

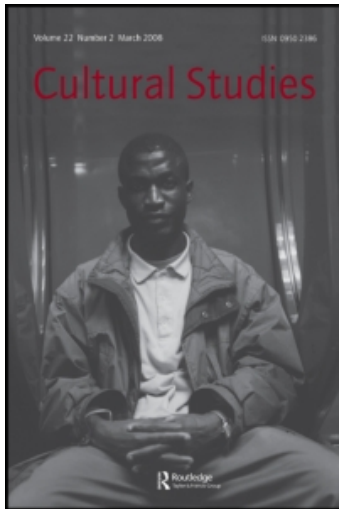
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# Steve Jones

## A UNIVERSITY, IF YOU CAN KEEP IT

### James W. Carey and the university tradition

Although the press is the institution about which James Carey wrote most, he spent his professional life in universities, and he viewed the university and the academy as institutions in need of criticism.

Carey was deeply interested in the press as an institution in and through which ideas were shared and through which public discourse took place. I believe he was interested in higher education for the same reasons, namely, that it provides a public sphere (or, in Carey's case, more aptly a republican sphere) in which multiple conversations take place that remember the past, constitute the present, and imagine a future.

I do not wish to imply that as institutions newspapers and universities are parallel or greatly similar. Though one can draw a variety of analogies between them, so far as I am aware Carey never established particular parallels. The most important characteristic that they share, and the characteristic that binds Carey's ideas about journalism and communication to institutions of higher education, is that they advocate a special relationship with freedom and with democracy.

Carey wrote extensively about journalism and democracy, but little about the university and democracy. He did, however, often (and regularly, at every commencement exercise of the College of Communication at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign over which he presided during his tenure as dean) speak of public universities and the part they play in developing an educated, democratic citizenry. Implicit in his commencement remarks is the Morrill Act, the name given the Land Grant Act of 1862 that established:

At least one college in every State upon a sure and perpetual foundation, accessible to all, but especially to the sons of toil, where all of needful science for the practical avocations of life shall be taught, where neither the higher graces of classical studies nor that military drill our country now so greatly appreciates will be entirely ignored, and where agriculture, the foundation of all present and future prosperity, may look for troops of earnest friends, studying its familiar and recondite

economies, and at last elevating it to that higher level where it may fearlessly invoke comparison with the most advanced standards of the world.

(Parker 1924, p. 166)

While perhaps a coincidence, it is interesting that the Morrill Act came about during the US Civil War, when the telegraph first saw extensive deployment as a communication medium during war (Wheeler 2006). One of Carey's most influential essays examines the telegraph's history as a means of explicating his views of the transmission and ritual models of communication (Carey 1989). In that essay Carey wrote that:

The telegraph . . . not only altered the relation between communication and transportation; it also changed the fundamental ways in which communication was thought about. It provided a model for thinking about communication – a model I have called a transmission model – and displaced older religious views of communication even as the new technology was mediated through religious language. And it opened up new ways of thinking about communication within both the formal practice of theory and the practical consciousness of everyday life.

(Carey 1989, p. 204)

Substitute the word 'education' for 'communication' and 'Morrill Act' for 'telegraph' and there is a striking parallel. It may be said that the development of land grant colleges shifted (if not shoved) higher education away from bases in religion and toward secularization, away from the private toward the public. Given Carey's interests in American democracy and communication it is not surprising that he would have had an interest in the history of the Morrill Act, for, as one writer put it:

The land-grant college is a peculiarly American institution . . . Whatever the name, the real test of all the land grant institutions was their ability and disposition to fulfill their peculiar mission in the new era, and it was in ministering to the technical, social, and political needs of the nation come of age that they attained measurably to the vision of the true prophets of the industrial movement in becoming real people's colleges – with all their limitations a distinct native product and the fullest expression of democracy in higher education.

