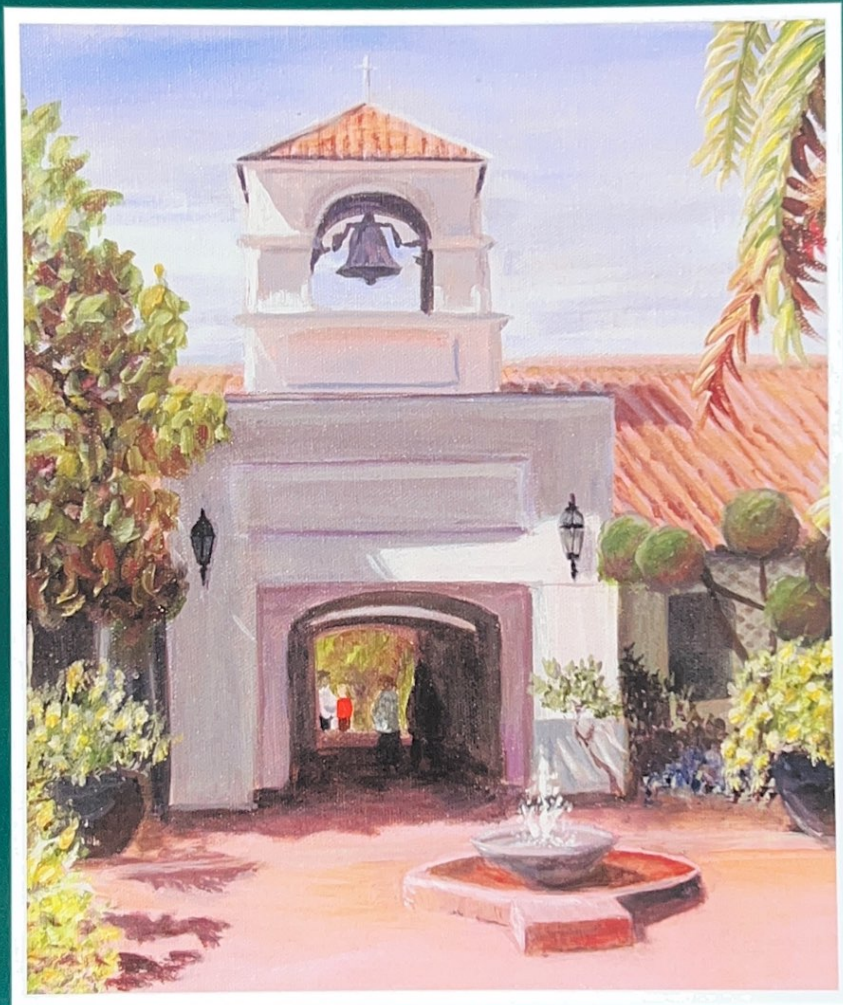


*The Bishop John S. Cummins Institute
for Catholic Thought, Culture & Action*

**Essays on a Theme:
A Catholic College - Why It Matters**



*Deepening Appreciation of the Beauty, Wisdom, Vitality
& Diversity of the Catholic Tradition*

Letter from the Chair

Dear Readers,

The Bishop John S. Cummins Institute for Catholic Thought, Culture, and Action is pleased to offer the following two essays, which were submissions to a contest it sponsored in the spring of 2014. The contest title was “A Catholic College: Why It Matters.” The Institute presents these essays in the hope of continuing the campus-wide dialogue about Saint Mary’s College as a Catholic institution of higher learning. We believe that the College is uniquely poised to help define for the wider church and civic communities what a Catholic college or university can be. Saint Mary’s has a continuous history of tertiary education rooted in the beliefs and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. For us being Catholic is more than a possible option for the future. It is a lived reality today. Our mission statement, our curriculum, and our campus life all bear the marks of our founding religious faith. The essays you will read here are voices within our community. Darcy Tarbell is a long-time administrative assistant who reflects on her own journey and growth in an understanding of the Catholic mission of the College. Her contribution reveals the experience of someone from a different ecclesial tradition taking ownership and helping to define for all of us what Catholic means for our community.

There is much discussion nationally and internationally about the intellectual tradition of a Catholic College. This contemporary conversation about a Catholic intellectual tradition is somewhat recent. Some observers trace it to efforts at Dayton University in the 1980s led by Father James Heft, a Marianist priest and now head of the Institute for Advanced Catholic Studies at the University of Southern California, to shift the conversation about what makes a university Catholic from the question of the confessional faith of its members to the question of the intellectual traditions and practices of Catholic higher education. Professor David Arndt of the Collegiate Seminar Program offers a genealogy of the liberal arts that finds the nexus of the liberal arts and Catholic missions here as the College’s key contribution to higher education. The Catholic understandings of truth and tradition as they have been sought at Saint Mary’s College can help reclaim the liberal arts from narrow scientism.

It is our hope that the two essays presented here will enjoy a wide readership and aide the ongoing conversation about the meaning and importance of Catholic higher education.

Best wishes,

Brother Charles Hilken, F.S.C.

THE BISHOP JOHN S. CUMMINS INSTITUTE
FOR CATHOLIC THOUGHT, CULTURE, AND ACTION

A CATHOLIC COLLEGE: WHY IT MATTERS

ESSAY 1 WRITTEN BY DARCY TARBELL

Recently I received a text message from a young woman I had met several years earlier. We lost touch as our lives took different paths; yet three years later she reached out to me to report she is now a non-traditional undergraduate student at Saint Mary's College. When we first met, she shared her longing to leave the military and her hope of attending college. I spoke to her about my experience at Saint Mary's College as a student, an employee and as a member of a community far richer than any other I had experienced.

I have spent a quarter of my life at Saint Mary's College. In 2013 I was recognized for my fifteen years of service to the institution. I am an alumna; I earned a Master's degree in Liberal Studies in 2009. I am not a Roman Catholic, yet I strive to be an active member of a faith-based educational community. These are the credentials and experience from which I draw when I respond to the question "A Catholic College: Why it Matters." How is a Catholic college relevant during the second decade of the 21st century? What does a college like Saint Mary's offer a student that a similar liberal arts college cannot? I argue there are three things: a sacred place in which to reflect, a set of shared values, and a diverse and inclusive community.

We live in an increasingly information-driven world. We are asked to surrender our spirit, our soul and finances to the technology deities. Tethered to my contact list by a telephonic umbilical cord, my private time, the space and leisure necessary to reflect, explore and create, is leached out of me. Identity theft continues to dominate the headlines, but I passively leave my spiritual being vulnerable against attack. Rather than nurturing my spirit, I too frequently succumb to the numbing effects of electronic devices. My awareness of the spiritual void in the physical world around me is awakened when I connect with my Higher Power. This occurs, when I allow it, if I take advantage of the chapel adjacent to where I spend my days. Churches and places of worship are sacred as is the time spent in them.

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Our busy twenty-first century society undermines sacred time. The commandment to keep holy the Sabbath is abandoned. Families forgo attendance at church to partake of sporting events. Parents split up to watch their children play in different games on fields at opposite ends of a town. Many of these people argue that they don't need an organized religion to have a spiritual life. This may be true. But, how do they know if their decision is the correct one for their children? Many young people entering institutions of higher education have not experienced the reverence and calm that can come from regular religious practice.

