [Socrates says] such inanities” (*The Republic*, 335a). Within the realm of opinion from which he takes counsel, “opinions” are rather useless things. Yet Thrasymachus fails his own test and ideological limit of knowledge (*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Preface) in providing his definition by use of the word *advantage*. Thus, Plato may implicitly reveal that it is difficult to define what is just or moral for human beings without using some permutation of the word *good* – even if the speaker does not believe in the thing. Once Socrates refutes Thrasymachus by showing that the laws are only what rulers believe to be to their advantage but might not actually be so, Thrasymachus provides a striking rebuttal:

To take an obvious example, do you call a man who makes mistakes about the sick a doctor because of the very mistake he is making? Or a man who makes mistakes in calculation a skilled calculator, at the moment he is making a mistake, in the very sense of his mistake? I suppose rather that this is just our manner of speaking – the doctor made a mistake, the calculator made a mistake, and the grammarian. But I suppose that each of these men, insofar as he is what we address him as, never makes mistakes. Hence, in *precise speech*, since you too speak precisely, none of the craftsmen makes mistakes. (*The Republic*, 340d)

Thus, Thrasymachus outlines a metaphysics that removes the accidents of a thing from the thing itself. Those accidents are defined as such by virtue of the Form of the Good,

since they take away from the perfect and purest forms of the arts aforementioned. Hence, dialectic is present yet again. It is worth noting that the grammarian's mistake is mentioned but never the grammarian. Here Plato seemingly foreshadows a kind of deconstructionism by identifying the inferiority of language and its equivocation traps to the *Good* itself, which is used to elucidate language in a fashion rendering it truly consistent and identifying of things by their respective essences. It is distinct, however, from deconstruction as it is now known today as this light that shines upon words also makes them a useful tool for providing evidence of its source being the greatest of ends.

It is telling that ideas like the aforementioned may be illustrated through the understanding of dialogue alone, which is the goal of what is called Socratic maieutics. The term literally means "midwifery" or, in the Socratic context, giving birth to ideas. It is not clear that ideas are actually born, rather than simply revealed through this exercise – at least in accordance with *precise speech*. However, Thrasymachus' earlier rebuttal is delivered by Socrates' use of indirect proof to reveal his argument to be inconsistent since according to what Thrasymachus articulates "the advantage of the stronger would be no more just than the disadvantage" (*The Republic*, 340b). Thus, by way of a logical contradiction, Socrates provokes Thrasymachus into birthing the ideas for the reader to see. Likewise, by earlier refusing to state what justice is, Socrates provokes Thrasymachus into demanding that he stop trying to "gratify [his] love of honor by refuting whatever someone answers" (*The Republic*, 336c). Considering the dynamics of the hierarchy of souls, this would amount to Thrasymachus accusing Socrates of being a silver man, if he deliberately and ultimately seeks honor for its own sake. In Book IX,

Socrates presents an important question through the development of a three-height analogy whereupon being elevated to each level, the one elevated may look downward:

Do you suppose that a man brought from the downward region to the middle would suppose anything else than that he was being brought up? And standing in the middle and looking away to the place from which he was brought, would he believe he was elsewhere than in the upper region since he hasn't seen the true up? (*The Republic*, 584d)

In his earlier argument with Socrates, the sophist Thrasymachus assumes he is attempting to best him for the sake of honor. Academic honor is what the sophist prizes most. He can see no higher principle upon which Socrates might found his actions, or how it might lead to the actualization of the human being. Hence, among the three types of souls, Thrasymachus identifies himself to be the one in the middle at best – the silver soul that seeks honor. Aristotle said of this soul:

Men of culture and action seek a life of honor; for the end of political life is almost this. But the good appears rather superficial to be what is sought; for it is thought to depend on those who bestow rather than on those who receive honor, whereas we have a strong inner sense that the good belongs to the man that possesses it and cannot be taken away from him easily. (*NE*, 1095b-22)

Thrasymachus intends to uphold what has been taught as the common wisdom among the culture of the Athenian elite. He sees no wiser man from whom to seek instruction than himself, but also lacks a golden soul. Being a man “of culture and action,” Thrasymachus dwells typically somewhere in the realm of opinion. So Thrasymachus’

conclusion amounts to there being no *good* in truth, since he does not see it. Instead he sees only different opinions among equals. Under Thrasymachus' instruction alone, with his proneness to see "fool's gold" (*The Republic*, 450b), the youth cannot be given sight of the end of the political life in its entirety according to Aristotle's distinction. If, in America, those called academics and philosophers do not educate the youth in terms of what the *good* reveals, they may be considered sophists as the Ancients knew them. As shall be elaborated, the overall task may require an examination of that youth as well, beyond simply the accidents or images conventionally associated with education, textbooks, and standardization. Some accidental outgrowths must be substituted for the sake of substance entering each person's mind, reinstating dialogue. According to Plato, the *precise* truth is a function of the good and its determination requires "counting the good things and measuring how many of them each... speech" (*The Republic*, 348b) possesses. Here is the utility of *logos* in practice through speech itself, similar to how Derrida understands it, except with respect to souls and maieutics.

In response to the antics of Socrates during their argument, Thrasymachus becomes uncomfortable and also quite angry. He is being shamed in the Socratic sense, as ideas are delivered, spoken or unspoken, to reveal themselves as implicitly greater than what he deems most valuable. His rage begins after listening to Polemarchus and Socrates discuss the definition of justice, upon a pause where Socrates has seemingly shown Polemarchus a dead end in the search:

Now Thrasymachus had many times started out to take over the argument in the midst of our discussion, but he had been restrained by the men sitting near him, who wanted to hear the argument out. But when we

paused and I said this, he could no longer keep quiet hunched up like a wild beast, he flung himself at us as if to tear us into pieces. (*The Republic*, 335b)

The genesis of his anger is the simple fact that Socrates and Polemarchus continue to search for justice in the same manner. Thrasymachus believes this to be a fruitless endeavor *a priori*. His rage demonstrates Socrates' earlier faux evaluation of a dog as being like a philosopher in the only outright anger present throughout the entire work. He is ruled by a democratic regime, and thus his individual impulses of honor-loving are functionally driven toward imagination. Thrasymachus is silver mixed with iron, and Socrates must attempt to purify him within his mini-polis as a blacksmith handles metals in his furnace. Later in the argument, after Socrates rhetorically dominates him, Thrasymachus' rage turns to shame:

Now, Thrasymachus did not agree to all of this so easily as I tell it now, but he dragged his feet and resisted, and he produced a wonderful quantity of sweat, for it was summer. And then I saw what I had not yet seen before – Thrasymachus blushing. (*The Republic*, 350d)

Socrates, in defeating Thrasymachus in argument on his own sophisticated terms, allows him to be examined. He immediately experiences great discomfort, as he realizes something more about himself than the topic at hand – for as he has indicated with his intent, he does not believe in the *good* in truth. He is moved from the status of a vicious beast to a more civil man. The transformation is something akin to what feminist scholar Rosalyn Diprose mentions in her essay *What Is (Feminist) Philosophy*, where she argues “that it is in its generation of new ideas that feminist philosophy is at its most productive”

(Diprose 1998, 116). And, according to Platonic implications, she may have lived up to the mandates of her title in coming closest to defining that field of study in *precise speech*. In a virtual paraphrase of Plato's epistemology, even within the feminist framework, she states that "ethics (the interruption of autonomy and of the imperialism this implies) is a precondition to knowledge (the creation of concepts)" (Diprose 1998, 127). This mirrors the idea that the *Good* is a precondition to human truth. Likewise, the ethical good of students must be the central focus of the truths imparted and, as has been demonstrated, the approach to fields of study can be readjusted in order to find similarities leading to such a good.

Diprose promulgates a sort of maieutics through self-examination that contains the components of provocation and shame, so to speak:

In response to the disturbing experience of these others, my body said to my ego "Feel pain here!" and my ego suffered and wondered how it might suffer no more. And that is why I was made to think. (Diprose 1998, 129)

Diprose explains the blushing Thrasymachus well, ironically (*The Gay Science*, 273-275), in allusion to a set of quotations by Nietzsche that begins her essay. Even if Thrasymachus does not understand what he has revealed, he at least knows to whom he should listen. Rather than responding "to this teaching by forgetting the other and seeking refuge in [his] own egoism" (Diprose 1998), Thrasymachus is tamed after being bested, his autonomy interrupted for a moment by a sort of golden imperialism. This creation of concepts reiterates the hierarchy of souls within the Noble Lie as well since this creation has something "to do with the philosopher's social constitution in relation to

others” (Diprose 1998), or rather what Aristotle would call *political* constitution (*Politics*, 1253a35).

V. The Form in Praxis

From what has been articulated, there seems to be a certain duty that human beings have to one another and to themselves. It involves the realization of what a person has or lacks and, with respect to what they ultimately seek, the type of soul they possess. If this duty is necessary for the revelation of souls, it must be shown useful beyond revealing these souls simply for the sake of knowledge itself in order to truly be called useful. There is no practical or inherent *good* applied to knowledge sought for its own sake, except insofar as the knowledge sought is *real* knowledge or is guided by another possessing it more completely. An individual man cannot by himself be completely *good* in relation to the actual thing. Men, even those possessing golden souls, are in need of others. And this need may be in accordance with what Socrates means in saying “the unexamined life is not worth living for a human being” (*Apology of Socrates*, 37e). Education as Plato understands it is intimately connected with the ordering of regimes, virtue, freedom, and also happiness. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle gives happiness a definition:

The good for a man turns out to be an activity of the soul according to virtue, and if the virtues are many, then according to the best and most complete virtue. (*NE*, 1098a15)

Within a single man, whether his soul is golden, bronze, or silver, there may be a best way for it to be ordered so that it can approach what it sees as its “best and most

complete” virtue in alignment with the hierarchy of the Noble Lie. Although the essential and *best* virtue of a man is said to be his reason, it may only be found in its fullest within a society’s golden portion.

However, the lovers of wisdom may be able to guide those who lack the thing in its entirety by stimulation of what part of it each of the other types of souls possesses. They do not intend entirely to do away with the different virtues, or “reproaches” (*The Republic*, 347b) ruling the other souls, but only to help ensure that reason precedes them. Reason, preceding those desires, rules them by proxy. Thus there is not one best individual life to be imposed on every particular human being, rather one that is flexible for the whole of mankind. To reveal the types of souls and what a person lacks with respect to each one’s virtue, the pains of examination are required as Socrates describes them:

This much, however, I beg of [the jury]: when my sons grow up, punish them, men, and pain them in the very same way I pained you, if they seem to you to care for money or anything else before virtue, And if they are reputed to be something when they are nothing, reproach them just as I did you: tell them that they do not care for the things they should and that they suppose they are something when they are worth nothing, And if you do these things, we will have been treated justly by you, both I myself and my sons. (*Apology of Socrates*, 41e)

These are Socrates’ last words to the Athenian public, just as he is about to be taken away and put to death for the very type of examination he begs Athens to adopt. If happiness is among the goals of education, and it is not true that “relief from pain is pure pleasure”

(*The Republic*, 584c), then the aversion to this pain must be regarded as a sort of vice. Pain is not inflicted in only one direction, however, and moves both downward and upward. The philosopher pains others, but does not manage to avoid pains himself since it is as painful for him to move downward as it is for others to be brought upward. He must not give into this pain of seeing wisdom he fathers battered by hues of truth and vice, retreating to unadulterated utterances of wisdom as if in a more pleasant private place. Rather, according to Socrates, he must fight it especially “when he is seen by his peers” (*The Republic*, 604a). The philosopher must be forgiving of those who know not what they do or “of what they speak” (*Apology of Socrates*, 22c). This mutual, altruistic sacrifice is what constitutes *Love*, and is the art of making men better with respect to the most *precise* part of knowledge. Therefore aiming toward this precise part, and lifting other souls from where they rest in the lower parts spanning the whole of mankind, is called the *Love* for the *whole of Wisdom*. Everything thus far indicates it to be an essential human element, and it is known otherwise as *philosophy*. *The Apology* is regarded by many to be one of the cornerstones of Western civilization, perhaps indicating that it should at least seriously consider Socrates’ advice.

