Beyond the Lecture Hall

Universities and community engagement from the middle ages to the present day

Edited by

Peter Cunningham

with Susan Oosthuizen and Richard Taylor

Faculty of Education and Institute of Continuing Education
## Contents

**Introduction: universities and community engagement in historical perspective**  
*Peter Cunningham and Richard Taylor*  
1

**Foundations, funding and forgetfulness: reflections on the pattern of university histories**  
*David Watson*  
9

**The university and rural community outreach: from Cambridge beginnings to a national system**  
*Bill Jones*  
19

**Civic universities and community engagement in inter-war England**  
*Keith Vernon*  
31

**The reach of print**  
*David McKitterick*  
49

**Educational radio in Quebec: a complement to university**  
*Paul Aubin*  
61

**Universities and professions in the early modern period**  
*Rosemary O’Day*  
79

**The university, professionalization, and race in the United States**  
*Philo Hutcheson*  
103

**The origins and consequences of university involvement in English school examinations**  
*Sandra Raban*  
117

**Modes of engagement: universities and schools in Australia 1850-1914**  
*Geoffrey Sherington and Julia Horne*  
133

**The University of Melbourne and the retreat from university extension 1922-1946**  
*Gordon Dadswell*  
151

**Trapped in a local history: why did extramural fail to engage in the era of engagement?**  
*Chris Duke*  
169

**Notes on contributors**  
189
Introduction: universities and community engagement in historical perspective

Peter Cunningham and Richard Taylor

The nature and extent of higher education’s contribution to economic prosperity and to the development of a vibrant civil society, and thus to national well-being is a key policy debate. This book contributes to that debate, exploring the neglected but important role of universities’ engagement with their communities. Faced with apparently relentless policy changes by successive governments aimed at reforming higher education for the national good, universities need to avoid the defensive stance that can emanate from an inward-looking and self-referential academic culture. We need instead to recognise and properly understand initiatives and achievements of the past in relating and responding to the needs of the world beyond the lecture hall.

Complex and contested definitions of ‘community’ in relation to the university can only be fully understood by examining the variety of ways in which universities have reached out, and society has reached in, in a relation of mutual dependence and enrichment over centuries. Here we foreground historical analysis, underlining the longevity and complexity of universities’ interaction with their multiple communities. Historians around the world have been active in researching these aspects of higher education, where attention has shifted from purely internal configuration of institutions, curricula and teaching careers, to a concern for the influences of, and effects on the societies in which universities work. That extensive international research underlies the content of this book.

Researchers from Japan, Hong Kong and Taiwan, Iraq and Israel, Finland, France, Italy and Serbia, as well as a good number from Australia, the USA and the United Kingdom gathered at the Faculty of Education in Cambridge at a conference convened in September 2008 to acknowledge the university's 800th anniversary. The chapters in this book represent a small selection of these peer-reviewed conference papers, in which a frequent reference point is Cambridge as one of the oldest universities in the UK. But this selection includes some key comparative studies from other parts of the world. Case studies include colonial Australia, black America and bi-lingual Canada. Recurrent cross-references indicate how reaching ‘beyond the lecture hall’, and its reciprocal consequences for Cambridge, are reflected and contrasted in other geographical and historical settings.

Each of the four strands that structure this collection of papers highlights a two-way relationship between university and society. Book publishing, professional formation, adult education, and interaction with schools, are not simply a benign extension of traditional intellectual leadership, but constitute formative agents of change within the university itself:

- Through promoting print and publication of the written word, universities disseminated their knowledge to a readership well beyond the confines of the academic community. This activity became increasingly responsive to the needs of the reading public, and the market for books, and was enhanced by the adoption of broadcasting media, and most recently the internet, for distance learning.
From early engagement with the church, and eventually with the vocational preparation of an increasing range of professional groups over time, universities have contributed significantly to the conceptualization and articulation of professional education and training. At the same time, they have had to respond over the course of time to changing conditions of professional organisation and practice.

Relationships between universities and the provision of schooling emerged in England with Oxford and Cambridge foundations and their associated colleges at Winchester and Eton, but an increasingly close connection with a national school system developed through the establishment of examination boards, and the associated publication of textbooks, and through the training of teachers. The establishment of state systems of education, however, and their exponential growth in the twentieth century, required university examining boards to attend to the varied demands made by governments and school systems nationally and worldwide.

Adult and continuing education has been an important extension of the universities' activity, has also provided a vehicle for new disciplines to be brought in from the margins to the mainstream of university teaching and research, and thus the university's academic knowledge has interacted with individual adult learners and broader social movements. Adult and continuing education has also had a longstanding concern with enabling educationally disadvantaged communities to have the opportunity to engage with university level study.

Communities
In his opening chapter David Watson alerts us to the long history of ‘the university’ and the way the concept has evolved over centuries. Despite the enduring image of ‘ivory tower’ he argues that universities have been more closely associated with their communities than is sometimes understood. But ‘community’, like ‘university’, is a slippery concept and identifying the university’s community is akin to peeling the onion. Watson reveals also the multi-faceted nature of community engagement, and poses some hard questions for the higher education sector, such as ‘How do we use our autonomy?’ and ‘How do we balance our obligations to civil society and the state?’. One prominent manifestation of ‘engagement’ has been so-called extramural education, early examples of which appeared in the work of James Stuart at Cambridge. Chris Duke, in his closing chapter, draws attention to language and narrative, highlighting the play there has been with ‘walls’ – trans-mural and intrans-mural – as well dismantling them altogether. Extension shared this connotation of taking university education out from its on-campus heartland, outreach likewise. Each of these terms, he points out, suggests that the university is taking something of its riches out from a closed scholarly community, on its own terms, to a wider audience or, as we would now say, clientele. The notion of (learning) partnership was uncommon. More contentiously, he argues too that the very separateness of extramural activity in the academy condemned it, from the outset, to a marginality from mainstream university life.

The immediate community for most universities has been the town or the city, as over time they generated settlements around them, or more usually were founded to
serve existing centres of population. An evident factor as universities embarked on extension activities in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was industrialisation and its urban impact, and Stuart’s early ambitions for his extension classes were on a national scale. But as the towns expanded, so rural communities declined, and their scattered populations also provided a focus and a challenge for university engagement. Two case studies here offer some contrast between rural and urban contexts in which university academics worked.

Bill Jones hints at a possible medieval source of ‘outreach’ in the training of clergy and their mission, through parish churches, to the population at large. He also sees the extension movement as part of a wider reform movement from the mid-nineteenth century that includes school examinations, to be dealt with later in this volume, as serving the community. Jones casts a wide historical net to compare rural educational projects in the eighteenth century, and the romantic attractions of ‘untutored rural genius’, with the particular problems of rural community outreach that persist to this day. He alerts us to the considerable diversity that exists within modern rural society compared with assumptions that are often made and reminds us that partnership with voluntary and commercial organisations, a favoured theme of current policy, has clear historical precedents.

In large cities the relationship between ‘gown’ and ‘town’ is bound to be complex. Universities may provide educational opportunity for the local population and all sorts of economic opportunities for local entrepreneurs. They are likely to enhance cultural life. But conflicting interests between academics and citizens, students and workers, have also been a potential source of tension from the middle ages onwards. The so-called ‘civic universities’ in Britain were those typically founded at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a result of local initiative in major industrial and commercial cities, responding to local need. As a group they have been seen as subsequently ‘disengaging’ from their local communities over the next half-century. Keith Vernon’s close study of Liverpool in the inter-war period reveals continued attempts by a university to engage with its local community, but at the same time sees fundamental trends that worked consistently in the opposite direction.

David Watson points to the global marketplace in higher education as a critical feature for universities in the twenty-first century. The way this works for British universities is deeply affected by that nation’s imperial past. Its empire was built on trade, religion and war, and implicated in all of that was education. Within these pages, historical accounts of printing and publishing, examining and adult education all draw attention to transnational and international dimensions of universities’ activity.

**Publishing and broadcasting**

David McKitterick, for example, again questions our definition of community in respect of the markedly different readerships that were served, and perhaps created, by university publishing over centuries, from early printing to the internet age. The university presses at both Cambridge and Oxford now rely for large portions of their income on publishing that is aimed, broadly speaking, at education outside the university community. English as a second language is a major international business.

But as he looks back further, at the history of engagement by these and a few other presses with the various kinds of communities as they have developed and changed over the centuries, so he finds issues in common. In the seventeenth century,
the university printers at Cambridge depended for their profits and their livelihood on supplying not just the Bible and prayer book, but also thousands of schoolbooks, to the population of Britain. The commercial activity of publishing was closely linked to trends considered in other chapters here. We need to examine the relationship (and, often, lack of relationship) of both Oxford’s and Cambridge’s university presses to the lecture programmes organised by people like James Stuart as they reached out to the mechanics’ institutes and other groups of northern England, and then to the more formal university extension movements. And publishing was considerably stimulated through the new role which both Oxford and Cambridge found as major examining bodies for schoolchildren. A particular feature that McKitterick traces is the reputation gained through publication of major reference works, such as the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which enabled university publishing to present itself to extensive new readerships. For the universities, they helped redefine ways in which communities could be reached.

University presses may latterly be adapting their output to communications technology, but universities, in Britain at least, were not notably in the vanguard of using new media. (An exception must be made for the Open University, which, from the early 1960s, pioneered distance learning technology, and the adaptation for educational purposes of broadcasting media.) Paul Aubin researches the outreach achieved through radio from the 1920s to the 1960s by the three main universities in Quebec. Though all radio, and especially public service radio, might be considered for its educational and cultural content, he attends to programmes included in a structured package, that had for their declared objective the enrichment of knowledge in a specific field, offered by teachers or organized by academic authorities, accompanied by printed material and follow-up consisting in mail contacts between authors and students. Aubin identifies the remarkable rapidity with which the academic sector of Quebec used this new medium to increase its influence, and the enthusiasm with which the intelligentsia recognized its possibilities.

**Universities and professions**

One of the sustained links between the civic university and its local community as identified by Vernon was the research and teaching that fed into local industrial needs. That element of applied knowledge and vocational preparation was not new to the industrial age but foreshadowed in earlier centuries by the ways that universities had served the interests of church and state by supporting the older professions, notably the clergy, the law, and subsequently medicine. On the other hand it has been argued that the early modern universities in England lost the control of the learned professions that they had exercised in the late medieval period. Faculties of theology, medicine and law were small. Relatively few clergy in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries had degrees in theology, common lawyers obtained their vocational training in London at the Inns of Court, and medics were trained, for the most part, outside the universities. New professions such as the attorneys and solicitors, scriveners and civil servants grew up outside the universities as did specialisms such as surgery and pharmacy.

Rosemary O’Day sees, however, the need to address this question from a new perspective. She explores the way in which university influence was spread throughout the professions and reveals the common culture that professionals shared as a result (at least in part) of their university education, documenting the role of university faculties and the collegiate system; she observes the concepts of general
and special vocations, a view of what we would today term vocational training, and
the importance of the university experience in fostering sociability, friendships and
occupational networks. O'Day suggests that history may provide lessons for modern
educationalists. Although the universities may intentionally or accidentally exclude
new vocational specialisms from their formal curricula (as they appear to have done
in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – and as they certainly did with the newer
professions until the very last decades of the twentieth century), they continue to exert
a pervasive influence upon the value systems of professions through a shared
preparatory education in schools and universities.

Hutcheson takes it as axiomatic that one central component of engagement has
been professional preparation, the process of educating students who will provide
expert knowledge to clients. At the same time, a critical aspect of the university in
relation to the varied communities outside the lecture halls, is its interaction with
historically marginalized groups, groups that faced political, economic, and social
exclusion, if not oppression. Focusing on medicine, Hutcheson explores historical
meanings of professionalism in regard to the university education of African
Americans, and of special interest is the shift from learned professions to modern
professions in the early 1900s and thereafter. The prior requirement of a liberal arts
undergraduate education based on white European culture held particular meanings
for black students, and his conclusion implies that professionalization is not simply a
mark of a higher education but a complex set of interactions predicated not only on
educative but also on social, political, and economic processes shifting over time.

Schools and examining
Interaction between the university and the world outside is highly visible in the
process of school examinations which have become such a ‘high stakes’ issue for
personal lives, for the labour market, and as a consequence, for contemporary public
policy. As Sandra Raban explains, in the United Kingdom it began 150 years ago or
more with learned societies followed by the universities of London, Oxford and
Cambridge as a source of academic authority by which a tiny elite of school leavers,
and the secondary schools that produced them, could be judged. Unusually, by
contrast with other nations, the state continued to refrain from direct provision of
exams, and left this function to independent boards which until relatively recently
were dominated by the universities. But these boards were nevertheless increasingly
constrained not only by cultural, technological and economic change, but also by ever
more stringent government requirements for school assessment.

The development of empire and the consequent dominance of both English as
a language, and of Anglo-American culture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries
led to overseas demand and a global market in school examining, which in turn
required adaptation and accommodation within the academic world, whilst also
generating a multi-national business dependent on a wide range of business and
technical expertise. Cambridge still lends its historic name to the certification of
schooling around the world, and indeed actively promotes its brand, but this
university, and universities in general, are engaged in the process in ways that are far
more complex than simply the conferment of academic authority.

In Australia the six universities established from the mid-nineteenth century
were public foundations with a social contract to serve various ‘publives’. Amongst
those publives were secondary schools, school teachers and school students. The
interaction between university and school occurred in various ways including the
creation of public examinations, early admission of women to universities and thereby support for the female teaching force, and then finally the establishment of education systems providing increased educational opportunities for students to enter university. The Universities of Sydney (1850) and Melbourne (1852), for example, were secular foundations open to all males and with teaching and examining concentrated as a central function. From the outset both universities established formal examination as the basis for student matriculation. To complement matriculation by examination the University of Sydney had generous scholarships attained by merit. The University of Melbourne matriculation examination established in 1855 soon became the school-leaving exam for all schools in the state of Victoria. The University of Sydney helped to establish Sydney Grammar School (1857) as a ‘feeder school’ to the university and then also created a public exam system to improve the standards of secondary schools (1868). The University of Adelaide almost from its foundation (1874) admitted women, most of whom were non-matriculants: school teachers wanting to further their academic studies. Sydney and Melbourne followed the pattern of admitting women but only as full matriculants. The University of Queensland (1909) and the University of Western Australia (1913) were universities ‘for the people’ associated with the creation of state secondary school systems and with provision for state scholarships particularly for those attending university and teacher training college.

But Sherington and Horne argue that while the meritocratic mode of engagement tended to widen and extend the influence of the University, the emphasis on a male cultural bond was often more restrictive and constraining, leading to tension in gender and other relations within the universities. They show how student life, particularly in male colleges, supported a common cultural bond between school and university focused increasingly on sport and the ideology of athleticism set within the wider context of British imperialism.

**Adult and continuing education**

Gordon Dadswell explores the ideological and personal dynamics that translated adult education or ‘university extension’ from pioneering projects in Britain (and Cambridge specifically) to Australia (and Melbourne in particular) in the early twentieth century. In this colonial context local political priorities and strong personalities with allegiances to differing social, educational and academic principles, determined the course of policy over a period of time. Through fifty years the university moved into, and later out of, a partnership with the voluntary sector and local activity. Initially the focus was on liberal education, but the influence of national efficiency and scientific sociology led to a more pragmatic approach, and there was collaboration but also tension between the university on the one hand and the Workers’ Educational Association of Victoria on the other. Organisational and personal conflicts were also bound up with competing constructions of the new social sciences. Dadswell’s account of university extension in the state of Victoria echoes some of the debates revealed by Jones in his earlier chapter on England in the same period.

These critical debates about an appropriate role for the university in continuing education and lifelong learning continue to be played out through subsequent decades in Britain and elsewhere, up to the present day, as demonstrated by Chris Duke. In autobiographical mode, he calls on his considerable international experience to reach a radical conclusion. He assumes that there is something beyond
a legal charter that makes and is ‘the university’, and yet ‘idealisation of the university obscures a reality: that the whole is actually less than the sum of its parts.’ Thus Duke returns, as Watson began, to questioning what constitutes a ‘university’ in the context of ‘engagement’, to celebrate the potential benefits but to alert us also to the dangers of excessive control and administrative direction in threatening the essence of partnership:

… it is evident that the partnership and reciprocity on which effective and mutually fruitful engagement depend cannot be dictated, orchestrated and managed in fine detail by the Registry or Chancelry. They rely on commitment, trust, tacit knowledge and personal contacts. Any attempt to document and regulate the work of partnership and engagement in pursuit of social, civic and cultural as well as economic development is risky. If pursued ruthlessly it will destroy the very work.

University extension, adult education, or lifelong learning have presented the most immediately recognisable outreach ‘beyond the lecture hall’. However, the essays collected here will serve to indicate with diverse examples drawn from across time and place, that engagement has taken many forms. These studies highlight Duke’s caution that community engagement must be a reciprocal process. It cannot be simply decreed by national policy nor directed unilaterally from within the academy; sensitivity and sustained responsiveness to cultural and technological change will be more significant factors than government policies or institutional management, in generating fruitful community engagement.

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Foundations, funding and forgetfulness: reflections on the pattern of university histories

David Watson

Abstract

This paper looks at the historical development of types of university in relationship to the communities which founded and continue to support them. It offers a critique of a number of ‘grand narratives’ of this process, including those developed by contemporary university leaders. Finally it attempts to assess elements of continuity and change in modern university missions.

Introduction

I need to begin with a health warning, or at least a pre-emptive strike against justifiable criticism. Prefacing conference papers full of original and deep contributions to our understanding of aspects of the relationship between higher education and society (reference will be made to several of the papers as I go along), this lecture is going to seem very much broad-brush, and sometimes superficial. My excuse is that I want to make a strong ‘big picture’ argument: about the value (the necessity, even) of historical sensibility in the governance, leadership and management of universities today.

I’m going to try to achieve this in three stages:

• I’ll first propose an almost universal ‘shape’ for the sequence of university-like foundations in the modern era. I’ll try to explain how these founding goals and achievements have been at least foreshortened, and sometimes distorted, in a series of grand narratives on the part of opinion-formers inside and outside the university.

• In the second section, I’ll look at the specific question of how funding (or ‘paying for’) the university and its activities has influenced this discourse. My shorthand for this section is the simple question: ‘who owns the university?’

• Finally, I’ll elaborate a small number of dilemmas that arise for university leaders. This is where my third ‘f’ (forgetfulness) comes in. The proposal is that a greater sense of institutional and sectoral history will assist in the resolution of at least some of these dilemmas.

Foundations

A strong case can be made for the university as a quintessentially European institution. With the exception of idealised views of the Socratic dialogues and the Aristotelean peripetea, as well the Library of Alexander (there remains a case that what is common to all conceptions of a university – in all eras – is a library), the models of a university most regularly appealed to as cultural icons are the late medieval foundations of Bologna, Paris, Oxford and Cambridge. What is more, these models – properly understood – were anything but ‘ivory towers,’ set apart from the societies which founded them.
Here is Elizabeth de Burgh, Lady Clare, founder of Clare College, Cambridge in 1359 setting out a ‘mission statement’:

through their study and teaching at the University the scholars should discover and acquire the precious pearl of learning so that it does not stay hidden under a bushel but is displayed abroad to enlighten those who walk in the dark paths of ignorance.¹

And here is the Papal Bull of Innocent VIII establishing the University of Aberdeen in 1495:

In the northern parts of the kingdom the people are ignorant and almost barbarous owing to their distance from a university. The city is near these places and suitable for a university, where all lawful faculties could be taught to both ecclesiastics and laymen, who would thus acquire the most precious pearl of knowledge, and so promote the well-being of the kingdom and the salvation of souls.²

The ‘pearl’ is a particularly evocative metaphor. It requires grit to get it started, it is created in a relatively sealed environment, but it only achieves a real value once it leaves that protected environment. What’s more, that value can be of various kinds: aesthetic and symbolic, as well as a tradeable commodity. There’s much more poetry here than in the concept of the ‘third leg’ (or ‘arm’ or ‘mission’).

If we then fast-forward to the early twenty-first century, European governments (like those on every other continent) see universities as vital parts of modern, competitive knowledge economies. The context has changed, but the expectations of communities that founded and maintain institutions of higher education remain constant.

In between these chronological points, higher education has developed differently in differing regional and national contexts, but a broad pattern can be discerned, in which, again, Europe took a lead.

The early foundations were specialist communities, such as the late medieval colleges for poor scholars in England (Oxford and Cambridge) and for urban professionals (such as Bologna and Paris in continental Europe). Three centuries later, a similar trajectory was followed by the American colonial seminaries, many of which subsequently became not only research universities but also expensive private schools in the United States, including the heart of the Ivy League (how did this happen? Bruce Leslie’s paper is highly relevant here).³ Historians like Stephen Lay point out that what distinguished all of these foundations from their ancient predecessors was the presumption of independence from the state, or what has subsequently become termed autonomy.⁴

After a further fallow period, the next significant wave of foundations took place in the nineteenth century. These grew similarly out of perceived social and economic needs, but in the radically different context of industrialising societies. Examples are the University of Berlin in 1810, the national universities founded by newly-created European states, the late-nineteenth century ‘civic’ universities in the UK, and the Land Grant universities of the American West and mid-West. The latter were leavened by specific, primarily research-based institutions on the German Humboldtian model, such as Johns Hopkins.

It is often helpful to go back to the founding acts or charters to see what was intended. See, for example, the 1905 royal charter of what is now the University of
Sheffield, when the city was the centre of the British steel industry, of which some extracts are set out below. Here the emphasis is firmly on practical knowledge. There is also a strong sense of place. Other clauses enshrine gender equality (not just the absence of a religious test) and the importance of professional accreditation.

Extracts from the Charter granted by Edward VII in 1905, to convert the University College of Sheffield (founded 1836) into the University of Sheffield

To provide for:
• Instruction and teaching in every Faculty.
• Such instruction in all branches of education as may enable students to become proficient in and qualify for Degrees Diplomas Associateships and Certificates in Arts Pure Science Applied Science Commerce Medicine Surgery Law and all other branches of knowledge.
• Such instruction whether theoretical technical artistic or otherwise as may be of service to persons engaged in or about to engage in Education Commerce Engineering Law and especially the applications of Science. Metallurgy Mining or in other industries or artistic pursuits of the City of Sheffield and the adjacent counties and districts.
• Facilities for the prosecution of original research in Arts Pure Science Applied Science Medicine Surgery.

In the next wave of development, the twentieth century saw the development across Europe of technical university or college systems, sometimes regionally planned, as with the English polytechnics and American state systems (of which the archetypes are Wisconsin and the Californian Master Plan). These were equally specifically tied to expectations about relevant education and training, with a new element of ensuring both access by groups previously under-represented, and of progression. History also reminds us that these systems (and the institutions which made them up) often had deep roots: see, for example, Tony Kirby’s paper on what he calls ‘the prehistory of Anglia Polytechnic’.

In many countries, the result was to create what came to be known as binary systems of higher education: a group of traditional university institutions contrasted with a more local, apparently more locally-accountable, and apparently more responsive pattern of provision.

The ‘binary question’ is a hugely important one. In his 2008 lecture for the Higher Education Policy Institute in London, Yves Mény, President of the European University Institute, sees this division as largely constructed around the separate realms of research and teaching. It reached its highest form (and one of the rare instances in which teaching is seen as more significant than research in reputational terms) in France:

In fact, in most continental countries this strict division of labour was put in place rather late and mostly after the Second World War. Indeed in France for instance, where the Napoleonic model was imposed in a radical way, the fundamental division was not so much between teaching and research but between the university system on the one hand and the professional schools in charge of educating and training the future civil servants of the State.

Around the turn of the twenty-first century, this juxtaposition posed real dilemmas for policy-makers dealing with the advent of mass higher education. Those with binary systems felt that they had run their course; those without them felt that the only way to re-inject mission diversity was to try to create a polytechnic-style counterpoint to
unresponsive autonomous universities; others who had tried the change decided they needed to change back.

To return to the schema, these were followed by late twentieth century experiments in curriculum, pedagogy, and a further drive towards accessibility. Examples here are the pioneering of open access, or admission of adults without formal qualification, by the UK’s Open University and New York’s City College system and their imitators around the world. At the same time, developing nations began to establish the mega-universities, as analysed by John Daniel, making use of open and distance learning technologies (ODL) to speed up participation, and to cut costs. The Indira Ghandi National Open University, founded in 1985, had 1.4m enrolments in 1996, and the Islamic Azad University had 1.2m.\(^8\) The notion of community interest is thereby dramatically expanded. However, even the experiments in ODL built upon traditional foundations. In 2008 the University of London’s external degree scheme (which is celebrating 150 years of such business) supports 43,000 students in 183 countries.\(^9\)

Finally, the latter part of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries have seen significant action on the frontier between compulsory education, optional tertiary provision, and the initial rungs of higher education. Examples are the UK phenomenon of ‘higher education in further education’ and the vitally important American Community College network: the former especially in the provision of intermediate qualifications such as the Higher National Certificates and Diplomas and Foundation Degrees, and the latter through two-year (when taken full-time) Associate Degrees. The latest descriptor of activity in this borderland is that of ‘dual sector’ provision. There are not yet significant Continental versions of this model, although it is under consideration in parts of Germany.

Some would say that this development finally recognises a submerged stream of post-compulsory education especially in the UK. Consider Sandra Raban’s comments about the ‘hiving off’ of vocational qualifications in her paper on the development of university-accredited qualifications (below). Relevant, too, is Jana Sims’ paper on the enormous contribution of the Mechanics’ Institutes.\(^10\)

These latter two waves of developments illustrate that as communities have changed – most recently in response to global communications – not only have existing universities had to respond, but the acts and intentions of foundation of new institutions have also adapted.

The ‘pattern’ is rounded out by the most recent wave: that of the ‘for-profits’. My argument is that it constitutes a robust, empirical shape for university foundations. You can see different national systems joining in at key points (for example, Geoffrey Sherington and Julia Horne’s paper on Australasia, below).

This long narrative history is capable of sustaining several ‘Whig’ theories, encapsulating contending views of progress and development towards a preferred vision of the present. These include:

- the *liberal* theory of higher education as self-realisation and social transformation, including latterly an element of social mobility and meritocracy (perhaps reaching its height and certainly retaining its most important talisman in Cardinal John Henry Newman);
- the *professional formation* theory, identifying universities and colleges as providers of expertise and vocational identity, in some continuous (law,
Foundations, funding and forgetfulness

medicin and theology) and in some new (engineering, science and public administration) areas;

• higher education as a research engine, allied to regional and national ambitions for economic growth (in this area contemporary governments have re-discovered, rather than invented, priorities that were high over a century ago) – variations on this theme include higher education as a source of business services and of national pride.

Each of these narratives (or theories) can, of course, be re-cast in a dysfunctional or negative light. The liberal aspiration can become a means of social selection and exclusion. Aggressively individualistic notions of advancement can lead to discrimination. Professionalism can lead to narrow and self-interested instrumentalism. Research can ignore some of its wider ethical responsibilities, and national pride can convert into short-term state priorities. And so on.

In Managing Civic and Community Engagement I tried to re-formulate and endorse another consistent theme of value and identity for the higher education tradition and legacy: that of civic and community engagement. As Stephen Lay concludes in his elegant survey of this long history for the Observatory for Fundamental University Values and Rights (otherwise known as the Magna Charta Universitatum): ‘the university should be valued as an intellectual resource of inherent social usefulness and admired as the model of a reasoned approach to life’. His recommendation is that the ‘expectation of public service’ should be added to the Charta. In the book, I attempt to weave this thread of engagement together with its ‘liberal’ counterpart.

Funding

According to the conventions of corporate governance, organisations are governed in the interests of either shareholders (the institutions, groups or individuals who own the shares – and expect dividends) or stakeholders (the individuals and groups, including the employees – whose interests might be affected by aspects of the organisation’s performance). To the frustration of several commentators, most universities are neither shareholder nor stakeholder institutions. On one end of a spectrum, institutions with the university title may be wholly ‘for-profit’ institutions, especially in jurisdictions where the title is relatively unprotected in law. At the other end they may be unmediated emanations of the apparatus of the state. However, in the vast centre ground they are unashamedly sui generis, with, as many commentators have argued, institutional autonomy lying at the heart of the conception of the modern university.

They are also symptomatic of what I think is a breakdown of old-fashioned distinctions between public and private. When Vice-Chancellors are asked whether their institutions are in the public or the private sector, the correct answer is ‘yes.’ In the early twenty-first century, are there any large, complex businesses which are purely public or purely private?

In these circumstances, who owns the university (or pieces of it) or thinks that they do? There are several potential candidates.

The state, directly and indirectly, is invariably a major funder. It will also claim to represent the people’s share by investing the proceeds of taxation. However, attempts to co-opt universities into politically-influenced national priorities, is
dangerous. Nor is it likely to work. Just look at the current agonies of adjustment going on in the former Eastern bloc states.

Other big investors may be other public services, the professions, business and employers, through means such as sponsorship and purchase of student places. The ‘professions’ are a particularly interesting case. They were in at the beginning of the modern European university (law at Bologna; theology at Paris). Rosemary O’Day’s keynote (below) shows how they maintained their influence (including through the development of ‘being a gentleman’) through what I have called the ‘fallow’ period of foundations. Then, of course, they played their part in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century expansion of the system (science and technology in the ‘civics’ – especially engineering throughout the Commonwealth, and beyond – and more recently the addition of health professions to the traditional formation of doctors of medicine).

Then there is the public more generally, especially as its prejudices are refracted through the media. There are contrasts between cultural roles of universities and colleges in different national contexts: in the United States they are more loved and respected than may be deserved; in Australia and the UK they stimulate more opprobrium than is objectively fair. This picture may, however, be changing, as US higher education is hitting – almost for the first time – a combination of cuts in public subsidy, consumer resentment and consumer debt.

These constitute the various external communities which interact with and within the university.

But probably most important in the historical sense are the internal communities: the members of the university, its staff and students. (Returning to corporate governance, the notion of ‘membership’ is, I think, relatively underdeveloped.)

To describe these all as ‘stake-holders’ is by no means straightforward. ‘Stake-holder’ is one of those words which has almost exactly the opposite meaning from when it was originally coined (‘client’ is another one, so too are ‘amateur’ and ‘elite’). The stake-holder used to be the person who held the coats – and the prize-money – while the fight was on; the notion was one of scrupulous disinterest. Stake-holders need to understand that if they are to live up to the modern designation (as having invested something themselves), they have to put something at risk. A rigorous stakeholder analysis from the perspective of the university throws up some surprising results. Questions arise including the following.

- Whose are the stakes on the table (really) in the sense of sharing risk?
- Who can most effectively (i.e. legitimately as well as logically) claim to hold the third party stake (the celebrated people’s money) on behalf of the community as a whole? The politicians would like to claim it is theirs – through democratic validation – although they too can fail the stewardship test, not least through self-serving and short-term policy interventions.
- What about the wider loyalties of staff: to subject and professional communities beyond their employer’s boundaries?
- How do students – now aggressively enjoined to act as customers – express their interest?

By any objective analysis of sharing risk, our biggest stake-holders have to be our students. They make the very lumpy investment (usually a life-time’s purchase at each level); they have the most bound up in the lifelong meaning of that investment.
Hard questions
If I am right about any of this (I won’t expect to be right about all of it), then some very big, stakeholder-related questions arise for institutional leadership and management.

1. How do we use our autonomy?
UK higher education institutions (HEIs) are – by international comparison – extraordinarily autonomous; and we hold that autonomy at the institutional level (in contrast autonomy – when it is held, as in some jurisdictions, at the faculty or local level – can restrict institutional freedom of action). However, we are very ambivalent about autonomy. We pay excessive lip-service to the idea, but we are also hooked on ear-marked funding. Lots of university leaders won’t do what they know they should unless and until there is a special fund to support it. And they stop as soon as the so-called ‘initiative’ ends. This can lead to a very curious inversion of institutional priorities. The thing that we assume to be most important becomes not the first but the last call on our institutional resources.

2. How do we balance our obligations to civil society and the state?
Self-interest can trump stewardship responsibilities and the notion of a wider public interest. At the height of the era of expansion through officially induced competition, our governing Boards and Councils were basically enjoined to look no further than the bottom line; certainly not to any kind of wider set of interests which might call it into question. And (as in my allusion to Central and Eastern Europe) universities can be seduced into an inappropriate relationship with government. University history has some classic cautionary tales here (like Heidegger’s Rectoral Address to the University of Freiburg in 1933), but we live permanently at the top of a slippery slope. What, for example, are the underlying implications of decisions about who is ‘under-represented’ in higher education being made politically? Yaacov Iram’s paper probes this in the case of Israel.14

3. How do we treat each other (the other members of the sector)?
What lies behind much of the historical success of the UK sector is the concept of a controlled reputational range. It is important that institutions at each end of the reputational pecking-order can recognise each other, and have something tied up in each other’s success. The self-appointed ‘gangs’ in the system (select groups of like-minded universities with common interests, such as the Russell Group, the 94 Group, Million+, the Alliance and Guild HE) don’t help much in this respect. For them ‘autonomy’ is mostly bound up in getting a third party (the government) to restrict the freedom of manoeuvre of their rivals.

4. How do we handle the ‘Russian Doll’ (or ‘onion skin’) question of service simultaneously to the neighbourhood, the sub-region (which may be a city), the region (officially and unofficially defined), the nation, the international region (like Europe), and the global enterprise of higher education?
‘Stake-holders’ will exist at all of these levels, as opened up by Chris Duke’s keynote (below). Starting with the local, as I have suggested, until the advent in the late twentieth century of company or ‘for-profit’ universities, all university institutions grew in some way from the communities that originally sponsored them.
These acts of foundation varied according to a range of local circumstances, in time and location. Many such founding commitments have been transformed – positively and perversely – over the ensuing years; it’s revealing, as suggested above, to look at the charters of the Victorian and Edwardian ‘civics’ (where local and regional themes abound). In this context, the familiar image of a university as somewhat separate from its community – as, for example, an ivory tower – is curiously unfaithful to the historical record.

Meanwhile at the more expansive end of the scale, simplistic analyses of whether we are ‘winning or losing’ in a global market place undervalue the historical role of higher education internationally, which has been much more profoundly structured around cooperation and mutual support than competition and nationalistic breast-beating. They can also be allied with a naïve, melioristic view of globalisation.

From the ethical point of view there are questions about the mutual support between national systems of higher education at different stages of development; of the asset-stripping of key personnel; of a potentially pre-emptive ‘western’ model of intellectual property registration; and of ‘dumping’ of poor quality e-learning materials. This is not the kind of ‘market’ that works simply by driving out all of the competition.

5. How do we best preserve the ‘ethical idea’ of the university?
There is a kind of presumption that, as ‘stewards’ of responsible knowledge creation, testing and use, universities are expected to behave well. Most of the pre-conditions for behaving well seem to rely on aspects of ‘emotional intelligence’ at all levels of the institution, as well as serious corporate self-study. They include establishing and nurturing a grown-up internal culture, avoiding the naïve extremes of academic populism on the one hand and management triumphalism on the other. This in turn relies on a secure institutional grasp of the corporate strategy (what is called in some charters and governing articles ‘character and mission’). Institutional insecurity – notably financial – can quickly fracture common purpose (to put the point crudely: getting the money right is a necessary but not sufficient condition of institutional success). It also needs a general sense of responsibility for what is done in the institution’s name – from marking to marketing; from ethical research to being a good neighbour.

The terms of exchange are similarly important: mature institutions cultivate a discourse that neither over-claims nor over-blames. They also maintain a culture in which intellectual excitement, joy, and even fun, co-exist with a sense of responsibility and even mercy (not all academic exercises – on the part of individuals and groups – should be expected to succeed). In other words, they choose to behave well – towards all of their legitimate stakeholders.15

Conclusion: forgetfulness
My thesis is that, in striving for this goal, understanding the ‘pattern’ of university foundations is essential. So, too, is the use of founding purposes – however and how far they need to be updated – in testing university strategic choices. Understanding their institution’s history is an important part of any university management’s drive to contribute to contemporary society, including on a global scale. George Birkbeck (1776-1842) founded the London Mechanics’ Institute in 1823, which later became Birkbeck College, University of London.16 At Birkbeck, I am told that the senior staff, when faced with a difficult issue, ask ‘what would George think?’
Notes


2 See http://www.neadvent.org/cathen/01042a.htm


5 *Sheffield University College Charter*, 1905, Paragraph 14. For the full document see: http://www.shef.ac.uk/calendar/incorp.html


16 The London Mechanics’ Institute was progenitor of the Mechanics’ Institute movement and Birkbeck College, is a specialist provider of evening higher education.
The university and rural community outreach: from Cambridge beginnings to a national system

Bill Jones

Abstract
University community outreach in England had its beginnings in Cambridge, when James Stuart of Trinity College inaugurated his innovative lecture tours in manufacturing towns and cities. From these beginnings developed the university extension movement, which after the First World War led to a government-funded university adult education system which lasted from the 1920s to the 1980s, and which is in part still recognisable although much eroded by changes in universities and their concepts of outreach. This paper explores the origins of community engagement from Stuart’s early lecture series to the development of university provision to rural communities. The early days of rural community engagement saw universities struggling with the issues for villages and scattered populations of viable numbers of students, suitable tutors and accommodation, distance and transport, and despite all these maintaining a ‘university standard’. In so doing they were tackling issues which are still very much alive today.

Introduction
The popular imagination has a tendency to accord to historical movements single and conspicuous moments of birth; hence the popular assumption that literary Romanticism began with the publication of Wordsworth and Coleridge’s *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798, or Virginia Woolf’s confident assertion that Modernism began ‘on or about December 1910’.¹ A similar defining moment in the history of education is a series of lecture tours in northern industrial cities – Leeds, Liverpool, Sheffield and Manchester – in the autumn of 1867. The lectures, to audiences from women’s educational associations, were organised and delivered by the young Cambridge mathematician and fellow of Trinity College, James Stuart. This is popularly taken as the terminus a quo for university outreach: academic lectures in communities at a distance from the University, and to what now would be called a non-traditional audience. The great success of these lecture tours adds to their mythical status as a defining moment in the widening of opportunity for university education. But this one incidence – important though it was – is a part of a longer and more complex process. It can be traced back along various courses, depending on how long a view one takes, indeed perhaps to the founding of the universities of Cambridge and Oxford in the thirteenth century and their association with the training of secular clergy and the proselytising mission through parishes to the population at large.

But for my purpose I will take the origins of university outreach as beginning with the University reforms of the mid-nineteenth century, formalised by the various Commissions from 1850 onwards. These were a part of a general movement for reform in both English and Scottish universities, leading to the abolition of the religious tests at Oxford and Cambridge in the thirteenth century and their association with the training of secular clergy and the proselytising mission through parishes to the population at large.
far more widely, and that, if possible, the most able and promising of the youth of the whole Empire should be attracted to the great Institutions.  

Other developments at the time added to this changing climate. The new Oxford and Cambridge Local Examinations system was established in the 1850s with the aim that, in Frederick Temple’s words ‘all England should be made to feel they have an interest in the prosperity and influence of the universities’. A contemporaneous and related issue was the perceived need to improve the educational opportunities for girls and women. There was also an accelerating pace of the founding of new university colleges, in, for example, Durham, Newcastle, Bristol and London.

All of these developments were, in various ways, prompted by a strengthening impulse to widen university education, both geographically and socially. As another manifestation of this impulse, the idea of what became known as ‘university extension’ was born, with proposals from the late 1840s for societies to be formed in towns and villages with lectures by university academics and funded by Government.

The immediate prehistory of the initiatives by James Stuart was the proposal in 1850 by William Sewell of Oxford for university academic posts located in the big industrial cities. Sewell formalised (if not actually coined) the phrase ‘university extension’ in a paper to the University titled Suggestions on University Extension:

All round Oxford was rising up an outcry that Oxford should do something more with its revenues than educate in a most imperfect way about 1500 sons of gentlemen…and there was but one way to meet it – by originating without delay, and by the spontaneous action of the University, some great measures for the extension and improvement of the Oxford education.

Sewell’s plan was for a comprehensive system providing university academic provision first to great centres of manufacturing, and then by extension to towns throughout the country:

A plan of this kind would extend the benefits of university instruction to the utmost possible limits…Wherever its institutions were planted, the immediate residents would be provided with the opportunity of completing the education of their sons, without parting with them from under their own roof.

Sewell’s ideas were rejected, but reflected a rising tide of interest in outreach programmes. They were followed by similar proposals from Arthur Hervey at Cambridge, graduate of Trinity and a village clergyman in East Anglia. Hervey, a great enthusiast for the Mechanics’ Institutes, looked to the universities to add academic rigour to what he saw as the somewhat desultory provision by the Institutes. From his rural perspective Hervey saw a possible future structure for university extension by the appointment of four ‘Rural or circuit Professors, to be nominated by the University for the delivery of lectures on arts and science to local societies and mechanics’ institutes’.