Not long ago, the church played an essential part of everyday life. Driving through older townships and villages in this country bears witness to the importance the church played in building communities. The church on a leafy green served as the center of town. Now urban planners approve residential subdivisions built around playing fields and shopping malls. In most suburban communities, residents are forced into their vehicles to shop, to play and to connect with family and friends. Yet, in our free time we are drawn to travel. We visit the great cathedrals and temples of worship not recognizing our need to experience the calmness and to reconnect with our souls. There is a reverence one finds in the sacred space of the church. It makes us mindful that a power greater than ourselves exists. Edward Abbey, author of *Desert Solitaire*, wrote about the loss of wilderness space which could be applied to the decline of churches as the center of the community. He writes, "Wilderness is not a luxury but a necessity of the human spirit, and as vital to our lives as water and good bread. A civilization which destroys what little remains of the wild, the spare, the original, is cutting itself off from its origins and betraying the principle of civilization itself."

Unique to a Catholic college is the emphasis on shared values, most prominently social justice, a tenant of the Roman Catholic faith. Catholic colleges often make a social justice-based course a requisite to obtaining a degree. This is not a useless exercise as say being able to recite the prologue to the *Canterbury Tales* in Middle English. Rather,



it is a way of educating students to think beyond themselves, to imagine and embrace the greater community. Such an experience may feed a hunger they have never understood. Such engagement may blossom into a vocation. Whatever the outcome, an exposure to social justice is increasingly necessary to understand how the world functions where there is a growing divide between the have and have nots.

Being at a Catholic college makes it permissible to have a faith, to believe that our own foolishness will not destroy the world. The mystery of creation, the sanctity of life and the belief in an eternal existence beyond the troubles of our corporeal life are shared values. These things promote hope and love. Anything is possible.

I can speak only about the community at Saint Mary's College, as I have not experienced other Catholic colleges. However, I can compare the community at this institution to those I have known in the secular sector. Job satisfaction waxes and wanes; the benefit of ready access to life-long learning opportunities outweighs the challenges faced in working in a physical plant that needs modification, retrofitting and expansion. Too few offices, inadequate parking, an aging plumbing system and the lack of women's rooms at this once all-male college rank at the top of the list of complaints. But it is the culture of collaboration and helping one another on a personal scale in a world that is increasingly automated that makes the institutional physical imperfections trivial.

Students enrolled at this institution are welcomed into a community that we do not advertise. The

faculty and staff take on the role of extended family, helping to shepherd the students into the next chapter in their lives. We do this by instructing and modeling what it means to be a part of a caring community. Some of our actions are small, such as providing tissues to the sick, or stapling that paper a student has stayed up all night writing. We care enough to seek out a student that has exhibited a marked change or has become distracted by life. We encourage them to remain focused on completing their education. This shared community value makes us unique and is important to retain. Not all people learn the same way. There are students who thrive on our campus. Some students require a greater support network. Students that might fail in a larger institution, who would be lost at a UCLA or Cal, can succeed at Saint Mary's College because we are a community that cares.

Students witness faculty and staff at their worship services, in the dining halls and at cultural events that go on late into the evening. As members of a community, we model for our students in hopes that they will take all that they have learned forward into the world. Students see their cultures celebrated at the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe or Black Heritage Month. We marvel as our students perform island dances in native dress. At communal barbecues when the mariachis serenade us with Latin music, students, faculty and staff are joined on the dance floor with Sodexo workers. We recognize our white privilege and strive to be a part of a greater community. We have taken small steps and there is much work to do. It is our mission. This is why this Catholic college matters.

A CATHOLIC COLLEGE: WHY IT MATTERS

ESSAY 2 WRITTEN BY DAVID ARNDT

Every college embodies a view of education--an understanding of its nature and aims. Saint Mary's is distinctive in that it does not embody a single view, but a creative tension between the aims of three different kinds of institutions: the research university; the vocational university; and the liberal arts college. The aim of the research university is to produce and disseminate scholarship and scientific knowledge. The aim of the vocational university is to give students technical expertise and marketable skills. But the aim of the liberal arts college today is not quite as clear--for more than a century there has been no general agreement on the meaning and end of liberal education. This lack of clarity is the result of a profound shift in the assumptions underlying traditional views of the liberal arts. Catholic colleges matter today because they endured and responded to that shift in an exemplary way, and because the resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition can help us to retrieve and rethink the traditional ends of liberal education.

The Crisis in Liberal Education

It is often said there is a crisis in the liberal education today, but in fact liberal arts colleges have been in crisis for more than a hundred years. While the underlying grounds of the crisis are obscure, its manifestations are obvious. Critics of higher education tend to repeat a set of standard charges.

1. Academic work has become too specialized.
2. Scholarship has become narrow, trivial, and insular.
3. Academics tend to write in a technical jargon that is opaque to outsiders.

4. The undergraduate curriculum has become fragmented and incoherent.

5. Undergraduate education is adrift without any sense of common purpose.

6. Liberal education has become increasingly irrelevant in a world dominated by modern science and technology.

7. Liberal education is economically useless.

8. Liberal education no longer centers on the arts of language. Hence:

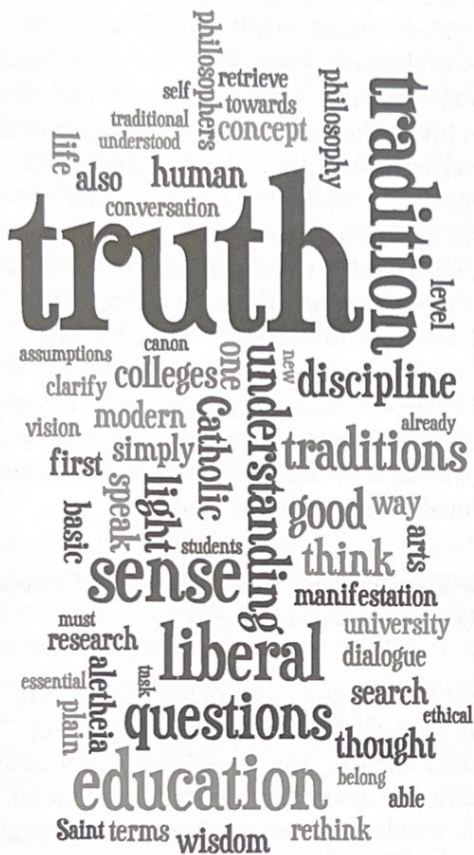
(a) The quality of academic speech and writing is deplorable; and

(b) Academics fail to teach students to listen, speak, read, and write.¹

9. College students are being taught to do independent research, but are not learning to think for themselves.

The traits of the crisis are obvious, but its causes are not. How are these traits related? Where do they come from? What are their underlying grounds?

To understand this crisis we have to understand the genealogy of the liberal arts college. Very briefly: despite the internal tensions within the liberal arts traditions, liberal education was originally grounded in a number of core assumptions--about the nature of truth, tradition, language, the self, and education. These assumptions supported the distinctive institutions of the traditional liberal arts college: its curricula; pedagogies; disciplinary divisions; the roles of faculty and students; and the language in which education was understood.