Reverting to an earlier discussion of tyranny and faction, it seems prudent to discuss which type of faction is the greater threat within American society. America’s founders, aiming to establish a lasting and stable regime, provided a number of safeguards for neutralizing the effects of faction. In the case of a divine tyrant’s bouts with *eros*, it may be left up to “the majority to defeat its sinister views by regular vote” (*The Federalist*, 45), which they are very likely to do by their number and nature. With respect to human desires alone, they would likely differ so much concerning object as to

prevent a faction directed toward a single one from penetrating through to the larger society. The divine tyranny is mitigated with consent of the governed, or at least constrained to a microcosm within the expanded orbit of government that constitutes the dual federalist system. In this case, at least for the people in that region, it may or may not be effectively tyrannical rule. Alexis de Tocqueville saw America's greatest danger as emanating from its opinion center, as Allan Bloom paraphrases:

It is very well to say that each should follow his own opinion, but since consensus is required for social and political life, accommodation is necessary. So, unless there is some strong ground for opposition to majority opinion, it inevitably prevails. This is the really dangerous form of the tyranny of the majority, not the kind that actively persecutes minorities but the kind that breaks the inner will to resist because there is no qualified source of nonconforming principle and no sense of superior right. The majority is all there is. It is not so much its power that intimidates but its semblance of justice. (Bloom 1988, 247)

If this is the case, the aforementioned intermixing of gold with bronze pales in comparison to the danger of intermixing silver with iron within America.

Thus the silver souls, the modern Thrasymacheans, seem to be the ones who hold the key. If in this case silver opts to honor public opinion based upon the equality of objects, giving birth to mere rationalizations of imagination, it is not the source of education but of faction. This would constitute the deprivation of a vital human element and also the glue which holds societies together – not simply peace but their notions of the *Good*. Bloom continues paraphrasing Tocqueville's observations:

Tocqueville found that Americans talked very much about individual right but that there was a real monotony of thought and that vigorous independence of mind was rare. Even those who appear to be free-thinkers really look to a constituency and expect one day to be part of a majority. They are creatures of public opinion as much as are conformists – actors of nonconformism in the theater of the conformists who admire and applaud nonconformity of certain kinds, the kinds that radicalize the already dormant opinions. (Bloom 1988, 247)

It is difficult to determine how much America has changed in regard to its dominance of independent thought by opinion, except for maybe the content that has occupied the realm. Thus it is necessary to investigate whether the donor of opinion – the educational system – has overcome mere opinion in a manner similar to what is demonstrated in Plato's cave, and how well it has done comparatively throughout history to produce itself as it is now. Its position relative to the iron desires of imagination will also come into question.

Likewise, it seems fitting that the American system of higher education would be evaluated in light of how well it allows the youth to be examined, and how it deals with the varieties of souls in relation to the Noble Lie. If those most exposed to the variety of souls can either become tainted in education or the best judges (*The Republic*, 409a), then democracy is the type of regime most capable of producing both of them for it has the greatest variety of souls “decorated with all dispositions” (*The Republic*, 556c). As such, the task of producing the best judges rather than the truly corrupt shall transcend whatever is discovered of the American system of higher education's purpose following

its identification by evaluating its current aims and motivations. Applying this type of continuous, critical evaluation may one day assist in moving the next generations within America closer again to what Aristotle calls a Polity. In *precise speech*, this is the means by which the critique shall be provided.

VI. Examining Higher Education's Past in America

Higher education began in America with colonial colleges largely intended to instill moral virtue and a common notion of justice in students. Students were required to have read the ancients, mastered classical languages to a certain level, and to have a certain amount of experience with mathematics (Thelin 1947, 18). During the course of their education, students were expected to become masters of oral argument, necessitating that they partake in oral recitations and disputations (18). The first requirement ensured that students knew the material as presented by the authors, qualifying them to opine during the latter requirement. Immediately after giving these disputations, the students' arguments were critically evaluated by everyone present in the room. While it may seem difficult for one to imagine modern students actually taking these matters seriously, America's colonial counterparts possessed a tool to ensure their participation – shame. In fact, the “jeers that greeted poor public speaking, flawed logic, or faulty translations” (19) proved to be highly effective. The liberal arts education provided was also very broad, and managed to cover the relationship to the professional studies as well. Thomas Jefferson, who was among the undergraduates of one of these institutions, detailed discussions that took place of law and medicine despite their not being a central part of the curriculum (19). Another trait peculiar to early American

higher education was the lack of a stigma attached to college dropouts. Students were not necessarily expected to graduate, and many fewer enrolled in proportion to current levels of enrollment. In 1776, there were only about 3,000 graduates of American universities (Rudolph 1990, 22) and a population of 2,148,076 according to data from 1770 (U.S. Department of Commerce 1975, 1168). This would grant a conservative estimate on the higher side for the number of college graduates being around .13 percent of the population. Although college was not assumed to be a person's default route, those who graduated were highly honored. A person's graduation was taken to signal "a young man's entry into a position of power and responsibility in adult life" (Thelin 1947, 20), very much akin to the description Aristotle offers of the guardian class and citizenship in *The Politics*:

He says, indeed that, having so good an education, the citizens will not need many laws, for example laws about the city or about the markets; but then he confines his education to the guardians.

Aristotle is referring to Socrates, and is criticizing the ideas he articulates in *The Republic* about the City in Speech. The guardian class, or the middling class between bronze and gold, is tasked with acting as the pathway of reason and the source of right opinion for the others. They are the ones "readiest to obey reason" (*Politics*, 1295b4-5). The education of these souls helps to ensure that the rulers in name are not tyrants, and that the bronze and iron parts will be well-suited to recognize one. For as the silver-souled Polemarchus says it, in the Polity or Republic, the man "who seems to be, and is, good, is a friend" (*The Republic*, 335e10).

Religion was another essential part of colonial higher education in America, providing the basis of fellowship among both students and faculty. At King's College, and many others, the recitations and disputations of the day were "ended with prayers and blessings, reconciling secular learning with Christian faith" (Thelin 1947, 19). If education is concerned with right opinion and sharing of the good in common, these acts may illustrate yet another facet of education that may now be missing – at least if the advice of the Ancients is to be taken. To clarify what Aristotle means in his critique of Socrates in *The Republic* when he notes "friends will have all things in common" (*Politics*, Bk II.5), the importance of friendship must first be considered. Aristotle claims that he and Socrates are in agreement that friendship constitutes "the greatest good of states and the preservative of them against revolution" (*Politics*, Bk II.4). Also, he says "perfect friendship exists between men who are good and alike with respect to virtue" (*NE*, 1156b8-9), indicating that these men should also have at least common sense of what is good and virtuous as a precondition for this to occur. Consistent with this is the notation that *The Republic* begins with Socrates joining Glaucon in prayer within the Piraeus. However, while the efforts for collegiate friendship in Colonial America seemed to produce some beneficial social impacts, the state of affairs on the socioeconomic front was dubious.

At the very beginning of America's educational endeavors, a split in status due to wealth could be easily witnessed. A relatively sharp divide in wealth, one of the root causes of faction Aristotle articulates in his description of the war between the democrats and the oligarchs, was not only present on early Colonial campuses still dominated by

monarchical rule – it was flaunted. Students, faculty, and the outside society at large participated in parading this division, as historian John Thelin articulates:

College rolls listed students not alphabetically but by family rank. And, following the Oxford tradition, academic robes identified socioeconomic position. “Commoners” – literally, those who dined in commons – wore long robes as distinguished from the short academic robes of “servitors,” scholarship students who waited on tables. Little wonder, then, that the College of Rhode Island was considered a bit radical in 1769 when the broadside for its commencement exercises bore the headline “Nomine alphabetice disposita sunt.” (Thelin 1947, 23)

The listing of names in alphabetical order rather than order of socioeconomic class was taken as a radical measure by the wealthy elite. Hence, the war between the oligarchs and democrats began in the educational regime by a sharp divide in favor of the oligarchs. With regard to the impact on curriculum, the powerful students almost always inherited their wealth as Cephalus does in *The Republic*, presumably providing an emphasis of what they sought in an education less concerned with obtaining a job. Still, though, Puritanical colleges tacitly opposed to the crown arose which advocated for the same socializing role of education “in literacy and in social values” (Thelin, 25) that would continue. In what further supports the parallel with Plato’s training of the guardians, Thelin writes:

It is true that the colonial colleges ratified and perpetuated an elite that would inherit positions of influence in communities. One could also argue

that the son of a wealthy Virginia planter or Boston merchant was going to be wealthy and powerful whether he went to college or not. (26)

And, often these men would later possess actual leadership roles within society. Hence, the liberal arts were considered a sort of training in Political Science where future leaders learned their own interest to be inextricably linked to the interest of the ruled (36-37).

As the American Revolution came to an end, so did the status of many colleges loyal either to the crown or to Puritanism. By the middle 1830s, Protestant denominations dominated the funding and building of educational institutions (60). These institutions were concerned primarily with instilling faith in their students. Soon, though, student revolts in opposition to what they claimed the “dull course of study irrelevant to the issues they would face as adults” (65) began to take place. The form seemed largely similar to the way it was before, with the typical curriculum containing “the study of classical languages, science, and mathematics with the aim of building character and promoting distinctive habits of thought” (64). However, in the wake of the American Revolution, the products of democratic faction slowly started to seep out of the institutions. In the 1800s, there were mass-expulsions of students at Princeton, where one of the school buildings was burned to the ground, and also at Harvard (Richards 1). Before that, the bottled-up angst of the past turned by association to the substance of what they had been made to study. At many of the most prestigious institutions in the country, students conducted mock celebrations of the Last Supper and burned the Bible (Richards 1). Nonetheless, as Thelin conveys, these protests were far from the norm when considering the demands of most prospective undergraduate students and their parents:

It is tempting to say in hindsight that colleges of 1820 or 1830 should have provided a modern, useful course of study. The problem is that the historical record shows that such prescriptions would not necessarily have been effective. There is an uneven pattern of modern subjects and institutional appeal. Yale, the foremost champion of ancient languages and a conservative curriculum, enjoyed prestige and popularity. It had the largest enrollment of any institution in the country. In contrast, Columbia's experiments with adding an engineering course of study had little appeal to prospective students. (Thelin, 68)

It is clear that Americans at the time simply valued different things. It is believable since their parents had largely either been the products of the earlier forms of education, or had seen these products in the leadership figures with whom they were familiar. The majority that had been produced during the early founding included "both the left wing Congregationalists who became Unitarians and the Deists, gradually joining forces with the Evangelicals, who ... had begun to form 'denominations'" (Fowler, 272-273). Likewise, education was moving toward becoming less one dimensional but with the same general emphasis.

