# CONNECTION

NEW ENGLAND'S JOURNAL
OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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## ART FOR NEW ENGLAND'S SAKE!

Also Inside: Neal Peirce on New Lessons in Regionalism

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*Cover photo by Caroline Kelly.*

## COVER STORIES



## COMMENTARY



## DEPARTMENTS

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The **New England Board of Higher Education** is a nonprofit, congressionally authorized, interstate agency whose mission is to foster cooperation and the efficient use of resources among New England's approximately 260 colleges and universities. NEBHE was established by the New England Higher Education Compact, a 1955 agreement among the states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont.



## EDITOR'S MEMO

It was one of those fatherly moments that had me flustered.

My 6-year-old son and I were walking through Boston's Downtown Crossing one recent evening, when we stopped to listen to a street drummer bang out the city's soundtrack on a collection of plastic pails and rusted refrigerator drawers. My son was eager to plop some change into the drummer's strategically placed cup, and I was more than happy to begin instilling a sense of obligation to support art—even at this modest level.

But this little lesson became rather complicated when we resumed our walk. Less than a block away, a middle-aged woman with a black eye pushed her hand toward us. "Change for a sandwich?" she begged in a scratchy whisper.

My son wanted to give her some change too, and I obliged, assuring him, "She really needs it more than the drummer."

Not 10 yards from the woman, a man sitting on a cardboard mat gripped a handwritten sign, "Homeless Veteran. Please Help." Now, things were really getting sticky.

"We can't give money to *everyone,*" I told my son.

"Why?" he wondered. "Can't we just go to the bank and get some more money?"

Our walk revealed in microcosm the larger policy dilemma in which the arts are pitted against all manner of pressing social needs.

At the national level, the system of trade-offs has become something of a cliche. Many of us would cancel production of one fighter jet (to use the popular reference point) if doing so allowed us to support several thousand painters, sculptors and musicians. I'd also invest in the arts over stadiums and convention centers any day.

But how does support for the arts match up against funding for cancer research or AIDS prevention or environmental cleanup or safer roads? That's where setting priorities, such a revered skill in so many circles these days, can seem so cruel and unimaginative.

This issue of CONNECTION focuses on the critical role of the arts—particularly college and university arts programs—in New England's economic and cultural life. We thank our distinguished authors for offering eloquent voices in support of the arts, particularly in light of the tough competition for a spot on New England's agenda.

* * * *

Speaking of priorities, the New England Board of Higher Education recently began undertaking the *1998 Future of New England Survey* as part of its New England Public Policy Collaborative.

NEBHE conducted a similar survey 10 years ago, when New England was enjoying its last economic boom. Today, with the regional economy again riding high—and with rapid technological and demographic changes transforming the region's workplaces, schools and homes—the time seems right for another formal round of regional self-reflection and agenda-building.

NEBHE has mailed the new *Future of New England Survey* to about 6,000 New England opinion leaders, including college presidents, academic vice presidents, think tank directors, foundation heads, school superintendents, legislators, mayors, newspaper editors, community leaders and business executives.

In the fall, NEBHE will tabulate and analyze data from survey respondents. CONNECTION will feature analysis of survey results by thoughtful New Englanders.

If you weren't among the sample group, we invite you—we urge you—to complete the survey on-line at NEBHE's Web site. Our address on the Web is www.nebhe.org.

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Finally, we wish to extend special thanks to Caroline Kelly of The Publication Group for her fine photographs of Massachusetts College of Art which accompany this issue's "Cover Stories."

***John O. Harney** is executive editor of* CONNECTION.

## Ten to Life?

Boston University's School of Management has captured headlines by offering faculty renewable, 10-year contracts as an alternative to much-maligned lifetime tenure.

The 10-year contracts are offered alongside lifetime tenure to selected junior faculty members after they complete BU's standard six-year probationary period. Those who choose the alternative may have their contracts renewed based on an evaluation by their colleagues in the final year.

The contract professors get the same privileges as tenured professors and receive a salary premium up to 10 percent to offset the risk of foregoing lifetime tenure. Seven of the 14 faculty members hired by the school over the past two years have opted for the contract.

BU officials say the 10-year contracts give faculty time to develop effective research agendas and build reputations, while allowing them to outlast most deans, provosts and presidents, thereby eliminating some pressure from individual administrators.

Meanwhile, University of Massachusetts faculty have agreed to some system of post-tenure review, while Board of Higher Education Chairman James F. Carlin has made the end of tenure at Massachusetts state colleges a crusade. "Tenure was put in place in 1915 to protect academic freedom," Carlin told Boston business leaders. "The world has changed since 1915."

At Harvard, the dilemma is very different. The most difficult tenure process in the country is scaring off young talent, according to critics on the faculty.

## Buy Four, Get One Free

Lesley College ranks 14th nationally in master's degrees granted. And the number could rise. Under a new initiative, the Cambridge, Mass., college began offering a free year of master's-level courses to students who complete Lesley undergraduate degrees with a minimum grade point average of 3.4 and begin their graduate study immediately. Lesley officials say the free study amounts to about two-thirds of the typical master's program and represents $10,200 in savings.

But watch out for generalizations about trends in pricing. Six years after Worcester Polytechnic Institute took the extraordinary step of raising tuition by not one penny, the institute has decided that its under-$19,000 tuition is too low compared with peer institutions. WPI is biting the bullet, with hikes of 9 percent in fall 1998 and nearly 7 percent in 1999 to bring tuition to $22,108

## Now, Your Local Weather

For two decades, scientists from the University of New Hampshire's Climate Change Research Center have been drilling deep into the ice of Greenland, Antarctica and the Himalayas in search of tiny clues about ancient climates. Now, the center is launching the New England Climate Change Initiative to develop a climatic history of northern New England and monitor air quality in the region.

In June, the center received a $2.3 million gift from 1927 graduate Leslie S. Hubbard of Walpole, N.H., to create its first endowment. The gift included $500,000 in seed money for the New England initiative.

Among other things, UNH scientists will study tree rings and lake sediments and pore over old settlers' journals, agricultural records and other documents to better understand the frequency of coastal storms in New England and explore the impact of El Niño upon the region.

Using information gathered by monitoring stations from Mount Washington to the New Hampshire seacoast, the scientists hope to provide residents with daily forecasts of air quality and help predict the effect of changes in air chemistry on residents' health.

## Outdistanced?

The number of institutions participating in the Southern Regional Education Board's Southern Regional Electronic Campus will rise to 150 this fall, up from 40.

The distance learning consortium, including public institutions in 15 states, plans to offer more than 1,000 courses and 25 degree programs online and through television. The consortium also plans to add private colleges to its membership.

Meanwhile, Western Governors University has its first non-Western member. In the spring, Indiana joined the consortium, which provides competency-based degree programs drawing on courses offered by colleges, businesses and other providers.

New England—with its shorter travel times to physical campuses—has yet to devise any such regional effort. But state-level initiatives are gaining strength. In Connecticut, the Legislature granted $200,000 to support a distance learning consortium involving 25 public and private colleges. And 19 public institutions in Massachusetts are collaborating on honors courses using the Internet and other technologies.

LETTERS

## Funding Regionalism

I was pleased to read John O. Harney's excellent lead in the Spring 1998 CONNECTION—two whole pages dedicated to a single question: "Who is this guy Jack Hoy."

Harney's article dwelt largely with the California import's extraordinary impact on New England's academic landscape. But Hoy's low-key perseverance—and ultimate success—with the region's state legislatures could be the subject of a doctoral dissertation. Is there one man who clearly understands the political nuances of the six New England states? Yup! His name is Jack Hoy.

The New England Board of Higher Education's principal source of support during Jack Hoy's presidency has been legislative appropriations from the six New England states. As a former legislator, I can tell you that funding for regional activities is not necessarily the highest priority of the region's appropriations committees, which have been struggling to balance state budgets on and off since the 1970s.

Politicians love to pay homage to interstate cooperation, but precious little of it is in place. The fact is that NEBHE, with the 40-year-old Regional Student Program as its foundation, is the most important and successful example of regional cooperation in the nation.

***Bennett D. Katz***
***Augusta, Maine***

*(Editor's note: Katz, the former Maine Senate majority leader, served with former Newport, R.I., mayor and six-term Rhode Island state Sen. Robert J. McKenna and Rhode Island state Senate President John C. Revens Jr. on the search committee that hired Hoy in 1978.)*

## Balance of Trade

Public higher education officials from Maine and the Republic of Ireland in June unveiled George J. Mitchell Peace Scholarships, enabling up to four students from Maine public campuses to study free at public colleges and universities in Ireland, while Irish students study in Maine.

The cumulative effect of such individually modest initiatives is that New England hosts a disproportionate share of foreign students studying in the United States and sends a disproportionate share of students abroad.

The New York City-based Institute for International Education has compiled data on foreign enrollment up to academic year 1996-97 and for U.S. students abroad up to academic year 1995-96.

The number of U.S. students studying for credit in foreign countries has nearly doubled since the mid-1980s, but they remain concentrated in Europe, according to the institute's most recent analysis of study-abroad activity. In addition, the institute reports that large, well-established study-abroad programs are growing, while weaker programs are declining.

| | Foreign Enrollment | Students Abroad |
|---|---|---|
| Connecticut | 6,444 | 1,424 |
| Maine | 1,219 | 876 |
| Massachusetts | 26,568 | 4,769 |
| New Hampshire | 1,869 | 1,007 |
| Rhode Island | 3,128 | 781 |
| Vermont | 647 | 833 |
| New England | 39,875 | 9,690 |
| United States | 457,984 | 89,242 |
| New England as a % of U.S. | 8.7% | 11% |

## Kids Count in New England

New Hampshire and Vermont provide the best conditions for children in the nation, according to the 1998 "Kids Count" report of the Baltimore-based Annie E. Casey Foundation.

The Kids Count project ranks the 50 states and the District of Columbia based on 10 measures ranging from infant mortality to the percentage of families headed by single parents.

Maine ranks 5th; Massachusetts, 11th; Connecticut, 12th; and Rhode Island, 18th.

Last place belongs to the nation's capital, where 39 percent of children live in poverty and child health care barely exceeds Third World quality.

## Comings and Goings

**Franklin M. Loew**, former dean of veterinary medicine at Cornell University and longtime dean of the Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine, became president of Becker College, succeeding **Arnold C. Weller Jr.**, who became chancellor.

**Louis C. Vaccaro**, former president of the College of St. Rose in Albany, N.Y., was named interim president of Trinity College of Vermont.

**Richard Ortner**, former administrator of the Tanglewood Music Center, the Boston Symphony Orchestra's music training academy, became president of the Boston Conservatory, replacing **William Seymour**, who retired.

**Diana Van Der Ploeg** left the presidency of Gateway Community-Technical College after two years to pursue a business career.

**Gloria F. Ragosta** became executive director of the Connecticut Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority after serving for 14 years as deputy director.

**Monty Neill**, former associate director of the Cambridge, Mass.-based National Center for Fair & Open Testing, became executive director, replacing **Laura Barrett**, who joined the Massachusetts Teachers Association.

## More Web Sites

Berkman Center for Internet and Society (Harvard University), cyber.harvard.edu

National Center for Education Statistics, www.nces.ed.gov

National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, www.highereducation.org

National Coalition of Girls' Schools, www.ncgs.org

***Correction:*** The Connecticut Department of Higher Education's Web site was listed inaccurately in the Spring 1998 issue of CONNECTION. The correct address is: www.ctdhe.commnet.edu

## D A T A   C O N N E C T I O N

- Increase in average hourly wage at Connecticut manufacturing companies, first quarter 1997 to first quarter 1998: **3.2%**
- Increase in average work week at Connecticut manufacturing companies during the same period, in minutes: **24**
- Approximate number of Maine workers who got pay raises as a result of the most recent increase in the minimum wage: **40,000**
- Approximate change in number of Maine jobs in the past year: **+10,000**
- Average age of students at Maine Technical Colleges: **27**
- Percentage of Bates College entering freshmen who earn a bachelor's degree within five years: **88%**
- Percentage of University of Southern Maine entering freshmen who do: **24%**
- Percentage of Americans who think the benefit a student gets from college depends mostly on the quality of the specific college he or she attends: **7%**
- Percentage who thought so five years ago: **23%**
- Percentage of children ages 5 to 17 in the U.S. Northeast who speak a language other than English at home: **15%**
- Percentage of children in the West who do: **26%**
- Percentage of white non-Hispanic children ages 3 to 5 who are read to everyday by a family member: **64%**
- Percentage of black non-Hispanic children who are: **44%**
- Number of non-whites among eight role models participating in Macy's fall 1998 “Follow A Leader” program in which selected New England students spend a day with a local “mover and shaker”: **1**
- Number of doctorates awarded by U.S. colleges and universities in 1970: **29,498**
- Number awarded in 1996: **42,415**
- Percentage of U.S. college presidents who never served as full-time faculty members: **27%**
- Percentage who served as full-time faculty members for five years or less: **23%**
- Average years of service for a college president in 1986: **6.3**
- Average years of service in 1995: **7.3**
- Number of states that link higher education funding directly to specific measures of institutional performance: **8**
- Number of New England states that do: **0**
- Respective national ranks of Maine, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont and New Hampshire in state appropriations for higher education per $1,000 of personal income, fiscal 1998: **34,44,47,48,49,50**
- Increase in number of foreign tourists visiting the United States for pleasure, 1993-96: **13%**
- Increase in number visiting New England: **5%**
- Percentage of executives who think job candidates lie or leave out important information on their resumes: **30%**
- Percentage who cite e-mail as the preferred method of receiving resumes: **4%**
- Change in number of Americans employed as designers, 1994-97: **+110,000**
- Change in number employed as painters, sculptors, craft artists or artist printmakers: **+26,000**
- Change in number employed as musicians or composers: **-9,000**
- Number of lit jack-o'-lanterns displayed in Keene, N.H., last Halloween to maintain a place in *Guinness Book of World Records*: **13,432**

**Sources:** 1,2 Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis; 3,4 Maine Center for Economic Policy; 5 Maine Technical College System; 6,7 Maine Development Foundation; 8,9 National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education and Public Agenda; 10,11,12,13 Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Studies; 14 NEBHE analysis of Macy's news release; 15,16 National Research Council; 17,18,19,20 American Council on Education; 21,22,23 State Higher Education Executive Officers; 24,25 Clearinghouse on State International Policies; 26 Accountemps; 27 OfficeTeam; 28, 29, 30 National Endowment for the Arts; 31 Antioch New England Graduate School

# The *Art* of New England Higher Education

John C. Hoy

The economic role of the arts in New England is a hot topic. In the spring, the New England Board of Higher Education assembled a select group of arts educators and others at the Portland Museum of Art in Maine to discuss the cultural, economic and social impact of college and university arts programs on the region.

A few months later, the New England Council, America's oldest business organization, sponsored a forum at Tanglewood in Lenox, Mass., to encourage cooperation between the arts and business and promote "cultural tourism" in the region.

Such attention from "practical" New England organizations is important and overdue, for this little corner of the United States has long served as America's studio, gallery and theater.

All told, New England is home to more than 9,800 cultural organizations and about 98,000 of the nation's 1.6 million artists, according to Northeastern University Economics Professor Gregory H. Wassall, who has diligently attempted to take stock of the economic role of New England arts in collaboration with Douglas DeNatale of the New England Foundation for the Arts.

NEBHE's interest in the subject stems from the fact that New England's vibrant arts community is nurtured by the region's colleges and universities. Indeed, the stunning montage of academic arts programs associated with New England's 260 colleges and universities may represent the most richly diverse concentration of quality arts programs in the Western Hemisphere.

Sure, Hartford's Wadsworth Atheneum is America's oldest continuously operating public art museum. And the Museum of Fine Arts is world-renowned. But so are the Fogg and Busch-Reisinger art museums at Harvard University, as well as museums at Dartmouth, Yale, Brandeis and several other New England colleges, including the Housatonic Community-Technical College Museum, which claims to hold more works of art than any other two-year college in the country.

Yes, the Boston Symphony Orchestra is world-class. But how many admirers are aware that nearly half of its musicians are New England Conservatory alumni and faculty? The region hosts other key music institutions as well, including the Boston Conservatory and Berklee College of Music.

New England higher education's contribution to the arts is growing.

The region's campuses granted more than twice as many bachelor's and doctoral degrees in arts and music in 1995 than they did in 1970, and nearly twice as many master's degrees in those fields. Nationally, the number of bachelor's and master's degrees granted in arts and music grew by just 27 percent and 33 percent, respectively, during that 25-year period, while the number of doctorates granted in the fields grew by 49 percent.

Yet the arts are in a precarious position as we approach the 21st century. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) survived the now-predictable threats of elimination again this year, but the federal program is a shell of its former self. NEA funding in New England sunk from nearly $14 million in 1988 to less than $7 million last year. Meanwhile, arts, culture and humanities causes capture just 3 percent of American charitable giving.

As federal arts funding has suffered from political attacks, state arts funding has been buffeted by recession. State support for the arts in New England neared $26 million or $1.95 per capita in 1988, but sunk below $9 million or 67 cents per capita during the depths of the recession of the early 1990s, dragged down primarily by a precipitous drop in Massachusetts arts funding. Despite gradual improvement since then, state investment in arts throughout New England remains below $21 million or $1.54 per capita—still better than the national per-capita state investment of 82 cents!

Notably, the Washington, D.C.-based National Association of State Arts Agencies reports that state investment in the arts is rising across the nation, not to make up for the shortfall in federal arts funding, but because states increasingly see connections between the arts and public priorities in areas such as education and economic development.

Still, funding isn't the only problem. The arts carry little weight in key phases of academic life. High school arts grades often matter little in college admissions decisions. Artistic accomplishment matters little in faculty tenure decisions—and so on.

Constance Bumgarner Gee, who teaches arts policy at Brown University, notes: "If we want other people to value something, then we must show that we value that something as well. The first step I would suggest New England colleges and universities ought to take is to require several high school arts credits for admissions, just as they do the sciences, history, literature and mathematics."

Above all, New England educators, policymakers, business leaders and other decisionmakers need to work together to ensure that the region prepares students for the creative careers of the 21st century and fosters the economic and cultural development of cities and towns.

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***John C. Hoy*** *is president of the New England Board of Higher Education and publisher of* CONNECTION.

# ART FOR NEW ENGLAND'S SAKE!

JOHN O. HARNEY

When academics tout the economic impact of New England's higher education enterprise, they instinctively point to university science research or the latest community college worker retraining program. They almost never flaunt their arts programs in this context. But they should.

New England's college- and university-based arts programs feed not only the imagination, but also the economy.

Though the region is home to just 5 percent of the U.S. population, New England's colleges and universities award 8 percent of U.S. college degrees in arts and music—and, along with the region's museums, cultural organizations and artists, garner 7 percent of funds awarded by the embattled National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

Perhaps as a result of this educational over-achievement, Boston ranks sixth among all U.S. metro areas in artists as a percentage of the labor force. Massachusetts, Connecticut and Vermont all rank among the top 10 states nationally by this measure.