These institutions and their underlying assumptions were challenged with the emergence of modern science. The thinkers who founded the modern sciences profoundly altered traditional concepts of truth, tradition, the self, and education, and these new concepts laid the foundations of the modern scientific research university. But the research university did not simply *replace* the liberal arts college. Instead, liberal arts colleges were largely *incorporated* into the modern research university, and in the process they were uprooted from the basic assumptions that had supported and sustained them. The traditional disciplines of liberal education were re-cast in the mold of the modern sciences, and were reinterpreted in light of the assumptions underlying the research university. These basic assumptions have distorted and concealed the traditional meaning of liberal education.

Grounds of the Liberal Traditions

The traditions of liberal education rested on a number of basic assumptions.

1. One assumption concerned the nature of *truth*. Liberal educators assumed that scientific knowledge is not the only form of knowledge, and they distinguished several kinds of understanding: opinion, know-how, judgment, knowledge, and wisdom.² These distinctions imply that scientific truth is not the only or the highest form of truth. The highest form of truth was assumed to be wisdom, broadly conceived as a clear understanding of what is essential to a good life. This assumption supported the central place in the liberal arts curriculum of philosophy in the broadest sense of the word—the love of wisdom. Science and scholarship were subordinated to philosophy, in the sense that the pursuit of knowledge was to be guided by the search for wisdom. Seneca for example condemned the pursuit of scholarly knowledge for its own sake: “This desire to know more than is sufficient is a sort of intemperance.”³ Wisdom was the end of education, and the search for wisdom was so central that the liberal arts as a whole were commonly subsumed under the aegis of philosophy. This is why even today advanced degrees in the liberal arts are called Ph.D.s—doctorates in philosophy. Because the highest form of truth was wisdom, the search for wisdom was the highest end of liberal education. Seneca wrote “there is only one really liberal study,—that which gives a man his liberty. It is the study of wisdom.”⁴

2. A second assumption concerned the meaning of *tradition*. The liberal arts curriculum was shaped by the assumption that understanding is always historical in the sense that it is always indebted to a tradition. Tradition was understood as not just a body of knowledge but as inherited forms of thought and practice, an inheritance that both opens up and delimits the space of what we can think. Liberal educators assumed that in order to think at the highest levels we have to constantly appropriate the highest achievements of this inheritance. This

assumption supported the organization of the curriculum around a canon of classic books. A book was considered a classic if it had decisively contributed to the traditions that students and scholars had inherited and that shaped the way they thought.

3. A related assumption concerned the nature of *language*. Language was assumed to be not just an instrument of thought but a medium of traditional understanding. This is why for centuries Greek and Latin were at the center of the liberal arts curriculum; to read the classics one had to learn the languages in which they were written. This is also why the first liberal art was the art of grammar. To appropriate the traditions in which we find ourselves we have to learn the languages in which we think.

4. A fourth assumption concerned the nature of the *self*. It was assumed that a person was not simply a subject--a thinking ego or conscious mind. The mind itself was merely one facet of a person's spirit, and a person as a whole was a synthesis of body, spirit, and soul. The soul was not just the seat of perception and motion, but was by nature drawn towards and oriented by a vision of the good. So the work of education was not primarily directed at the mind or intellect of the students, but at their spirit and soul. This is explicit in an analogy in Plato's allegory of the cave: just as the eyes of the prisoners cannot see the light of the sun unless their whole bodies are turned around, so also the mind or intellect cannot grasp the natures of things unless the soul is turned from the actual to the ideal: "just as the eye was unable to turn from the darkness to light without the whole body, so too the instrument of knowledge can only by the movement of the whole soul be turned from the world of becoming into that of being, and learn by degrees to endure the sight of being, and of the brightest and best of being, or in other words, the good."⁵ The liberal arts traditions descended from Plato took for granted that education has a spiritual dimension, and that education is directed not simply the mind or intellect of the students but their soul and spirit.

5. A final assumption was that education was essentially a discipline of the spirit, a spiritual *discipline*. Again, this is explicit in the allegory of the cave, where Plato draws an analogy between the exercises (*askeses*) that aim to cultivate the excellence of the body, and the exercises (*askeses*) that aim to cultivate the virtues of the soul: "The other so-called virtues of the soul do seem akin to those of the body. For it is true that where they do not pre-exist, they are afterwards created by habit [*ethesi*] and discipline [*askesesin*]."⁶ This notion of spiritual exercise was essential to both ancient and medieval philosophy, which was commonly conceived not as an academic field but as a way of life centered on spiritual exercises and devoted to the search for wisdom.⁷

New Foundations: The Shift to the Grounds of Modern Science

These basic assumptions of the liberal traditions were challenged by the emergence of modern science. Modern science was founded on different assumptions about the nature of truth, tradition, language, the self, and education, and these new assumptions underlie the foundations and institutions of the modern research university.

1. The most basic assumption concerns the nature of *truth*. The thinkers who laid the foundations of modern science accepted the traditional concept of truth as a matter of correspondence between thought and reality. But modern philosophers shifted this concept of truth in two decisive ways: they assumed that the test of truth is certainty, i.e. that no belief can be considered true unless it is known for certain; and they assumed that certainty could be established only on the basis of evidence so clear and distinct that it is indubitable to any rational mind. These two new assumptions were most clearly articulated by Descartes in the first rule of scientific method laid down in his *Discourse on Method*: "The first [rule] was never to accept anything as true that I did not plainly know to be such; that is to say, carefully to avoid hasty judgment and prejudice; and to

include nothing more in my judgments than what presented itself to my mind so clearly and so distinctly that I had no occasion to call it into doubt."⁸ This intrication of truth and certainty is still commonly taken for granted today, even by the most skeptical thinkers; skeptics tend to deny that truth is attainable precisely because they assume knowledge must be certain in order to be true. Modern scientists are cautious about claiming to have final and definitive truth precisely because they know most scientific findings are not absolutely certain and so are always open to revision. The power of this concept of truth is undeniable. The world in which we live has been shaped by the scientific methods it grounds and guides.

Here we have to distinguish between *science* and *scientism*. Science is a search for universally valid knowledge. Scientism is the belief that modern science is the only genuine form of knowledge. A scientist is a practitioner of science, not a believer in scientism. To be critical of scientism is not in any way to denigrate science itself.