(Ross 1969, pp. 181–182)

The relationship journalism and the university have with freedom is somewhat different than the relationship between democracy and the university, however. Press freedom is, by and large, assured by law but it is a protection from government intervention and not by any means absolute. (The press is

still constrained by other laws such as those pertaining to libel.) In contrast, public universities are government institutions. Freedom in a university is defined as academic freedom, by and large the assurance by individual academic institutions of placing no restrictions on the expression of ideas, an assurance made on institutional terms and by the community of scholars within those institutions. It, too, is not absolute.

US scholars may share some of the same protections accorded speech and expression as US journalists (and citizens, generally) thanks to the First Amendment to the US Constitution. But the First Amendment and academic freedom are separate matters, albeit easily and often conflated by faculty. The protections scholars have are, unlike those of journalists, ones connected to employment as much as to expression. The First Amendment as it is applied to journalism is, at least for now, generally regarded as an institutional protection, that is, as a matter of law that protects the institution of journalism as much (or more) as it protects individuals. In other words it is an institutional guarantee whose umbrella takes in journalists. The First Amendment as it is applied to scholars is not regarded as protection of a university or the academy. There is no 'First Amendment umbrella' under which the scholar may stand. Though as an individual one may have First Amendment rights, as an employee those may be superseded by a faculty handbook, policy or contract.

It should be recognized that academic freedom is largely a modern concept guiding, primarily, Western institutions. The most comprehensive history of academic freedom is Hofstadter and Metzger's 1955 volume *The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States*. Although the study is over a half-century old, little has changed to make it less relevant, accurate or complete. What the lack of change over 50 years tells us, however, is not about Hofstadter's and Metzger's prescience, nor about academic freedom's steadfastness. Rather, it tells us that academic freedom is founded on a delicate balancing act whenever a decision is made about whether or not to speak, to publish, to essentially make public an idea. It is a balance of possibilities between myriad individual actions and an even greater number of consequences, between the present and possible futures. In those cases in which academic freedom is publicly invoked in practice it is most likely to be regarded as relevant primarily (or only) in matters of the dismissal of individual faculty. It is in these cases that the consequences are most clear (and, probably, dire). In other words, academic freedom is not so much foregrounded as intrinsic to the pursuit of knowledge as it is a matter of a contract. Another way to put it is that academic freedom does not now so much suffuse the culture of the academy as it underpins the faculty handbook. It is policy, but it ought to be ethos. Universities accord academic freedom to scholars as a condition of employment, but it is not indulged as a matter of climate.

There are countless other cases when academic freedom is less visible than it is in a dismissal action, when, for instance, silence *reigns* instead of speech. It is not unfair to ask, therefore, if academic freedom is less in the grain of a university and more in a set of policies and procedures, whether freedom has lost its ring on campus. It has become a matter of individual rights rather than collective responsibility, something 'given' by universities rather than arising from the academy, the community of scholars.

Carey wrote two essays specifically about universities, 'The Academy and its Discontents' (1991) and 'The Engaged Discipline' (2002, essentially the text of a lecture given at the annual National Communication Association Convention in 2000). Though some 10 years apart in their crafting, in both Carey is quite clear that universities as modern institutions – while gaining status and power – have lost their standing as places where truth is sought, debated, changed and shaped. Following Harold Innis's discourse on the decline of the modern university, Carey took the theme of that year's convention, 'The Engaged Discipline,' to turn the notion of engagement on its head. 'These partnerships between disciplines and external communities,' he stated, 'are rarely equal ones and they have changed universities much more than they have changed government or business' (2002, p. 5). By shifting their focus from the internal and adopting external priorities (political, economic, etc.) universities have, in other words, traded a sacred form of power for a profane form, as Carey noted in his lecture: 'The gates of the university mark a passage not only from the city to the campus but from the vulgar and ordinary to the hallowed and unique' (2002, p. 6). In the 1991 essay he criticized universities for not 'performing very well of late and, like most American institutions . . . suffering from a confusion of purposes, an excess of ambition that borders on hubris, and an appetite for money that is truly alarming' (1991, p. 166).

