The Crisis of the Humanities and the Public Research Universities: University of California, San Diego, as a Case Study*

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> *In fact, far from being an unsurpassable "end in itself," the liberal cultivation of personality is characterized by a multiplicity of ends. Its goals have included civility, taste, bodily grace, aesthetic "wholeness," eloquence and others, depending on the use of particular techniques of cultivation and the circumstances of their deployment. Indeed, we might be tempted to say that it is not the absence but the multiplicity of social purposes that characterizes liberal education; not the opposition between culture and utility but the utility of education.*
>
> Ian Hunter, in *Accounting for the Humanities*, 31

WHEN IT COMES TO BROACHING THE SUBJECT OF THE FATE of humanities departments or of the humanities in general in the current juncture, as a member of the faculty of a public university it is increasingly impossible for me to do so without reference to the fallout from the deep economic recession that began in 2008 and how it has affected state-funded higher education. The financial collapse caused by commercial and

investment banks' unregulated speculation and the resulting government deficits have renewed calls in Europe and North America for the radical restructuring and even privatization of many institutions that have been associated with the public sector since the beginning of the twentieth century, not least of which is higher education. While their presence is not remotely related to the problem of the current crisis, in policy circles and legislatures their reduction is now deemed part of the solution.

It is equally difficult to write on this subject without reference to specific contexts of nineteenth-century Europe and North America that shadow contemporary discussions, especially in the United States and the United Kingdom, and in which pressures exerted on the liberal arts by a rising pragmatic, commercial culture were perhaps the most direct and unmediated. In light of this tradition, one is tempted to ask when, if ever, since the nineteenth century were the humanities *not* in crisis or on the defensive. Closer to our own times, studies have shown that in the United States the proportion of undergraduate students majoring in the humanities dropped 50 percent between 1970 and 1988 and has remained largely flat at 12 percent since 1992.[1] However, situations vary from state to state and school to school, and some universities seem to be sheltered from the present crisis: large numbers of graduating seniors at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, have majored in the humanities (25 percent); Cornell University, a hybrid public-private institution, after many lean years has recently allocated an additional twenty FTE positions to the humanities; and many—but not all—private schools enjoy healthy humanities enrollments.

The writings of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century authors such as Immanuel Kant, John Newman, and Matthew Arnold still enjoy a legacy in today's debates, in which humanists often address the crises affecting the humanities and public universities either by refusing to make arguments to the larger public as to the value of what they do or by proposing idealized visions of the humanities-based university as the bastion of noninstrumental thought and historical knowledge and the free development of the self. It's as if they took the arguments of the proponents of the private sector in the United States and United Kingdom who have traditionally dismissed the humanities as impractical and elitist and made a point of honor out of these criticisms. Such a picture does not stand up to scrutiny, if critical histories of the arts of self-cultivation, the humanities, and the university itself by authors such as Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu, Ian Hunter, and Christopher Newfield have any value. However, this historical perspective scarcely diminishes the sense of peril that many history, literature, and philosophy departments face today as resources dry up.

In what follows I attempt to assess the current predicament of the humanities by placing them in the concrete institutional context of the public university, where the crisis is perhaps the most alarming. I begin with the peculiar history of my own department at the University of California, San Diego, one of ten campuses of the University of California, which is the largest public research university system in the United States. I then extend my considerations to the wider context of US and British academe and, finally, contemporary responses by humanists to the crisis. This may be seen as something of a first step toward rethinking the humanities in the current moment. And if I don't make concrete suggestions in the way of reorganizing humanities departments, I try to indicate a few measures that might reposition the humanities in new ways both on campus and with respect to society at large.

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[1] Humanities Resources Online, "Bachelor Degrees Completions in the Humanities (1966–2009)," http://www.humanitiesindicators.org/content/hrcoIIA.aspx#topII1 (accessed June 15, 2012).

THE DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Most of what I have to say concerns the situation in California and the United States of public institutions of higher learning and not private, nonprofit colleges and universities, which face a very different set of constraints and pressures. In 1988 I left the Department of French at Middlebury College, a private liberal arts college in rural Vermont, to become a member of the Department of Literature at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), a major public research university. The school was founded in 1960 as part of the famous University of California Master Plan devised under the guidance of then governor Pat Brown, father of the current governor, and Clark Kerr, former Berkeley chancellor and president of the UC system. The Master Plan was the result of political battles and compromises in a conservative state political climate, and it accelerated the expansion of the University of California by establishing new campuses in Irvine, Santa Cruz, and San Diego in anticipation of the arrival of the baby boom generation. Higher education was then tuition free. Incorporating the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UCSD was originally conceived to be a graduate school of science only, but this was quickly abandoned, and in 1963–64 the Departments of Literature, Philosophy, and History (along with Economics, Anthropology, Linguistics, and Psychology) were added to the existing biological and physical sciences departments. These three departments now constitute the humanities units of the Division of Arts and Humanities. To staff the new Department of Literature, a core group of bright male professors in their forties joined UCSD from Ohio State University. They had been unhappy with their campus administration's interference in the intellectual life of their academic programs and came from Departments of English and Germanic Languages to form the Department of Literature at UCSD.[2] The new department has the same structure as the Literature Board at UC Santa Cruz. It exhibits an explicit division of labor whereby beginning language classes are split off from the literature curriculum and assigned to the Department of Linguistics. I think it is fair to say that from the outset at UCSD this structure reflected the domination of the sciences, as is the case at MIT, whose equivalent programs are divided between the "sections" (not departments) of Literature and of Foreign Languages and Literatures. However, unlike at MIT (which, I might add, is not a full-service research university in which all academic divisions enjoy a research vocation but, as its name indicates, is primarily a science and engineering institute),[3] UCSD's Department of Literature has offered from the beginning both doctoral and undergraduate programs.