The challenge to the traditional liberal arts came not from modern science, understood as a universally valid yet distinct and limited form of knowledge. The challenge came instead from *scientism*, the uncritical belief that modern science is the only genuine form of understanding, and that scientific truth is the only genuine form of truth. This belief was articulated with exemplary clarity in 1880 by Thomas Huxley, who argued that "liberal education" should be re-founded on "an unhesitating faith that the free employment of reason, in accordance with the scientific method, is the sole method of reaching truth."⁹ This scientism challenged the notion of truth underlying the traditions of liberal education. The intrication of truth and certainty reversed the traditional hierarchy of forms of understanding. The highest form of understanding was no longer wisdom but scientific knowledge; the highest kind of truth was not a clear understanding of how to live well, but quantitative knowledge based on factual evidence.¹⁰

One effect of this reversal was that the search for wisdom was delegitimated as unscientific. Many thinkers dismissed as sophistry or illusion any claim to nonscientific truth, and consigned whole disciplines of thought to oblivion. This de-legitimation was expressed with exemplary clarity by the philosopher David Hume:

When we run over libraries, persuaded of these principles, what havoc must we make? If we take in our hand any volume, of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance; let us ask, *Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity and number?* No. *Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matters of fact and existence?* No. Commit it then to the flames; for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion.¹¹

Scientism had an especially powerful effect on the humanities. Once scientific truth was held to be the only real form of truth, the humanities could no longer be approached as sources of truth. Humanists generally responded to this challenge in one of two ways.

On the one hand, there have been attempts to cast the humanities into the mold of the modern sciences. Philosophers have tried to remake their discipline into "a rigorous science." Historians have tried to model their discipline on the natural sciences, and to find universal laws governing the phenomena of history. Classicists have come to think of their discipline not as part of a living tradition but as the study of dead languages. Humanistic study was re-conceived as quasi-scientific research.¹²

On the other hand, there have been attempts to re-conceive the humanities as disciplines aimed at something other than truth. Some humanists have claimed the goal of humanistic education is primarily aesthetic--the formation of an aesthetic sensibility. Others have claimed the point of humanistic education is primarily ethical--the cultivation of the virtues proper

to a given ethos. Others have claimed the aim of the humanities is ultimately political—to promote justice by raising consciousness and demystifying the ideologies that support injustice.

While both these responses have produced valuable work in the humanities, they have distorted the traditional aims of liberal education insofar as they no longer approach the humanities as a way to wisdom or a search for truths higher than scientific truth.

2. This basic assumption about the nature of truth entailed a related shift in the concept of *tradition*. Once it was assumed that beliefs could be accepted as true only on the basis of perfectly clear and distinct evidence, tradition could only appear as a source of preconceptions that stood in the way of a return to things themselves. It became a primary discipline of thought to break with tradition by suspending all inherited preconceptions in order to achieve a direct and immediate grasp of reality. This understanding of tradition is also articulated with exemplary clarity in *The Discourse on Method*, where Descartes tried to suspend belief in all inherited ideas in order to ground his thinking on a bedrock of absolute certainty: “as regards all the opinions to which I had until now given credence, I could do no better than to try to get rid of them once and for all, in order to replace them later on, either with other ones that are better, or even with the same ones once I had reconciled them to the norms of reason.”¹³ This view of tradition—that it is merely a source of preconceptions that thinkers must get rid of—underlies the characteristic pedagogies of the modern research university. In the sciences it sustains the use of textbooks that present science as an established body of knowledge and a fixed set of questions abstracted from any real historical tradition.¹⁴ In the humanities it has led scholars to focus mostly on keeping up with cutting edge developments in their field, rather than on critically appropriating the greatest works of their discipline.

3. This view of tradition is related to a shift in the traditional understanding of *language*. If tradition is no longer the element in which we come to understand ourselves and the world, but instead simply a source of preconception, then language is no longer a medium through which traditional understanding is handed down across generations, but is instead simply an instrument of thought that must be purged of inherited errors and confusions. This instrumental view of language underlies the vast proliferation of technical terminologies in the arts and sciences. Technical terminologies aim to eliminate all linguistic opacity and confusion, and to achieve maximum transparency and precision, either by inventing new words to signify new concepts, or by abstracting old words from their traditional senses and assigning to them a single precise, univocal, and definite meaning. In order to achieve the status of a science, it was assumed, every academic discipline had to develop a specialized vocabulary distinct and detached from the common sense words of traditional language.

Here again the challenge to the humanities did not come from science but from *scientism*. What is problematic is not technical terminology itself, which is indispensable to scientific thought, but rather the uncritical assumption that technical terminology is the *only* precise and rigorous use of language. This assumption has largely eclipsed the notion that rigorous thinking can take the form of studying the traditional senses of words, and retrieving, explicating, clarifying, and refining the implicit understanding they articulate. One effect of this assumption is that scholars in the humanities commonly write in specialized and quasi-scientific terminologies that are accessible only to other specialists and opaque to outsiders. A subtler and more profound effect of this assumption is that modern thinkers have generally lost a sense of the historical dimension of language—the sense that to understand the meaning of a word one has to understand the experiences from which it was born and the historical contexts through which its meanings shifted over time. The effect of this loss

is that we have largely lost any common frame of historical references that would sustain the common sense of words; words now appear as empty signifiers to which we can give any meaning we want, as long as we define our terms and use these terms in a logically consistent way.¹⁵

The most relevant symptom of this loss is the fate of the words “liberal education,” which are commonly abstracted from the actual traditions of the liberal arts and used to signify whatever ideal of education the speaker happens to hold.

4. Another shift in the basis of liberal education concerned the nature of the *self*. Simplifying to the extreme, we could say that the demand for certainty led modern thinkers to reduce the self and the world to two realities: thinking substance and extended substance, mind and matter, subject and object. Since notions of soul and spirit elude the concepts of subject and object, they were bracketed as unscientific, and the self was reduced to the conscious mind or thinking ego. This shift in the concept of the self is again most clearly visible in the *Discourse on Method*, where Descartes concludes that the one essential attribute of a person is conscious thought: “From this I knew that I was a substance the whole essence or nature of which is simply to think....”¹⁶ To understand the self as a “subject” is to assume its only constitutive property is self-awareness.¹⁷ This assumption shifts the focus of liberal education from the spirit to the intellect or mind. The focus on spiritual discipline was largely displaced by a focus on mental discipline, a calisthenics of the mind with no aim other than the development and strengthening of the students’ mental powers. This focus on mental discipline was most clearly articulated in the influential *Yale Report* written by the president of Yale in 1828, which defended the study of liberal arts in general, and the classics in particular, not as a spiritual discipline but as an intellectual exercise whose ultimate aim was “the *discipline* and *furniture* of the mind: expanding its powers and storing it with knowledge.”¹⁸ The reduction of the self to the

mind eclipsed the spiritual dimension of education that Plato had emphasized in the allegory of the cave. The aim of liberal education was no longer the *askesis* of the spirit but rather mental discipline.

5. Finally, the meaning of word *discipline* itself shifted. The modern university divided up knowledge according to a territorial model; the disciplines were conceived as self-contained “fields” of knowledge with clearly defined borders lying adjacent to each other like fields on a plain. The traditional sense of a discipline as a kind of *askesis*--a work the self does on itself to reach a spiritual end--faded into the background. Instead a discipline came to mean primarily a self-contained field of science or scholarship--an area of expertise rather than a spiritual practice.

This territorial model of the disciplines had profound effects on higher education.¹⁹

It first altered the place within the curriculum of the liberal arts and the sciences. The liberal arts were no longer at the center of the curriculum, but the sciences did not take their place. Instead the territorial model leveled and de-centered the curriculum. There is no point trying to design a core curriculum, argued Harvard president Charles William Eliot in 1898, because all fields of study are equally suited to discipline the powers of the mind: “there are no studies that are recognized as of supreme merit....The accumulated wisdom of the race cannot prescribe with certainty the studies which will best develop the human mind....”²⁰ The liberal arts became just one field of studies among others.