Yet Carey would not claim that at any time US universities were completely isolated and without connection to the world:

The American university has never been an ivory tower, never completely independent of its surrounding society. Very few of them are architecturally walled off from their host communities. Land-grant universities were from the outset campuses without walls dedicated to serving their states. The relationship between the university and society has always been a tense and uneasy one – moments of accommodation alternating with assertions of autonomy. The core of its activities – teaching and the curriculum – has been the domain of the greatest academic freedom and autonomy, and always the most stoutly defended against outside interference. The independence of the university is now pretty much gone, and where it remains it is largely a pretense.

(Carey 1991, p. 169)

By the time of the 2000 lecture, not quite 10 years later, Carey is directly invoking Harold Innis when he makes a “plea for the university tradition” against all those that would undermine [the university] and for the engaged intellectual whose first task is to defend that tradition against predatory forces, including those that stem from our own ambitions’ (2002, p. 7). In the roughly 10 years between the two essays Carey’s focus had shifted to include not only universities but also intellectuals, those who constitute the university, noting that:

The change in the university tradition was not merely cultural and institutional but represented also a decisive change in the role and psychology of scholars: in self-definition and in how they saw themselves in the world. That transformation turned scholars, in Kenneth Burke’s nice phrase, from prophets to priests, from independent critics of the world in the light of human reason to upholders of class and national pieties.

(Carey 2002, p. 7)

It is telling that Carey invokes Burke and in particular his recasting of the contrast between the sacred and profane in terms of prophets and priests, ‘independent critics’ and ‘upholders of class and national pieties’ because he could have used the same terms in some of his essays about the professionalization of journalists and corporatization of journalism. In another essay that was published in 1991, in a volume commemorating the 200th anniversary of the Bill of Rights, Carey sought to understand whether the press had functioned as the authors of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights had intended and hoped. The debate about the role of the press between Lippmann and Dewey took center stage in that essay, with the former, as Carey noted, establishing through his writing a system in which ‘citizens are . . . primarily, if not exclusively, the objects rather than the subjects of politics’ (1991, p. 120) while the latter’s pragmatism suffuses the essay in phrases such as, ‘the task of the press is to encourage the conversation of the culture – not to preempt it or substitute for it or to supply it with information as a seer from afar’ (1991, p. 121).

The most poignant message in that essay is not to be found in the stories Carey tells that describe the value of the freedom of the press in places where there is no legal guarantee of such freedom, nor in contexts outside of the mainstream press. Rather it lies in his quite clear assertion that:

The ‘public’ is the God term of the press, the term without which the press does not make any sense. Insofar as the press is grounded, it is grounded in the public.

(Carey 1991, p. 119).

What is the ‘God term’ of the university? It is the community of scholars and students. It is not buildings, donors, grants, rankings or athletics (among other things). And it is most decidedly the community and no one individual. And yet academic freedom has come to be perceived as belonging to the individual rather than to the community. In “‘A Republic If You Can Keep It’: Liberty and Public Life in the Age of Glasnost,’ Carey decries ‘the powerful imperialism of the “rights tradition” (that) has smothered all other meanings of our founding documents. . . . The assertion of rights has become a mere tropism’ (1991, p. 110). Just as the First Amendment has come to mean more about a right to speak one’s mind and less about providing for a foundation for civic discourse, academic freedom has come to mean more about an individual’s right to research and publish as they wish than about the foundation for a community of scholars. The ‘rights tradition,’ as Carey called it, has eviscerated the meaning of the Bill of Rights as a document that constitutes a people, a public. Similarly, the meaning of the university as a community has been lost, according to Carey (2002), as faculty orient more toward associations with government, industry and media than they do with the university. For Carey, and Innis, the stronger such associations, the less likely that scholars will be unbiased, that they will be able to muster a critical voice, and, worse, the less likely that scholars will turn their attention to matters of intellectual import and interest, and the more likely that they will turn their attention to matters that bring forms of currency unavailable (or at least rare) in the academy. All those turns move them away from the community of scholars that should constitute the university.