On a US research university campus, one commonly expects to find five to ten departments of literature and languages. For example, in 2011 Stanford, which had 16,000 students, had five departments of literature with 117 filled faculty FTE positions, and the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, with 41,000 students, had nine departments of literature and 124 filled faculty FTE positions. By contrast, UCSD had 29,000 students and a single Department of Literature and 47 filled (literary) faculty FTE positions. But the UCSD department's original structure also reflected a conscious decision to break away from the models of national literature

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[2] Dr. Roy Harvey Pearce, Department of Literature, University of California, San Diego, interview by Dr. Kathryn Ringrose, August 21, 1984, UCSD Oral Histories Collection, Mandeville Special Collections Library, UCSD.

[3] There are few undergraduates who major in fields other than the sciences and engineering and few graduate programs in social sciences, humanities, and the arts.

departments whose origins lie in nineteenth-century conceptions of culture and language and from United States–based twentieth-century area studies models of the researching and teaching of societies and cultures. It had the advantage of favoring comparative, theoretical, and interdisciplinary approaches, and very quickly the Department of Literature and the Department of Philosophy (where Marcuse was present) became centers for the dissemination of twentieth-century European literary, social, and cultural theory and philosophy throughout not only North America but also East Asia: existentialism and phenomenology, Western Marxism (including the Frankfurt school), structuralism, poststructuralism, semiotics, feminist theory, and so forth.

That said, traces of traditional administrative organization of literary study persisted in the curriculum in the form of majors and doctoral degrees offered in English, French, German, Spanish, and comparative literatures. Fifty years later, we retain largely the same structure except that we now define ourselves explicitly as a department of world literatures that offers a single doctoral degree and many more majors, such as in cultural studies, Asian American literature, Chicano/a literature, Korean literature, and Japanese literature, that overlap with campus interdisciplinary programs and departments such as Chinese Studies, Japanese Studies, Taiwanese Studies, European Studies, Critical Gender Studies, Ethnic Studies, Science Studies, and Classics that involve faculty and students from the humanities, arts, and social sciences.[4] These new majors reflect not only the evolving needs of the student population but also the transnational frame of humanities education, whose mission, according to an internal department document, is "to train scholars in international literary traditions and ideas in a manner that will address an increasingly global, linguistically complex, and culturally diverse world.... [It] is committed to the intellectual principle that no single literature exists in isolation, entirely untouched by other traditions."[5] At the same time, faculty and graduate-student research now integrates some of the methods of history and the social sciences, including extensive work in archives and field interviews.

Such a structure is not without its drawbacks. Some of them are cultural: by virtue of its organization, the Department of Literature cannot serve as an outpost or refuge of national culture, neither for its faculty or students nor for society at large. It doesn't work as an identity—or, crucially today, as a brand—of that kind.[6] However, in 1988, when I left Middlebury for UCSD, this was one of its distinctive advantages. At the same time, since even today most of my colleagues have been trained in national literature departments, our grounds for intellectual community are based more on common research paradigms and methods than on shared canons, languages, and scholarly networks dating from graduate school. Other, sometimes more volatile forms of connectedness can take the latter's place. Some drawbacks are administrative: instead of five to ten literature department chairs who enjoy wide influence in campus affairs and make common cause to argue for resources or defend their programs to divisional or central administration, there is only one. About ten years ago, at a time when it was, I believe, among the largest departments at UCSD outside the School of Medicine (this is no longer the case), its size prompted the senior vice-chancellor of Academic Affairs (the equivalent of academic provost), a political scientist, to liken it to a gigantic amoeba, and she wondered if it wasn't an example of

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[4] Having woken up to the institutional advantage of having strong course enrollments in Literature, for some years we have been teaching beginning language classes in Latin, Greek, Italian, Korean, and Russian.

[5] "Graduate Studies in Literature," Department of Literature, UCSD, 2011.

[6] This has potential consequences for successful fund-raising among private donors and corporations.

a simple life-form that had failed to undergo mitosis or self-division. Nevertheless, it is becoming quite apparent that in many ways we preemptively downsized long before the administration issued a circular in summer 2010 announcing the consolidation of the financial officers of academic units. Moreover, we have 50–60 percent of the number of faculty that historically we should have in a university of our size, which today would attest to a proven track record in intellectual and pedagogical "efficiency." But in this case this is not quite the advantage it appears to be, for it means that faculty and academic resources have always been stretched quite thin and that any potential loss of faculty and lecturers due to budget cuts poses an immediate threat to the viability of our programs.

THE HUMANITIES' DETERIORATING POSITION

In fact, over the last ten years, our position within the campus has weakened progressively with the absence of a foreign-language requirement in four out of six undergraduate colleges and the recent restructuring of the University of California's very extensive Education Abroad Program by the Office of the President that eliminated all subsidies for study abroad, imposed differential rates for different countries (rendering Europe and East Asia more expensive), closed six programs in six countries (primarily at the expense of smaller languages—e.g., Hungarian and Dutch), and reduced direct faculty oversight by cutting faculty directorships from approximately twenty-one to six.[7] Although one of the watchwords of the UCSD administration over the last eight years has been "internationalization," the biggest push for study abroad has been for students to enroll in so-called five-week summer "Global Seminars" that are taught entirely in English by UCSD faculty in overseas locales. Like the humanities departments at Stanford and very unlike those at UC Santa Cruz, humanities departments at UCSD have never enjoyed high enrollments and largely for the same reasons: students applying to UCSD do so based on the campus's public reputation in the sciences and engineering.