The territorial model of the disciplines also supported the ideal of specialization. Within this model the questions proper to each discipline are supposed to lie in a clearly defined territory, so that scientists and scholars could excel in one field while knowing little or nothing of other fields.²¹

The territorial model embodies several basic principles of the research university. One is that the pursuit of knowledge is good in itself; research needs no justification beyond itself. Another principle is that nothing should be exempt from scientific inquiry; the university should gather and disseminate all human knowledge. Another is that truth is best protected and advanced by instituting a space where discussion and inquiry are utterly free. And this led to the principles of *Freilehren*--faculty should be free to teach what they want--and *Freilernen*--students should be free to decide what to study.

These principles support the institutions of the research university: the division of the faculty into departments (which took place at Harvard in 1825); departmental autonomy (1825); elective courses for undergraduates (1825); the relegation of writing instruction to composition programs (c. 1870); graduate schools in the arts and sciences (1872); the use of doctoral degrees as a teaching credential (after 1872); undergraduate majors; and distribution requirements (1910).

These principles also make it unnecessary to have any real debate on the deepest questions of education: What is worth studying? What should educated people know? How should it be studied? What is the point of studying a particular field? These questions seem superfluous if we assume that everything is worth studying, that research is an end in itself, and that the search for truth is best guaranteed by academic freedom--that each professor should be free to teach what he or she wants, and that students should be free to decide what to study.²²

The Crisis of Liberal Education

Liberal education was thrown into crisis when the traditional college was detached from its underlying assumptions, and when the liberal arts were cast in the mold of the modern sciences, reinterpreted in light of the sciences' most basic assumptions, and incorporated into the modern research university. It is this situation that generates and sustains the specific features of the crisis singled out in the standard charges against undergraduate education today.

The division of knowledge into fields, faculty into departments, and fields into sub-fields has pushed academic work toward hyper-specialization.

This hyper-specialization has led to narrow, insular, and trivial scholarship.

This insularity, combined with an instrumental conception of language and with the attempt to model the languages of the humanities on the languages of the sciences, has led academics to write primarily for other specialists in technical terminologies that are opaque to outsiders.

The division of knowledge into self-contained fields overseen by autonomous departments, and the division of fields into self-contained subfields overseen by autonomous professors, has led to a loss of common purpose, a fragmented and incoherent curriculum, and a situation in which it is not necessary to engage in serious debate about what is worth learning, how it should be studied, and the basic aims of education.

The principle that fields of knowledge are self-contained--that researchers can understand the questions in one field of knowledge while knowing little or nothing of other fields--has encouraged a systematic blindness to the ways that the sciences are necessarily implicated in political, ethical, and ontological questions.

The ideal of pure scholarship has led professors to focus on teaching students to replicate the forms and vocabulary of scholarly discourse, rather than actually practicing the arts of listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Practical instruction in speaking and writing has been marginalized into programs in rhetoric and composition, so that students are expected to learn to speak and write through a few specialized courses rather than through four years of regular practice.

This shift in focus away from the language arts has made study in the humanities more economically and vocationally useless.

Finally, the traditional ends of the liberal arts college have been largely eclipsed by the ends of the research university. The role of the faculty is not primarily to teach but to advance science and scholarship, and the role of the students is to spend four years as novice scientists and scholars. The new roles of faculty and students were articulated by Josiah Royce in 1891:

The traditional college had as its chosen office the training of individual minds. The modern University has as its highest business, to which all else is subordinate, the organization and the advance of Learning....In the true University the undergraduate ought to feel himself a novice in an order of learned servants of the ideal--a novice who, if in turn he be found willing and worthy, may be admitted, after his first degree, to the toils and privileges of this order as a graduate or, still later, as a teacher, but who, on the other hand, if, as will most frequently happen, he is not for this calling, will be sent back to the world, enriched by his undergraduate years of intercourse with his fellows, and with elder men, and progressive scholars. The ideal academic life then is not organized expressly for him.²³

The ultimate aim is to train students to do independent research, rather than to lead them to the point where they could think for themselves. Education has become primarily a form of scholarly or vocational apprenticeship, rather than a search for wisdom, and the preparation for a life of political, intellectual, and spiritual freedom.

So liberal arts colleges were thrown into crisis when they were uprooted from traditional assumptions about truth, tradition, language, the self, and education--when the assumptions underlying the modern research university eclipsed the ethical, civic, and spiritual dimensions of liberal education.

What then can we do? How should we respond to this crisis?

A Catholic College: Why It Matters

Saint Mary's College matters because it offers a genuinely liberal education. It has adopted the institutions of modern universities, while recovering and reinventing the best elements of the traditional liberal arts college. It is and should be a model for liberal arts colleges around the world.

But to be such a model, Catholic colleges such as Saint Mary's have to offer a clear critique of prevailing models of higher education today. They have to explain how liberal education has been distorted by the assumptions underlying the modern research university. They have to be able to explain both the legitimacy and the limits of the view of education embodied by the research university. They have to respond to the challenge of the research university by drawing on the resources of the Catholic intellectual tradition in order to retrieve, refine, and rethink the assumptions that sustained the traditional liberal arts college.

This rethinking involves five tasks.

1. The first task is to rethink traditional concepts of *truth*. We need a critique of scientism that shows both the legitimacy and the limits of scientific truth. And we need to explain in what sense one can speak of non-scientific truths--truths of art, history, interpretation, and scripture.

To do this we have to retrieve an understanding of truth that runs through the Western traditions without ever being fully grasped in conceptual thought--the understanding of truth as the kind of illumination or disclosure that the Greeks called "*aletheia*." We already have a rough understanding of truth in this sense when we speak of a "moment of truth"--an instant when something that has been hidden or obscure suddenly comes to light and becomes clearly apparent. In this expression, "the moment of truth," truth is implicitly understood not as a correspondence between thought and reality, but as the illumination or disclosure that underlies truth in the traditional sense--that first makes possible any correspondence or non-correspondence between thought and reality.

This sense of truth as *aletheia* is implicit but unnoticed in many classic works. It is already legible in Plato's allegory of the cave, where the movement of the prisoners is not simply from semblance to reality, or from a less correct to a more correct vision, but from a place from which the sun is hidden to a place where the sunlit landscape is disclosed and illuminated. This sense of truth as *aletheia* is also implicit but not grasped conceptually in a certain Christian understanding of the revelatory power of language; it is legible in the notion that the truth of the Gospel parables lies in their power to unearth and disclose what--like a treasure hidden in a field--has been hidden since the foundations of the world.²⁴

Contemporary Catholic thinkers have begun to explicate and clarify this sense of truth. The Catholic theologian David Tracy, for example, has argued that what he calls "manifestation" is the most basic level of truth:

Truth is here understood, on the side of the object, as the power of disclosure or concealment in the object itself; and that disclosure is related to truth as an experience of recognition on the side of the subject....Anyone who has experienced even one such moment--in watching a film, in listening to music, in looking at a painting, in participating in a religious ritual, in reading a classic text, in conversation with friends, or in finding oneself in love--knows that truth as manifestation is real. Truth, in its primordial sense, is manifestation.²⁵

It is only in this sense of truth as *aletheia* that we can understand what it means to speak of the truth or untruth of art. "A model of disclosure-concealment better serves our understandings of the kind of claims to truth of the work of art."²⁶ The concept of truth as *aletheia* also helps clarify in what sense we can speak of the truth of conversation: "Conversation accords primacy to one largely forgotten notion of truth: truth as manifestation."²⁷ We have to retrieve and explicate this "largely forgotten" notion in order to clarify in what sense the humanities can be approached as sources of truth.