The programmes thus proposed were to be remarkably extensive – each of the four professors would deliver twenty courses of six lectures each. Hervey, like Sewell, had a comprehensive vision. If his plan were adopted by other universities, including those in Ireland and Scotland ‘we might look forward to having the whole of the United Kingdom brought within reach of the best instructors the country can afford’.

Bill Jones
James Stuart
It is in this context and climate that James Stuart delivered his inaugural series of Cambridge lecture courses in the autumn of 1867. The direct occasion was in response to the increasingly-recognised need for educational opportunity for girls and women, which led to the setting up of women’s educational associations, founded in northern industrial cities with the central aim of improving standards of education. Stuart was invited as the lecturer, and was asked to lecture on the art of teaching; he declined this topic, believing he was not competent in the subject, and instead delivered his lectures on astronomy. The lectures were well received, and generated an increase in organisations for women’s education, and led to the formation of the North of England Council for Promoting the Higher Education of Women.

The experience of delivering these lectures acted as a strong stimulus to Stuart in his developing ideas for University Extension. In this he was also influenced and aided by the example of the Co-operative movement, and of the Mechanics’ Institutes as they developed through the nineteenth century. Stuart’s ideas of higher education were much influenced by the enlightened university vision of his native Scotland, and by the reforming tone of his College. Trinity was ‘foremost in the cause of academic reform, and had supplied many of the leaders of the movement for bringing the curriculum of the University into line with modern needs and sentiments’. 9

It was through Stuart’s determination that the University of Cambridge accepted in 1873 his recommendations to establish provision for those who were denied access to university education on grounds of either geographical remoteness or social class. In a letter to the Senate in 1871 Stuart had stated:

There can be no doubt that the demand for higher education which exists at present, and is growing, will certainly be supplied from some quarter or other, and the question is this, shall we be the people to supply it or not? 10

In 1875, after two further years of negotiation, Cambridge established a permanent Syndicate for the provision of university courses, taught by university staff in locally-financed centres.

From this promising beginning the development of extension programmes was rapid. In 1876 the London Society for the Extension of University Teaching was formed, with membership from the Universities of Cambridge, Oxford and London. Within a few years there were quite large numbers of courses provided in many centres across the country, concentrated in cities and large towns. It was to be considerably later, as Sewell and Hervey had predicted, that the extension movement would reach out to rural communities.

Rural education
Adult education as an organised activity had its origins in cities and towns; the adult Sunday School movement, the Mechanics’ Institutes, the entry of the universities on the scene, all were in an urban context. There was, however, no equivalent structured beginning for rural adult education.

There was indeed education of a kind in villages and sparsely populated rural areas. There were local hedge-schools, dame schools and other, often short-lived, ventures, usually dependent on particular individuals, not organisations, and thus where access to educational opportunity was by chance of time and proximity. In some rural communities clergymen or enlightened local landowners would provide
lessons and books for individuals from the village who had taken their eye as having potential for learning. In the eighteenth century a fashionable belief developed that in the unschooled rural communities natural genius might be unearthed and nurtured if only the chance were offered. This impulse owed something to the long-standing aesthetic of ‘pastoral’ in which rural life was perceived as untutored, simple and essentially innocent, untroubled by the transient fashions and politics of the city. Indeed city ways of learning had no place in this innocent life, where ambition might be stifled, but the happy state of ignorance would be a protective shield for innocence. This pleasing but inaccurate image had a pervasive and in some ways damaging influence on perceptions of rural life which has proved very persistent up to the present day.

The poet Thomas Gray – a good Cambridge man of course – put it nicely in his famous ‘Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard’ (1751), when he observed that there might be potential unknown greatness buried among the graves of the uneducated villagers:

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time did ne’er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Numerous examples exist from this period of promising young minds in rural communities observed and encouraged to grow by local patronage. The result could be that village boys or sometimes girls would be projected into spheres far from their origins. One of the more celebrated of these cases is that of Stephen Duck, the so-called ‘thresher poet’.

Born in a Wiltshire village in 1705, Duck was brought up to farm labour. Determined on self-improvement, he worked extra hours to buy a few books, which he studied by night. His intellectual promise and determination drew the attention of local gentry who helped his learning. He developed an aptitude for verse, and in the late 1720s wrote The Thresher’s Labour, a long poem describing the working year of the farm labourer. It is an extraordinary achievement, and Duck’s work stands alongside that of John Clare as poetry of country life not from the aesthetic standpoint of pastoral, but from that of the labourer who is depicting first-hand experience:

When sooty Pease we thresh, you scarce can know
Our native colour, as from Work we go;

Week after week we this dull task pursue,
Unless with winnowing days produce a new,
A new indeed, but frequently a worse;
The Threshall yields but to the Master’s Curse:
He counts the Bushels, counts how much a day,
Then swears we’ve idled half our Time away.

Duck’s reputation spread, and his benefactors obtained an introduction to the Queen, who was so impressed that she employed Duck as her librarian at Kew. The ‘thresher
“poet” became a literary nine-days’ wonder; stories even spread that he was being considered for the Laureateship. He took Holy Orders and became the Rector of Byfleet in Surrey. Unfortunately this rapid elevation destroyed his mind, and in 1756 he took his own life – a victim of a charitable but misplaced approach to rural education, which naively believed that, to quote Gray, all that this ‘mute inglorious Milton’ needed was some civilising education, (‘aspiration raising’ in our jargon), and a move to the city.

There were organised initiatives in rural learning, and some committed and inspirational individuals made considerable achievements. One of these was the Carmarthenshire clergyman Griffith Jones, who in the mid eighteenth century set up a system of free circulating schools teaching basic education, and in part emulating the Scottish charity schools. Jones was an energetic visionary, who operated these peripatetic free schools from 1730 until his death in 1761. He taught the basic subjects of reading and religious instruction, in the then controversial medium of the Welsh language. His system was based on local chapels, which the school would visit for a three-month period before moving on to another of the remote rural communities. The movement flourished, pupils of all ages attended, and large numbers of people learned to read and to teach others. In the nature of his organisation Jones was the first to confront one of the critical and systemic problems of rural lifelong learning – how to bring viable numbers of learners together with a teacher. His solution of adopting a peripatetic policy, taking the school to the students, was one which was to be echoed in the university extension system. His students were of all ages, as Jones himself reported: ‘Poor and low people of various ages, even from six years old to seventy, and sometimes parents and children together, resort to these schools’.

The universities enter the rural scene

It was some years after Stuart’s early lecture tours and the inception of extension courses that the Universities came on to the rural scene, and the extension movement developed to include village groups. As in the cities, there was a great demand for courses. Important early ventures were, significantly, in mining villages. R.D. Roberts, a stalwart of the Cambridge Extension movement from its beginnings and a close friend of Stuart, recorded in *Eighteen Years in University Extension* the moment that extension lectures began to move outward to villages from the large Tyneside coal towns:

> Some of the pitmen who had attended the lectures, were so enthusiastic about the scheme that they made a campaign through the Northumberland mining district during the summer months, held meetings at colliery villages and roused so much interest that a central committee was forthwith formed and arrangements made for the delivery of the same course of lectures at five villages in the following winter. The movement met with a most enthusiastic welcome. An aggregate attendance of over 1300 working miners attended the lectures at the five centres. This was the beginning of a work which rapidly grew and which was carried on from year to year …

It is not surprising that the first experiments in rural extension were in mining villages, where there were concentrations of workers comparable to industrial towns in density of population if not size. Roberts identified other advantages:
The Northumberland pitmen were no doubt as a whole better prepared for this kind of education than any other class of working people in the country. Not only are they a less migratory population than that of other mining districts, but they possess in a high degree the traditional hard-headedness and love of knowledge of Northerners… there were numbers of thoughtful men ready for the highest kind of teaching which the University extension system provided… it is astonishing what a thorough study of certain subjects some of these men had been able to make with scarcely any early educational advantages.  

The efforts miners made to attend the lectures, usually in the Northumberland winter and after long shifts underground, are now legendary. Roberts recorded this example from the village of Backworth:

Two pitmen brothers, living in a village five miles from one of the centres, were able to get in to the lectures by train, but …they were compelled to walk home. This they did weekly for three months… in all kinds of weather. On one occasion they returned in a severe storm, when the roads were so flooded that they lost their way and got up to their waists in water. It is not surprising to find that they distinguished themselves in the examination and eventually succeeded in making their own village a lecture-centre.  

James Stuart himself visited Northumberland to teach mathematics to miners in 1881, invited by the newly formed local Students’ Association for the first of a series of lecture courses which was to include physiology, literature and, perhaps curiously, classical Greek drama. These lectures became something of a model for the development of the extension of university provision to smaller rural communities, described by Roberts as ‘the earliest beginnings of a subsidiary system suited to the needs of villages and rural districts’. The first of these initiatives took place in Surrey, in villages around Guildford. The Surrey villages had good quality village halls – a vital element in rural education. A student who had distinguished himself in the town’s local examinations was appointed as lecturer in an attempt to solve another of the perennial issues for rural adult education – the provision of suitable tutors. It was recognised as a success, and the idea of the ‘village lecturer’ was introduced to the extension movement. Nonetheless there were concerns that the students should have access to university lecturers, and the Surrey scheme developed so that teaching was shared between a ‘regular’ extension lecturer and a student teacher. Roberts commented:

There seems little doubt that some expansion in the direction of utilizing the enthusiasm of the best students to bring higher teaching within the reach of villages…is an essential step, if the movement is to grow into a really national system of higher education.  

This expansion into rural areas continued from the 1880s to include Cornwall (another mining county) and Yorkshire. By this time too Oxford extension lecturers were travelling to towns and villages to deliver courses. These first experiments in rural provision brought to the surface problems which persist to this day for rural community outreach – those of sufficient numbers of students, suitable accommodation, and tutors. In the earliest days of extension, university academic staff were prepared to travel great distances out of missionary enthusiasm for the new movement. But as the programmes developed, and especially in the rural areas, the problem of suitable teaching staff was recognised and addressed.
The university and rural community outreach

The Surrey experiment in employing successful extension course students as ‘village lecturers’ was one such, and the 1890 Cambridge Extension Conference discussed the idea of ‘a plan whereby student lecturers, trained at university extension centres, who have given evidence of their capacity, should go into the villages to hold small classes, and so leaven the whole lump of rural life’.

Another approach to the problem was the employment of university postgraduates. Young graduates would take up extension lecturing posts for a period while completing postgraduate study – a pattern which of course still exists and which has given many distinguished adult educators their first experience in the field. This scheme had its advantages, but there were insufficient numbers to fulfil demand, and the system had the disadvantage that as the lecturers gained experience they were likely to leave extension work for more mainstream academic positions as fellows in the university colleges. Thus the move to recruit local tutors, who nonetheless had the right qualifications to teach for the university, was a significant development – preparing the ground for the still familiar structure of a network of local tutors, employed at a distance by the host institution.

This growing awareness of the scale of the task for bringing education to the rural villages brought with it for the first time, in any methodical way, an equal awareness of the scale of rural educational deprivation. There was an air of missionary evangelism, referring for example to the ‘intellectual darkness in rural districts’. In 1907 Michael Sadler, who had been one of the pioneers of university extension at Oxford, cites a survey in the early years of the twentieth century which found education was ‘a pretty general failure in most rural districts. The young people grow up in an atmosphere which, as a rule, nips educational ambitions in the bud.’

This was despite the introduction of the policy of universal schooling up to the age of thirteen by the 1870 Education Act and subsequent legislation, and, after 1899, provision of transport to schools for isolated communities.

The university extension movement was some years later going to play a vital part in meeting the question of rural entitlement, together with the Workers’ Educational Association (WEA), which had come into being in 1903, but not until another great defining moment for rural learning, the First World War.

The First World War and the 1919 Report

The measure of rural educational disadvantage had become clear by 1914, but the full import of this situation became a matter of national urgency during the 1914-18 war. The war had a major impact on the rural world. In the first place the educational service to rural areas was severely reduced by enlistment, munitions work and disrupted railways. The WEA Yearbook for 1918 reported: ‘The rural work of the Association has suffered more than any other activity through the difficulties caused by the war’.

Secondly, the very labour-intensive agricultural economy had been depleted by large numbers of men leaving the land for military service. Thirdly, by 1916 rural learning emerged as no less than a matter of national security. Food and grain imports were badly affected by blockades and attacks on convoys; the only defence was a robust home agriculture. Rural education, at a low political ebb, suddenly became of urgent importance, so that when Lloyd George became Prime Minister in 1916 he immediately set up an Adult Education Committee. The Committee produced a number of reports which have collectively achieved iconic status among historians of adult education as ‘The 1919 Report’. Unsurprisingly in a country which was still
largely agricultural much space is devoted to what is described as ‘The Rural Problem’. 24

The findings of the rural report were bleak: a million agricultural workers in substandard housing, working conditions utterly hostile to educational aspiration, younger people trying to escape the village life altogether, hostility to education from landowners and farmers. Finally, the Report made clear another of the systemic problems of rural learning – the lack of suitable teaching accommodation:

It is unfortunate that so large a number of villages are without any meeting-place under public control. Church and Chapel buildings are by no means always available for “secular” purposes. Village institutions are few, and are usually under private control. The schools, which the local managers largely control, afford a very inadequate meeting-place at the best of times. 25

Instances were then given of the kind of problems encountered:

The Secretary of the WEA in a Wiltshire village writes:
“Here we had quite a decent parish room, but unfortunately its management was largely in the hands of several very narrow-minded and unprogressive people…Through their influence the WEA was debarred from all further use of the room, because a perfectly impartial survey of village life from early times was given in which the Enclosures and the work of Joseph Arch were referred to.” 26

Almost all villages had a public house, but this too had its disadvantages:

At present in thousands of places, the public house is the only place where men can meet for social intercourse. Being a social animal he must have these opportunities, and if he cannot get them under good conditions, he will get them under bad ones. 27

And of course for women there was a particular issue: ‘As to women, it is very rare to find a suitable meeting-place provided in the village, except under some form of patronage’. 28

The ‘1919 Report’ was enthusiastic about the role of universities in the education of adults, recommending public funding of adult education and the establishment of extra mural departments which would link the academy with the outlying communities, including voluntary and commercial organisations. The whole is a remarkably enlightened and forward-looking document, described by one historian of adult education as sounding ‘remarkably like a late twentieth century document’ in its vision ‘of a diffusion of higher education into every community … and of wider access to mass higher education and continuing professional development’. 29

A formal structure for university rural provision
The ‘1919 Report’ was to have a significant and lasting effect on the structure of adult education, and especially on provision for rural communities. Writing in 1957, Robert Peers, holder of the earliest formal Chair in Adult Education, observed:
In rural adult education, the Committee’s recommendations were of considerable effect. One result of the war had been to reawaken interest in the life of the countryside, since the nation had been forced to rely to an increasing extent upon home production in agriculture… Great efforts were made to increase agricultural production and to revive rural crafts… Young Farmers Clubs were formed to stimulate the younger generation to interest themselves in farming … All this led to a great awakening in the villages… there developed a new interest in the social life of the countryside, in its history, in the world of nature, in the arts of drama, music and literature, as part of the effort to revitalise life in the villages.

This revitalising of rural life and education took various forms. Many agencies played their part: the Rural Community Councils, Public Libraries, the Women’s Institutes, and the enormously forward-looking Village College experiment in Cambridgeshire by Henry Morris. In this enterprise the universities had a major role, since the recommendations of the ‘1919 Report’ led directly to the establishment of the funded, regionally-based university extra-mural structure which from its beginnings in the 1920s lasted until the late 1980s as a formal funded structure, and which is recognisable, if severely eroded, to the present day.

The regulations governing the new funding regime were introduced in 1924. Eventually 23 universities were given the now-quaint status of ‘Responsible Bodies’, directly funded by the Ministry of Education for the provision of programmes for designated regions, the funding being dependent on approval for not only academic range and quality, but geographical spread across communities. The universities and university colleges took their new (and funded) rural responsibilities seriously, especially those, like Nottingham, with large rural regions. Robert Peers (who was Director of the Nottingham Department) recalled:

And in this post-war period there was the great phase of building of village halls, which have done so much to counter the disadvantage of inadequate or indeed absent suitable accommodation for educational activity.

But as ever the universities were at a disadvantage as providers at a distance from the campus or the main urban centres, and – adopting a model reminiscent of that of Griffith Jones – were reliant on local organisations and facilities, mainly voluntary associations and in particular the branches of the WEA. Such joint programmes with WEA branches were for many years staples of rural university outreach, and still survive in some areas.

Two years after the appearance of the new regulations, the inaugural edition of The Journal of Adult Education was published. The contents include an article on ‘Administrative Problems in Rural Areas’ and another on ‘The Organisation of the extra Mural Work of the Universities’. The first of these, by a county inspector of schools, while focusing on issues of organisation, and on provision by local education authorities and other agencies of ‘courses of instruction below the University extra-mural standard’ includes a view of rural learners very similar to those of the ‘1919 Report’.

The regulations governing the new funding regime were introduced in 1924. Eventually 23 universities were given the now-quaint status of ‘Responsible Bodies’, directly funded by the Ministry of Education for the provision of programmes for designated regions, the funding being dependent on approval for not only academic range and quality, but geographical spread across communities. The universities and university colleges took their new (and funded) rural responsibilities seriously, especially those, like Nottingham, with large rural regions. Robert Peers (who was Director of the Nottingham Department) recalled:

And in this post-war period there was the great phase of building of village halls, which have done so much to counter the disadvantage of inadequate or indeed absent suitable accommodation for educational activity.

But as ever the universities were at a disadvantage as providers at a distance from the campus or the main urban centres, and – adopting a model reminiscent of that of Griffith Jones – were reliant on local organisations and facilities, mainly voluntary associations and in particular the branches of the WEA. Such joint programmes with WEA branches were for many years staples of rural university outreach, and still survive in some areas.

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Rural workers are financially poorer than those in the towns – a factor of importance, considering the relatively high cost of Further Education in country districts – and they are not yet educated to the idea of co-operation which has been developed in the town workers by Trade Union organisations.35

Definitions of ‘the University extra-mural standard’ were in fact a vexatious matter, and especially in rural areas. Over the years debates, and indeed disputes, generated much energy on the matter of what distinguishes university provision and what constitutes a ‘university standard’ in adult education. The ‘gold standard’ of university provision was maintained for the first half of the twentieth century by the ‘Tutorial Class’. The creation of Albert Mansbridge, founder of the WEA, this flagship programme, jointly provided by the universities and WEA branches, was a part time three-year programme offering to working-class students the chance to achieve a university honours degree standard, with tutors who were themselves academically qualified and active in their subjects. The feasibility of this high ideal was problematic from the start in rural education, which had, throughout its history, faced the issues of sparsity of population, distances to be travelled by university tutors, and lack of suitable accommodation and academic resources such as books.

After the Second World War, with the decline of the tutorial class and the rise of a wide range of university short courses, many with vocational rather than liberal aims, this issue of university standard remained a matter of debate. The ‘great tradition’ of extra mural education which focused on the educationally disadvantaged was giving way to the concept of what was to become ‘lifelong learning’: providing adult education for the whole community.

The issues for rural university provision remain remarkably unaltered from the earliest days of the extension movement, despite the massive changes in higher education.36 Rural learning provision is too often predicated on an urban model, and coloured by unreliable perceptions of country life. The bringing together of viable numbers of learners with a qualified and suitable tutor remains a large issue, too often tempting the solution of taking the learners to the town or city, with the resulting weakening by depopulation of the very communities the provision is intended to strengthen. Today, technology, in the form of distance or online learning, is often claimed to be the answer to the problem of rural education. Advocates of this would be surprised at the history and range of technological solutions for rural learning. The earliest example – from the early twentieth century – is the bicycle, on which it was said students could travel to the college in the town. Successive innovations each make their claim: cinema, radio, television, local radio, cable television – all would bring the longed-for cost-effective equity of access to education for rural communities.

The one issue for rural provision which is of more recent date is the diversity of the rural population. Typically any rural community will include several distinct groups of adults, each with distinct learning backgrounds and needs. As well as, and often outnumbering, indigenous local people will be incomers, who may be city workers seeking a dormitory village life, migrant workers, retired professional incomers, and in some areas large numbers of tourists. Similarly rural communities range from affluent dormitory villages within easy reach of the campus to remote communities with high levels of poverty, and ageing and dwindling populations. Each rural community is distinct in its character, an awkward feature for policy makers who tend to fall into the urban trap of assuming there is a common typology and thus a
common approach to what is still too often seen, in the words of the ‘1919 Report’ as ‘the rural problem’. This distinctiveness and diversity of educational need and demand adds to the tiers of complexity for the providers of university education in villages beyond the lecture hall.

Notes

1 Virginia Woolf, ‘Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown’ (London: Hogarth Press, 1924).
2 T. Kelly, A History of Adult Education in Great Britain from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1992), 217.
5 Ibid., 17.
6 Ibid., 18.
7 Kelly, History, 217.
8 Jepson, Beginnings, 57.
9 D.A. Winstanley, Late Victorian Cambridge (Cambridge: CUP, 1947), 237; Jepson, Beginnings, 81.
10 Jepson, Beginnings: 80.
14 Kelly, History, 67.
15 R.D. Roberts, Eighteen Years of University Extension (Cambridge: CUP, 1891), 22.
16 Ibid., 23.
17 Ibid., 26.
18 Ibid., 48.
19 Ibid., 49.
20 Ibid., 50.
21 Ibid.
22 M.E. Sadler, Continuation Schools in England and Elsewhere: Their Place in the Educational System of an Industrial and Commercial State (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1907), 714.
25 Ibid., 87.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
31 Ibid.

Dean, ‘Administrative problems’: 105.

Ibid., 101.

Civic Universities and community engagement in inter-war England

Keith Vernon

Abstract

The new universities chartered at the beginning of the twentieth century have been designated the ‘civic universities’ in recognition of the support they received from, and the services they rendered to, their local communities. Some historians have argued, however, that through the first half of the century, they drifted away from local concerns to become more occupied with pure research and national and international academic priorities. This article considers the question of the civic universities’ disengagement from the community through an analysis of the activities of Liverpool University between the wars. There is abundant evidence of sustained and systematic attempts to engage with the community with no indication of any diminution during the period. One can, however, identify trends which tended to divorce the university from the community, primarily through the efforts to establish a discrete student experience.

The common designation of the new universities of the turn of the twentieth century as the ‘civic universities’ captures an important sense of their distinctive origins and purpose. Founded in the great industrial and commercial cities of Victorian England, they derived considerable sustenance from their localities. Industrial, commercial, professional and other civic bodies offered moral and material support, sometimes drawing rate-payers into the orbit. In return, the universities offered technical and vocational training for the professional classes, plus liberal education for the cultured and leisured. They developed specialisms relevant to their urban economic base, offering advice, consultancy or original research to neighbouring firms, and expert services to local authorities. In the first decade of the century, the principal institutions were recognised as fully autonomous universities with an innovative role and mission.

Reviewing their progress through the first half of the twentieth century, however, the distinctive role of the civic universities has been called into question. There is a strong view that, whatever the initial differences, British universities tended towards a relatively uniform pattern, dictated by the dominant Oxbridge model. The ways in which the newer universities are held to have copied the ancient ones is often depicted in somewhat narrow terms, primarily as the move away from an emphasis on technical and vocational activity towards a greater concentration on a more liberal curriculum and fundamental research. This overstates the vocational character of the new universities, which always had a significant tradition of liberal education. Nevertheless, the argument remains that the new universities tended to neglect their distinctively civic mission in steadily copying Oxbridge norms. The creeping effects of this transformation are captured in the notion of academic drift, implying a greater emphasis on disinterested scholarship, liberal education and the aspiration to national standards of academia rather than service to a locality. There are different views as to its timing; whether it was already underway in the late nineteenth century, that it was mainly taking place in the Edwardian period, the 1930s, or that it only really took hold during the 1960s. Against that, historians whose focus is specifically on the civic
universities have been more sympathetic. Armytage referred to them as ‘community service stations’. Sanderson is one of the staunchest defenders of the civic tradition, although he too notes a shift away from technical studies by the 1930s. Barnes and Morse identify a continuing civic tradition during the interwar period, although they too suggest that distinctiveness was lost as the civics came to copy the dominant Oxbridge ideal. One of the key factors cited as a cause of this drift is the increasing preoccupation with liberal academic research. The uncertainty about the role and nature of the provincial universities was recognised at the time, with mounting criticisms from the 1930s, culminating in the fulminations against ‘Redbrick’, and a sense of a crisis in the university.

Summarising, there is a prevailing view that the new universities lost much of their traditional civic ethos during the first half of the twentieth century, a transition at least underway by the 1930s. Although seldom couched explicitly in terms of community engagement, the argument that there was a move away from local concerns towards national, academic priorities suggests a growing disengagement from the community. The purpose of this study, then, is to examine the nature and extent of the new universities’ engagement with their local communities during the interwar period. What forms did engagement take? Can we assess how extensive it was, and is there any evidence of a slackening during the 1920s and 1930s? Can we evaluate whether the universities remained committed to a civic mission? To address these issues specifically, the focus will be on Liverpool University, arguably the most civic of the new institutions, but not out of character with the rest. We also need a way of identifying community engagement and distinguishing it from merely serving the locality. It is clear that, until after the Second World War, all of the provincial universities were predominantly local institutions, in that the vast majority of their students were drawn from about a thirty mile radius. Offering courses to local students, however, is not the same as engaging with the community. Nor is it necessarily sufficient that university departments offer training or research that could benefit local interests. A more stringent interpretation is required, one that goes well beyond the lecture hall to seek for evidence of a sustained and systematic attempt by the university to engage with the local community.

The principal source used to look for this evidence is the annual reports of the university, taken at intervals from the first post-war academic year 1919/20, to the year 1935/36. Each annual report comprises summaries of reports from the Council of the University, the Vice-chancellor, and from the various Faculties and Departments. They constitute a public statement of the work of the university, which offers a convenient summary of what was done each year, plus an indication of underlying principles and priorities. This evidence is supplemented by a systematic survey of press cuttings for one academic year in the middle of the period. We shall begin with a survey of official views as stated by the Vice-chancellors, followed by a review of the range of expert services and cultural offerings made by university staff. Before assessing what this amounts to, we must consider evidence for a move away from civic engagement. Overall, it is maintained that there was a systematic and sustained attempt by the university to engage with the city and community of Liverpool, but there were clear movements emerging during the period that tended to undermine this involvement.
Civic Universities and Community Engagement

Official engagement
This section considers some of the ways in which the university as an institution positioned itself with respect to the community. An important element of this is the rhetoric used by the Vice-chancellors. Through the inter-war period there were two main occupants of the role. Alfred Dale, the long-standing incumbent who had overseen the foundation of the university, stood down at the end of the war and was replaced by George Adami. When he retired through ill health, his place was taken by Hector Hetherington who served until 1936. He was succeeded by two short-term replacements, so effectively it was Adami and Hetherington who set the tone. Both used the annual reports to make programmatic statements about the nature, direction and orientation of the university. Under this heading, we can consider some of the more formally established channels of contact between the university and the wider population, through extension work and WEA (Workers’ Educational Association) tutorials. There was also an important settlement movement in Liverpool connected with the university. Although often decidedly informal, it is worth looking here at the work of high-ranking university officials, especially the Vice-chancellor, in meeting with local and community organisations, most notably schools.

The first annual report of the post-war period was written by Dale whose immediate concern was to re-launch the university after the difficult war-time years. Student numbers were rising, fuelled by ex-servicemen, but staffing, buildings and facilities needed to be made good after years of neglect and deterioration. Obviously more funds were required, so an appeal for £300,000 was launched and Dale looked to the people of Liverpool to ‘once again come to the assistance of the University at a critical period’. He made a point of making public some of the war work the university had conducted, which had hitherto been shrouded in secrecy, especially chemical research and the inspection of millions of tons of explosives. ‘The time has come’, he announced ‘for the citizens of Liverpool to take a just and honest pride in the doings of their own University’.

The refrain was taken up the following year in the first report of the new Vice-chancellor Adami. Despite the increase in students, the university was in deficit and Adami pursued all avenues to raise funds; representations had been made to the government, the city had increased its contribution by 50%, and fees had risen by a third. The principal focus, however, was the public appeal, its target now raised to £1 million and a professional fund-raiser hired to drive it forward. Local businesses were called upon to support the university in the way that philanthropic merchants of previous ages had endowed the ancient universities. Ultimately, however, it was the people of Liverpool who had to be persuaded of the value of the university. ‘If every man and woman in the district can realize that in the University lies, next to the Mersey which made the city, Liverpool’s greatest asset, and greatest glory, then all will be accomplished’. Reciprocally, the university could not worthily serve the community unless it had the funds.

Although clearly connected to the public appeal whereby eloquent rhetoric was designed to persuade people to part with their cash, Adami made the most fully articulated and far-reaching statement about the local relevance of the university and academic independence. While acknowledging the importance of state grants, he was wary of too much dependence on government. He feared that teaching staff would become civil servants who would be more inclined to teach that which had official approval. There was a danger of Prussianization and a servile professoriate, which had so debased the German academic profession during the war. Adami gave a specific example of the proposal by the chief Medical Officer of Health for full-time professorships in medical subjects. Although still an experiment, the government had
offered funds to provide such posts, with the likely result that the experiment would become a *fait accompli* before being properly tested. Even in the midst of financial crisis, Adami preferred to look to the locality than rely too much on state funding.

The more we in Liverpool can help ourselves, the less we have to depend on national aid . . . the more sensitive and more responsive will we be to local needs, the greater will be the service we can render to Liverpool, to Lancashire and the surrounding district.\(^{15}\)

No doubt Adami was couching his appeal to suit his audience, but there is a genuine sense of the necessity of close interaction between university and locality.

Local bodies were not insensible of the appeal, although a general application coming during the post-war depression was unpropitious timing and only about £300,000 of the £1 million hoped for was realised.\(^{16}\) Nevertheless, Adami believed that a great deal of good had been achieved besides the material returns. In addition to the general appeal, individuals continued the tradition of great personal generosity towards the university. Each report catalogued the contributions, of money or kind, made during the previous year. By way of example, £20,000 came from the will of William Prescott for a Chair in Veterinary Medicine and in the same year there were several smaller donations which added to the endowments of the Chair of Organic Chemistry to help increase the income of the holder.\(^{17}\) Later in the period, a very substantial donation of £100,000 from H.C. Cohen went towards a new library.\(^{18}\) A special note was made of W. Harding, who had recently died. Late in life, he had discovered the university as an object of philanthropy and made a number of donations to help improve student facilities, including £5,000 for a new gymnasium. Corporate contributions remained important, with a project for a new chemistry building costing £50,000 promptly attracting £20,000 from local firms including £10,000 from ICI, £5,000 from Bibby’s and £3,000 from Pilkington’s.

Local authorities also featured more prominently in financial considerations. The City of Liverpool responded quickly to the post-war appeal, increasing its grant by half.\(^{19}\) A series of receptions was planned for representatives from Liverpool and district to visit the university to gain a better insight into its work.\(^{20}\) Greater effort was made to reach out to a wider range of local authorities who might regard Liverpool as their nearest university and grants were received from across Merseyside, south central Lancashire and from the Isle of Man.\(^{21}\) In 1935/36 a co-ordinated appeal was made by the universities of Liverpool and Manchester to Lancashire and Cheshire County Councils, which resulted in both councils doubling their grants for university education. There was still cause for criticism, however. Despite the increases, there was little systematic rate aid. Only Bootle County Borough gave a fraction of a 1d (penny) rate and the university was disappointed that, in this respect, it enjoyed less local authority support than other universities.\(^{22}\) Over the period, grants from local authorities grew from £19,655 in 1923/24 to £26,758 in 1934/35, representing a small increase in the proportion of the university’s income from 10.1% to 10.8%.\(^{23}\)

In common with other universities, Liverpool had more formal means of communication with the wider community through extension work. Although obviously an important aspect of engagement, less will be said about it here because it was an expected and organised activity. Arguably, extension schemes actually ghettoised such work, which is why this study focuses more attention on other aspects. Nevertheless, it is important to note what was achieved under this rubric. There were two main forms: university extension lectures of a more popular and *ad*
hoc nature, intended primarily for public interest and entertainment, whereas WEA tutorial classes were more systematic and demanding, in principle leading to access to the university. At Liverpool, the period started with separate organising boards for the two kinds of work operating under a joint committee. Extension lectures enjoyed a surge in the post-war years. In 1923/24, lecture courses were arranged at 27 centres in conjunction with local organisations. The Extension Board also arranged lectures for Poor Law Board officials preparing for exams and in geography for secondary school teachers. In all some 267 lectures were given, plus Christmas holiday lectures for boys and girls. The number of tutorial classes, however, was reduced to 36 because of economic circumstances, but there were 997 on the rolls. Over the period, the extension lectures declined noticeably. By 1931/32, although held at more centres, only 144 lectures were given. With economic difficulties reducing both individuals’ surplus income and local authority grants, plus the expansion of alternative forms of leisure, there was less demand for traditional extension type lectures. Offsetting this, there was an increase of lectures to secondary schools and technical colleges. While ad hoc lectures declined, there was greater demand for more serious instruction and courses of lectures. Tutorial work now led the way supervising 63 classes from Barrow to Crewe, reaching 1,318 students.

Another more organised point of contact was the Liverpool University Settlement, which became an important city institution between the wars. Although the university did not own or run the settlement, it did have an important role in its supervision. Of 18 members of the settlement committee, the Vice-chancellor was chairman, the President of the University Council an ex-officio member, and Senate, Convocation, and the School of Social Science each had rights to nominate a member. The historian of the Liverpool Settlement suggests that connections with the undergraduate body were less developed than elsewhere although, up to 1938, 120 out of a total of 230 residents had degrees. The settlement found its main partner in the David Lewis Hotel and Club, a charity established by the founder of Lewis’s department store and this perhaps helps to account for the limited engagement with the university. In our period, however, there were two important combined initiatives. During the slump of the early 1930s, an appeal was made from the settlement to university staff to offer lectures to unemployed men. A distinctive problem in the commercial economy of Liverpool was the number of black-coated workers, minor clerks, who were also victims of the depression. Hetherington personally supported the scheme and there was a generous response. As well as lectures of general cultural or current affairs interest, there were classes of direct commercial value, for example in languages, and attempts to place the unemployed in actual jobs. Another important relationship came through the industrial and social surveys of Liverpool conducted by Caradog Jones, in association with the settlement.

On the general subject of social and charitable work, it is worth mentioning the student Rag events. Usually the occasion for high spirits, bordering on anarchic horseplay, the traditional parade and inventively threatening exhortations to give to charity were generously and indulgently reported in the press. During her office as Lord Mayor, Miss Jessie Beavan hosted two receptions for students to help cement relationships between the university and the city. Her reward was being taken hostage on Rag Day and only released on payment of a ransom, which she accepted in good part. The money raised went towards an operating table for the open-air children’s hospital, which was also reported. Not surprisingly, the university’s collection of press-cuttings reveals little sense of friction between the undergraduate body and the city, although Hetherington more than once defended his students, perhaps indicating
residual tensions. In his valedictory report, he observed that they may be high-spirited, but they were also serious in purpose. Most were local and deserved, acknowledged and justified ‘what the generosity of Liverpool citizens had provided for them’.\textsuperscript{29}

Hetherington himself was indefatigable in his efforts to reach out to the wider community, notably in the large number of school prize-givings and speech days he spoke at.\textsuperscript{30} In the midst of a particularly hectic period, the local paper commented on the fact that he had given four different speeches at four schools in eight days, plus addresses to the Boys’ Association and the WEA.\textsuperscript{31} This wasn’t the full story; between 8 November and 14 December 1928, Hetherington spoke at six different schools, an indication of the importance he attached to this work. Obviously, it was important for the university to maintain good relationships with its hinterland, especially when income depended heavily on local sources, whether philanthropic or from the rates. It would be wrong, however, to see this as simply a pecuniary interest; the public pronouncements made great emphasis on the fundamental significance and value of connections with the community. At no stage did the university seek to devalue, or distance itself from, the locality.

**Expert and professional engagement**

One of the main ways by which a university could engage with its community was through providing expertise, difficult or impossible to find elsewhere. This is probably the most common understanding of how the civic universities served the community and why they enjoyed the support of local industrial and commercial concerns.\textsuperscript{32} We need to look for more than just a generalised connection, however. A philanthropic industrialist might find a convenient object for his generosity in making a donation to a department that had some relevance to his firm, but this does not necessarily denote regular and routine engagement. There is plenty of evidence, however, that most of the professional and vocational departments did have significant and well-established connections with neighbouring establishments. The Faculties of Medicine and Engineering especially required close co-operation with outside agencies to provide proper professional training and experience of real working situations. They also offered expert services to hospitals, firms and local authorities, commanding a virtual monopoly on some activities. It was not just a one-way relationship, however, and there were numerous occasions where outside bodies provided valuable services to the university. Liverpool also had a dynamic Department of Architecture, which operated in similar ways, but connections in the Faculty of Science were less pronounced.

An extremely important component of the work of the Departments of Pathology and Bacteriology was the huge volumes of diagnostic work they performed. Bacteriologists in university medical schools had quickly dominated this lucrative market as the techniques were established at the turn of the century.\textsuperscript{33} The two departments looked in different directions, pathology catering primarily for local hospitals, and bacteriology working mainly with the city public health authorities. For example, in the post-war years, a major pre-occupation was with venereal disease (VD). In 1918/19, pathology issued 2,500 reports to several hospitals under the VD Acts.\textsuperscript{34} By the following year, this had increased to 4,169 reports on VD for the Royal Infirmary, plus 3,722 Wasserman reports, and 787 others, together with 388 miscellaneous reports for the Children’s Infirmary.\textsuperscript{35} The department feared that it simply could not keep up with the amount of routine work, which put pressure on space as well as time. Several rooms in the laboratory were allotted to the Women’s
Hospital where most of the work was done. The Clinical Pathologist to the Royal Infirmary and his staff were also accommodated in the department, but a reorganisation in 1932 seemed to help things to run more smoothly. Other medical departments came to provide diagnostic services through the period. Biochemistry offered more chemical investigations, amounting to 1,020 for the Royal Infirmary in 1923/24. The Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology conducted a large amount of work for the city’s Criminal Investigation Department.

The Department of Bacteriology was more locked into the public health services, indeed the professor at times held the post of City Bacteriologist. It too was concerned with VD in the post-war years carrying out 3,242 examinations in an eight month period under the scheme of the Local Government Board. In the same period, the department examined over 10,000 miscellaneous specimens for the city authorities. The following year, these figures had risen to 7,446 for the, now, Ministry of Health scheme plus over 24,000 specimens in total for the city. In subsequent years, the gross numbers were not recorded, it merely being noted that ‘the bacteriological work for the city has been heavy this year – many of the problems requiring prolonged investigation’. In addition to the routine work, the bacteriologists were commonly asked to conduct special investigations. For example, the Professor of Bacteriology had found some plague-infected rats near the docks, which lead to a systematic survey in conjunction with the Bacteriologist to the Ministry of Health. A suspected anthrax infection of shaving brushes revealed 36% of brushes to be infected. The relationships were not all one way, and the city authorities frequently reciprocated in kind. In recognition of the work done by the Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology, the city coroner allowed students in the department opportunities for observation on cases. Similarly, the Medical Officer of Health made facilities available at the abattoir for students on food hygiene courses in the Veterinary Department. At times, the assistant city bacteriologist and some of his staff actually helped out with the professor’s practical classes.

In rather different, although parallel, ways other departments of the medical school made concerted efforts to situate themselves at the centre of local practice and a source of expertise, while also making arrangements for improving facilities for students. The Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology consciously set out to make itself the fulcrum of all such work in the area. Arrangements were made with the Maternity Hospitals and Royal Infirmary for notice of all operative work to be sent to the department, which would alert its students. In this way, more students were able to observe actual operations. A co-ordinated system was established with the City Council to ensure that the department provided for three municipal hospitals. Catering for the public in a rather different way, the department re-established a public pregnancy diagnosis centre which proved ‘of the greatest use to many’. At the same time, the Veterinary Department was making similar initiatives. It was already a centre of agricultural advisory work, offering lectures and consultancy services. An extra effort was made to connect with local veterinary practitioners, through the work of the advisory officers and through the establishment of a hospital, and a poor person’s out-patient clinic. The Lecturer in Veterinary Hygiene was appointed official surgeon to the local greyhound track, which also enabled students to visit the racing kennels.