University administrators understand this well. Public support for higher education has been on the decline for decades, and along with it public funding has decreased to the point at which it is in some cases a misnomer to call a university ‘public’ in regard to the financial support it receives from state sources. There are very practical and visible elements of the transition of public universities to *de facto* private entities. Consider that the University of Illinois (the university system in which I am employed), though established as a land-grant institution<sup>1</sup> and thus by definition a public institution in the first instance, is in some ways also a private entity. It has a relatively high degree of fiscal independence. As a case in point, while there was no formal announcement from the university about its ability to keep its doors open while wrangling over a state budget during July and August of 2007 went on in the capitol, informal comments by university administrators pointed to a time period of anywhere from three to nine months during which the university would be able to function without money from the state. In short, the university can and does operate without state funding for a substantial period of each year.

In 2004 the University of Colorado strategically sought to publicly occupy that very middle ground between public and private. Its administration had

calculated that it would soon receive less than 10% of its budget from the state. Consequently they sought enterprise status for the university, essentially requesting that it be free of numerous regulatory constraints (including ones concerning the issuance of bonds and setting of tuition). Elizabeth Hoffman, Chancellor of the University of Colorado at the time, wrote in an op-ed article that, 'Enterprise status means that CU would have the needed flexibility to run itself more like a business' (Hoffman 2004).

The surprise here is not that the University of Colorado has sought some degree of fiscal and regulatory independence from the state of Colorado, it is that other universities in other states have not followed the example. Why should they not? As public money for higher education decreases it is reasonable to expect that universities would seek to come out from under whatever constraints and regulations states impose on them. After all, the reasoning goes, the less financial stake in an institution, the less oversight there should be. However, no matter if a state's funding of an institution of higher education drops to zero, the institution will still be considered public. It will be a part of the state in one way or another. Take, for example, the situation in Illinois in 2007 regarding the budget for fiscal 2008. The state's comptroller, the person at the head of the office that writes checks from the state's treasury, vowed not to allow checks to be written without a state budget in place. While legal challenges may have been mounted to his decision to hold back checks, the decision itself pointed to a way in which the university is far from private. The state provides a vast infrastructure upon which the university relies. Were a university to divest itself entirely from a state it would not only need to replicate the business infrastructure the state provides but also account for its physical plant, its buildings and grounds. Interestingly, re-creating the university, at least in a virtual way, is precisely what the University of Illinois seemed to intend when its Global Campus Initiative was announced in late 2006. Joe B. White, President of the University of Illinois, viewed the Global Campus Initiative as a sort of 'spin-off' of the university, and had as a model for it the University of Phoenix, probably the best known institution of private for-profit higher education, and one that many university leaders seem to at least admire, if not wish to emulate. It is, perhaps, the most compelling (if not most widely accepted) definition of the term 'academic enterprise': for-profit higher education. As Mike Royko once remarked about changing the motto of the city of Chicago to '*Ubi est mea?*' (Where's mine?), one may wonder whether most university's mottos should soon be changed just the same.

It can be argued that even though the vast majority of US universities are non-profit, they are nevertheless compelled to maximize revenue and that the 'non-profit' tag is in some sense meaningless. Universities have had to maximize revenue from other than public sources as state funding has declined. At most of the biggest state universities in the US,<sup>2</sup> the bulk of the budget is now from sources other than the state, usually a combination of tuition



revenue, indirect cost recovery from research, endowment, and private donations. The proportion of the budget that is provided by the state has decreased over time not only because revenue from other sources has grown. States are, simply, spending less on higher education. The matter of funding is caught in a feedback loop. The less state funding, the more universities are driven to find other funding sources, and the more universities find other sources, the less important it appears that a state needs to provide the university with funding, resulting in less state funding (to the degree that one wonders whether at some point states will one day demand that universities generate revenue for the state's treasury).