But while we can conceive of non-scientific truth in light of this understanding of truth as manifestation, it would be wrong to think of manifestation as non-scientific truth. Scientific truth in the common sense is first made possible by truth as manifestation; scientific revolutions are shifts in the basic assumptions and terms through which reality is concealed or disclosed.

Above all, the concept of *aletheia* helps to clarify the truth of wisdom. Wisdom cannot be conceived as the content of propositions that accurately correspond to reality; it is instead a clear vision of the good, and an abiding clarity about what is essential to a good life. In his encyclical, *Fides et Ratio*, John Paul II called on contemporary philosophers to retrieve the vocation of philosophy as a search for wisdom. "To be consonant with the word of God, philosophy needs first of all to recover its *sapiential dimension* as a search for the ultimate and overarching meaning of life."²⁸ "I appeal also to *philosophers*, and to all *teachers of philosophy*, asking them to have the courage to recover, in the flow of an enduringly valid philosophical tradition, the range of authentic wisdom and truth--metaphysical truth included--which is proper to philosophical inquiry."²⁹ To recover the sapiential dimension of philosophy, we have to clarify in what sense wisdom is a matter of truth. I think Tracy is right that the truth of wisdom is a matter of illumination or disclosure--truth as *aletheia*.

2. The second task is to rethink the concept of *tradition*. There are three common stances toward tradition in modern thought. "Traditionalism" regards tradition as an authoritative source of insight and guidance, which is constantly in danger of ruin or loss and which must be deliberately conserved and protected. "Anti-traditionalism" regards tradition as a source of prejudices and preconceptions, from which we must free ourselves in order to think and act on our own. "Neo-traditionalism" regards tradition as a fund of ideas with which we are free to do whatever we want. While these three stances seem mutually exclusive, they all assume tradition is simply a heritage we happen to have but that we could easily lose or leave behind.

In *Fides et Ratio*, John Paul II laid out a more insightful concept of tradition. It is true that on one level a tradition is like an inheritance from earlier generations; on a deeper level, a tradition is like a conversation with the past. But on the most basic level, tradition is like the language in which we first learned to speak and think. In this sense it is not an inheritance that belongs to us, but a heritage to which we ourselves belong.

The appeal to tradition is not a mere remembrance of things past; it involves rather the recognition of a cultural heritage which belongs to all of humanity. Indeed it may be said that it is we who belong to tradition and that it is not ours to dispose of at will. Precisely by being rooted in the tradition will we be able today to develop for the future an original, new and constructive mode of thinking.³⁰

In both the humanities and the sciences we have to appropriate this understanding of tradition as a basic trait of human existence, an indebtedness to the past that shapes and guides the way we think. Our thinking is always situated within traditions, and this situation determines the standpoint, perspective, and horizon of our thought.

This concept of tradition helps to explain the place of a canon of classic texts in liberal education. We cannot stand outside of all traditions and view them with equal distance and detachment. Some traditions have to be central to a liberal curriculum because they are the traditions we belong to and from which we have inherited the ways we think. We Americans cannot regard all political traditions as equally worthy of study, for example, not because the American tradition is superior to other traditions, but simply because as Americans we are situated within it.

This concept of tradition helps to clarify in what sense truth is historical. In *Fides et Ratio*, John Paul II emphasized that we cannot simply preserve and perpetuate what seem to us eternal truths, because the revelation of truth occurs in time and history. “The truth about himself and his life which God has entrusted to humanity is immersed therefore in time and history.”³¹ The truth revealed to us is always limited and incomplete: “our vision of the face of God is always fragmentary and impaired by the limits of our understanding.”³² But over time we can work towards a more complete revelation. “This is the teaching of the Constitution *Dei Verbum* when it states that ‘as the centuries succeed one another, the Church constantly progresses toward the fullness of divine truth, until the words of God reach their complete fulfillment in her.’”³³ This is why we cannot simply conserve old ways of thinking, but must also try to open up new paths of thought: “it is necessary not to abandon the passion for ultimate truth, the eagerness to search for it or the audacity to forge new paths in the search.”³⁴ To think at the highest level it is not enough to hand down what we have inherited from the past; we have to critically appropriate the traditions to which we belong.

This critical appropriation has to take four forms:

First, we have to unearth and listen to voices in our traditions that have been silenced, muzzled, neglected, or forgotten. This is especially true of the voices of women, minorities, the poor, foreigners, the heterodox, the closeted, and the oppressed. The sad truth is that most of the works in the Western canon were written by a tiny elite. If the canon remains closed there is the risk that we might fail to recognize the perspective of that elite as simply one perspective among others. To open the canon to nontraditional voices is to open it to new perspectives, and this plurality of perspectives is essential to the search for truth.

Second, we have to make our own the highest achievements of our traditions. This is hard because these achievements are not immediately available; for the most part they are distorted or concealed by later interpretations, simplifications, received ideas, and anachronisms. To think at the highest level, we have to constantly return to the classics, learn their language, read them on their own terms, and make their insights our own.

Third, we also have to critique the greatest works of our traditions--to look for the limitations they have imposed on our thinking, to sense what has been distorted or concealed by the terms in which we think, to point to phenomena that elude or exceed traditional forms of thought, and to rethink and refine our inheritance in order to grasp and bring to light what has so far been obscure and beyond the scope of thought.

Last, we have to open the canon of classics to constructive dialogue with other traditions. In this openness to others we remain true to a fundamental principle of our own tradition, the principle of dialogue articulated with incomparable clarity by Saint Augustine: “Let none of us say he has already found the truth. Let us look for it as though we did not yet know it on either side; for we can search for it in peace and devotion only if both parties, rejecting all presumptuous prejudice, renounce the belief that it is already known and found.”³⁵

These four tasks have to be brought to bear on the traditions of liberal education. In order to understand liberal education at the highest level, we have to constantly return to and critically appropriate the educational traditions to which we belong.