By the mid 1800s, legislators and communities had begun to deal with the curricular issues relating to a technical education. The economy had become more complex and demand had grown for additional training. Most of the proposals articulated, though, intended to keep technical training separate entirely from the liberal arts (82). However, in the 1850s Francis Wayland, then president of Brown University "depicted the typical American college as obsolete because it was out of touch with the

demands of an energetic, industrial society” (87). He claimed reform to be urgent on account of “declining appeal” (87), citing statistics to support his claim. These claims and others motivated schools to become increasingly technical and to incorporate additional subject matter as the 19th century closed. It should be noted, though, that typically this increase of subject areas was simply in addition to the already established character-emphasizing curricula. In the case of Dartmouth College, the result was an increase in students that was almost sevenfold over the next 25 years and a maintained reputation for excellence (91).

By the 1900s, specialization had occurred to the extent that the choosing of a “major field” was a common obligation (Thelin 1947, 129). However, juniors or seniors were tasked with having to do this and the major was a route of slow specialization. Over the period of several years, though, the major had the effect of taking up more of the curriculum. In the last half of the century, there was a new vocational emphasis on specialization. Furthermore, from the 1960s onward, the percentage of undergraduate degrees in the humanities decreased from about 17 percent to roughly 8 percent [Appendix B]. Students were demanding fewer degrees in the humanities, and universities had moved their emphasis elsewhere. There are two possibilities worth mentioning as to why this decrease in demand occurred. The first is that students, adjusting for the perceived profitability of economic conditions, simply chose degrees that were seen as more economically profitable in being most directly related to their choice of career. This development certainly may have been a factor, as the lowest percentage of humanities degrees awarded, 6.7 percent in 1985, occurred roughly four years after a relatively severe recession. The mere perception of growth in the economy,

though, turns out to be a relatively small factor upon closer examination. For example, humanities degrees awarded in 1995, roughly four years after a drop in real GDP growth [Appendix C], differed only a small amount from degrees awarded in 1991 which was four years prior to a boom period [Appendix B]. The figures were 8.6 percent and 8.87 percent in 1995 and 1991, respectively (Humanities Resource Center Online). Thus, any substantial change should be due not to variations in perceived economic magnitude but the nature of the economy – a move toward the service sector. The 1970s marked this change, and the decade accounted for nearly the entire percentage drop seen in humanities degrees awarded thereafter.

The second possibility explaining the decrease in demand can be explained by a change in the country's valuation of a liberal arts education. Although there appears to be some correlation, the proportion of education in the humanities as calculated by degree recipients must be differentiated from demand of education in general. According to the statistics, it is generally true that as the number of degrees demanded rise so too does the percentage of humanities degrees demanded. However, the proportion of degree recipients in the humanities for 1993 is still lower than in 1975, despite a greater number of recipients overall, by almost 2.5 percent (Humanities Resource Center Online). Change in valuation could potentially be a function, also, of increased grade inflation corresponding with the overall increase in students, their greater emphasis on more technical fields, and the apparent desire to address their demand to be pushed through to the job market. From 1991 to 2007 the average undergraduate GPA moved upward from 2.93 to 3.11, further indicating the impact of economic and student demands on the policies of higher education [Appendix D]. Higher GPAs are somehow associated with

greater success following graduation, contributing to the reputation and profitability of institutions of higher education. In support of this hypothesis is the fact that private institutions have increased grade inflation proportionally more than public ones. Noting the general trend in education of being governed by economic forces, it is possible to now isolate the humanities sector, of which higher education used to consist almost entirely. Hence, having isolated each of these secondary variables and having identified the other primary variable, the only other major factor notable is that of the population's valuations independent of economics and the content of education in the humanities – the remainder one would expect to most nearly resemble the traditional liberal arts.

VII. The Form Applied: Modernity

The modern educational regime as it currently exists in the United States, following World War II, could be seen emerging during the 1940s. Neilson describes the vocational trend in education, and the corresponding notion of progress, which was then in full force:

Of course I am familiar with the plea put forth that everything is changed. It is another world now, and what was of service to our fathers and their sires is utterly unsuitable to the man who has to be taught how to make a living. This is the stupidest excuse for dilatoriness and incompetency that the teacher can make. Men are still men, and so long as they have to work for food, fuel, clothing, and shelter, they will be the same as they were in the days of Plato. (Neilson, 123)

After criticizing the new vocationalism, Neilson notes "a quarrel between two schools of thought" (124), and cites excerpts from a book by Sidney Hook entitled *Education and the Modern Man*. In his book, Hook claims that religious and metaphysical beliefs are responsible for imperiling the existence of a democratic society (126). Neilson himself points out that America had endured for a very long time despite the multiple religious and philosophical differences within the country. Hook's claim stands in direct contrast to the methods of the past. Likewise, this is contrary to the common property advocated by the Ancients existing beyond the realm of imagination. Neilson notes that traditional schools like the British Liverpool Institute produced not only fine scholars, but also "first-class bankers, merchants, and teachers" (127). Hook claims philosophy worth studying in the modern world of job-getting primarily for its use in supplying a "methodological sophistication that may immunize students against the confusion of definitions or linguistic resolutions... which constitutes so much of the traditional... metaphysics" (127). Essentially, students are to be made immune from the speeches of culture the Ancients saw as useful for producing publicly-interested citizens. Instead of being taught to "mind one's own business" (*The Republic*, 433a8), they are taught to doubt and to doubt especially the claims of those with conceptions of justice that deem it to be a valuable thing existing outside of common whim. Humanity is left to the level of imagination, able at best to produce vague opinion only affirming of immediate perception and the sophistry that has enslaved their senses. After all, if all opinion is somehow vague and can be decided in speech only by the relative methodological prowess of the speakers, it seems to be an intellectually honest thing to hold such opinion irrespective of the truth.

The modern regime is defined, to some extent, by a metaphysical closed-mindedness. It seeks to come across as practical in this respect, but is unable to demonstrate its results in producing a society of maintained, or increased, stability. However, it continues in its epistemological extremism under the underlying assumption that ever more knowledge, regardless of clear purpose, should be gathered. The drawing of comprehensive conclusions regarding the long-term utility or teleology of given facts and behaviors becomes the only knowledge that is forbidden. As an analogy, the Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution requires that a search be *reasonable* and not arbitrary. What the modern regime declares is that reasonableness is, in itself, arbitrary and hence should be abandoned as a standard at the whims of the regime praised by the majority. Reason, and hence reality, becomes a thing decided on a lawyer-like basis at the hands of the most skilled lawyer. The prescriptions of the one Aristotle calls the lawgiver (*Politics* 1288b), and the protections they afford, are effectively destroyed in tyranny's favor. An educated observer knows, however, that a contrary result produced by the skill of a prosecutor or defense attorney in manipulating a jury is not justice. Figures like Socrates and Sir Thomas More experienced this fact firsthand. The result of the inoculation against reason is a tyranny symbolic of a strange majority faction not similar to the traditional American majoritarianism. The faction finds agreement only in inoculating against the cure so as to preserve its own reproduction, and like Plato's band of pirates must ultimately find itself torn asunder from within.

Authors, such as Henry Perkinson, have taken the idea of attempting to teach students simple scholarly truths to be authoritarian. Perkinson calls this, and the emphasis on earlier philosophers as potential givers of truths, part of an "effort to escape

from the human condition of fallibility" (Blight 1981, 344), and lambasts the attempt to do so. In actuality, Plato's epistemology is saturated with mentions of Man's limitations in knowing. Perkinson supposes that educating men simply in critical doubt and deconstruction, in the meanwhile accepting without doubt or deconstruction the assumptions upon which his method of education operates, will somehow produce freer men. The author is in agreement with Karl Popper, whose theory he advocates, upon a division of Plato's work as being between either "'Socratic' (or critical) and 'Platonic' (or authoritarian)" (344). Confusion leading to a distinction between the Socratic and Platonic viewpoints, however, simply sacrifices evaluation of *telos* -- truly critical reading -- in favor of an emphasized focus on method. For example, in the case of *The Republic* Socrates can be witnessed questioning Cephalus' morality of telling "the truth and giving back what a man has taken from another" (*The Republic*, 331c) and answering the question regarding the worth of choosing of justice in Book X on the basis of a long monologue containing a myth (*The Republic*, 614b3). Socrates' method is not as one dimensional as some scholars may suppose, and is as flexible as necessary to attain the goal. Hence, the *telos* governs the actions. In giving his teaching to Glaucon, he ignores an opportunity to question and deconstruct his own faulty premises which appear even when he is not constructing the City in Speech. To suppose that Plato is an accidental writer, or Socrates an accidental speaker, places authority in the modern reader. But the presupposition then is that, as modern readers, modern men are inherently wiser than their Ancient teachers. Similarly, the method advocated by Perkinson and Popper deconstructs but presumes that the students must have their own wiser teaching. Meanwhile, teachers essentially impart to students the method prescribed by Sidney

Hook with substantive knowledge in philosophy substituted for merely a deconstructive process. Since such substantive metaphysical knowledge is regarded here as regressive, the process of opining for the purpose of deconstructing belief is adopted as the new aim for education.

The teaching promulgated by a student in place of the formerly deconstructed teaching would have to be the wiser, from any perspective, in order to attain the increased freedom and autonomy advocated by both scholars. However, students presumably attend school for a reason, with the most apparent reason being some lack of knowledge. To inoculate men against the teachings and stories of the past, which became widely read after being passed from the hands of those whose words have stood out in history, therefore appears to be a poorly informed gamble. It regards the education of past men as useless, failing to build upon it, since these part figures cannot be taken seriously among minds supposedly knowing so much more. This gamble is not Platonic since, by Plato's odds, more are naturally fit for the cave than otherwise. It is not Socratic either, considering the questions and criticisms raised are not knowingly directed at what constitutes the public interest or at dialogue regarding how circumstances might be improved to arrive at a society that lives in accordance with such a matter.

Deconstruction and eristic favoring an emphasis on semantics does not suffice even from the same pragmatic constructions tacitly accepted as truths within the language itself.

Likewise, knowledge of the truths of *episteme* does not cripple the *techne* required to do the same. Considering these facts within a holistic context, while consulting the Merriam-Webster dictionary definition of authoritarianism as being "of, relating to, or favoring blind submission to authority" a duality emerges depicting two alternatives.

One is rule by the proverbial blind, in which blind authority literally rules. The second is the seeming subjugation of some in accordance with nature, similar to the case of Plato's cave, for the overall freedom and well-being of humanity as a whole. A second definition of authoritarianism provided by Merriam-Webster is a thing "of, relating to, or favoring a concentration of power in a leader or an elite not constitutionally responsible to the people." With respect to what is likely to effectively result, the aforementioned teaching of Perkinson and Sidney Hook more closely matches authoritarianism by this definition. Again, Aristotle refers to the producer of a political association's constitution as its lawgiver (*Politics*, 1288b-1289a), or what is translated from the initial Greek reading *nomothetes*. The men who are the lawgivers, though, are distinct from the men of action, or silver souls in Platonic terms. These men are the philosophers, who are most probably those widely known and read authors of works that have spanned the centuries. Philosophers, or the lawgivers in Aristotelian terms, write in a way understandable to all men (*Politics*, 1263a30-39), to instruct each type of man, in order to produce sustainable human societies. Usually such texts are either decidedly hierarchical, as in the case of Confucianism, or at least assume some greater wisdom in the author imparting them. To deprive people of works written for them in one way or another is to deprive them of their humanity. To teach in a manner that does not even give consideration to a teaching's truth is to shirk constitutional responsibility by perpetuating ignorance of the lawgiver's discoveries. And, as a result, the skilled in method form an elite that concentrates its power in a diversity of demagogues until one of them attains rule through raw force or the society that is instituted tears itself apart. Simply put, here is the very essence of authoritarianism and of the tyrant. He possesses no Socratic shame in the

sense of being wise that he knows he knows nothing. Instead, the perpetuity of self-proclaimed knowledge is his essence as he sees himself fit to assume a knowledge that supersedes even that of the wisest men. To further examine the greatest obstacle in preventing such a development requires also a brief examination of Perkinson's predecessor.