Several of the medical departments made efforts to provide for the continuing training of qualified practitioners. The Board of Clinical Studies instituted a series of lecture-demonstrations aimed at local practitioners, which were well-attended to begin with, but then quite quickly trailed off. An attempt was made to make the lectures
more attractive and to publicise them more effectively, but little more is reported so it
does not seem to have continued. More successful was a similar scheme for dentists.
A national initiative launched post-registration courses throughout the country, and
Liverpool was invited to establish one. This was reported to have been thoroughly
appreciated by those who attended and a second one was planned for the following
year. The dental board also held an ‘at home’, which attracted about 150 former
students. On a less ambitious scale, the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology
allowed pupil and trained midwives into their museum where they offered informal
demonstrations.

In the other main vocational area, departments in the Faculty of Engineering
were assiduous in cultivating relationships with local employers, to provide real
practical experience, to place graduates in positions, and to provide a forum for
discussion and sociability. Two schemes which continued throughout the period were
to arrange visits to works, and work placements. The former usually took place
during the Easter vacation and involved visits to private engineering companies,
shipbuilders and municipal installations. Placements were usually offered over the
summer and could be routine positions, or more investigative projects. An 1851
Exhibition Scholar was supported by two local shipping lines to visit shipyards
throughout the country and then to embark on a voyage to observe the behaviour of
ships at sea. The employment prospects of students was a regular feature of the
faculty’s reports, reassuring readers of the continuing demand for engineers in
difficult times. An advisory committee of electrical engineers met with
representatives from firms, who commented on the high quality of graduates.
Similarly, the mechanical engineers noted the number of applications they received
from employers seeking students for research, administrative and commercial
positions. In recognition of his interest in the careers of graduates, P.J. Robinson,
Electrical Engineer to the City Council was invited to become a member of the
faculty. At the other end of the process, members of the faculty were keen to offer
advice to schools on opportunities in engineering. Prof. Bannister was appointed
president of the North-Western Branch of the Science Masters Association, which
gave him an opportunity to advise on appropriate preparation, the facilities offered by
the faculty and the prospects for graduates. Lectures were given at the municipal
technical school, and school parties also visited the laboratories. Architecture was
located in the Faculty of Arts, but operated in similar ways to other vocational areas.
Staff did consultancy work in the area, designing stalls for the Mersey Docks and
Harbour Board, or a new church for the Diocese. In return, the city engineer gave
lectures in civic design and the Town Hall exhibited student posters. In the mid
1930s, there was an initiative to promote building education and the department
established a materials gallery for the use of builders as well as architects, and hosted
conferences for building organisations.

There are much fewer references to external relationships from the Faculty of
Science. One important initiative was the formation of a Tidal Institute in the
Department of Mathematics in conjunction with the marine surveyor to the Mersey
Docks and Harbour Board and the Bidston Observatory. Records were examined to
try to improve tidal prediction at Liverpool. Another nautical venture was the
Department of Oceanography, which involved collaboration of interests between the
Manx Government, the Western Sea Fisheries Committee and the Liverpool Biology
Committee. An advisory board was formed of representatives of these bodies with
four professors from the university. Some terse comments a few years later suggested
that the department was providing a service to the public although not in an entirely
appropriate manner. Apparently, the marine station at Port Erin on the Isle of Man derived a considerable portion of its income from tourists who paid to see the small aquarium they had established. Other departments in the faculty carried out work of local relevance. Zoology did research on Irish Sea fisheries, Botany conducted surveys on the Wirral, and there were important interactions between the chemistry departments and local firms. ICI supported research in the departments, and there was frequent exchange of staff between the university and chemical companies. Nevertheless, local interactions do not feature so highly and much of the work was not particularly local, but of general scientific value that happened to have local relevance. Perhaps by the nature of the subjects, it was difficult to make the connections in the ways that engineers or medics could.

Unexpectedly, one area which recorded almost no activity with local organisations was the Department of Law, yet it is difficult to imagine that there were no connections. Perhaps it was an issue of recording, but in the absence of evidence, one cannot comment further. This example, however, stands in marked contrast to the considerable evidence of engagement between all the other vocational departments of the university and outside agencies. Across a spectrum of professional training, practical experience, graduate employment, research, advice and consultancy, university staff were heavily involved in working with city organisations. Nor was it just one way; the city responded in many ways, providing facilities or expertise of its own.

**Cultural engagement**

It is probably to be expected that professional and vocational departments would seek external contacts. Real practical experience was a crucial part of training, which required connections with actual workplaces and employers. They might also be a useful source of income for a department; bacteriological examinations were not done for free, although payment might be in kind, such as making facilities available for students. Provincial universities, however, were also intended to act as beacons of culture and enlightenment in the industrial and commercial cities, so how far did Liverpool University offer cultural engagement? The principal medium was through a large range of free public lectures given by members of staff, usually at the university, although sometimes off-site. These did not lead to qualifications, they were not usually given as part of a systematic series, although some were, and seem to be delivered at the instigation of the lecturer, as a part of their acknowledged duties for the university and the community. University departments also hosted, sometimes taking a lead in, local scientific and cultural societies, which could be as much sociable as academic.

To appreciate the sheer diversity of topics, we could consider the lectures listed for one academic year, 1919/20. Lascelles Abercrombie of the Department of Architecture gave a series of public lectures over two terms, which were well and steadily attended. Prof. Bosanquet and his colleagues Ormerod and Smiley delivered lectures on classical subjects to visiting school parties, which proved so popular they were repeated. A free course of lectures was offered by the Italian Department on ‘social and economic problems of modern Italy’. The Professor of Philosophy, besides concluding a course of lectures for the WEA, felt it his duty to give lectures to surrounding communities in Waterloo, West Kirby and Wallasey. Nor were the scientists to be outdone. Mr Rice gave a special course of nine lectures on Einstein’s principle of relativity, which were ‘highly appreciated’. The Professor of Geology
gave six public lectures on topical aspects, with an average attendance of about 200. A course of lectures in oceanography was offered by the new professor, while the assistant lecturer held a series of classes for fishermen at Barrow. Four ‘very successful’ public lectures were given by members of the Faculty of Engineering. Although not listed for this year, later stalwarts of the public lecture programme were the Professors of Classical Archaeology and Egyptology, with topics such as ‘the Hittite empire’, ‘Roman sculpture’, ‘Greek athletics’, and the standby ‘Egyptian history and archaeology’, which ‘proved more popular than ever’. Members of the university were also popular as after-dinner speakers, with the Vice-chancellor a regular at meetings of the Rotary Club and the Liverpool Soroptimist Club.

A quite distinctive offering at Liverpool was a number of special lectureships in areas not featured in the undergraduate curriculum. The two most regular ones were in music and the art of the theatre. In 1918, a group of well-wishers had attempted to establish a lectureship in music, but only realised enough funds for a temporary post. The incumbent, A.W. Pollitt taught in the training college and gave a course of popular lectures for people from outside the university. At the end of the year, there was not enough to continue even this but a Mrs Alsop, who became the chief benefactor of the scheme, contributed £3,000 towards an endowment to promote the study and practice of music. With further contributions, a small committee was formed and a regular programme of occasional lectures was instituted. The lectures were given in the Autumn term and were well reported in the press, with advance notice and a write-up of each one. For example, the series for 1928 took as its theme ‘the meaning of progress in music’ and featured musical examples to support the lecture. The other most regular sequence was on ‘the art of the theatre’, which ran during the Winter term. This rather idiosyncratic subject reflected a keen interest by members of the university earlier in the century in promoting the Liverpool playhouse. In return, the manager of the playhouse, Shute, supported the lectureship named after him. Several other special lectureships were begun at various times. One on poetry attracted Walter de la Mare, but only lasted a short time. Later in the period, a special lectureship was begun on the Philosophy of Religion, perhaps an unusual departure for the university which comprehensively avoided theology as an undergraduate course. A series of six lectures on ‘The historical background of the New Testament’ suggests a suitably scholarly tone. In keeping with the broad desire to expand cultural horizons, in 1936, the Pro-Chancellor C. Sydney Jones established an annual lectureship in Art to run for five years. There were to be public lectures on ‘art and society’ but also talks to students by the director of the city’s Walker Art Gallery.

Besides public lectures, the university departments also served as hosts and supporters of local industrial, scientific and cultural organisations. In engineering, a branch of the Institution of Electrical Engineers was established, which met monthly and thrived throughout the period with attendances up to 200. Members of the faculty acted, at times, as chairman and secretary to the branch. The engineering society of the local firm Automatic Electrical Company also held its meetings in the faculty. A Metallurgical Society was established, which held its meetings at the university and arranged visits to works. There was a very well-supported student engineering society, which organised a series of speakers and visits to firms. The topics were not solely technical; at the nadir of the slump, J.R. Hobhouse from Messrs. Alfred Holt and Co. gave a talk on ‘Labour Problems’. Geology seemed to take its public duties very seriously, regularly reporting on its activities and noting that while being too pressed to carry out research, ‘a certain amount of what may be
Civic Universities and Community Engagement

termed propaganda work has been attempted’. The department had a good relationship with the Liverpool Geological Society. Staff acted as directors of the society’s field trips, led visits to the new Mersey Tunnel and occasionally served as president. In return, the society deposited its collection of foreign periodicals with the department library.

Perhaps the most ambitious cultural organisation was the Summer School in Spanish, established by the professor, E. Allison Peers, soon after his arrival. It was aimed partly at prospective applicants to the department, to get them up to scratch in a subject that did not feature highly in the school curriculum, but it was also suitable for teachers and for the wider public. There were linguistic and literary courses for different levels and more popular lectures on Spanish and Spanish-American life and letters. The Summer School settled in Santander and quickly grew in popularity; in 1929 there were 62 in residence, by 1932 there were 117. Initially for two weeks, by 1936 there were three separate courses in July, August and September. A further intensive course was established at the university, known as Hispanic Week, which became the foundation of the Institute of Hispanic Studies and was soon attracting nearly 1,500 members and 15 incorporated societies. Of rather more modest ambition, but notable nonetheless, was a Russian circle of about 50 members formed just after the war, which held meetings, including a concert of Russian folk music and dances.

A good example of how such cultural organisations were engendered is provided by Prof. Roxby of the Department of Geography. In 1932, he was invited to become part of a delegation from the British Universities’ China Committee to attend a conference there. On his return he gave a course of public lectures, which resulted in the formation of a Liverpool China Society to foster closer cultural relations. Apart from the special lectureships, there seems to be no system or organisation to all this activity, it simply seems to have been accepted, perhaps especially by the professors, as a part of the job.

Countervailing tendencies

Before we attempt some kind of assessment of what all the undertakings discussed so far amounted to, we should consider the evidence for countervailing movements. Are there any indications that academic drift was taking place at Liverpool University, or that the university and its staff were actively or passively disengaging from the community? One of the main arguments put forward is that during the inter-war period, staff at provincial universities became more interested in doing research, and that of an increasingly abstract and academic kind. Another suggestion is that there was pressure from central government bodies, especially the University Grants Committee, for provincial institutions to divorce themselves from local commitments and become more like Oxbridge. In this respect, a particularly important issue is the growing emphasis on the student experience.

Research was certainly regarded as important. In the immediate post-war years, it was regretted that the great increase of student numbers meant that research had been virtually abandoned. ‘The professors and lecturers must have time for research and original work in the interests not only of research but also of good teaching’. By the mid-1920s, as student numbers and the university’s finances stabilised, time was found for research, especially the production of larger studies and books which, it was noted, had a better chance of reaching the wider public and so offering ‘an indication of the extent to which the University is influencing thought in very various directions’. Research work is highlighted most prominently in reports.
from the Faculty of Science. The departments of Botany and Zoology noted various
research projects, Oceanography continued work on tidal records. The Chemistry
departments were most active with regular support from ICI, and funding for research
studentships coming from the central government Department of Scientific and
Industrial Research. Medics participated in the investigations of the Liverpool Cancer
Research Committee. In Engineering, projects on insulating material, the calibration
and standardisation of flow meters and annealing were recorded. There is less
indication of research activity in the Faculty of Arts, a situation famously castigated
by Peers under his pseudonym Bruce Truscot. He was a little unfair as several of the
arts professors produced substantial works, although his own output was prodigious
by comparison.

While we might discern increasing attention devoted to research, can we
regard it as superseding other activities? One approach to this question is to consider
the nature of many of the projects, which were predominantly carried out in
conjunction with outside bodies. For example, much of the work in oceanography was
in connection with Merseyside maritime organisations to produce better tidal
predictions. The research on insulating materials in engineering was tested at a nearby
works and that on annealing at the request of local firms. Much of the routine
bacteriological testing came to involve considerable investigative work. It is important
to recognise that there is a spectrum of activity spanning post-graduate studies, routine
analysis, consultancy and advice, collaborative projects and original research, which
intersects with and feeds back on itself. To carry out research work does not at all
imply neglect of other kinds of work or retreat into cloistered seclusion. Another way
of addressing the question is to analyse the way research is portrayed in the annual
reports. The 1923/24 report gives much greater prominence to research, with the
faculty and departmental summaries proudly detailing their work. By 1927/28, there
is much less attention to research in the body of the text, but a substantial list of
publications given as an appendix. A list of publications was subsequently issued
separately but limited reference to research in the annual reports continues. We should
not really see this as a decline in the importance of research to the university, more an
indication that it was being recorded elsewhere. It does suggest, however, that
research was not seen as something that deserved high prominence in the annual
report.

There was increasing attention devoted to research, although much of it was in
conjunction with local interests, which suggests that a growing emphasis on pure
research was not really an issue. Indeed, there were mounting criticisms of provincial
universities on just this point. Flexner’s report for the Rockefeller Foundation on
European universities criticised the English provincial institutions for their failure to
promote proper research of a fundamental, abstract nature. Partly on these grounds,
vast sums were poured into Oxbridge and London, with very little finding its way
elsewhere. Truscot’s castigation of arts professors’ failure to engage in research
portrayed provincial universities as research deserts. Much of the post-war debate on
universities in Britain argued that they should focus much more on academic research
than routine activity. Again, this would suggest that the problem was a lack of such
work, yet it seems to have been interpreted as a growing call through the 1930s for
more fundamental research.

In a survey of pressures acting on the provincial universities, we must consider
the increasing role of central government agencies, most importantly the University
Grants Committee (UGC). This was established in 1919 as a conduit of state
funding to the universities, which increased through the period to approximately a
third of their annual income. Although intended as a buffer between the universities and the state, and protective of the autonomy of universities, it has been argued that the UGC came to exert considerable, albeit usually implicit, pressure on institutions. The ways in which the UGC influenced relationships between the new universities and their localities, however, were mixed. On the one hand, the UGC recognised the special role of universities in providing for their hinterlands. They were supposed to be centres of professional training, expertise and advice for industry, business and local authorities; they were also to act as beacons of culture and enlightenment to provincial communities. Equally, the UGC was keen to encourage local authorities to support their nearest university, especially through rate aid. Yet, there were also concerns lest universities get too close to local interests. In a showdown with Nottingham University College, the UGC forced it to limit the influence of the local council on its governing body. In Sheffield, the university was made to give up its work for the local authority in providing pre-degree level technical education. A specific example affecting Liverpool actually involved another government department, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) established in 1917. This agency was created to channel state funding towards scientific and industrial research of national significance, and we have come across it providing grants to post-graduate students, one of the main ways in which it related to universities. When Liverpool’s Vice-chancellor, Dale, sought advice from the DSIR on doing research work for local firms, the DSIR was adamant that such ventures were fraught with danger and should be very carefully monitored. In particular, research students had to be safeguarded against embroilment with private firms. As we have seen, the universities continued to keep close relationships with local concerns and it is strange that a government agency devoted to promoting industrial research should have become almost hysterical about work that the provincial universities had performed successfully for some time. It suggests some uncertainty among central government departments about the extent to which universities should be engaging with local interests.

During the inter-war period, the overriding aim of UGC policy with respect to provincial universities was to upgrade them to become institutions of the highest education. Staff, facilities, degree courses and research were to be of a standard befitting the term university and the model of what this constituted was provided, inevitably, by Oxbridge. One of the most important features of this model was the student experience, and the UGC gave considerable emphasis, and not inconsiderable funds, towards improving social, cultural and welfare facilities for students. Ideally, student life was to be catered for in halls of residence but, given the expense of these, other means included sporting and cultural facilities, student unions and refectories. At Liverpool, successive Vice-chancellors saw the improvement of amenities for students as a priority and were happy to acquiesce in the UGC’s exhortations. One of Dale’s last initiatives was to purchase a 25 acre site for athletics, which he hoped someone would come forward to pay for. Adami was a leading figure in arguing for improved health and welfare services for students and he pressed the case for more halls of residence. Hetherington took up the refrain. It was not just the limitations of residence or the smallness of the Union building, even the main quadrangle was dilapidated, undermining the whole environment of university study. The ‘unity of University life’ was impaired and he cautioned that his priority was ‘the strengthening of the agencies of our common life, rather than in further departmental expansion’. With the financial constraints, it was difficult to achieve very much, especially in halls of residence, but there was a new Students’ Union building, sporting and athletic
facilities were expanded and there was the beginning of a student health service.

Liverpool, alongside most other universities between the wars, made great efforts to improve the quality of the student experience, and achieved significant results. There were limitations, but doubtless there was a positive impact on many students’ lives. In trying to create a more self-conscious student and university community, however, something was perhaps lost in relationships with the wider community. Behind the initiatives was an urge to remove the student from undesirable connections, primarily to take them out of lodgings but also, to an extent, to take them out of their homes and off public transport. Lodgings were potentially unhealthy, unsavoury and isolating; even parental homes might not furnish a suitable environment for study, particularly for women who might be pressured into domestic tasks. Travelling across the city might entail exposure to dangers and distractions. The tendency of the moves to establish an identifiable student community was to divorce students from the city community at large.

Conclusions
We have seen evidence of a great deal of interaction between the university and its staff and the wider community. There were close relationships between professional and vocational areas and practitioners in their fields to provide suitable training and experience, and to help secure jobs. There were several initiatives to maintain contact with graduates to continue to develop their careers. Expertise and advice was offered to firms, hospitals and local authorities, which reciprocated in making practical services available, or even in helping out with teaching. A great variety of lectures and talks were given, whether through formal bodies such as the university’s extension department, WEA courses, or in a huge number of occasional events. At the same time, local cultural and scientific organisations made use of university facilities. The question that obviously arises is what does all this activity amount to; was it a little or a lot? Equally obviously, it is impossible to arrive at a definitive answer. There is little evidence about the audiences for these events. Where information is given, the indications are that attendances were good, clearly sufficient for them to be continued in successive years. It would be difficult to argue, however, that more than a small fraction of Liverpool’s population was reached by the university, and it is highly likely that the majority of that fraction were the educated and cultured classes. Similarly, we do not know what proportion of firms and businesses in the area had any kind of contact with the university. Our concern here, however, is not with impact, but with the attempts by the university to engage with the wider community and it would appear that there is considerable evidence of a systematic and sustained effort to reach out to the people, businesses and city of Liverpool. Nor is there any indication of a diminution of effort between the wars, or any indication that the university sought to disengage from its hinterland.

However, we can identify several trends emerging during the period that had a tendency to divorce the university from the community. The view from the UGC and critical commentators that the provincial universities ought to become more like Oxbridge if they wanted to be counted as proper universities was powerful and implied engaging more with national and international academic priorities than responding to local concerns. These are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but one cannot give priority to both and they tend in opposite directions. In the moves to ape Oxbridge, however, it was not research that was the key factor. There is little evidence that, during this period, research replaced community activity; indeed, to a great
extent, research work was integrated with local agencies. The more significant element was the growing emphasis on the creation of a self-contained university community with a discrete and recognisably different student experience. Divorcing students from their home environments helped to establish a separate university enclave within the city.

Notes


8 See comparative statistics tables in the annual reports of the University Grants Committee for the period.
9 Annual Reports of the Council, The University and the Vice-Chancellor (University of Liverpool Press) [hereafter Annual Report]. Held in the archives of the University of Liverpool.

10 ‘University of Liverpool Newspaper Cuttings 1928 – 1932’ [hereafter ‘Newspaper Cuttings’] Held in the archives of the University of Liverpool. The year surveyed was October 1928 – October 1929. I should like to thank Adrian Allan and his colleagues at the University of Liverpool archives for their help and advice.


12 Ibid., 49.

13 Annual Report 1920, 18.


17 Annual Report 1924.

18 Annual Report 1936.


20 Annual Report 1928.

21 Annual Report 1936.

22 Annual Report 1928.


24 Annual Report 1924.


26 This section is based on C.M. King and H. King, “The Two Nations”: The Life and Work of Liverpool University Settlement and its Associated Institutions 1906 – 1937 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1938).

27 D. Caradog Jones et al., The Social Survey of Merseyside (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1934); D. Caradog Jones, Merseyside: trade and employment (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1935).

28 ‘Newspaper Cuttings’.

29 Annual Report 1936, 18.

30 These were routinely reported in the press, see ‘Newspaper Cuttings’.

31 Liverpool Daily Post 24 November 1928. ‘Newspaper Cuttings’.

32 Sanderson, Universities and British Industry; Jones, Origin of Civic Universities.


34 Annual Report 1919.

35 Annual Report 1920. The Wasserman was a standard bacteriological test for syphilis.

36 Annual Report 1932.

37 Annual Report 1924.

38 Annual Report 1928.


40 Annual Report 1920.

41 Annual Report 1928, 50.


43 Annual Report 1928.

44 Annual Report 1932.

45 Ibid.

46 Annual Report 1936.

47 Annual Report 1932, 54.

48 Annual Report 1936.

49 Annual Report 1928.

50 Annual Report 1924.

51 Annual Report 1936.
53. These were noted in each annual report.
55. *Annual Report* 1928.
56. *Annual Report* 1924.
60. *Annual Report* 1928; *Annual Report* 1932.
64. *Annual Report* 1928.
65. For Botany see *Annual Report* 1920; Zoology *Annual Report* 1924; and Chemistry *Annual Report* 1932.
68. ‘Newspaper Cuttings’.
70. *Annual Report* 1928.
71. ‘Newspaper Cuttings’.
73. *Annual Report* 1924.
76. *Annual Report* 1924.
78. *Annual Report* 1920, 56.
82. *Annual Report* 1936.
84. *Annual Report* 1932.
89. *Annual Report* 1928; Mackenzie and Allan, *Redbrick Revisited*.
90. *Annual Report* 1924.
93. Vernon, *Universities and the State*.
95. Vernon, *Universities and the State*.
97. Appendix I to the minutes of the meeting of the DSIR 17 July 1918. DSIR1/1 National Archives.

99 Annual Report 1919.

100 Vernon, ‘Health and Welfare of Students’.


102 Vernon, ‘Health and Welfare of Students’.
Abstract

What do we mean by communities, or the community? That question becomes critical when we look at the place of printing, and print publication, in the context of commitment to groups of people who might be described as outside the everyday world of universities. More importantly, it can help us to understand something of the opportunities and challenges of communication in whatever form, oral, written, printed, visual or electronic, as these are developing now.

But if we look further back, at the history of engagement by the university presses at both Cambridge and Oxford, and a few other presses, with the various kinds of communities as they have developed and changed over the centuries, so we find issues in common. How have the university presses, and (in every generation) a few major commercial publishers, responded to, exploited and helped drive times of change? The market for thousands of schoolbooks in the 1630s did not appear overnight, but it was one much larger than just a few years earlier, and it was one for which Cambridge thought well worth investment in paper, equipment and time. Some of the changes in the late nineteenth century in educational publishing, at both adult and school level, are attributable to the 1870 Education Act and its successors, though the roots for these demands reach back into the 1820s.

The university presses have long made their reputations in major reference books, such as the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which gave opportunities for university publishing to present itself to wide audiences, and new faces. For the universities, they helped redefine ways in which communities could be reached.

I begin with a commonplace. When we speak of the community, we are really speaking of many communities – local, religious, political, educational, professional, family, ethnic, literary, and so forth. We can also mean those that are defined by technology – access to computer resources, to telecommunications networks, to transport, to different kinds of printing. Communities can similarly be defined by price. Often, of course, these all come together. Often they can be allied in different groupings. When we consider relationships, we need to be accordingly attentive as to how we define our terms. Only by very careful definition can any community achieve its aims. On this occasion, we are concerned with relationships between parts of the academic community and other parts of the wider range of communities, both in this country and overseas.

This is a useful reminder when, on the other hand, we find printing spoken of as a democracy, of the universality of print. For, like all forms of communication, it is in fact limited. Even the supposed universality of access to information on the web and via radio waves is in fact compromised by economic and social factors, by access that is in reality controlled by the financial gates set on websites, by ownership of appropriate equipment, including software, and, for much of the world, by censorship. Printing is limited in further ways again. Books that are unaffordable cannot sell. Books that have no advocates will not sell. Books jostle for position in crowded markets. Textbooks and other printed matter such as journals have to be kept up to
date, especially but not exclusively in fast-moving sciences. It is pressures such as these, not just differences of policy or opinion within academia, that help limit the extent to which universities can reach out into the community. We might recall the familiar words of Daniel Coot Gilman, first president of Johns Hopkins University. In founding what was at first known as the university’s Publication Agency (it only became the Johns Hopkins Press in the early 1890s, and Johns Hopkins University Press in 1972), Gilman stated that ‘It is one of the noblest duties of a university to advance knowledge, and to diffuse it not merely to those who can attend daily lectures – but far and wide’. He spoke in the wake of the examples set by Oxford and Cambridge in their publishing, schools examination systems, and the foundation of extra-mural programmes. His words have been often quoted in more recent discussions of American university press publishing. But, as so often, a principle is easily compromised. There can be difficulties within, just as much as outside, the university.

These generalities are important when we look at the history of the ways in which printing has contributed to community relationships of the kind focused on by this collection of essays. At one level is the least controversial, but potentially the most testing, when we are considering investment; it is briefly summarised as market research, the kind of investigations that are an essential preliminary to commissioning, editing, designing, trialling, printing, advertising and finally publishing, for example, a new series of educational course-books. In such an exercise, essential to any such project if it is to have any hope of success or profit, the business of publishing seeks to define itself by its audience, and thus to identify and build its particular community of interests.

More particularly, here I shall look principally at three separate examples of very different kinds of educational publishing, spread over four centuries. They all concern Cambridge University Press. All need to be examined and understood in the contexts of other events of their times. On this occasion I shall not be concerned with the reception of these three products of university publishing, a topic that demands further study than it tends to receive: this phenomenon is by no means limited to the activities discussed here.

The first example may be the least familiar. The University Press is commonly thought of as an educational publisher that entered the field as a serious player in the wake of the 1870 Education Act, with the well-known Pitt Press series of school texts (German and French as well as English), with the best-selling Pitt Press Bible commentaries, and with a more slowly developed stable of mathematical and scientific schoolbooks. But we can trace its involvement in the schools of this country long before that. In the early seventeenth century, the British book trade was subject to controls that were designed on the one hand to provide a measure of censorship and on the other to provide protection to the printers and booksellers in the London-based book trade. The Bible monopoly for the King James Bible of 1611 is the best known example of this control, its printing being restricted to the King’s Printer, and the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. But there were many other monopolies that were established, either by royal patent or as part of the internal workings of the Stationers’ Company. Under these conditions, almanac printing, for example, became highly profitable for those few lucky enough to be part of the cartel. The Cambridge printers printed hundreds of thousands of them in the middle and later part of the century, reaching an even wider range of communities than that caught by the Bible patent: at its height, the Cambridge printers were reaching a larger proportion of the literate population of Britain than at any other time in their history.
The monopoly in school textbooks was also highly profitable. Reliable statistics about the numbers of books printed, as distinct from the numbers of titles and editions printed, are not abundant for this early period. Instead, we tend to have snapshots. In the sixteenth century these are rare. In the seventeenth century they tend to be fuller. For this, we are fortunate in that on several occasions disaffected members of the book trade recorded the edition sizes, how many copies of a particular book were printed. The records of the London trade were all but destroyed in the Great Fire in 1666. Cambridge escaped this, and in the University Archives we have an extraordinarily valuable series of records relating to the management of a printing and publishing business. Among them are some figures for the numbers of school texts printed by the group of university printers in the 1630s. They reveal what at first sight seems astonishing. According to a longstanding agreement between masters and men, a day’s work at the printing press was expected to produce between 1,000 and 1,200 sheets of paper, printed on both sides. This was also the customary upper limit to the size of editions for ordinary books, though, of course, many books were printed in much smaller editions, even as little as 200 or fewer copies. But there were exceptions, and one of the main exceptions was school-books. In the 1630s, the Cambridge printers enjoyed a period of unprecedented prosperity and confidence. George Herbert’s volume of poems *The temple* (1633) was a best seller for a few years. But they were occupied for much of their time with the printing of the privileged books – Bibles, prayer books, almanacs and schoolbooks. They were in competition with their London equivalents, who also possessed these privileges. In 1631-2, for example, the University Printers Thomas Buck and Roger Daniel printed 9,600 broadside almanacs, for distribution far beyond Cambridge, whose own population could not have absorbed such quantities.

The number of grammar schools across the country increased substantially in the first half of the seventeenth century, to the extent that by 1660 there was perhaps one grammar school for every 6,000 members of the population. By 1678 one polemicist enquired whether the country was not ‘over-proportion’d’ with such schools, whether too many pupils were being prepared for jobs in church and state. He asked the question in order to refute it, but the point was based on arithmetic. Every market town had its free school by the 1670s.

It was against this background of market potential that the Cambridge printers pursued a difficult path between the University and the London book trade. Books could be printed more cheaply in London (accordingly, there were complaints from the University) and yet it was a rewarding field in which to work. The Cambridge printers had been printing one of the best educational steady sellers, Lily’s elementary Latin grammar, for years: in 1629 Thomas Buck, the University Printer, claimed to have 7,000 unfinished grammars in stock. But in the early 1630s a new, and far more wide-ranging and ambitious programme was also set in place. Elementary classical texts – Virgil, Cicero, Aesop and Ovid – were published alongside the standard textbooks including Vives, Mantuanus, Corderius, and an epitome of Erasmus’ *Colloquies*. Aesop was printed three years running in editions of 4,000 copies each. But all these were dwarfed by the numbers printed of a Latin conversation book by Leonhard Culmann, *Sententiae pueriles*. In 1631-4, Buck and Daniel, the University printers, printed 18,000 copies of this book.

Where did these books go? Here we are in difficulty. There is no ledger listing wholesalers or booksellers. The numbers in the edition sizes have come down to us thanks partly to trade agreements between Cambridge and London, and thanks partly to records of legal cases heard in Cambridge. The other obvious way to judge the
market is to examine surviving copies of books, to look at the names written in them, the schools attended by these pupils, the marginal scribbles and so on. But very few copies of these books survive, despite the huge numbers printed. For example, only one copy now exists out of the 18,000 copies printed of Culmann’s *Sententiae*. So it is difficult to discover precisely which communities used these books; we can do little more than surmise.

What is clear about these books in the seventeenth century is that they were inspired by commercial opportunity, by the continuing process of negotiation and trade warfare between the Cambridge printers and those in London. They were not part of a university-inspired or university-organised campaign directed at the schools market. And yet, they reached educational communities up and down the country, and took with them, in the imprints on their title-pages, the reminder of Cambridge as both university and printer.

If we now jump forward two centuries, to the nineteenth, we find a very different situation when the University Press again – on a major scale for the first time since the years before the Civil War in the seventeenth century – tackled the schools market. Conventionally, this is a tale told round the 1870 Education Act. In fact, it is rather more complicated, and can be better understood if we take our starting point about forty years earlier. The movement for education associated with the mechanics’ institutes was a mixture of well-meaning patronage, and of self-help. This dual development contributed to the developments and jealousies that characterised much of the movement, and it shaped priorities as they developed in different communities, in cities, towns and the countryside, in different parts of the country. Some of the same kinds of issues lay behind the new public libraries after 1850, where there was a mixture of public and private interest.

All universities and university departments and activities have their founding saints. In the case of Cambridge, we can look here to James Stuart, who soon after graduating from Trinity College found a career in taking a mixture of some of the new scientific learning and some simple theology to mechanics’ institutes, to groups initially of working men and then also to women. There is some danger here in speaking of different classes of people, for those who sought out this kind of learning came from a range of economic and social circumstances. We need to be wary of terms that seemed perfectly straightforward at the time, such as working men’s colleges, or the Workers’ Educational Association. They disguise more complicated patterns.

Whatever our present anxiety at too rigid definitions of class, Stuart himself was in no doubt. In 1868 he delivered a course of lectures to an audience that he addressed as the workmen of Crewe. But, even though he was seemingly so explicit, he was also at pains to make clear that he had in mind a wider audience, including women. ‘I hope that … none from age or sex or want of learning will be deterred from any of them, and that the introductory lecture will be attended by all indiscriminately.’ In May that year he addressed, from Trinity College, a circular to his potential audience: ‘I wish to take an early opportunity of letting you know what is to be the general character of the lectures on Astronomy which I propose to give at Crewe.’ Stuart attached great importance to his lectures as a series: they were to develop from examples of scientific knowledge to what he termed the ‘great lessons’ – not just of astronomy and mathematics, but also of religious belief, the topic to which his lectures led.
More immediately, he was determined that his audience should prepare itself with reading. To that end, he sent in advance of his lectures several copies of Sir John Herschel’s *Familiar lectures on scientific subjects*, directing readers to just four chapters. This substantial volume of over 500 pages had been published recently by Alexander Strahan in London. It dealt with a series of natural phenomena and physical questions, beginning with volcanoes, earthquakes, the sun and comets, and proceeding through to discussions of force and of light absorption. Herschel’s three first lectures had their origins in a series that he had given in the schoolhouse in his home village of Hawkhurst in Kent, so the circumstances had something in common with Stuart’s purpose in Crewe. They are a useful reminder that public lectures of the kind planned by Stuart were not entirely a novel idea: indeed, they were familiar in the eighteenth century, when itinerant lecturers made a living from offering series for which members of the public paid a small entrance fee. The difference was that Stuart was speaking directly from the university, albeit not as its representative, and that his words were freely available. His emphasis on working men and women in an industrial town was a reminder also of his wish to extend knowledge beyond the casual spending money of the middle classes.

In Stuart’s phrases and sentences we can perceive many of the principles of the extension of Cambridge, with Oxford hot on her heels, into communities that would not ordinarily have access to university teaching. The formality of university teaching, where lectures and reading were closely associated, were taken to Cheshire and other parts of the industrial north. The universities were obliged by their statutes to support religious belief. In a generation for whom geology and Darwinian theories of evolution had seemed to question the familiar facts in the Bible about the six days of creation and about the age of the world, Stuart was also presenting a heavily simplified version that emphasised the place of God.

Stuart delivered his lectures in the Crewe Mechanics’ Institute, and had them printed privately at Cambridge University Press. The sequence of events, over the following few years, has been often enough recounted, as the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge gradually involved themselves in extension lectures, as new universities at Reading, Nottingham and elsewhere grew out of some of these initiatives. Here I am more concerned with the relationship of the University Press to these endeavours.

Matters did not proceed outside the University in the same order as within. Girton College was not founded until 1870, and Newnham not until 1871. Yet by 1869 the University was already proposing examinations in science for women (there was no thought of women being examined on the same syllabus, or according to the same rules, as men). These examinations were advertised in the national press. Candidates had to be over eighteen, and the successful ones would receive certificates. ‘Science’ was interpreted broadly. It included not just botany, mathematics, geology and elementary chemistry, but also religious knowledge, logic, political economy and English literature. But the books suggested as background reading were published by publishers other than the University Press.

None of this would have been possible without an economic environment ready to support it. In the nineteenth century the advent of cheap paper, steam printing presses, stereotyping for mass production, cheap and sturdy cloth bindings, and the application of photography to printing processes, all contributed to new possibilities of scale and of appearance. And this would have meant little without the means to transport goods and people, the railways. This new transport map opened up possibilities for James Stuart, as he addressed the railway workers at Crewe, and he
and his successors travelled among other towns across the country. Nearer at hand, the railway was much resented when it was planned for Cambridge: it was kept as far as possible from the centre of the town, lest students should be tempted away to frivolous excursions. Nonetheless, and more fruitfully, the railway station at Cambridge was a route that the University eventually took to its heart, once it realised that it wished to reach out to other communities.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the catalogue of books published by Cambridge University Press ran to 164 pages, including the ever growing programme of schools publishing. The Pitt Press series included about 300 volumes, and the Cambridge Bible for Schools had proved equally successful. The Pitt Press series at Cambridge, like the Clarendon Press series at Oxford, affected generations of schoolchildren for most of the twentieth century. Financially, they became very profitable to their publishers, just as educationally they became very profitable to schools and schoolchildren. When we enquire not just what texts were published, but also who was involved in their editing, we discover that they depended on a new breed of professional editor such as the Shakespeare scholar A.W. Verity. When we ask where these editors came from, then we begin to understand more of the ways in which the universities had to develop their own processes and decision-making, to bring in people, and particularly schoolteachers, to supply this sudden need. For the first time, fees and royalties, a familiar part of business for general publishers, became a major and not always comfortable issue for the University Press.

For this was a serious commercial enterprise. When complaints were made in the London press about what seemed too close a relationship between Cambridge University Press and the Local Examinations Board, it was not over the quality of the editions. It concerned the fact that the Press thereby had an advantage over its commercial rivals: not just Oxford, but also firms such as Longman, Macmillan, Bell or Rivington, all of whom had by the 1890s substantial educational lists that were likewise partly tied to the annual processes and syllabi of schools examinations. Oxford had behaved similarly.

‘The Pitt Press’, fumed an anonymous writer in the widely-read magazine The Academy,

professes to prepare books specially for the Cambridge Local Examinations. Now, this suggests a certain correspondence and collusion between the authorities who choose the subjects for these examinations, and the authorities who rule the destinies of the Press. We have frequently heard it remarked that an extremely short time has often been known to elapse between the announcement of the subjects for examination in ancient and modern languages and the announcement of a convenient edition of the same by the University Press. Such a collusion, if it exists, appears to us unfair to publishers and schoolmasters, and opposed to the interests of education. Then, as today, production timetables were tight thanks to the need for schools to be supplied in good time for the autumn term. But we might in passing note the contrast. The various parts of the University were clearly collaborating for their mutual advantage – what the writer in The Academy considered to be collusion. It made commercial sense, it provided some coherence in University activity, and it was not, in fact, especially damaging to schools or pupils. It was much more damaging to rival publishers. An arrangement that began as an ad hoc convenience, based on little more than friendships and acquaintances in a small community, developed into a policy of collaboration. The needs of the balance sheet reflected the links between two arms of
the University, but in a very different temper compared with today. To those working in the 1870s, the earlier that information could be obtained from the examining bodies, the greater the prospect of profit to both parties, whether that was measured in educational or financial terms.

We can sometimes follow in surviving correspondence the details of these tensions. In 1874, the Secretary of the Local Examinations Syndicate was G.F. Browne. At the end of February, the texts were set for the following year. Could the Press, he enquired, have such texts ready, complete with annotations and introductions, by December, and thus in time to be examined at the end of 1875? The Press would have just nine months to find editors, agree the contents, and then print and bind the books. By today’s measures, it seems an impossible request. That aside, the immediate returns would not be great: in 1873 there were just over 1,000 junior candidates and 359 senior candidates in Latin, 142 in Greek, 786 senior candidates in French, and 172 in German. But if, as could be reasonably assumed, the syllabus remained unchanged for some years, the longer-term rewards from reprints could be substantial. The Press purchased a new printing press in May, and a new steam boiler. The first books were in production by July, and all were printed initially in runs of 1,500 copies, with stereotype plates made ready for the reprints that were anticipated. In November 1874, the title of The Pitt Press Series was adopted, obviously aping the Clarendon Press series that had been initiated at Oxford a little earlier. Later on, it was joined by the Cambridge Bible for Schools. Series titles, publishing books in similar formats, with identifiable liveries and within a narrow price range, helped sell books. They identified similar work and similar standards. More general publishers had known this since at least the 1820s, and the Victorian book trade was full of them, with titles such as the Railway Library, the Parlour Library, and Murray’s Home and Colonial Library. Cambridge University Press had at last woken to the benefits of modern marketing.