This tendency has only deepened over the years: since 2000, UCSD's undergraduate student population has grown 48 percent, whereas the absolute number of majors in literature and history has remained largely flat and in philosophy has increased slightly. In other words, proportionately fewer UCSD students take humanities courses and major in these fields. Finally, in terms of first-year admissions, the number of freshman students declaring their intent to major in the humanities has dropped by almost half since 2009. This reflects a common nationwide trend during hard economic times (compounded by sharp increases in public university tuition), in which students turn increasingly to fields that seem to promise—perhaps erroneously—a more direct return on their investment and better chances of paying off growing student loans. As UCSD moves to increase quickly the total enrollment of nonresident students from 5 to 21 percent of undergraduates by recruiting more international students, the humanities are poised to lose even more ground. Before the cuts of the last three years, humanities budgets were already struggling to keep up with the consumer inflation index, and the budgets of the six campus libraries were gobbled up by the soaring costs of electronic subscriptions to scientific journals. Moreover, returning to the Department of Literature, faculty lost to retirement and recruitment to other universities—in British and American literature (6), African American literature (1), French literature (1), Chinese literature (1), Japanese literature (2), Asian American literature (1), Latin (1), Spanish Peninsular literature (1), and German (1)—have not been replaced, although we have

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7 University of California Education Abroad Program, Report, February 2012.

gained new faculty in Religious Studies (3; now housed in our department), Luso-Brazilian literature (1), trans-European literature (1), Chicano/a literature (1), Creative Writing (1), Chinese literature (1), and Taiwanese Studies (1). The net result is that the number of literary and cultural studies faculty in the department is actually shrinking.

Meanwhile, over the last ten years there has been a process of cannibalization of budgeted faculty positions across the campus: from 2000 to 2009 regular faculty positions at UCSD did not keep up with the growing student population, increasing only 28 percent, while the number of lecturers whose course load is almost double that of regular faculty increased 58 percent (but in 2010, 125, or 19 percent, were let go). Only 62 percent of regular faculty positions are currently filled; the remaining 38 percent of FTE funds have been allocated largely to hiring temporary lecturers and TAs and to covering the costs of recruiting and retaining star faculty in sciences and engineering.[8] Although it must be noted that plans are under way to stanch the loss and increase the filled faculty positions to 70 percent within nine years by drawing on the new nonresident tuition revenue stream, it appears that this will also be accomplished by reallocating FTE funds from the social sciences, arts, and humanities departments to new initiatives in the sciences.

STUDENT ADMISSIONS AND CROSS-SUBSIDIES

Other developments have placed humanities departments in a weaker position. There has been a laudatory initiative going back to 2007 to admit many transfer students from community colleges (43 percent of all new undergraduates in fall 2011) as a way to give students from underfunded public high schools a second chance to enter the UC system and to lower their costs of receiving a UC degree. However, the initiative is also driven by administrators' desire to shift expenditures away from the lower-division course offerings by effectively outsourcing them to two-year community colleges. This has had the effect of reducing proportionately those courses upon which humanities departments critically depend to recruit new majors on a science-dominated campus. And as the budget crisis has ground on, the overall quality of undergraduate education has declined: there's been a sharp increase in the proportion of the growing number of entering nonresident students who fail the Basic Writing exam, directors of freshman writing programs have been downgraded to lecturer status, class sizes have increased as course offerings have declined, and instructional teaching labs are overcrowded (up to four students to an experiment). Moreover, graduate students are increasingly assigned as primary instructors of upper-division classes, and large lower- and upper-division lecture courses in the humanities, arts, and social sciences have few or no teaching assistants and discussion sections, while more and more of them in the social sciences have no writing assignments whatsoever. In such an academic climate, "building" or "rebuilding" the humanities or the Department of Literature will be quite difficult. Indeed, in 2011, with limited consultation with the faculty, the UCSD Libraries administration, facing a cumulative 20 percent cut to its budget, decided to close four out of six campus libraries, consolidate collections, move journal issues over ten years old offsite, and sell off printed books that have not been checked out in the last ten years and for which copies exist at Berkeley or UCLA. UCSD appears to be the only UC campus to have taken this course of action.

Finally, a word is needed about higher education financing and what are sometimes called in the United States cross-subsidies. This has a direct bearing on the current status of humanities departments in research universities. Discussions on research university campuses in the

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[8] UCSD, Academic Affairs, Budget Presentation, May 12, 2010.

United States have long labored under the shadow of the claim that medical schools, the biological and physical sciences, and engineering bring in outside resources in the form of publicly and privately sponsored research grants whose overhead funds constitute important revenue streams, some of which (i.e., cross-subsidies) help finance many campus functions, including the activities of many arts, humanities, and social science departments. Consequently, it could be said that a divide between "two financial cultures" has colored academic and budget debates for some time. However, the growing budget crisis has brought this claim concerning overhead revenues under new scrutiny, and higher education consulting firms such as the Delta Project and university financial officers have now begun to admit that the overhead funds included in grants (with the possible exception of the largest ones) often do *not* cover overhead or indirect costs (everything from laboratory and building maintenance and utility costs to grant management and so forth).[9] Financial officers now commonly claim that the overhead rates authorized by industry and government granting agencies to public research universities are on average about ten points too low. Moreover, it would appear that even the *direct* costs of sponsored research (research salaries, equipment, and support) are not covered by many grants due to the highly competitive nature of grants, which sometimes leads principal investigators to lowball their figures in hopes of beating rival applicants. So how have public research universities made up the difference? In part they have done so by reallocating funds generated by low-cost and high-enrollment departments (where they happen to exist) in the humanities and social sciences in the form of state allocations per student and student tuition and by deferring maintenance on physical infrastructure and buildings.[10] This revised picture is now helping reposition these divisions (depending on local conditions) as no longer wards of the university but rather as potential or actual benefactors of sister departments in sciences and engineering. This shift offers some leverage in ongoing budget negotiations.