Karl Popper, in his work *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, speaks of historicism as a mentality that removes the very necessary sense of responsibility from those who possess it. However, a different type of historicism (Strauss 1953, 9) seems to remove from him the responsibility of interpreting what Plato actually meant in exchange for a sort of modern psychoanalysis. Popper describes what he believes to be Plato's regime:

How does Plato solve the problem of avoiding class war? Had he been a progressivist, he might have hit on the idea of a classless, equalitarian society; for as we can see for instance from his own parody of Athenian democracy, there were strong equalitarian tendencies at work in Athens. But he was not out to construct a state that might come, but a state that had been – the father of the Spartan state, which was certainly not a classless society. (Popper 46)

By attempting to relegate a portion of Plato's thought to his era, Popper literally interprets the class system in economic terms, having issues to deal with regarding "economic interests" (Popper 46). This is consistent with the aforementioned way of thinking produced by Modernity's combination of Cartesian and existentialist impulses post-Nietzsche. He goes so far as to pit Plato against the "Athenian democrats who supported the abolitionist movement," (Popper 47), interpreting the master-slave relationship within the true regime in *The Republic*, and the *Ethics* and *Politics* by extension, as being equal to what is now called slavery. Escaping from the realm of the seeming, though, allows the reader to note that Popper speaks justly in describing a

regime that “had been” rather than one that “might come.” Understanding Plato’s regime as one that transcends time, era, and also historicism, grants additionally that it *has always been* in essence.

The Polity, translated from the same Greek word *Politeia*, is the essence of *The Republic* and the regime at which all other societies or their parts aim in some way to actualize. In actuality, unlike Popper and his student may be led to believe, *The Republic* is the enemy of the authoritarian impulses that seem, instead, to follow from Nietzsche. Although Aristotle himself admits that a Kingship or Aristocracy would be best ideally, it is neither practicable in its acute isolation of *eros* from the many nor its isolation of the rulers from the ruled. In some manner, this realization is consistent with Thrasymachus’ claim that justice is the advantage of the stronger, since “a good [in] actuality is better and more honorable than the potentiality” (*Metaphysics*, 1051a5). It is important to keep in mind that Thrasymachus is refuted by Socrates first on the basis of rulers thinking what was in their interest actually was not. Aristotle indicates, when speaking about the rulers and the ruled, that “what is beneficial to a part is beneficial to the whole also” (*Politics*, 1255b10-11). The problem of *eros* and the disconnect from the other segments of the political association are what Plato illustrates with Socrates’ guardians in the City in Speech, and the one embodied in Aristotle’s criticism in *The Politics*. His solution, rather than ruling solely by law which is to “rule badly” (*Politics*, 1255b9), is friendship among men who are called equals.

Those in the guardian class serve as the friendly bridge between the potential democrats and oligarchs, and are called “those in the middle between” (*Politics*, 1295b2). They are between both those differing in either the case of wealth or wisdom, and

societies “in which the middling element is numerous... tip the scale and prevent the opposing excesses from arising” (*Politics*, 1295b30-33). In order to develop the large middling class so that they have “have the same thing in common” (*The Republic*, 464a3-4), a society “must be made one and common through education” (*Politics*, 1263b31-32). All classes of men, with their differences in background and virtue, are to be brought together to become familiar with one another and share in a common idea of the good. Aristotle harnesses *eros* of the familiar present in Plato’s faux analogy of a dog being philosophic in “[distinguishing] friendly from hostile looks by nothing other than having learned the one and being ignorant of the other” (*The Republic*, 376b2-3). Their passions can thus be guided toward ends which differ from “injustice [which] is excess and deficiency” (*NE*, 1134a9). In the case of deficiency, right opinion and Socratic shame suffices. In the case of excess, there exists the consent of the governed to preserve that individualistic and more Rousseauian element only insofar that it need be tolerated. However, the reality underlying that consent is not to limit the realm of argument and opinion by intermixing the middling class and its stewards with the opinions of iron. Here is the utility of the liberal arts education, and the constant struggle it faces.

The middling class has been largely confused as to how the set of opinions it has been given has any real connection with the common good. Certainly, of the many schools of thought that currently dominate the Modern academy, the stated moral principles are typically compassion and equality. The ends at which these principles aim are the real matters at hand. Bloom writes in his controversial book *The Closing of the American Mind*:

[Education] pays no attention to natural rights or the historical origins of our regime, which are now thought to have been essentially flawed and regressive. It is progressive and forward-looking. It does not demand fundamental agreement or the abandonment of old or new beliefs in favor of the natural ones. It is open to all kinds of men, all kinds of life-styles, and all ideologies. There is no enemy other than the man who is not open to everything. But when there are no shared goals or visions of the public good, is the social contract any longer possible? (Bloom 1988, 27)

Soon after publishing these words, Bloom became that enemy. The American Council of Learned Societies would go so far as to denounce the book as having “potentially dangerous consequences” (Green 1998, 28). His question was never answered, although the response to his book may have been that answer. Recognizing equality nowhere beyond name gives rise to the beginning of extremist thought in considering all opinions, or at least all opinions about what is comprehensively important, as being equal. It creates the tyrant that emerges from the equality principle. Compassion is channeled in sparing a man shame, as Nietzsche proposes. Hence, right opinion and Socratic shame are obliterated immediately and society falls downward across the divided line of knowledge into the realm of imagination. Images look quite different from different perspectives, though. So the semblance of order, at least insofar as it is sustained through education, is left then to rely on the *eros* of familiarity. This slave morality is seemingly useless for any ruler, but the maintenance of familiarity supplied by this passion for equality and compassion has yet to be examined.

The ties that sustain reciprocity within the regime have gradually been eroded by tying the objects of the iron to the silver element. Students are very much encouraged to see reality through the iron lens of the passions. The psychology behind this assumes, as Hobbes does, that a person's claims or beliefs are invariably connected to their own private interest, or unwittingly to the exclusive interest of a group. The Hobbesian maxim of *nosce teipsum* (*Leviathan*, Introduction), or "know thyself," has left students asking "who am I?" However, they are left with no real answer. The remainder is several groups of interests at odds with others, with no reasonable argument sufficient – or even permitted – for one to convince the others. Although equality is the clothing of democracy, it would seem a stretch to claim that those involved in a given interest would not think their own to be in some way better than the others. Students are thereby encouraged to become ideologues in one way or another, sacrificing the public interest for a given private interest while unhinging the bonds of reciprocity. If the fields and concentrations were approached differently, in light of the *Good*, it is uncertain they would produce the same academic outcomes.

VIII. Modernity's Process

The expanding postmodern process, having grown out of modernism, has begun to usurp the realm of higher education. Harland Bloland details the perspective of postmodernism:

It may be viewed as a new epoch, or a new historical era. In either case, the major concepts and ideas of postmodernism provide a devastating attack on modernism. This assault renders as questionable the major assumptions and assertions of our modern culture. That is, it makes problematic what is taken for granted in a wide range of topic. The postmodern problematic zeroes in on hierarchies of any kind -- and

hierarchies are inherent in modern life -- with the view that 'there are no natural hierarchies, only those we construct.' (Bloland 525)

In the complete absence of hierarchies, what remains is an absolutist application of the equality principle. However, this deviation from classical philosophy carries with it the aforementioned problems. It obsesses over the fact that certain things might be intended or founded on "power and control" (Bloland, 525), only to end up "[seeking] rational solutions in a world that increasingly distrusts reason as a legitimate approach to problem solving" (Bloland, 525). Even structures and hierarchies founded on reason are not immune from the instilling of distrust in those who might follow. In Platonic terms, postmodernism amounts to a development mirroring the description of the democratic man on the verge of becoming consumed by tyranny:

"And," I said, "he doesn't admit true speech or let it pass into the guardhouse, if someone says there are some pleasures belonging to fine and good desires and some belonging to bad desires, and that the ones must be practiced and honored and the others checked and enslaved. Rather, he shakes his head at all this and says that all are alike and must be honored on an equal basis." (*The Republic*, 561b8-561c4)

The guardhouse in this case, which houses a society's spirited silver element, or its *thumos*, has been infiltrated by a deconstruction that has left a vacuum for only iron desires to be seen perpetuated by iron will. Of course, reducing dialogue to desires allows simply for similarities or differences in the preference of objects to be discussed. Hence, the most critical type of thinking by this mindset is simply the type that can question motive. Any real grounding in knowing a person's motive, though, requires a sort of mind-reading that can be tainted by the object preferred by the mind-reader. To postmodernists, it must become a power struggle for emotive persuasion and the mobilization of agents to carry it out coupled with the consequences of failing to be

persuaded. War is thus declared for the sake of pleasure and for honor provided by the semblance of justice these various proclamations carry. An example of this mentality is embodied in what is known as the "student learning imperative," where college faculty members are hired specifically to begin the deconstruction process upon a student's arrival; phrased innocuously, its purpose reads "to re-examine the philosophical tenets that guide the professional practice of student affairs" (College Student Educators International 2009). It is not a widespread phenomenon, taking place on campuses in a few states, but serves as a concentrated example of what has grown out of some curricula in the liberal arts. The National Association of Scholars describes the imperative in a recent publication asking for improvements in intellectual freedom:

It seeks to "transform" students, but in a doctrinaire and coercive way. It assumes that undergraduates arrive on campus bearing a benighted inheritance – the values of traditional American culture – that must be replaced by more enlightened attitudes. Students must confess their racial, sexual, and other prejudices; admit that American society is, by its nature, oppressive; and pledge to promote specific forms of social and political change. In short, the "student learning imperative" aims at winning converts to an orthodoxy. The Imperativists offer thought reform, not education. (National Association of Scholars 2009)

Thus, every man deemed is a tyrant but it is the noble man who is slave to another's tyranny in a world where every thought can be simplified as a Hobbesian statement of a man's own benefit. Students are to follow employees, not philosophers; yet, in the long run not even the economy prospers where instruction might be later given to deafened ears. It has been pointed out by Edwin J. Lattre that attempts at teaching morality in schools have often ended in a state of futility. He recognizes, further, that for schools "conversation about [moral issues] will be only a word game – perhaps a contest to see who can be most clever – insubstantial and without meaning or consequence" (Education

Week, 134). Morality, taught by argument and imposition, notoriously devolves into a semblance of Thrasymachean eristic. However, "attempting to convey value neutrality as an appropriate way to behave condemns life to triviality and education to insignificance" (Education Week, 144). It is evident to students that this is not realistic. Delattre continues, claiming further that if the young fail to see the significance in moral issues, they "will learn their habits from the streets, from demagogues, and from entertainment and commercial media that neither care about them nor love them" (Education Week, 144). A true education prevents such a travesty from occurring. Rather than deconstruction, imposition, simple choice, or the creation of one's own moral code, the *techne* behind each of these aims could instead be combined with the creative energies of synthesis to bring about a maieutics sustaining what has flourished traditionally. Likewise, viewing modern scholarship from such an *epistemological* perspective identifies it and forces it to speak justly.