The economic impact of university science research is measured in spinoff activity, right? Well, academic arts programs create spinoffs too. More than 1,000 commercial art-oriented businesses, including photography studios and ad agencies, operate in New England. And the region boasts nearly 10,000 nonprofit arts and cultural organizations, which are responsible for $2.3 billion in annual spending, according to a study by the New England Foundation for the Arts.

That study also counted nearly 100 million yearly admissions to arts and cultural events in the region—about 20 times the annual attendance at major league sporting events in New England. Despite the rants of conservative politicians, people like art.

The economic impact of arts programs is revealed not only in quantifiable terms like employment and ticket sales, but also in the region's quality of life and, indeed, in the creativity that underlies New England's fabled capacity to innovate.

Montserrat College of Art expands in downtown Beverly and, like magic, quality restaurants appear. The Maine College of Art takes over an abandoned Portland department store, and southern Maine lawyers, accountants and entrepreneurs receive a signal: stick with the seacoast city.

No wonder governments from Dublin, Ireland, to Providence, R.I., have created special tax-favored zones for artists. They know that art, more than any other use, enlivens street life. And they know that CEOs consider a community's cultural climate when making business location decisions.

The National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies recently named 14 New England cities and towns among America's 100 best small communities for the arts—a disproportionate share that seems more than coincidental in a region that also boasts a disproportionate share of higher education resources.

Admittedly, the impact of arts programs on industrial innovation is more difficult to assess. And arts are really not supposed to be "useful." But it has been noted that Japanese art forms seem to underlie the design of Japanese automobiles and other products that have been so successful in the world marketplace.

Indeed, the practical value of an arts education has been recognized in New England at least since the 1870s, when the public Massachusetts College of Art (MassArt) and the private Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) were created at the urging of business leaders who saw a need for homegrown designers to support the region's surging textile industry.

New England's textile industry is mostly history. But MassArt still offers a major in "industrial design." Meanwhile, RISD and Bryant College, known for business education, have attempted to capitalize on these practical applications by jointly establishing a Center for Design and Business, which aims to spur economic development in southern New England through the use of design.

Moreover, learning to understand art—and trying to make art—doesn't just "round out" individuals. It also helps students, young and old, approach and understand hard sciences and other subjects. A new course at Yale University, for example, helps medical students become more careful observers by having them view an assigned painting at the Yale Center for British Art and, according to a course promo, "study it like a rash that has been framed."

Despite all this, college and university arts programs face nagging problems, according to arts educators and others who gathered recently in Portland, Maine, for a New England Board of Higher Education conference aimed at exploring the impact of academic arts programs on New England's economic and social life.

Among other things, the arts educators lamented the artistic deficiencies of students who arrive at the doors of college admissions offices. After all, some urban school districts haven't taught music in a quarter century. And in too many of the districts where music and other arts courses have survived, so has a tradition of half-baked arts teaching.

Consider New England Conservatory of Music President Robert Freeman's anecdote about dining a few years back with the president of Eastman Kodak. Freeman, then director of the Eastman School in Rochester, N.Y., asked about the powerful businessman's interest in music. "Alas, I have a tin ear," the executive told Freeman, adding, "I wanted to sing in the choir in the seventh grade, but was told by the director of that group that I had absolutely no ability in music."

The point is that an insensitive comment made by a teacher decades ago is probably inflicting profound damage today on the cultural life of Rochester, N.Y. Who knows how many New England communities suffer similarly?

In fairness, higher education has offered little incentive for schools to provide a serious arts curriculum. The chairman of Emerson College's Performing Arts Department reminded colleagues in Portland that admissions officers—even at colleges claiming to specialize in the arts—have historically "factored out" grades in arts courses when reviewing an applicant's academic records.

Brown University Professor Constance Bumgarner Gee suggested that, to the contrary, colleges should require a certain number of high school arts credits for admissions (and in the process, presumably, give school districts an incentive to reinstate the arts and music programs they had cut at the first signs of budgetary trouble).

Gee also called on colleges to upgrade teacher education in the arts, as well as arts courses for non-arts majors. And she suggested that fine arts students be required to take arts policy courses so they can help frame public debate.

Connecticut Higher Education Commissioner Andrew G. De Rocco wondered why colleges that are so eager to give academic credit for business-oriented internships do not give credit for artistic performance.

For all their economic power, the arts face serious political problems symbolized by the right's attack on the NEA (which costs every American just 36 cents per year), but also evidenced by the second-class treatment of arts faculties at all levels and the fear among many parents that their children might squander tuition dollars by taking arts courses or, worse, pursuing arts majors.

Patrick St. Clair O'Malley of Hansa Media urged colleagues in Portland to be "as aggressive as the Wall Street banker" in lobbying for favorable treatment.

But lacking the cold cash of Wall Street bankers, the arts industry can build its political power in one way: by building audiences. That means reaching out to nontraditional supporters, keeping a lid on museum and theater ticket prices and above all, ensuring that students at all levels and from all backgrounds complete serious, well-taught arts courses.

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***John O. Harney*** *is executive editor of* CONNECTION. *This introduction is adapted from a column which was first written for BusinessToday.com, a Boston-based daily news service on the World Wide Web.*

# TRAFFICKING IN WONDER:

## The Arts and the Liberal Arts

**ARTHUR FEINSOD**

Like ancient Rome, the United States is better known for its pragmatic achievements than its aesthetic ones. Alexis de Tocqueville, in *Democracy in America,* describes how those in democracies such as ours "habitually prefer the useful to the beautiful" and "require that the beautiful ... be useful." When choices need to be made between the two in our country, utility invariably wins out over art. The lightbulb of Thomas Edison is preferred to the light of Robert Frost's poems, Henry Ford's automobile to Tennessee Williams' *Streetcar.*

Nonetheless, the ideal of art lies just below the surface of our national consciousness and now and then influences our words and actions. After all, the WPA's Federal Arts Project did subsidize artistic experimentation throughout the United States while employing thousands of artists during the Depression; America did create a National Endowment for the Arts in 1965 that fueled artistic endeavor for decades; and President Kennedy did proclaim, "When power corrupts, poetry cleanses, for art establishes the basic human truths which must serve as the touchstone of our judgment."

Even *arts education* can claim the blessing of a U.S. president, indeed one of the Founding Fathers. John Adams wrote his wife in 1780: "I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy ... in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music [and] architecture." By our second president's timetable, we should all be deep in the study of art by now, but of course, we aren't.

If for no other reason, one would think that the liberal arts college would be a bastion of support for the arts, since liberal arts study and the arts are kindred spirits in both forswearing utility. A liberal arts education is meant to create "free" individuals by educating them in the broadest sense, not preparing them directly for any specific kind of work. Art is an application of skill toward the expression of beauty. When the criterion of utility is added, we move away from art and more toward craft. A work of art, in its purest sense, tends to be "useless," much like a liberal arts education.

> When we ask students to examine a great poem or symphony or piece of sculpture, or to ponder the shape and meaning of a pivotal monologue in some great play, we are teaching them to engage with the mysterious—to confront magnificence.

One would think that the arts and the liberal arts would stick together: a camaraderie of the useless, two impractical buddies paddling together against the swift current of American pragmatism in the name of something higher. But facing the harsh realities of diminishing funds, neither the arts nor the liberal arts can afford to strap its cause to a partner perhaps more impractical than itself. Now paddling separately, the arts and the liberal arts, instead of standing firm for their own intrinsic value, struggle to find any argument that can save them. And the arguments most likely to be heard in our culture are those of utility.

## Practical rationale

Rather than claim a privileged status apart from the mundane, the liberal arts now find themselves having to legitimize themselves by claiming that they indirectly create the skills to succeed in the "real" world. Responding to dwindling interest in a liberal arts education among secondary school students and their parents, Richard Hersh, president of Hobart and William Smith College, recently argued that people with liberal arts educations, having learned to think creatively and express themselves clearly, have a better chance of securing and excelling in professional jobs than those with specialized or vocational training through which they have accrued skills seemingly more applicable to the work at hand.

In parallel fashion, studying the arts in schools is advocated insofar as it can be shown to improve performance in more traditional academic disciplines. Paul Griffiths of the *New York Times* led off his recent endorsement of music education in a child's early years on the grounds that listening to and performing music enhances a child's ability to acquire math and language skills. He enlists the same arguments used to validate the liberal arts: "On a more practical level, a child involved in a musical performance is confronted with challenges that will be of lifelong benefit: how you present yourself in public, how you argue a case, how you interpret a document, what evidence you accept and what you question, where you draw the limit between what you are told and what you want, how you work with others toward a common goal."

Griffiths does ultimately posit musical education's intrinsic value by its "asserting the importance of things ... that have no physical existence or monetary worth," but he feels obliged to lead with the argument most prone to catch the eye of the pragmatic American reader. In short, advocates of the arts—like those of the liberal arts—have had to proclaim their worth in practical terms.

In searching for ways to validate the arts, administrators of arts programs have focused not only on vocational training, but also on social utility. To secure funding, the arts have had to prove their success in steering the young away from criminal activities, providing substantial jobs for the unemployed or underemployed or building interpersonal skills for those alienated and isolated on our socioeconomic fringes—notably, the poor and institutionalized. While many of us would celebrate these as worthy goals, making these

> Colleges should require students to complete art-making courses, so they will never again take artistic achievement for granted.

issues priorities turns the arts into social means, rather than ends in themselves. The frequent result is that inferior art receives support over quality art on the basis that it addresses immediate social concerns, delivers manifest social results and thus is easier to measure in follow-up evaluations. Lost is art that stirs a deeper consciousness about larger, more enduring issues, even social, political and economic ones, but doesn't attempt to fix anything here and now. Lost is art that provides unquantifiable gains through a deeply satisfying and enriching experience for the individual—art that engages artist and audience alike in an intimate and lasting relationship with transcendent beauty and longer-term significance.

Clearly, the arts and the liberal arts are useful in the grand scheme of things, but not in their capacity to produce anything tangible or profitable or to do anything that is concretely applicable to a specific problem here and now. Utility should not be the primary standard by which we determine their worth. But if not by utility, how can we speak of the value of the arts, especially as they are taught and presented in liberal arts colleges?

## Art's intrinsic value

Far more today than in 1807 when William Wordsworth first told us how "the world is too much with us," we have allowed "getting and spending" to "lay waste our powers." As we work our daily jobs, attend our daily classes and spend our leisure hours viewing television, surfing the Internet and playing computer games, we can easily forget that the human spirit needs to experience wonder—something that takes the breath away, something that strikes us mute as Job when confronting God in the whirlwind. In days past, religion mostly filled that need; today, in our increasingly secularized society, the arts are called upon to assume that role.

In one of his poems, John Keats conveys his silent awe upon reading George Chapman's translation of one of Homer's great epics, comparing it to the awe that Keats imagines Hernan Cortes (he probably meant Balboa) and his men must have experienced as they caught their first glimpse of the Pacific Ocean. Great art can bring us to our metaphorical knees.

That isn't to say that working one's way through the maze of a complicated mathematical proof or staring through a microscope at pulsating life does not inspire a similar reaction. But a work of art is constructed out of the stuff of the human soul and connects us to our place in a world that science and technology haven't changed: a world where people are born, grow old and die, a world where loss and the suffering that comes of loss are the steep price of wisdom. For centuries, artists have struggled to create meaning, and their efforts to probe the human soul in all its glorious and bewildering complexity have enlightened and ennobled us.

The problem is that when confronting great works of art for the first time, we do not always have the eyes or ears to appreciate them. In Plato's famous allegory of the cave in *The Republic,* "prisoners" (a metaphor for all mankind) are forced to face a cave wall where they can only see shadows, not the light behind. The shadows can be said to represent everyday reality or perhaps art that merely reflects, without transfiguring, everyday reality. The light, then, would represent ideal beauty and transcendent art. Plato asks what would happen if one of those prisoners were suddenly compelled to look up at the light. At first sight, he wouldn't necessarily appreciate it. In fact, his eyes would hurt, he would flee, he would return to the shadows, concluding that the shadows are truer and clearer than the light cast by transcendent, ideal beauty.

I remember my first encounters with Chekhov's *The Three Sisters* in high school and *King Lear* and *Waiting for Godot* in college. I specifically recall taking my copy of the Beckett play and throwing it across my room and muttering to myself, "Why are they making me read this crap?" Ironically, I now regularly teach these same three plays and, when I do,

Making art is not practical, efficient or ultimately profitable in any material sense, but it can—after years of self-sacrifice and hard work, study and experience—endow one with the skills to create wonder, and perhaps that's all the counterweight one needs.

I ask myself: "How can I get my students to appreciate what I now see in these works, not what I experienced at their age?"

Teaching the arts is challenging because the defining artistic experiences of our lives often require not only time and maturity, but a training of the eye and ear to reorient the ways we look at a painting or sculpture, view a performance, hear music and read poetry and drama. Our job is not only to build those skills but to inspire—that is to "breathe life into"—our students, provide mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, to save them from drowning in the fast images and brash sounds of today's popular culture and technology. When we ask students to examine a great poem or symphony or piece of sculpture, or to ponder the shape and meaning of a pivotal monologue in some great play, we are teaching them to engage with the mysterious—to confront magnificence.

## Artistically Gifted

The museums at Mount Holyoke, Smith and Wellesley colleges will receive more than 170 works of art by 20th century artists including Mark Rothko, Jackson Pollock and Louise Nevelson in a bequest from Norma Marin, the daughter-in-law of painter John Marin. Notably, rather than divide the collection, the three colleges will jointly own all the paintings, photos and other works. Norma Marin will also donate the family's summer retreat in Addison, Maine, to be run as a center for women artists.

## Making art

Few quarrel with the validity of studying literature or art history. The objections come with giving credit for creating art. But this distinction between studying and making art is dangerous; you cannot fully appreciate what an artist has accomplished without attempting to do it yourself. Besides, it would be woefully ironic if we were to sanction studying the work of past masters but not encourage potential artists of the future to make art now.

Some in the academy undervalue the making of art because they claim it is easy and therefore doesn't belong beside more rigorous fields of study. Especially vulnerable to these accusations are realistic acting, modern dance and abstract painting since the most significant works in these areas *seem* easy to accomplish and so require a trained and discerning eye to determine their quality. It is difficult to prove to someone who doesn't make art on a regular basis the countless drafts, sketches and rehearsals it takes to create a believable multidimensional character on stage or a dance or an abstract painting that "works" on the artist's own terms, let alone those of critics and a measurable audience. Creating a body of significant work in any art takes years of training, practice, applied intelligence, endurance and courage.

Colleges should require students to complete artmaking courses, so every student has the experience of employing some form of artistic skill, even at a basic level. This is not to force students to care about something that perhaps they are indifferent toward, but to expose them to the demands a work of art places on its creator, so they will never again take for granted artistic achievement.

I am always taken aback by the reactions of certain students in my Introduction to Theater course at Trinity College. Despite my warnings and eight-page syllabus of required assignments, every year students enroll who think the course must be easy because it's "only theater." You write a short play, direct and perform scenes, do stage designs and then participate in a fellow student's play. "What could be easier?" And yet, by the end of the course, some of these students are visibly angry at me for asking so much and are stunned if their hard work is met with grades they don't like.

"How dare you demand so much and then give me a C+?" one asks.

"How dare you think that making art is easy?" I reply.

After filtering out subjective criteria of evaluation, arts educators should apply strict standards in judging performance in arts subjects and not succumb to pressures to inflate grades. In turn, admissions officers on the undergraduate and graduate level should assign the same weight to arts grades as those in other subjects when reviewing applicants' records, rather than "factoring out" arts grades as they often do.

Parents need to take heed, too. Not surprisingly, some parents consider an arts major a waste of money since taking arts courses only rarely translates into increased earning power after graduation. If taking an art course is viewed only as a break from the courses that do seem to increase earning power, say a marketing course, you can imagine parents' anger when their child works harder in the art course than in the others and then receives a lower-than-expected grade for the hard work that should have been saved for the courses of greater practical value.

For centuries, art has forced its creators and viewers to question their values, face their complacency and challenge authority.

This raises a second objection to the arts as a serious choice of study in the academy, which is that they are impractical. Why waste time on something that does not prepare you in any obvious way for the more lucrative professions, for helping the student get into law school, medical school, dental school or business school—or into business directly?

My answer is that participating in the arts creates in students the appetite to think, feel and experience deeply and to live more creatively. Thus, they are saved from the spiritually deadening shopping malls and the pernicious effects of mindless television-watching and computer-game playing. Exposing our students to significant art nourishes a passion for substance and quality and a benign impatience with superficiality. Even students who do not opt for the precarious life of an artist will be more in touch with their full humanity having labored over a poem or a dance.

A liberal arts education provides students with a foundation on which to build the capacity to create and appreciate wonder.

Making art is not practical, efficient or ultimately profitable in any material sense, but it can—after years of self-sacrifice and hard work, study and experience—endow one with the skills to create wonder, and perhaps that's all the counterweight one needs. But everything in our materialist consumerist culture militates against making art that doesn't lean heavily toward entertainment, commercialism or mere decoration. When all that is filtered out, the place of pure art is small but worth fighting for, and the fight must begin in the academy. If this fight can't be won in the bastion of enlightenment, it has little chance anywhere.

A final reason why the arts are viewed with suspicion in the academy may be more fundamental than any of the others. Making art does not draw exclusively from the reasoning faculties. Creating art is oftentimes trafficking in mystery, magic, passion, ecstasy, even wild irrationality. That which evokes wonder is almost by definition something mysterious, something inexplicable, something that defies reason, logic and explanation. Nothing could be more threatening to institutions of contemplation. For the same reason that Plato did not see a place for poets in the ideal republic, some people inside the academy—still the bastion of rational discourse in our society—feel more comfortable with the arts on the periphery, rather than in the center.

Edward Albee recently spoke with my playwriting students about another aspect of art that sometimes overlaps with the wondrous, but often does not. Albee urged my students not to write plays that are nice. Art, he said, has always challenged the status quo, it must always be provocative. In other words, the role of the arts is to provoke turmoil and effect change.

Art often succeeds at shaking up those who create it as well as those who view it: shaking them up psychologically, politically, intellectually and metaphysically.

For centuries, art has forced its creators and viewers to question their values, face their complacency and challenge authority. Art demands reexamination. And while the shaking-up process might be healthy and beneficial to the life of the institution, it is often met with resistance. The academy tends to think it needs calm for peaceful contemplation, and to some degree it does, but that calm can easily become complacency. The arts stir the waters, preventing stagnancy in individuals and institutions, including the liberal arts college itself.

It's not that the academy is a reactionary institution which, fearing challenge, banishes its artists, kicking and screaming to the periphery. More often than not, art faculty and students place themselves there, finding institutional regulations and traditions repellent to their maverick sensibilities. Artists—individualistic, idiosyncratic, at times idiotic—can bewilder even the most patient college officials, while the routines of academic life can drive any self-respecting artist to distraction. Relationships between artists and their institutionally well-adjusted colleagues are often rocky, not only in day-to-day interactions, but also in the hiring and promotion of faculty artists and the admission and advancement of student artists.