UC AND UCSD'S RESPONSE TO THE BUDGET CRISIS

What has been the response to the crisis by the UC's upper administration? In terms of process and substance, the UC Academic Senate is discouraged. It vigorously opposed the request for emergency powers made by President Mark Yudof to the Board of Regents in July 2009, which basically suspended the principle of joint governance. The Academic Senate also unanimously objected to one of the earliest decisions made by Yudof to exploit restructuring of the Office of the President in response to a financial scandal under the previous president by eliminating subsidies and raising fees for the Education Abroad Program. It constituted an early experiment in shifting education costs to students. This program had been a successful, if not highly efficient, self-supporting

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9   Christopher Newfield, *Unmaking the Public University: The Forty-Year Assault on the Middle Class* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 195–219; Jane Wellman and Louis Soares, "Bringing Business Analytics to the College Campus," Center for American Progress and Delta Project, September 9–11, 2011; Jane Wellman, "Rebooting Finance in Public Higher Education," paper presented at AASCU Annual Meeting, Charleston, SC, November 22, 2010, slide 19.

10 Obviously, labor-intensive studio, writing, and language classes modify this picture somewhat. Regarding overhead funds derived from sponsored research, it must be added that they are sometimes used as seed money to cover direct costs of new research projects, rendering the coverage of overhead costs even more difficult. A recent UC report discovered that UC receives $3.5 billion annually in sponsored research grants, of which $780 million is for indirect costs, but it loses about $720 million in uncovered overhead costs. Nanette Asimov, "UC: Millions Lost in Research Costs from Grants," *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 16, 2010, http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2010/06/15/MNOC1DTI1V.DTL#ixzz1LVEGQAdV (accessed May 6, 2011).

immersion program that afforded many UC students the precious opportunity to spend substantial time abroad becoming literate in cultures and languages other than their own. Moreover, when Yudof and the regents appointed a joint Commission of the Future charged to make recommendations for addressing the budget crisis, only two out of the initial twenty-odd members were faculty, none of whom were from outside the professional schools. Graduate and undergraduate education were apparently not invited to the table. Matters weren't helped when in his November 20, 2009, interview on national public television (*Jim Lehrer News Hour*) Yudof stated:

> Many of our, if I can put it this way, businesses are in good shape. We're doing very well there. Our hospitals are full, our medical business, our medical research, the patient care—so we have this core problem: who's going to pay the salary of the English department? We have to have it. Who's going to pay it, and sociology, and the humanities, and that's where we're running into trouble.[11]

To all appearances, the long-standing assumptions of the "two financial cultures" were alive and well in the Office of the President. They were also alive and well in the report of UCSD's Joint Senate-Administration Task Force on Budget when it stated: "The campus will need to address the question of how to appropriately support the less extramurally intensive campus units that have been determined to be worthy elements in the larger UC San Diego profile."[12] While the eight-page report contained only three lines about the importance of liberal arts education, it did declare the protection of the "academic core" as a top priority and called for greater transparency in budget reporting by academic and nonacademic areas. UCSD department chairs seized on these phrases and in quick order galvanized the Academic Senate to pressure the administration to provide a detailed report of the entire campus budget and called for the creation of an executive vice-chancellor / provost as the chief academic officer to whom nonacademic units would also be subordinated and report. This unfolded just as the campus erupted in February and March 2010 in protests against a hostile racial climate on campus and the threat to access posed by the budget crisis to people of color.[13]

At the national level, there has been little comfort for those of us in US public universities. After the resounding Republican victory in the November 2010 elections, new Republican governors cut state budgets deeply, most notoriously in the formerly liberal states of Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, and passed legislation banning state workers from forming trade unions. Higher education wasn't spared; the governor of Pennsylvania went so far as to propose a 51 percent cut in state funding of universities.[14] At first glance, President Obama's annual State of the Union address in January 2011 seemed to offer a glimmer of hope: in the manner of a true Democrat, he stressed the importance of rebuilding and expanding the national infrastructure in order for the United States to remain competitive in the global

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11 It must be noted that in response to the outcry provoked by his remarks, Yudof issued a clarification reaffirming the importance of academic programs and, more important, conceded that overhead funds generated by sponsored research do not cover indirect costs.

12 "Report of the Joint Senate-Administration Task Force on Budget," UCSD, January 2010, 7.

13 Steve Schmidt, "Protestors Take Over UCSD Chancellor's Office," *San Diego Union-Tribune*, February 26, 2010, www.utsandiego.com/news/2010/feb/26/noose-protests-ucsd (accessed May 4, 2011).