Lest all this seem a system set rapidly and effectively in place, it is worth pausing for a moment over Shakespeare. The Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate had been setting Shakespeare plays since its beginning, in 1858. There were available in the market school editions of half a dozen plays published by Longman, Routledge and a few others, but the range of titles was meagre: the more usual practice in the 1850s and 1860s was to publish extracts, rather than complete plays. For many years, there were still no Pitt Press editions of even so frequently set plays as Richard II, The merchant of Venice, and As you like it. Why this delay in what, and surely not just in retrospect, can be seen to be a sure money-maker? The answer, in brief, lay in the Press, not in the examining body. In the 1850s the Press was little more than a printer of the privileged books, the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer. Its list of publications was short, and heavy with theology. There were at that time no schoolbooks of any kind. Publishing of literature was left to others. Even some years later, the nine-volume annotated Cambridge Shakespeare, a new edition where the texts were thoroughly re-assessed by a group of Cambridge editors, was based on the resources of Trinity College library. It was published by Macmillan, the firm that had been founded in Cambridge in the 1840s and that dominated publishing for Cambridge authors for over half a century. Macmillan also published the best-selling one-volume Globe Shakespeare, based on the text of the Cambridge Shakespeare and printed by the tens of thousands by the University Press. The Globe Shakespeare largely replaced the mid-century shilling Shakespeares, editions of the collected works published by Routledge, Frederick Warne and, most
successfully, John Dicks, who sold 700,000 copies of his cheap edition in two years, figures that neither Macmillan nor the University Press ever came close to challenging.

All that had changed by the 1890s, when the name of A.W. Verity was known to schools across the country, and to tens of thousands of schoolchildren. Verity had made his name as an editor of Milton, but for most people he made his reputation as editor of the Pitt Press Shakespeare series. He was receiving royalties of as much as one-sixth of the published price (not so far off the roughly 15% considered normal for a university textbook in mathematics today). The edition sizes were large. When *The Merchant of Venice* was published in 1898, the Press printed 20,000 copies in the first few weeks. The first printing of *Henry V* in 1900 was of 20,000 copies.\(^{15}\)

Schools publishing, like schools examining, was profitable, and it promoted the reputation of the University among the young – thus forming the views of the coming generation.

So far, we have looked at schools and the university presses, in the seventeenth and the late nineteenth centuries. We have not looked at what was for long periods the staple of these presses’ success, indeed sometimes almost their *raison d’être*: the printing of the King James Bible and the printing of the Book of Common Prayer. By any measure, these were the printed means by which the universities were linked to the book-dependent nation over a longer period than was the case with any other publication. Rather than these, however, I want, thirdly, to move away from these long-established kinds of literature, to the ways in which Cambridge University Press faced an entirely different kind of challenge in the wider community. It involved another kind of financing; another kind of marketing; another kind of collaboration. It was on an altogether greater scale than anything that the Press had done previously. It required considerable, and complicated, negotiations with other printers since the task was far too big for the Cambridge printers alone. It demanded immense patience from the University, and in the end it brought great prestige. Unlike Bible and schoolbook printing, it did not bring great or prolonged profits.

The project was the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. The encyclopaedia had been first published at Edinburgh in the eighteenth century. In the late nineteenth century, it came to London, where the ninth edition was published by A.& C. Black in 1875-89. It was not a money-maker, and so Black sold it to two Americans. These two men, Horace Everett Hooper and William Montgomery Jackson, were more enterprising. They had been trained in the world of part-publishing and subscription publishing, a practice that was widespread in the second half of the nineteenth century in the USA, and that was ideally adapted for a country where ordinary bookshops were thinly scattered across a large country. They found new American markets for *Britannica*, and turned it into profit. In London, Hooper and Jackson also turned their attention to *The Times*, which was in considerable financial straits, and they used the newspaper as a vehicle to help market the encyclopaedia. They used *The Times* for other populist publishing ventures. But they were not universally liked. Their sales methods were widely mocked, and were detested by the book trade. Many people were irritated by their aggressive American salesmanship, their ‘transpontine’ methods as one critic put it, while another spoke of the ‘splodges left by Hooper’s black hands’ on the redesign of *The Times*. More damagingly, the newspaper was also severely criticised after they founded a book club, which was little more than a front to sell new books at below the net book prices agreed by publishers.\(^{16}\)
When they wished to publish a new edition of *Britannica*, they approached Oxford, who declined. So they approached Cambridge, where in Richard Wright, the Secretary to the Syndics, and the manuscript scholar and Provost of King’s M.R. James, as Chairman of the Press Syndicate, they found more willing listeners. Unlike the tenth edition, which was in fact simply an updated reprint of the ninth, with eleven new volumes, the eleventh was to be a wholly new work. There was no doubting the quality of the entries. Hugh Chisholm, of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, who succeeded William Robertson Smith, the Cambridge Arabist and University Librarian, as editor, was well-organised, scholarly and sympathetic. He well understood the need for the highest standards combined with accessible learning. Among the figures whom he persuaded to contribute were James Ewing the engineer, Sir Joseph Larmor, Lucasian Professor of Mathematics, J.G. Frazer the anthropologist, Thomas Hodgkin the historian, Stanley Cook the Hebraist, William Ridgeway, Disney Professor of Archaeology, and others of the same calibre, many of them from Cambridge.

The fact that so many of the contributors were resident senior members of the University made it difficult to criticise the encyclopaedia. But it was perfectly possible to question the procedures that led to its being adopted by the Press. Led by William Cunningham, Vicar of Great St Mary’s and an internationally respected economic historian, complainants stated that it had not been properly read by referees; that the University was associating itself with sales methods that had already drawn prolonged and bitter complaints from the very book trade on whom the University Press relied; and, more insidiously, that the people behind the project – Hooper and Jackson – were from the wrong background. Cunningham had contributed to the encyclopaedia, but that did not stop him launching into a prolonged attack at a university discussion in the Senate House.

Much more fundamentally and constructively, the preface to the new edition broke new ground. It argued that the encyclopaedia was the latest in a natural progression of events for the University. It spoke of the ancient university as an institution for the instruction of the clergy. It spoke of the widening of intellectual pursuits during the reformation. It spoke of the abolition of religious tests in the nineteenth century. And it spoke of the University Extension movement, ‘advocated at Cambridge in 1871 on the ground that the ancient universities were not mere clusters of private establishments but national institutions’, this entailing a wider conception of utilizing, sharing and propagating intellectual resources. Meanwhile, the local examinations organised by Cambridge brought the University to the schools. ‘The present time’, wrote Chisholm as author of this preface, ‘seems appropriate for an effort towards thus signally extending the educational and intellectual influence of the university.’ Thus, the project was offered as ‘a trustworthy guide to sound learning, and an instrument of culture of world-wide influence’.

Chisholm must have had in mind the words of F.M. Cornford’s celebrated *Microcosmographia academica*, of just two years earlier, when he alluded to ‘sound learning’. Cornford had written

> The principle of Sound Learning is that the noise of vulgar fame should never trouble the cloistered calm of academic existence. Hence, learning is called sound when no one has ever heard of it … University printing presses exist, and are subsidised by Government, for the purpose of producing books which no one can read; and they are true to their high calling.
Cornford’s gentle satire was now taken up in the University’s defence. But it was a reminder that, for all the investment in time, in money, in equipment and in scholarship, by its Press and by many of its most senior members, the University was not at one when matters concerned the wider community of the outside world.

Beyond this there was another lesson. The University was not disposed to employ means of communication other than those to which it was accustomed. Hooper and Jackson, with their American sales practices, their heavy advertising, their willingness to circumvent booksellers and sell direct to customers, and their plans to publish books in parts, like magazines, were all anathema to one group or another in the University. This was the period when the Amalgamated Press was enjoying huge success with the part publication of books such as Sir Herbert Maxwell’s *Sixty years a queen* and the jingoistic *With the flag to Pretoria*. In 1905, the *Harmsworth encyclopaedia*, which was eventually to run to 40 sevenpenny parts, published fortnightly, was not only an obvious landmark in popular publishing. Inevitably, it was compared with *Britannica*. It was like buying an encyclopaedia on the never-never, the way one could buy furniture. The University was not ready to sell or present itself in this way. Northcliffe, Rothermere, the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Mirror* and the rest of their publishing empires, were not to be confused with the University of Cambridge.

If, then, there was felt to be more than a whiff of vulgarisation in the publication of the eleventh edition of *Britannica*, there was a more serious issue. How was the University to communicate its message in a world of higher literacy than ever before, of increasing mechanisation, where Britain was a part of an international empire facing external threats, where transport was faster, and where some knowledge of foreign affairs was critical to social intercourse? Amidst a welter of reform legislation, the Asquith government was moving gradually towards modifying the traditional autonomy of Oxford and Cambridge. With national responsibilities came the investigative hand of government. Oxford was under examination, and there was much talk of the need for a government commission to enquire into Cambridge. There is no hint in any of the archives that *Britannica* was intended as a riposte to those who thought the University remote and unresponsive to the country’s needs. But the project certainly became one means by which the University could demonstrate its concern for the public weal, as the preface to the eleventh edition made perfectly clear.

The eleventh edition of *Britannica* was published in 1910-11, on what proved to be the eve of the First World War. It was printed in a very large edition. Thanks to the size of the task (the whole ran to 28 volumes, plus an index volume), printing had to be shared with firms in Edinburgh and Bungay, in Suffolk. The text was set by Monotype, a technology still relatively new in the printing trade which transformed the speed of composition, and duplicate and even triplicate stereo plates were made so that the same text could be printed by different firms, according to their capacity. Two issues were published, on thick and thin paper. The printing records show that 10,000 sets were printed initially, and over three times as many for the American market. We no longer possess records of how successful it was on the British market over the next few years, in the sense of how many copies were sold. But there is no sign that the University profited very much financially. During the war it was taken up further in America, and published in a handy-volume format, complete with bookcase.

It was also published against a background in the book trade that was still able to ignore the recent inventions that were shortly to be taken for granted. In 1911, there was indeed a threat to parts of the book trade by the cinema, which was accused of
The reach of print

stealing readers from their books. Marconi had conducted his experiments with wireless only a decade earlier, but so far they were directed at wireless telegraphy, direct contact between nations. By 1911, such contact between Britain and North America was a part of life. Wireless contact with countries south of the equator remained for the future. There were few people who imagined its potential for mass broadcasting. Meanwhile, the new visual environment of the moving image and the new sound films, and the ever-developing technologies of sound-recording, offered fresh means of life to educational communication.

In this transformed world of sound, colour and movement, the University’s printing could only make progress among the outside communities that were now a part of its everyday existence by acknowledging the need for changes to the content, design and marketing of educational books. The world of schools and educators paid attention to the need for legible type, of a good size. The Cambridge printers had to take note. So, too, they introduced new formats for schoolbooks, and worked to transform the picture content. There has been plenty of work done on the typographical changes of the first two decades of the new century, on themes such as the impact of expressionism, the influence of French, Dutch, German, Italian and Russian design, the search for ways of presenting texts that were not so obviously slaves to the rectangle of the printed page. There has been much written about typefounders’ searches for their markets. Much more remains to be done concerning the design and presentation of schoolbooks, a genre that is naturally conservative but that must also respond to the visual contexts of those who teach and learn.

At the beginning of this essay, I emphasised the importance of understanding that when we speak of community, we understand also the ways in which community is constructed, of several different components, several different communities. I have concentrated on some of those that have been defined at different periods partly by what we may call the markets – markets for print of different kinds: for Latin schoolbooks, and a wider market for almanacs in the seventeenth century; for a much larger schools market in the second half of the nineteenth century, driven very largely by a system of public examinations; and for a wider, more general public with the Encyclopaedia Britannica in the years leading up to the First World War.

In conclusion, I emphasise one of the themes I mentioned briefly in my preliminaries: the relationship of printing to other forms of communication. I have been concerned here with examples of printed publications, the latest of which is about a century old. Obviously, therefore, I have not been concerned with questions about the future of the book, the future of relationships between printing and other forms of recording or spreading alpha-numeric signs, or pictures, maps and diagrams. I have said little directly even about the present, and very little about the complementary nature of different forms of communication in print, speech and image. Downloading onto mobile phones and other pocket-sized electronic communications devices, the arrival of cheap everyday versions of hand-held readers for e-books, the implications of projects by Google and others allegedly to ‘capture’ the world’s libraries:20 these herald much greater changes not just to how education is propagated, but also to definitions of community.
Notes

2 For this and the following, see David McKitterick, _A history of Cambridge University Press_ 1, _Printing and the book trade in Cambridge, 1534-1698_ (Cambridge: CUP, 1992).
6 For some of these issues see Dennis Smith, _Conflict and compromise: class formation in English society, 1830-1914. A comparative study of Birmingham and Sheffield_ (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982).
7 James Stuart, _Six lectures to the workmen of Crewe, delivered in the hall of the Crewe Mechanics’ Institute in the summer of 1868_ (Cambridge: privately printed, 1869).
8 For the movement for the education of women in northern England, and the work of the North of England Council, see Blanche Athena Clough, _A memoir of Anne Jemima Clough_ (London: Arnold, 1897), ch.5.
9 Sir John F.W. Herschel, _Familiar lectures on scientific subjects_ (London: Alexander Strahan, 1867).
11 Advertised, for example, in _The Chromolithograph_ 23 January 1869, 232-3.
13 _The Academy_ 2 June 1877, 482-3. For this episode, see McKitterick, _History of Cambridge University Press_ 3, 79-81.
14 Sandra Raban (ed.), _Examining the world: a history of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate_ (Cambridge: CUP, 2008).
16 For the subsequent official view of these years, see _The history of The Times 3, The twentieth century test, 1884-1912_ (London: Office of the Times, 1947), 443-59. For their attempts to gain control of _The Times_, see ibid., 509-72.
17 For the following, see McKitterick, _History of Cambridge University Press_ 3, 183-201.
Educational radio in Quebec: a complement to university

Paul Aubin

Abstract

The birth of radio in Quebec goes back to 1922 with the earliest broadcasting in Montreal. From the very beginning, the radio system proudly announced that it had three goals: information, entertainment, and instruction, the third of these appearing very early. This paper analyzes three major series of Quebec educational radio: L’heure provinciale (1929-1939), Le réveil rural (1938-1973), and Radio-Collège (1941-1956). It considers the three main parties to these innovations and developments: radio stations, their initiatives and the respectability acquired by involvement in education; the state at federal and provincial levels, and the needs of two linguistic communities; and above all the universities who used radio to reach ‘beyond the walls’, the opportunities identified by visionary academics for addressing new audiences and the scope for collaboration with outside bodies.

Producers, authors, and contents will be analyzed to see how these series were built as links between scientific knowledge and the general public. Many of these series were produced by universities and many of the authors were university teachers. The topics were often close to university curriculum and were seen as palliatives to the shortage and poor quality of instruction for those who had been unable to attend higher schools.

Originally offered in dedicated places specifically organized for that purpose, university targeted a captive audience, a group deliberately attending those institutions. The persons dispensing the knowledge could, if they made an effort, know each person receiving their messages. That situation had its advantages and its disadvantages. Teachers could know whom they were addressing and could confer diplomas, after exams passed with success, which was a form of control. However, only those attending the university were reached. That was a limitation. This rather exclusive environment was encroached upon in the beginning of the twentieth century by the use of new technologies, especially radio, for teaching. The number of students became potentially limitless, but teachers had no direct contact with students. It might be said that the university, thanks to radio, sent its message everywhere, as in the image that adorns to this day the covers of Larousse dictionaries.1

It is important to establish benchmarks to define academic radio programmes, since every broadcast programme might be said to be cultural. I will consider only programmes included in a structured package, thus leaving aside hundreds of other programmes that conveyed to listeners elements of knowledge equally useful in enriching their culture. These programmes must comply with various criteria: to have as a declared objective the enrichment of knowledge in a specific field; to satisfy one of the criteria accepted in academic practice; to be offered by teachers and/or be organized by academic authorities, preceded or followed by printed material and completed by a follow-up consisting in mail contacts with the authors, control tests or competitions aimed at rewarding the most deserving students.

Radio appeared in Quebec with the opening in Montreal, in 1922, of the first private station, CKAC, owned by La Presse, the most important French-language daily newspaper published outside France.2 From the very first years, the owners of that radio...
Paul Aubin

station foresaw the educational possibilities of the new medium; Jacques-Narcisse Cartier, the first person responsible for bringing radio to Montreal, had previously worked for Marconi in Nova Scotia and later for David Sarnoff, vice president of Marconi in the United States, who had predicted a few years earlier: ‘The receiver may be designed in the form of a simple Radio Music Box and arranged for several different wave lengths ... The same principle can be extended to numerous other fields as, for example, receiving lectures at home ...’. After becoming vice president for the RCA (Radio Corporation of America), Sarnoff went further in 1922 and declared: ‘The broadcasting consists in entertaining, informing and educating the nation and should clearly, for that reason, be considered a public service.’

Broadcast piano lessons
Cartier took his inspiration from good models. As early as September 1925, hardly three years after the introduction of radio in Quebec, he broadcast ‘a structured course of piano’ that would span 30 programmes. The station organizing that course behaved as a private school, trying to attract students through a publicity campaign carried in La Presse, the station’s owner. In July and August of 1925, five articles advertised the proposed course. The station hired a famous musician, Émiliano Renaud, as a teacher. He is presented as the ‘Canadian Paderewsky’, and it was promised that students of the ‘basic course’ would have the opportunity to send questions and receive answers from the teacher during the following programme. Here are indications, if needed, that the programme was devised as a course: listeners could buy the companion handbook, and at a discount price, on presentation of coupons published in the newspaper. Students would read, in the handbook preface: ‘Persons wishing to follow successfully my “basic course for piano in thirty lessons”, that will be broadcast by the poste radiotéléphonique C.K.A.C. of La Presse, must read this preface very carefully.’ Students are advised that they must read the handbook before taking the lessons, or risk not understanding anything in the broadcast explanations.

A visionary regarding the possibilities offered by radio for distance teaching, since that initiative might have been ‘the first one in the country and, perhaps, in the whole world’, Cartier opened a gate that would never afterwards be closed.

L’heure provinciale
The formula used for the piano lessons was designed to reach an audience only interested in that particular field. It was necessary however to develop a formula suitable for the general population. For that purpose, a private station, however essential, was inadequate because such an endeavour required a stable team of teaching professionals and governmental support, whether financial or organizational. This would be achieved with L’heure provinciale.

Radio broadcasting had naturally not been envisaged in 1867 during the assignment of fields of jurisdiction between the provinces and the federal government. In 1929 the government of Quebec declared itself competent in that field and began to finance an educational program, claiming that education fell within its jurisdiction. In the unending disputes between Quebec and Ottawa to determine who could do what, the government of Quebec exploited educational radio to score a point.

Édouard Montpetit, an economist, professor at the École des Hautes Études Commerciales of the University of Montreal, was put in charge of the project. He chose for his assistant Henri Letondal, a man trained in music and theatre, two complementary
fields, which should guarantee the success of the project and explains the two approaches that would be favoured. Inspired by some foreign models, especially the BBC, Montpetit considered that project as a means ‘to complement the school and to spread teaching among ordinary people and the population living far from the great centres’ within a vast territory inhabited by a sparse population with a low level of schooling.8 Launched in 1929, L’heure provinciale included four facets: lectures (on topics now included in human sciences and reaching the majority of students enrolled in the French-language universities of Quebec); debates on the economy; debates on health; and artistic performances in the fields of music, theatre and poetry. Montpetit stated clearly: ‘We maintain the distinction that we have always made between the lectures and the artistic aspect of our programmes, while noting that certain programmes contained lectures and artistic performances’.9 That formula seemed to be well accepted according to a message sent to Montpetit by a teacher: ‘Allow me to tell you how much I appreciate the “popular courses” offered on the radio by the University of Montreal and that are, in my view, a powerful means of education and “popularization”.’

Over a period of ten years, about 350 lecturers would speak during L’heure provinciale in their recognized sphere of competence. ‘To be invited to play a part in that prestigious hour of culture was an honour and, sometimes, a consecration.’11 Among the lecturers who were heard over at least four years, 30% were women. Almost all the lecturers, men or women, were lay people. That selection parted from the common practice of the time. Listeners could hear lectures on a wide array of topics, including economic and social matters (113 lectures), architectural heritage (16 lectures) or history (51 lectures).12 The portion dedicated to history deserves special attention.13 Out of the 38 lectures presented on history, 24 (unsurprisingly) were about the history of Quebec. Nine of these were dedicated to New France (before 1763), and two were about the English colonization (1763-1867). Thirteen covered general themes of the history of the province and touched on either of these two periods. None of the programmes tackled directly the history of the province since confederation. Thus listeners were presented a view of the history of Quebec corresponding with the historiography of that time that, within a vision glorifying the past, considered mainly New France, generally presented as the golden era of our history. We must note the total absence of lectures about the history of English Canada. That choice was compensated for, and complemented by, lectures in English; in fact, L’heure provinciale also offered English-language programmes that Montpetit entrusted to Wilfrid Bovey, responsible for adult education at McGill University.14 Surprising as it may be considering the English-speaking people in Quebec were a demographic minority, 35 lectures were given, almost all of them on the history of Canada or of Quebec; not surprisingly, 15 lectures concerned the history of English Canada, but almost the same number of lectures aimed to inform English-speaking Quebeckers about the period of New France. Was this a desire to present them a period about which they might have little knowledge or to demonstrate a more open mind? We should note finally that, according to the categories used in their annual reports by the producers of L’heure provinciale, Francophone listeners had 17 lectures on sciences, compared with 23 for Anglophone listeners. Sciences, in the traditional sense of the word at that time, were more popular at McGill University than at the University of Montreal. That fact, as well as the choices about history, expressed a social and cultural reality: English-speaking people had more consideration for sciences than French-speaking people.

How can we explain the disappearance of L’heure provinciale? Did those in charge run out of inspiration? Toward the end of the decade, the contents of the programmes became much less scientific judging by a request from the principal of a
small private college who asked to be entrusted with production of the programme of May 22, 1938, that would allow him, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of his college, to do some advertising for it. The programme he envisaged was essentially festive.\textsuperscript{15} That is quite far from the ‘course on advanced botany’ that Jules Brunel, lecturer at the University of Montreal, gave in 1932.\textsuperscript{16} However, it seems that the disappearance of \textit{L’heure provinciale} was mainly due to partisan considerations, especially as Maurice Duplessis had always shown some contempt for intellectuals and artists.\textsuperscript{17} The political party elected in 1936 (Duplessis’s \textit{Union Nationale}) cut the finance of a project that had been launched by the previous government under Taschereau.

\textit{L’heure universitaire}

As an academic trying to reach, through \textit{L’heure provinciale}, all those wishing to enrich their meagre stock of knowledge acquired in the elementary school, Édouard Montpetit did not forget his colleagues who may convey messages as well as receive them. That would be accomplished through \textit{L’heure universitaire}, which he broadcast in 1930 and which would reach 100 lectures broadcast by CKAC in 1932. The lecturers were academics addressing an audience more educated and less numerous. That innovation was all the more appropriate as, with the passing years, the proportion of \textit{L’heure provinciale} dedicated to lectures would become smaller, while the artistic proportion would grow.\textsuperscript{18} Montpetit even brought collaborators from beyond his university (\textit{Conservatoire National de Musique}, \textit{Association Canadienne-Française pour l’Avancement des Sciences}, \textit{École Polytechnique}, \textit{École des Hautes Études Commerciales}), converting \textit{L’heure universitaire} into a production of the entire academic sector of Quebec. The advertising executive for CKAC even suggested to Montpetit to invite to the microphone, as ‘prominent figures’ visiting professors at the University of Montreal.\textsuperscript{19} A further sign indicated the didactic nature of the process. The publication of ‘pamphlets reproducing the broadcast courses, as done in England’, was considered, but unfortunately, the project never took off.\textsuperscript{20} Was \textit{L’heure universitaire} heard in the United States of America? In 1930, Édouard Montpetit received a letter from a correspondent from Chicago who wished to be able to listen to lectures in French coming from Quebec: ‘Many people in Chicago and in the United States generally are interested in learning or even acquiring better command of the French language’.\textsuperscript{21}

\textbf{Radio for the rural world}

Until that date in 1930, the educational programmes had been intended for everybody interested by a theme. By broadcasting a course aimed specifically at farmers, ‘upon the invitation of the officials of the University of Montreal, in conjunction with other faculties and schools’, the \textit{Institut Agricole d’Oka}, one of the most important schools for the training of French-speaking agronomists, made a breakthrough in 1930. The course was intended ‘not only for the farmers, but also for everybody in the towns and villages of Quebec who still has an interest in farming and in the hearts of whom that institute hopes to rekindle the wish to become farmers again’. Therefore, there was a mix of various types of programme. Scientific lectures were mixed with propaganda that constituted a rearguard battle in favour of a return to the land. The rhetoric might be explained by the economic crisis of that decade. Notwithstanding, initiators of the project had foreseen the potential of this new medium.
From his school and without any modification of his regular courses, a renowned professor expert in a given agricultural problem may address that problem for an audience of 500 or 1000 farmers gathered for condensed courses in a hall equipped with a radio.

We do not know how long that experiment lasted and we know almost nothing about another that began in 1935 under the title *La renaissance campagnarde*, which was in itself very ambitious. Produced by a ‘group of educators’, this series was intended as ‘a radio crusade aiming to inflame again the minds and hearts for agriculture’. In 1938-39, the Agricultural School of Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière, founded in the nineteenth century by the Reverend François Pilote and affiliated to Laval University since 1912 launched itself in teaching by radio through a series with the suggestive name of *L’heure Pilote*. Each of the dozen programmes for that first trial included ‘a lecture of general interest, Canadian songs from “La bonne chanson”, and varied instrumental music’. It was enlivened by a radio novel called *La famille Routinier*, broadcast in six episodes between April and May 1939, written by Louis-de-Gonzague Fortin, teacher at the School of Agriculture. This is in keeping with the tastes of the time; that genre of literature was abundant in Quebec. *L’heure Pilote*, directed at farmers, aimed to inform them, of course, but also to convince them of the importance of their role and of the necessity to confine themselves to that role. During the decade of the 1950s, the programmes began with the motto: ‘Le sol, c’est la patrie; améliorer l’un c’est servir l’autre’, a formula equating land with country and declaring that one serves the country by improving the land.

This series, broadcasted by CHGB, a local station affiliated to the state network, was still on the air in 1961, for half an hour each week. Part of its contents was prepared by students, a practice which may be commendable from an educational point of view, provoking a healthy competition among the students, but raises doubts about the quality of the lessons.

These local initiatives by two schools of agriculture (Oka and La Pocatière) did not yet prompt into action the higher spheres of the educational world. J.-C. Magnan, author of the general agenda (*Programme général*) of 1941 for the teaching of agriculture throughout the region’s education system, said not a word about radio, although he wrote a few lines about ‘rural cinema’, which he ranked among the ‘practical and didactic means of teaching’.

### Le réveil rural

A few key individuals in 1937 created the *Société du Réveil Rural* that was the origin of a series of programmes broadcast thanks to the collaboration of Radio-Canada (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) and to financial assistance from ‘a few provincial departments’. These people committed themselves to dealing, in daily programmes, with a great diversity of themes, such as ‘folklore, the rural mind, embellishment of the farm, young naturalists and family education’. *Le réveil rural* was launched in 1938 with the collaboration, at least in the beginning, of the Agricultural School of Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière. The driving force behind that series was to be Armand Bérubé, who had been trained in communication and agriculture in the United States. *Le réveil rural* was under the responsibility of the very recent federal state radio that innovated by broadcasting two different series, one in English and one in French, from its station in Montreal. Intended as ‘a contribution, in the form of a public service, to information, to mass education and to public health, that series consisted essentially of in-depth
information’. As in the case of L’heure Pilote, and probably to ensure a lighter tone, a story in four episodes, Aujourd’hui pour demain (‘Preparing now for tomorrow’), was broadcast during the very first year. It was written by the ‘colonization service of the national railways of Canada’, which was responsible for the transportation of farmers towards new agricultural development regions. In the context of lessons intended for a population with limited education, a dialogue between a teacher of the school of fisheries and a teacher of the Agricultural School of Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière was used in 1945 to explain ‘the influence of the sea on the climate’.

Whatever form they might take, the scientific assertions were not neutral. Engaged in a war effort between 1939 and 1945, as was everybody in Quebec, the farmer was reminded of the necessity ‘to produce as much as possible to fulfil the needs of the armed forces, to feed the population of Canada and the allied countries and to help, when the time comes, the starving nations of Europe’.

Speaking primarily to farmers, the originators of the project did not want to edge them out because they wished ‘to offer city dwellers a better understanding of rural people, and vice versa’. This is far removed from agriculturist propaganda. The campaigns for a ‘return to the land’ had had no effect, and that fact was taken into account; there were now two socio-economic worlds that must not be seen as opposed but as complementary.

Farmers could rely on other radio resources. The Macdonald College of Montreal, namely the Faculty of Agriculture of the McGill University, offered in 1941 a series of lectures based on a curriculum developed by the dean of the faculty, who was also President of the Canadian Association for Adult Education. Intended for English-speaking people and broadcast through the stations of CBC in Montreal, these very specialized lectures – ‘nutrition, parasitology, use of minerals in diets, economics and agriculture’ – also reached audiences in the maritime provinces and the eastern part of Ontario.

Reporting to the Department of Agriculture, the provincial service responsible for the schools of agriculture that oversaw the teaching offered there, asked teachers to prepare, at least from 1952 to 1960, ‘lectures to be delivered by radio.’ We do not know if these lectures were intended for the students of the schools of agriculture or for farmers in general. We might infer that the practices of a few schools of agriculture had finally opened the eyes of the higher authorities in the Department.

Radio-Collège
Although it lasted a very short time, L’heure universitaire showed the way for teaching a more highly-educated audience. In 1939-1940 Radio-Canada offered a course of French grammar and linguistics given at the University of Montreal by Charles Bruneau of the Sorbonne, and whose texts were published by Radio-Canada, ‘that answered the wishes and pressing demands of the audience’, and which would continue to be distributed as rewards at least until 1946. On the back cover of the manual complementing the lectures, Radio-Canada described itself as the ‘auxiliary of all the educational projects’; applying to itself the declaration made by David Sarnoff in 1922, according to which ‘broadcasting aims at entertaining, informing and educating people’, Radio-Canada ended its self-advertising by declaring that ‘its motto is to teach, to entertain and to serve’.

Radio-Canada, with its experience in general programmes produced by private radio in co-operation with universities, launched in 1941 what remained its most successful educational series, Radio-Collège. Its title was already a whole curriculum. The associated chief executive officer clearly stated:
If our young people, our professors, our teachers, our school inspectors, our educational institutions, our listeners as a whole benefit to a certain degree from Radio-Collège, we will be entirely satisfied and we will have fulfilled the role we had envisioned for ourselves.\textsuperscript{45}

The circumstances were as favourable as possible. In a period when the agricultural society of Quebec was transforming into an industrial society, arguments about the necessity of increased education became more frequent. The government would raise from 14 to 16 the age of compulsory school attendance, thus obliging the Department of Public Education (Département de l’Instruction Publique) to develop a high school curriculum accessible to everybody. Furthermore, radio receivers were by now a generalized consumer good. In 1941, 70\% of households were equipped with a receiver; in 1947, that proportion reached 88\%.\textsuperscript{46}

To lay solid foundations for the formula envisaged, consisting in ‘programmes intended especially for the students of our colleges for boys or for girls, and of our teachers’ colleges’, Radio-Canada created a teaching committee comprising professors of Laval University and of the University of Montreal.\textsuperscript{47} It recruited a great proportion of its collaborators among university professors or within the intelligentsia. When Radio-Canada convened a congress to review the situation after five years of production, the congress took place at the Cercle Universitaire de Montréal. The speech made by Augustin Frigon, chief executive officer of Radio-Canada, showed how far Radio-Collège was inspired by high pedagogical standards; the teachers should aim at perfection and express themselves clearly.\textsuperscript{48} By doing so, Radio-Canada made sure of the collaboration of an educational sector that, otherwise, might have seen broadcasting initiatives as an encroachment upon its territory. Simultaneously, it acquired, among its listeners, a respectability that was essential for the success of its operation.

Radio-Collège expanded around three hubs: physical and natural sciences, human sciences, arts and literature. It is perhaps with the proportion of broadcasting dedicated to sciences that we can measure the rise of the interest shown toward that field of knowledge over twenty years, remembering the meagre part dedicated to sciences during L’heure provinciale. Starting in 1941, it was possible to hear talks by prominent scientists, such as the physicist Louis Bourgoin, of the École Polytechnique de Montréal, the chemist Léon Lortie, of Laval University, and Brother Marie-Victorin, of the University of Montreal, ‘a central figure in the intellectual circles of the province of Quebec’; Marie-Victorin was to die as a result of a car accident after writing his last scientific contribution, a lecture he was supposed to give on Radio-Collège in October 1944 that would therefore be read by Jules Brunel, his disciple and successor.\textsuperscript{49}

If descriptive sciences, such as botany, were popular with the organizers, also invited were young researchers who were opening new avenues, such as Fernand Séguin, who considered the study of biology as an initiation into the study of the whole human being. This approach created some unrest, when, along with François Cloutier, another young researcher, he even touched on psychiatry and mental disorders. Fernand Séguin would become one of the best scientific popularizers, especially on television, and would write a few school handbooks.\textsuperscript{50} Those in charge of Radio-Collège knew that they were entering a minefield because ‘the simple fact of speaking about mental disorders generates ambivalent feelings where fear mixes with curiosity’.\textsuperscript{51} It may also have incited other individuals to continue with this topic, such as Thérèse Gouin-Décarie, ‘who explains the development of the child, the revolts and conflicts of the teenager’; that was psychology, a very new science in Quebec. She even went as far as pondering on the
place of woman in the society: ‘wife, child or mother of the husband’. She was one of the first women to formulate feminist questions on the air waves of state radio; her lectures would constitute the basis for two handbooks subsequently approved for use in high schools.

As far as human sciences are concerned, radio had come a long way since L’heure provinciale. There was to be a major evolution of the themes and their treatment between the beginnings of Radio-Collège in 1941 and the end of the series in 1956. The first programmes on the history of Canada (by Albert Tessier and Marie-Claire Davely), dedicated essentially to New France and in which role-play was abundantly used, illustrates the progress that had been made. At the same period, the history exam in certain classical colleges, required candidates to compose a speech that might have been made by some particular great figure! At the opposite pole from L’heure provinciale, where current political questions were avoided, Radio-Collège invited Professor Jean-Charles Bonenfant, starting in 1954, to take charge of the section dedicated to reflection on the Canadian constitution. That tricky question must have been treated with objectivity if we rely on a laudatory appreciation published in the liberal and federalist daily Le Canada, which has the following motto: ‘Le Canada d’abord, le Canada toujours, rien que le Canada.’ Moreover, among the specialists invited to debate these questions, was one University of Montreal professor, Pierre-Elliott Trudeau (later Prime Minister from 1969 to 1984). We might speculate about voices that were not heard on Radio-Collège. Is the absence of the Reverend Lionel Groulx, the most famous historian and a passionate supporter of the nationalist movement of the province of Quebec, revealing? Certainly, it would have been necessary to invite, as a counterweight, the Reverend Arthur Maheux, a herald of federalism.

Therefore it seems that Radio-Collège, while addressing tricky themes, such as the constitution, avoided partisan ideological discourse, from whatever side. Hence we must question an assertion made by the nationalist historian Robert Rumilly in his history of Quebec: ‘The Free Press of Winnipeg, scrutinizing the contents of Radio-Collège [in July 1942], was indignant about the place given to the French regime in programmes dealing with the history of Canada.’ If that accusation was justified, it could at least be interpreted as recognition of the importance accorded to opinions expressed in that forum. But what was the truth? Two articles in the Winnipeg Free Press dated 31 July, appear to be at the source of the historian’s ire. In the first one, under the title ‘A Matter of History’, a few reasons were advanced why Quebecers had voted negatively in the recent referendum, of 27 April 1942, on the draft constitution; the other article, ‘CBC French Network’, referred to the testimony of Montreal journalist Jean-Claude Harvey before a parliamentary commission, where he accused the French-language sector of the CBC of giving air-time to opponents of the federal policy in time of war. Neither of these articles either mentions Radio-Collège or makes allusion to the teaching of the history of New France; moreover, testimony given before a House of Commons committee about the use of radio, by Jean-Claude Harvey, an active champion of federalism, accused the administrators of the French-language sector of the CBC of giving air-time to opponents of the federal policy in time of war. This attack concerns the French-language sector of the CBC, but never once mentions Radio-Collège; an article entitled ‘La guerre des idées’, written by the same journalist a few days later in Le jour takes up once more the essence of his reasoning, again without any mention of Radio-Collège. It may be concluded that the historian Rumilly has, to say the least, stretched the text of his sources.

As it had done for the sciences, Radio-Collège encouraged, during its last years of existence, young historians (Marcel Trudel and Guy Frégault) whose approach had
nothing in common with that of the historians who had preceded them on the airwaves. A return to the history of New France made it possible for the authors to familiarize listeners with a notion of history that implied extensive use of documentary sources and led to the questioning of earlier interpretations. The managers of Radio-Collège congratulated themselves in their syllabus of 1954-55:

Radio-Collège thought it was appropriate to invite two of our most active historians to inform its listeners about the conclusions emanating from the work they have already done and the conclusions that will result from the work they are doing right now.61

Going beyond the traditional limits of history, Radio-Collège made incursions not only into political sciences, as we have seen with Professor Bonenfant, but also into sociology, especially sociology of the working class, at a crucial moment during the major crisis shaking Quebec, the 1949 workers’ strike in the asbestos mines in the town of Asbestos. The Reverend Jules-Bernard Gingras, professor at the University of Montreal, took up with success the difficult challenge of speaking about labour-management relations by referring initially to the papal encyclical Rerum novarum, while declaring, at the same time: ‘The state must officially recognize professional associations, in the form of unions or corporations. It must let unions organize themselves and intervene as little as possible in their internal functioning.’62 A similar acknowledgement may be made about religion. In a period when the triumphalist attitude of the Church was evident in society, Radio-Collège broadcast on religion without being moralistic. It offered courses on the Bible, presented discussions of current problems – ‘the hierarchy in the Church, the role of lay people, the scandal of suffering, education for freedom’ – and had the audacity to invite others than priests, like the religious Brother Clément Lockquell, of Laval University, or lay people such as Simone Monet-Charrand, to produce certain programmes with a religious content.63

Arts and literature were topics to which Radio-Collège devoted most time. There were few lectures on visual arts owing to difficulties of presentation on radio. However, lectures on the art of New France given by a specialist, Gérard Morisset, were accompanied by illustrated publications. On the other hand, listeners could receive, week after week, an initiation into classical music, including recent compositions. In the radio tradition first launched by the conductor Wilfrid Pelletier64 and later under the responsibility of Claude Champagne,65 professor and composer, these programmes allowed listeners to acquire a basic vocabulary of music, thus preparing the ground for Jean Vallierand. Thanks to that ‘aesthete and musicologist ahead of his time’, faithful listeners would have the opportunity to hear ‘4300 pages of texts and 650 compositions throughout 215 programmes dedicated to the history of music’.66 Roland Leduc also left his mark on the musical scene of Radio-Collège, where he was ‘the animator and conductor of a series introducing musical instruments and to the orchestra’.67

Literature received the most extensive treatment of all. One reason might have been to satisfy and retain the main audience, the classical colleges. Over a period of fifteen years, listeners were able to hear 216 complete or partial works by 101 writers as different as Sophocles, Shakespeare, Ibsen, Camus and Miller.68 The will to offer listeners an overview of world theatre (the series would soon be titled ‘Sur toutes les scènes du monde’), would encourage frequent theatre-going in the adult lives of college leavers.