In regard to the vocationally-oriented side of education, perhaps there is some justice in what later Marxists describe as the cause of economic faults or the mass production of what Marx calls "dead labor." Moving from labor as the essence of humanity, for which an argument can also be made for it belonging to spiders and some other animals, to *reason* allows for the definition and extension of virtue. Such virtue must replace wealth and property as the goal of human life. Likewise, what currently is being witnessed during the continuation of the 2008 recession may be described instead as the result of *dead virtue*. Money has been removed from virtue, despite the fact that "not from money does virtue come, but from virtue comes money" (*Apology of Socrates*, 30b). Money, in the hands of people unable to see beyond their own desires, except to

the extent that they may project the opinions guarding their own onto others' situations through the legalese of *right* and *choice*, descends into the realm of imagination. Here is the current struggle of the "worker," and what is now growing into the struggle of the country, and maybe world, as a whole. By refusing to pay attention to those poor in virtue, and deliver to them their due, Modernity has taken steps toward impoverishing itself. Although many of the money-makers work very hard, they are robbed of their surplus value with respect to what reifies and sustains it.

Herbert Marcuse of the Marxists brings up yet another question, this time concerning the neutrality of technology. Scholar Harland Bloland sums up Marcuse's and many Marxists' concerns:

Instrumental rationality in its current postmodern reading is seen as having forged the consumer society, in which commodification, the definition of persons and activities solely in terms of their market value, has become dominant. (Bloland 1995, 524-525)

"Uncontrollable technology," Bloland articulates, can be as easily associated with bad as with good. In the case of poor education for those who would harness these powers of technology, the former is inevitably more likely than the latter where they are slave to that technology in their education. Therein the instrumental is emphasized, and even seeing a thing is put second to the process underlying sight. To consider the iron impulse with respect to the scale of knowledge and the dialectic, how often can technology be neutral in usage within this society when *techne* is aimed downward toward nihilism of the imagination or otherwise by any ruling regime? There are always differing hues to any art or thing's use with respect to the soul of the user and his governing regime.

Nevertheless, life cannot be merely regarded as a commodity in pursuit of commodious living. Value neutrality in the technical, or in anything else, may not only be opinion – but a myth. Aside from offering systematic solutions, maybe some consideration could be given to whether the realm of opinion can be built upon to an extent allowing some thought to be given to wealth's source. Sharing the product of reason in common through education, as Aristotle suggests for growing the middling class, could be investigated as an alternative to the older and more regressive idea of sharing the product of labor or otherwise putting the passions first with no real endeavor toward friendship at all. The question then becomes whether an educational regime granting this could come into being, and further what must be overcome for it to occur.

There has been a notion, echoed from its beginnings in the modern era of philosophy, that human society is not a natural state of affairs. It is also one that reflects in the current mode of education. The post-modern notion of sustainability has completely missed the point. Its primary philosophical backing rejects the ideas of Plato and Aristotle that political society is natural, and also the contentions of social contract theorists that it is a practical necessity that there be majority rule. Especially rejected is a majority united behind similar metaphysical principles, which is deemed inherently guilty of oppression for solely personal interests. In other words, it supposes like Thrasymachus that justice is nothing other than the advantage of the stronger and that the cure for justice is the advantage of the weaker (*The Republic*, 338c). The ultimate cure for the slave moralists of Nietzsche, and by extension of Thrasymachus too, is the advantage of the weakest part of Man – simply the will to power of the passions. To become truly just, for the follower, is to become value-neutral or to give up what Marx

termed “ideologies,” in favor of focus on the physical entities and control of their distribution among those currently occupying the world’s political sphere. For the ruler, it is revaluation of all values aimed at private lust for power. Any notion of the *ought*, therefore, must reflect the *is* and provide for dominance of that *is*. In the case of Marx the *is*, however, is defined in terms of one class as opposing another class in control of physical property, with the obvious realization that conceptions of justice provided for given regimes. The careful scholar, however, will find that these imaginations and those advocating increasing technology, knowledge, or power for their own sake must find the root of their thinking in the work of Machiavelli:

I conclude, therefore, that since fortune changes and men remain set in their ways, men will succeed when the two are in harmony and fail when they are not in accord. I am certainly convinced of this: that it is better to be impetuous than cautious, because fortune is a woman, and it is necessary, in order to keep her down, to beat her and to struggle with her. And it is seen that she more often allows herself to be taken over by men who are impetuous than by those who make cold advances; and then, being a woman, she is always the friend of young men, for they are less cautious, more aggressive, and they command her with more audacity.

(*The Prince*, Ch. XXV)

Here, Machiavelli intentionally advocates the more Glauconian style of rule, as fortune must be ruled and “[rejects] none of those who glow with the bloom of youth” (*The Republic*, 474a). This is the rule of the “erotic man” (*The Republic*, 474d4), who demands that, for his purposes, human nature be mastered, or re-created, rather than seen

as a model to which technology or *techne* should instead be adapted. Hence, it is the mark of the tyrant, in his need for ever-higher standards of satisfaction, to prescribe an *ought* situated contrary to the metaphysical *is* on the highest level (RSV, Genesis 1:26). The image of a thing must reflect the thing itself. Likewise, agreement with Rousseau that speech is a mostly accidental outgrowth (*Discourse on Inequality*, 94-95), useless in articulating anything higher than what Plato terms opinion, reflects a halt of upward motion in individuals necessary in attaining *right opinion*. Ultimately, it subjects humanity to rule by the very technology that later Marxists lament. This is the same rule some critical theorists have seen as necessary to advance in order to achieve a progressive state that is beyond human.

One might be daring enough to say that America's next generations should not be left to suffocate under the accidental machinery of Descartes' *Discourse with No Exit*. Is this system's goal computer programs, begging for the raw pleasures of input? It seems it may be even less than that, since at least computer programs are knowingly built to receive certain kinds of input with discrimination and are acknowledged as having some sort of resulting purpose. The two-front war of philosophy between the passions and rationality has reached an end to its history that Hegel probably would not have imagined. It has been exchanged for a fragile peace, with both sides of this war considered equal and placed among one another for the same training, slave to *techne*, and aimed at immediate gratification with no other clear end. That people will truly resist these impulses, or that anything other than faction might result, is a daring assumption. Exercises in the nude, like those present within Book V of *The Republic*, have replaced the struggle of courtship between philosophy and the artisans by diluting the ends of their

mystery and substance. Furthermore, neither is expected to touch the forbidden counterpart. The spirited portion of society has not mitigated this idle viewing of imagery, but has instead promoted it in accordance with the equality principle characteristic of democracy. Rather than a group of truly passionate citizens with actions directed toward the maximum pleasures attainable – since these are their most potent when intermixed with some of what opposes some pleasures – America is left simply with a group of workers and consumers.

IX. The Forgotten Souls

Several might object to the practicality of implementing higher education in a different fashion, namely the manner from which all the other attempts are criticized. As has been demonstrated, Plato has formulated a hierarchy of individual souls that is, at its core, independent of age or socio-economic stature. There are peers in many respects, but also peers in essence with respect to souls [Appendix A]. With a view toward society's well-being, and without the authoritarian perceptions or temporal interests of their peers in essence, bronze and silver souls alike may be permitted in their own ways to harness the power of the golden souls of the past in order to synthesize a path for human existence. Hegel made an error in his attempt at striving for the goal all humans strive toward, instead taking steps in the direction of regress. It is in synthesizing that the human power of speech is unleashed in its full, creative capacity. Human societies are built upon a thesis, not simply in opposing existing social orders. This creative power, of

which Nietzsche was also conscious, is not without boundaries of necessity. Social orders are built to avoid anarchy, the lack of governance by reason, which is in all cases the ultimate antithesis of a *true* regime. They do not seek out differences in the realm of the normative or metaphysical, but rather seek to avoid the *real* contradiction that is the nihilism of obliteration. Hence, rather than stressing differences, a true education acknowledges those differences while attempting to find substantive common ground. It does not simply find people from different backgrounds to place them in close proximity in order to inculcate divisiveness, but rather goes beyond the physical to engage in dialogue grounded in the great texts of all cultures and backgrounds. Neglect of this need, and the actual consideration of intellectual substance, could explain why a study conducted during the 1990s indicated that only a small fraction of professors expected their students to exhibit key critical thinking skills (Winch 75). Perhaps common ground might be found even with the political regime originally established in America, strengthening and progressing it with a view of the common interest regardless of one's personal background. Here is the nature of truly critical thinking and its results. The loss of this potential advantage, a multiculturalism in the *realest* and most *progressive* sense, is the loss of those who take the political route and by extension of those who vote and are governed. C.S. Lewis has already outlined the beginnings for this endeavor (*The Abolition of Man*, Appendix-Illustrations of the *Tao*).

For the man who is ultimately governed, the bronze soul, an ugly truth is prescribed. It is prescribed to him even despite the fact that psychology famously teaches positive reinforcement to be stronger than negative reinforcement or punishment, and even deemed practical. He is somehow guilty, or disenfranchised, or incapable of ever

being satisfied in this life – and not in the Augustinian sense either. In his mind his recourse is to look outward at his victims or oppressors, and become either a selfless martyr or deliberate criminal. In any case, he must value one private interest over another. He is taught the wise men of the past are not wise, and are either foolish to the benefit of another at best or deliberately nefarious at worst. In many cases, as is often the case in courses entitled “History of Political Thought,” students never confront the texts because in addition to being granted increasingly higher grades it has seemed too much to ask that they actually read what the authors wrote, or even less that they think critically. A purported historical process of ever-increasing rationality largely appeases students only to thereby encourage them to forego their desire to think, except in regard to how those thinkers of the past might tickle their fancy in arbitrary ways or be adapted to suit their desires and decreasing attention spans. Truth, nature, and existence must be adapted to them – not vice versa. Students are flattered in this regard, rather than shamed in the Socratic sense, and suppose at the behest and signals of their instructors that they know much. Such courses provide students an image of an image of what these authors wrote at the ultimate jurisdiction of the professors. Here is *true* authoritarianism in education, as being taught the perception of a thing is different from seeing the thing itself. The teachings of the lawgivers are obscured. Even given the privilege of reading the actual texts and stories, or even the personal motivation to do so from time to time, it is not clear a student will see the author’s words represented by the professors as they are actually meant. As has been shown, the modus operandi of current scholars has been to assume themselves to be wiser than their predecessors and to interpret their words in modern terms. On the whole, absent the assumption students should really need to learn anything

of substance, they deem themselves wise and either become or continue to be narcissists (Twenge 2008, 919). Aside from being granted these excerpts during the remainder of the liberal arts in non-humanities majors, upon graduation these souls are governed by those who have experienced the same sort of education if not even more of it. Their love of the familiar, the Platonic maternal love, combines with outward recognition to give these sayings a semblance of justice and provide either the consent or support necessary to subvert the political order. However, given a truth that embodies beauty, unity, and that prescribes justice as being worthy of choosing for its own sake, the resolution of these and even further issues might be possible.

The benefits in the business world of a proper education are a great source of argument in its favor. Telling the truth and the paying back of debts (*The Republic*, 331c) are the cornerstone principles of contract law. The law itself, though, is often not sufficient to prevent injustices from occurring. It is limited to the capacities of men, or to the Machiavellian masters of fortune. However, utilizing *techne* with the aim of becoming omniscient in this sense would be totalitarian in nature and incongruent both with American character and the prescriptions of the Ancients. Likewise, this would be the case for the inevitable failure of attempting to manage an entire economy (*The Republic*, 425d7-425e1). In the case of Cephalus, the change in his ways comes as a result of his later religious piety. Polemarchus, a silver soul, interrupts Socrates' attempt to refute this type of morality by taking up Cephalus' argument and allowing him to escape. Certainly, a greater fervor with regard to metaphysical moral principles could be of use in preventing future debt crises or simply staving off white collar crime. The corruption of a single soul in the business world can cause laziness, fraud, and

exploitation on a massive scale. It took only one employee to cost Société Générale, a French bank, over \$7 billion through trading fraud (Jolly, 2008). Bernard Madoff's ponzi scheme cost the investors that trusted him a total of \$50 billion (Reid, 2008). Likewise, toleration of massive public debt, poor regulatory enforcement, over-regulation, and the over-abundant ease of credit is less likely in a group of politicians held accountable by a public with strong belief in this principle of contracts. The interests of politicians would be thrust toward actually being the public interest, since it would be the sole source of honor. Money can thus possess value coming from ever-increasing virtue, awarding the one who invests it with profit and the one who saves it with great interest. Hence, on both an interpersonal and broad level, education can allow business and the work of the artisans to be sustained as something profitable and therefore worthy of attempting.