14 The actual cut ended up being 20 percent, but the governor proposed another 3 percent cut to the three research campuses. Jeff Gammage et al., "Under Pa. Plan, State System Colleges Would Lose a Third of Their Funding— after 2011's 20 Percent Cut," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 8, 2011, http://articles.philly.com/2012-02-08/news/31038097_1_higher-education-ann-weaver-hart-basic-education (accessed May 15, 2012).

economy, but as Berkeley linguist George Lakoff pointed out, there was little in the president's speech that indicated a role for arts, humanities, or even social science education in this effort.[15]

HUMANISTS AND THE CRISIS

The response by colleagues in the humanities in the United States and the United Kingdom has not offered grounds for encouragement either. Understandably alarmed by their frequent exclusion (along with faculty from other divisions, it should be added) from high-level budget discussions and from consideration in public policy debates in the United States and the example of the outright defunding of the humanities by the Cameron government in the United Kingdom, teachers and researchers have often reacted by circling the wagons and reaffirming the most traditional definitions of the humanities' mission going back to the nineteenth century as sole purveyors of the historical past, transcendental, noninstrumental knowledge, critical thinking, and the free development of the self. This reflexive return to the past should come as no surprise, for then, as many do now, writers like Matthew Arnold reacted against the dominance of "mechanical civilization" and the British-American utilitarian tradition that has shaped public discourse over the past two centuries. Take, for example, Frank Donoghue's *The Last Professors*, published in 2008, which analyzes the continuing decline of the humanities in the context of the increasingly corporate, market-oriented university. His promise to perform an institutional analysis is welcome, but in the opening pages he makes the startling claim that the humanities stand for the core academic enterprise in general: "My book focuses squarely on the figure of the professor. I exclude from my study those academics whose work is subsidized by government or corporate funding or is supplemented by extensive consulting contracts. This leaves professors of humanities."[16] It is unclear what analytic rigor is achieved by omitting colleagues in the arts, social sciences, and general sciences from the category of "professor" under study, many of whom receive little in the way of sponsored Federal and corporate research grants. Narrowly redefined as a humanist, what therefore emerges from Donoghue's book is the figure of the professor as a solitary scholar working in isolation, a representation that once again doesn't include the experience of many researchers and teachers in fields such as social sciences, sciences, and engineering whose activities, including publication, are often quite collaborative. Perhaps what is lost in terms of analytical rigor is balanced by clarity with respect to the dire funding circumstances in which the humanities find themselves.

A more extreme example of defensiveness by fellow humanists is the six-part "Manifesto for the Humanities" posted on the British blog *Defend the Arts and the Humanities*, by David McCallam, reader in French at the University of Sheffield. A spirited counterblast to the 2010 Browne report that originally advocated the massive cuts to humanities and social sciences departments and the tripling of tuition in UK universities, it proposes the literary text as a space of freedom and counterposes the reader to the model of the worker. In this view the acts of reading and interpretation are practices that transpose the presumably critical freedom of the literary text to that of the classroom itself, where by virtue of free discussion of assigned readings, social hierarchies among participants presumably collapse. According to McCallam, humanities and

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15 George Lakoff, "Obama's New Narrative," *Huffington Post*, January 28, 2011, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/george-lakoff/the-new-obama-narrative_b_815326.html, (accessed May 4, 2011).

16 Frank Donoghue, *The Last Professors: The Corporate University and the Fate of the Humanities* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), xi; see also xiii, xvii, 1–2, 13, 19.

arts classes in which students and faculty study texts and works of art increase "our capacity for empathy" and tolerance and "constitute a genuinely democratic space, founded on the equality of intelligences of their members; at once leveling and empowering, they are the workshops of citizenship."[17]

There is much to like in such stirring pronouncements, but one can't help but wonder if counterposing the "reader" to the "worker" seems not only to reintroduce social hierarchies (in the form of gradations of freedom) that the seminar presumably dismantles but also to echo strangely Kant's old schema in *The Conflict of the Faculties* whereby the more critical but other-worldly fields (philosophy in particular) were positioned as overseers of the more practical, vocational disciplines such as law and medicine.[18] And one must ask whether the author hasn't fallen into a trap laid precisely by the utilitarians and philistines he so derides: that of disqualifying his position by overstating the case for the humanities, which are idealized to the point of caricature, by reprising his adversaries' gesture of posing transcendental and utilitarian perspectives as absolute antinomies of each other. For what have many of us in the humanities (and social sciences) been doing over the last forty years if not engaging in critical histories of culture—including literature and the arts—in terms of the long-standing entanglements of fields of knowledge and culture with networks of power and administration of populations deployed by social, national, and imperial projects? According to this research literature, the interplay of knowledge, strategies of government, and utilitarian goals has never stopped at the classroom door.

In this regard, C. P. Snow's famous lecture titled "The Two Cultures" from the late 1950s comes to mind. Readers may recall that he contrasted Euro-American literary and scientific cultures in terms of which one would be best able to assist and manage newly independent colonies under the auspices of the new narrative of "Development." In Snow's view the literary culture associated with high modernism was backward looking and reactionary while the scientific one, as best represented by molecular biology, was forward looking and progressive: "If the scientists have the future in their bones, then the traditional culture responds by wishing that the future did not exist. It is the traditional culture, to an extent remarkably little diminished by the emergence of the scientific one, which manages the Western world."[19] This, too, is a caricature, but echoes of Snow's concept of "two cultures" still can be heard in contemporary US budget debates.