Artistically inclined students tend not to do as well on standardized college admissions tests, and, if accepted, often take the least direct and most bumpy road through college. In a recent interview in a Trinity publication, Albee told about his time as a Trinity student in the late 1940s, auditing classes he deemed necessary and ignoring those he didn't, until finally he and Trinity had to part ways. Life in an academic institution is often a compromise for the artist. For that reason, hanging out at the periphery may be the best strategy for the artist's spiritual survival and, from the institution's standpoint, for the smooth conduct of day-to-day college affairs.

## Wrestling with ideas

Moreover, art faculty and students need to raid philosophy, religion, biology, Latin, psychology and all the arts, not just their own. Young artists should study abroad and be exposed to other cultures and other ways of seeing and hearing. All this will contribute to their capacity to make works of art that are charged, broad-ranging and deep.

An actor leaving a conservatory with a well-trained body and voice but no grasp of the big ideas that his or her instruments are serving is contributing in a very limited way. The same is true of the director who adroitly moves bodies around a stage but does not have a clear understanding or cogent interpretation of the play he directs. Or the painter who dazzles with color but whose brush doesn't probe powerful ideas, complex emotions or psychological depths.

In our multicultural and postmodern world, artists juxtapose ideas, images and sounds from high art and popular culture, from as close as their own private experiences to as far away and as long ago as they have learned to reach. The lines have blurred between disciplines, and few artists today can afford to create in one medium without confronting aspects of other artistic media and other fields of knowledge.

Our artists, if left unrestrained and uncensored, will teach us how to be free. Similarly, the purpose of a liberal arts education is to develop the "free man" (i.e., person). We need the arts and the liberal arts—individually and together—today more than ever. People today are "everywhere in chains," but it is a bondage different from the kind described by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in the 18th century. Materialistic and technological advancement has brought spiritual deprivation. We are in a silent war against forces diminishing our spirit, keeping us prisoners compelled to face only shadows on Plato's cave wall. Sophocles, Michelangelo, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Bach, Chekhov and Yeats are our Ariadnes, laying string to guide us out of our labyrinthine wasteland. Their laboring to find just the right image, metaphor, sound and story have provided a vast cultural endowment which emboldens us to face the transcendent light behind us, and confront the fact that, no matter who accompanies us, we are on a solitary journey—that no matter what illusions we hold, we are, as the Theban poet Pindar reminds us, mere creatures of a day. Director Max Reinhardt said that actors are artists who sculpt in snow. The actor's art provides a metaphor for all human activity, all of which, in the end, is sculpting in snow.

A liberal arts education provides students with a foundation on which to build the capacity to create and appreciate wonder. If it fails to do so, it betrays its mission. It must take the arts seriously and imbue students with an appreciation for the challenges of art-making and the glory of art that is well-made. The hope is that this kind of education will create generations of students with a lifelong spiritual hunger that will make art not nice but necessary. Then art and the liberal arts can become very useful indeed.

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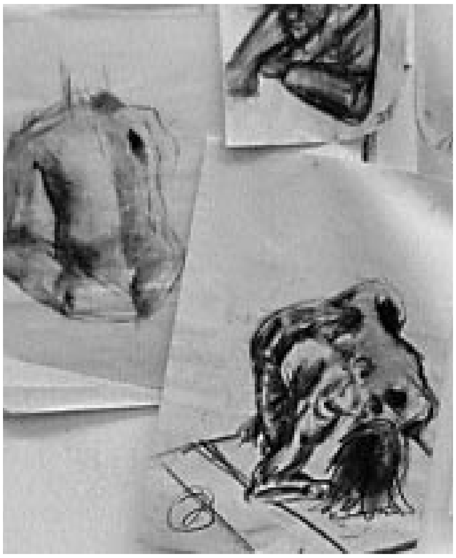
***Arthur Feinsod*** *is associate professor of theater in the Theater and Dance Department at Trinity College and associate scholar with the Hartford Stage Company. A similar article will appear in a volume of essays on the liberal arts college to be published by Trinity in fall 1998.*



# THE ARTS AND SOCIETY:

## Looking Ahead

**ELIZABETH COLEMAN**

What do those who worry about the use of public dollars in a democracy for so individual and subjective a thing as art make of the fact that every other civilized nation in the world—democratic, socialist, capitalist, Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, large or small—somehow manages to see its way clear to doing just that, and on a scale well beyond anything the United States has ever achieved? Surely art and artists are no less unruly, provocative, and individual outside our borders than within them.

Some critics charge that artists have brought this lack of support upon themselves through their insensitivity to public taste and political realities. But whatever artists' obligations to the larger community may be, they do not include minding their manners and being politically correct.

This is not to suggest that the artist's freedom is without responsibility. The issue of what anyone owes to the broader community has particular urgency in this era of personal privilege and unremitting emphasis on the value of the individual. Unquestionably, to inquire into the responsibility of the artist beyond the development of his or her own talent is to enter very dangerous territory. But that only makes it more urgent that the issue of responsibility be engaged by those who love the freedom and even the unruliness of art, rather than by those who despise and fear it.

The charms of following and submitting to the crowd are no match for the consuming intensity of immersion in a craft or a discipline, the challenge of engaging the as-yet untried or the courage to think independently.

If we are serious about achieving a sustained policy to support the arts, we desperately need to build consensus about the value of art, artists and artistic freedom. Yet in our political life, we pay a good deal of attention to tactics and strategy at the expense of underlying philosophy.

### Power of art

Intrinsic to the activity of the artist is the act of giving concrete embodiment to something within the artist, so it

Compare the number of times you have heard that the fundamentals of literacy include the capacity to see, to move, to hear, and to listen with the number of times you have been told of the importance of reading and writing.

achieves a reality for others. In so doing, the world is enlarged, enlivened and, in some measure, changed. As such, that activity is the fullest possible expression of individual freedom—an act of profound generosity spun out of the artist's innermost resources. It is an activity in which humans come closest to imitating the divine. But when exploring the contribution the arts can make to maintaining a robust society—especially a democratic society—we can and should ask for even more.

Art is fueled by a restless and exhilarating quest for perfection—the perfect line, the perfect balance, the perfect gesture, the perfect word. It carries with it a relentless ethos. For the artist, the quest is endless: hour after hour, day after day, work after work. When the subject is art, we enter a universe where there is no such thing as "good enough," where the embrace of excellence is unequivocal.

Artists and lovers of art can teach us to participate in and to cherish the pleasure, the power and the exhilaration of that quest. And while art collapses distinctions between the young and the old, the privileged and the unprivileged, the powerful and the powerless, artists must not let this capacity become yet another rationale for abandoning standards of excellence. This is a particularly lively issue in a democracy, where the commitment to equal access often generates resistance to the virtues of excellence. Who are the real losers when we diminish the value of excellence in our determination to expand access? All of us, but most particularly those who have just been granted admission.

At the heart of the matter of what art and artists bring to this nation is their unique capacity to transcend differences, to make connections, to create community. Lerone Bennett Jr., executive editor of the magazine *Ebony Forum,* has captured this capacity with particular eloquence. In discussing a publication of the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities entitled *Creative America,* he notes:

> *One of the principal findings of our study … is that the cultural sector is more integrated than any other sector of American life and is a living example of the strengths and possibilities of our oneness in difference and our difference in oneness. Few if any analysts have noticed it, but on this level, without any preaching or moralizing or subsidizing, Americans of all races and creeds are writing a new compact that carries the meaning of America to a new level and charts a new course for a new century.*
>
> *On this level, we all speak jazz and the blues and gospel and Gershwin and Ellington and Rap and Macarena. On this level, we all conjugate Aretha and Dylan and Estefan and Bernstein ... On this level, there is no White or Black or Brown or Red or, to be more precise, we are all Black and Brown and White and Red. ...*
>
> *The challenge of the 21st century is to make this oneness in diversity more conscious and to carry it to another level not only in the cultural field but in all the public arenas that bring Americans together and define them as Americans. ...*

Bennett is right. It's not that the arts avoid the passions that can separate us or blind us—it is that they *educate* them. Like nothing else, they extend our reach beyond the limits and parochialisms of direct experience. There is no better teacher from whom to learn hope and no better way in which to learn empathy.

## Arts as paradigm

We have mountains to climb, however, in the area of arts education. For it is in educational institutions of all places that the arts are more often than not treated as add-ons. Even where art is highly regarded as an object of study, the actual practice and practitioner of that art are another matter.

Compare the number of times you have heard that the fundamentals of literacy include the capacity to see, to move, to hear, and to listen with the number of times you have been told of the importance of reading and writing. This very limited perspective is troubling for the arts—and even more so for education.

I have the good fortune to preside over an institution that has had the vision to treat the visual and performing arts as equal partners in a liberal education. At Bennington, over time, the arts have tended to transform the energy of the more traditional academic disciplines, bringing into the culture of the college a kind of life that does not run out of steam, along with a resistance to trendiness. The charms of following and submitting to the crowd are no match for the consuming intensity of immersion in a craft or a discipline, the challenge of engaging the as-yet untried or the courage to think independently.

To use the arts and practicing artists to help transform education into something more active, more collaborative and more penetrating will take a revolution in the way we think about teaching. It means providing alternative models to that of the student as passive recipient of received truths, predigested ideals of beauty and distant and disembodied images of excellence. In this new model, the studio replaces the lecture hall. The role of teacher approaches that of master to apprentice, of coach to athlete and, eventually, of colleague to colleague. And the student's original work, rather than the capacity to recapitulate the work of the teacher, becomes the grounds for evaluating accomplishment.

To return to the role of the arts in this society as a whole, consider madrigals written centuries ago. They are typically composed for five voices, all in different ranges, all singing different phrases. The madrigal then weaves this cacophony of sound and sense into something deeply pleasing and whole. Unity is achieved not by virtue of the strong hand of the conductor, but by each singer attending, even as he or she sings, to the differing voices of others. Or think about jazz, which takes this ideal of the ensemble one step further. The collaborative activity is now itself the work of art.

In one of the more wonderful leaps of the imagination, it has been suggested that jazz best captures the defining spirit of our democracy—this experiment in building a new kind of nation, this improvisation, this ongoing work in progress. The final century of this millennium has been a trying time. Having provided the metaphor that so conveys the essence of this republic at its best, we will undoubtedly turn again and again to the arts in the coming millennium for their powers of renewal, for their creative energy and, most of all, for their unceasing invitation to connect.

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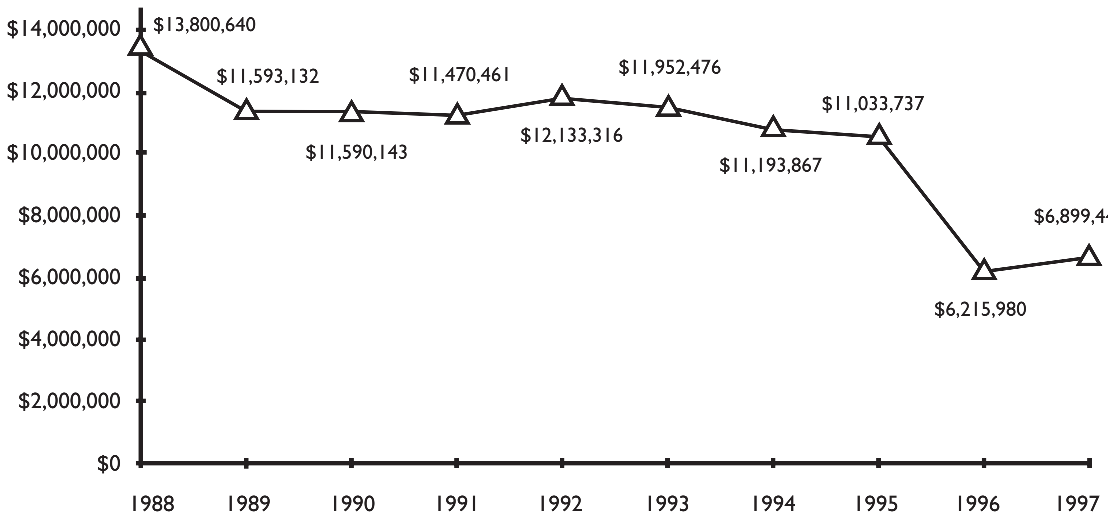
***Elizabeth Coleman** is president of Bennington College. This essay is adapted from Coleman's keynote address to the ArtTable Inc. conference held earlier this year at the Getty Center in Los Angeles.*

**Under Attack: National Endowment for the Arts**
**Arts Funding in New England, 1988-1997**

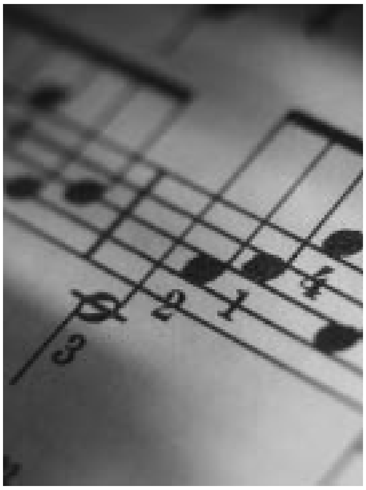



*Source: New England Board of Higher Education analysis of National Endowment for the Arts data.*

**Recovering: State Funding of the Arts in New England, 1988-1998**

| | 1988 | 1990 | 1992 | 1994 | 1996 | 1998 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Connecticut | $2,000,000 | $2,148,012 | $2,897,287 | $2,161,703 | $3,150,185 | $3,748,990 |
| Maine | 514,753 | 701,741 | 601,914 | 511,773 | 513,389 | 522,292 |
| Massachusetts | 21,148,270 | 17,685,000 | 3,587,543 | 6,309,470 | 14,162,525 | 14,691,657 |
| New Hampshire | 450,848 | 497,390 | 490,454 | 515,014 | 468,093 | 552,113 |
| Rhode Island | 1,070,165 | 1,382,552 | 899,518 | 723,442 | 626,562 | 674,587 |
| Vermont | 350,200 | 509,371 | 415,749 | 399,840 | 430,000 | 470,000 |
| New England | $25,534,236 | $22,924,066 | $8,892,465 | $10,621,242 | $19,368,754 | $20,659,639 |
| United States | $242,842,294 | $292,141,879 | $213,431,877 | $246,157,363 | $262,241,894 | $304,400,379 |

*Source: National Assembly of State Arts Agencies.*



# COLLEGE MUSIC: A Work in Progress?

ROBERT FREEMAN

College-level music education began to blossom in New England during the closing decades of the 19th century. True, the Harvard Music Association had been formed in Boston during the 1830s by a group of Harvard alumni who believed that the music of Beethoven, Haydn and Mozart was worthy of study and performance, even if the authorities responsible for the development of curriculum at Harvard College did not yet agree. And a Harvard graduate from the Class of 1843, Alexander Wheelock Thayer became so interested in the music of Beethoven that he dedicated his life to the study of the composer's biography—an endeavor furthered by President Lincoln who, shortly before his assassination, appointed Thayer American consul to Trieste as a way of facilitating Thayer's continuing Beethoven studies.

But Harvard and Yale did not establish their first professorships in music until 1875 and 1894, respectively. Among other important dates, both the New England Conservatory and Oberlin were founded in 1867, and the University of Michigan in 1880. Juilliard, Eastman and Curtis were all founded with private money in the early 1920s. At Princeton, however, the first full-time music appointment did not come until the mid-1930s, and by the end of World War II, music was still taught there as part of a Department of Art, Archaeology and Music!

Also after World War II, the MIT Corporation commissioned a study to understand better why young scientists and engineers in those days seemed more attracted to Harvard than to MIT. The study concluded that MIT might address the problem by expanding its curricular offerings to economics, philosophy, linguistics, political science and, among other things, music. (John Harbison and I left Princeton in 1968 in order to become assistant professors at MIT, where Harbison, one of America's most eminent composers, is now Institute Professor of Music.)

By the 1950s and '60s, music schools and departments sprang up in colleges and universities all over America. And music has achieved a great deal in the United States during the past century, partly as the result of the encouragement of a great many American higher education institutions. More than 12,000 degrees in music are awarded annually by U.S. colleges and universities. With encouragement from the academic world, virtually every repertory is available on compact disc. And performing arts centers have been built during the past 25 years in great numbers across the country.

## Flat note

Despite all this, there are threatening rips in music's canvas. Though it is beginning to make a comeback, music has not been taught in most of America's urban school systems for a quarter century. During the past half century, very few new works of music have become part of the standard repertory—a canon which appears more and more restricted. While

Because most institutions still base their reward systems on publication, faculty are reluctant to dedicate the time to oversee a first-rate course introducing music to college students who would otherwise have relatively little acquaintance with it.

record stores and radio stations pump out lots of music of which Plato would have taken a very dim view, the number of classical CDs made and sold has declined precipitously in the past decade, as has the number of metropolitan newspapers employing music critics and the annual sale of acoustic instruments all over the world.

Furthermore, every collegiate music faculty member of my acquaintance has complained for a generation now of annual declines in the test results of aural skills among admitted students—not a happy phenomenon to contemplate in a nation whose future depends upon a thoughtful electorate. And though no serious longitudinal studies have been done that I know of, the audience for classical music over the past quarter century has appeared to be getting markedly older. How long that phenomenon has been going on and to what degree that process was retarded by the immigration of younger refugees from the Nazis during the 1930s and '40s and from the collapse of Communism in the 1990s, has not yet been fully explored.

Finally, in a nation where the arts were supported almost entirely by private money through the early 1960s, the very existence of the National Endowment for the Arts has been under strenuous political attack from the right for more than a decade. Even at a time when the richest nation in the world has a balanced budget, the fact that we spend less than a half dollar per capita in federal support for the arts continues to be a major target for political attacks—a sure sign that those who care about art have not found an effective way to organize.

There will always be music in America; the question confronting schools and departments of music concerns what *kinds* of music will survive pressure to appeal to the lowest common denominator. The following courses of action could enhance the nation's musical life.

• ***View music as a whole on campus.*** The late Roger Sessions postulated a single way of thinking about music. In Sessions' view, those who experience music most keenly are the composers, for it is they who conceive it in the first place. But Sessions added that while there will always be college faculty who think of performance as a species of clerical activity, a sensitive performer will *conceive* the music with an acuity approaching that of the composer. And while I have known university administrators who see the role of the listener as a very passive one, it was Sessions' dream—and mine—that the musical instruction provided in American colleges and universities would make American listeners more active participants in the creative process. (These days, this task can be facilitated through computer technology in the instruction of elementary composition.) Put another way, composition, performance and listening should be thought of not as discrete entities separated from other intellectual disciplines through narrowly focused academic organizations, but as parts of the same process.