Simultaneously, the more a university requires external funding sources the more it demands of faculty to be 'entrepreneurial,' whether by seeking research funding, participating in fundraising, attracting additional students and tuition dollars, or other means. Demands of this kind require faculty on a practical level to privilege an external focus. And that focus is not without its rewards. As Carey noted:

The turn from an internal to an external focus has had immense advantages for us as faculty and I am not disposed to surrender all the gains of recent decades ... opportunities for travel, conferences, symposia, seminars, press coverage, interviews, public exposure on media, mingling with the prominent and powerful. With that has come a new and elevated status, occasional brushes with celebrity even, and, most of all, the opportunity to earn outside income from publishing, consulting, advising, from just being there and lending academic legitimacy to some often shady enterprise.

(Carey 2002, p. 5)

The easy melding of the terms 'academic' and 'enterprise' in recent years belies the canny merger of concerns the public has long had about the academy (e.g. its members are lazy, profligate, unsupervised, etc.) and the desire of university administrators for a means by which to beat back politicians' demands for cost-cutting and accountability. Hoffman's desire to run the university 'more like a business' is an interesting appropriation of rhetoric that has long been used by politicians to criticize universities' operations. It has been deployed both in regard to fiscal matters and in regard to intellectual matters, as during discussions of tenure when it is noted that if universities were run more like a business they would have greater flexibility in firing faculty. Most universities now point with pride to various financial systems they have implemented to enable them to run more like a business. They tout to various constituencies that they act responsibly and are careful stewards of public and private money (as well they should be, but one must ask why it is necessary to show off on that point unless there is little to no trust that they

will be careful stewards). They nevertheless claim a different status for themselves than businesses, setting themselves apart as an 'academic' enterprise, but rarely if ever is there a pause after such a phrase is used to ponder its meaning. The language of business has so fully merged with the language of university administration that there is a preponderance of books with titles like 'Rethinking the American University: Market-Smart and Mission-Centered' (Zemsky et al. 2005). Even the term 'academic capitalism' is being widely used.

At the same time as the language of business has come to pervade the academy, academics have given in to professionalization. One way to look at it is from the standpoint of public perceptions of the academy. The image of the 'absent-minded professor' who Carey says was 'so disoriented from the practical world that his leather elbow patches were a necessity rather than a fashion' (2002, p. 5) is a curiosity of former times. That stereotype has been replaced by the well-dressed public intellectual who appears in the media (admittedly sometimes on Comedy Central) to 'debate' one or more other public figures on some timely or trendy topic, or by the university administrator (usually president or chancellor) engaged in discussions with business leaders. (Interestingly, it is almost never the case that public intellectuals debate business leaders and university administrators engage public figures.) Carey had described a similar problem associated with the professionalization of journalists which disengaged them from the public and removed them from the very communities in which they were not only reporters but also participants:

The great danger in modern journalism is one of a professional orientation to an audience: the belief, usually implicit, that the audience is there to be informed, to be educated, to be filled with the vital information and knowledge whose nature, production and control rests with a professional class. This knowledge is defined, identified, presented, based upon canons of professional expertise over which the audience exercises no real judgment or control. And in this new client–professional relationship that emerges, the same structures of dependency are developed that typify the relations of doctors, lawyers and social workers to their clients.

(Carey 1980, p. 6)

In the case of scholars the primary danger of professionalization is that it leads to corruption by commercial interests. Also problematic is the narrowing options for self-definition, and the diminishment of the sense that students are equal members of the community of scholars. As with journalists, students are seen as clients. There are many universities that encourage faculty and staff to consider students as 'customers,' and that tout customer service to students. The notion of learning is displaced by a transaction. The student is, in essence,

buying an education, in a most banal way. Meanwhile, scholars quickly lose their bearings, as they are no longer guided by a sense of student learning as participation in the future of a field, and instead focus on professional rewards. In the case of journalism Carey argued that:

The real problem of journalism is that the term which grounds it, the public, has been dissolved, in part, by journalism. Journalism only makes sense in relation to the public and public life. Therefore, the fundamental ethical problem in journalism is to reconstitute the public, to bring it back into existence? How are we going to do that?