However, few commentators have noticed that what Snow was attacking was the peculiar public authority of a British literary culture that in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was deeply involved in the training of domestic and colonial administrators, those university graduates who read classics (and also mathematics) and many of whom pursued careers managing the empire and who now in Snow's view were incapable of addressing the challenges of the developing and modernizing postcolonial world. This was the very history that the tradition of postcolonial critique inaugurated by Edward Said and Gauri Viswanathan attempted to sort out and that Ian Hunter has studied in terms of governmental strategies of managing populations through education.[20] This history of the humanities and social sciences points to the analysis of the social

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17 David McCallam, "A Manifesto for the Arts and the Humanities," part 4, "Work." http://defendartsandhums. blogspot.com/2011/03/work-part-four-of-manifesto-for-arts.html (accessed June 9, 2012).

18 Immanuel Kant, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, trans. Mary J. Gregor (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 31–61.

19 C. P. Snow, *The Two Cultures and a Second Look*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 11.

20 Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993); Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989); Ian Hunter, Denis

recruitment into fields of knowledge provided by Pierre Bourdieu and others: until the 1960s in many countries humanities, arts, and qualitative social sciences faculty traditionally had upper-middle-class or even patrician pedigrees, and for many years members of their ranks came from the upper echelons of society, while in the sciences and engineering, where students faced lower barriers related to cultural capital, polished speech, and good manners, faculty were commonly recruited from more modest backgrounds.[21] McCallam's blog, which opposes the critical, free reader to the presumably uncritical, unfree worker, would seem to echo not only Kant's old distinction between the free (liberal) and servile (vocational) faculties but also this unspoken class culture of academe. Finally, with respect to US public land grant universities founded in the nineteenth century, the twin projects of economic and human development (or vocational and critical training) have always been intertwined—if unevenly and tensely so—and characterized much of US higher public education, culminating in the ability to produce graduates who could operate autonomously and creatively in large organizations characteristic of the late twentieth-century workplace.[22] As Christopher Newfield might say, the university as the bastion of "critique" that Bill Readings claimed has been ruined was "ruined" quite some time ago, long before the market-oriented discourse of excellence came to dominate university administrators' thinking.[23]

Today, as defunding of the humanities continues in public universities in the United States and the United Kingdom, it would appear that the twin project of human and economic development of mass populations—what Newfield terms "mass quality"—that lay at the heart of late-modern endeavors such as UC's Master Plan is facing extinction, and that the humanities run the risk of being relegated to private universities and liberal arts colleges and of becoming the privilege of the elite few destined to manage corporations, government, and major cultural institutions.[24]

RETHINKING HUMANITIES DEPARTMENTS

In the way of a conclusion, I would like to make a few remarks about rethinking and repositioning humanities departments. These comments stem from an awareness that what teachers and scholars in many fields do has been changing for some time: for example, scholars trained in the humanities (fields conventionally dedicated to serving as guardians of the cultural past) now study contemporary popular culture and society using some of the tools of social science, while social scientists avail themselves of archives and modes of text-based analysis as tools for studying

Meredyth, Bruce Smith, and Geoff Stokes, *Accounting for the Humanities: The Language of Culture and the Logic of Government* (Brisbane: Institute for Cultural Policy Studies, 1991).

21 Pierre Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus*, trans. Peter Collier (Cambridge: Polity, 1988); see also Christopher Newfield, *Ivy and Industry: Business and the Making of the American University, 1880–1980* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 48–49. Stefan Collini, in his long introduction to a new edition of Snow's lecture, usefully reminds readers that Snow's own polarized opposition of the literary and scientific cultures owes much to the context of the post-1945 British educational system within which he wrote and its mandatory early specialization and sharply defined class hierarchies and trajectories. See Stefan Collini, introduction to *The Two Cultures*, by C. P. Snow (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), xvi, xlii.

22 Newfield, *Unmaking the Public University*, passim.

23 Newfield, *Ivy and Industry*, 41–64; Newfield, *Unmaking the Public University*, 142–58; Bill Readings, *The University in Ruins* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

24 To take just one example, in 2011 the former president of Harvard University Derek Bok gave a lecture at UCSD on higher education. The former law school dean argued that the core of any liberal arts undergraduate education in the United States remains writing and critical thinking. In softer tones he seemed to echo the most idealistic humanists. See Derek Bok, "Can Undergraduate Education Meet the Challenges of the 21st Century?," Helen Edison Lecture, University of California, San Diego, April 26, 2011.

not only contemporary cultures but also the past.[25] The infrastructure of research and teaching and the very nature of the university classroom have perhaps changed even more. My remarks also stem from a hesitancy to award a monopoly of truth-saying to any one corner of campus, whatever the claims of the philosophical tradition of critique may be.

One new development that has excited colleagues is something called digital humanities. It has undergone rapid development at UCLA, is a centerpiece of the UC Humanities Research Institute at Irvine, and seems also to drive the recent proposal to reorganize the humanities division at UCLA. It offers the promise of an engagement with the present in the form of assimilating new computer-based and Internet technologies that will revamp access to research archives, enable new forms of collaboration, and redesign classroom interactions.[26] To someone who has advocated unsuccessfully for the creation of courses in new forms of "digital literature" or "digital literacy" to a progressive department, these new initiatives are welcome. However, just how "digital humanities" will spark a rethinking of research paradigms and topics is less clear to me than the opportunity to reorient classroom work more toward project-based assignments where interpreting cultural texts is coupled with the collaborative production of not only research papers but new narratives, visual objects, and real-world and public policy–oriented projects (a reorientation already under way in some areas of US secondary education). This builds on the recognition that in the United States the institutional space and time of thought are undergoing dispersion along with our intellectual authority: in the United States we are teaching courses in what are basically nineteenth-century classrooms in which the traditional authority of humanities professors as guardians of and guides to the past for students is shifting under our very eyes thanks to students' growing access to primary texts and objects, historical narratives, cultural concepts, and social data via the Internet. We can no longer assume, as we perhaps did in the past, that we can approach students in upper-division courses as if they were destined to go on to graduate study in our fields any more than we can expect that they will absorb and embody the deep histories of our disciplines. Different teaching and learning subjects are in the offing in a new configuration of knowledge, culture, and the utility of education.