• ***Refocus musical specialists.*** Partly as the result of musical specialization during the 19th century by such figures as Chopin and Liszt, and partly because of a century of specialization in American graduate schools begun by the Johns Hopkins University near the end of the 19th century, we have become adept as a nation in developing musicians and musical scholars whose professional focus is very narrow. The academy's need to produce young men and women who can begin tenure-track positions by the time they are in their early 30s further contributes to the overproduction of musical specialists who have difficulty finding jobs—and whose contribution to the musical life of the nation is undermined by their narrow focus. This is certainly true for virtuosic performers on a number of acoustic instruments—after all, how many tuba openings are there in any given year? But the problem is just as important for musical *scholars* as it is for performers.

During my days as an MIT faculty member, I developed a databank, with the guidance of Cornell musicologist Donald Grout, for the attribution and dating of 18th century Italian arias, which we estimated to number about 10 million. The development of the necessary computer programs had already been accomplished for other projects by the department of electrical engineering at MIT. But the gathering of data and the development of a common cataloging format that I hoped to see adopted by other scholars working in the field required both time and money. As a result, the MIT development authorities arranged for me to travel to the Presser Foundation in Philadelphia for a meeting with the foundation president, who listened to me with what I thought very promising attentiveness for more than an hour, only to ask me toward what turned out to be the conclusion of our interview, "Mr. Freeman, if the foundation were to give a million dollars for the work you have proposed, which I agree is very interesting, in addition to your wife and mother, how many people are there in the world who would be pleased?" Counting my friends and colleagues as rapidly as I could, I suggested something on the order of 10 or 12. To which the Presser president responded, "I was afraid of that. I'm sure you understand that in a world of finite resources, beset as it is with human deprivation of many kinds, it's hard for my colleagues and me to consider giving away a million dollars that would be of use to so few people." I got the point.

Moreover, while it is possible to appoint young men and women to music faculties who are narrow specialists—pianists, composers or scholars, for example—there is a lot to be said for the music faculty whose members can accomplish more than a single objective as musicians. Bach was not a lesser composer as a result of the fact that he was the greatest organist of his day. Robert Schumann's compositional output did not suffer as a result of the fact that he was equally interested in conducting and in a professional career as a music journalist. Leonard Bernstein was no less a conductor for the fact that he also composed so-called serious music as well as Broadway shows, played the piano and served as Charles Eliot Norton lecturer at Harvard. And today, Robert Levin's teaching and scholarship at Harvard is clearly informed by his active career as a performing pianist.

Musicians need not be intellectually isolated from the rest of a university or college faculty. James Winn's wonderful book on a comparative history of poetry and music, *Unsuspected Eloquence,* demonstrates the wondrous intellectual and artistic bridges that can be built between those disciplines. Indeed, ongoing work in Harvard's neurobiological laboratories by Gottfried Schlaug and Mark Tramo and by the University of California, Irvine's Norman Weinberger, on ways in which the musical instruction of children apparently develops increased cognitive capacity, promise much for the future.

The fact that we understand so little of the musical history of our own country provides a broad opportunity for collaboration between music historians and other history scholars. And the current malaise of American orchestras promises stimulating opportunities for collaboration among business school professors interested in organizational behavior, sociologists and orchestral players. Some of these interdisciplinary activities can be introduced to a college campus through the individual initiatives of faculty members. But interdisciplinary programs can also be stimulated through special funding for collaboration. Indeed, because the sometimes-narrow disciplinary specialties control much of the promotion process that precedes tenure, the proper moment to encourage an interdisciplinary spirit is immediately after a professor gains tenure. In fact, the quest for tenure itself leads some young professors to embrace interdisciplinary studies as a vital opportunity for self-renewal.

## Impact Statement

Somehow communities with art schools seem more vibrant—more theaters, better restaurants, more public art. Maine College of Art President Roger Gilmore recently outlined some of the Portland college's more quantifiable impacts on the seaport city:

- Pro bono design services for local nonprofit organizations
- Signage program for the city of Portland
- Active role in establishing Portland's downtown Arts District
- Art In Service program oversees student internships in social service and community agencies as well as certain public schools
- Enrolls 320 BFA degree students, 400 adults in continuing education and 500 young people in Saturday School programs
- Maine's largest employer of visual artists
- $7 million operating budget

• ***Pay greater attention to teaching musical literacy.*** Though we in higher education talk about the importance of balancing research and publication on the one hand and teaching on the other, most institutions still base their reward systems mainly on publication. As a result, a great many faculty are reluctant to dedicate the necessary time to oversee a first-rate course *introducing* music to college students who would otherwise have relatively little acquaintance with it. Because of this, such assignments—which I believe to be the most difficult in any music school or department—are normally handed over to senior faculty who have stagnated intellectually or to junior people who lack the necessary experience.

As a second-year graduate student at Princeton in the fall of 1959, I was responsible for a section of one of these introductory courses, as the result of which the musical education of a man who turned out to be U.S. Sen. Bill Bradley undoubtedly suffered. Although I became a fairly popular and, I think, successful teacher after several years in the trenches, it has always worried me that the future of national arts policy took a serious blow as the result of my unknowing pedagogic interaction with a Princeton freshman who ultimately turned into an important national political leader.

Similarly, a couple of years ago when I was director of the Eastman School in Rochester, N.Y., I asked George Fisher, then the newly appointed president of Eastman Kodak, about his potential interest in music. He responded, "Alas, I have a tin ear. I wanted to sing in the choir in seventh grade, but was told by the director of that group that I had absolutely no ability in music." One can only weep over the damage done to the eventual musical life of the city of Rochester as the result of a seventh-grade choir director's focus on short-term results.

Put another way, if introductory college courses in music—or in any other discipline, for that matter—are not staffed by our best men and women, we are providing a less than optimal education. In all probability, it will not be the graduates of the Harvard music department, but of Harvard's introductory Music 1 who will eventually become trustees of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

My colleagues and I have worked hard on the development of new initiatives to persuade both music faculty and their students that the future development of audiences in America for good music depends not on the whim of God but on the willingness of musicians to think of themselves not as victims of an uncaring society, but as missionaries ever-anxious to develop new ways of spreading musical literacy among Americans of all ages.

Young people come to music almost always as the result of a deeply moving experience with some work of music which persuades them that there is, in fact, nothing in the world like music. Sometimes it is a performance in a high school band of John Philip Sousa's *Stars and Stripes Forever.* Or it may be the result of singing in the chorus in a performance of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* or Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony.* It may be listening to a live performance of the finale of Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* or to Joseph Schwantner's *New Morning for the World*—music involving texts by Martin Luther King Jr.

It matters not whether the enthusiastic young performer-listener decides eventually to go on to a professional music school or to become a professional musician, for a healthy musical culture requires not only professionals, but also amateurs who participate in musical events not because they are paid to do so but because they love to.

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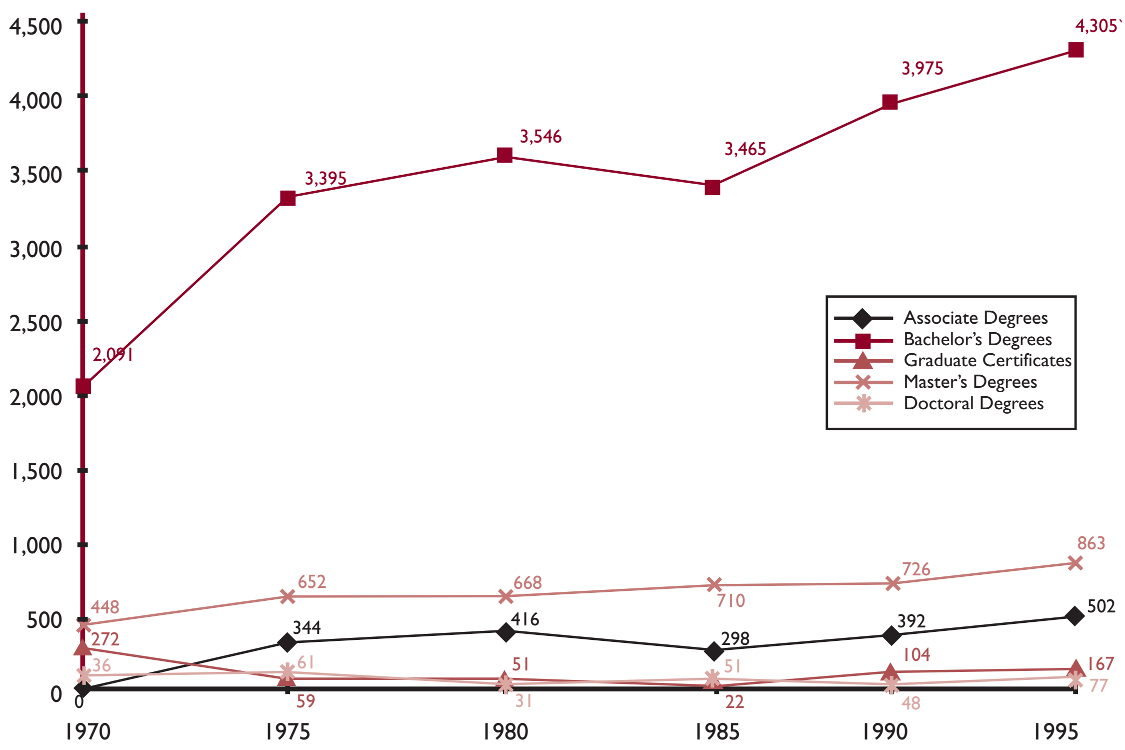
***Robert Freeman*** *is president of the New England Conservatory of Music.*

## Degrees Conferred by Level in the Arts and Music in New England: 1970 to 1995




*Source: New England Board of Higher Education analysis of National Science Foundation data.*

# ARTS: A Practical Argument

**KATHERINE SLOAN**

New England has always had a schizophrenic view of arts and culture. Sports-crazed as we are thought to be, far more New Englanders pay to attend cultural events each year than sporting events. Indeed, art and culture account for almost $4 billion in direct and indirect spending throughout the six-state region, according to a 1997 report by the New England Foundation for Arts. Yet government at all levels offers woefully inadequate support of the arts.

Boston ranks an astounding 35th among the nation's 50 largest cites in municipal arts funding, trailing such historical bastions of high culture as Las Vegas, according to a recent survey by the United States Urban Arts Federation. The Athens of America has not realized what other cities have understood for decades: the arts need a steady source of financial support or they wither and die. Even the preeminent Boston Symphony Orchestra and Museum of Fine Arts continue to flourish because of the largesse of their Brahmin founders and season subscribers, not because of significant city support.

The problem of inadequate local arts funding is compounded by retrenchment at the state level and a political sideshow on the national level. For example, Massachusetts dramatically reduced its investment in the arts following the recession of 1990. Though the Massachusetts Cultural Council budget grew by $3.3 million this year after remaining steady for the past three years at about $14 million, its predecessor agency could claim twice the budget in the 1980s. In Washington, meanwhile, some lawmakers build political capital by attacking federal funding for the National Endowment for the Arts, while others frame the arts as marginal and irrelevant to public policy.

It hasn't always been this way. In the second half of the 19th century, Massachusetts industrial and legislative leaders recognized that they could no longer rely upon England for skilled artists and industrial designers to sustain the flourishing textile mills of Lowell, Lawrence and New Bedford. Bay State industrialists knew they needed to train an indigenous workforce in drawing if the state's economy were to thrive.

In short, Massachusetts public and private interests saw art and design as crucial to the economic viability of the commonwealth and to its civic vitality. In 1873, they converged to make a major public policy decision that established the Massachusetts Normal Art School, later Massachusetts College of Art.

The Massachusetts Normal Art School had three goals: to train Massachusetts citizens as artisans for the state's growing industries; to prepare teachers of drawing (for both children and adults) in Massachusetts public schools; and to teach analytical approaches to visual problem-solving to those who aspired to be professional visual artists.

Like the progenitors of England's then-developing Arts and Crafts movement, the founders of Massachusetts Normal Art School believed that good art and good design were inseparable. Victorian educators on the state's Board of Education

## Scratching Beneath the Surface

Two Worcester Polytechnic Institute undergraduates used their engineering know-how to turn an off-the-shelf document scanner into a vital tool for art historians and curators. The low-cost device developed by WPI students Patrick Noonan and Scott Townsend, with help from faculty and the staff of the Worcester Art Museum, will enable curators and others to determine what lies beneath the layers of paint and dirt on the surface of works of art.

were more interested in what they saw as art's positive moral influence on the public than they were in the vocational needs of business leaders. In the legislative battle to create the art school, state leaders supported the teaching of the fine arts, as well as design, because they believed art had an inherent public value.

Moreover, from its beginnings, the nation's only free-standing public art college welcomed students from all economic and ethnic backgrounds, recognizing that talent knows no class or racial distinction and that art and design are as important to the lives of working people as they are to the elite who frequent art galleries. In an age when men dominated college enrollment, women made up more than half of the art college's first class. Turn-of-the-century graduate Annie Lucasta Rogers was America's first cartoonist to advocate for women's suffrage.

Over the decades, graduates of the college of art have become noted graphic and industrial designers, advertising executives, architects, painters and sculptors in glass, wood, metal and clay, as well as textile and fashion designers, photographers, filmmakers, multimedia and performance artists, gallery owners, art historians, museum curators and teachers of art and design. Recently, two alumns crossed paths when one designed General Motors' first electric car and the other designed the award-winning advertising campaign for the car.

As in the 1870s, New England today is in the midst of an economic boom. Political and education leaders across the region are now beginning to recognize the need to train and educate the workforce by investing in public colleges and universities. In the same way that the visual arts were critical to the industries that drove the robust economy of the late 19th century, visual communications today are at the center of the rapidly evolving, digitally oriented, information-based economy. Today's thriving software, telecommunications and new media industries are grounded in visual communications and all require design solutions for their success.

The commitment Massachusetts made a century and a quarter ago to a public art and design college provides lessons for us today, as we debate public investment in the arts and redefine the role of government in supporting and sustaining the arts.

First, public support for the arts depends on developing a broad array of mutual interests, including those in the public and private sectors. Government support of the arts begets corporate support. Government and corporate support together lower costs to the public and increase attendance at art events. The arts community must be able to show that good art and design have an enormous positive impact on the New England economy.

Secondly, cultural and education leaders must demonstrate to business and industry, to political communities as well as to the public, the vital connection between fine and applied art. We must emphasize the unity and utility of art and design, the importance of excellent craftsmanship and the creative splendor of the fine arts.

## Cultural Exchange

Art can transcend differences among nations. The latest case: Maine College of Art recently established an exchange program with the Hanoi Fine Arts College in Vietnam, and announced that Denise Karabinus, a senior majoring in printmaking would be the first American student in a generation to go to Vietnam.

Third, art must help address contemporary problems. In urban areas, the arts can be a catalyst for social change, for self-expression, for empowering communities and improving children's learning. In Boston, Mayor Thomas Menino seems to understand this. "A city without culture is a city without character," he recently noted. "Art and culture give young people an insight into a world they wouldn't normally see."

Our art colleges are vital to economic well-being. New England needs the Massachusetts College of Art and its counterparts for art's sake—but also for the sake of education and commerce.

***Katherine Sloan** is president of the Massachusetts College of Art.*

# VISUAL ARTS IN THE SCHOOLS:
## A Joint Venture

**PAUL A. C. SPROLL**

One could reasonably assume that the arts have begun to move from the margins of elementary and secondary school curricula to a more central and integrated role within the life of schools. After all, the federal Goals 2000: Educate America Act recognized arts as a core subject, and the Consortium of National Art Education Associations a few years ago forged a consensus on "what every young American should know and be able to do in the arts."

But despite these national initiatives and the clarion call of arts education advocates, the potential of the arts in K-12 education is still largely misunderstood and untapped. The visual arts, often viewed as peripheral to basic education, are not widely considered a necessary component of K-12 schooling. What art education is offered frequently revolves around technical skills and activities that seem to have little relationship to other school subjects. Witness the ubiquitous mask-making projects in which students are instructed in manipulating material, but rarely are offered insight on the context or symbolism of masks.

The teaching of art should explore the intersections between the arts and all other areas of schooling; the common ground is *ideas*. When teachers place ideas at the core of instruction and encourage *discovery*, they give students the wherewithal to discern *meaning*. But local school districts cannot undertake such reforms on their own.

### Visual arts partnership

Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) has long been committed to reform and renewal of public and private K-12 education. Through its Department of Art Education, RISD contributes to two critical areas of education reform in Rhode Island: the professional development of teachers and improved student learning in the visual arts.

RISD's most recent reform efforts focused on the Providence Public Schools, an urban system with all the attendant ills of an undervalued and underfunded educational enterprise. Importantly, RISD recognized that art teachers in the schools must be involved from the beginning as partners in reform.

In 1994, RISD launched a customized professional development program for art teachers known as *Project New Directions*, which was funded through Health & Education Leadership for Providence (HELP), a coalition of Providence's six nonprofit hospitals and four independent colleges and universities, including RISD. The project fos-

Collaboration is indeed a two-way street. Certainly, Rhode Island teachers and their students benefit, but so do RISD faculty and their students—in ways they could not have had they remained a comfortable distance from the rough and tumble of teachers' daily work.

tered a three-year collaboration between city art teachers and RISD, which in turn, led to the recent publication of the *Visual Arts Framework for Teaching & Learning*. The framework, part of an overall strategic reform plan in Providence, provides teachers for the first time with a guide of well-defined learner outcomes indicating what students are expected to achieve in visual arts at critical junctures, namely grades four, eight and 10.

While it's too soon to judge the impact of *Project New Directions* on student achievement in the Providence public schools, art teachers say the project has indeed created a greater sense of community among a group of specialists who had been largely isolated from one another and from other education professionals. "For years, art teachers have wanted a forum to communicate their ideas, plan and revise curriculum, discuss new trends in education and be advocates for the arts," says Allen Harris, a former art teacher at Hope High School. "Until now, it has been just a dream."

Encouraged by the Providence experience, RISD began to consider expanded partnerships with elementary and secondary schools, focusing next on curriculum design and faculty development in art and design education statewide.

With support from the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, RISD in 1995 established its Center for the Advancement of Art & Design Education.

Specifically, the center was established to address: 1) the lack of curriculum and professional development available for visual arts teachers in Providence; 2) the absence of curricular direction in visual arts education throughout the state of Rhode Island; 3) the need to develop teacher-based initiatives focused on attainable, replicable strategies for the curricular integration of national standards for the arts; and 4) the need for joint ventures connecting college and K-12 education.

For the past three years, elementary and secondary school teachers throughout Rhode Island—first art teachers and more recently teachers of all subjects—have attended a series of one-day professional development programs and weeklong summer academies established to explore inquiry-based approaches to visual arts education and to broaden the concept of visual arts to include design and architecture.

Using the inquiry-based approach, teachers develop learning encounters where the students' own creation of art and design is inextricably linked to their interpretation of diverse modes of visual expression. Teachers are encouraged to view creation as a process of investigation where the interrelationships between idea, material and expressive form are central to the inquiry.