(Carey 1999, p. 52)

The real problem of the university is that the terms that ground it, the scholar and the student, have been dissolved by the university in the wake of the university's rationalization. By making economics and economic thinking the driving forces behind the motivation for (and thus the conceptualization of) the university, the university has given up the most important ground it has held and has left itself open to the vicissitudes of political, social and economic change as never before.

Should these trends continue (I have no reason to doubt that they will cease) it is only a matter of time before public research universities receive no funding from the state in which they are located. They may well be viewed as the 'economic engines' they purport to be when making a case for increased public funding. Indeed, they may well become self-sustaining business entities. However, since most debates about the public versus private nature of a university center on the source of its funding, it is fair to ask whether it is a suitable means by which to determine whether a university is public or private. An absolutist would say that at 0% funding it is private. Others might opt for a higher cutoff point, below 10%, perhaps, or even below 25%. Some might opt for a middle ground and simply, though confusingly, say that in some ways a university is public, in other ways it is private.

But to look at the issue only from the context of fiscal, legal or policy matters misses the point, because it inappropriately constrains the meanings of the terms 'public' and 'private' within those contexts. Carey wrote in the Bill of Rights essay that, 'Public life stands for a form of politics in which, in Jefferson's phrase, "we could all be participators in the government of our affairs"' (1991, p. 127). University life promises public life. Faculty governance is standard at most universities in the US, where it promises, essentially, a republic, as is the case with this typical example taken from the University of Arizona:

The General Faculty has fundamental responsibilities in the areas of academic personnel policy; instruction and curriculum policy; research policy; student affairs policy; ethics and commitment; advice on budget

and University support; and acts on such other matters affecting the welfare of the University as are brought for consideration in accordance with University policy and Shared Governance Guidelines and Agreements as may be entered into from time to time.

(Constitution of the General Faculty of the University of Arizona 2007)

It is worth asking, however, whether faculty governance operates in principle or in practice. In most cases it operates in the former when it is symbolically useful and in the latter only when faculty participate. But what is the extent of faculty participation in faculty governance? Toward the end of his plea for the university tradition Carey wrote:

University administrations at one time worried about the faculty and felt their active consent was needed if the institution was to accomplish its mission. Administrators were concerned that the faculty might act as a collective, might revolt and pass a vote of censure or no-confidence. That is no longer true. The university does not need consent and the faculty has no real collective life. What the university needs from the faculty is not consent but compliance. . . . What universities do worry about are individuals – stars who establish the brand name of the institution and give it visibility and celebrity, particularly in the world of publicity. The principal focus of academic administration is to lock such stars in the academic equivalent of long-term contracts so as to decrease their mobility and to manage patents and increasingly copyright so as to increase the flow of market profits.

(Carey 2002, pp. 12–13)

As universities increasingly undertake initiatives such as the University of Illinois' Global Campus, Carey's latter point concerning intellectual property will be increasingly important.

Is there anything that may counteract the centripetal tendencies that draw scholars and students away from a higher conception of the university as a community of scholars and toward a baser individualism fostered by an increasingly instrumental view of higher education? According to Carey in 'The Engaged Discipline' there is, and the first and most important is the recovery of the university as a public sphere:

If a genuinely free society depends upon citizens capable of self-questioning, and if universities are still places, as Lionel Trilling argued, where young people exercise their native capacities for reflection free from the pieties of the past and fashions of the present in order to debate contending ideas of a meaningful life, it would be wise if the university and faculty staged this debate for them as an exemplar.

(Carey 2002, p. 14)

Neither journalism specifically nor the media generally are able to stage this debate for them. Particularly among young people the notion of 'freedom of the press' has dissolved. And although I do not teach in a journalism program, I still find it remarkable that few of my students know from whence the concept arose, and but a few connect it to the US Constitution.