The silver souls could take pleasure in being honored, and knowing the reasons for being honored to be true and sustainable. Professors and scholars might realize society's true need for them as guides along humanity's path. Soldiers might protect their country, knowing its principles to be founded on truth and experiencing the appreciation of which they are worthy for the sacrifice of their service. Parents might take pride in raising their children, and the values in which they have instilled in them. The politicians can experience confidence in their actions, in being guided by virtue, and know with assurance that they will be honored by history for work that will produce long-term success. Pleasures for all types of souls abound unfettered in the true regime, which is grounded on its common property of justice and friendship. However, as the situation now stands, these pleasures and even the economic pleasures that sustain them become rarer by the day. Professors have become authority figures who transmit

ideology, often as members of institutions that concern themselves with removing students from the teachings of their parents. Parents, who are typically convinced in this new era of supposed progress that their children are wiser than themselves, watch quietly as bystanders while their sons and daughters are stripped of decades of work in a matter of semesters. Allan Bloom noticed this new faith in the youth decades ago (Bloom 1988, 58). Their children learn that on some level they are to be shamed, and shamed especially for shaming others on the basis of their principles. This level of shame, however, is not *true* shame; it is the Nietzschean and Dionysian shame of flattery. This is especially the case for parents espousing the Western, Socratic traditional values generally associated with the majority. It seems every group and country is entitled to its culture, except for America's middling class. The double standard produces doubt and the mirages of moral ambiguity. If the idealized form of America were put in terms of a man, the aforementioned aims would render it a man without a chest, left only with a stomach in direct control of the brain (*Abolition of Man*, Ch. 1). Sophists and politicians profit for making light of their own country, perpetuating the sophistry, at times serving themselves as demagogues and directors of the mirage imagery against the group that sustains its values.

America has become a nation that despises itself. It carries with it the tone of disdain and contempt of Machiavelli's *Mandragola* (*Mandragola*). As a result, every type of soul suffers as all things are eventually lost in the failure to ascend toward knowledge. The process of 'economization,' where education is slave to the economy, has failed even on the basis of economics alone. Despite decades of producing technical systemic experts, and appointing them to positions within the government, the United

States has gone down the road of economic disaster. Efforts from the constructed top downward by the administrative hand of the state and the *techne* of experts appear dubious in their prospects of success. Bronze and iron alone have not been able to sustain themselves, regardless of technical skill. On the interpersonal level, friendship in Aristotle's truest sense has become more and more difficult to attain. Where no common sense of justice is permitted, it becomes impossible. However, friendship is a necessity among men with such a variety of natures. Further, there is evidence that indicates there may be some truth to Plato's *Noble Lie*, as twin studies have indicated remarkable similarities in interests shared by twins separated at birth (McGue, 4). Hence, there could be a physiological component extending to society's tri-part soul as well. Lacking friendship and the justice it sustains, men are turned against one another on the basis of petty desires. A drive toward one set of those desires or another is purchased unwittingly at the price of tuition. The pleasures associated with friendship in the true regime, for which all people are to naturally strive, are diluted if not vanquished in some spheres. Class warfare and petty bickering among various groups outweighs the public interest, which is deemed non-existent as a slave argument. Reason loses its status as a master. The country, losing its master by extension, loses with it its culture, sense of justice, and inevitably its borders. Nations are founded on conceptions of justice, and where these exist no longer borders are but obstacles. A nation becomes merely an economy, since only economies are deemed value neutral and not driven by the supposedly inevitable rationalizations of personal interest alone. Economic growth can be quantified. Even among those who claim the economy produces simple rationalizations, or lacks neutrality, it typically is considered as a mandatory and necessary stage for achieving a

master regime. The Marxists, the economy's biggest critics, are even slave to the economy. The struggle becomes not one of principle, rather one of material goods. The 'moral' and 'noble' men become simply the best distributors of goods, and the most 'compassionate' satisfiers of want. Where simply want is opposed, however, the virtuous are called oppressors and deemed naïve at best. This perception is ripe for exploitation by those wishing to attain political power, so that it may be obtained in a fashion that, yet again, mirrors the transition from democracy to tyranny:

Doing battle they hold sway themselves; and naming shame simplicity, they push it out with dishonor, a fugitive; calling moderation cowardliness and spattering it with mud, they banish it; persuading that measure and orderly expenditure and rustic and illiberal, they join with many useless desires in driving them over the frontier. (*The Republic*, 560d1-6)

By calling each thing its opposite, and crowning that opposite with virtue, Nietzsche's slave moralists pull down the just to make room for a tyrant's stand in a fit of disguised Dionysian conquest. In becoming a slave nation, the willfully virtuous dwindle, necessitating brute force within to accomplish the will of its new master. Thus is the fate of an education system that is slave to an economy. There is but one true master, and it exists in the lasting part of human society that truly educates (*The Republic*, 473c10-e5).

X. The Future: Implications and Possible Solutions

It is clear that neither does philosophy rule within the regime of modern higher education nor are its leaders and executors philosophers. Incidentally, the same can be

said for the political rulers the regime has produced. Until instructors serve as auxiliaries and guardians, placing themselves in the position of a guide amongst fellow students of philosophers, the educational regime will only suffice to perpetuate widespread calamity. The rejection of shame at the expense of individual ego must beget a situation that is contrary to the self-interest of every individual, and shameful to all. There remains the possibility, though, that students might be instilled with the virtue and with common values that produce the *real* value of all things measured. It begins with education in the liberal arts. Education should be distinguished from simply indoctrination or the indiscriminate transfer of information from professor to student, instead providing students with direct access to history utilizing primary sources insofar as possible, the ideas of the past that shaped that history in their original form, readings of the texts that define the great world religions, and as many of the texts defining of the major philosophic traditions as possible (*Abolition of Man*, Appendix-Illustrations of the Tao). Professors should seek simply to represent these ideas and arguments as faithfully as possible, since ideas, represented by speech, transcend time and to exist must be considered as things independent of interpretations. Otherwise it must be foolish ever to read or listen to a thing, assuming as a first principle the impossibility that speakers are ever capable of accurately representing themselves. How then could even the representatives of the representations, and so on, ever be trusted? Speech would revert to the animal level, becoming voice, therefore negating itself and reducing politics to an act of bestial warfare. Rather than images of images of the truth, students could be provided full access to the actual materials and attempt to understand them as the original authors and actors intended them. Until these standards are achieved, scholars and statesmen

alike will be removed from the equipment necessary for them to produce a truly human society.

As aforementioned, it will be difficult to implement a system of such rigor when it is apparently contrary to the demands of students and lost on the immediate interests of the business world. The long-term benefits provided by knowledge of nature and its mandates, as seen throughout all the cultures in the world, has so far been stifled, preventing a corresponding benefit in the whole able to maximize potential benefit to every individual in each of the separate walks of life. This is a sign that both students and universities have failed to structure their habits and modes in accordance with nature. However, knowing the problem is simply not sufficient for a work of political science. As Aristotle points out, in accordance with Plato's cave model, the task of offering a replacement solution will be especially necessary since:

It would seem to belong to the [science] which is most authoritative and most architectonic... [and] politics appears to be as such; for it is this which regulates what sciences are needed in a state and what kind of sciences should be learned by each [kind of individuals] and to what extent. (*NE*, 1094a27-1094b3)

Hence, the task must become prescriptive and utilize in its prescriptions the advice of the great political scientists. It is vital to note that the solution is articulated only to outline the *telos* of educators themselves. Any changes in structure are slave to human nature, and seriously specifying with strict rigor some goal or means to govern fortune is akin to the mistake of Glaucon, Machiavelli, and Nietzsche. Hence, it will be most practical "to indicate the truth roughly and in outline" (*NE*, 1094b21-22) as people must first be

persuaded and their habits improved on the individual level. This will simply be the educational regime *in speech*. Whether or not it is also possible for it to come into being remains a question decided by experts and specialists. Considering the liberal arts education of the past, it appears that despite not possessing college degrees, artisans and businessmen still could enjoy great success. However, as the economy has shifted toward being more service-oriented, universities have made a corresponding shift in expanding their offerings. The mentality arose, eventually, that a person was by default destined for the catch-all of the university. A liberal arts education, and the course load necessary to attain it, was apparently not the forte of many in the technical arts. Over time, the liberal arts and humanities segments of education shrunk to accommodate the demands of the new majority and of economic forces. As a solution, so that the work of the businessman does not taint the work of the statesman and scholar, or vice versa, perhaps an alternative to the four-year major degree could be an advanced technical training. As it stands now, core requirements common to all majors are subject to the demands of students from outside of the departments in which those core requirements reside and to each of their respective career paths.

With respect to degree majors, a model similar to that of the early 1900s might suffice for those who wish to undertake the course of a traditional degree. A major could be considered to be more like what is now a minor, with students sharing the same general liberal arts curriculum as the basis. It seems a very difficult argument to make that the technological advancements and innovation in fields such as medicine have nothing to do with the expansion of education in these fields. Hence, some undergraduate familiarity with major-specific subject matter will likely prove necessary

in the graduate and business spheres alike. Ideally, these people would have their sights set upon being masters of their arts and holding leadership positions in their fields. If a silver soul wished, for practical purposes of his circumstances, to partake in artisanship he could do so with grounding in the principles of his education. Prospective masters degree students of the general arts might be required to hold a four-year degree in order to commence training in that general field. Then possessing their more specialized master's degree, so to speak, they could be considered qualified to train those in the subordinate arts falling under the category of their general art. Training in a general art and subordinate arts alike could be reserved to those possessing doctoral degrees. Those who decide to undertake the liberal arts route will have the greatest of burdens, being required to master several sciences including a broad array of earth sciences, mathematics, economics, history, literature, politics, religion, philosophy, and especially political philosophy. This proposition seems somewhat similar, at face value, to what is currently attempted at most universities; it is a different order. However, the other part of the distinction consists in the manner and rigor with which these courses are instituted. Each course would require intensive reading into the major texts of the subject, as well as some knowledge of the intellectual history behind each of them. *Critical* understanding of general ideas and principles underlying the arts must be demonstrated. Students failing to supply both a substantive knowledge and understanding of the original works, primary sources, and ideas behind each of these arts and sciences must be allowed to fail. These students must be pained as Socrates pained Athens, and informed in one way or another that they are not wise. Likewise, failure to read or to take the time grasping the subject matter must be deemed shameful. Given this information, students who

repeatedly fail might then take the clear and available path of mastering a single art. This alternative grants professors classes of students genuinely interested in learning, and allows those who are not lovers of learning to learn in order to satisfy more immediate bronze ends in the right way. Professors are enabled to design classes of high rigor and have them actually be feasible, since the interest level of the students will be distributed among either dedicated scholars or career-interested specialists. Also the combined course load informs all parties who the leaders truly are, serving as a cure for the non-Socratic presupposition of knowledge on the part of the ruled. Hence this new model potentially aids in supplying moderation in the regime, granting that those without knowledge listen to those with some of it rather than supposing they know better.