For example, in a recent teachers' workshop, Lora Urbanelli, curator of prints, drawings and photographs at the RISD museum, used the exhibition *Working the Stone: Process & Progress of Lithography* as a point of departure for Rhode Island teachers to explore the history, science and expressive context of lithography. To bring the process alive, teachers joined RISD Assistant Professor of Printmaking Andrew Raftery in the college's print studios where they collaboratively produced a series of prints.

In another professional development workshop, this one devoted to design, RISD furniture design faculty members Rosanne Somerson and Alphonse Mattia directed a studio where teachers were challenged to rethink concepts of furniture. One assignment in "altered function furniture" asked teachers to consider changes in objects that would enhance rituals and experiences. Another had teachers design "self-portrait cabinets" to reflect the uniqueness of the owner.

It is important to add a cautionary note. RISD's decision to enter the fray of educational reform as an active participant has required far more faculty time than anticipated.

Two summer academies—*Design Talks: Teaching Design in the K-12 Visual Arts Classroom* and *The Garden: An Interdisciplinary Exploration*—have enabled teachers to work alongside professional architects, product designers, lighting designers and landscape architects, as well as museum curators and college-level teacher educators. Teachers return to the classroom prepared to expand the generally narrow focus on visual arts to include design, which in turn, allows students to connect the visual arts to the pulse of their daily lives.

The center has also provided direct grants to teachers for professional development, as well as professional designer residencies in the schools.

Providence art teacher Meris Baretto received a direct grant for her collaborative project with Colgate Searle of RISD's landscape architecture faculty and graduate landscape architecture student Kristin Surette, to develop a schematic master plan and establish an *Enchanted Garden* as an outdoor classroom at Baretto's Veazie Street Elementary School.

Marilyn Baldwin, an art teacher at Roger Williams Middle School, used a direct grant to commission professional exhibition designer Amy Leidtke to conduct a series of student and community *charettes* in order to capture diverse opinions as to how an abandoned lot adjacent to the school could be transformed into an *Art Park* for the school and community.

More recently, the RISD center, again with HELP funding, created the *Designers in Providence Schools* project as yet another way to enable teachers and K-12 students to interact with professional designers. Six designers were paired with art teachers to help them incorporate the study of design into their curriculum planning and instruction, while increasing student awareness of the role of architects and designers and design in everyday life.

In one project, students worked with graphic designer Sarah Sharpe to create a signage system for their elementary school. In another, high school students worked with architects Barbara Macaulay and Bob Hogan to create a daytime/nighttime master plan for the school's neighborhood, using light to improve the natural and built environment.

The center's involvement in teacher and curriculum development has thrust RISD into a substantial, long-term relationship with visual arts colleagues in elementary and secondary schools. Of all the lessons we have learned, the most striking is that collaboration is indeed a two-way street. Certainly, the teachers and their students benefit, but so do RISD faculty and their students—in ways they could not have had they remained a comfortable distance from the rough and tumble of teachers' daily work.

RISD's Center for the Advancement of Art & Design Education provides teachers with a forum in which to explore new ideas and teaching methodologies, empowering teachers to take risks. And they have. Art teacher Denise Zompa and music teacher Elizabeth Newman recently convinced the Bristol-Warren Regional School District to open Rhode Island's first arts-focused magnet elementary school. The school, slated to open in the fall of 1999, will fully integrate arts into the collaborative teaching strategies used in daily instruction in an effort to make learning come alive for all students. RISD and Bristol-Warren teachers are exploring the feasibility of a service agreement to provide staff development.

It is important to add a cautionary note. RISD's decision to enter the fray of educational reform as an active participant has required far more faculty time than anticipated. What started as a community service outreach project with 38 art teachers in Providence has expanded over three years to include 500 art teachers across the state. Moreover, as the center shifts its emphasis to include teachers of all subjects and grade levels, the faculty time commitment increases. If the level of external service is to be sustained, RISD will have to consider appointing talented faculty and staff whose work is dedicated to such programming. Nonetheless, if higher education is committed to changing the status quo in K-12 education, it cannot stand on the sidelines.

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***Paul A. C. Sproll*** *is director of the Center for the Advancement of Art & Design Education at the Rhode Island School of Design and head of RISD's Art Education Department.*

# Gee's View

*Brown University President E. Gordon Gee recently shared his observations on a variety of subjects with the New England Board of Higher Education. Gee, the former president of Ohio State University, became president of Brown in January.*

## On Pecking Orders

I believe that some of the most serious mistakes we make in higher education are our attempts to be like someone else. This is just too low an aspiration. Once, at a faculty meeting of the University of Colorado, a professor in the back raised his hand and said, "President Gee, isn't it wonderful that Colorado is now the Harvard of the Rockies?" I certainly did not want to give the standard response, that wasn't it wonderful that Harvard was really "Colorado on the Charles?" Such an answer would be a disservice to Colorado *and* Harvard.

For too long now we have had a follow-the-leader syndrome in higher education. If you are a state college, you want to be a state university. If you are a state university, you want to be the state's flagship institution, and on and on. We have developed a pecking order that has limited our ability to think creatively and to determine and appreciate each institution's unique calling and mission.

The best institutions are those with a clear sense of what they are and what they wish to accomplish. Brown, for example, should not be Harvard or Yale or Stanford. Those institutions are quite different from Brown. They have different aspirations and agendas. Their strengths are not Brown's strengths; their particular challenges are not ours. We will create better institutions when we each push toward our own expectations and our own benchmarks.

The greatest strength of American higher education has always been its diversity. It is wonderful to be in a nation where you can attend Ohio State or Denison in Ohio, or the University of Rhode Island or Brown in Rhode Island—that makes for a vibrant, diverse intellectual community. But if we become amalgamated and alike, or driven by the same motives, we lose our ability to innovate and respond to change. The opportunity to differentiate is a great opportunity in higher education today.

## On Leadership in Higher Education

When we speak of leadership and higher education, three ideas come to mind. The first is our obligation to create *leaders* and *leading* thinkers. We must show each new generation how to think and reflect, how to use limited resources and how to make decisions humanely and justly.

The second idea that comes to mind is more about creating opportunities for discussion and contemplation. The campus is the one place today where time and space are set aside for serious debate and inquiry. The campus is a place for ordered thought. The rules of scientific discovery and classroom decorum are not mere 19th century formalities that have somehow survived; they set the stage for true learning and true communication. So when we talk about leadership, I would like to think that the great universities view it as their responsibility to bring together scholars and students, to surround them with the best resources that can be assembled and to train them in the rules of discovery and argument.

Leadership will grow from this laboratory of inquiry. Intellectuals lead when they have a chance to be scholars and students; when they are freed to teach and learn. So when we talk about leadership, I think back on our essential mission of teaching and research. A university can lead when it hews closely to that mission, when it understands its role in our society to be one of creating a *place* for leadership.

Finally, when we speak of leadership and higher education, we must think about the university's role in contributing to public discourse. Where are the people in higher education today who speak out on issues that go beyond the walls of the university? In this country we have lost our public intellectuals, those men and women who can intelligently discuss issues that make a difference in people's lives.

I have been speaking about creating leaders within the campus. But we also need to think about which universities will be leaders in the world of higher education. Where will innovation and change come from in higher education? I firmly believe that leadership will come from some surprising corners. The great *public* universities in this country have learned to lead because they have been forced to defend themselves in an increasingly hostile and anti-intellectual world. Faced with declining support, public universities have had to show the world how important they are to the intellectual, cultural and economic life of this nation. Many public universities have become much more focused centers of excellence because various market forces have driven them to a clarity they might not have had to articulate before. I believe a number of our nation's public universities will join the circle of the leading universities of the world. Many already have.

One of the greatest dangers that *private* institutions increasingly face is their tendency to look inward instead of outward, to build walls around themselves as they try to cling to successes of the past. I do not want that to happen at Brown. Brown must be a private institution with a clear sense of public purpose. It must be willing to promote the sort of research and inquiry that contributes to public discussion and debate. Brown is as small as Rhode Island and as wide as the world.

## On Demonstrating the Economic Value of Higher Education

When I was president of Ohio State University, I went out and explained in very visible ways the things that Ohio State did for the people of the state. The most important thing I did was to carry around a jar of tomato sauce in my briefcase. Ohio is responsible for 56 percent of all the tomato ketchup produced in the world. It has the largest food processing plant, right behind Campbell Soup's processing plant, in a place called Napoleon, Ohio. In 1981, these two plants were going to move out of Ohio not because they didn't love Ohioans, but because they simply didn't have enough tomatoes.

A researcher at Ohio State's Agricultural Research Station, received a $1,500 grant from the university to develop a new type of tomato. In one generation, in about 18 months, he came up with the "Ohio State Tomato," which is still the finest of its kind in the world. It's now a $400 million business, and 15,000 people are employed because of that tomato. When I told people in Ohio that story, all of a sudden the lights came on! "I have a job because that university did the work."

Another thing people don't think about, whether it's Ohio or Vermont or Rhode Island, is all the teachers who are graduates of a state's colleges and universities. Think too of the physicians, the business and community leaders and all the other people who make the economy of a state run. We can talk about the economic vitality of the state, we can talk about what we do, we can talk about the budget of a university and all those other kinds of things. But we have never been able to put into words the economic value of an individual who graduates from an institution of higher learning in a state. In some way or another, we need to make that case.

Universities are often their own worst enemies. They have wonderful stories to tell. Yet, they are typically isolated. They don't tell their stories. Instead, they expect that money will come in from the state or the federal government or from their alumni, and then they don't want to be bothered. Anyone with this attitude is not going to survive as a leader.

## On Tenure and Academic Responsibility

If faculty members or others in a university think that tenure exists only to sustain jobs, then they do not know what tenure is about. Tenure was established at universities early in this century to protect and maintain academic freedom. But with the protections that now exist in the courts, tenure no longer exclusively serves that protective function. Tenure is now a rite of passage in the university. It is a statement that a faculty member has risen to the next level—a level of greater rights within the university, certainly, but also to a level of greater expectations. With every academic right comes academic responsibility, and if we do not enforce and exercise both, we have failed the university. The great universities are the ones that understand that.

At this nation's great colleges and universities, there are very few people sitting around with time on their hands. In such places, tenure functions to promote creativity and vitality. It also promotes the idea that a faculty member has obligations beyond the classroom—to the university community, to the surrounding community and to his or her particular field. We must stop hiding behind an idea of tenure that limits us. We must promote the kind of self-confidence that comes when good people know they are being directly rewarded for good work.

## On Lifelong Learning

The nontraditional student, the 31-year-old mother of three who is now single and wants to get back in the job market, the 45-year-old engineer who lost his job at the jet propulsion plant because of cutbacks in federal funding for basic research in that industry—these people and others like them are now becoming the "traditional" student. The 18- to 22-year-old may still be the traditional student at a few select institutions like Brown. But throughout the country, the normal continuum of education is no longer K through 12, but K through life.

It has been said that knowledge now doubles every two years. I am not sure exactly how that is measured, but the point is clear. We cannot point to a person and say that person is educated because he or she has studied these subjects and read these books. This can no longer be the basis for us to say, "You are educated." You may have some learning at that moment—some *information* perhaps—but education, real education, must be continuous.

Looking beyond Brown and the liberal arts universities, we must mount an ongoing effort to create an education infrastructure that will serve people, particularly in their later years, as they continue to change. When my father entered his profession, the chances were that he would change his job once. When I entered the job market, the chances were that I would change my job four or five times. My daughter, who is 22, is entering a world of work where statistics say that she may change her job or her profession many more times than someone of my generation. Think of the intellectual power that is going to be required to create and operate an educational system that must serve that sort of world. Creating that system is our greatest challenge—and will be our greatest achievement.

# Easy Days are Over

*The following is excerpted from remarks by Trinity College President Evan S. Dobelle before a June 1998 Brookings Institution issues forum titled "The Urban Recovery: Real or Imagined?"*

America's colleges and universities have had it very good for a very long time. In the years after World War II, we all sailed on the plentiful seas of the GI Bill. In the 1960s, we were flush with research dollars and federal largesse. Even now, most of our institutions have enjoyed endowment growth somewhere in the range of 15 percent since the start of 1998. And, of course, we have all continued to find a rationale for raising our tuitions by percentages that are almost two times the rate of inflation.

American higher education stands at its moment of reckoning. Within the first decade of the 21st century, we will see a fundamental change in the state of higher learning in this country. The easy days are coming to an end. And, to paraphrase Walter Lippmann, we can no longer divert this reality by forgetting it.

I assure you that we who lead the country's colleges and universities can no longer take for granted that the government and our students will continue to accept cavalier annual tuition increases of up to 5.5 percent.

We cannot continue to sit atop cumulative endowments that approximate $150 billion, continue to argue that we should not pay taxes and, at the same time, state by our inaction that we cannot be burdened by duty to city, state and nation.

We must define a new leadership for higher education. That leadership must combine vision, a sense of urgency, a willingness to take risks and a capacity to move multiple constituencies. We must escape from the insularity that breeds institutional arrogance. We must move away from the notion that change can only be achieved in incremental units that are inevitably painful and expensive. We must accept that we hold a special responsibility as centers of debate on matters of local, national and international importance. And we must move beyond rhetoric in the face of injustice or social need.

Too many college and university presidents continue to hide behind a set of excuses for inaction. Faculties are too difficult, money is too scarce, outsiders don't understand campus life, alumni are too demanding, students aren't prepared for scholarship—on and on the list can go.

The bottom line is that these excuses do little more than rationalize ineffectual leadership—the kind of failed leadership that has made many college campuses the most micromanaged and risk-averse institutions in America.

At a critical hour in our history, too many colleges are staid and self-satisfied islands unto themselves. They would do well to remember one of the great lessons of the liberal arts—the lesson of Dante: there is a special place in hell that is reserved for the morally indifferent and the safely neutral.

Trinity College in Hartford is taking a different course. Trinity is investing in its city—$6 million to date. Trinity is embracing its city. Trinity has made a commitment to provide leadership, vision and a forum for debate—to work in partnership with the city's leaders and other institutions committed to improving the quality of life in our community. The college does not wish to be an island within its city, nor an ivory tower with walls so high they are impossible for our neighbors to scale. We intend to draw our neighbors in, not drive them away.

Trinity is spearheading a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization initiative for the community surrounding our campus in the heart of Hartford. The initiative links neighborhood groups in a truly unprecedented collaboration to create a safe, viable neighborhood which also is a central hub of educational, health, family support and economic development activities. Our approach to revitalization starts by creating an infrastructure for local families that draws on the community resources and institutions already there. Its goal is to encourage stable home ownership and neighborhood economic development, and ultimately to generate jobs through research and through commercial and retail developments linked to the neighborhood initiative.

We've put together a package of public and private initiatives that will invest close to $200 million in the neighborhood, including approximately $100 million in new construction. It's a plan that includes three new schools; new home ownership opportunities; a new science and technology center; recreational, cultural and support facilities for the city's children, families and communities; and significant retail and business incubation opportunities.

Our vision reflects a "holistic" approach to the neighborhood which seeks to renew the neighborhood from within. And from Day One—from Moment One, in fact—we have emphasized citizenship in order to help the residents of our community feel empowered. No solutions have been imposed on them from without. The solutions have emerged from within the community through collaboration marked by common agendas, a sense of common purpose, mutual respect and shared commitment to success.

For more than two years, we have lived together, walked the streets together. We promised each other that we would not let our neighborhood die and that we would not recuse ourselves to the easy but unproductive path of despair, self-pity or bitterness in the face of common challenges. Instead, we dedicated ourselves to shaping our own destiny—focusing on our strengths and assets, not our weaknesses or liabilities.

Our initiative stands today as eloquent testimony to what a true public-private partnership can be and what it can do. Last July, the governor of Connecticut, the mayor of Hartford, the superintendent of schools, corporate leaders, the nonprofit institutions that are Trinity's partners in the neighborhood and, most importantly, the residents of the Frog Hollow neighborhood of Hartford gathered to break ground for the "Learning Corridor," which two years ago was an abandoned, environmentally contaminated bus garage site home to every imaginable stereotypical pathology of harsh urban life. Today it is the centerpiece of our neighborhood renewal plan. Today, on that reclaimed parcel of land, we are constructing three new schools—a Montessori public elementary school; a public middle school; and a math, science and technology high school resource center joined with a performing arts academy.

And just across the street a new building already has been constructed. It is the first ever campus-based Boys & Girls Club in America. The club, which is funded by a partnership of Trinity alumni, Hartford-based corporations and private foundations, will be staffed by Trinity students—students who will provide mentoring and tutoring to neighborhood youth and who will in the process learn precious lessons about the realities of life in contemporary America.

The neighborhood initiative also includes a family resource center, which is funded by the Aetna Corp. and focused on programs that assist parents not only with day-care needs but also with critical matters of family health and the pressures of childrearing.

Beyond this infrastructure for families and children, we are now implementing with Fannie Mae and local partners a housing strategy that emphasizes home ownership and fiercely resists the traditional incentives for staff and faculty to move to a neighborhood, while forcing the poor once more to relocate nearer the railroad tracks, nearer the highways, nearer the industrial zones. That kind of gentrification is not right, it's not fair and, for higher education, it's not defensible.

Trinity's role in this neighborhood revitalization effort has been as a champion of change and a catalyst for action. Our strategy reflects an extraordinary partnership among major health and educational institutions, the public and private sectors, city, state and federal government, and community and neighborhood groups that share a stake in the future of this area and are committed to its revitalization.

We have assumed leadership of this effort because it is vital to Trinity's future that our neighborhood turn itself around. We have also done so because it is the right thing to do. It would be morally bankrupt for Trinity to teach the liberal arts on our campus and ignore what is happening across the street.

How can we call our students to leadership if we lack the courage and vision to lead? How can we speak of the pursuit of truth if we turn our back on the truth that is our neighborhood? How can we encourage individual responsibility if we as an institution behave irresponsibly?

We have an obligation to Hartford and we intend to honor it. Quite frankly, every other college in America has this obligation to the cities and towns they thrive in.

Our commitment to community renewal and social responsibility is not at odds with our fundamental educational mission. In fact, the two are closely aligned and complementary. Our efforts beyond campus are supported and indeed bolstered by a new educational strategy that will tie Trinity students to Hartford and to other great cities of the world. Just last week, this strategy received unequivocal affirmation from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, which awarded Trinity a $5 million grant to build college-community connections that emphasize civic responsibility and educational innovation.

Trinity's board has endorsed a new academic vision for the college. It is built around our belief that as a liberal arts college in a capital city, we have a unique opportunity—and a special responsibility. At the heart of our academic strategy is our relationship to Hartford. We are proud of our connections to a great and historic city that now stands on the verge of renaissance. We are moving aggressively to build academic linkages to our own city and to cities around the world, so that Trinity graduates will understand the realities of not only one American city but also at least one other great city of the world.

Every student who graduates from Trinity will have experienced life in Hartford either through an academic internship or through volunteer service. Be it through an internship in a legislature, in a corporate office or in a hospice, or be it through volunteering in a school, a shelter or a Habitat for Humanity project, our students will be in the city—reaching beyond the sheltered walls of this campus and making a difference in the community. They will graduate with liberally educated minds—and with a sense of responsibility to the place in which they live.