The theatre on offer had didactic purposes with the reading of plays preceded by an analysis that situated them in their context of time and place. That approach was all
the more important because the schedule revealed the audacity of the programmers. It was not so usual to read out Camus’s *Caligula* in 1950 or *Les justes*, by the same author, in 1953. We may be surprised by the open-mindedness shown by those in charge of programme selection. Certain persons however did not share that vision; the schedule was published each year in advance of the season, and after learning that *Radio-Collège* intended to broadcast *Le gendre de Monsieur Poirier* by Émile Augier, Reverend Émile Beaudry, of the Quebec seminary sent this cautionary note: ‘The author is not commendable. We request the persons in charge not to present that work in a favourable light at the beginning of the programme’. The schedule had didactic aims and was intended, in the first place, for students at the collegiate level, even though it later reached a constantly increasing audience in unanticipated circles. That was another proof of its success. Jean-Paul Desbiens, for example, at that time confined in a convalescent home, later to become a teacher, author, journalist, and noted critic of the academic system of Quebec, wrote: ‘When I had tuberculosis, I sucked at the breasts of *Radio-Collège*’. The whole set of lectures was completed by a series of measures that connected them even more directly to the academic world. *Radio-Collège* published at the beginning of each academic year a *Programme-horaire* distributed free of charge on request, the circulation statistics of which demonstrate the popularity of its courses: 5000 in the first year, 20,000 in 1949 and 32,000 in 1953. Preparation for the hearing of a play is highly educational, and *Radio-Collège* used that preparation: ‘Classical theatre is presented every Sunday evening. The Thursday lesson analyzes the play that will be presented the next Sunday’. Foreign professors invited by the universities of Quebec made a detour to *Radio-Collège*. For example, Raymond David wrote to Jean-Charles Bonenfant proposing as a guest for his station Joseph Lebret, a Dominican priest visiting the University of Montreal, ‘who has recently completed a long trip to Asia and South America to study the problem of overpopulation and undernourishment’. *Radio-Collège* did not hesitate to treat current themes that might provoke polarised opinions among its listeners. Where university professors normally published their class preparation, some lecturers of *Radio-Collège* also published their texts. About 30 of them were compiled, including geographic maps and large size illustrations for various themes treated on the air waves. At least for the sciences, some programmes were recorded on disks. Sometimes, the ‘students’ were invited to take part in mail contests offering prizes to the best participants. As a result of the programmes, study clubs were organized in urban or rural centres. Finally, the use of drama was considered consistent with the aims of *Radio-Collège*. To complement his course on Alfred Nobel in the series ‘*Aventures scientifiques*’, Léon Lortie wrote a sketch called *Alfred Nobel, inventeur de la dynamite et apôtre de la paix*.

The *Radio-Collège* series, produced in Montreal, covered the entire Quebec region thanks to a network of affiliated stations. There were eight in 1941 and 16 in 1947, including Edmundston in New Brunswick. The series soon radiated throughout the whole of Canada. Gérard Lamarche was proud to announce to Jean-Charles Bonenfant in 1952 that ‘we reach as far as Edmonton, in Alberta.’ That expansion was the source of a problem. The programmes, initially intended for Quebec now reached the whole of Canada. The vocabulary, if not the style, had to take account of this fact, as the person in charge of human sciences and literature was told:

Terms such as ‘la province’ or ‘le Québec’ must disappear from our programmes. We must never forget our national character and we must avoid using expressions that would seem to limit the extension of our influence to the sole province of Quebec.
So, even success had adverse consequences! That success was however recognized. In 1955, the Canadian Association for Adult Education presented to Radio-Collège ‘the annual prize awarded to the institution most distinguished for its achievements in popular education.’

Might Radio-Collège be considered as a model? Almost immediately after its launch, Radio-Canada received, from as far as South America, requests for information about Radio-Collège. UNESCO, created as recently as 1946, wishing to offset a lack of schools, teachers and handbooks in a Europe painfully recovering from World War II, had some programmes of Radio-Collège adapted for broadcasting outside Canada. That was the supreme consecration. Georges Préfontaine, producer of a series called Le monde animal (The Animal Kingdom), proposed the titles of thirteen programmes that should answer the need. Through the international service of Radio-Canada, some programmes were recorded on disk and distributed to countries such as Greece, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Luxembourg and France. In some cases Radio-Collège even ensured translation into Polish and Czech. However, dissemination beyond the borders had begun some time before; during the academic year 1943-44, a professor of French in a university of the United States asked his students to read, before hearing them, some of the plays included in the syllabus of Radio-Collège.

**Fig 1**: from Radiomonde, 18 October 1941

**University network**

We have seen that a network of universities provided a pool from which the originators of teaching through the radio found their resources. The University of Montreal had been the first to support the school of agriculture of Oka and was later one of the main architects of Radio-Collège, and of L’heure provinciale before that, which served as a testing ground. All these programmes bear the hallmark of the secretary of the University of Montreal, the economist Édouard Montpetit.

Laval University was not outdone, first standing as a security for the School of Agriculture of Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière, then as a collaborator in Radio-Collège, where Jean-Charles Bonenfant was heard quite often. That university had a good grasp of the effectiveness of radio to educate the masses. When creating the Centre de Culture Populaire in 1946, it rapidly offered summer courses by radio. To make sure that the
message was understood, it was important that the messengers learned to use radio as a new instrument of communication. ‘Radio and television are presented as small popular universities or as huge cultural cafeterias where the user or consumer has a very large choice’. Once again, there was collaboration between public bodies: Laval University received for this purpose subsidies from the Department of Welfare and Youth (responsible for managing adult education and all education outside of public schooling), and the state society offered its facilities free of charge. Did universities complement each other or compete in adult education? The University of Montreal had also envisioned in 1945 the creation of its own ‘Institute of Radio’, in cooperation with radio station CKAC and the public relations representative of that station wrote a memorandum entitled ‘Notre radio a un rôle éducatif à jouer’.

Although less prominent on radio than the two French-language universities, McGill did not neglect the new medium. Its participation through the programmes of the MacDonald College of Agriculture in 1941 has already been mentioned as well as its collaboration on L’heure provinciale. Twelve years earlier, taking its inspiration in a model developed by the BBC, the ‘McGill Department of Extramural Relations’ advertised in the Montreal daily The Gazette a ‘series of four lectures on museums to be broadcast by the history staff’.

In 1929, that was certainly a first in Canada. Nonetheless, McGill University did not engage as much as the University of Montreal in teaching via the radio. Its rector answered with a terse ‘no’ the following request for information received from a senior officer of the Department of Mines of Ottawa in 1937: ‘It is our understanding that certain Universities are utilizing radio facilities to broadcast lectures of an educational nature. May I enquire whether the University of McGill is using this method of instruction?’

It seems that McGill University preferred joint projects with other universities. Wilfrid Bovey worked with the Montreal studio of the National Council of Education and he attempted to enrol Montpetit from the University of Montreal in 1941. This is an interesting project because CKAC offered a ‘daily half-hour broadcast’. Bovey announced a few of the themes envisioned. A professor of McGill would speak about diction and another would explain the opera Tristan und Isolde. Canon Chartier, professor at the University of Montreal, would discuss the ‘French patois’. A ‘series of trans-Canada broadcasts’ was also considered.

We lack evidence to know whether that series, a potential counterpart to L’heure universitaire, went on the air waves.

Many Canadian academics rapidly foresaw the possibilities offered by the new medium. As early as 1930, we find them in the Canadian Radio League, one of whose aims consisted in promoting ‘a wider use of... school broadcasts’. Bovey and Montpetit sat on its board. On 21 March 1932, through its secretary, the conference of the presidents of Canadian universities officially endorsed the efforts of the Canadian Radio League: ‘... radio could be used to educate popular taste in music, as the development of B.B.C. has shown...’. The whole discourse of the Canadian Radio League was based on two objectives: to transplant into Canada the experience of the BBC and to develop a Canada-wide control system for all radio programmes. This second objective was officially justified by the desire to contain invasion of the air waves by the United States, among other things. Nonetheless, Quebec could not completely embrace that discourse, as education, one of the objectives of the Canadian Radio League, was a matter for provincial jurisdiction. It was probably to avoid offending one side or the other that Wilfrid Bovey had reminded the president of McGill University, a few days before that meeting, of two principles, to use the radio everywhere in Canada for educational purposes, but in line with constitutional jurisdictions:
The Conference of Canadian Universities should be asked to establish a special committee to arrange for all such interprovincial or nation wide broadcasts as are necessary, or desirable, acting as a coordinating committee for the various educational committees to be established as above suggested.94

Barely one year later, a report on what might well be the first Canada-wide enquiry on the radio emphasised that education was of provincial jurisdiction and added that, with reference to programmes for adult education, it was necessary to think that ‘planning by series is inevitable’ and that radio programmes must be ‘simple progressive expositions’.95

Very soon after its creation in 1936, the CBC, of federal jurisdiction of course, tried to engage the universities in its educational projects, in a most original way. It broadcast, over the course of two years, debates between students of various universities. They took place between Francophone universities and Anglophone universities to begin with and finished with a national debate. Considering the audience, discussions on current affairs were preferred rather than purely academic topics. For instance, French-speaking students debated ‘whether Italy had good reasons to wage war against Ethiopia, if direct assistance must be maintained’ or ‘whether the provincial governments need more power.’ English-speaking students considered, for example, ‘whether democracy is triumphing in Canada at this time.’ The final debate of the first year’s broadcasts, between the University of Montreal and the University of Manitoba, started with an assertion: ‘The British Empire is the greatest factor of peace in the world’. The University of Montreal ‘wins by one point’, and it is difficult to determine whether the linguistic aspect favoured the students of the University of Montreal.96 Students could use the language of their choice; students of the University of Manitoba who did not understand French, had complained that they were at a disadvantage. The idea of a collaboration between universities had been launched. As early as 1937, the CBC sent to all university presidents a circular letter announcing that: ‘We are interested in trying to arrange a weekly series of programmes to be broadcast by the various universities of the Dominion ... each university should undertake to broadcast one programme of an hour’s duration’.97 We do not know if that proposal was followed up; however, the letter of intent illustrates and underlines the importance accorded to academic teaching by radio.

Conclusion

What might surprise us in this account? The rapidity with which the academic sector of Quebec used radio to increase its influence? Or the unanimity with which the intelligentsia had recognised the possibilities of that new medium? The debate raised in France by Georges Duhamel about ‘the low level of truly nutritive intellectual substance diluted in all that noise’98 does not seem to have resonated very much here, except for an outburst by Robert Rumilly, Duhamel’s fellow citizen emigrated to Quebec, according to which ‘Radio, like plague, spreads at a vertiginous speed. The United States are infested by it. The province of Quebec does not escape that universal scourge.’99 The Church, traditionally considered as opposed to technological changes, took note of the situation. Since radio was here to stay, it might as well be used. There was no risk of transposition to the educational sector of the warning given by the Church, according to which sermons heard on the radio might divert the faithful from attending churches.100

Beginning with a simple piano lesson given on the radio in 1925, we arrived at a structured system covering most academic fields. The three main universities of Quebec, that would later turn toward television, were all involved to various degrees.101
Notes

1 The motto of Pierre Larousse, perpetuated in Larousse publications was ‘Je sème à tout vent’, represented from 1905 to the present day by a female figure blowing dandelion seeds.
2 A contract between the Marconi Company and the newspaper was signed on 2 May, and a few days later it received the call letters CKAC from the federal authorities. It was the first French-language radio station in the world.
6 Émiliano Renaud, *Cours élémentaire de piano en trente leçons fait exclusivement pour le poste radiotéléphonique C.K.A.C. de la ‘Presse’*, ([Montréal]: [Émiliano Renaud], 1925); Pagé, *Histoire de la radio*, 211. A few years later, the English practice for broadcast courses would be considered as a point of reference: ‘One of the characteristics of the regime established in England is to distribute to schools pamphlets where lessons given on the radio are summarized.’ (Édouard Montpetit et Henri Letondal, ‘Rapport des directeurs de l’heure provinciale’, *Rapport du ministre des terres et forêts de la province de Québec pour les douze mois expirés le 30 juin 1930* (1930), 154). According to Pierre Miquel, ‘As early as 1929, 5000 English schools were using radio teaching. The BBC was publishing more than 100,000 companion pamphlets for the courses.’ [Pierre Pagé, *Radiodiffusion et culture savante au Québec, 1930-1960: les cours universitaires à la radio, le Service Radio-Collège, le theatre de repertoire international* (Montréal: Maxime, 1993), 18].
10 Jules-Omer Desaulniers à Édouard Montpetit, 3 mars 1932, Archives de l’université de Montréal (AUM), Fonds Secrétariat général, D0035/125. The signatory was to become Surintendant de l’instruction publique (Superintendent of Public Education).
11 Marcel Valois [i.e. J. Dufresne], *Au carrefour des souvenirs* (Montréal : Beauchemin, 1965), 40.
13 I am using the subdivisions used by the writers of the annual reports sent to the Minister of Lands and Forests, to whom Montpetit and Letondal had to account for the amounts received from the government through his department. The section on history sometimes included literature, geography, travel and regions.
14 Germaine Cornez, *Une étape de vie universitaire*, (Montréal: Thérien Frères, n.d. 1942?), 79. Cornez was secretary to Montpetit. Bovey ‘was one of those English-speaking persons who considered it a priority to bring English-speaking people to know the French-speaking element of Quebec’. (Personal communication from Pierre Pagé).
15 ‘We will hold the entire session. Since we have had M. Jean Goulet as conductor for many years, M.H. Parent, of the Conservatoire Lassalle, as teacher of diction, and a student of M. Lamoureux as choirmaster, we are not afraid of comparisons with more fortunate competitors.’ Frère Azarias, directeur du collège Laval, à Joseph Bilodeau, Ministre de l’industrie et du commerce, 9 mars 1938. Archives nationales du Québec, E16 1960-01-035/180.
Educational radio in Quebec

16 AUM, fonds Jules Brunel, P0149/B4, 1.
17 Communication personnelle de Pierre Pagé.
18 Pagé, Radiodiffusion, 32.
19 Jules Derome à Edouard Montpetit, 4 octobre 1932, AUM, fonds du Secrétariat général, D0035/125.
20 Cornez, Une étape, 80.
21 AUM, fonds Secrétariat général, D0035/125.
26 Reverend Charles-Émile Gadbois used radio to popularize morally acceptable songs, «la bonne chanson», a term that is part of the culture of Quebec.
27 Archives de la société historique de la Côte-du-sud (ASHC), Fonds Louis-de-Gonzague Fortin, F198/376/5 à 11.
28 François-Xavier Jean, ‘L’école supérieure d’agriculture de Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière’, Rapport du ministre de l’agriculture ... le 30 juin 1938 (1938), 89.
29 ASHC, F126/97/2.
33 AUM, Fonds Georges Préfontaine, P0001/D12. Félix-Antoine Savard, Victor Barbeau, Clarence Gagnon, Jean-Marie Gauvreau, Reverend Albert Tessier and Brother Marie-Victorin were amongst the founders of the society.
34 Joseph Diament, directeur, à Adrien Pouliot, doyen de la faculté des sciences de l’Université Laval, 12 mai 1959, ASHC, F126/96/3.
35 Personal communication from Pierre Pagé.
37 ASHC, F126/96/1.
38 ASHC, F126/96/4.
40 ‘Faire mieux connaître les ruraux aux citadins ... et les citadins aux ruraux’, La semaine à Radio-Canada (20-26 juillet 1963), 2.
41 ‘Le collège MacDonald’, Rapport du ministre de l’agriculture ... le 31 mars 1941 (1941), 95-96.
Radio-Collège - Programme-horaire de la saison 1941-1942 (1941): 4.


50 Fernand Séguin and Auray Blain, Le monde des plantes: botanique. 8e et 9e années (Montréal: Éditions Centre de psychologie et de pédagogie 1959); Fernand Séguin Les chemins de la science (Montréal: Éditions du Renouveau pédagogique, 1969-73), a set of seven pamphlets for beginners.


58 Special Committee on Radio Broadcasting: Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, 1942.


60 Gérard Laurence repeats Robert Rumilly’s accusation against the Free Press in ‘La province de Québec’, La guerre des ondes, 323.


62 Lefèbvre, ‘Radio-Collège (1941-1956)’, 251. In 1951, Reverend Gingras published Figures de sociologie catholique, his title indicating the school of thought to which he belonged. At the same time however, contrary to current practice, he did not identify himself as a priest in the title page, but as a professor at the University of Montreal, as if he wanted to distance himself from the social group to which he belonged.

63 Lefèbvre, ‘Radio-Collège (1941-1956)’, 256.

64 Cinq années de progrès, 55.


68 The director of Radio-Collège received a letter of congratulation for the programme on Shakespeare which ended on a humorous note. He asked to delay that kind of programme by one hour for this reason: ‘only have a little boy of two years and a half, but mental concentration is very difficult for me on account of his buoyancy and Shakespeare’s.’ René Arthur à Aurèle Séguin, 26 octobre 1947, Archives de l’université Laval (AUL), Fonds Jean-Charles Bonenfant, P10/5/13. It is noteworthy that the buoyant little boy, named André Arthur, was destined to pursue a long and controversial radio career.

69 Aurèle Séguin, to whom the complaint was addressed, sent a copy of it to the appointed commentator, Jean-Charles Bonenfant, of the Laval University, on 26 January, 1942.
Educational radio in Quebec

(Archives de l’université Laval, Fonds Jean-Charles Bonenfant, P10/5/13). Eventually, the incriminated work would be heard only in 1948-49, the explanation for this being either that Reverend Beaudry knew long before that the play was to be presented, or that the CBC postponed its reading.

71 Lefebvre, ‘Radio-Collège (1941-1956)’, 239.
72 *Cinq années de progrès*, 43.
73 Raymond David, directeur de Radio-Collège, à Jean-Charles Bonenfant, 14 octobre 1955, AUL, fonds Jean-Charles Bonenfant, P120/5/1/3.
75 *Radio-Collège: Programme-horaire de la huitième saison* (1948), 46-47.
76 AUM, fonds Georges Préfontaine, P0001/A342.
77 Lefebvre, ‘Radio-Collège (1941-1956)’, 239.
78 AUM, fonds Léon Lortie, PO135/C16.
81 *Cinq années de progrès*, 66.
83 AUM, fonds Georges Préfontaine, P0001/A341.
84 Pagé, *Radiodiffusion*, 83-85. The acknowledgements sent to Aurèle Séguin by the officer of the UNESCO are really over-enthusiastic. Contrary to what it claims, the texts of Radio-Collège were evidently not translated into French!
87 Ferdinand Biondi à Aurèle Séguin de Radio-Canada, 6 juillet 1945, AUM, fonds du Secrétariat général, D0035/125.
89 Robert J. Stead au Principal de McGill, 3 décembre 1937, Archives de l’université McGill (AUMcG), fonds General correspondence, 0002, 0048, 00534.
90 Wilfrid Bovey à Edouard Montpetit, 18 décembre 1931, AUMcG, fonds General correspondence, 0002, 0048, 00534.
91 Alan B. Plaunt, secrétaire de la Canadian radio league, 10 décembre 1930, AUMcG, fonds General correspondence, 0002, 0048, 00534.
92 Carleton Stanley, secrétaire de la conférence des recteurs, à Alan B. Plaunt, 21 mars 1932, AUMcG, fonds General correspondence, 0002, 0048, 00534.
93 Wilfrid Bovey au recteur de l’université McGill, 14 mars 1932, AUMcG, fonds General correspondence, 0002, 0048, 00534.
95 AUM, fonds du secrétariat général, D00 35/212.
96 Gladstone Murray, 17 novembre 1937, AUMcG, fonds General correspondence, 0002, 0048, 00534.
Acknowledgement:
I wish to thank Pierre Pagé, leading authority on the history of radio in Quebec, for his judicious remarks after reading a first version of this paper. Thanks also to Édouard Bergeron, who translated it.
Universities and professions in the early modern period

Rosemary O'Day

Abstract
This article brings together old and new ideas and information to provide a different perspective than has so far prevailed upon the relationship between the universities and the professions in the early modern period. It focuses not only upon the direct impact of the so-called educational revolution upon the learned professions but also upon the indirect and less easy to quantify implications of that phenomenon.

Introduction
In order to establish the influence of the early modern English universities upon the development of the so-called learned professions we must first accept that the relationship between the two was complicated rather than simple. In other words it is not a case of discovering whether or not Oxford and Cambridge themselves provided vocational training for professionals. It is not appropriate to focus exclusively upon the direct contribution of the universities to professional education and training or on attempts by the universities to interfere at an institutional level. Instead we must look also at how the influence of universities and colleges was spread throughout the professions, at how they helped shape the professional ethos and the future work and relationships of professionals. To do so, we need to think ourselves back into what was a very different society from our own, dominated by philosophies and norms distinct from our own. We need to build upon what is known about the catchment of early modern schools and colleges in order to arrive at a more nuanced picture of the relationship between educational institutions and society as a whole. Reference must be made to the role of the university faculties and the collegiate system; to the concepts of general and special vocations; to what we today term vocational training; to evidence of a common culture; to the role of lifelong friendships and sociability; to what must seem to us very strange notions of the accepted role of college fellows and scholars in the education of the young.

Oxford and Cambridge and the education of professionals
At first sight it may seem that Oxford and Cambridge lost that control of the learned professions that they had in the late medieval period. As late as 1554 Roger Ascham was able to state: ‘I know universities be instituted only that the realm may be served with preachers, lawyers and physicians’. Thereafter the universities had variable fortunes, affected as they were by external events, the reformation and the civil wars. These events had an impact upon total numbers in the universities and especially upon the number of BAs progressing to the higher faculties of theology, law and medicine that were taught at what we today call postgraduate level.

Statistics for the size of the universities are hard come by and oft disputed. The following table provides approximate figures for the size of Oxford and Cambridge at various points in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These statistics are only indicative, because they disguise the inadequacy of the sources upon which they are
based: contemporary estimates, figures that include undergraduates as well as fellows and scholars and figures that do not, historians’ calculations based on matriculation registers, and so on. Comparable figures for both universities at any one time are rarely available. Runs of figures over two centuries are yet more hardly come by. Historians suggest that the early sixteenth century was also a period of expansion but there are no reliable estimates for numbers immediately preceding the reformation, thereby preventing us from making truly meaningful statements about the impact of the reformation on overall university numbers, although we may deduce that the impact was significant. The figures are enough however to show that it was possible to recover quickly from such crises; that both universities grew considerably in size over the period following the reformation; that Cambridge grew from a lower starting point than Oxford; and to suggest that much of the growth was in the numbers of students not funded by the university or colleges, that is, of what we today call undergraduates.

Undergraduates at Oxford and Cambridge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Oxford</th>
<th>Cambridge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c.1390s</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1490s</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td>1300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.1550s</td>
<td>1150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1560s</td>
<td>1764</td>
<td>1267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1570</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>1630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1575</td>
<td></td>
<td>1783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1617</td>
<td></td>
<td>2270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1622</td>
<td>c.3200</td>
<td>3052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1670s</td>
<td>c.3200</td>
<td>c.3000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Crises certainly hit the higher faculties at the reformation. Oxford, a university dominated by religious orders of monks and friars in the middle ages lost at least 800 members. The faculties of theology, medicine and law there were especially affected in the ensuing period. Theology lost considerable numbers although it remained the largest higher faculty. The removal of canon law from the curriculum and the uncertain future of the ecclesiastical courts meant that it was difficult to attract law students. By 1566 there were insufficient law students to fill the available dedicated fellowships and scholarships. Numbers thereafter considerably increased but a study of the civil lawyers has shown that there was a crisis in the university faculties between 1590 and 1610 linked to a shortage of professional opportunities.

Students pursued doctorates in the civil law not to quench their thirst for academic learning but to set themselves on the high road to rewards and preferments...The fate of the civil law as an academic study depended almost completely upon the availability and value of the offices for which the students were preparing themselves.  

The medical faculty was tiny – it had only 177 graduates during the entire sixteenth century. Perhaps most startling is the evidence for the decline in the number of BAs proceeding to what today we would call postgraduate study. ‘In the decade after 1530, when the tensions of the royal divorce and the break with Rome took their full toll, the proportion of the known alumni who went on to graduate study dropped from almost 40% to just over half that figure.'
Although a majority of new clergy in the period 1580-1640 were university students or graduates, relatively few had degrees in theology. Common lawyers obtained their vocational training in the Inns of Court in London. Physicians trained, for the most part, outside the universities. Entirely new professions such as the attorneys (ancestors of the solicitors), scriveners and civil servants grew up outside the universities as did specialisms such as surgery and pharmacy. Even those scholars who have pointed to the vitality of medicine, theology and civil law in the seventeenth century universities have concluded that this vitality was a function of the men involved and was not institutionally integrated.9

Closer examination however suggests that the picture itself is out of focus. The universities retained and even strengthened their control over parts of the ancient professions needing training in Theology and Civil Law. The MA, BD and DD remained an important to the career structure of part of the Church of England. A majority of higher clergy – that is, those in the richer pastoral livings and in positions of authority, such as rural deans, archdeacons and bishops – had degrees in theology from one of the universities and/or had held fellowships in one or more of their colleges. Of 11 graduates who held the prebend of Colwich in Staffordshire, for instance, all had an MA, six had a theology degree and four had held college fellowships. At Eccleshall, Staffordshire seven of the 15 prebendaries between 1554 and 1689 had held college fellowships. After the initial impact of the reformation the civil law saw a considerable revival until the early seventeenth century and it was the universities that provided the civil lawyers who served in the prerogative, university and ecclesiastical courts. The faculty suffered a further reversal during the seventeenth century, when opposition from the common law and the civil wars and interregnum saw the number of opportunities for civil lawyers drying up but the restoration saw a fresh resurgence. The universities also educated many of the more successful and prosperous physicians and licensed others. In London and the provinces medical men who acknowledged the importance of the Royal College of Physicians as a professional organisation nonetheless respected the imprimatur of a degree conferred by a university through its faculty of medicine.

In any event we should not be focusing exclusively upon the higher faculties (which continued to control certain professions) but instead upon the direct impact of university education upon generations of England’s elite and upon the professions in particular. Of the large numbers of students who did not enter the higher faculties of the universities, many took a bachelor’s degree – the percentage of freshmen taking this degree rose from 26% in the mid-sixteenth to over 40% in the early seventeenth century.10 Many students took the degree and entered the church, while others spent a year or two in a university college before moving on to the Inns of Court, into medical practice, into school teaching or into a private life spent in public service as Justice of the Peace, for example. Gentlemen, professionals and academics spoke the same language. Over many of these men the universities certainly retained no institutional control but they nonetheless exercised a continuing and powerful influence. The influence of the universities was felt more directly in some professions than others – of this there can be little doubt, especially the upper echelons of the clerical profession, the higher branches of both the civil and the common law, metropolitan medicine, the royal service. By a process of osmosis, however, this influence was also felt in the education, training and organisation of poorer parochial clergy, teachers, solicitors, attorneys, apothecaries, rural medical practitioners and others, at varying rates; and what we today would call the cascading effect was profound. The effect is difficult to measure although statistics of university attendance and subsequent careers
suggest its significance. There have been many debates about the nature of the early modern professions. The assumption here is that there were professions that were recognised as such by contemporaries and that were acutely aware of their own identity.\textsuperscript{11}

We need to set both university education and the development of learned professions in their social and demographic context. The population of England fluctuated during the period 1540-1700. Broadly speaking it stood at 2.774 million in 1541 and had risen to 5.281 million by 1656; thereafter it slowly declined with only occasional rallies.\textsuperscript{12} Actual doubling of the 1541 population was not reached until 1741. Historians since the 1960s have tended to see sixteenth-century England as a bipartite society, in which a tiny group (between four and five per cent of the population) belonged to the gentry or above, owned between a third and a half of the land and even more of the nation’s resources, and wielded power and controlled decision making. Change, however, was afoot.

In 1577 and 1587 William Harrison when describing the ‘degrees of people in the commonwealth of England’ found no place for professions with the exception of the clergy, yet one hundred years later Gregory King was in no doubt that six degrees of persons that today we would dub professional in character intervened between the leisureed classes who did not work and those involved in trade, retail, craftsmanship, manufacture and agriculture. These six groups included churchmen, lawyers, physicians, bureaucrats, schoolteachers and officers in the navy and military.

Historians such as Peter Earle have identified the emergence of a middle class in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. According to Earle’s definition, by the early years of the eighteenth century between a fifth and a quarter of London households were middle class and of these between a quarter and a third were households of ‘learned professionals’ – 5000 lawyers, 1000 clergy, 3000 teachers and 100 physicians.\textsuperscript{13} Having said this, be aware that professions in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the organisations that came to define them were not identical to their modern counterparts, were constantly developing and were highly segmented.

The educational revolution: its implications for the universities’ community engagement
There is a strong case to be made for educational expansion in early modern England – grammar school foundations multiplied (800 in the period 1480-1660); unendowed schools were yet more numerous and any figures that we have must be regarded as minima;\textsuperscript{14} undergraduate numbers at the universities as we have seen grew considerably. It is less clear that this constituted a revolution, unless it be in record keeping. Probably the expansion of university education was already beginning in the later middle ages. It was nonetheless certainly built upon in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Education formed an early life stage – pupils in elementary and grammar schools fitted within the age range of four to 18 and most undergraduates at the universities within the range of 14-21 or 22. Not everyone was given a formal schooling, be it in a school or a home environment. Few pupils had a school career that lasted continuously from four or five till 18: much more commonly, pupils attended school for just a year or two, with only those from gentle or professional status groups having a more extended grammar school education. David Cressy inferred from the records of William Dugard’s school at Colchester that the average
age of admission to a grammar school was about 12 years, with the large majority entering the school between the ages of nine and 13. Social class had a small effect upon age at admission: the higher the class the younger the age at entrance. Cressy noted that some of those who entered late had however migrated to Colchester from other grammar schools. On the basis of information in the college admission records at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge he was able to show that the average duration of students’ studies at grammar school was about four-and-a-half years and that the somewhat shorter periods shown for some students could be explained by their having moved from one school to another.\(^ {15} \)

Some, but by no means all, of these ‘grammar’ pupils would then progress directly to the universities. Many of them would be very young when they did so – 14, 15 or 16 years of age – but by the mid-seventeenth century most students who took the BA degree had begun their university studies around the age of 17.

Cressy and others showed that the social mix at grammar school was marked. The social composition of the undergraduate student body was also very varied. In part this was because of the traditional connection between the universities and the church’s need for educated personnel. This need was to be met from able boys of relatively humble origin. In part it was because the late medieval and early modern universities began to attract and cater for the education of many gentry and nobility. Some historians – notably Lawrence Stone – argued that this influx of well-born students in the period 1560-1640 constituted an educational revolution. Others have been more cautious and explained that the influx in the late sixteenth century was probably more apparent than real, arguing that expansion in undergraduate numbers predated this.\(^ {16} \)

Probably there had in the later middle ages been a sizeable number of well-born students but their presence had neither been recorded nor controlled. In about 1420 King’s Hall, Cambridge, initiated the practice of teaching for a fee undergraduates who were not on a foundation so the presence of undergraduates was not novel. What was new was the emergence in the sixteenth century of more colleges and halls dedicated to the education of undergraduates. Even in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, though, many students lived in the town not the college or hall and many do not appear in the university or college records.

### Social origins of Colchester Grammar School entrants\(^ {17} \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gentry</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clergy</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Professions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradesmen</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeomen</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>166</td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Undergraduate numbers at the universities were clearly flourishing in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The numbers suggest that the opportunity was seized by an increasing proportion of the individuals in the male year groups that could have afforded and aspired to it, and their servants or protégés. In 1500 about 300 new students entered the Universities. At the height of their popularity the two ancient universities combined attracted 1000 new undergraduates a year. Numbers reached peaks in the 1580s and ‘90s, 1620s, ‘30s and ‘70s that would never again be achieved until the nineteenth century when the country’s population exploded.
Matriculations at Oxford and Cambridge indicate that the social composition of the universities was changing. Social composition varied between the colleges – Emmanuel and Jesus College, Cambridge, for example were much more aristocratic in complexion than Jesus, University or Magdalen Colleges at Oxford.

**Percentage of Oxford matriculations at gentry status or above**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1575-79</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1580-89</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1590-99</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600-09</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cressy has shown that the matriculation records are seriously defective as a source for the social composition of the universities and are an especially ‘insensitive indicator of social structure, especially below the level of the squirearchy’.18 A quarter of students at Cambridge failed to matriculate. The Oxford matriculation registers recognised nobles, gentlemen and clergy but lumped everyone else in to the category of ‘plebeian’. At Cambridge the matriculation registers gave the dining status of the student but not his social status. College Records at Cambridge often provide a much more accurate picture of the precise origins of undergraduates. About one third of Cambridge college entrants were of gentry status or above, about one-fifth were sons of clergy or other professionals; the remainder were sons of tradesmen, yeomen and husbandmen. These figures will always be simply indicative because we know that individuals sometimes overstated or understated their social status.19

**Age and origins by table status, Caius College entrants 1600-40**

(Percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table status</th>
<th>Fellows</th>
<th>Esquires, lords</th>
<th>Gentry</th>
<th>Clergy, professions</th>
<th>Trades</th>
<th>Yeomen</th>
<th>Husbandmen</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>Median age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fellow commoners</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioners</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16.79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholars</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sizars</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17.24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unsurprisingly the tendency of the elite to attend university had repercussions throughout society. The reach of university education within particular social and occupational groups extended considerably. For example, of working Justices of the Peace (i.e. those members of the county elites who were most active in county administration and justice) in 1562, 4.89% had attended university; by 1584 23.17%; by 1608, 40.5% and by 1636, 62%. The percentage rose to 80% if all members of the bench were considered. In the early seventeenth century over half of those who served as Lords Lieutenant or Deputy Lords Lieutenant had attended university. There were commensurate rises in the number of Members of Parliament who had attended university. Over half the MPs in the Long Parliament had attended university, as compared with just a quarter in 1563.
Let us consider more carefully the evidence that exists for social mixing and its implications in the universities and their colleges themselves. First of all, the elite believed in and were keen to maintain social segregation. Henry Peacham in 1622 counselled:

For the companions of your recreation, consort yourself with gentlemen of your own rank and quality; for that friendship is best contenting and lasting. To be over free and familiar with inferiours argues a baseness of spirit and begetteth contempt... 

and there are echoes of his advice in many contemporary letters from fathers and brothers to new students. Undergraduates of noble birth at Cambridge entered the colleges with the status of fellow-commoner.

Perhaps the most important privilege fellow-commoners enjoyed was that of eating and associating with the fellows and master of the college rather than with the remainder of the undergraduate body. If they followed parental advice they would mix with only 10% of the student body. The Gonville and Caius College statistics indicate that a high proportion of gentle and aristocratic parents were prepared to pay fees for this privilege and that even a few of professional or more humble origin were tempted to do so. Humfrey Busbey, an LLD of Eye, Suffolk, who had been a fellow of Trinity Hall, Cambridge for 23 years, was admitted a fellow-commoner at Caius in 1564 and allocated an upper cubicle alongside other fellows and fellow-commoners such as Nicholas Cobbe, Francis Dorrington and William Greene. Certain tutors (and certain colleges) were favoured to look after the sons of aristocrats because of their own good breeding. Sons and cousins of the gentry were educated at the universities in tandem. Walter Bagot (aged 20) and his brother Anthony (aged 19) of Blithfield, Staffordshire both matriculated at Merton College, Oxford, on 20 December 1577. Walter’s sons Lewis, Harvey and William all attended Oxford in the early seventeenth century. Harvey was at Trinity College alongside his brother-in-law Thomas Broughton. Harvey’s cousins Richard, Thomas and Oliver Cave were at other Oxford colleges during the same period. Harvey’s sons Edward (18) and Harvey (17) matriculated at their father’s old college Trinity in February 1634/5. There is evidence that some students even brought their own tutors to university with them, to ensure that they remained uncontaminated. The accommodation allocations survive for some Cambridge colleges and illustrate how social and local connections were continued in the living and teaching arrangements therein. Francis Dorrington, fellow of Caius and son of Robert Dorrington, gentleman, of Stafford, had in his charge and his chamber his brother, William, aged 18. Dorrington’s other students came from gentle and merchant families in Suffolk, Huntingdonshire, Staffordshire, Lancashire and Norfolk.

Nicholas Cobbe, a Catholic student from Essex (who had matriculated as a sizar at Jesus College, Cambridge in 1551) and an ex-fellow of St John’s College, Cambridge, entered Gonville and Caius College as a fellow-commoner in 1564. His education at Cambridge brought him a rise in social status at his new college. He brought with him several well-born, frequently Catholic, students from his home county. Most entered as fellow-commoners and pensioners and shared Cobbe’s suite of rooms as well as in some cases his table and conversation. A group of them shared the fifth cubicle in Cobbe’s suite. In all cases it was not only the gentility and youth but the Catholicism of these boys that was in need of protection.
Chambers of Nicholas Cobbe of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, 1564

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Cubicle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas Cobbe</td>
<td>Fellow commoner</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>fellow of St John’s &amp; son of Avillus of Hedingham, Essex</td>
<td>2nd upper cubicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Greene</td>
<td>Fellow commoner</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>Mr Greene of Sampford, Essex</td>
<td>Own cubicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Greene</td>
<td>Litt. Grat.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>Mr Greene of Sampford, Essex</td>
<td>Own cubicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Crawley</td>
<td>Fellow-commoner</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>Mr Greene of Sampford, Essex</td>
<td>Own cubicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Stooron</td>
<td>Litt. Grat.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>Mr Greene of Sampford, Essex</td>
<td>Shared 5th lower cubicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmund Arrabaster</td>
<td>Litt Grat. Pensioner</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Colchester School for 2 years</td>
<td>Shared 5th cubicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Mannock</td>
<td>Esquire</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>home school in Suffolk</td>
<td>Shared 5th cubicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abraham Copwoode</td>
<td>Litt. Grat.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Gosfield School, Essex for 3 years</td>
<td>Shared 5th cubicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Chappline</td>
<td>Litt. Grat &amp; pensioner</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>Mr Greene of Sampford, Essex</td>
<td>Shared 5th cubicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Chappline</td>
<td>Pensioner</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>Mr Greene of Sampford, Essex</td>
<td>Shared 5th cubicle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Secondly, we should note that this counsel for social segregation was not necessarily obeyed and, even when it was, there were many ways in which the university and college experience were shared across the social spectrum. We have to look past the formal direction to the informal practice. It is here that the universities’ and colleges’ engagement with the community and specifically with the professions is to be located.

The example of Cobbe and his chamber mates in fact underlines one important way in which this engagement took place. The colleges were frequently microcosms of the county communities from which they drew most of their students. So intercollegiate rivalries evident physically in football matches and intellectually in disputations often took on a regional complexion. The colleges as landowners had vested interests in their county communities; these areas in their turn developed equivalent interests in the colleges. Fellows and officers made annual visits to county lands and had conversations with local administrators; alumni loaned money for college building projects and were rewarded with beneficial leases; local landowners supplied the colleges with provisions – for example the fishponds at Stowe and Finmere supplied New College, Oxford; benefactors endowed exhibitions for pupils from certain schools to attend given colleges – in Yorkshire, for example, many schools had closed scholarships to named Cambridge colleges and created a system of feeder schools that ensured a continuing regional connection between the North and Cambridge; informal connections between schools and colleges in East Anglia were built upon the local influence of Cambridge alumni and the geographical proximity of the university itself.
School connections of freshmen at Jesus, King’s, Emmanuel and St John’s Colleges Cambridge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1090</th>
<th>Freshmen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>800</td>
<td>Early connections with college chosen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.450</td>
<td>School connections with college chosen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A student’s experience of college life reinforced these local connections – awareness of dependence on local munificence was heightened by portrait galleries and prayers; regional dialects emphasised the difference between one house and another; after graduation the Act or the Great Commencement in July, The St Giles Fair in Oxford, or the Stourbridge Fair in Cambridge each September provided formal and informal opportunities for alumni to re-establish connections with their colleges. During the Long Vacation, which by the 1570s had become normal, college fellows were drawn into the life of the counties, attending the Midsummer Quarter Sessions, joining in the festivities surrounding the summer Assizes and participating in the house parties held by the county notables who were, so often, the fathers of their students or alumni.

We must not, of course, exaggerate the closed nature of the universities or colleges. Both fellows and undergraduates extended their range of connections through their university experience. No college was exclusively composed of students from a restricted area. The commoners of Trinity College, Oxford, in the later sixteenth century hailed from no fewer than 29 counties. There was ample opportunity for the young gentleman there to broaden his experience and for the servitor or plebeian student to form patronage connections outside his native area. There is evidence that college afforded many a degree of geographical mobility. The ordination lists of London suggest significant mobility via the university from Yorkshire to the South East. Then again, we must not ignore the role of common curriculum and ethos in giving students and graduates a common intellectual baggage that was at least as pervasive as their sense of regional distinctness. If England did not become homogeneous as a result of the common education of her rulers, she was at least less heterogeneous as a consequence of it.