3. The third task is to rethink the concepts of *language*. Language is not simply a tool of thought but a medium in which we think. We have to understand that scientific discourse is not the only or the privileged form of discourse that leads to truth, but that we also move towards truth (in the sense of *aletheia*) through conversation and dialogue. And we have to recognize that the technical terminologies of the specialized disciplines often stand in the way of genuine dialogue. The Catholic philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre made this point in words that are worth quoting at length:

It is one of the marks of the professionalization and specialization of the disciplines that the practitioners of each discipline are preoccupied with addressing only those within their disciplines rather than anyone outside them, and indeed for the most part with addressing only those who are already at work on the detail of the same problems on which they themselves are currently at work. So their mode of writing presupposes not only shared expertise and familiarity with a semi-technical vocabulary, but also a mastery of the relevant professional literature...and thereby excludes from the discussion all but their colleagues.³⁶

On technical questions within a specialized area of expertise, it is perfectly appropriate for scientists and scholars to speak to fellow specialists in technical terms. But every specialized discipline is implicated in more general ethical or philosophical questions that rightly concern everyone. And we can best think through these questions only through conversation and dialogue. So scientists and scholars should be able not only to discourse on specialized topics in technical terms; they should also be able to use their expertise to discuss questions that concern everyone in plain English, as clearly and accessibly as possible. MacIntyre speaks of philosophers, but his point applies to all scientists and scholars:

The questions that philosophers ask are...questions that they first ask, not qua philosopher, but qua human being, qua plain person. They are the same questions as those asked by other plain persons, and every plain person is potentially a philosopher. By asking those questions rigorously and systematically philosophers therefore, we may infer, are to practice their trade, their craft, on behalf of all plain persons. They contribute to the common good by so doing, just as other plain persons, say carpenters or farmers, do. So philosophers owe it to other members of their community to speak and write in such a way that, so far as possible, what they say is accessible to those who are not academic philosophers.³⁷

Professors and students in liberal arts colleges must of course be able to speak with each other in the discursive forms and technical terms proper to their disciplines. But to engage in conversation or dialogue with colleagues or peers outside their discipline, or with the general public, they have to be able to speak in plain English about questions that concern us all.

4. The fourth task is to rethink the nature of the *self*. This is not a matter of discarding as incorrect the modern concept of the self as conscious subject, which does correspond to something real in human beings. Instead it is a matter of bringing to light and grasping explicitly the fundamental traits of human beings that modern concepts of the self distort or conceal.

In the allegory of the cave, Plato suggests that human beings have at least two essential traits: the first is that we find ourselves in darkness, not understanding where we are or how we got here; the second is that we are naturally drawn away from darkness towards the light of understanding, and towards the source of that light which Plato calls the good.

The Catholic philosopher Charles Taylor has attempted to retrieve and refine this understanding of the self. In very broad terms: Taylor argues that two traits are essential to human existence. The first trait is that to be human is to face a few basic questions: Who am I? Where have I come from? How should I live? What is essential to a good life? “We take as basic that the human agent exists in a space of questions.”³⁸ These questions are existential and ethical, in the sense that they ask not simply what it is right to do but what it is good to be. The second trait is that to be human is to be oriented towards the good--not just to be aware of what we care about and want, but to sense a way of being that is intrinsically good, that gives meaning to our lives, and in light of which we can decide what is worth caring about and wanting. “We cannot do without some orientation to the good...we each essentially are (i.e. define ourselves inter alia by) where we stand on this.” “We cannot but orient ourselves to the good.”³⁹ The good is the ultimate end of all our actions, what we live for and what gives meaning to our lives. Everything we do is guided by our vision of the good. It is only in light of this vision that our practices and actions make sense.

These practices and actions include the disciplines that are studied in college and the professional activities and way of life for which they prepare students. They make sense only in light of some vision of the good, and so they are inherently implicated in the most basic ethical and political questions we face: How is it good to live? What should we do, and how can we best live together?

This implies that ethics is not just one field among other fields that are ethically neutral. It means that every discipline is directly or indirectly implicated in the most basic ethical questions. So an education is necessarily incomplete if it brackets all ethical questions, and focuses only on forming the intellect or training the mental powers of the students. A more complete education must address the student as a person, and encourage her to engage with questions of ethics across the curriculum.

5. The fifth task is to rethink the concept of an academic *discipline*. We saw that Plato understood education as a discipline (*askesis*) of the soul, and Graeco-Roman thinkers understood philosophy as a way of life centered on spiritual exercises and devoted to the search for wisdom. This understanding of education was appropriated and transformed by Christian thinkers in general, and by Saint Ignatius in particular.⁴⁰ With the emergence of the modern research university, the meaning of discipline shifted from a spiritual exercise to a self-contained field in the topography of knowledge. To a large extent it is only within Catholic colleges that the original understanding of academic discipline has been preserved. Catholic education is a spiritual practice.

A number of recent thinkers have begun to retrieve the classical notions of philosophy as a way of life, and of education as a discipline of the spirit: Michel Foucault, Pierre Hadot, Arnold Davidson, Martha Nussbaum, and John M. Cooper. But to the extent that they remain uncritically attached to the institutions and underlying assumptions of the research university, these thinkers have not managed to transform their way of teaching, or the institutions in which they teach.

In this respect, Catholic colleges such as Saint Mary's can be models for liberal arts colleges in general.

The Collegiate Seminar and the Integral Program in particular exemplify this dimension of liberal education. The pedagogy of the seminar minimizes the role of the instructor as a source of scholarly knowledge, and it focuses instead on practicing the arts of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The immediate aim of this practice is not just to develop the students' mental powers, but to cultivate the virtues proper to a life of intellectual, political, and spiritual freedom: authenticity, thoughtfulness, openness, respect, independence, grit, seriousness, and joy. The ultimate aim of this practice is to enable students to move, in dialogue with others and through their own efforts, towards the light of truth.

Final Thoughts

Liberal education was once understood as a spiritual discipline devoted to the search for wisdom: "There is only one really liberal study....It is the study of wisdom."⁴¹ This is why even today doctorates in the liberal arts are called doctorates in philosophy. But this understanding of liberal education was distorted and obscured with the emergence of the modern sciences, when liberal arts colleges were cast into the mold of the research university and reinterpreted in light of its underlying assumptions. This distortion was not effected by the sciences themselves, but by scientism—the uncritical belief that scientific truths are the only genuine form of truth. Catholic colleges such as Saint Mary's matter today because they have retrieved and reinvented the classic ideals of liberal education. But to serve as a model to other colleges they have to offer a cogent critique of the model of education embodied by the modern research university, and they have to elucidate the rationale underlying their own distinctive programs and pedagogies. To do this they have to "forge new paths" of thought, and take the lead in rethinking the nature of academic discipline, the self, language, tradition, and truth.