The changes in terms of teaching load under such a system would be minimal for professors and would be of great benefit to students. The students would simply be redistributed such that those possessing interest in a subject participate in each respective class. Those partaking in *techne* would simply become more skilled in less time, and would fall under the leadership and advice of the scholars rather than iron desires. The silver souls, building cultured communities through their leadership, might then spread their wisdom to the bronze souls. Rather than exposure to ideas easily misunderstood, or teachings that might deprogram them of their principles inciting their action in one direction or another, those more closely tied to their passions could experience a life free of faction. The bronze, then, could subject the iron souls to the necessary laws as guided by silver. Silver could be immune to slavery by bronze, rendering the middling element whole and distinctly opposed from the “men without chests” (*The Abolition of Man*, Ch.1) possessing but a brain governed by a stomach. This correction is especially

important, as the middling part “is readiest to obey reason” (*Politics*, 1295b5-6). Ease of simple facts, and other methods corresponding to indoctrination and inculcation of false confidence, would probably be virtually eliminated as it would be less likely to be demanded by serious scholars with cultured, inquiring minds. Sophistry’s iron support could fall from beneath it, replacing the whole thing with scholarship and right education through shame and moderation. Likewise, the Kingship could appear in the regime within a regime, bringing democracy closer again toward the publicly-interested Polity.

Shame intermixed with friendship becomes the solution, embodying the *love* of wisdom and of fortune. As there are two primary conceptions of education, and alternate means for attaining them, there are also two conceptions of love. The nature of each type is ultimately decided by whether the appetitive part or the rational part of the soul rules. Crossing the divided line of knowledge, the second type must be derived by the intellect. Machiavelli spells out the first type of love, however, after the first act of his play

Mandragola:

He who makes no test, Love,
of your great power, hopes in vain
ever to bear true witness to
what might be the highest worth of heaven;
nor does he know how, at the same time, one can live and die,
how one can pursue harm and flee from good,
how one can love oneself
less than others, how often
fear and hope freeze and melt hearts;
nor does one know how men and gods alike
dread the arms with which you are armed.
(*Mandragola*, Act I Scene 2)

Machiavelli’s blaspheming of *Love’s* name is directly opposed to the Socratic teaching as “all gods and human beings hate the *true lie*” (*The Republic*, 382a4-5). The focus, in this type of love, is limited to one man’s existence upon the earth. Pleasure is found on the

outside, and not by amplifying the virtue of the soul within. It is not Love (*Analects*, XV.20) rather indulgence in the passions predicated upon the passions simply and ceasing only in death. Hence, it seeks "to live and die" simultaneously; it lives by embracing the passions as life's purpose, and it dies by the imminent destruction it renders to the whole as a result. In *But if a Living Dance Upon Dead Minds*, Poet E.E. Cummings seems to differentiate this Machiavellian conception of love with *Love* itself:

but if a living dance upon dead minds
 why, it is love; but at the earliest spear
 of sun perfectly should disappear
 moon's utmost magic, or stones speak or one
 name control more incredible splendor than
 our merely universe, love's also there:
 and being here imprisoned, tortured here
 love everywhere exploding maims and blinds
 (but surely does not forget, perish, sleep
 cannot be photographed, measured; disdains
 the trivial labeling of punctual brains...
 -Who wields a poem huger than the grave?
 from only Whom shall time no refuge keep
 though all the weird worlds must be opened?

)Love

(Cummings, 1982)

The Apollonian element of the Sun is required to extinguish the former type of love, by revealing it for what it is. The enchantment of the passions and the resulting dramatic effect of being isolated to the earthly and bodily do not suffice. The intermixture of life and death as simultaneous ends in love is not celebrated for a single man's earthly pleasure. Instead, love is "imprisoned, tortured" when constrained to these conditions as tamed fortune and, over time, causes an inevitable explosive destruction. The minds themselves are to be called living, and not merely the motion of the dance. *Love* is not the relative frequency of motion of particulars, or temperature as in *Mandragola*. Yet, absent this revelation, *Love* itself is invisible within the poem: it can be seen exclusively

through its effects. It is only parenthetical to the reader or thinker who is not careful. The last line, however, cautions that this sort of *Love* can make the man who looks carefully seem blind. The ones who see nothing are not to create in its stead, confining it within time's river of *eros* with "punctual brains" enamored by the dance; this is fool's gold (*The Will to Power*, 1059.3). Likewise, those who propose that Man look higher are not naïve, or in need of "a wet nurse" (*The Republic*, 343a3-4), as Thrasymachus would say. Rather these are the men who are practical and who truly adapt the prescriptive *ought* to the *is* – they are the men of *political philosophy*.

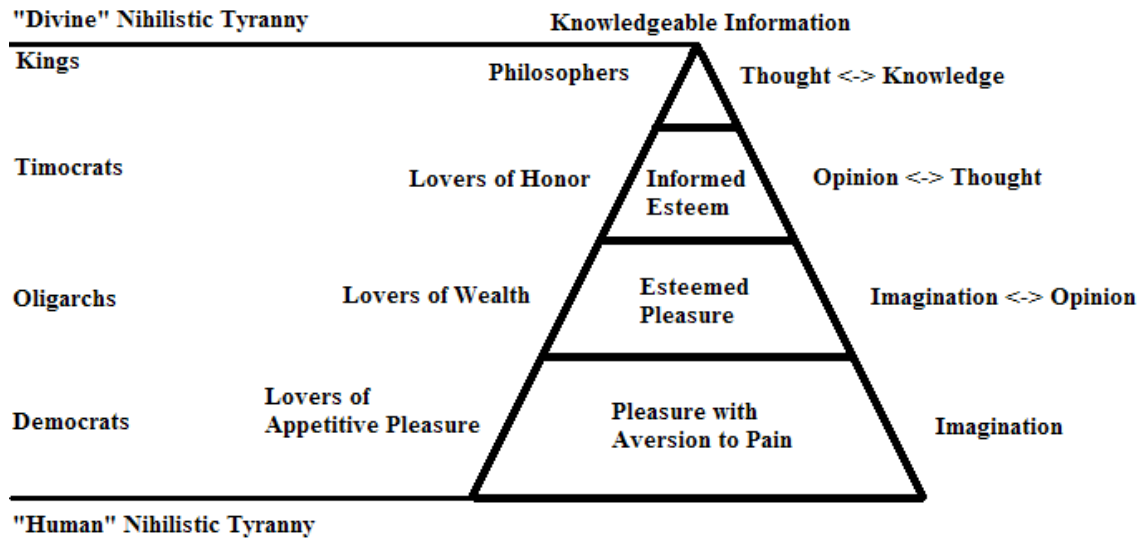
It is in this way, or some similar fashion, that America could possibly bring its population toward knowledge in order to secure freedom and prosperity for its future. Although the mid-twentieth century change in education's exclusivity has seemingly produced a future that is dim for all types of men, it is still possible that it be harnessed by professors themselves so the educational regime can be wholly beneficial. Perhaps by considering the advice of those who came before it, the content and organization of courses could be aimed by the regime toward serious scholarship useful in producing a true social *thumos*. From the stability provided therein, all types of men might experience the best possible pleasures in their best possible ways. Each of the arts, mastered by the guardians at the advice of golden souls, could be directed in a dialectical fashion consistent with justice and aimed toward the *Good*. The gap in the common property of justice created by class warfare, and the other divisions, is bridged through irony and by taking the advice of Marx when he famously says "from each according to his ability, to each according to his need." Through shame, those lacking knowledge may know what they lack and those possessing it may realize, as others like C.S. Lewis have

(*The Abolition of Man*, Ch.1), how to use it and otherwise how not to use it (*Analects*, II.16). Thus, in continuing its journey spanning hundreds of years, America may be permitted to fare well.

Appendix A:

# of Rulers in Name	Public-interested	Self-interested
One	Kingship	Tyranny
Few	Aristocracy	Oligarchy
Many	Polity	Democracy

Kingship <-- Timocracy -- Oligarchy -- Democracy --> Tyranny
 (Type of individual counsel governing regime.)



Appendix B:

Supporting Table II-1a: Bachelor's Degree Completions in the Humanities (Absolute Number and as a Percentage of All Bachelor's Degree Completions), 1966–2004

	Bachelor's Degrees (NSF)*	Bachelor's Degrees (CIP)*	% of All Bachelor's Degrees (NSF)	% of All Bachelor's Degrees (CIP)
1966	90,948		17.36	
1967	99,280		17.65	
1968	111,923		17.57	
1969	127,370		17.35	
1970	131,558		16.48	
1971	138,646		16.39	
1972	137,097		15.33	
1973	132,023		14.19	
1974	121,909		12.77	
1975	107,262		11.51	

1976	96,155		10.29	
1977	86,857		9.36	
1978	79,982		8.60	
1979	74,591		8.01	
1980	70,754		7.53	
1981	68,564		7.24	
1982	67,664		7.02	
1983	66,000		6.73	
1984	66,259		6.72	
1985	66,360		6.70	
1986	68,263		6.82	
1987	70,628	100,060	7.04	9.97
1988	74,424	104,359	7.40	10.37
1989	81,578	114,067	7.92	11.07
1990	89,851	124,101	8.46	11.68
1991	98,263	135,704	8.87	12.25
1992	104,985	146,715	9.13	12.76
1993	107,526	150,243	9.12	12.74
1994	104,813	146,390	8.86	12.37
1995	101,056	144,435	8.60	12.30
1996	99,640	143,831	8.45	12.19
1997	97,118	142,065	8.18	11.97
1998	99,043	145,024	8.26	12.09
2000	100,519	148,122	8.02	11.82
2001	100,799	151,182	8.01	12.02
2002	104,436	156,240	8.00	11.97
2003	108,392	162,853	7.97	11.98
2004	112,048	168,882	7.96	12.00

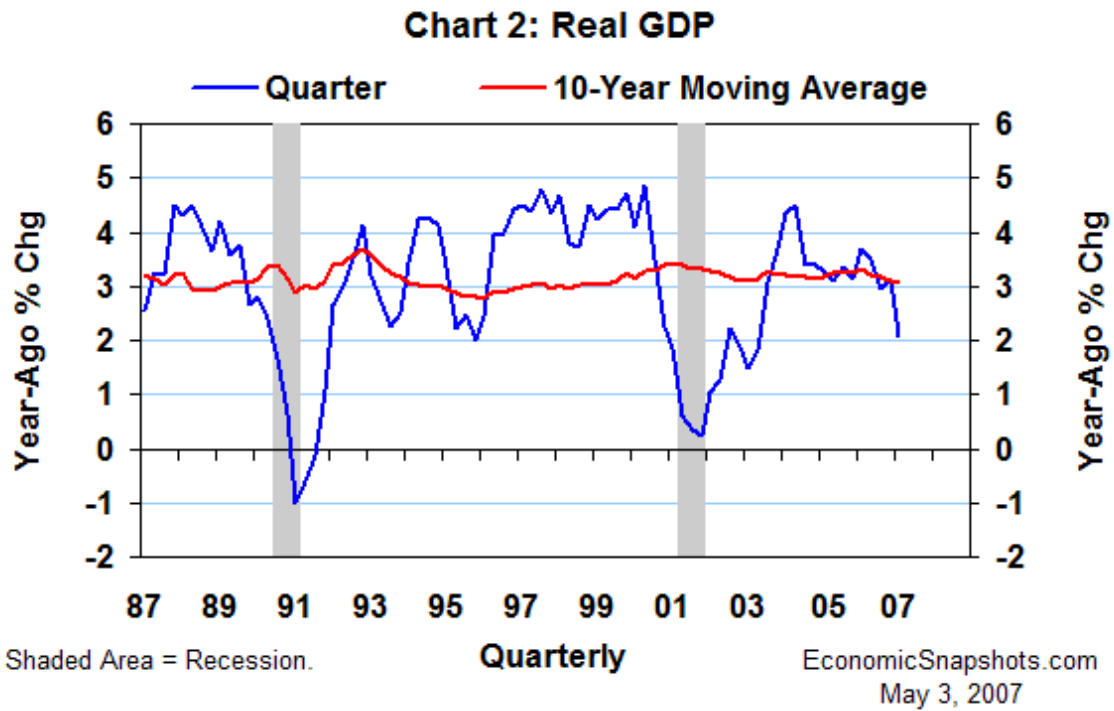
* Please see "Note on the Data Used to Construct Degree-Related Indicators" for an explanation of the differences between the two trend lines.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Data System; accessed via the National Science Foundation's Online Integrated Science and Engineering Resources Data System (WebCASPAR).