Gentle interest in university education influenced the social composition of the total student body, but scholars are unsure precisely how. In the early sixteenth century a majority of students were plebeian in origin. In the period 1560 to 1640 there was overall an increase in the proportion of admissions from elite groups and from clergy families and a commensurate decline in the plebeian. But despite this about two-fifths of the student population were drawn from non-gentle and non-clerical families. The emergence of students with a clergy background was unsurprising as the Reformation brought with it little improvement in the economic conditions of the clergy, appreciation of the value of education, a gradual acceptance of a married clergy and the resulting numbers of their offspring. There were many scholarships available to support poor students at the university as well as a duty incumbent upon higher clergy, nobility and gentry to give such aid – a duty that was apparently taken seriously. By the early seventeenth century a declining recruitment from the artisan and yeoman classes was compensated for by increased recruitment from clerical families. The clergy favoured university education for their children (and, pertinently, often saw the ministry as their natural destination). Most but not all sons of clergy would claim clerical status when they matriculated. Many would table with gentlemen. By the mid-eighteenth century nearly a third of Oxford matriculands came from rectories.
The figures showing the origins of Cambridge scholars are indicative rather than robust because information is not available for a majority. They do suggest that by the seventeenth century boys from clerical families were dominating sources of funding in the colleges although there were still some places available to support the sons of artisans and yeomen (by the same date, of 751 Cambridge fellows 280 claimed clergy status on entry). Anderson and Schapner argued that after 1870 the clergy acted as a very marked channel of social mobility, their sons moving into other occupations frequently and ‘with minimum of concentration’ in any one profession, and the number of clergy sons entering the church scarcely exceeding chance. It would be dangerous to assume, therefore, that all these ‘clergy status’ fellows and scholars were destined themselves for church careers. It is interesting that impecunious gentry were also not above seizing opportunities for institutional funding. As late as the early eighteenth century, when two of the nephews of James Brydges, Duke of Chandos, were to be educated at university the Duke paid for one while the other found provision on the foundation. A social mix in the colleges was apparent on the foundations themselves as well as among the remainder of the undergraduate body.  

**Origins of Cambridge scholars 1596-1645**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholars at Cambridge</th>
<th>686</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social status details available</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentle status</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clergy status</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plebeian status</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Origins of Cambridge fellows 1596-1645**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fellows at Cambridge</th>
<th>751</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clergy status</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of people in England and Wales were still excluded from a university education. The plebeian students (who represented a sizeable percentage of all students) formed a tiny percentage of those who fell into the middling layers of society – peasantry made up 60-70% of the nation, for instance. This was certainly not universal university education. On the other hand, the universities did educate distinct groups of students for differing social roles: nobility and gentry (many of whom went on to acquire a legal education); and clerical and plebeian entrants to several professions – church, teaching, law and medicine. The university degree itself had varied importance to different social categories of entrant and perhaps the eventual career of those students.

**Percentage of Cambridge students from different social groups completing degrees 1596-1645**

| Gentry sons | 34.4% |
| Clergy sons | 82.5% |
| Plebeian sons | 77.4% |

So the universities were expanding in size and changing in composition, with an increasing emphasis upon undergraduate education and provision. Colleges were
Universities and professions in the Early Modern period

becoming more and more important in this context. There was a social mix within the universities and their colleges. Segregation, desired by the elite, was not achieved and the university/college experience was shared.

The universities: vocations, careers and professions

It is clear that undergraduates were not all destined for the same career or profession. We hear a good deal today about vocational education and vocational subjects. When studying England in earlier centuries, and specifically the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, it is important to recognise that all education and all subjects were vocational. Vocation, however, was understood in a very different way from today and within a Christian framework. Every individual had a general Christian vocation or calling – simply put, to follow Christ and his teachings. But each Christian also had a special vocation, whether to be a doctor of medicine or a drover; a lawyer or a baker; a pastor or a ploughman.

One of the recognised vocations was that of being a gentleman. The gentleman’s calling was altruistic – for the good of society or commonweal as it was termed, as well as in his, and his family’s and connection’s interests. There was an enormous emphasis upon the need for education (which was provided for by teachers, schools, universities and books). The skills the gentleman practised were non-manual and involved the giving of advice based on intellectual expertise as well as experience and also the execution of magisterial duties. Historian Arthur Ferguson called this ‘active citizenship’ and ‘applied learning’. So Thomas Elyot in his The Boke Named the Governor entitled one chapter ‘The education or form of bringing up of the child of a gentleman which is to have authority in a public weal’. This ethic was passed on to the learned professions during the sixteenth century. So Ralph Rokeby, a lawyer of Lincoln’s Inn, addressed his own kin in 1565 in a detailed memoir designed to preserve the tradition of public service and beneficence and in the 1590s wrote yet another version for the next generations.

Direct teaching about vocation and about how to recognise what was one’s special vocation blossomed in this period in response on the one hand to the teaching of continental and home grown reformers such as Luther and Latimer and on the other to socio-economic change within England. Some of the most important contributors to this thought (in speech as well as in literature) were working within a university milieu. I note here William Perkins whose sermons in the university church of Cambridge on this subject were turned into extremely well-thumbed and influential Works. But not all of it – The Attorney’s Academy, Tom of All Trades and The Art of Thriving (which went into many editions from the 1620s onwards) were written by a lawyer.

Additionally many undergraduates came under Ramist influence, with its marked emphasis on the social utility of knowledge, at late sixteenth-century Cambridge and at Magdalen College, Oxford. Through the media of English Protestant translations the ideas of Pierre de la Ramée (Peter Ramus) affected numerous sermons and printed works. The principal producers of graduate clergy were especially under the spell of Ramism – notably Emmanuel and St John’s Colleges at Cambridge.32

It was not only direct and explicit teaching about vocation that was important. More influential perhaps was the educational environment in which young people were placed, both before and after they settled upon a profession. We need to consider inhibitions placed upon individual choice by social class and by parents and teachers,
but also the broadening of horizons that may have led some young people to hold out for their calling despite such pressures.

When it came to supplying the educational needs of those entering or planning to enter specialised vocations, the response of the universities was, to put it mildly, hesitant. Changes in the content of the curriculum during the period largely affected only the education of future clergymen, schoolteachers and civil lawyers who studied the whole curriculum and took the BA. This hesitant response to change was in large part because academic institutions, even at that date, were hidebound by lumbering bureaucracies, vested interests and traditions. Also, renaissance humanists themselves had not seen the plebeian (and ecclesiastically dominated) universities of the sixteenth century as the ideal location for the education of the elite public servants – instead they called for the establishment of separate academies in the capital modelled on the Inns of Chancery and Court. When these plans fell through, existing institutions outside the universities were colonised.

There was one part of the universities that was recent and vibrant – the provision in colleges and halls for increasing numbers of young undergraduates, not all of whom had aspirations to become clergymen. Of the 16 colleges existing in Cambridge in 1642, six had been founded and two re-founded and expanded since 1485. Six of Oxford’s 15 colleges were post-1500 foundations. It was here in the colleges, informally, that tutors and parents appear to have made an attempt to identify the specific vocations of their charges and to prepare them for these in some way. Historians find it extremely difficult to penetrate the documentation at this level. University and college records can tell us only so much. The private notebooks and accountbooks of both tutors and students survive in small numbers and are much more revealing. Much more work needs to be done now using correspondence between parents and tutors, parents and sons, tutors and students – which does survive in scattered archives – to gain more understanding of the process of choosing a vocation and determining in what manner and in what place preparation would best take place.

In the early modern period college fellows and scholars were not the same as their modern counterparts. Fellows were quite often young and had not yet achieved either BA or MA status. They were generally in orders and often had limited external experience. Outright sale of fellowships and scholarships was prevalent if not condoned: in 1576 John Whitgift petitioned William Cecil against the practice. Even when they had not purchased their positions fellows frequently owed them to accidents of birth and or to the direct and indirect patronage of individuals with no interest in or knowledge of scholarship:

*Salisbury MSS*

*7th Nov 1609 Letter to Robert Cecil from Jane Jobson of Brantingham:*

There is a fellowship in Queen’s College, Cambridge proper only to Yorkshire and the diocese thereof, likely ere long to be void. Vouchsafe your letters unto the Master and Fellows ... in the behalf of my husband’s nephew, Abdias Cole, that he might be preferred thereunto. He is Master of Arts of three years continuance in Trinity College, Cambridge ... I am not only his aunt by marriage, but in younger years I had him for my child and bestowed his education. Wherin I am able I still endeavour his preferment, allowing now unto him part of his maintenance. His father ... was not unknown to your father, and I doubt not but your Honour’s self does remember him.33

The career of William Whitaker (1547/8-95), St Paul’s School and Cambridge-educated, and a well-connected Calvinist theologian, anti-catholic propagandist and
Universities and professions in the Early Modern period

Master of St John’s College, Cambridge, owed much to his close familial and scholarly relationship with Alexander, Laurence and Robert Nowell and with Laurence Chaderton.

In addition some, perhaps many, students were placed in the care of other students rather than college fellows. (Generally this kind of information is obtained not from systematic records but from surviving correspondence between parents and tutors.) All tutors, whether fellows or not, had an eye either on further preferment within the college and university system (where opportunities were limited) or outside. For so many of these fellows regional connections provided the path to future preferment – the way out of a celibate clerical life in college to a career in one of the professions – an ecclesiastical curacy or benefice; a teaching position; or administrative, medical or legal practices.

Examples of individuals who found patronage through their student charges include Cardinal Wolsey, who in October 1500 obtained his first benefice (Limington, Somerset) from the Marquis of Dorset, whose sons he had taught. They continue throughout the period. Dr Joseph Hunt was tutor to John Marquis of Carnarvon, elder son of the First Duke of Chandos, while he was at Balliol College, Oxford, in the 1700s. The Duke continued to support Hunt long after John left Oxford and Hunt eventually became Master of the College with Chandos’s patronage.

Fellows sought after responsibility for well-connected students as a valuable addition to their income and prospects. (Inevitably tutors came to regard well-connected pupils as a prize for which they would be prepared to fight – even on occasion going to law to secure them!) They would follow direction from their employers – the student’s parents – and direct their offspring appropriately both in terms of reading within the university and of advice – sending many off to the Inns of Court, for example. While, doubtless, many did consider the interests of their college, they also served these other employers and their own self-interest. We see, for instance, President Kettle of Trinity College, Oxford, advising young Harvey Bagot to leave the university for the Inns of Court. Many tutors seem to have had a year-round responsibility for their student charges: Thomas Wolsey spent the Christmas vacation in 1499 with the family of his students (sons of the Marquis of Dorset); Harvey Bagot’s younger brother William in 1621 was one of the many who resided with their tutors (either in the country or in the university) during the long summer vacations. This last practice appears to have prevailed in the sixteenth century also: in the 1580s John Temple of Stowe, Buckinghamshire, tried hard to exert influence on his 15-year-old son-in-law’s upbringing by insisting that the youth left his grandmother’s home at Hillesden and returned to the care of another son-in-law, Paul Risley, at Oxford in July 1589. In the early eighteenth century tutors often accompanied young gentlemen on their foreign and domestic tours: Dr Stuart of All Souls College, Oxford, had partial charge of John Marquess of Carnarvon for 3 years, accompanied him on a grand tour in 1723, tended him through severe illness and, through the intervention of two noble women – the Duchess of Chandos and Lady Anne Coventry – became tutor to the young Duke of Beaufort on his tour abroad in 1723-4.

It is impossible to do more than speculate about the extent of tutors’ impact upon the future of their charges when compared to that of students’ families and friends. We do know that some fellows of colleges made it their business to watch out for talent among their acquaintances and connections outside the universities. For example, John Foxe (1516/7-1587), the martyrlogist, reputedly owed his education at Brasenose College, Oxford, to the generosity of John Hawarden, former fellow and

91
Mr Dearsley, fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and acquainted with my father ... visited my father also just at the time when I had sent him a Latin epistle to desire him once more that I might be a scholar; Mr Dearsley liked the letter so well that he persuaded my father to send mee to the university, which he then yielded to.

Archer’s father, a minister, had sought previously to apprentice Isaac to a linen draper.

There is also evidence of the continuing relationships between men in the universities and those who had left to follow careers in one of the nascent professions. In about 1573 Gabriel Harvey corresponded with Humphrey Hales, a recent graduate from Pembroke College, Cambridge, who had become a schoolmaster. Hales had asked Harvey for advice about curriculum and method and Harvey responded with general advice and two relevant books:

I had thought to have sent you a pretty treatise of Henry Schorus touching the ordering of his school, being in a manner an extract of Ramus’ worthy oration Pro Philosophica Parisensis Academiae Disciplina, but surely it was not to be gotten amongst all our stationers, and mine own I gave away to a friend of mine above a month ago.35

This example points to the key role that such relationships may have played in disseminating new scholarship and books long after graduates had left the university.

At a more general level, friendships made at university frequently provided the basis for lifelong relationships and career furtherance. Some of these were friendships between tutors and undergraduates; others between students who were exact contemporaries, some of them dating back to county and even to grammar school. Just a cursory examination of Tudor and Stuart biographies in the new Oxford Dictionary of National Biography demonstrates that there was a continuing impact of such relationships upon the careers of professionals and upon their networks. Some were old friends: John Foxe and Alexander Nowell, Dean of St Paul’s, who shared a room as undergraduates at Brasenose College, Oxford; William, 1st Baron Paget, Thomas Wriothesley, Anthony Denny and John Leland were pupils at St Paul’s School and then undergraduates together at Cambridge; Reginald de la Pole and his tutors William Latimer and Thomas Linacre. Some became fellow-travellers: John Bale and Thomas Cranmer at Jesus College, Cambridge; John Jewel, Peter Martyr Vermigli, Nicholas Ridley, Thomas Cranmer and John Parkhurst through connections at both Oxford and Cambridge and during their service to Protestantism; Thomas Bentham and Thomas Lever at Cambridge, then as Protestants during Mary’s reign, then as members of the hierarchy in Coventry and Linfield diocese; Hugh Latimer and Rowland Taylor at Cambridge and then in the diocese of Worcester. Some formed patronage bonds: Thomas Tusser, agricultural writer, musician and poet, who obtained the patronage of William, 1st Baron Paget, after their association at Trinity Hall, Cambridge; Thomas Wolsey and Edward Fox; William Cecil and John Whitgift; William Cecil and Walter Travers, who became tutor to Robert Cecil, and was later protected by Burghley and preferred to the Provostship of Trinity College, Dublin; John Whitgift and his erstwhile student Gervase Babington, Bishop of Worcester; Whitgift and another former student, William Morgan, later bishop of Llandaff and
translator of the Bible into Welsh. In April 1578 Edmund Spenser was to find employment and a home in the household of Dr John Young, Bishop of Rochester, who had been Master of Pembroke College, Cambridge, when Edmund was a poor student there. Long-term friends Spenser made at Pembroke included his mentor Gabriel Harvey and Lancelot Andrewes. Sir Thomas Smith when he was born the second son of a middling Saffron Walden sheep farmer can scarcely have expected a future career as scholar, diplomat, political theorist and secretary of state but his entry at 13 to Queens’ College, Cambridge, set him on that trajectory. His intellectual ability and political ambitions helped but the fact that he was tutor to pupils who included William Cecil was no hindrance to a man who was often abrasive and never fitted in well at court! Notably he served as Secretary of State alongside Burghley, acting as ‘an intermediary between him, the queen, and ambassadors’. Some formed enmities: simply studying or serving together on the foundation of a college did not imply a harmonious relationship and for some working with those who achieved power and influence brought anything but good fortune. The example of John Whitgift, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Walter Travers, junior fellow, whom he ‘persecuted’ from the 1560s to the 1590s, is indicative.36

Some scholars have argued that, while at university, gentlemen and prospective lawyers (frequently of gentle extraction themselves) followed a different course of study from that pursued by students intent upon taking a degree and entering the clergy as a career. In fact, there was no formal difference in the courses they undertook, although the course for the gentleman was truncated. It was assumed that gentle youths were already sufficiently well educated not to need further education in grammar and so their studies concentrated on rhetoric and logic. For this reason, the universities permitted gentle students to graduate in the BA in three, not four, years if they wished to do so. In rhetoric and logic they would, in any event, as long as they remained for two years, reach graduate standards. The main differences were four: tutors of well-born students provided additional tuition in what might be called ‘modern’ subjects such as history or vernacular literature, geography and travel; such students were to some extent kept separate from other students in the ways suggested earlier; they frequently curtailed their university studies after about a year or 18 months; and it didn’t matter terribly much whether they excelled in the university exercises.

Many of these young men never had any intention of completing degree studies or entering the church at the end of their time at university. Why did they go? They went to complete a grammar school education and perhaps to identify their vocation. They went to acquire useful learning. Tutors were able to explain to them of what such learning consisted: as Gabriel Harvey wrote to Arthur Capel in 1573:

I would have gentlemen to be conversant and occupied in those books, especially, whereof they may have most use and practice, either for writing and speaking, eloquently or Wittily, now or hereafter. Farewell, good Mr Arthur, and account of learning, as it is to be one of the fairest and goodliest ornaments that a gentleman can beautify, and commend himself withal.37

They went to form useful connections. They went with a view to moving on to the next stage – to a knowledge of the law which would prove so useful in their future lives as gentlemen of property or to become practising lawyers or to a knowledge of medicine that would be similarly useful. Sir Thomas Temple of Stowe, Bucks, who matriculated at University College, Oxford, in June 1582, was moved to Lincoln’s Inn
in 1584 specifically to equip him to serve his father John as a legal advisor on the spot. Some of the surviving correspondence demonstrates his usefulness in this capacity. He preserved this tradition of ensuring that there was a lawyer in this litigious family by seeing that his third son Thomas coupled his theological studies at Oxford with studying and eating dinners at his father’s Inn. Grandsons and great-grandsons of Sir Thomas followed the family tradition of combining a year or so’s study at Oxford with meaningful time at the Inns of Court. Another relative (the youngest son of Thomas Denton, mentioned earlier) attended Oxford but served the family and the connection by training in medicine and ministering to the needs of relatives and friends. Paul D’Ewes, Simonds’ the diarist’s father, had attended both college and Middle Temple. He was called to the Bar in 1598. He never practised as a barrister in the central courts but his legal connections brought him a position in the nascent civil service and he also exercised legal jurisdiction in his own manorial court at Lavenham. It was natural for his son to follow the same tradition.

For large numbers of these students their eventual professional preparation continued outside the universities in a quasi apprenticeship context, whether or not organised and controlled as through the Inns of Court and Chancery or the London, later the Royal, College of Physicians.

University and Inns of Court
A pattern of combining education at university and Inn of Court nevertheless was beginning to be set by the mid-sixteenth century and probably well over half of those registering at the Inns of Court by the later seventeenth century had attended the university before hand. (For example, most of the Bagots who attended Oxford also studied at an Inn of Court.) A large majority of those at the Inns had had a grammar school education and so shared some part of the classical education experienced by these former undergraduates. Very few had followed the old route of practical training in the courts and membership of a junior Inn of Chancery prior to membership of an Inn of Court.

Edward Coke, author of the famous and influential Institutes and one of the most controversial judges of the period, had also spent a few years at the university prior to entering a junior Inn of Court and eventually the Inner Temple. He provides us with an excellent example of the professional lawyer intent upon emphasising his humanist, classical education. When he quoted the Bible he generally quoted the Vulgate. It was in Latin that he composed serious verses – to commemorate his son's wedding, or to while away confinement in the Tower. He knew his classical authors well: Virgil, Cicero, Tacitus, Ovid, Sallust, Seneca. Yet he also invented an intellectual pedigree for the English common law and was an advocate of the efficacy of the English language in a legal context.

The common law in the early sixteenth century was not and never had been an academic discipline. Lawyers learned technique, not law. Written law, statute law and precedent were relatively unimportant. By the middle of the seventeenth century this had changed: the law was an intellectual discipline. This is a fascinating subject in its own right. At least as worthy of consideration is the impact which university education had upon the men who eventually led the legal profession. There is a good deal of evidence that the year or so that many of these young men had spent in the universities had a profound influence not only upon themselves and their later lives but also upon the institutionalisation of the profession itself. Some of these graduate and undergraduate student lawyers tended to continue their studious habits within the
Inns and to assume leadership positions therein. Their eventual importance to professional development may well have been disproportionate to their actual numbers. We must be careful here because other influences were also at work – the invention of the printing press and the availability of printed books, for example. Nevertheless, changes that had occurred in undergraduate education penetrated the Inns of Court and Chancery and, eventually, the more scattered vocational training grounds of parochial clergy, physicians, surgeons, apothecaries and solicitors.

**Study habits learned at college**

Ex-university students entered the Inns already imbued with what they had learned at university and college, and accustomed to given study methods that differed markedly from those traditionally practised in the Inns. The college student was used to private study and small discussion groups – to relying on books, reading guides, commonplacing, cataloguing, and listening to private lectures, rather than exclusively on formal commentaries and occasional learning exercises. The first legal text book directed at law students was published in 1600 – Fulbecke’s *A Direction* – and marked not the beginning but the culmination of a movement towards private study of the law, sometimes with and sometimes without the help of a tutor. Commonplacing, taught at college, had a profound influence on the study habits of all early modern professionals. It was upon their training and expertise that lawyers, like other professionals, rested their claim to serve society.

Simonds D’Ewes, when he was fresh from Cambridge and long afterwards, spent the mornings studying law and preparing for moots, and the afternoons on humanistic and religious studies. At Lincoln’s Inn, Thomas Egerton, who eventually became Lord Chancellor of England, developed more fully the general interests in law, history and philosophy that he had begun in tutorials at Oxford, as well as his practical expertise in the common law. At more aristocratic Gray’s Inn, Edward Waterhouse spent just three hours of a 16-hour day studying law and a high proportion of the remainder on rhetoric, logic, history, literature, and sport; when he was practising law, William Drake continued the habit of commonplacing, reporting cases he had heard and opinions he had solicited; he learned from others how best to keep his notes in order and how to approach certain difficult topics through both reading and direct observation. He observed that it was necessary to reserve study for the vacations because it served to distract him from legal practice. These were men actively involved in legal practice who nonetheless saw part of their vocational preparation for active citizenship and applied learning to be a continuance of their humanistic education. William Drake provides an excellent example of a university-educated legal practitioner who, when he became a prominent landowner, MP and author, nevertheless spent a good deal of his time in continued study (and, in his case, in collecting the papers of Francis Bacon).

The relationship between teacher and taught, and the evolution of teaching and learning methods, both found their echoes in the Inns of Court. Many university colleges in the 1570s introduced a formal requirement that a student must be attached to a tutor. The beginnings of the formal tutorial system can be traced at certain Oxford colleges: Exeter College from 1564, at Balliol from 1574, at Brasenose from 1576 and at University College from 1583. This was at a time when the universities’ own formal lectures had ceased to have much importance. Instead the disputations remained dominant in undergraduate and MA education – as student notebooks testify – and their format seems to have had an impact upon the legal moots and clerical
exercises and conferences. In college students heard informal lectures and read with their tutors in preparation for their disputations. They wrote out their arguments (precursors of the undergraduate essay) before delivering them orally. Several tutors’ guides for student study are still in existence.

Small group teaching appears to have migrated from the colleges to the Inns of Court. Between 1595 and 1619 John Hoskyns of the Middle Temple had under him 14 young students of the law, many of them drawn from his native Herefordshire and the Welsh borders. At his term-time moots he would act as judge, licensed barristers argued the cases and these students recited pleadings they had learned by rote. In the vacation moots, these same students had to argue the cases themselves. To prepare for these moots, students often hired private tutors.

Perhaps the most outstanding example of a lawyer who changed the face of professional education for lawyers is provided by Edmund Plowden, who appears to have spent three years at Cambridge before being admitted to the Middle Temple in about 1538. Reputedly he was so studious that he did not leave the Inn once during the space of three years. He began recording cases he heard in court from at least 1550, the same year in which he gave law readings (on entails and replevins) at New Inn. In 1571 Plowden published his volume of law reports on cases heard in the reigns of Edward, Mary and Elizabeth that decisively broke out of the older year-book tradition. The keys to Plowden's approach were two resolutions he claims to have made back in 1538. The first was:

[to] be present at, and to give diligent attention to, the debates and questions of law, and particularly to the arguments of those who were men of the greatest note and reputation for learning. The second was, to commit to writing what I heard, and the judgment thereupon, which seemed to me to be much better than to rely on treacherous memory (Les commentaries, preface).

Plowden appears to have produced and published the reports as a student guide for those studying law. He concentrated upon special verdicts, which threw up particularly problematic points in law; he did not quote verbatim, but he did preface each report with a transcription of the pleadings from the court record, and he verified the accuracy of the arguments presented by consulting the judges and other lawyers who had made them, sometimes showing them his version for approval. Although the book contains some of his own cases, there are only one or two lengthy expositions of his own views, most notably that in connection with the application of principles of equity to the interpretation of statutes. Plowden claimed that he published in the first place because manuscript versions, some of them corrupt, were circulating widely. The second edition, which included additional cases, was printed in 1578, along with an analytical index compiled by Recorder William Fleetwood. The work was subsequently reissued many times, with some later editions containing in addition Plowden’s Queries, a collection of moot points that was published from manuscript for the first time in 1620. Plowden's name was held in high regard. Sir Edward Coke approvingly referred to him in his Institutes as a ‘sage of the law'.

Connections and friendships made at school and university continued throughout the lives of professionals. D’Ewes, Egerton and John Hoskyns offer excellent examples. For many, sharing of chambers at college and Inn provided a route to preferment and to good marriages. John Manninham, who had studied at and graduated from Cambridge, joined the Middle Temple in March 1598. While there he shared a chamber with Edward Curle. In 1605 he was called to the degree of
Utter Barrister and married Anne Curle, the sister of his chamber mate. Through this marriage he obtained a position at the Court of Wards and Liveries, where his father-in-law was Auditor.

The mingling of law students with men of connection who had no intention of practising law was very important for a budding legal practitioner – providing patrons and clients. For example, Ascham, Frobisher, Raleigh, Inigo Jones and Francis Drake were all members of the Inns and ate dinners there. Because the Inns were also London homes for many county families, they helped extend the social reach of young lawyers – it was not uncommon for young and old women to be in residence, for example.

A graduate profession – the clergy

The clergy provide the first example of that modern phenomenon, the move towards becoming a graduate profession. In the middle ages members of the church hierarchy had often been highly educated men but parish clergy, who were not on this ladder to preferment (beneficed and unbeficed), had rarely been so. Parochial clergy were often described as ignorant of the scriptures and barely literate or Latinate. The situation was deplored by Elizabethan bishops and puritans alike, who saw the existence of a learned ministry as crucial to the spiritual health of the nation. Various attempts were made to provide appropriate training for ministers in situ. Monarchy, bishops and puritans, however, were in their differing ways concerned to improve the quality of ministers at the level of initial recruitment. They did this by encouraging the ordination of graduates, and by working with the colleges to ensure the appropriate vocational preparation of students. This movement was gradual and progressed at differing rates in different parts of the country. For example, whereas mass ordinations in Oxford, Ely and London in the 1590s were already almost exclusively of graduates, those at Chester, Coventry and Lichfield were not. Even when recruitment was graduate, it took some time to have an impact at parochial level, because clergymen had life tenure and were often long-lived, and because of the insidious effects of the patronage system that operated with limited reference to the educational qualifications of beneficiaries. In 1584 only 14% of ministers in Coventry and Lichfield diocese were graduates; this had risen to 24% in 1603. In Coventry archdeaconry in 1584, 30% of clergy had attended university; by 1620 this had increased to 64%. In Surrey archdeaconry in 1603, of the 54 clergy presented to livings since 1591, 49 (92%) were graduates.43

### Graduate clergy in selected locations c. 1600

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Identified incumbents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1603</td>
<td>Surrey Archdeaconry</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600</td>
<td>Worcester diocese</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600</td>
<td>Oxford diocese</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600</td>
<td>Coventry &amp; Lichfield diocese</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600</td>
<td>Lincoln diocese</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600</td>
<td>York diocese</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>1065</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1601</td>
<td>London diocese</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Generally speaking, graduate clergy were more common at an earlier date in places within reach of London, Oxford and Cambridge but everywhere the picture was one
of improvement over the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with a decline in the years c.1549 to c.1585 accounted for by a shortage of clerical recruits, as the figures for Surrey below indicate.

Graduate clergy in Surrey 1520 to 1600

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of graduates</th>
<th>Identified incumbents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1520-30</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1549-53</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1562</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1581</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1603</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although it may appear that in educating the clergy the early modern universities were merely continuing their medieval traditions, in fact this was not the case. The medieval universities had educated the clerical elite – the hierarchy. Few resident parochial ministers were graduates. Foundations such as Corpus Christi College, Oxford – designed to produce educated parish clergy – represented a small move in the right direction. The much larger sixteenth- and seventeenth-century universities, through the colleges, concentrated a higher proportion of their energies on the education of the pastoral ministry. They were participating in a major revolution in what society was asking of its clergy.

The universities then had a direct role in educating the parish clergy of Elizabethan and Stuart England and Wales. The church hierarchy was not entirely happy to see this role in the hands of institutions over which it had imperfect control. (It is intriguing, for example, to view Archbishop Laud’s reform of the Oxford statutes in this context.) While it became difficult to obtain preferment in the early Stuart church without a university degree, there were many attempts by individual bishops and other church dignitaries to offer more practical training to their clergy, especially their chaplains – Thomas Morton, John Cosin and Richard Kidder spring to mind. In addition, evidence survives of household seminaries run by prominent divines or other clergy who stood outside the established hierarchy – Richard Greenham, Thomas Gataker, Thomas Taylor, John Ball, Francis Higginson and Alexander Richardson. Others wrote books on how to perform the ‘job’ better – William Perkins’ *The Art of Prophesying* of 1592 is a good example. Laurence Chaderton’s *Excellent and Godly Sermon* criticised the idle parading of scholarship and the use of flamboyant rhetoric and gestures. Some of these men worried about the elite nature of the graduate clergyman’s education and the emphasis upon humane scholarship to the detriment of the pastoral role; they were keen to improve the cleric’s communication skills with a poorly-educated congregation.44

As with the lawyers, so with the clergy: it is important to look at the indirect influence of university and college education upon them. As a result of their education alongside gentry at the universities, the Elizabethan and Stuart clergy began to see themselves as gentlemen. The growth of clerical family dynasties (often through the universities), professional meetings, informal meetings, common educational background, and similar life-style to other graduate clergy certainly all served to strengthen the cleric’s sense of belonging to a profession. This may have had a derogatory effect upon their relations with the plebeian laity, but it strengthened their sense of belonging to an educated elite that shared education, culture and ethos.
The clergy, while certainly not a unified profession, shared features of great importance: education, a sense of calling and commitment, a way of life. These features add up to a common culture, closely identified with that of the educated gentry and other learned professions. As a group the clergy were given to reflection upon their raison d’être – abundant documentary evidence of their professional work and their relationship with the gentry and other professionals. As more and more of the clergy passed through Oxford and Cambridge, this common culture and awareness of it intensified.

Conclusions
Professions were jealous of their areas of expertise. Battles between common and civil lawyers have been highlighted by historians. Battles within other professions were no less frequent. Nevertheless, there is much evidence that professionals regarded one another highly and that, when other social groups turned against them (as during the middle of the seventeenth century), professionals found common ground.

There is also a good deal of data showing the common culture shared by gentlemen and professionals. This culture derived not only from a common education at university, of course – the classical curriculum of school and university was, however, at its root. Knowledge of Greek, Latin, philosophy and ancient history fed into the contemporary rhetoric practised by statesmen, the governing elite, lawyers and clergy alike; study of the scriptures was common to students at the university and continued among lawyers and gentlemen, as well as clergy. Moreover there was an awareness of a common professional ethos.

To say that the universities lost control of the professions is too simple and far from accurate. They maintained a firm grasp on preparation for careers in the church and the civil law. New professions grew up outside the universities’ formal control. However, the new professions were influenced by the universities in many ways, some formal and some informal. Leadership of the new professions often rested in university-educated men who revered learning. The ethos of the gentleman (which had developed at least in part at the universities) spread to the professions. The concept of cascading may seem especially appropriate when considering this influence.

This essay has not attempted to place university influences upon the development of the professions and professionals in relation to other undoubted influences upon them. Such a comparison would be difficult and, in any event, must await further attention.

As a result of the change of focus in this essay, there may appear a lesson to be drawn by today’s educationalists. Although the universities tread dangerous ground when they exclude, whether intentionally or accidentally, new vocational specialisms from their formal curricula (as they appear to have done whether by accident or design in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries), they may continue to exert a pervasive influence upon the value systems of those professions as long as these professional personnel have shared a common preparatory education in schools and universities. Too early specialisation in so-called ‘vocational’ subjects has become a feature of English – even British – education. The Americans retained that insistence upon a broad liberal arts education prior to specialisation that was a feature of both old and new professions in the early modern period. We, too, should see that such an education is not a selfish indulgence in pleasurable but useless studies, but should be a necessary and useful common education in the values we hold so dear as a society.
Moving students on more and more precipitously towards a ‘useful’ education – so that even our 11-year-olds engage in a so-called vocational curriculum – may turn out to be just the opposite to useful. It could result in a unifying educational curriculum turning instead into a divisive training agenda.

Notes

3 Aston, ‘Oxford’s medieval alumni’.
4 Aston, Duncan and Evans, ‘The medieval alumni’.
6 McConica, *Collegiate University*, 154, citing Richard Stevens.
8 McConica, *Collegiate University*, 153-4.
10 The huge dropout rate was owing in part to the large number of undergraduates who died or left university for financial reasons, and in part to the tendency of many deliberately to study just part of the course.
16 For a particularly persuasive and elegant exposition of this argument see Elizabeth Russell, ‘The influx of commoners into the University of Oxford before 1581: an optical illusion’, *English Historical Review* 92 (1977): 721-745
19 E.g. John Thurston was accorded the status of ‘son of a gentleman’ when he entered Colchester school in 1639 but when he entered St John’s College, Cambridge in 1646 it was noted that his father was a Colchester mercer.
23 Richard Tyler, ‘The Children of disobedience: the social composition of Emmanual College, Cambridge, 1596-1645’, (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1976), 40-2, 68, 75, 91. The number of students who followed their migrating tutors to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, is amply illustrated in Venn and Venn, *Admissions to Gonville and Caius*. It may be dangerous to extrapolate from this example to other colleges but there is no reason to believe that Caius was unusual.

Guildhall London MS 9535/2; see Rosemary O’Day, The English clergy (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1979), 4-8, 137-9, for a discussion of the impact of university upon the geographical mobility of the clergy.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Plebeian</th>
<th>Sons of Clergy</th>
<th>Sons of Esquires &amp; Country Gentry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Late C16th</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early C17th</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid C17th</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contemporary letters sometimes reveal that non-graduate gentry supported academics. See, for example, non-university-educated John Temple Esquire’s support for Richard Slythurst, medical fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford, as evidenced in the following correspondence: Henry E. Huntington Library (San Marino, California), STT 1816 Richard Slythurst, medical fellow of Brasenose, to John Temple of Stow, 17th December (probably 1580s) from Oxford: ‘Worshipfull Sir If you even from your beginning to tender & support my shrunken & thinne estate had not been more forward than I have been speedy in returnyng to you a certificat of receveing your relief, I had oftener and more neerly been pinned with the lacke of your liberalitie, than you touched with the bestowing therof on mee. Wherin my present condition representeth the misery of olde Adam, turned out of paradise for that he so unkyndely forgat so high felicitie received: & contrariy yours the happines of the nue Adam Jesus Christe in whom God hath layd up for us the riches of his graces, redy ever to supplie the wants of our miserable bareness.’

Fee differentials may have led some matriculands to understate their social status. For this see Cressy, ‘Admission Ages’, passim.

Anderson and Schapner, School and Society, 2.

Henry E. Huntington Library, STT5, vol. 25, fo. 55: letter dated 8th Dec. 1724 from Duke of Chandos to Mr Brydges, noting that he should pay £100 to brother Chamberlayne for ‘his eldest son’s education at Oxford at 50 p.a....the other I think is chosen upon one of the Foundations & will not want such a supply from his frends’; Tyler, ‘Children of disobedience’, 114; tables in text based on his figures.

For discussions of Ramism at the universities and its impact upon the clergy see Hugh Kearney, Scholars and Gentlemen: Universities and Society in Pre-industrial England 1500-1700 (London: Faber, 1970), 46-70.

Abdias Cole of Yorkshire was admitted scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1602; he proceeded to the B.A. in 1603/4, and the M.A. in 1607. His bid for a fellowship in 1609 was apparently not successful but he achieved his goal in 1611, when he obtained a fellowship at Queens’ College, Cambridge, and was incorporated M.A. at Oxford. He remained a Fellow until 1618.

See, e.g., Letters from Daniel Featley in the period 1607-10 regarding disputed tuition, Daniel Featley to Dr Spencer, President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford c. 1607-10, and Daniel Featley to Sir Walter Raleigh, n.d., Bodleian Library, Rawlinson MSS.


These details were drawn from the relevant articles in the New Oxford Dictionary of National Biography; quotation from Ian W. Archer, ‘Smith, Sir Thomas (1513–1577)’,

For more on all these see O’Day, The Professions, 125-34; for William Drake see University College London, Bacon/Tottel Collection; The House of Lords Record Office, London, Historical Collections MS 49: commonplace book of Sir William Drake, c.1632; Buckinghamshire Record Office, Ref: D/DR/10/56: part of a notebook attributed to Drake; Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC, Folger MS v.a.263: Commonplace Book of William Drake, c.1645) and Henry E Huntington Library, Journal of William Drake, 1631-42. Kevin Sharpe, Reading Revolutions: the Politics of Reading in Early Modern England (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), covers Drake’s reading throughout his life, including periods when he was a practising lawyer and periods when he was primarily a landowner.

Resuscitatio or Bringing Into Public Light Several Pieces of the Work ... of the Rt Hon Francis Bacon (London: William Lee, 1657).


The university, professionalization, and race in the United States

Philo Hutcheson

Abstract

The university has long held a central role in the process of professionalization; in the United States, the early decades of the twentieth century were a critical period for the development of modern professions based in university settings. Increasingly in the first decades of the century the liberal arts became the necessary preparation for admission to professional schools such as medical schools. This chapter examines how definitions of the liberal arts, despite some clear potential for revision, remained the purview of those who defined such an education in terms of White Western civilization, thereby complicating the process of professionalization for Black physicians.

One critical aspect of the university in relationship to the varied communities outside the lecture halls is the interaction between the institution and historically marginalized groups. Universities have responded in a variety of ways, often incomplete, to groups that face political, economic, and social exclusion, if not oppression. In the United States, discussions of African Americans in the educational pipeline are a reminder of the obvious but all too often uninvestigated argument, that they must take first steps to get to higher levels of learning, and the role of the university in professionalization deserves attention in this regard, as such examination can offer reconsideration of what scholars mean by professionalization. In this chapter I focus on the 1930s when African Americans were seeking admission to medical schools, institutions which were undergoing a transformation to an institutional type requiring an undergraduate degree. Dissertations I have supervised, especially those regarding African Americans and higher education, inform this investigation, in the powerful context of the reminder that professionalization is, first, a process, and second, that professionalization begins during the undergraduate experience if not earlier. I specifically examine the step commonly needed for professionalization in the United States but, as best as I know, not yet investigated: the meanings of an undergraduate education and the liberal arts for the professionalization of Blacks. For the purpose of this work, I am responding in fact to a challenge I often give in lectures: use the Journal of Negro Education as a primary source because it is a remarkably underutilized, often unrecognized, source. Leading educators of the time wrote for the Journal, often in forthright terms, and therefore I am using articles from the Journal of Negro Education as a means to inquire about professionalization and race.

The Journal of Negro Education began publication in 1932, founded at Howard University. It was intended to be a forum to advance discussion of Blacks and education in the United States, and the early years of the Journal are a reminder that Blacks were still struggling with access to primary schools and secondary schools; in fact, in more than one article an author lauded the efforts of Black colleges to move beyond the necessary literacy education and become post-secondary institutions. Also at this time the Harlem Renaissance was underway, the flowering of African American writers and artists, with a beginning often marked by the 1925 publication of Alain Locke’s volume of essays, The New Negro. From the 1920s well
into the 1930s, Harlem provided both a literal and figurative space for Black intellectuals, including writers, visual artists, and performing artists. These intellectuals knew that their voices represented both personal and ideological claims to the unrecognized high quality of argument and ideas in Negro life. There is a great deal to suggest that the 1930s were a time when Black colleges were rapidly coming of age; it was also a time when Blacks knew that they had begun to conquer what Hayden White calls the destructive fetish of the noble savage. White argues that this fetish, based on centuries of Western thought, identified American Indians in horizontal and vertical terms; his arguments apply to African Americans as well.

The horizontal dimension was predicated on the idea of natives who were outsiders, nomadic and living in the wilderness, while Whites, slaveowners, were stable and urban. Also according to the Europeans, the natives were closer to animal souls than human souls, thereby reflecting a vertical dimension of Western thought. Both the Harlem Renaissance and the increasing undergraduate enrolments at Black colleges presented challenges to the ideas of Blacks as noble savages.