Yet I do not find it surprising that they know little about freedom of the press, for the same might be said of journalism and freedom of the press as about universities and academic freedom. While both advocate a special relationship to freedom, neither any longer institutionalizes that relationship. Journalistic institutions have either cozied up to, or have been swallowed up by, corporate concerns. To what extent is there, can there be, a 'freedom of the press' when corporations and government are bound together so tightly that on an institutional level their interests mesh and on a personal level relationships are more than collegial? Universities are marching in a similar direction, becoming corporatized (it was not long ago that their greatest sin was bureaucratization, but that now seems *an almost charming defect*). The link between journalism and universities is thus at its most obvious when one views them as institutions that had, as my students might put it, once been 'all about freedom,' but now are 'all about money.'

Two stories Carey used to tell while dean of College of Communications at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign stand out for me as guides that show possible means of recovering the university tradition. One is captured in his farewell letter to alumni of the college and the other is from his annual remarks to its graduates. I now suspect that the words he shared with those audiences were more deliberate than I realized when I first read and heard them, because it is now more clear to me than ever that he was addressing those who were about to change their relationship to the university's community of scholars. In his letter Carey said he could think of four reasons why anyone would want to become an administrator. The first two, power and money, are illusory. The third reason is vision, a plan for the future. The fourth reason is duty, that administration ought not be a personal goal but an opportunity for service. It was the fourth reason that kept Carey in administration longer than he had planned to serve, and it is the reason, bar none, that faculty should take a hand in administration. While power and money are less illusory now than they may have been when Carey was dean, they should neither guide one toward administration, nor guide one in it. And if service is to be the reason one undertakes administrative responsibilities, then it must be kept in mind that it is service to the community of scholars, to the faculty and students, that is the prime objective.

As an associate dean at the University of Illinois at Chicago remarked to me upon the departure of a sitting dean, 'He worked really hard to make things better.' I believe we can make things better, but not for free. One of the costs will be the time and energy that we could otherwise spend on doing things that

bring us individual recognition within and without the university, but generally do little collective, local, good. I do not of course advocate that we should all turn toward administration for a career, and some may for whatever reason be ill-suited to it, but we should strongly consider opportunities that might arise to serve temporarily in administration so that we may learn about the conversations that take place in those realms of the university usually opaque to scholars, and so that we may have the chance to make things better and recapture the university tradition from that vantage, too. At the very least we should not cede our universities to professional administrators. If, as Carey wrote, administrators believe ‘the (faculty) senate is simply a body to be managed on the front stage while all the real work goes on backstage’ (2002, p. 12), then we need to find our place backstage and do some work.

The other story Carey told virtually every year at graduation was about his arrival at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. While I cannot do the story justice (not only could I not reproduce it verbatim but printed words could not convey the wonderful grain of his voice) the gist of what he told the audience of graduates, parents, friends and faculty is that he came to the university from Rhode Island, and was given an education in Illinois. Neither the state nor the university owed him anything, but they gave him an education. He would urge the audience to imagine the efforts and resources involved in maintaining such opportunities for other students. We owe it to our students, our universities, the academy, ultimately to posterity, to work to maintain them, too. Hofstadter and Metzger (1955) put it more elegantly than I can:

No one can follow the history of academic freedom in this country without wondering at the fact that any society, interested in the immediate goals of solidarity and self-preservation, should possess the vision to subsidize free criticism and inquiry, and without feeling that the academic freedom we still possess is one of the remarkable achievements of man. At the same time, one cannot but be appalled at the slender thread by which it hangs, at the wide discrepancies that exist among institutions with respect to its honoring and preservation; and one cannot but be disheartened by the cowardice and self-deception that frail men use who want to be both safe and free. With such conflicting evidence, perhaps individual temperament alone tips the balance toward confidence or despair.

(Hofstadter & Metzger 1955, p. 506)

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## Notes

- 1 An excellent, concise explanation of US land-grant universities is available online at <http://www.wvu.edu/~exten/about/land.htm>.
- 2 The ones bringing in research dollars, usually federal funds, that pay for indirect costs.

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