Beyond Hartford, every Trinity student will have the opportunity to study in a great city of the world. Trinity currently operates a very successful campus in Rome. Last year, we purchased a campus site in San Francisco. This year, we have opened a site in Cape Town, South Africa. Within the next five years we will open 10 additional learning sites in cities as diverse as Dublin, Barcelona, Santiago, Beijing, San Juan, Istanbul, Jerusalem and New Delhi. These sites will be linked technologically, allowing students to share their experiences via "cyberseminars."

Our goal is to ensure that graduates of Trinity will be sophisticated, passionate and sensitive citizens who are committed to the life of their neighborhoods and their world; graduates who will move effortlessly among cultures and with grace among people of all social and economic standing; and graduates who will never lose either their enthusiasm for learning or their belief that they can make a difference.

We have no less a goal for Trinity and no less a challenge for higher education in America. We call on colleges and universities to return to a time when they sought to make a conscious and well-conceived difference in the quality of this nation's life—a time in which, as Frederic Rudolph has written, American higher education was "governed less by accident than by certain purpose, less by impulse than by certain design."

## Showcasing Research

*The following are among titles of papers delivered by students and faculty at the first Massachusetts State Colleges' Graduate Deans Symposium held this past spring at Salem State College and published in a report entitled "Showcasing Graduate Faculty and Student Research."*

*An Assessment of Addictive Behavior in College Athletics*

*The Social Worker's New Clothes: A Research Study on Attire and the Social Work Profession*

*Hong Kong's Future Opportunities and Threats Associated with the People's Republic of China's Corporations*

*Deviant Mortals: A Methodological Approach to Sexual Mores in Early Essex County*

*Total Quality Management in Health Care*

*Saratoga and British Prison Policies*

*Arc View GIS, Modeling and Internet Applications in Environmental Impact Assessment*

*Taxonomy of Nicaraguan Forms of Mice of the Genus Peromyscus (Rodentia, Muridae) Using Discriminant Function Analysis*

*Using Focus Groups to Determine Health Education Needs of Young Adolescents*

*Perceived Outcome After Stapedectomy for Otosclerosis*

*Environmental Influences on Fearfulness in Young Children*

*Face to Face: Visual Truth and Media Technology in Portraiture*

*Sawako Ariyoshi and the American Reader*

*Living in the Underdeveloped World: An Interactive CD-ROM Program*

*Senior Centers of Tomorrow: Small to Mid-Size Cities*

*Listener Identification and Perception of Voice Quality of Smokers and Non-Smokers*

*Lucy Snowe: Female Hero of Bronte's Villette*

*Adult Learning and Distance Learning in Higher Education: Problems and Solutions Applied to Physical Therapy Education*

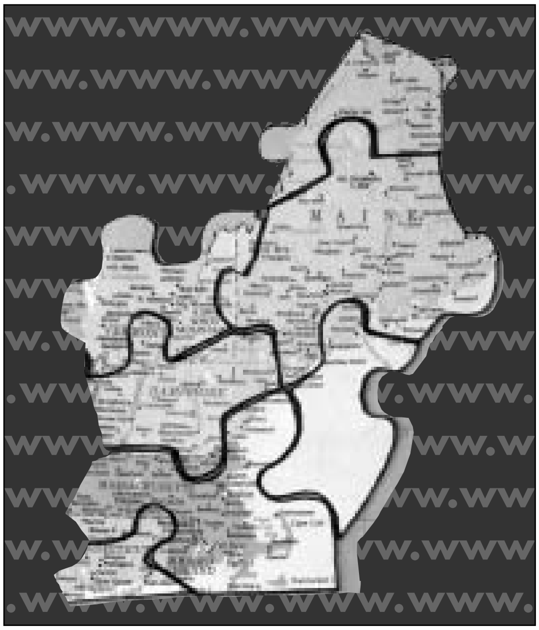
*Collecting and its Role in Education*

*Global Environmental Changes: Applications of Satellite Data in Analyzing Changes in Global Vegetation Cover*

## Practicing What You Preach

*The following items are among the "environmental features" built into the recently completed, $3.25 million New Classroom Building at Vermont Law School, according to a college fact sheet. The South Royalton, Vt., college is known for its programs in environmental law.*

- Composting toilets, which do not require any water, are on the New Classroom Building's main and upper levels.
- Aerobic bacteria will convert waste into potential fertilizer.
- Fixtures will be removed from other campus structures, allowing Vermont Law School to reduce its overall water demand.
- The reduced water demand is a substantial benefit to the Town of Royalton's small municipal water system.
- In contrast with most buildings, the New Classroom Building does not send ventilated air to unoccupied rooms.
- Ventilating only rooms that are occupied is the New Classroom Building's principal energy-saving strategy.
- Enthalpic energy recovery wheel [located within the ventilation air ductwork] controls humidity, recycles exhaust heat.
- By transferring heat and water vapor, the wheel will keep the building from becoming too dry in the winter or too humid in the summer.
- The wheel recovers 80 percent of the heat in exhaust air, transferring it to the incoming fresh air.
- Photoelectric lighting controls turn off corridor lighting when sufficient natural light is present.
- Lights are turned off automatically once users leave a classroom.
- Outdoor site lighting includes high-pressure sodium lighting, the most efficient electric lighting for larger, open spaces.
- Products of combustion from heating equipment have been eliminated. The building is so efficient that it is heated by oil-fired boilers installed in adjacent Whitcomb House. The new building did not require any heating equipment, chimneys or fuel storage tanks.
- Moisture-induced biological factors such as molds and dust mites have been prevented by design.
- Construction materials were carefully chosen to minimize harmful fumes, including water-based paints and finishes, non-formaldehyde particle board for cabinetry and casework and natural linoleum [made from linseed oil, wood flour and cork] instead of vinyl flooring.




# New Lessons in Regionalism

*Today's regionalism is economic, organic, social and strategic*

**NEAL R. PEIRCE**

The level of interest in regionalism has increased exponentially in the 1990s. Simultaneously, the power of and trust in governments, especially national government, has eroded. Tracing why that might be, consider what former Middlebury College President Olin Robinson said about how political events make centuries unequal in length. The 18th century was short, running from peace treaties in 1712 or so to the French Revolution in 1789. The 19th century was long, running from 1789 all the way to 1914 and the start of World War I. And the 20th century was short. It started in 1914 and it ended on Nov. 9, 1989, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the totalitarian regimes of our time.

By this analysis, the 21st century is already nine years old. And already, it has shattered the geopolitical model of recent centuries—most recently represented by the Cold War—in which coalitions of sovereign nation-states struggle to maintain a military balance of power. Across the world, nation-states today are less omnipotent; many are crumbling. From the hierarchical, governmental, industrial, military models of the 20th century, we are hurtling toward a world of globalized, interactive markets and a totally networked model represented by rapid telecommunications and the Internet.

This new order is tailor-made for *regions*, whether metropolitan or rural or multistate like New England. But it also demands more of regions than anyone imagined. Regions are challenged to think and act strategically, very much on their own, in a world of weakened central governments, evaporating tariffs and $2 trillion-plus a day in world currency exchange. They have been freed to compete and cooperate with counterpart regions, across nation-state lines, across continents, indeed with counterpart regions anywhere on the globe. Yet conversely, if regions ignore the challenges, they will slip and decline.

As recently as 20 years ago, regionalism was narrowly conceived, narrowly discussed and minimally influential. It related almost exclusively to governments—how the various municipal and county units of a single region could bet-

## Priority Issues

Following are the 10 key issues to watch in state legislatures across the United States in 1998, according to *Governing* magazine:

1. Tax Relief
2. School Reform
3. The Internet
4. Managed Care
5. Animal Waste
6. Electricity Deregulation
7. Child Development
8. Stadium Deals
9. Ethics/Campaigning
10. Affirmative Action

ter coordinate their efforts or, in rare cases, actually merge.

Today, both the concept and practice of regionalism have escaped those narrow bonds. Government is just one aspect. Today's regionalism is economic, organic, social and strategic.

Consider the economic aspect. One can argue that today's meaningful jurisdictions are not the nation-states on which so many statistical tables and discussions rest, but rather the multiple local regions that operate as the basic, functional economic units of our time. National averages miss huge regional differences. Federal policy is still a factor, but less so than we used to think. Indeed, if we can break away from the prevailing nationalist economic paradigm, we can see what economic regions really look like—freestanding, contiguous, some crossing state or international boundaries, some based on single industrial clusters, others on varied bases, many ready to strike agreements among themselves.

The Europeans understand this; indeed they freely describe their continent as a collection of increasingly powerful city-states, ranging from Milan to Hamburg, Manchester to Stuttgart, Lyon to Marseilles—all metropolitan regions making deals, establishing direct economic and cultural ties to one another with minimal regard for the nation-states in which they happen to be located.

### New England's story

Even the most avid exponent of New England has to admit there's a touch of artificiality to this particular region. Glance at the map and you wonder why Maine, at least its northern reaches, doesn't belong to Canada. I spend my summers in New Hampshire, and if it shares much more than the Connecticut River with its geographic twin Vermont, it has escaped me. Connecticut largely ignores the regional hub, Boston, relating more intensely to the great urban agglomeration around New York City.

When I was preparing my book on *The New England States* a quarter-century ago, Elliot Richardson counseled me to focus on the sharp interior divisions in New England. Another expert, George Wilson Pierson, noted that "on the map, it looks as if New England ought to be a region. Whereas, in sober reality, geographically New England is not so much a region as an optical illusion."

Yet everyone knows there is a New England reality, spirit, tradition and future hope. Ambiguities and all, it's as clearly defined a region as you'll find anywhere in America. In terms of the intellectual sparks flowing from its academic halls and laboratories, New England has few peers on earth.

Still, intellectuals seem to take the region for granted. I was shocked recently when a scholar from Newfoundland contacted me to ask if I'd collaborate on a book about cross-border regionalism by writing a chapter on the politics, cultures and institutions of each of the New England states.

He asked good questions. Which socioeconomic and political forces will either inhibit or make it easier for New England's states to work together on common problems? Are there common regional values and interests that can be mobilized? Is New England a myth created by outsiders that is perpetuated to lure tourists? Have there been attempts to promote common values? Is there much trade among these states? Are they more competitive than cooperative?

But I wondered: why couldn't this scholar find *within* New England a small army of qualified, up-to-date experts ready to tackle those issues?

There is a lingering mystery about the six-state region. Why, without benefit of salubrious climate or great agricultural soils or geographic centrality in America, has this region proven so resourceful, so successful over time? The early farmers deserted New England's rocky hillsides as the Erie Canal opened the way to the grand farmlands of the Midwest. New England grew into a great maritime power, only to be eclipsed by New York and later Baltimore. America's insurance and banking industries were born in Boston and Hartford only to be carried off elsewhere in significant measure. The momentous New England textile boom featuring the first power looms was eventually lost to places with cheaper power and cheaper labor.

## No News

The much-talked-about devolution of government responsibilities from Washington, D.C., to the states should make the nation's statehouses political centers of gravity, but America's newspapers are missing the story—on purpose.

The number of newspaper reporters who cover state government full-time has declined in 27 states since the early 1990s—roughly the beginning of devolution, according to a recent study by the University of Maryland-affiliated Project on the State of the American Newspaper. Reason: Market-driven editors and publishers figure government news is too dull to sell papers.

Writing in the *American Journalism Review*, the study's authors contend that just 513 newspaper reporters and 113 wire service reporters cover state government full time. The authors note that more than 3,000 media credentials were issued for the last Super Bowl.

To some extent, New England newspapers are bucking the trend. The number of statehouse correspondents has declined in Connecticut and remained level in Maine, but risen in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont.

Yet after each reversal, New England, like a Phoenix rising from the ashes, has staged a comeback. Its remarkable story of renewal offers lessons to all regions as they plunge into an era of globalization in which the protective envelopes of time and space have been exploded, in which intellectual power will be the coin of all realms, in which no industry, no process, no technology can long retain monopolistic advantage against competition springing up across the globe.

How did New England reinvent itself back then? How is it learning to survive and grow now? What's missing in its formula for the century about to dawn? New England studies ought to be a growth industry, not a backwater.

### What is a region?

To be sure, regionalism is a squishy, evasive subject. I learned the hard way by trying to pin down multistate regional lines across the continent in a series of books I wrote on the USA in the 1960s and '70s. In recent years, I have been wrestling with another brand of regionalism—centered on our great metropolitan regions.

Yet if any kind of regionalism teaches you quickly that political boundaries are pretty irrelevant, it's that metropolitan cut. Think of any metro area you know and tell me precisely at what border line you think it starts and ends, and you know why. In 1993, Curtis Johnson, now chair of the Metropolitan Council for the Twin Cities, and I wrote a book about this phenomenon, called *Citistates*.

We devised a modern-day definition we'd like to convince Random House or Webster's to accept. It reads:

> **Citistate**—*n.*—A region consisting of a historic central city, surrounded by cities and towns which have a shared identification, function as a single zone for trade, commerce and communication, and are characterized by social, economic and environmental interdependence.

That definition leaves out *boundaries*. That's because a citistate isn't a political entity. A citistate is organic. It's a labor market, the reach of leading newspapers and TV stations, a medical marketplace, a "commuteshed." The citistate *is* what the economy *does*.

## Freestanding Think Tanks

The Boston-Cambridge axis is home to an unparalleled concentration of nationally oriented university-based policy think tanks, led by the high-profile centers and institutes of Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. But for state-oriented policy work, two freestanding Boston policy institutes unaffiliated with any college or university continue to make the big splashes.

In the spring, the Boston-based Massachusetts Institute for a New Commonwealth managed to provide common ground for a working group of former cabinet members from the administrations of former Bay State governors William F. Weld and Michael S. Dukakis, commonly thought to be polar opposites. The five former officials even reached agreement on the divisive issue of how to reduce the state's personal income tax rate to 5 percent, down from 5.95 percent, contingent on the condition of the economy. The think tank then disseminated the findings at a downtown Boston breakfast conference, featuring the two former governors themselves, the cabinet officials and Harvard professor Michael Porter.

A few months earlier, MassINC won kudos for its report entitled "Closing the Gap: Raising Skills to Raise Wages," which recommended that Massachusetts invest $160 million a year to provide the range of adult basic education, vocational training, worker training and community college programs needed to prepare adults for the knowledge economy.

The "market-oriented" Pioneer Institute, meanwhile, continues to play a leading role in the development of Massachusetts charter schools, recently helping convince state lawmakers to raise the maximum number of charter schools from 25 to 50, and setting up a new leadership academy to train charter school managers. Pioneer also reopened debate on privatization in Massachusetts with a study claiming private bus service on some routes in Greater Boston would save taxpayers money.

Similarly, the unaffiliated Maine Center for Economic Policy has provided compelling studies on tourism and other economic development issues in Maine, while the conservative Josiah Bartlett Center in New Hampshire and Ethan Allen Institute in Vermont have become established voices in their states.

So what does this urban metro theory of regions have to do with multistate regions like New England? A lot. Dan Kemmis, former mayor of Missoula, Mont., author of books about cities and community and now head of the Center for the Rocky Mountain West in Missoula, observes that we're past the old paradigm—the mechanistic model of Newtownian physics, the intellectual faith of the men who wrote our Constitution, a group forever writing about things like billiard balls, because they were so fascinated with strict cause-and-effect relationships. That was a world of rational checks and balances and predictable effects—the progenitor of the Machine Age.

But it's time for a change, Kemmis insists. He invites us to look at complexity theory and how closely it ties in with a conception of modern world regions as organic. In this model, each level is defined not by borders and rules but by natural organic development in successive stages from neighborhood to citistate to bioregion to continent to the entire globe.

Regionalism, writes Kemmis, is an utterly organic phenomenon. It is never possible to tell a place that it is a region; either it is a region inherently or it's not a region at all. As a result, regionalism stands in stark contrast to the command-and-control structures we have placed on the landscape—structures like state and county boundaries by which we attempt to

## State of the States

Earlier this year, the national Council of State Governments analyzed the state-of-the-state addresses of 45 governors and tallied the top priorities in its monthly *State Government News*. Issues marked with an "X" were considered priorities. Note the "higher education" column:

| | K-12 | Safety | Children | Environment | Tax Cut | Economic Development | Higher Education | Transportation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Conn. | X | | X | X | X | | | X |
| Maine | | X | | | X | X | | |
| Mass. | X | | | | X | | | |
| N.H. | X | X | X | | | | | |
| R.I. | X | | X | X | X | | | |
| Vt. | | X | X | X | X | X | | X |

tell places what they are and are not part of.

Instead, Kemmis proposes that we think about fractals—patterns within patterns within patterns. Look, for example, at the surface of a sand dune: you will see small sand dunes making up that surface and even tinier dunes on the surface of the small dunes. In this organic sense, these forms play back and forth on one another. And while this description is physical, we can extend the analogy to all sorts of analyses and insights, political, economic and environmental.

Bill Dodge, head of the National Association of Regional Councils, suggests we are moving from the old paradigm of governance—federal, state and local—to a new paradigm that is radically different: global, regional and neighborhood.

Why?

*Global* because critical impacts are worldwide—global warming, for example, but also worldwide economic restructuring and the dawning of the Information Age.

*Regional* because citistates are the true cities of our time—the real environmental basins, the real labor markets, the functioning economic communities.

*Neighborhood* because the local community is the arena in which social problems must ultimately, on a person-to-person, neighbor-to-neighbor basis, be dealt with—and all the more so as our national safety nets for the poor disintegrate. And because in our strikingly interdependent regions, neighborhoods do dramatically better if they're connected to the larger region, its growing economy and its diverse educational and developmental resources.

Kemmis sees it this way. Globalism is here to stay, because the whole earth is so utterly organic and interconnected. Continentalism too is a fact of life. Bioregionalism is with us. So is city- or citistate regionalism, and finally the most elemental form, the "miniregion" of organic relationships we call the neighborhood.

In that construct, New England emerges distinct out of history. In one sense, it's the New England inside us: Puritan sometimes in severity but transcendentalist in new opportunities of the mind, a region that symbolizes as no others do values of character, of capacity, a place that through history's vicissitudes stays afloat, keeps progressing. And by those qualities, a place that owes itself and its people no less than preparation for a challenging century ahead.

Some people will always see New England as a political entity. Clout, they'll say, is the name of the game. One needs to get one's act together—to lobby with the powers that be in Washington for special grants and privileges. And certainly, at least some reasonable level of federal research and development support is vital for any academically based region.

But internal capacity and performance are more important for these times. The federal grant chase is a detail, not an end in itself. The political clout game is part of the adversarial, win-lose politics we brought to a fine and frustrating art in the 20th century. It's part of the traditional adversarial governance model that produced so much gridlock and left so many governments paralyzed attempting to cope with deeply ingrained societal problems. At least in some measure, it will be replaced in the 21st century by a politics of collaboration. Just take a look at corporate culture today. Of course all sorts of power games are still played. But few question that the most viable, sustainable corporations will be those that honor and consult their employees and encourage teamwork, rather than a hierarchical, power-clash model. And so too in the public sector.