Although the question for this work – what are the relationships among higher education, race, and professionalization in the United States? – addresses at least a century of activity, I am focusing on a critical decade, the 1930s, because of how events during the 1930s highlight the central issues of the investigation. In 1910 the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching published what is widely known as the Flexner report, Report on Medical Conditions in the United States and Canada, which gave a scathing review to medical education in the United States. As a result, by the 1930s what we now know as modern medical education – in particular a medical school affiliated with a university as well as a hospital, and requiring undergraduate instruction for admission to the school, thus providing academic content and clinical education – was a dominant model. Second, attorneys at the Legal Defense Fund of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People had begun their well-orchestrated, albeit long-term, efforts to de-segregate education in the United States by first de-segregating professional schools because they recognized that those schools could not long afford a separate but equal education. Finally, and most important as I will discuss in some detail, the 1930s was a time of coming of age for Negro colleges, particularly for those focused on the liberal arts, increasingly a necessary curriculum for admission to medical school.

I focus on physicians because of the centrality of that occupation to the notion of profession and professionalization. Hallmark characteristics of the modern professions such as medicine and law often, perhaps typically, drive concepts and arguments about other occupations. For example, even though the teaching degree was the first degree offered by the medieval university, the ease with which United States scholars speak of the semi-profession of teaching reflects the ease with which they perceive medicine as the penultimate profession. And, as a historian (whose books were reviewed in the Journal of Negro Education) argued in 1934, physicians formed ‘the most important element in the Negro race’. More particularly in terms of exclusion and oppression informing how we perceive the university, as a contributor to the Journal argued in 1935:

The Negro physician is in a special class and bears a particular burden in this country only because of his racial identity. The requirements imposed upon him to enter the profession are identical to those demanded of all physicians. The general improvement of standards in the preparation for medicine during the last thirty years, therefore, has been reflected in the Negro physician also.
In his final arguments, having detailed the problems of adequate undergraduate preparation at institutions enduring limited financial resources and still engaged in basic as well as advanced instruction of a formerly enslaved people, the author notes that immediately after graduation, because of limited internships and hospital affiliations, the Black physician faced ‘the proscription of race’ and typically became a general practitioner serving an impoverished population.\textsuperscript{10} Whites had no interest in receiving care from a Black physician, further restricting the Black physicians’ opportunity for practice.\textsuperscript{11} Problems for Black physicians in terms of their practice also included their exclusion from the American Medical Association, the powerful national group for physicians. Not until the late 1940s and early 1950s, when the National Medical Association, composed of Black physicians, voiced support for national health insurance, did the American Medical Association, which opposed such insurance, begin to invite Black physicians to join.\textsuperscript{12}

Hence, professionalization is not simply a university act, but is a construction of expectations based on standards – standards effected for all but formulated by certain dominant groups. As a brief definition of the modern profession, I suggest that it is an occupation marked by expert knowledge gained through advanced education, practitioner autonomy, and practitioner-client (rather than wage-earner) relationships. It is also an occupation marked by cultural, social, and political definitions that derive from those with the power to establish policies and rules for the profession.\textsuperscript{13} A range of historians and historians of education have clearly shown that the changes in medical education in the United States after 1910 had substantial negative effects on Blacks and other minority groups.\textsuperscript{14} The degree to which the discrimination occurred is clear in a simple fact: five out every six Black physicians by the early 1930s were graduates of the two Black medical schools, Meharry Medical College and the College of Medicine of Howard University.\textsuperscript{15} This segregation was also a pattern at the undergraduate level.\textsuperscript{16} Curiously the complexity of higher standards and discrimination appears in some of the articles reviewed for this paper, as authors lauded the better medical care while bemoaning the decline of the ratio of Black physicians to the general Black population.

While I do not examine either the ability of Negro students to fund their undergraduate education or the problems of qualified faculty members and institutional resources at Negro colleges although such examinations appeared early in the \textit{Journal of Negro Education},\textsuperscript{17} there is, however, one area (encompassing in part financial characteristics) that requires some attention because of its importance in regard to one obvious aspect of professionalization, admission to professional schools. Institutional accreditation (often by regional associations but also by such groups as the American Medical Association) became very important in the early 1900s, and professional schools used accreditation as a measure of the acceptability of candidates for admission. One scholar who conducted an extensive study of Negro colleges in the early 1930s noted by the 1920s those institutions were ‘keenly interested’ in accreditation, a process which focused on institutional resources, faculty qualifications, and student characteristics. Their interest rested in part on their continuing drive for acceptance, but especially because the American Medical Association used the regional accrediting association lists to create a list of ‘approved colleges’.\textsuperscript{18} Leaders at Negro colleges decided at a 1925 meeting to examine the problem, resulting eventually in a 1928 report by the United States Bureau of Education on 79 Negro colleges. The American Medical Association re-considered
its sole use of regional accreditation association lists and in 1930 issued a statement that the federal survey provided information for a list of 31 Negro colleges that provided adequate pre-medical education. In 1930 the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools – the South was where almost all of the Negro colleges were located – began an examination of those institutions and by 1933 six of them were fully accredited and another 22 were rated as ‘Class B’. In institutional terms, Negro colleges were slowly making their way into recognition as institutions of higher education.

Nevertheless, this work focuses on curricular issues because of the increasing importance of the liberal arts as preparation for professional degrees in the United States. In fact, in the 1930s the liberal arts were, arguably, especially important for pre-medical studies because medical schools in 42 of the 48 states required only two years of undergraduate coursework before admission; the coursework had to include English as well as courses in the sciences. Hence our now standard expectation of a major at US colleges and universities, approximately a third of a student’s undergraduate coursework, in a specific field (often in the natural and physical sciences) as the form of pre-medical education, simply did not exist in the 1930s. The early years of an undergraduate education, when students were often expected to pursue broad rather than specialized studies, were the immediate preparation for medical school.

Blacks and professionalization in the early 1900s in the United States

The early decades of the 1900s were a time when Black colleges continued to overcome the powerful and enduring effects of slavery, and those institutions struggled to provide literacy education, secondary school instruction, and higher education in a remarkable effort to achieve equality. The drive for equality often focused on racial uplift, a collective means for raising the possibilities and fortunes of all Blacks, and teaching was a critical component of that uplift. In general, however, even given the deeply racist and segregationist laws and norms of US society, college-educated Blacks aspired to all of the professions. A 1912 survey of Black college graduates indicated that 85 percent of them were in teaching, preaching, medicine, and law; more specifically for the purposes of this chapter, just under 12 percent were in medicine or law. As of 1930, there were just over 3,800 Black physicians, but despite an increase in their number, the rate of population increase in the general Black population meant that the ratio of Black physicians to Black people had slightly declined, from one in 2,993 to one in 3,127. Furthermore, the number of Black graduates of Northern white medical schools had declined. By the mid-1930s, 12.4 percent of the Black college graduates surveyed were physicians, second only to the still large percentage of teachers and that wonderfully uncertain category, ‘Other’. Those physicians were more likely to work in border states, balanced between Jim Crow laws of segregation and political exclusion in the South and less restrictive conditions in the North, or Northern urban areas rather than in Southern states; in both border and Northern states, the proportion of Blacks in the general population was much lower than in Southern states.

Gender differences appeared early, as the dean of women at Howard University noted in 1933. She pointed out that some black men had gone into the ministry, law, and medicine, but the majority of men, and women, had gone into teaching. None of her discussion addressed women entering law or medicine. A 1935 report on the occupations of Black college graduates indicated that only 10
percent of the graduates in medical fields were female.\textsuperscript{25} And as Linda Perkins pointed out, all too easily African American men assumed that African American women would become teachers if they entered the professional world, rather than physicians, lawyers, or preachers. Watson also addresses the substantial obstacles that African American women faced in any attempts to enter medical school and eventually become a physician.\textsuperscript{26} Thus, the remainder of this discussion addresses African American men far more than women.

By the mid-1930s, historian Carter G. Woodson was reporting that hardly any physicians were from families where the parents were professionals, hardly surprising given the deleterious effects of slavery and Jim Crow (the use of laws to enforce segregation and discrimination, overtly practiced in the South and enacted in more subtle forms in the North). As he noted, ‘It appears, then, that the cause was a beckoning one rather than a natural urge from within the group’.\textsuperscript{27} He also noted the lack of sufficient educational preparation in specific subjects, such as mathematics. The educational level of Black physicians reflected, at least to some degree, the still developing expectations about the need for an undergraduate degree; 44 percent held bachelor’s degrees, almost 26 percent had attended an undergraduate institution but had not earned a degree, and virtually all of the rest had not attended an undergraduate institution.\textsuperscript{28}

By and large, then, Black physicians in the 1930s represented a group that had faced limited opportunity, for a variety of reasons, for access to medical education. How they arrived at that education, especially in terms of the nearly three-quarters who attended undergraduate institutions, is the focus of the analysis for this chapter.

\textit{Ars Liberalis for whom?}

Fittingly enough, I begin the analysis of professionalization and the liberal arts with discussion of an article by W.E.B. DuBois, who fought long and hard in the United States for collegiate, liberal arts education for Blacks. His work is most appropriate not only for his focus on the liberal arts but also for the position of liberal arts in the professions – a position well-documented by Bruce Leslie.\textsuperscript{29} While traditional arguments about education for its own good are clear, arguments that educators again and again have articulated in defense of the liberal arts – in the white world in the United States, perhaps Alexander Meiklejohn and then Robert Maynard Hutchins serve as the best twentieth century defenders of that faith, even such advocates of the liberal arts articulated that undergraduate education as the most suitable preparation for professional education.\textsuperscript{30} DuBois easily equalled the passion of Meiklejohn and Hutchins, driven by his comprehension of the liberal arts as a signal of knowledge and intellectual acuity, a curriculum where Blacks could match Whites in acquiring knowledge. From the early 1900s onward, DuBois offered an insistent and articulate call to the liberal arts, recognizing that questions of political, economic, and social equality had a strong foundation in the questions of intellectual equality.\textsuperscript{31}

In a 1932 article in the first issue of the \textit{Journal of Negro Education}, DuBois reflected on the arguments that he and Booker T. Washington had about collegiate and industrial education in the early 1900s, and while acknowledging the need for economic stability for Blacks evidenced in industrial education, he placed at the forefront this idea:
More than most, here was land and people who needed to learn the meaning of life. They needed the preparation of gifted persons for the profession of teaching, and for other professions which in time would grow.  

With ease, then, he made the apparently simple transition from the knowledge of the meaning of life to the professions.

In confirmation of DuBois’ comments, in 1933 a special issue of the Journal included an article, ‘The Negro Liberal Arts College’, which affirmed the traditional meanings of the liberal arts in terms of the trivium and the quadrivium and the contemporary meanings in terms of pre-vocational studies and intellectual culture. The author also clearly stated that there were no differences between white and Negro liberal arts colleges, the latter ‘actively engaged in conforming to set standards’. Those standards included academic achievement, the author reporting with pride that the days had passed when students were proudly getting by with just barely passing or students were able to earn a degree no matter how long it took. Yet the content of that academic achievement was becoming problematic. Robert Moton, president of the Tuskegee Institute (where Booker T. Washington had been president and championed industrial education), in an article on Negro colleges and professional schools, chided Negro colleges for their imitative curricula, noting that few offered any courses addressing the lives and challenges of Negroes:

His meager knowledge of the problems to be faced in the process of adjustment, his limited knowledge of his racial background, and of his race’s contribution to American life, are shortcomings which represent fundamental weaknesses in the Negro’s graduate educational equipment.  

In the same issue, another author echoed Moton’s concern about the lack of courses on Negroes. Kelly Miller identified the early years of Black colleges in the nineteenth century as a period when there was an ‘adoption of the college curriculum, suited to the choicest white youth’ resulting in such caricatures such as ‘the Negro boy driving his mule to the tune of hic, haec, hoc’. She called for a future in which the Black colleges did not attempt to imitate White colleges. While her main concern was the leadership and faculties of Black colleges, as she offered the hope that increasingly those positions would be held by Blacks, she also argued for ‘study and investigation related to the Negro problem, in which Negro students are intimately and vitally interested’. It is imperative here to highlight that these authors argued that courses on the meaning of Black life were not best placed in areas such as African American studies but in the liberal arts themselves.

An investigation of Black students’ reading habits indicated that while they often chose white popular texts – such as works by Zane Grey about cowboys in the Wild West – they also chose Black newspapers and Black authors. English courses at Negro colleges, obviously, did not necessarily include works by Black authors although there was interest in those authors among the students.

Not all authors celebrated the potential for courses on Negro life. In 1938 Elizabeth Ferguson noted the powerful work of such groups as the American Negro Academy and the Negro Society for Historical Research in developing racial pride among Blacks. Nevertheless, she also stated that ‘a good deal of the Negro literature’ constituted ‘mediocre accomplishments. . . praised in the highest terms’ because of
the emphasis on racial pride; ‘some musical and artistic attempts’ also fell prey to such misplaced praise.39

Moton also noted the irony of success in achieving collegiate education for Blacks, indicating that the masses were well aware of the distance between them and college-educated Blacks. He reminded the 107,000 professionally educated Blacks that they, born of the necessity of racism, had to rely on the over 4.5 million Blacks employed in agriculture, mechanical work, and domestic work, offering a telling reminder of the racially segmented dimensions of profession. Black professionals served only Black people.40 Furthermore, the health needs of the Black population were severe, emphasizing the need for Black physicians. In 1937 an author documented those needs, highlighting such serious characteristics as infant mortality and tuberculosis. In regard to the former, Winfred Nathan stated that the ‘high infant mortality rate can be directly attributed to the illiteracy of the parent, the lack of prenatal and post-natal care, and the absence of proper medical care during the crucial stage of pregnancy’. She offered comparative data between Blacks and Whites for tuberculosis, which she described as ‘a disease that attacks the impoverished classes’, indicating that across all age groups Blacks had substantially higher rates of the disease, as high as nine times the rate for White among children aged 10 to 14.41

Racism contributed to the limited resources of medical education. One author, Jackson Davis, offered a tangential assessment of the decline from five to two medical schools as the result of stiffened requirements for medical education. As a number of scholars have shown, that decline was in part due to such changes, but those changes were predicated on notions of White male capacity to be the best physicians. Despite a seemingly cheery evaluation of the state of medical education and medical services for Blacks, Davis acknowledged that there was a ‘serious handicap’ because of the limited internships and hospital contacts for Blacks.42

Hence, the problems of professionalization. The means to medical education depended on the liberal arts, but as defined not by all participants but rather by those Whites who controlled professionalization, the American Medical Association and the medical colleges. Furthermore, the liberal arts were constituted on the basis of the Western classical tradition, a tradition both lauded and lamented by Black educators during the 1930s. One of the most extensive critiques of the education of Blacks, The Mis-Education of the Negro, published in 1933, clearly established the premise that Black education sought to imitate the educational content for Whites, without regard to the substantial accomplishments in the variety of ancient African cultures.43 Black scholars in addition to Carter Woods on promoted the intellectual accomplishments of Africans and African Americans. Not only DuBois, but also Black college leaders such as Charles S. Johnson (president of Fisk University, a leading Black liberal arts institution) focused on the Harlem Renaissance as evidence of the intellectual equality of Negroes.44 Finally, White medical schools refused admission to Blacks under the assumption of intellectual inferiority.

More problematic, however, is the relationship between the content of the liberal arts and the measures for entrance to medical school, in particular, the Medical College Admissions Test, so often cited by authors as the measure where Black students fell short. As Charlotte Borst has shown in her examination of the development of that examination, the content reflected the knowledge valued by the test designers, white men concerned about maintaining racial (and gender) barriers to the medical profession; the *ars liberalis* indeed played a central role in the development of appropriate items for the test.45 The increased selectivity of the medical schools beginning in the 1920s and continuing for the next several decades
was indeed a topic for praise among some contributors to the *Journal of Negro Education*, if only for the better medical care presumably afforded to clients. Nevertheless, concerns about Negroes and selectivity tended to reflect not academic content but grades and test scores, and even in cases where discussion eventually occurred regarding academic content, the framework for the argument began, as in the case with a 1950 article, with Negro students’ low test scores as evidence of the inadequacy of their premedical education.\textsuperscript{46} That same author, however, eventually identified the key problem with the medical admission tests for Black applicants:

The main curse on the premedical student aspiring to matriculate in a college of medicine has been his general inability to succeed on those sections of the Medical College Admission Test that deal with the social sciences and the humanities. … The premedical student of today must be well versed in the humanities and in the social sciences as well as in the natural sciences.\textsuperscript{47}

In the author’s analysis of the problem, he drew the conclusion that the Black colleges needed to ensure that their premedical students took more courses in the humanities and the social sciences rather than the natural sciences. Nevertheless his critique of the teaching staff and facilities at the Black colleges focused on the natural sciences, bypassing his specific discussion of the more troubling area of the humanities and the social sciences.\textsuperscript{48} While his critique acknowledged the need for a liberal arts education, it did not address the content of that education.

In the same year another contributor to the *Journal* lamented the lack of cultural opportunities for Blacks, especially those in the South. His concern focused on the narrow possibilities for culture, citing examples of Leonardo da Vinci, Pericles, Lorenzo de Medici, and Pope Julius.\textsuperscript{49} Hence the arguments for a substantial liberal arts education continued to waver between content based on the Black experience and content based on the White European experience.

It would take much longer before courses on Black life would enter the liberal arts curriculum – as Marybeth Gasman ably points out, even during the 1950s, Black college leaders used the extracurriculum (with speakers and workshops, for example) to further ideas about Black life and more specifically, Black life and justice in the United States.\textsuperscript{50} Despite the slow development of courses on Black life at Black colleges – much less at White colleges, or even more striking, as integrated into the liberal arts at all colleges rather than standing alone within departments of African American studies – one conclusion is clear in this review of the university, race, and professionalization in the 1930s.\textsuperscript{51} It was a decade when Blacks made clear progress in the development of Black literature and the arts, a development begun beyond the lecture halls of the university, in Harlem, yet confirmed by leading Black educators of the time and by Black undergraduates themselves in their choices for reading beyond the lecture halls. Early professionalization through the liberal arts was underway in the 1930s, although that curriculum continued its focus on White notions of knowledge. Even authors focused on the development of Black contributions to the liberal arts, as well as those examining Blacks in medicine, did not necessarily recognize the problem of *ars liberalis* as a means to entering a profession when it was solely defined in terms of White Western civilization.

**Conclusion**

I end on two notes of irony. First, it is no small matter that the decade of the 1930s covers only about one-eighthith of the years of existence for the University of
The university, professionalization and race in the United States

Cambridge, and a thirtieth of the years of college and university life in the United States. Overall, Black medical college graduates by the early 1930s were passing the state boards’ examinations at roughly the average of all medical college graduates. Nevertheless, the number of Black physicians was insufficient for the needs of the Black population. Given that a greater proportion of Blacks entered medicine from 1900 to 1930 than from 1930 to 1967, the problems of adequate preparation for medical school – whether the focus is on the liberal arts or on laboratory facilities at Black colleges – would not be solved in a decade or even in several decades. The severe, if not dire health needs of the Black population did not receive immediate attention even though we expect the university to provide professionals and professional service to the communities beyond the lecture hall.

Second, the tensions among the university, professionalization, and race remain. One African American dissertation writer told me, in the midst of writing an 80-page prospectus for her dissertation that she, as a female dietician, had to deeply know meanings of professionalization because Black physicians were still being instructed in the 1990s to check for certain symptoms by examining the color of the patient’s skin. No small wonder, then, that Black intellectuals continue to bemoan a social construction of knowledge, in specific terms for the sake of this work, the liberal arts, that pays scant attention to the contributions of a marginalized community. The vertical dimension of the fetish of the noble savage, the assumption that Whites held a higher place in the development of human thought than did Blacks, was under question in the 1930s, but the question would not have a quick or clear answer for all participants in the professionalization of physicians. Our acts of exclusion continue to render poignant the arguments of educators in the past and more telling the intricate tensions of higher education, professionalization, and race.

Notes

1 I use the term African American as a general identifier across the years, and in order to specify historical meaning, I use Negro and Black in reference to the past, in great part as a reminder to readers that the term ‘Negro’ was a term of agency at a time when racial slurs were part of public, including published, discourse.

2 See, for example, Wilbur H. Watson, Against the Odds: Blacks in the Profession of Medicine in the United States (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1999), and his discussion of the history of medical schools serving Blacks, ‘History and political economy of African American medical education’, 19-43; James L. Curtis, Blacks, Medical Schools, and Society (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1971), ‘Historical Perspectives’, 1-27 and ‘Work with Black premedical students, 83-104, a chapter that deals exclusively with undergraduate research experiences, advising, and grades; Dietrich C. Reitzes, Negroes and Medicine (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958). All provide a brief historical, or at least chronological, discussion of Blacks and medical education, but with little or no attention to the content of undergraduate courses.

3 V.P. Franklin and Bettye Collier-Thomas, ‘Biography, race vindication, and African American intellectuals’, Journal of African American History 87 (Winter 2002): 167-168. A variety of Black leaders identified African literary and artistic accomplishments, including Booker T. Washington, even though he was often critiqued for his focus on vocational education at the undergraduate level. See Michael Bieze, Booker T. Washington and the Art of Self-Representation (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2008) in general for discussion of the Washington-DuBois debate, as it is called, regarding vocational education and the liberal arts, and see 121 for Washington’s role in developing the arts and the ensuing development of the Harlem Renaissance. This work was the result of Michael’s dissertation for the Ph.D.


10 Ibid., 39.

11 Morais, The History of the Negro in Medicine, 95.


15 Callis, ‘The need and training of negro physicians’, 36. Problems of exclusion at White medical schools went beyond refusal to admit Black students; in 1933 an author in the Journal of Higher Education reported a court case in which two Black students sought reinstatement at a medical school where they had been dismissed because White students objected to their presence. See David A. Lane, Jr., ‘Student and collegiate contracts’, Journal of Higher Education 4 (February 1933): 77-78.


17 This is indeed a serious matter, eventually highlighted in a federal report with substantial impact, Higher Education for American Democracy (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948). See also Chas. H. Thompson, ‘The socio-economic status of negro college students’, Journal of Negro Education 2 (January 1933): 26-37. Thompson focuses on Howard University, a particularly apt example for this argument given its professional schools. See also E. Franklin Frazier, ‘Graduate education in negro colleges and universities’, Journal of Negro Education 2 (July 1933): 329-341. Frazier notes that the Negro colleges are only offering the master’s degree, and even counsels Atlanta University to postpone its plans to offer the doctorate, 341.


The university, professionalization and race in the United States

23 Ibid., 13 and Table III, 8 on Black physicians, and 11 on where the physicians practiced.
27 Woodson, The Negro Professional Man and the Community, With Special Emphasis on the Physician and the Lawyer, 81-82 on the background of Black physicians, 82 on the desire to become a physician. Of those who earned bachelor’s degrees, only 39 percent had attended regionally accredited institutions, highlighting the difficulties noted earlier in regard to accreditation.
28 Ibid., 83-84 on preparation, 85 on level of education.
31 W.E.B. DuBois, The Souls of Black Folk (New York City, NY: Grammercy Books, 1903/1994). In this collection of essays DuBois detailed the variety of oppressive measures that Blacks faced as well as their ongoing struggle for equality. He frequently called upon images of ancient Greek and Roman civilization, thereby evidencing both his own liberal arts education as well as the unerring focus on ancient Western civilization in that education.
32 W.E.B. DuBois, ‘Education and work’, Journal of Negro Education 1 (April 1932): 61. He also bemoaned the fact that the controversy about collegiate and industrial education had not yet reached a resolution, despite considerable successes, in part because the black students had ‘... swallowed hook, line, and sinker, the dead bait of the white undergraduate, who, born in an industrial machine, does not have to think, and does not think’, 64, urging the black college students and professors to focus on ways of exploiting the powerful corporations to create a better life for Blacks. In view of the focus of this chapter, I leave that most intriguing argument for another time.
34 Ibid., 308.


37 Ibid., 418-421.


39 Elizabeth A. Ferguson, ‘Race consciousness among American negroes’, *Journal of Negro Education* 7 (January 1938): 36. Ferguson is clearly an apologist for Booker T. Washington and Robert R. Moton, both of whom espoused working relationships between Southern Whites and Blacks, in opposition to the militant stance of W.E.B. DuBois and his advocacy of the liberal arts as a key indicator of Blacks’ intelligence. See Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, for one discussion of this controversy with a more favorable view of DuBois and his role.

40 Ibid., 400.

41 Winfred B. Nathan, ‘Health education in negro public schools’, *Journal of Negro Education* 6 (July 1937): 523 on infant mortality, 524 on tuberculosis. Concern about appropriate health care for Blacks was a recurring theme in the *Journal*; see, for example, Ernst P. Boas, ‘The cost of medical care as a factor in the availability of health facilities for negroes’, *Journal of Negro Education* 18 (Summer 1949): 333-339; and W. Montague Cobb, ‘Special Problems in the provision of medical services for negroes’, *Journal of Negro Education* 18 (Summer 1949): 340-345.


45 Bost, ‘Choosing the student body’.


48 Ibid.

49 George N. Redd, ‘The educational and cultural level of the American negro’, *Journal of Negro Education* 19 (Summer 1950): 249.
The university, professionalization and race in the United States


The origins and consequences of university involvement in English school examinations

Sandra Raban

Abstract
Externally run schools’ examinations are a product of their time and as such have reflected the dramatic changes in society as a whole since they were established. This paper explains how local examinations came into existence from the mid-nineteenth century, partly through public pressure on universities to provide them and partly through the need for universities themselves to set matriculation standards for their entrants.

The role played by universities meant that secondary education for the most able pupils has until recently been skewed in favour of academic rather than technical subjects, the latter being examined by other bodies such as the Royal Society of Arts and City and Guilds of London Institute. In addition, there has been a complicated and sometimes tense relationship between government and the examining bodies, as the former has sought to exercise increasing control over the curriculum, the structure of examinations, the proliferation of syllabuses and potential differences between the standards of different boards. Against this background, there has been considerable continuity over time in the concerns shown by users, although their precise nature has often changed.

An unforeseen consequence of examinations run by non-governmental bodies has been the ability of these organisations to play a leading role in the educational systems worldwide, including many countries where post-colonial sensitivities would have made official British examinations unacceptable.

Much of the research for this paper was done by contributors to Examining the World, published in February 2008 to celebrate the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate. My own credentials rest on many years spent as a Syndic; a lineal descendant of those academics first entrusted by the University in 1858 with the oversight of Cambridge local examinations (that is examinations held at the schools themselves), and also as someone caught up at first hand in the profound changes in the examination system during the past twenty-five years or so. I offer here my own interpretation of the implications of universities’ involvement in school examinations and not that of any organisation, most especially not that of Cambridge Assessment, the former Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, although I have inevitably drawn heavily on its history and archives.

Origins
English examining bodies first emerged during the second half of the nineteenth century, an era when private initiative rather than government provision was the order of the day. The introduction of external examinations, sometimes accompanied by inspection, was regarded as a means of raising standards in schools, but in their inception they were entirely the work of interested parties such as teachers and philanthropists. In what might be termed the first phase of development, the earliest body to undertake such activities, incorporated by royal charter in 1849, was the
College of Preceptors – an organisation founded by teachers and not a university at all. Its first examinations were held in 1850.3

Table 1 Examining bodies in England: First Phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Body</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>College of Preceptors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>(Royal) Society of Arts – first examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>University of Oxford Delegacy of Local Examinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td>University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td>University of Durham Matriculation and School Examinations Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>Oxford and Cambridge School Examination Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>City and Guilds of London Institute – assumed responsibility for technical examinations from Royal Society of Arts (RSA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>London University Extension Board – matriculation examinations run since mid-nineteenth century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>Joint Matriculation Board (Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds, later joined by Sheffield and Birmingham) – matriculation examinations run since 1880s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>University of Bristol School Examinations Council</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. I am grateful to Helen Patrick for help with this and the other tables. Providing dates for the establishment of boards is not a precise art. One might choose the date at which they were first proposed, formally established or ran their first examinations. Unless otherwise stated, the dates given here are those when they were formally established.

The Society, later Royal, Society of Arts, likewise preceded the first university boards. Founded in 1754 for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, it offered its first examinations, a century later, in 1855, although responsibility for technical subjects was subsequently handed over to the newly established City and Guilds of London Institute.4 The university boards made their first appearance shortly afterwards.

The Oxford Delegacy of Local Examinations, the first by a whisker, was set up in 1857. In Oxford, the examination boards were overseen by university committees known as delegacies, while in Cambridge the equivalents are called syndicates, hence their members are known respectively as delegates and syndics. This explains why the Oxford board was familiarly known as The Delegacy and the Cambridge board as The Syndicate. The genesis of the Oxford Delegacy was largely the work of individuals, notably Viscount Ebrington, chairman of the Council of the Society of Arts, who had already experimented with running examinations in the West Country, and Frederick Temple, an inspector of teacher training colleges, who became headmaster of Rugby School in 1857 and was later to become archbishop of Canterbury.5 The task at both Oxford and Cambridge was to convince the university authorities that running local examinations was a suitable responsibility for them to undertake; the notion of reaching out to serve the wider community was still in its infancy. It was Temple who presented Oxford with a sufficiently persuasive blueprint to propel it into action. At Cambridge the initiative came from a deputation from Birmingham and a petition, curiously known as a memorial, from some of the so-called ‘middle class’ schools in Cheltenham, Leeds and Liverpool. Their request was formally considered at the end of 1857 and the Local Examinations Syndicate was set up by the Council of the Senate in February 1858. Both boards ran their first examinations in 1858 – Oxford in summer and Cambridge in December. In the same
year, the University of Durham also established a matriculation and school examination board.

‘First Grade’, or what we would now call public schools, had no part in this initial provision. In 1871, however, the recently established Headmasters’ Conference, anxious about ‘the centralized uniformity, or the arbitrary caprice of a Government Department’, asked both Oxford and Cambridge to set examinations for their pupils too. As a result, in 1873, the confusingly named Oxford and Cambridge School Examination Board came into existence, a joint operation with offices in both universities. Thus there were finally three Oxbridge boards.

Meanwhile London University and the federation of northern colleges, known as Victoria University, had long been running matriculation examinations to regulate the standard of their entrants. These acquired a wider function as students with no intention of entering these institutions nevertheless found their certificates worth having. The situation was formalised specifically to provide school examinations with the establishment of the London University Extension Board in 1898 and the Joint Matriculation Board of Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool Universities in 1903. The latter was augmented by the University of Sheffield in 1905, and Birmingham, which had previously run its own matriculation examinations, in 1916. Finally, Bristol University joined the club in 1911, by establishing its School Examinations Council.

Clearly there was felt to be a widespread need for locally conducted school examinations of an academic nature and it was the universities which met it. Even so, they were not only responding to the needs of society at large, but also acting in their own interests as consumers of the school system. They wanted students to be as well prepared for their university studies as possible and also to be able identify the ablest among them. As Temple observed in an early appeal for what we would today call ‘outreach’, ‘The Universities should be made to feel that they have an interest in the education of all England’. Extension lectures are more commonly thought of as providing this service, but so close at the time was the perceived link between local examinations and the extension lectures launched by Cambridge in 1873 that, between 1878 and 1925, a common syndicate administered them both.

**Early consequences**

By the end of the nineteenth century, the cleverest school pupils – including girls from the 1860s – might expect to take to take ‘local’ examinations set and marked by one of the university boards, while those studying for technical or vocational qualifications were catered for by City and Guilds or the Royal Society of Arts. This situation continued virtually unchanged until the middle of the twentieth century. So, what were the consequences of this unplanned, if apparently serviceable, structure?

Firstly, and most unfortunately, it created a deep and enduring division in the English educational system between academic and vocational education, with the latter seen as second best. Many of our current economic ills have been attributed to this lack of parity of esteem, but the situation has proved singularly resistant to change. Nor was it just the existence of two types of examination run by different bodies. It was also the nature of the examinations the universities set. In the early years, the university boards drew exclusively on academics as examiners. Surprisingly eminent scholars devoted themselves to this activity. George Liveing, an early Secretary (director or chief executive), of the Cambridge Locals combined his administrative role and academic post as Professor of Chemistry with examining not just the sciences, for which he might have been thought especially qualified, but also
some of the preliminary subjects and English. All the early Syndics and many other dons were active examiners. Only drawing and commercial subjects were farmed out to more expert institutions such as Kensington School of Art. Even granting that the scale of activity was tiny by modern standards, these scholars showed impressive commitment to school education. The tradition continues at Cambridge, if on a less heroic scale. University teachers are still often involved as members of committees, consultants and even paper setters. As a Syndic, *inter alia*, I chaired the History Subject Committee, a forum for consultation with schools and teachers’ organisations, and examined A Level individual studies. The raison d’être of such involvement was to ensure academic rigour and also, more recently, to support colleagues in schools and inform ourselves about what was happening outside the ivory towers. Today’s examinations are a far more collaborative venture, with school experience on the part of examiners now far outweighing the contribution of those teaching in higher education.

In the early years, although the papers then set by academics were irrefutable in terms of academic rigour, they were often narrow and old fashioned in content. This mattered because, in effect, the papers determined the curriculum. It was sometimes hard for scholars to gauge the appropriate level of difficulty for school pupils and there was always the danger of the tail wagging the dog because they were most concerned to meet the needs of the handful of candidates who might become their students rather than the broader candidature. Complaints about the difficulty of papers were voiced from an early date. Moreover, as numbers of candidates grew and the demand for examiners along with it, the assumption that an MA was a sufficient qualification for setting, marking or conducting examinations proved to be wanting. *The Journal of Education* complained that school examinations were ‘ruled and regulated by middle-aged and even elderly gentlemen, who now have little to do with the education of the young, and in many cases have never had to do with it’. A list of examiners for Cambridge in 1900 shows that almost all were Cambridge MAs or Fellows of colleges and most were clergymen. If the claims of a letter in *The Journal of Education* in 1893 were halfway to accurate, paper setting could be casual to the point of incompetence. As early as 1875, a Cambridge Syndic had suggested that committees be appointed to oversee the setting of papers. There is no evidence that this was done at the time, but it was a straw in the winds of change. Now of course, paper setting is a highly technical business, involving considerable discussion and oversight.

A second legacy of university administration of school examinations was the diversity of provision. Unlike some other European countries, England had no central examining authority. Although this gave schools choice between the huge range of subjects and paper options and sometimes permitted examinations tailored to their particular needs, it was not seen as an unadulterated benefit. Complaints about variations in standards between different boards quickly emerged. In 1872, a headmaster in a letter to *The Times* claimed that Oxford was attracting fewer candidates than Cambridge, in part at least because its examinations were harder. In 1891, the York Boys’ Local Secretary reported to Cambridge that they were changing to Oxford because the papers were ‘more even’. Anyone who has taught in schools will know how enduring claims that one board is easier than another can be, despite sophisticated modern methods of assuring comparability between boards and between options within individual examinations.

Concerns were also voiced that the new local examinations tested individuals rather than schools, contrary to their purpose in raising standards in secondary
education. There was anxiety that the heavy examination timetables imposed too heavy a burden on candidates. A note in *The Journal of Education* in 1893 observed that fifteen year olds might have seven and a half hours of papers in a single day and that some might go on until 8 o’clock at night. However, such complaints would have arisen whichever sort of body ran the examinations and claims that the papers often tested knowledge rather than understanding or that teachers taught to the examinations remain an issue to this day.

**Twentieth century developments**

The existence of multiple providers did not pass completely unchallenged. As early as 1868, the Taunton Commission had proposed a centralised system of examining. It envisaged a Council of Examinations on which government and universities would be equally represented. Although some of the commission’s recommendations were adopted, this proposal was not. The issue was addressed again by the Bryce Commission in 1894. Worries were expressed about ‘excessive multiplication and overlapping of examinations’, but in the face of vigorous lobbying, not least by Neville Keynes, the Cambridge Secretary and father of Maynard, the Commission declined to recommend a central examining authority, citing as its reason the availability of ‘so many efficient and suitable agencies for examination’.

Government intervention confined itself to the replacement of the boards’ own examinations with a national School Certificate (age 16+) and Higher School Certificate (age 18+) (coordinated by the Board of Education, but still set and administered by individual boards) in 1918, and later the replacement of these with the General Certificate of Education (GCE) at O (Ordinary) level and A (Advanced) level in 1951. Universities are exceedingly sensitive on the subject of academic freedom, so it is not surprising that examination boards run by academics should have fiercely opposed any form of government intervention. Their attitude was typified by the Cambridge response to Sir Philip Hartog, the distinguished educationalist when, in 1932, he asked for cooperation in research into School Certificate. The Syndicate sent ‘a courteous letter stating that the Syndics could not accede to the request’. Any move towards examination reform emanating from the centre tended to meet with instinctive obstruction, although as Gordon Johnson’s introduction to a Cambridge classic – F. M. Cornford’s *Cambridge and his advice to the young academic politician* (*Micocosmographia academica*) – shows, this has not prevented Cambridge from meeting the challenge of change with great success when it has no alternative.

The catalyst for change in the examining structure, when it came, was the widening of educational opportunities in the period after the 1944 Education Act.

Table 2  
Examining bodies in England: Second Phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Associated Examinations Board (AEB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Southern Universities Joint Board (SUJB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Regional CSE Boards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A second phase of newly founded examining bodies emerged with the establishment of the Associated Examinations Board in 1953. Underwritten by City and Guilds, it was designed to meet the needs of the recently established technical schools and adult students. In the following year, Reading, Southampton and later Exeter joined the Bristol board to form the Southern Universities Joint Board for School Examinations,
a late addition to the panoply of university provision. The most important
development, however, was the advent of bodies set up to examine the newly
developed Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE) aimed at a much wider ability
range. By the 1960s it was no longer acceptable that a mere 20% of the school cohort
should be served by 16+ examinations. Thus Local Education Authorities and
teachers set up regional examining boards, independent of the universities, to run
these new examinations.

There again the matter rested for a generation, until growing dissatisfaction
with two parallel examinations led to the creation of the General Certificate of
Secondary Education (GCSE), designed to cater for almost the entire ability range.
This marked the beginning of the third phase in the evolution of English examining
bodies – a progressive reduction in their number, accompanied by an widening of
their remit.

Table 3  Examining bodies in England: Third Phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>GCSE Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Midland Examining Group (MEG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Northern Examining Association (NEA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Southern Examining Group (SEG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>London and East Anglian Group (LEAG)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Unitary awarding bodies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Edexcel – London and Business and Technical Education Council (BTEC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Oxford, Cambridge and RSA (OCR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– NEA boards, AEB/SEG and City and Guilds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To a large extent this reflected significant changes in the government’s attitude to
education ushered in by Prime Minister James Callaghan’s ‘Ruskin speech’ of 1976.
For the first time there was a real desire by government to control the curriculum and
regulate the way in which it was examined.

One manifestation of this was the pressure to form groups of combined GCE
and CSE boards to run the new examination. This process of enforced cooperation
was far from painless. A vital question for the Oxbridge boards was whether the
proposed groups would be regional, like the CSE boards, or free to operate on a
national basis, taking candidates from any centre. Although some of the university
boards, notably the Joint Matriculation Board, had always drawn their candidates
from a regional base, owing to their origin this was not the case for either Oxford or
Cambridge. These boards would have suffered a serious loss of candidature had they
been geographically limited in their catchment areas. To their relief, the argument in
favour of competition eventually prevailed. Although the groups when they were
finalised were broadly regional in membership, they were allowed to accept all
comers.

As ever with recent reforms, all the syllabuses, specimen papers and training
courses had to be developed within a tight time frame. It so happened, that open
competition enabled the Midland Examining Group, to which Cambridge belonged
and which had done well in this respect, to far exceed the maximum number of
candidates predicted by management consultants. So heavy indeed were the resulting
scripts that the then Secretary of the Syndicate had to consult structural engineers to
ensure that the floors of Syndicate Building could bear their weight. Less amusingly, it also became clear that an examining body belonging to a university with wider priorities might face certain disadvantages. At a time of financial stringency in the university sector, the Examinations Syndicate found itself forbidden to recruit the extra personnel it needed, with consequent impact on the delivery of the examination and a certain amount of recrimination within the Group. For different reasons, the Southern Examining Group also experienced problems. Its cumbersome constitution left its Chief Executive without real power and dependent for decisions on the parent bodies.  