(Endnotes)

- 1 In 2003, according to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy, only 31% of college graduates were proficient readers. 69% of college graduates in the U.S. are less-than-proficient readers.
- 2 Here I am simply listing the different kinds of understanding distinguished by Aristotle in Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994) 332-333.
- 3 Seneca, "Letter LXXXVIII. On Liberal and Vocational Studies," in *Critical Strategies and Great Questions* (Moraga, California: Saint Mary's College of California, 2014) 33-34. See Seneca, *Letters from a Stoic*, tr. Robin Campbell (New York: Penguin Books, 1969) 159.
- 4 Seneca, in *Critical Strategies and Great Questions*, 27. See Seneca, *Letters from a Stoic*, 152.
- 5 Plato, "Allegory of the Cave," in *Critical Strategies and Great Questions* (Moraga, California: Saint Mary's College of California, 2014) 4. See Plato, *The Republic, Books VI-X*, tr. Paul Shorey (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000) 135.
- 6 Plato, *The Republic, Books VI-X*, tr. Paul Shorey (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000) 136-137.
- 7 Among recent thinkers it was above all Pierre Hadot who has shown most clearly that the Greeks and Romans understood philosophy as a way of life, centered on spiritual exercises, and devoted to the search for wisdom. See Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, tr. Michael Chase (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1995).
- 8 René Descartes, *The Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*, tr. Donald Cress (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1998) 11.
- 9 Thomas Huxley, "Science and Culture," quoted in Bruce A. Kimball, *Orators and Philosophers: A History of the Idea of Liberal Education* (New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1995) 171 (italics added).
- 10 This reversal is most clearly expressed by the words carved in stone on the façade of the Social Science Research Building at the University of Chicago: "If you cannot measure, your knowledge is meagre and unsatisfactory." This inscription is a paraphrase of Lord Kelvin's dictum: "When you can measure what you are speaking about, and express it in numbers, you know something about it; but when you cannot measure it, when you cannot express it in numbers, your knowledge is of a meagre and unsatisfactory kind; it may be the beginning of knowledge, but you have scarcely in your thoughts advanced to the state of *Science*, whatever the matter may be." Kelvin's words are quoted at zapatopi.net/kelvin/quotes/. The inscription is discussed by Thomas Kuhn in *The Essential Tension: Selected Studies in Scientific Tradition and Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977) 178.
- 11 David Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985) 165.
- 12 Classics for example became largely a branch of philology. One still studied Greek and Roman texts, not as sources of a living tradition but as one set of objects among others. This approach obliterated the original rationale for the study of classics. Hence the proliferation of spurious rationales, such as the theory of "mental discipline." There were also attempts to remake history on the model of the new sciences. There was, for example, a search for laws of history analogous to the laws of nature. This analogy was explicit in Marxism; Engels wrote that "Just as Darwin discovered the law of development of organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of development of human history." (Friedrich Engels, quoted in Hannah Arendt, *Essays in Understanding*, ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1994, p. 388) There were also attempts to make philosophy a science in the modern sense, and to reject all previous philosophy as "metaphysical," that is, unscientific nonsense.
- 13 Descartes, *The Discourse on Method*, 8.
- 14 Thomas Kuhn made this point in his discussion of textbooks in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*: "Characteristically, textbooks of science contain just a bit of history, either in an introductory chapter or, more often, in scattered references to the great heroes of an earlier age. From such references both students and professionals come to feel like participants in a long-standing historical tradition. Yet the textbook-derived tradition in which scientists come to sense their participation is one that, in fact, never existed." Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970) 137-8.

15 Hannah Arendt makes this point in her essay, "What Is Authority?": "We have ceased to live in a common world where the words we have in common possess an unquestionable meaningfulness, so that, short of being condemned to live verbally in an altogether meaningless world, we grant each other the right to retreat into our own worlds of meaning, and demand only that each of us remain consistent within his own private terminology." Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (New York: Penguin Books, 1993) 95-96.

16 René Descartes, *The Discourse on Method*, 19.

17 I take this formulation from the Catholic philosopher, Charles Taylor, who argues that in the modern world the prevailing concept of the self "is defined in abstraction from any constituent concerns....Its only constitutive property is self-awareness." Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989) 49.

18 Yale president Jeremiah Day, quoted in Kimball, *Orators and Philosophers*, 151.

19 The territorial model of knowledge has impoverished our understanding of the sciences in two ways.

First, it is not true that each discipline is a self-enclosed territory that contains all the discipline's questions. Every science relies on philosophical assumptions about the nature of its object, and these assumptions exceed the concepts and methods of the science itself. All sciences rest on an implicit understanding of what science is, and yet the question, "What is science?" is not a scientific question but a philosophical question. When work in the sciences is confined to self-contained fields, scientists are less able to give thoughtful answers to basic questions about their own disciplines.

Second, the sciences are a form of human activity, and as such they are implicated in ethical, political, and spiritual questions. These questions are supposed to lie outside the sciences, and they are usually excluded from scientific textbooks and courses. But they are part of the sciences. When ethical and political questions are excluded from scholarship and education in the sciences, scientists become less able to think intelligently about these questions and to participate actively in public debate on the political questions in which their work is implicated.

20 Charles William Eliot, quoted in Kimball, *Orators and Philosophers*, 166.

21 The principle of specialization was championed forcefully by Stanley Fish: "The sharper and more limited the focus of your labors, the more likely it is that what you produce will be useful to the larger contexts you resolutely ignore." "Same Old Song", *Chronicle of Higher Education*, July 11, 2003.

22 In my own field, for example, the study of literature is divided into subfields delimited by language, historical period, and genre. A department is supposed to offer a complete education if it can offer instruction in all of these subfields. Each professor can work in his or her subfield without the department having to construct a coherent curriculum for the students, a project that would force professors to debate what students should learn, how it should be approached, and ultimately why it is worthwhile to study literature.

23 Josiah Royce, quoted in Harry Lewis, *Excellence without a Soul: Does Liberal Education Have a Future?* (New York: Public Affairs, 2007) 41.

24 Matthew 13:34-5 and 13:44. "Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: 'I will open my mouth to speak in parables; I will proclaim what has been hidden [κεκρυμμένα] since the foundation of the world.'" "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden [κεκρυμμένω] in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field." (New Revised Standard Version.)

25 David Tracy, *Plurality and Ambiguity: Hermeneutics, Religion, Hope* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1987) 28-29.

26 Tracy, *Plurality and Ambiguity*, 22.

27 Tracy, *Plurality and Ambiguity*, 28.

28 John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 14 September 1998, c. 106. Vatican translation (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1998) p. 102.

29 John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, c. 106.

30 John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, c. 85.

31 John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, c. 11.

32 John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, c. 13.

- 33 John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, c. 11.
- 34 John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, c. 56.
- 35 Augustine, quoted in Karl Jaspers, *Plato and Augustine* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1962) 77.
- 36 Alasdair MacIntyre, *God, Philosophy, and Universities* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009) 176.
- 37 MacIntyre continues: “The philosopher shares with the...pre-philosophical person the need for and the search for *truth*: for the truths of everyday life, for the truths to be discovered by scientific research, for the truth about human goods and about the final human good.” MacIntyre, *God, Philosophy, and Universities*, 166-7.
- 38 Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989) 29.
- 39 Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 33 and 51.
- 40 Pierre Hadot argued that “Ignatius’ *Exercitia spiritualia* are nothing but a Christian version of a Graeco-Roman tradition, the extent of which we hope to demonstrate in what follows. In the first place, both the idea and the terminology of *exercitium spirituale* are attested in early Latin Christianity, well before Ignatius of Loyola, and they correspond to the Greek Christian term *askesis*. In turn, *askesis*--which must be understood not as asceticism, but as the practice of spiritual exercises--already existed within the philosophical tradition of antiquity. In the final analysis, it is to antiquity that we must return in order to explain the origin and significance of this idea of spiritual exercises....” Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 82.
- 41 Seneca, “On Liberal and Vocational Studies,” in *Critical Strategies and Great Questions*, 27.