John Gardner, the former cabinet secretary and writer on organization and community, noted: "Behind all the buzz about collaboration is a discipline. And with all due respect to the ancient arts of governing and diplomacy, the more recent art of collaboration does represent something new—maybe Copernican. If it contained a silicon chip, we'd all be excited."

Optimizing a region's prospects in the age of globalization requires that we reinvent government, sharpen economic development planning and face up to shared social and environmental problems. And that we systematically tap the region's resources, ranging from corporations to universities to aspiring ethnic groups, just as any intelligent business uses its assets to progress and prosper.

California has a network of regional organizations—people who despair of their overly politicized state government—who see their local governments too deeply engaged in a fight for revenues to be at all creative. But what has emerged, region by region, is a network of "civic entrepreneurs," individuals who instinctively grasp that regional success and civic agendas, ranging from education to better land-use planning, are closely allied, indeed dependent upon one another. They have names like the Sacramento Regional Cluster Project, the Institute of the North Coast and San Diego Dialogue. They're working on ways to bridge political jurisdictions, build public-private relationships, rethink complex issues and get results. They see state and federal governments as potential partners—but by no means saviors—in helping regions prosper.

Many of these civic entrepreneurs met in Santa Barbara, Calif., last fall for a regional summit put on by the Irvine Foundation. In effect, they presented a regional declaration of independence from an overbearing, overburdened state government that appears so beholden to special interests. They declared that regions are the right focus for action—large enough to assemble sufficient resources and leadership to act, but small enough to ensure effective interaction among interested parties. They affirmed their belief in the interdependence of economy and community. They announced their commitment to involving underprivileged communities—to making the table bigger and rounder. They concluded that having small groups of leaders speak for them was yesterday's way. Now, they would operate not as hierarchies, but as networks based on trusting relationships and seeking measurable results.

A good model for other regions is *Joint Venture: Silicon Valley*, which began in the recession of the early 1990s. With top high-tech industry leaders at its helm, Joint Venture is building substantive benchmarks into its vision, rather than relying on squishy good intentions. It's now addressing such Silicon Valley migraines as road congestion and sky-high housing costs. Recently, it has dispatched teams of business professionals to work intensively and over time with selected groups of schools, helping them devise specific classroom changes and set hard goals for better student achievement. This is a whole generation ahead of simplistic corporate adopt- a-school programs.

## A New England Policy Collaborative

The New England Board of Higher Education was awarded $139,451 by AT&T and the AT&T Foundation to support its New England Public Policy Collaborative, an initiative designed to coordinate the region's policy expertise, enhance public access to timely policy research and focus attention on regional issues.

NEBHE kicked off the collaborative in February by bringing together policy researchers and opinion leaders for a conference on "The New England Agenda." Since then, NEBHE has linked about 200 public policy centers and institutes on the World Wide Web at www.nebhe.org., and launched a major survey on New England policy issues.

**New England, known as a high-tech region, presents a pitiful image of itself on the high-tech medium of our time.**

For a region like New England, which has to rely on its brains, the idea of a 21st century labor force any less than superbly prepared, equipped with critical analytic tools, should be intolerable. But regions have to do it for themselves.

Consider the New Standards in Education project, sponsored by Theodore Hershberg's Center for Greater Philadelphia at the University of Pennsylvania. Hershberg argues convincingly that low education standards aren't just an inner-city problem, but that suburban districts are often far behind the international competitive curve too. Hershberg's project is persuading a growing number of Philadelphia-area school districts to introduce rigorous standards-based school reforms. The effort ingeniously walks around the political arguments of whether there should be federal- or state-imposed standards by building consensus for standards from the bottom up, enlisting local chambers of commerce and others in the effort to get sometimes-lethargic school districts on board.

As an illustration of how metropolitan regionalism moves into interstate regionalism, consider the Cascadia grouping of citistates and their allied territory stretched along the Portland-Vancouver corridor. This group is looking at rapid rail, trade, academic, other alliances, even a joint application for future Olympic Games.

### Regionalism on-line

We must use the Internet to create the virtual region (metropolitan or multistate) that politics denies us—a home for all the reports, analyses, updates, benchmarks, citizen goals, commentaries and debates that a healthy and competitive society should have. Yet New England, known as a high-tech region, presents a pitiful image of itself on this, the high-tech medium of our time.

I recently did an experiment to see what an interested person—a prospective student, business partner, scholar, retiree, convention planner—could learn quickly about New England's status, conditions and future directions via the Internet.

I thought just typing in the words "New England" on one of the Internet's popular search engines would connect me pretty quickly to all sorts of information on, for example, the state of the economy. I thought I'd find data on leading industries and economic clusters of specialization, manufacturing and services output, median wages and so on, by state, on a New England-wide basis and perhaps even by city or town. After all, any region that could give us such economists as Michael Porter and Lester Thurow ought to have that basic economic material available quickly and easily.

I also expected a lot of basic Census data—population totals and trends, demographic breakdowns by sex, race, age, occupation and more. I imagined links to state pages, which, in turn, would lead me to pages on each of those hundreds of wonderfully independent, historic New England towns. And I expected such 1990s tools as governmental efficiency and effectiveness performance measures regionwide, by state and by locality.

Maybe I'd find something on how environmental improvement measures are restoring air and water purity, cleaning up toxics and defending the integrity of the landscape New Englanders boast about so much. Or perhaps a truly advanced model like the Oregon Benchmarks and Minnesota Milestones efforts—showing popularly determined goals on where states want to go over the next five, 10 or 15 years on vital economic and social indicators—and how well they've really done.

Well, my search yielded precious little of that. Instead, I discovered some stale data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Boston Regional Office, a bit on the activity of the New England Council's Political Action Committee and, through the New England Board of Higher Education's site, links to the New England Governors' Conference and the very interesting site of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative.

I got a list of Subaru Dealers of New England, Food New England and the Northern New England Real Estate Network House Selection Wizard. Approved AAA repair facilities in Southern New England. New England Yellow Page classifieds. New England Fishing Trips and Charters. But on the whole, I was left at a loss.

A strong Internet presence would give New England the following benefits:

• Citizens, businesses, organizations and potential customers from across the continent would see an aware, customer-oriented, self-critical, mature, adaptive, promising region.

• New England media—newspapers, magazines and TV news—would be able to tune in quickly for updates on where important matters stand and prepare much better coverage as a result. So would college students, high school students and civic organizations. Break down the data and goals—from regionwide to state to city and town—and think how much peoples' capacity to criticize and participate meaningfully in public life could be improved.

• Nor should New England be limited to any single Web site or sites parroting a single party line. Multiple outlets should be on-line, and linked. Healthy debate on proposals and their meaningfulness should be encouraged.

For New England, the Internet, while interesting, is really just a means to communicate something more vital—a region that works, a region seeking to apply the immense intellectual firepower of its unparalleled concentration of universities and policy institutions.

Why not, for example, create a mechanism to introduce into New England a constant flow of "best practices" tracked from across America and acround the globe—best practices in environmental cleanup, in overcoming racial and class barriers, in efficient, one-stop, rapid business permitting, in brownfields clean-ups and recycling, in neighborhood housing and commercial development, in community policing and crime prevention and much more?

It should be considered negligence, maybe not a crime but terrible practice, for any research institution in New England to develop a best practice in some particular policy area and not experiment with its application in a sampling of New England communities.

The ultimate goal, of course, is a successful, sustainable region. Camille Barnett, the chief administrative officer of the District of Columbia, has summed up the imperatives of sound regional development another way. She talks about three obvious "E"s: a strong *economy*, a healthy *environment* and social *equity*. And then she adds a fourth, which is a key to our future: the "E" of full civic *engagement*. Even in an age of experts, we need that engagement. A combination of relevant, organized, mobilized, coordinated expertise on one hand, and engagement of our citizens on the other, are the ingredients of a New England that works.

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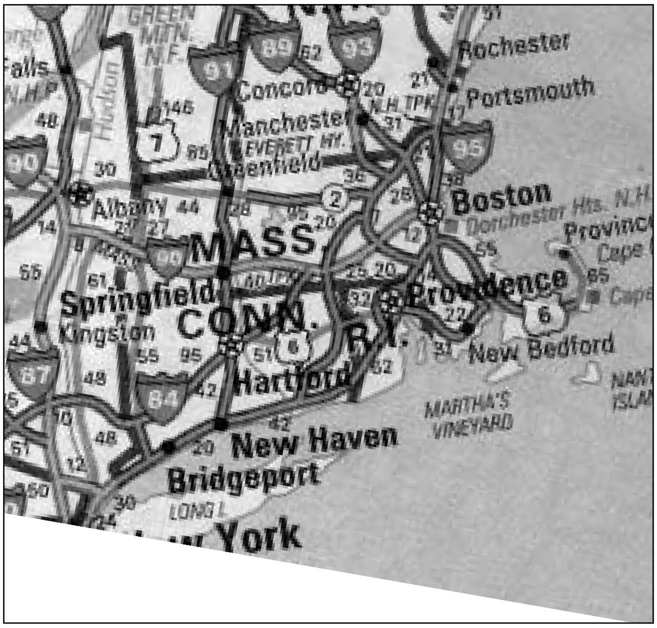
***Neal R. Peirce*** *is a syndicated columnist and chair of the Citistates Group, a network of journalists, speakers and consultants He is the author of several books, including "The New England States."*




# History Drives Us

*New England businesses confront familiar challenges*

JAMES T. BRETT

Seventy years ago, New England Council President John S. Lawrence warned his colleagues in the business community: "No problem is of greater importance to New England than that of transportation." Some would make the same argument today. Without question, we move goods and services faster than we did seven decades ago. But as the adage goes, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

Indeed, the issues that dominated the New England business community's agenda in the 1920s are remarkably familiar: transportation, but also international trade, environmental impacts, federal funding for research and job skills training.

The six-state region was expected to spend $50 million on construction and improvement of highways in 1928 alone, and growing aviation services created demand for new airports.

A scramble was on to land some of the federal government's $420,000 in agricultural research. And New England textile mills too small to maintain research departments sought newly available technical advice through organizations such as the National Association of Cotton Manufacturers.

Boston businesses were even beginning to consider the economic significance of environmental conditions, as a national study showed the Hub had the cleanest air of 23 cities investigated.

But the '20s also saw New England companies—especially textile and shoe manufacturers—moving to Southern states in droves, attracted by cheaper prices and warmer weather. The New England Council was established in 1925 when a group of New England business leaders joined with the region's governors to develop a joint strategy for arresting an exodus of jobs from the region.

The business leaders and New England governors who created the council recognized that the six New England states shared more than a common culture and history. They also shared an economic interdependence that argued for collaboration on issues that crossed state lines and challenged businesses of all types, as well as on the development of federal policies that would strengthen New England's economy. Over the next seven decades, issues ripe for collaboration would include costs of doing business, especially energy and environmental costs, quality-of-life considerations and, perhaps most notably, transportation and brainpower.

## Going places

In its early days, the council forged new partnerships with trade groups to create uniform standards for distribution and sale. The council proposed a uniform marketing bill in 1927 to authorize the commissioner of agriculture in each state to establish grades and standards for farm products. The council worked to establish the New England Dairy Conference Board to encourage closer cooperation within the dairy industry. Also in 1927, council members met with the economic staff of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. to begin a study of research in relation to the region's economy, particularly how research might widen markets, adapt products to changing demand and develop substitutes for products in declining demand.

The council also took an immediate interest in strengthening the region's transportation system, most notably by promoting airport construction. The cost of moving freight was a constant issue in 1920s New England. With the success of Charles Lindbergh's first solo nonstop transatlantic flight in 1927, aviation emerged as a new growth industry. New England's business leaders wanted to be in the forefront of this new mode of transportation and the manufacturing industry associated with it.

By the late 1920s, New England was home to two distributors of seaplanes and one distributor of rebuilt planes. Pratt & Whitney of Hartford, Conn., was making airplane engines, while other manufacturers around the region made instruments, fabrics, cements and glues and other parts needed in airplane manufacturing. In 1928, Bourdon Aircraft Corp. of Hillsgrove, R.I., built the first New England-made airplane. The region was also growing a variety of support industries related to the booming aviation field, including contract air mail, aerial dusting, aeronautical engineering, instruction, insurance and airplane servicing.

In those early days of aviation, New England businesses were particularly concerned with the region's airport capacity. In 1927, New England counted 45 existing or proposed landing fields out of a national total of 4,000. One year later, the region claimed 69 landing fields, including new ones in Manchester, N.H., Hartford and Danbury, Conn., and Caribou, Maine; an additional 68 were in the proposal stage.

Again, the connection to the 1990s is striking. Today, the New England Council is leading an effort to better use New England's existing system of regional airports. Already, 25 million passengers use Boston's Logan International Airport annually—and between 12 million and 20 million new passengers are expected to join them each year over the next decade. In 1996, the council began working with the Massachusetts Port Authority, the Federal Aviation Administration and the region's major jet-service airports on a New England Regional Airport Initiative. The initiative aims to explore ways to lessen the burden on Logan and improve the regional economy by promoting increased usage of regional airports in cities such as Warwick, R.I., Manchester, N.H., and Worcester, Mass.

Indeed, a recent study commissioned as part of the initiative found that 5 million Logan passengers—about 25 percent of the total at Logan—live closer to one or more of New England's regional airports than they do to Boston. Of this total, close to 2.1 million passengers could be recaptured by the regional airports if additional routes were offered at competitive prices. In addition, more than 4 million passengers who live near Hartford or New Haven use the larger, but more distant, New York airports.

Ground transportation will also remain important to the regional economy. The introduction of high-speed rail on Amtrak's Boston-New Haven route is slated for completion in 1999. This project will cut the Boston-to-New York trip to three hours from the current four hours-plus—with enormous potential economic benefits. Recognizing this impact, the council has consistently supported federal assistance for railroads.

The federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1990 offers additional evidence of transportation's importance to the region. The legislation has provided billions of dollars to improve and maintain New England's aging infrastructure. But the money has not flowed to New England without a struggle.

The energy and commitment of the New England congressional delegation and the vigilance of the region's business community has been needed to stave off efforts by Southern and Western states to alter the federal transportation funding formula and redistribute money in their direction. Recently, Congress reauthorized ISTEA, providing for $1.4 billion per year for the next six years for New England.

## Brainpower

New England's economic fate has been tied to the ingenuity of its people and the location in the region of some of the world's best universities. These institutions have consistently captured a disproportionate share of research and development (R&D) funding from federal agencies such as the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, NASA and the National Institutes of Health.

All told, New England businesses, universities and teaching hospitals received $4.8 billion in federal R&D funds in fiscal 1994 — about 7 percent of all federal R&D support, according to the latest available data from the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The Defense Department was the largest funder, providing $2.8 billion.

Moreover, alumni of a single New England research institution, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, have founded 4,000 companies worldwide, accounting for 1.1 million jobs and $232 billion in sales in 1994, according to a BankBoston study.

Nationally, at least 50 percent of U.S. economic growth derives from R&D investments. But R&D is particularly important in New England, and the region once again will find itself in competition with other parts of the country, as lawmakers consider plans to reduce federal R&D funding over the next six years.

Recently, the council convinced all 23 New England members of the House to send a letter to House Speaker Newt Gingrich and House leadership, emphasizing the importance of maintaining R&D funding.

## Acting regionally

The New England Council's membership includes large and small companies, educational institutions and nonprofit agencies. These organizations come together not only because of the common issues they face, but also because of the regional identity that unites them—a concept that may be difficult to imagine given the image of the fiercely independent New Englander.

In recent years, it has become increasingly evident that key economic issues are being decided on the basis of regional voting blocs. Indeed, the council, the lead regional organization in Washington, D.C., is also closely identified with the New England Congressional Caucus.

A look at the changes on Capitol Hill reveals why this activity is so important.

In 1910, Congress set the number of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives at 435. At that time, New England sent 32 members to Washington. Texas, Florida and California together sent 33.

**Regional unity is much more popular when the economy is flat, taking a downturn or facing a particular challenge.**

By 1940, New England's representation in the House fell to 28 seats. Texas, Florida and California collectively sent 47 members to Washington.

Following the 1970 census, New England sent 25 House members to Capitol Hill. Texas, Florida and California sent a combined 88 members to serve in the House.

Currently, New England elects 23 members to the House. Texas, Florida and California elect 105.

And some of the current population projections suggest that New England, and many of the Northeastern states, continue to lag behind the nation in population growth. The region could see a declining share in members of the House.

No one state delegation can succeed in passing legislation without the support of colleagues. Having 12 U.S. senators advocating a position that's good for the region is much stronger than having two. In essence: there is strength in numbers.

Seventy years ago, an early member of the New England Council, Connecticut State Farm Association President Henry Trumbull quipped: "North America is divided into two parts, New England and the other 42 states."

Yet in recent months, the council has formed partnerships with other states outside New England that share common agendas. For example, in the area of transportation infrastructure funding, the council has worked with the New York City Partnership to help form an agenda of common interests for the Northeast region.

On Capitol Hill, if New England can count among its allies the delegations from the Northeastern states—New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland—we could count an additional 74 members, bringing the regional total to 97 members.

When the council was in its second year, local newspapers were reporting a lack of regional identity and a low self-image on the part of New Englanders. The *Tribune* of Cambridge, Mass., called these factors "hindrances to this section's development."

The council's newsletter quoted from the *Tribune*: "There is another thing in which New England has been lacking and that is in optimism in regard to itself. The West has always seen its present and its future in bright colors; it has not undervalued itself; it has not had to be converted to a faith in itself as it seems New England has had to be. The West has backed its faith in itself with labor and with money; it has advertised itself and through its advertising has caused to grow its spirit of optimism. The two go hand in hand. Optimism leads to the speaking of self and community, and sectional advertising arouses optimism."

Regional unity is much more popular when the economy is flat, taking a downturn or facing a particular challenge. One issue that brought the business community together in such a way was the credit crunch of the late 1980s. As the combination of recession and increased federal regulation of the banking industry led to a severe tightening of available credit for small businesses, community banks began having difficulty attracting the new capital needed to meet federal standards without calling in existing good loans. This further tightened available credit and hurt New England worse than other regions.

Indeed, New England savings and commercial banks experienced a 25 percent decline in capital from the fourth quarter of 1988 to the fourth quarter of 1990, compared with a national decline of less than 3 percent, according to Federal Reserve Bank data. Meanwhile, business failures in New England increased by 193 percent from 1989 to 1990, compared with a national increase of 15 percent.

New England's business community was obviously troubled. The council provided a region-wide, nonpartisan forum for business, financial and political leaders to address the problem. Together, they helped develop the federal Small Business Recovery Act of 1991, which infused private capital into banks and reinvigorated lending to creditworthy small business owners, easing the credit crunch and stimulating job growth.