Perhaps the revamped classroom is indeed the space within which the future of the humanities will be forged—resources permitting. After all, pedagogy is less codified and more amenable to innovation than research. And quite possibly within that space the deep craft culture of the humanities—its attention to the contours and effects of language and rhetoric, cultural specificity, historical change, logical argument, complex causality, narratives of imagined worlds, subjective experience, and the aesthetic power of form—will provide literature, history, and philosophy with the bridge they require to the project-based world of active learning where analysis and interpretation are embodied in a craft culture of making. To be sure, new modes of intellectual investigation, critique, and engagement will be necessary, ones that will break down the

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25 Roddey Reid and Sharon Traweek, introduction to *Doing Science + Culture*, ed. Roddey Reid and Sharon Traweek (New York: Routledge, 2000).

26 Christine L. Borman, "The Digital Future Is Now: A Call to Action for the Humanities," *DHQ: Digital Humanities Quarterly* 3, no. 4 (Fall 2009): para. 63; UCLA, *Report of the Humanities Task Force*, December 2009. Less happily in this writer's view, the UCLA proposal for restructuring the humanities (which at UCLA include linguistics but neither philosophy nor history) recommends deepening long-standing hierarchies between literature and language teaching and relegated the latter to online teaching or to summer courses for which students may have to pay extra fees. Moreover, it consolidates many language and literature departments into a few entities while creating a single Department of Comparative Literature that appears to be the only literature unit with a developed research mission and the necessary resources.

all-too-rigid space-time organization of knowledge and thought as defined by the classroom, the department or program, or the academic division that cleanly separates the place and moment of critical analysis, historical investigation, and study of language from the conceptualization and implementation of concrete projects. Bringing the motivations of the here and now to the study of the there and then will be no easy task for the gatekeepers and proponents of the cultural past—nor should it be. After all, while the learning experience should address students as they are and in terms of what they bring to it, teaching them will hopefully always involve something more than simply catering to students'/consumers' own perceived needs and wants; the learning experience will be one in which teachers and materials embody a challenging intellectual and cultural otherness that is not always available to students outside that pedagogical relationship.

This will entail a new form of interdisciplinarity. It is worth remembering that, although for some time now interdisciplinarity has been a watchword across all academic divisions, until recently there has rarely been active engagement with the methods and paradigms of the social sciences in humanities fields. Perhaps there is a bit more in certain subfields like women's studies, science studies, and ethnic studies and also in history departments, since in the United States they can be located in either humanities or social science divisions. Here I am reflecting my own intellectual and academic biography, for I began collaborating with social scientists over twenty years ago when I began to teach and do research in the field of science studies and pursued a book project on antismoking campaigns in California, France, and Japan. Working with sociologists and anthropologists while doing research in archives and interviewing state officials, NGO staff, epidemiologists, media professionals, and public health activists posed a check on the routine assumptions of my own training. This led me to embrace a disciplinary relativism as I did research at the juncture of culture, public health, and governmental policy that nonanthropologist colleagues might find distasteful. However, that did not mean that I and colleagues in NGOs, government agencies, and public health were able to develop any meaningful collaboration: at that time our training, sensibilities, and professional identities—not to mention political pressures—rendered it all but impossible. There is no reason for this to remain true today for us in the humanities. To return to the classroom, there is growing evidence that institutional support for new interdisciplinary pedagogical departures exists, if only at the level of increasing the number of majors outside department-based programs: for example, one of the most popular new majors at UCSD is International Studies, with over nine hundred students (twice the number of Literature majors). It is a hybrid of humanities and social science curricula, and its success may partially explain why the number of our majors hasn't grown with the student population. Other emerging academic programs include the rapidly growing global health and global justice initiatives.

Thus, it seems to me that even in the absence of the "crisis," it would be fruitful for us in the humanities, especially those of us who find ourselves employed by science-dominated universities, to devise more joint research and pedagogical projects with colleagues in other divisions. At UCSD the California Institute for Telecommunications and Information (Cal-IT2) initiative between the sciences, engineering, and the arts has generated great excitement and resources from all parties concerned and has helped launch a new undergraduate college. There is no reason why the humanities can't follow suit. When I raise the idea of bringing the humanities and questions of policy together, colleagues in engineering and the medical school show keen interest. Currently, there is a new campus-wide initiative led by the social sciences, arts, and humanities divisions, with the participation of the Rady School of Management, under the rubric of "Design."

A daylong colloquium in January 2012 generated excitement, but the arts, social sciences, and engineering faculty dominated discussions, and the voices of the humanists present were barely heard. This should come as no surprise to anyone if one thinks of the almost total absence of a future-oriented outcome or design component in what we do in the humanities. This difficulty is confirmed by merely a superficial acquaintance with the literature on active learning: there seems to be very little on how history, philosophy, and literature can be articulated with student projects other than through, say, the crafting of fiction and poetry in creative-writing assignments, a tough task for students still learning to master basic concepts, historical narratives, and analytic skills.[27]

Still, recent successful experiments even in discipline-bound courses such as beginning upper-division Russian language and literature courses in my department suggest that the difficulties are not insurmountable. These classes require all students to rewrite chapters or dramatic scenes in assigned readings in Russian or even to author entirely new ones in the original language via online collaboration and discussion. The pedagogical payoff has been startling: we find highly motivated students who redouble the effort they put into their linguistic and literary apprenticeships and consequently see impressive results.