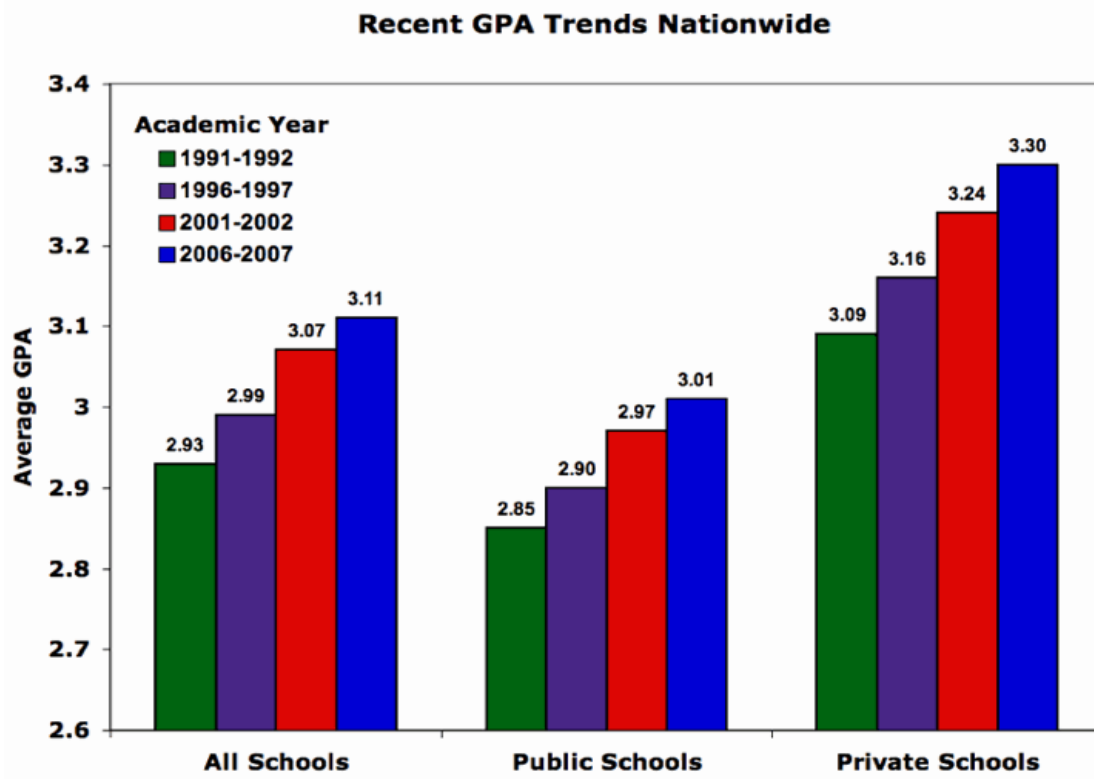
Assembled by the American Academy of Arts & Sciences for inclusion in the first edition of the Humanities Indicators.

(Humanities Indicators 2009)

Appendix C:



Appendix D:



Works Consulted

- Aristotle. 1991. *The Politics*. Excerpts from *Aristotle: Selected Works, third edition*. Hippocrates G. Apostle and Lloyd P. Gerson. Peripatetic Press: Des Moines, Iowa.
- Aristotle. 1991. *The Nicomachean Ethics*. Excerpts from *Aristotle: Selected Works, third edition*. Trans. and eds. Hippocrates G. Apostle and Lloyd P. Gerson. Peripatetic Press: Des Moines, Iowa.
- Blight, James G. 1981. "Authoritarianism in Western Educational Thought." *History of Education Quarterly* 21(3): 343-346. JSTOR (November 26th, 2008).
- Boland, Harland G. 1995. "Postmodernism and Higher Education." *The Journal of Higher Education* 66(5), pp. 521-559. JSTOR (November 10th, 2008).
- Bloom, Allan. 1988. *The Closing of the American Mind*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- College Student Educators International. 2009. "The Student Learning Imperative: Implications for Student Affairs." http://www.myacpa.org/sli_delete/sli.htm.
- Confucius. 2004. *The Analects*. Trans. James Legge. The University of Adelaide Library. <http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/c/confucius/c748a/>.
- Cummings, E.E. 1982. "But if a Living Dance Upon Dead Minds." E.E. Cummings Complete Poems, 1904-1962. Edited by George J. Firmage. Liveright Publishing: New York.
- Derrida, Jacques. 1967. *Speech and Phenomena*. As reproduced in *A Derrida Reader*. Ed. Peggy Kamuf. 1991. Columbia University Press.
- Diprose, Rosalyn. 2000. "What is (Feminist) Philosophy?" *Hypatia*, 15(2): 115-132. JSTOR (January 4th, 2009).

Economic Snapshots. "Chart 2: Real GDP." www.economicssnapshots.com. (March 15th, 2009)

Edwards, Virginia. 2007. *The Last Word: The Best Commentary and Controversy in American Education*. Education Week. New York: Jossey-Bass.

Fowler, James W. 1984. "Pluralism, Particularity, and Paideia." *Journal of Law and Religion* 2(2), pp. 263-307. JSTOR (November 10th, 2008).

Grade Inflation. "Recent GPA Trends Nationwide." www.gradeinflation.com. (March 16th, 2009)

Green, S. J. D. 1998. "'The Closing of the American Mind,' Revisited." *The Antioch Review* 56(1): 26-36. JSTOR (February 8th, 2009).

Hamilton, Alexander, James Madison, and John Jay. 2001. *The Federalist*. Liberty Fund: Indianapolis.

Hawking, Stephen. 1996. *The Illustrated A Brief History of Time*. Bantam Publishing: New York.

Hobbes, Thomas. 1997. *Leviathan*. Simon and Schuster Inc: New York, New York.

Humanities Resource Center Online. 2009. "Undergraduate Degrees in the Humanities." <http://www.humanitiesindicators.org/content/hrcoIIA.aspx#topII1>. (March 15th, 2009).

Jolly, David. 2008. "\$7.1 Billion Fraud Uncovered at Société Générale." *New York Times*.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/24/business/worldbusiness/25socgen.html>.

Lewis, C.S. 2002. *The Abolition of Man*. Columbia University.
<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/augustine/arch/lewis/abolition1.htm>.

- Machiavelli, Niccoló. 1981. *Mandragola*. Trans. Flaumenhaft, Mera J. Waveland Press: New York.
- McGue, Matt and Thomas J. Bouchard Jr. "Genetic and environmental influences on human psychological differences." *Journal of Neurobiology*. Volume 54 (1): 4-45. Wiley Database (September 17th, 2008).
- Maimonides, Moses Ben. 1975. *The Eight Chapters*. Excerpts from *Ethical Writings of Maimonides*. Trans and eds. Raymond L. Weiss and Charles Butterworth. Dover Publications: Mineola, New York.
- National Association of Scholars. "Rebuilding Campus Community: The Wrong Imperative." <http://www.nas.org/polStatements.cfm>. (March 15th, 2009).
- Neilson, Francis. 1946. "Review: Education and the Modern Man." *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 6(1): 121-129. JSTOR (September 2nd, 2008).
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. 2000. *The Antichrist*. Trans. Anthony Ludovici. Prometheus Books: New York.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1974. *The Gay Science*. Trans. Walter Kauffman. Random House: Toronto.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. 2008. *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. Trans. Thomas Common. Dover Publications: New York. Google Books (April 12th, 2009).
http://books.google.com/books?id=HKsbRh-UNq4C&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_summary_r&cad=0.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1968. *The Will to Power*. Trans. Walter Kauffman. Vintage: New York.
- Plato. 1999. *Phaedo*. Trans. David Gallop. Oxford University Press: New York.

- Plato. 1998. *The Apology of Socrates*. Excerpted from *Four Texts on Socrates*. Trans. and ed. Thomas West. Cornell University Press: London.
- Plato. 1968. *The Republic*. Translated by Allan Bloom. Basic Books: United States.
- Reid, Tim. 2008. Times Online. "\$50 billion at stake after Wall St broker Bernard Madoff is arrested over 'world's biggest swindle.'" http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/industry_sectors/banking_and_finance/article5333901.ece.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. 1984. *A Discourse on Inequality*. Trans. Maurice M. Cranston. Penguin Classics: New York.
- Revised Standard Version Bible. <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/r/rsv/>. (Accessed December 30th, 2009 – March 28th, 2009).
- Rudolph, Frederick. 1990. *The American College and University: A History*. University of Georgia Press: Athens, Georgia.
- Smith, David H. 1978. "Scientific Knowledge and Forbidden Truths." *The Hastings Center Report* 8(6): 30-35. JSTOR (November 10th, 2008).
- Strauss, Leo. 1953. *Natural Right and History*. University of Chicago Press: London.
- Strauss, Leo. 1964. *The City and Man*. University of Chicago Press: Chicago and London.
- Tarnopolsky, Christina. 2004. "Prudes, Perverts, and Tyrants: Plato and the Contemporary Politics of Shame." *Political Theory*. Vol. 32(4): 468-494. JSTOR (September 2nd, 2008).
- Twenge, Jean M. 2008. "Further Evidence of an Increase in Narcissism Among College Students." *Journal of Personality*. Blackwell Publishing, Inc. (March 27th, 2009).

Thelin, John R. 2004. *A History of American Higher Education*. Baltimore, Maryland:
The Johns Hopkins University Press.

U.S. Department of Commerce. 1975. *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial
Times to 1790*. Bureau of Statistics. Washington, D.C.

Winch, Christopher and Peter Wells. 1995. "The Quality of Student Writing in Higher
Education: A Cause for Concern?" *British Journal of Educational Studies*
43(1):75-87. JSTOR (November 10th, 2008).

Wittgenstein, Ludwig. n.d. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Project Gutenberg. E-text
5740. <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/5740>. (January 4th, 2009 – February 3rd,
2009).

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Ms. Margaret Fain for introducing me to the world of intensive research. Her comments and revisions have been invaluable, providing me with lessons that will be fruitful for years to come. I would also like to thank my departmental advisor, Dr. Paul Peterson, for his patience, inspiration, and knowledge. His teaching has ignited a spark in my learning that may not have been triggered in such a way otherwise. It has been a privilege to be a student in the Department of Political Science at Coastal Carolina University, and I am greatly indebted to the Department as a whole. Similarly, the Honors Program has provided me with a multitude of opportunities that I would never have otherwise enjoyed – the faculty has my gratitude. Thank you all.