Today, another looming issue could be as devastating as the credit crunch. New England's labor force shrank by 2 percent between 1990 and 1996 and since has grown very slowly, due in part to the region's high cost of living, according to Northeastern University's Center for Labor Market Studies.

New England's economy demands more skilled employees than ever before for high-end positions in fields such as information technology, engineering and biotech. But even entry-level positions require higher levels of skills, particularly knowledge of computer software. With more than 90 percent of college graduates employed, the region's business leaders and others must address the skill levels among the six out of 10 high school dropouts who are in the job market.

Cognizant of New England's current shortage of skilled labor, the council last fall began working with Training and Development Corp. of Maine on a new model for the Job Corps program, which helps provide training and career direction for people with multiple barriers to employment, ranging from learning disabilities to histories of abuse. The council worked on establishing a network of companies to help provide jobs and hands-on training for those enrolled in this novel Job Corps program.

The business, education and political communities need to work together to improve literacy, increase vocational training focused on job-specific skills, support incumbent worker training and create more avenues for job access. These are the tactics that will help close the gaps between people and jobs and mitigate the labor shortages that many companies are facing in their search for skilled workers.

If labor needs are not met, some companies may leave New England. And we may find ourselves in a position similar to the conditions that inspired the formation of the council in 1925.

***James T. Brett*** *is president and CEO of the New England Council.*

*University of Connecticut undergraduate (right) works on lab team with NEBHE Science Doctoral Scholars.*

# Summer Internships

## *A Way to Get Ahead*

While some students spend the summer lolling on the beach or rappelling down mountains, others work on teams splicing genes, developing new computer programs, analyzing hazardous waste in stream beds and starting a soft-shell clam hatchery—all through working in summer internships.

Why are internships so important? Because they introduce students to real-life tasks, bring them into contact with various personalities and workplace styles and prompt them to see more career options.

Through the New England Board of Higher Education's Environmental Internship Program, 62 college juniors and seniors from campuses around New England were provided with 10 weeks of supervised environmental work this summer at New England state agencies, private companies and nonprofit organizations. Veronica Webster, a University of Vermont intern who researched natural wastewater treatment centers at Living Technologies in Burlington, Vt., said of her experience, "The internship has helped me to bring my career options into focus, and it is great to have a head start."

Summer internships are doubly important for minority students interested in science, math and engineering. National studies conducted by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the National Science Foundation and the University of Colorado's Elaine Seymour have found that most minority students internalize negative and belittling signals received over the years about their ability to do well in science. The result is shaky self-confidence.

When minority students are given the opportunity to do hands-on work in a lab, or participate in field work with a faculty mentor and other undergraduate and graduate students, they realize they are capable of doing real science and being a valuable and productive member of a team.

According to Jean Girves, director of the Midwest's Summer Research Opportunity Program based at the Big Ten universities, minority college students are often "transformed" by their internship experiences; 60 percent to 70 percent of those in the program become single-minded in their decision to attend graduate school and pursue science careers.

African-American Bryant Nelson, who earned a doctorate in chemistry at UMass-Amherst and is now a researcher at Pfizer Inc. in Groton, Conn., is such a success story. "I highly recommend internships," he says. "They boosted my confidence, helped me gather inside information about science careers and resulted in wonderful alliances with senior scientists who help me in so many ways with my career development."

The General Electric Fund, realizing the importance of internships, has urged NEBHE to guide into summer internships a large number of students who participate in NEBHE's Science Network for underrepresented minority students from high school through graduate school. The GE Fund has also provided support for NEBHE to update its Web directory of available internships. (See www.nebhe.org.)

At an October 1998 meeting of NEBHE's Science Network to be held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, an "Internship Fair" will also alert students to internship opportunities in a variety of venues.

After the MIT meeting, NEBHE staff will make sure, through careful follow-up, that Science Network students are right in line for summer 1999 internships. The payoff is substantial!

# Books

## Student Debt: Impending Doom?

More than 60 percent of today's college students borrow money to pay tuition—up from 42 percent only five years ago, according to a U.S. General Accounting Office study released in February 1998. And the U.S. Department of Education reported in 1997 that the federal government guaranteed about $30 billion in student loans, a 50 percent increase in just four years. Now, three new studies, two of them sponsored by key players in the student loan industry, illustrate the complexity of the loan explosion.

Few would question the indispensability of a college education for an individual's future economic security. But with many four-year college graduates shouldering debts up to $15,000, Richard Fossey and Mark Bateman ask, in the typically grim language of the loan debate, are we *Condemning Students to Debt?* ***(Condemning Students to Debt: College Loans and Public Policy, Richard Fossey and Mark Bateman, eds., Teachers College Press, 1998, $38.)***

Fossey, an associate professor in the College of Education at Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge, notes in his introduction, "Without additional education or training, most high school graduates cannot command a wage that will support a family, pay for health care or permit them to own a home or prepare for retirement."

As the federal government has shifted its student aid portfolio away from grants for needy students and towards federally guaranteed student loans, most families with college-age children turn to loan financing as the only way to cover the cost of college: approximately $12,000 to $15,000 in tuition alone to earn a four-year undergraduate degree at many public universities. Even more affluent families can no longer stump up the $60,000 to $80,000 tuition required for a four-year private education without wincing and seeking relief through federally guaranteed student loans.

*Condemning Students to Debt* fleshes out the issues emerging from the growth of the federal student loan program since its creation by the Higher Education Act of 1965. Originally conceived as an alternative to a proposed tuition tax credit, the loan program's enrollment has soared from fewer than 6 million students in 1965 to nearly 15 million today.

The book contains 10 chapters by experts in the field of higher education policy including Jamie P. Merisotis, founding president of the Institute for Higher Education Policy in Washington, D.C., and Thomas G. Mortenson, editor and publisher of *Postsecondary Education Opportunity,* a monthly research newsletter.

Among other things, commentators note the complexity of cracking down on student loan defaulters. "Harsh measures against student loan defaulters are popular with the public and would be justified if the defaulters were middle-class college graduates who ... refused to pay" for their education, writes Fossey. But "research has shown that a typical defaulter is a low-income minority member (African-American or American Indian) ... Often, the defaulters had assumed student loans in good faith but had received no value from their educational experience."

A large share of the blame for this problem is leveled at the for-profit trade or proprietary schools, for which the bottom line is the bottom line itself. (Ironically, if public and independent colleges and universities enrolled greater numbers of such at-risk students, their percentage of defaulters might come to approximate that of proprietary schools.)

In any case, although the for-profit schools play a major part in student loan defaults, statistics show that there has been improvement in the repayment rate of their students since 1991, and the problem appears to be lessening.

Other authors explain how inconsistencies in student loan policy have affected administration of the program; how increased federal regulation of higher education has resulted in a blizzard of regulations; how higher education becomes less accessible as tuition increases, even with loan assistance; and how cost affects many students' decisions on the kinds of institutions they attend.

In the book's final chapter, Fossey offers reflections on what should be done to fulfill the guaranteed student loan program's primary goal of making higher education more accessible to low-income families. In the summing up, it becomes clear that this goal has yet to be achieved—indeed in some ways, access may be more limited than it was 30 years ago.

*Student Loan Debt: Problems & Prospects* is a compilation of proceedings from a national symposium sponsored by the Institute for Higher Education Policy, the Sallie Mae Education Institute and The Education Resources Institute (TERI) and held in Washington, D.C. ***(Student Loan Debt: Problems & Prospects, Institute for Higher Education Policy, 1998, Free.)***

Less pessimistic than some of the contributors to *Condemning Students to Debt,* Jerry S. Davis and Merisotis (again) suggest in the preface that although student debt is currently a topic of much discussion, the negative effects of carrying substantial loan burdens are exaggerated. Indeed, Jacqueline E. King, director of federal policy analysis at the American Council on Education, notes: "The evidence makes a compelling case that there is no generalized crisis and that most students can manage their debt."

Still, King outlines exceptions to the upbeat scenario: students from middle-income families who borrow more than they absolutely need; an average debt-to-income ratio pushed beyond an acceptable range without a corresponding increase in starting salaries for new bachelor's degree holders; students from low-income families who tend to have personal circumstances that make it difficult for them to repay their debt; the magnitude of debt incurred by graduate students in professional schools such as law and medicine; and evidence that credit card debt is expanding rapidly (which is itself the subject of a recent report by TERI and the Institute for Higher Education Policy, called *Credit Risk or Credit Worthy?*)

A third student loan report, *Life After Debt: Results of the National Student Loan Survey*, summarizes a comprehensive Nellie Mae-sponsored study by Sandy Baum of Skidmore College and Diane Saunders, vice president of public affairs at Nellie Mae. ***(Life After Debt: Results of the National Student Loan Survey, Nellie Mae, 1998, Free.)***

The study acknowledges that a $15,000 student loan debt may be manageable for one borrower and hopelessly burdensome for another with the same income but a different set of circumstances. The majority of student responders to the survey said loans were very important in allowing them to continue their education after high school, and that "if they had to do it over again, they would borrow about the same amount. In other words, the 'pain' of repayment was worth the gain both economically and otherwise."

***— Susan W. Martin***

## Deregulating Higher Education

Is quality in higher education contingent on liberating colleges and universities from excessive regulation? That's the central theme of a new text that is extraordinarily responsive to the major challenge facing American higher education. ***(Seeking Excellence through Independence, Terrence MacTaggart and Associates, Jossey-Bass Inc., 1998, $29.95.)***

University of Maine System Chancellor Terrence MacTaggart and professional associates present a number of case studies aimed at helping institutions find excellence through independence.

In Part One, MacTaggart and his co-authors present the argument for deregulating public colleges and universities. They note that prior to the 1960s, U.S. higher education was burdened by relatively few federal and state regulations, but that the situation has changed dramatically in recent decades with a plethora of requirements laid down by the Internal Revenue Service and state and federal departments of education and environmental protection as well as other agencies.

The authors argue that the time is now ripe for deregulation given new opportunities presented by changing information technologies and distance learning along with the imperative to help public institutions manage themselves more like private companies and private colleges.

In Part Two, the authors present two case studies of deregulation. The first focuses on St. Mary's College of Maryland, a public institution, which in 1992 was granted a lump-sum budget and exemption from most state controls in exchange for an agreement to cap state tax support at a mutually agreed-upon level. The second case study examines the 1994 reorganization of higher education in New Jersey and attendant decentralization and deregulation.

In Part Three, Patrick M. Callan, president of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, and colleagues offer examples of how deregulation can work in the context of increased demand for higher education, growing public concern about educational responsibility and quality, severe constraints on resources and rapidly changing technologies.

The recommendation that emerges is that higher education should pursue a *federalist* model that is at once centralized and decentralized. More specifically, a federalist system is characterized by a strong center devoted to serving its components but avoiding centralized decisions that could be made at lower levels. The authors present Virginia and Illinois as effective models of federalism, offering a structure of checks and balances and "the promise of management autonomy within a context that promotes cooperation, economies of scale and flexibility."

While federalism is not a panacea for what ails higher education, Callan and colleagues note: "It offers one productive alternative to the centralization-autonomy debate that has stifled productive discussions of state higher education governance for too long."

Noting St. Mary's College's record of expanded state fiscal support, its success in raising private funds and record of academic excellence cited by a 1995 Middle States accreditation team, as well as the positive effects of the New Jersey reorganization, MacTaggart effectively documents his contention that independence is a *sine qua non* of higher education. He concludes that at a time when quality is among the most critical challenges facing the enterprise, the key to success is to liberate colleges and universities.

There is a remarkable convergence between MacTaggart's conclusions and those of a recent report by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, which summarizes an 18-month study of how public higher education governing boards may reconcile the interests and ambitions of their university or system on the one hand and the financial, strategic and public policy demands of the state on the other. ***(Bridging the Gap Between State Government and Public Higher Education, Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, 1998, Free)***

*Bridging the Gap* concludes that state legislatures and governing boards must "establish relationships that allow for more flexibility, less regulation and greater respect of broad policy authority."

The report argues further that public higher education governing boards must remain independent if they are to do their jobs while being accountable to governors and legislators. This argument echoes the conclusion of MacTaggart and his associates that federalism may be the critical mechanism to free colleges and universities from excessive regulation and thereby enhance excellence by expanding independence.

***—Eleanor M. McMahon***

**AMHERST, MASS.** — The University of Massachusetts was awarded $1 million by Lexington-based Raytheon Co. to support science and engineering programs, including a university-wide initiative to encourage women and minorities to pursue engineering careers. The gift from the Bay State's largest employer will also support links among the UMass engineering colleges at Amherst, Dartmouth and Lowell, upgrade new equipment at the Amherst campus's Microwave Remote Sensing Laboratory and provide challenge grants aimed at expanding alumni giving.

**WORCESTER, MASS.** — A University of Massachusetts at Worcester partnership that encourages economically disadvantaged and minority youths to pursue health care and science careers was awarded $50,000 by the BankBoston Charitable Foundation. The Worcester Pipeline Collaborative, a partnership among UMass-Worcester, area health-care institutions, scientific companies and Worcester schools, will use the grant to buy video and computer equipment needed to link a university teaching laboratory with science classrooms throughout the region.

**POULTNEY, VT.** — Green Mountain College received $15,000 from the Maine-based Davis Educational Foundation to offer a new 15-credit "block course" focused on the environment in fall 1998. The interdisciplinary program, called "The Northern Forest: Public Policy and the Education of Citizens," will teach students about the forest from the perspective of economics, ecology, education and philosophy. Students in the program will take five component courses in areas such as conservation biology and sustainable development and do extensive field work.

**CAMBRIDGE, MASS.** — The Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Sea Grant program opened a haddock hatchery at the Charlestown Navy Yard on Boston Harbor. The hatchery will produce fish from eggs in the once-fouled harbor.

**KINGSTON, R.I.** — The University of Rhode Island's National Center for Public Education and Social Policy was awarded $50,000 by Bell Atlantic to develop a World Wide Web site where elementary school teachers, students, administrators and parents will share resources and information. The site will include banks of exemplary lesson plans, on-line discussions of statewide education issues and links to other Bell Atlantic education initiatives.

**BOSTON, MASS.** — Boston University's public radio station, WBUR-FM, bought the former WRCP 1290 AM in Providence, and reestablished it as WRNI, Rhode Island's first public radio station. The non-commercial station, which will carry local news as well as National Public Radio programming, cost BU more than $1.9 million. The Providence group that sold the station planned to seek a new venue for its Hispanic-language programming.

**DURHAM, N.H.** — The University of New Hampshire was awarded a four-year, $800,000 grant by the National Science Foundation to support its four-year-old international science and education program known as GLOBE (Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment). Under the program, teams of K-12 teachers from schools in 64 countries use standardized scientific techniques to observe weather, air quality, land use and other environmental conditions in their local communities. The data they collect are reported via the World Wide Web to a GLOBE database and used by students and scientists around the world. The new grant will fund observations of changes in land cover, training of GLOBE teachers and development of mechanisms to test the validity of student-collected data.

**HARTFORD, CONN.** — Trinity College was awarded a three-year, $5.2 million grant by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to support additional links between the college and the city of Hartford. Among other things, the grant will support a professorship in comparative urban studies focused on the local community, a "smart neighborhood" initiative to mobilize the information technology resources of area institutions in support of local education programs and a Cities Data Center that will assemble data on the Hartford area. Trinity has captured national attention for its recent $175 million initiative to revitalize a nearby 15-block area.

**MEDFORD, MASS.**— Tufts University established a Center for Hellenic and Southeastern European Studies to study political, economic, social and security issues in the region, which includes Greece, Turkey, the former Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Romania, Cyprus, Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The center will sponsor conferences bringing together scholars and policymakers, conduct research on Aegean disputes and ethnonationalism, award fellowships and offer special training for mid-career diplomats and military officers through the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts.

**PORTLAND, MAINE** — The Maine College of Art received $250,000 from the Bernard Osher Foundation of San Francisco to create a scholarship endowment for Maine students. Osher Scholarships will be renewable for financially needy students during their four years at the college.

**BURLINGTON, VT.** — Burlington College was awarded $50,000 by the Blue Ridge Foundation to build its scholarship endowment and support other college programs.

**CAMBRIDGE, MASS.** — Harvard Law School received a $5.4 million gift and bequest from Lillian R. Berkman and her late husband Jack N. Berkman, a communications industry pioneer, to support a new professorship in entrepreneurial legal studies, as well as the law school's Center for Internet and Society. The center sponsors research and teaching, conferences and other initiatives related to the legal and business issues raised by new forms of information technology. The law school also received a $5 million gift from Household International Inc., a consumer finance and credit card company. The gift was made in honor of alumnus Finn M. W. Caspersen, the former CEO of Beneficial Corp., which was recently bought by Household.

**WORCESTER, MASS.** — Worcester Polytechnic Institute began offering an undergraduate major in system dynamics—believed to be the first of its kind worldwide. System dynamics enlists computer simulation to study complex systems, ranging from national economies to organisms or global climate. The new major requires coursework in engineering, social sciences, math and computer science.

**DURHAM, N.H.** — The University of New Hampshire received a $1 million gift from horticulturist and retired landscaper Raymond Tuttle of Wolfeboro to support its horticulture program. UNH officials planned to use the gift for curriculum development, student internships and support for faculty, as well as plant breeding and research into environmentally friendly horticultural practices. Ornamental horticulture is New Hampshire's leading agricultural sector with a value of $150 million.

**FALL RIVER, MASS.** — Bristol Community College was awarded $90,909 by the Massachusetts Department of Education to begin offering an associate degree program in early childhood education. Students admitted to the program pay no tuition and receive free books, as well as academic support and career counseling. College officials expect to receive another $90,909 grant for the program next year.

**FAIRFIELD, CONN.** — Sacred Heart University received a $30,000 grant from the Davis Educational Foundation of Maine to upgrade six "smart" classrooms. The university will use the funds to enhance six multimedia classrooms with ceiling-mounted LCD projectors, state-of-the-art computers at podiums and video and stereo sound connections.

**BRISTOL, R.I.** — Roger Williams University introduced a program allowing university alumni to audit evening courses free of charge throughout their lives. The charge for auditing courses is normally $180.

**WALTHAM, MASS.** — Brandeis University received a $13 million gift from New York businessman and former Brandeis chair Abraham Feinberg to launch an International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life. Working in partnership with a residential conference center in Jerusalem, the Brandeis center convenes scholars from around the world to discuss ethical dilemmas. The center also supports scholarships and overseas internships and conducts seminars and public events.

**BOSTON, MASS.** — Boston University reported that its $1.1 billion in direct expenditures during fiscal 1998 stimulated another $1.1 billion of spending in Massachusetts for a total economic impact on the state of $2.2 billion. BU directly employed more than 22,000 Massachusetts residents, while university spending supported an additional 16,000 jobs, according to a new report on BU's economic impact.

**NORTH DARTMOUTH, MASS.** — Southern New England School of Law received a $10,000 grant from the City of New Bedford to help run a new legal clinic in the city's downtown. The clinic is designed to give law students hands-on training and course credits while providing legal help for New Bedford's poorest residents. The city funds are part of the federal Community Development Block Grant program.

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