Perhaps a no less startling example is my own experience teaching an interdisciplinary cultural studies class on "social marketing"—that is, the application of private-sector marketing methods to issues of public interest—a technique that was first introduced in child nutrition and family-planning campaigns in South Asia and Africa in the late 1960s. The course stemmed from my research on the cultural, medical, and policy dynamics of antismoking campaigns in the United States, France, and Japan. In its first iteration, I taught it to a seminar of graduating seniors in New York University's Department of Communication, most of whom were on the cusp of entering the New York job market. Following traditional lines of cultural studies pedagogy, the course was a critical appraisal of the practices of past and present public health campaigns (from child nutrition and HIV/AIDS prevention to the drug wars and antismoking initiatives). It also covered questions of narrative structure, literary genre, visual codes, discourse analysis, and rhetorical style. The subject held the students' attention at first, but by the end of the semester their interest had flagged. The reason became obvious: I had not asked the students to put into practice their newly acquired knowledge and critical concepts by designing their own campaigns. Their pent-up intellectual energy and real-world interests had no meaningful outlet other than a more refined investigation of previous or existing campaigns in the form of a research paper. This was confirmed when I offered the course in the Department of Literature at UCSD but included the development of a social marketing campaign as the final collaborative project by groups of two to four students. They had to start by submitting a proposal for review and revision that integrated research on the proposed topic, the working methods and concepts of social marketing, and the critical and historical literature. The final project included a class presentation and paper that defended the topic and the choice of strategies and provided concrete examples of flyers, billboards, television and radio spots, and Internet ads. Some of the final projects were quite original, with a quality approaching that of the better public health campaigns. Two were especially successful: one brought the issue of being at risk for sexually transmitted infections to the attention of young lesbians, and the other sought to highlight for the general public the unacknowledged dangers of cosmetic Botox treatments. By virtue of being an interdisciplinary, project-based class

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27 Anya Kamenetz, *Edupunks, Edupreneurs, and the Coming Transformation of Higher Education* (White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green, 2010).

with a fairly narrow policy focus, this humanities course lies at the other extreme from the very disciplinary Russian class cited above. Most humanities classes fall somewhere in between, and in my view we should experiment more in finding ways to refine what we do in the classroom into meaningful forms of active pedagogy.

With respect to the role that the humanities should play in cross-disciplinary teaching and research collaborations, it would have to be more than decorative or an afterthought: simply adding a few class hours devoted to the humanities to a preexisting collaborative program or course changes little. A passing nod to historical, philosophical, and aesthetic considerations will not suffice. The different rhythms and modalities of intellectual analysis and engagement will require rethinking not only the humanities but also the fields with which we collaborate. Left to themselves, most humanistic fields and academic units will be unable to change without strong university leadership in the form of encouragement combined with concrete reassurances from the top that new initiatives will not be a pretext for simply downsizing programs. Forceful campus leadership would also motivate academic units in other divisions to rethink their programs to discover ways to integrate with their own programs the conceptual and critical moments afforded by humanities pedagogy and research that would enrich and strengthen in their own eyes what they do.

If the UCSD Design initiative is any indication, based as it is presently on the studio model of the arts school, it will require substantial resources that are in short supply in public research universities. These are issues that have already dogged project-based teaching in public K–12 education.[28] Moreover, a working draft of the Design proposal appears to consign to a background role a key concept that emerged in early discussions and promised to provide a "tent" under which "design" could accommodate all the modalities of thought and practice one would wish to see from the associated disciplines: "interface." Design has been understood as the construction of interfaces between people, spaces, activities, policies, and built environments but can be expanded to include histories, narratives, social structures, cultures, and concepts. Interfaces can be understood to be organized into specific active systems called "programs."[29] The humanities, even traditionally conceived, may be rethought as so many virtual and empirical verbal interfaces that bring together in textual form many of the elements listed above, and as such, the humanities have a natural place in any endeavor that seeks to articulate relationships between those same elements. Here critical and practical activities intersect, albeit following rhythms of engagement peculiar to each type of practice and under the constraints of a particular pedagogical project. Out of this practical-critical classroom activity perhaps even new research projects may emerge.

Having the courage to recognize and draw on the long-standing, if tense, intertwining of so-called pragmatic, vocational, and critical elements in the US public research university may afford us unexpected intellectual and creative opportunities if the resources to do so are not withdrawn first and if poorly conceived online curricula don't eviscerate the promise of craft-based active learning with rote exercises in teaching to the test to large virtual classrooms, however accessible, flexible, and self-paced they may be. In so doing perhaps we may continue to offer California's diverse population the best that higher education has to offer in the way of intellectual apprenticeships and active learning that reflect multiple literacies of nature, the historical past, and contemporary globalizing cultures. Ⓐ

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28 Jane L. David, "Project-Based Learning," *Educational Leadership* 65, no. 5 (February 2008): 80–82.

29 Benjamin Bratton, "What Do We Mean by Program?," *Interactions: Experiences, People, Technology: The HCI Journal of the Association of Computing Machinery* 15, no. 3 (May–June 2008): 2.