It had not been immediately obvious which boards would climb into bed with each other and there was a certain amount of jockeying before the final composition of the groups emerged. Neither the Oxford Delegacy nor the East Anglian CSE board became part of Midland Examining Group alongside the Cambridge and the Oxford and Cambridge boards as might have been expected. Instead, Oxford decided to join the Southern Examining Group. The East Anglian Board in its turn made common cause with the London Board to form the London and East Anglian Group. There was inevitably a problem of the differing cultures within the GCE and CSE boards. Colin White of the East Midlands Regional Examinations Board memorably observed that the representatives of the two camps ‘tiptoed gently round each other, like the first missionaries meeting the first cannibals’. In the event, the groups worked surprisingly well as mutual respect and liking quickly developed and all the groups combined in inter-board committees to combat the external threat of further government encroachment.

Once launched, the movement towards greater rationalisation became ever harder to resist, not least because of a growing desire to see vocational examinations brought under the same umbrella as the more prestigious academic qualifications. There was no real fear that a single government examining body might be imposed. No existing board had the capacity to be offered this role, while to establish a completely new one would have been a logistical nightmare and cost a huge amount of money. It seemed clear that, for better or worse, the government would continue to work through a number of agencies, although the operating conditions it laid down grew increasingly restrictive. However, the writing was on the wall so far as the future of so many independent examining bodies was concerned. As a result, for the remainder of the 1980s and early 1990s there was much inter-board negotiation leading to mergers and buy outs. As John Day, former Secretary General of the Associated Examining Board, rather pointedly expressed it, Cambridge ‘annexed’ the Southern Universities Joint Board in 1990. Five years later, Cambridge acquired both the Oxford Delegacy’s A level operation and the Oxford and Cambridge Board in its entirety. These acquisitions were accompanied by formal mergers with its CSE partners in 1993 and 1998. The Associated Examining Board for its part bought the Oxford Delegacy’s CSE interests in 1994. In 1997, a consultation paper Guaranteeing Standards announced the Government’s intention to reduce examining boards to two or three unitary awarding bodies, each comprising at least one academic and one vocational board. This led to a final flurry of alliances. Thus Oxford and Cambridge merged with the examinations operation of the Royal Society of Arts, with which it had strong pre-existing links, to form OCR. The Associated Examining Board meanwhile threw in its lot with the Northern Group, not least because the vocational partner for this body was to be City and Guilds, its original begetter. Together they constituted the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA). The
third body, known as Edexcel, comprised the former London group in alliance with the Business and Technology Education Council.

**Contemporary consequences**
The purpose of this lengthy exposition has been to demonstrate how the university boards which dominated school examinations for the first century of their existence have been gradually subsumed into larger organisations. In the process, university involvement has been much diluted, but it has by no means disappeared. Of the three Unitary Awarding Bodies as they are now known, OCR, is a division of Cambridge Assessment, which remains a department of Cambridge University. It is still overseen by Syndics and still answers to the University Council, although there have been a number of constitutional changes to avoid the recurrence of the sort of problems encountered at the introduction of GCSE, notably independent employment arrangements as had long been the case at the University Press. The structure of the two other groups has changed more. AQA, was established as a company limited by guarantee in 2000 and is a registered charity. Edexcel has wandered furthest from its university origins. Originally a charitable foundation managed by trustees, it was sold in 2003 to Pearson plc forming London Qualifications Ltd. The purchase price was paid into an educational charity called Edge Foundation and what is now Edexcel Ltd, operates commercially as a Pearson subsidiary.

In 1944, Joseph Brereton, Secretary of the Cambridge Syndicate, could plausibly argue that examinations were a ‘mobilising force in education’. To a large extent, the idealism which had propelled universities into running school examinations in order to raise standards in schools, had succeeded. Had the system been run by other bodies, the English secondary curriculum might have been very different. As it was, for more than a century, many pupils were subjected to a highly academic regime which favoured a small elite. This enabled them to proceed to short, high quality university courses, but did little to cater for the needs of less gifted, albeit extremely competent pupils. It has been a legacy which brought renown to the English Higher Education system, but at a cost of undervalued technical and vocational training.

**World-wide reach and post-colonial consequences**
So much for England. One of the most unforeseen consequences of universities’ involvement in English school examinations was that they were quickly drawn into overseas examining. The impact of this on the countries concerned was, if anything, even more profound than it had been at home. Generations of school children, literally the world over, were subjected to excessively Anglo-centric studies, often in a language which was not their mother tongue. Moreover, this did not end as might have been expected with the demise of Empire. The very fact that the examinations were run by internationally renowned universities and not the British government reduced the taint of imperialism. Cambridge in particular has shown a remarkable capacity to adapt to the new world order, transforming itself into an organisation offering tailor made services to a large number of modern states.

Oxford, Cambridge, London and later the Associated Examining Board were all engaged in overseas examining, as were City and Guilds and the Royal Society of Arts. Only the Joint Matriculation Board never developed an overseas interest. As early as 1862, only four years after the first local examinations in England, Trinidad
asked ‘for some extension of the university action [in setting examinations] to schools in the colonies’. With the support of the Colonial Office, Cambridge was soon operating in South Africa, Mauritius, New Zealand, Malaya, Jamaica and Guyana. In Ceylon, a report of 1892 noted that the number of candidates almost equalled that of the rest of the world put together. At the Paris Exhibition of 1900, Cambridge proudly presented a graph showing the growth of colonial examinations.

![Figure 1](Cambridge Assessment Archives, M/PE 1; photograph by Nigel Luckhurst)

There was some ungentlemanly skirmishing between Cambridge and the London board, its strongest rival, as they fought to examine individual colonies. As a result, in 1936, the Colonial Office set up a Joint Advisory Board to enforce the principle of ‘one dependency, one examining board’. Despite stiff competition, which in the case of the Bahamas for example, resulted in Cambridge examinations in the 1940s, those of London in the 1960s and Cambridge again in the 1980s, Cambridge ultimately dominated; so much so that I was once told, probably apocryphally, that someone in Hong Kong was asked whether they were taking ‘London Cambridge’ or ‘Cambridge Cambridge’ examinations.

Running examinations successfully, even in England, is not a straightforward task as recent events have demonstrated. Given the distances, the primitive means of communication and the limited number of qualified personnel available, it is amazing how effectively early examinations were administered. There were tremendous challenges. To give just one example, in 1897, papers from Ghana were not sent back to Cambridge because both the Acting Director of Education and the Acting Colonial Chaplain had died and no one could find them. Eventually ‘a key put away among a heap of papers’ opened a box in which they had been placed for safekeeping and they were retrieved. Both world wars caused enormous disruption, but also witnessed extraordinary efforts to keep examinations running as normal. A collection of papers kept in what is known as ‘The War Box’ in the archives of Cambridge Assessment show the fortitude of candidates whose homes and families had been shattered in the Blitz, while Jack Roach’s papers reveal that Cambridge examinations were taken
throughout the war in Rome, although without the Cambridge name.\textsuperscript{40} Even more impressively, the Deputy Director of Education for Malaya, interned in Singapore, organised unofficial School Certificate examinations for young internees, which were duly recognised by the Cambridge Syndicate after the war.\textsuperscript{41} But, fascinating though these details are, they are not really relevant to the present argument. More pertinent is what motivated overseas governments to adopt examinations offered by English universities.

The first examinations requested by colonial administrators were largely for an expatriate clientele; the children of Britons resident overseas who were following an English-style curriculum. Soon however, these candidates were joined by local students for whom an English certificate would act as a passport to a white collar post in business or government. Top candidates also had the opportunity to win scholarships tenable at English universities. As in England itself, the acceptability of these early qualifications was greatly enhanced by the prestige of the bodies offering them. Early certificates bore the signature of the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University and were headed by an elaborate version of the University crest.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.7\textwidth]{figure2.png}
\caption{Certificate for the Senior Local Examinations 1919}
\textit{(Cambridge Assessment Archives, A/C 2/2)}
\end{figure}

The reputation of English universities was seen as a guarantee of standards and probity. Indeed, boards went to great length to ensure both, as they still do.

While there were undoubted benefits in an incorrupt, high quality examination system for the colonies, for many years the quest for parity of standards led to the use of exactly the same type of papers abroad as in England. The English History paper designed for overseas Junior candidates in 1940 reproduced here seems massively inappropriate to modern eyes.
University involvement in English school examinations

As late as the 1980s, it was said that Cambridge had a contract with Malaysia to translate all its papers into Bahasa Malaysia. Of course, most of these papers would never have attracted candidates and it was increasingly recognised that examinations needed to be adapted to local conditions. The first question papers in local languages, Tamil and Sinhalese, were set for Ceylon in 1906 and more were introduced for other countries in the inter-war years, along with special papers to meet local needs. Cambridge School Certificate Regulations for 1946 reveal a paper in West Indian History available in Trinidad, while special arithmetic papers were set using Mauritian, Indian and Sudanese weights and measures and currencies. But despite cautious reforms, the structure and content of English university overseas examinations remained broadly English. Since education plays such a large role in socialisation, this had far reaching consequences for the countries concerned. It created an enormous gulf between ruling elites steeped in English culture, possibly even with English as their mother tongue, and the majority of the population who were reared in a different culture, often without access at that time to secondary schooling.

As we have noted, perhaps the most remarkable thing about all this is that it did not come to an end with the British Empire. Why did newly independent states choose to continue with English run examinations with all that they implied? Certainly many wished to run their own examination systems as a matter of national pride. There was also an increasingly subtle awareness of the cultural implications of using English examinations, as exemplified by the research of Eric Williams, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago from 1962 to 1981, when he was a professor of history at Harvard. However not all countries wishing to run their own systems had

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**Figure 3** Part of the English History paper for overseas candidates for the Junior Examination in 1940

(Cambridge Assessment Archives, Bound Volume 1940)
either the means or the expertise to do so. Examinations are expensive and there are economies of scale which were not open to small countries with a limited number of potential candidates. In 1994, The Gambia for example had only nine A level candidates in Biology and 14 in Chemistry.45

One solution to this problem was to operate in alliance with neighbouring countries. The West African Examinations Council was the earliest in the field, coming into existence in 1952 for four, later five, states which had formerly been examined by London or Cambridge. The Caribbean Examinations Council created twenty years later, in 1972, actually developed its own 16+ examination along the lines of GCSE some years ahead of reform in England. It is worth noting however that a Caribbean A level, with its smaller candidature, was not launched until the mid-1990s.46 Moreover, although a logical answer to the difficulties associated with running lots of small scale examinations, regional boards were subject to just the same tensions as other regional bodies of the period and, like them, several founder. The East African Examinations Council established in 1967 to serve Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, collapsed in 1979 and a similar fate met the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland Schools Examinations Council in the same year.47 In effect, regional examinations were as unacceptable to small states as English ones and this undermined the viability of joint operations.

Another solution which found increasing favour was for metropolitan examining boards to offer technical support in establishing locally run systems. Several commentators from such countries have observed that the services of these bodies were expensive, but of a high quality which made them worth the price.48 Cambridge in particular made this something of a speciality. The largest localisation project with which it was involved in recent years was that of Zimbabwe. Prior to independence, the Associated Examining Board had examined in white schools and Cambridge in black schools. It was therefore natural that Cambridge should inherit the task of implementing Robert Mugabe’s promise that O level would be available to all. It quickly became evident that this examination was not suited to a mass candidature and that Zimbabwe would wish to take charge of its own examination system. A long period of partnership ensued while this was brought about. This model of localisation was replicated in other countries and training courses for examination administrators were established in Cambridge or Cambridge officers worked in the country concerned to provide whatever expertise was required.

Accreditation in particular was a useful service to newly emergent systems. The Bahamian government had launched its own Junior Certificate in 1953, but was aware of the need for international recognition for its young people studying overseas with the more advanced certificate which, for a variety of reasons, it was planning. Cambridge Assessment therefore worked with the Ministry of Education to provide accreditation for its Bahamas General Certificate of Education introduced in 1993. Certificates accordingly bear the crest of both the Bahamian government and that of Cambridge University.49

Surprisingly perhaps, not all countries able to run their own examinations decided to exercise the option. Singapore is the obvious example. Tan Yap Kwang described the thinking behind the joint Singapore/Cambridge operation elsewhere in the conference.50 In similar vein, Surendra Bissoondoyal, former Director of the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate, explained why Mauritius took much the same decision for slightly different reasons. Mauritius society is conservative, and places high value on international links. For reasons of international recognition and portability of qualifications, Mauritians would prefer a certificate from Cambridge or
London to a local one. In small states, especially those where scholarships are awarded on examination results, there is also much to be said for an external guarantor of impartiality and occasional whipping boy. The conservatism to which Bissoondoyal alludes means that not only is O level still available in some overseas countries, but even a hybrid of School Certificate and GCE. Essentially, Cambridge Assessment works with clients to provide the sort of assessment, well tried or innovative, appropriate to their circumstances.

Today, Edexcel and Cambridge Assessment have essentially transformed themselves into consultants on assessment and testing. Continuing the old London/Cambridge rivalry, both successor boards have produced international versions of the latest English examinations, most notably GCSE. Cambridge Assessment’s International GCSE celebrated its twentieth anniversary in 2005, the same year in which Edexcel launched its competitor. A substantial part of the candidature for these examinations is drawn from the international schools where portability is a key requisite, but several states have also adopted International GCSE for all their pupils or authorised its use in English medium schools. The newly emergent state of Namibia, for example, needed an examination system which cut free from the South African one which had operated before independence. Cambridge International GCSE met this need as a transitional measure before Namibia developed its own examinations based on the same principles. Cambridge now has more than 2000 International GCSE centres in a host of countries.

![Figure 4: Countries (shaded) where Cambridge Assessment had centres in 2006](© Cambridge Assessment)

The map of Cambridge Assessment centres in 2006 above gives some idea of the scale of English university involvement in overseas examining. There are two important caveats before taking this spectacular picture at face value. Firstly, some countries, even very large ones, have very few centres, so things are less impressive than they look. Secondly, a large number of centres may be examining English for Speakers of Other Languages. Oxford, Cambridge and RSA all had longstanding interests in this area. Cambridge Assessment, which inherited all of them, has undoubtedly benefited from the emergence of English as the world’s second language. It is Europe’s largest English testing body and one of the two or three largest in the world, with a distinctive emphasis on curriculum based examinations. This of course means that English Language examinations disseminate English culture in exactly the
same way as the old colonial examinations did, but without the opprobrium which would now attach to ordinary school examinations.

What then, in sum, were the origins and consequences of university involvement in school examinations? Well, without the university examination boards we might never have had Inspector Morse; Colin Dexter came to Oxford as subject officer for Classics at the Delegacy. More seriously, what alternative was there to university involvement once it became clear that running examinations was not a task that nineteenth century government was keen to undertake? Only universities had the reserves of intellectual expertise and the reputation which would make their certificates acceptable to candidates and users. It is an irony that, while the role of universities in examining in England has dwindled, it has expanded enormously abroad.

Things have come a long way from the days when school examining was an extra duty assumed by public-spirited academics. The world of assessment and testing has professionalised beyond all recognition in the last quarter of a century. However, it was the rather amateur efforts of the nineteenth-century university boards which laid the foundation for what is in effect a significant example of British enterprise. Indeed, in 1992, Cambridge Assessment won the Queen’s Award for Export Achievement. Nor have the benefits been purely commercial. Many parts of the English speaking world which no longer take English examinations have a style of curriculum and examination inherited from the past. Their examining bodies were often established with the technical support of English boards, and some are even called Syndicates. Furthermore, the possession of a Cambridge or London certificate has encouraged generations of the brightest students worldwide to come the UK for their higher education. Many have been destined to become leaders in their own countries. At the very least, the legacy of university involvement in school examining has been an influence and familiarity with English culture which no amount of cultural diplomacy could buy.

Notes

2 I am particularly indebted for the following to A. Watts’ chapter in Examining the World and his unpublished seminar paper ‘The Whirligig of Time’.
7 Watts in Raban, Examining the World, 41; Tattersall, K., ‘Ringing the changes: Educational and Assessment policies, 1900 to the Present’ in AQA, Setting the Standard: A Century of Public Examining by AQA and its Parent Boards (Manchester: Assessment and Qualifications Alliance, 2003), 7-8.
8 H. James, ‘The Joint Matriculation Board and the Northern Examinations and Assessment Board’ in AQA. Setting the Standard, 56.
10 For the admission of girls to public examinations, see Roach, Public Examinations, 109-12.
University involvement in English school examinations

12 Ibid., 14-15.
17 *The Times*, 16 May, 1872.
26 Ibid., 47.
27 C.F. White, *East Midland Regional Examinations Board: A Brief History*, (Nottingham, 1990), 27. Quoted by Patrick and Patrick in Raban, *Examining the World*, 96 who kindly provided the original source.
32 Edexcel and Edge websites: www.edexcel.com; www.edge.co.uk.
36 Ibid., 62.
38 Difficulties in the delivery of Key Stage 2 SATS in summer 2008.
39 Stockwell in *Making Imperial Mentalities*, 207.
40 Cambridge Assessment Archives, A/WWII 1/4; PP JOR 2/1.
41 Cambridge Assessment Archives, A/WWII 1/3.
S. Bissoondoyal, ‘Mauritius’ in Bray and Steward, Examination Systems, 55; Sumner and Archer in Bray and Steward, Examination Systems, 104.

49 Sumner and Archer in Bray and Steward, Examination Systems, 100-102.


51 Bissoondoyal in Examination Systems, 52.

52 Lacey in Raban, Examining the World, 116.

53 Colin Dexter was author of the highly popular and extensively televised Inspector Morse series of detective novels.

54 Leedham-Green in Raban, Examining the World, 35.
Modes of engagement: universities and schools in Australia 1850-1914

Geoffrey Sherington and Julia Horne

Abstract

During the mid to late nineteenth century universities and secondary schools were involved in formative modes of engagement. Beneficiaries of state endowment, from the 1850s Australia’s universities soon created a system of scholarships and examinations which established relationships with individual schools and school systems. This mode of engagement helped to sustain a meritocracy with access to university being extended to rural students and then to women. Simultaneously, student life, and particularly life in male student colleges, supported a common cultural bond between school and university focused increasingly on sport and the ideology of athleticism set within the wider context of British imperialism. While the meritocratic mode of engagement tended to widen and extend the influence of the university, the emphasis on a male cultural bond was often more restrictive and constraining, leading to tension in gender and other relations within the universities.

Introduction

In the mid-nineteenth century the boundaries between school and university still remained uncertain in both Britain and much of North America. At Oxford and Cambridge, caught up in debate over reform, college tutors provided generalist not specialist instruction in a manner not much different to grammar and public schools even though the age of admission of students had steadily risen since the eighteenth century. In Scotland, by contrast, many students went directly from parochial schools to university, often being admitted to university at age 14 or 15. It was similar also in the United States where foundations such as Harvard were only slowly turning from a collegial custodial function towards a new university ideal based on higher learning and scholarship. As Sheldon Rothblatt has suggested, ‘In Scotland and America, until the rise in the age of entry of about the middle of the nineteenth century, secondary school and university were virtually indistinguishable’. While many of these issues were being discussed at the centre of Empire a new idea of the university with implications for the university relationship to schools was being born at the peripheries. The ideas for change were sometimes drawn from the context of the debate over university reform that had already begun in Britain but the solutions were mainly local and adapted to the nature of a colonial democracy. And in terms of engagement with schools the situation became even more dynamic as the idea of ‘secondary education’ was invented in colonial contexts and then systems of secondary schools were established.

Developments in Australia in the early 1850s were crucial in these respects. Higher education in much of the British Empire had been focused on the idea of the College, sometimes residential but often not, and generally associated with specific religious orders or denominations. Colleges provided education beyond the elementary level, usually classical studies for a socially-privileged male elite. In Australia a few colonial colleges were established from the 1830s conceived in part as imperial outposts that would lead to Oxbridge or even emulate developments in
Britain. In South Australia, the idea of school and higher education being associated together was present with the foundation of the ‘Collegiate School’ of St Peter in 1847 which some even hoped could become an Anglican University College in the Antipodes created out of endowments like Durham University and similar in aim to King’s College London.\(^8\) From the 1850s the idea of a colonial college was progressively abandoned – initially in New South Wales and Victoria, later in South Australia and Tasmania – in favour of the university conceived as a different form to what then existed elsewhere in the British Empire. While influenced by developments in Britain including the establishment of the University of London and the Queen’s Universities in Ireland, the Australian universities founded in Sydney (1850), Melbourne (1852), Adelaide (1874), Tasmania (1891) and then Queensland (1909) and Western Australia (1913) were secular foundations established by state endowment with mainly lay councils as well as being teaching and examining institutions which would have a major impact on the development of local school systems.\(^9\)

An example of this new Antipodean model of the university was the University of Sydney – Australia’s first university established in 1850, accepting its initial students through matriculation in 1852.\(^10\) The movement to establish a university in the colony of New South Wales had been closely associated with the creation of colonial democracy and the universal male franchise. A study of the social origins of the early students at the University of Sydney from the 1850s to the 1880s suggests the gradual extension of an ‘educational franchise’ first to a male meritocracy selected through examination, and often granted scholarships, and then to other parts of the population including those in rural areas and increasingly involving women students.\(^11\) Much of this change came also with the eventual creation of state schools systems which consolidated the place of secondary education by establishing a number of academically-elite high schools that would eventually produce a ‘meritocracy’ who would go on to university.\(^12\)

Matching the foundation of universities in each of the capitals of the six colonies was the establishment of a number of grammar and similar schools mainly under the auspices of the various Churches. Influenced by reform movements in nineteenth century English public schools, by the late nineteenth century these colonial counterparts can be seen as consolidating class differences and creating a form of middle class culture attached to English public schools ideals and, ultimately, to visions of Oxford and Cambridge.\(^13\) Such institutions in Australia have come to be described as ‘corporate schools’, associated mainly with corporate bodies such as the major Churches, governed by independent councils and with their own corporate identity. They sustained a relationship with the universities which was often more ‘aristocratic’ than meritocratic in intent. The graduates from the boys’ corporate schools often sought to maintain at university a masculine culture learnt at school. And nowhere was this seen more than in the devotion to physical pursuits and the cult of athleticism.

These related processes led to diverse ways in which universities and schools engaged with one another from the mid-nineteenth century to the First World War. One chief mode involved the idea of a meritocracy formed principally through scholarships and examinations. The other major mode was a re-affirmation of the almost ‘aristocratic’ ideal of character formation focused on the emergence of the male ideology of athleticism and celebration of the body and physical endeavour rather than the mind. Such modes developed in parallel but sometimes contradictory ways thereby shaping the overall engagement between universities and schools.
Examinations, scholarships and academic life

By the mid-nineteenth century, the meritocratic ideal of competitive written examinations was becoming a feature of university life in Britain. From its outset, the University of London placed emphasis on examination for its matriculation arrangements as a way to preserve a liberal education. This justified, in the Senate’s mind, the very high failure rates, because ‘Matriculation was not only the first step to obtaining its degrees, but also the termination of the literary and scientific education received by large numbers of schoolboys who are prevented by circumstances from the farther presentation of systematic studies’. In the universities of Scotland, there was concern about academic standards of very young university entrants as expressed in the Royal Commission of 1826. In 1852, John Blackie, Professor of Greek at Edinburgh was given special permission by the University Council to establish an entrance exam for his own special course.

It was less certain at Oxford. As Sheldon Rothblatt has indicated, written examinations slowly replaced oral forms in the testing of undergraduates’ knowledge and understanding. According to Rothblatt, this movement was not based on meritocratic principles but as a way of disciplining the undergraduate population with the fears of unrest raised by the French Revolution. At the same time exams were associated with prizes and distinctions. While written exams were increasingly introduced from the 1830s they were only part of the Oxbridge undergraduate experience in the final year of study when individual students could distinguish themselves by examination performance. And well into the nineteenth century students continued to matriculate to university through personal and school associations with individual colleges.

From the outset, examination was part of the universal student experience in Australian universities. Students entered university through formal written exam, survived through formal written exam and finally graduated through formal written exam. The University of Melbourne, established in 1853, had created a matriculation examination with regulations by 1855, even allowing students to matriculate as young as 15. The new board of examiners was composed of the small professoriate, most of whom came from Ireland. It was their view that ‘The more closely, therefore, colonial Universities resemble those of the Mother Country the greater is the probability of their failure’. They were even prepared to consider dispensing with the compulsory study of classics at university on the grounds that a matriculation examination including Latin and Greek would help to preserve standards:

the University of Melbourne possesses one Examination, the Matriculation Examination, earlier than that possessed by Oxford and Cambridge; and therefore, is fairly justified in dispensing at an earlier period with those studies, which for certain reasons now to be discussed it is proposed still to retain as compulsory viz. Latin and Greek.

This matriculation examination soon became a leaving certificate for the secondary school students of Melbourne, most of whom never intended to go on to university. With an expanding middle class school age population in Melbourne, following the wealth and urban expansion of the gold rushes of the 1850s, the growing number of Church corporate and private schools soon used the academic matriculation examination as an educational goal to judge their success. The University soon extended its influence with examinations for others such as those entering the civil service, all assisted of course by the imposition of examination fees.
At the University of Sydney, the first students matriculated in 1852 by formal written examination. Formal written examinations became the way to admit and then, principally, to select students for scholarship support, with about one-third of students in the 1850s and early 1860s receiving a scholarship. Significantly, the University of Sydney did not impose any religious tests so providing for students of different religious faiths to be admitted. As a result, about 40 percent of all matriculants in the first decade were of the Church of England faith. But just over one quarter were Protestant dissenters and just under one fifth were Roman Catholic – the total of which was greater than the number of matriculants professing to be Anglican – which is significant because both groups were still excluded from Oxbridge in the 1850s. Competitive examination thus reinforced the role of the new University as a multi-faith and meritocratic institution.

Much was due to the role of the early professors and particularly John Woolley, the first principal of the University, who also held the inaugural chair of Classics. Woolley was part of the early nineteenth-century generation of Oxford students who had benefited from the new regime of emerging university reform. Winning a scholarship to Oxford he graduated first class in ‘Greats’ and was then elected in open competition to a fellowship at University College Oxford. A colleague of Thomas Arnold’s student A.P. Stanley, Woolley was associated with the reform movement at Oxford aiming to strengthen the central university against the interests of the Colleges. Woolley was committed to transplanting an Oxford education to the Antipodes but on the new principles of creating a colonial meritocracy. While the professors at the University of Melbourne accepted the need for professional schools in law and medicine Woolley’s views were founded on a liberal classical education. He sought to achieve this first by supporting the creation of a grammar school for Sydney and second by promoting the competitive examination principle for both school students and university undergraduates.

The idea of grammar schools had been brought to Australia during the 1830s and 1840s with Church of England foundations in New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania. In the colony of Victoria, the effect of the material wealth of the gold rushes led to all the major religious denominations establishing boys’ and girls’ schools from the 1850s to the 1870s. The establishment of the colonial Universities provided a new impetus to the creation and development of such schools, which now linked their curriculum to higher education. In particular, the University of Sydney in association with the colonial state helped to shape the nature of the Australian grammar school in the colonies of New South Wales and Queensland.

In part reform was driven by the nature of colonial schools as well as the early university matriculants. There were no age barriers amongst the first matriculants to the University of Sydney. The average age of these early matriculants was 17.5 although there was a vast spread of ages from as young as 14 to one matriculant aged 33; three were fourteen, seventeen were aged in their early twenties and two were in their late twenties to early thirties. The majority had attended numerous small private academies in Sydney which were usually schools run by clergymen with some classical education.

Woolley and his fellow professors had a low opinion of the academic background of these early undergraduates. In many ways Woolley was an example of the mid-nineteenth century headmaster turned don. He had been a headmaster at Rossall School in Lancashire and had become a follower of the views of Thomas Arnold. And he even took a headmaster’s view of the progress of many of the new students. Supported by the University Senate he discontinued many students for
failing to attend classes or pass the exams. He virtually ‘expelled’ George Barton the brother of the future first prime minister of Australia.  

Woolley and the other two foundation Professors were generally unimpressed with the standard of the first cohort of students at the University of Sydney. They blamed poor performances on the standard of their prior education in the private academies and grammar schools. As early as 1854, they noted:

进度更明显的出现在那些在家接受教育的学生中，而不是在殖民地受过训练的学生。考官们把这种明显的差距归因于这些学生的思想习惯、勤劳、坚持和广泛的智力活动对道德风貌和男子气概的影响，而这正是英国公立学校尤其能够培养的。

In 1854, just two years after the University opened, Woolley, along with Charles Nicholson, the University Provost, and Morris Pell, the Professor of Mathematics, were signatories of a petition to the New South Wales Parliament, calling for a state-endowed public grammar school. The needs of the University were prominent, the new institution being said to be ‘manifestly retarded for want of efficient preparatory teaching’. It was hoped that the proposed school would raise standards to those equivalent in English urban grammar schools providing a model for other colonial schools to follow. Following a committee of enquiry, it was agreed to establish a school with an endowment of £20,000 for buildings and an annual endowment of £1500 which would allow for 50 scholarships. There was provision for the university professors to serve on the board of trustees and act as examiners of the school.

Sydney Grammar School opened in 1857 on the site of the former Sydney College which the University itself had occupied for five years before moving to a large site on what were then the outskirts of Sydney town. The Sydney College site had been purchased with the state funds allocated to Sydney Grammar School for its new home. The school became the first state-endowed grammar school in Australia. It provided a model for schools both in and outside New South Wales. The Queensland Grammar School Act 1860 was directly drawn from the Sydney Grammar School Act 1854. The link was Sir Charles Nicholson, the former Provost and thus formal head of the University of Sydney. A supporter of Woolley who became President of the Legislative Council in Queensland, Nicholson now proposed a system of ‘public Grammar Schools’ for ‘conferring on all classes and denominations’ ‘the advantages of a regular and liberal course of education’. The result was boys’ and girls’ grammar schools spread throughout regional centres in Queensland.

The second initiative of reformers such as Woolley was to emulate the movement for school examinations that had begun in Britain. A number of historians have pointed out that by the 1850s the competitive examination principle had become entrenched first in the civil service in Britain, following the Northcote Trevelyan report, and then in the universities and secondary schools. The Oxford and Cambridge Local Examinations established in 1858-59 were designed to improve the academic standards of the local and endowed grammar schools for the middle classes. Offered at local centres in two age-related stages these examinations soon attracted a large candidature. And by the late nineteenth century the University of Cambridge was spreading the examination of schools throughout Britain and the Empire. Indirectly, these developments had an impact in Australia.

As indicated, from as early as 1856 the matriculation examination at the University of Melbourne had become de facto a school leaving examination. Sydney
in the 1850s had fewer ‘corporate’ schools than Melbourne. Nevertheless there was pressure to establish academic standards. In 1859, the Reverend Frederick Armitage, the headmaster of The King’s School, the first Church corporate school established in Australia in 1831 but still with few students, proposed to a Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry that the University impose its influence ‘in the way in which Oxford and Cambridge now exert themselves – by middle class examinations’. In 1864, Woolley himself had written to his former student and now friend and ally, W.C. Windeyer, proposing that ‘the middle class examinations be established throughout the country’. Windeyer later conveyed this idea to the Senate, the governing body of the University.

In 1867, following the initiative of Windeyer the University of Sydney established Junior and Senior exams with relevant by-laws and regulations. These new exams were similar to the Oxford and Cambridge Locals being intended for secondary school students. The exams were to be held each December at places throughout the colony where there were sufficient candidates who would be required to pay an entry fee (£3 for the Junior and £4 for the Senior). The University’s professors constituted the board of examiners. Successful candidates in either exam would receive a signed certificate from the University. The academic subjects for the Junior were divided into five sections requiring a Pass in Section 1 comprised of English, arithmetic, history and geography and a Pass in two of the other five sections, comprising further exams in English and history but also classics, modern languages, and mathematics. Initially candidates for the Junior exam had to be under 16, but following requirements that entrants to the colonial public service and those intending to become articled clerks should possess the Junior examination qualification, the age of sitting the Junior became a minimum of 16 years.

The Senior examination was divided into seven sections again requiring candidates to pass in Section 1 (exactly the same content as in the Junior) and then in two of the other six sections. By 1870, a pass in the Senior exam qualified a candidate to be admitted to teacher training school for public schools without further requirement while providing for exemption from further examination in such subjects as Latin, mathematics, chemistry, French, German, geology, botany and zoology. In this way, the exams came to define academic standards for students and future teachers. Passes in Latin and one foreign language at the Senior exam also allowed for matriculation to the University, but until the 1880s failure rates in these subjects remained high.

The new examinations were originally intended to supplement the existing matriculation examination. The candidates who passed received a certificate signed by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and by the University Registrar. A Board of professors and assistant professors were set up to conduct the exams. Deas-Thomson, Chancellor of the University, later elaborated:

I may explain that the object of instituting public examinations of the nature in question is to extend to persons other than matriculated students the advantages of the university, by affording to them an opportunity of having their acquirements tested by a thoroughly competent and impartial Board of Examiners whose certificate will be accepted by the public as conclusive evidence of their proficiency in the subjects in which they have passed.

In 1867 when these examinations were established there were eight candidates for the Senior examination, of whom six passed, and eleven candidates for the Junior, of whom nine passed. Thirty years later, the proportion of candidates compared to the
general school age population had increased greatly: there were 119 candidates for the Senior exam, of whom 101 passed and 1079 candidates for the Junior of whom 698 passed.\[^{40}\] There is little doubt that the competitive examination principle helped to widen opportunities for the New South Wales school population, extending the educational franchise which had been confined previously to a male, urban, largely middle class meritocracy.\[^{41}\]

The creation of the public examination system coincided with the growth of the state-funded public school system which now began to supplant the earlier denominational schools of the various Churches. In particular through the creation of local examination centres, and with the spread of state-funded public schools throughout New South Wales, students in rural areas of New South Wales were now able to sit for the exams and thereby matriculate for university. And by the 1870s, examination centres had been established in the northern colony of Queensland. Many of these Queensland grammar schools soon sat their pupils for the public examinations of the University of Sydney. And with Queensland lacking a university until 1909 many enrolled at the University of Sydney.\[^{42}\]

An example of the success of the examination principle was seen just south of Sydney. Between 1875 and 1879 the most successful of the rural public schools at the public exams was Kiama Public School about 60 miles from Sydney on the coast. The first head teacher of this public school, which opened in 1871, was J.G. Stewart, who held a science degree from the University of Glasgow and was also parliamentary representative for the area from 1871 to 1874. His successor H.G. Bent soon complained that parents expected a grammar school curriculum with success measured by results at the public examinations. And the exam route from Kiama led on to professional careers often via the University. A select list compiled in 1898 of 25 ex-Kiama Public Schools boys, all of whom had first studied under Stewart in 1871-74, revealed at least two members of Parliament, a barrister, solicitor, medical practitioner, five bank managers, three members of the public service, and an inspector of schools.\[^{43}\]

These new examinations thus strengthened the relationship between the University and the emerging state-funded public school system in New South Wales. They also set academic standards particularly for those preparing to be teachers in the public schools. The pupils of Fort Street public school in the centre of the city, which had become a virtual training centre for teachers, soon achieved great success in the public exams. By 1900, with this mark of achievement the school had over 2000 students.\[^{44}\]

Of equal significance was the effect of the University’s exams on girls’ schools. When the University of Sydney was established in 1852, some of the prominent early girls’ schools in Australia were convent schools which taught the daughters of middle class Protestants as well as Roman Catholics.\[^{45}\] There were also a number of private female academies throughout Australia which generally focused on the ‘polite accomplishments’ and the ‘elements of English education’.\[^{46}\] By the 1860s there were private academies often established by women who had associations with higher education in Australia or overseas. As one example, Emily Baxter had been a pupil teacher employed by the Council of Education established under the 1866 Public Schools Act. She had then been a correspondence student in classics with Charles Badham who had succeeded Woolley as Professor of Classics. By 1874 she had opened her own Argyle school with an academic curriculum. A decade later, the school had achieved a number of passes in the public exams and the Fairfax prize for female success in the Junior examination.\[^{47}\] An earlier established private academy
was the Cambridge School established in 1867 which also now prepared its students for the public exams. By 1876, more than a third of the candidates at the Senior exam were female, and one-fifth of those at the Junior. But pass rates for women were lower than for males, apparently indicating the still ‘deficient’ standards in girls’ schools.

By the late 1870s a group of women associated with the University of Cambridge had begun to arrive in Sydney and were opening private academies. The best known were the two Clarke sisters, Ellen and Marian, who founded two schools, ‘Normanhurst’ and ‘Abbotsleigh’, in the 1880s. Marian had been partly educated in Germany and in the University College Bristol as well as being awarded honours at the Cambridge Higher Local Examinations in 1880. Both sisters were part of the ‘Cambridge connection’ – that small circle of headmistresses determined to ‘widen the educational opportunities of girls’.

As Woolley’s successor as Professor of Classics, Charles Badham also had a more progressive view of the role of the University and was prepared to sponsor the higher education of women. Unlike Woolley, Badham’s own education was far from conventional. He had been to Pestalozzi’s school at Yverdun in Switzerland before attending Eton and then Oxford. Considered the ‘first Greek Scholar of the day’, and networked with Continental scholars, his ordination in the Church of England should have assured him a position at Oxbridge, denied, it seems, by his close association with dissenters. In 1854 he had been appointed headmaster of the Birmingham and Edgbaston Proprietary School which had been founded by Unitarians with the aim of providing a good general education for boys intended for business (with the Unitarians also being in the forefront of supporting educational opportunities for women). Whereas Woolley was focused on a male middle class elite, Badham was interested in extending social access.

Badham and other University members encouraged the development of colonial public secondary schools. In 1876, a series of petitions to Parliament called for the establishment of ‘Colleges or Grammar or higher class schools, in all the principal cities of the Colony’. Two years later, William Windeyer, now the University’s first representative in Parliament, introduced a motion calling for the establishment of ‘grammar schools at Maitland, Goulburn and Bathurst’. These moves came together in the New South Wales 1880 Public Instruction Act which removed all state aid from denominational schools, but also authorised ‘superior’ public schools, which provided for a form of non-classical studies but did not charge fees, and high schools with fees –separate schools for boys and girls in Sydney and in the major rural centres of Bathurst, Goulburn and Maitland. The Sydney and Maitland high schools survived, those at Bathurst and Goulburn soon failed because of the competition from local Church corporate schools which offered a similar curriculum. In contrast, the ‘Superior Public Schools’, which had already been established by 1881, soon attracted a clientele because they did not charge fees. But one of the survivors was Sydney Girls’ High School which mirrored the aims of creating a feeder school to the University in the original manner of Sydney Grammar School. With the admission of women to the University of Sydney from 1881 the school soon produced many of the early female matriculants.

Initially sharing the same building as Sydney Boys’ High School, fee-paying but with provision for scholarships, Sydney Girls’ High soon placed a focus on academic attainments and examination success. The name of the school seemed to indicate an association with Scottish rather than English traditions but in common with other similar grammar schools its curriculum was academic and oriented towards
the competitive public exams. Girls had to sit entrance exams, and scholarships and, later, bursaries were awarded on the results. Professor Badham presided at the opening ceremony in 1883, where the first scholarships were awarded ‘not as a charity but as a distinction’. Those who passed the entrance exams but could not afford to pay fees could seek their remission. While some have seen Sydney Girls’ High School as a poor cousin of the girls’ corporate schools, being too closely associated with the overall public school system, it also became a female model of meritocracy in action.

Sydney Girls’ High School soon became a nursery for teachers with many of its graduates taking up posts in the expanding number of girls’ schools. As such, the new school was following a new pattern of state-funded meritocratic girls schools established in other colonies at this time, such as the Advanced School for Girls in Adelaide (1879) which had been founded in the wake of the establishment of the University of Adelaide in South Australia in 1874.

By the mid to late 1880s other girls’ secondary schools in Sydney were incorporating academic studies as a way of preparing their pupils for university. Apart from the Catholic convents, there were also new Protestant Church schools founded to further the academic status of girls’ education. As one example Edith Badham, the daughter of Professor Badham, became founding headmistress in 1895 of Sydney Church of England Girls’ Grammar School. Some former private schools became incorporated with governing councils and acquired a corporate identity. The traditional polite accomplishments curriculum often remained in place alongside a focus on more academic subjects, but there was also a new fascination in many girls’ schools with organised games – a development which would have later implications for relations within the University.

These overall developments helped to entrench the principle of centralised examination as part of a major engagement between universities and schools in Australia. By the late nineteenth century, there were those who were coming to believe that the competitive examination principle in particular could constrain as much as define the school curriculum. As early as the 1870s the influential corporate school headmasters in Melbourne, many of whom served on the Council of the University, had come to pressure the University to broaden the matriculation examination so that it could satisfy a wider clientele, most of whom never intended to attend university. The nature of examination would remain a matter of tension between the University and schools in Victoria well into the twentieth century. Some within the University of Sydney also came to believe that the Junior and Senior had become too complicated and unprofitable. In 1897, Judge Alfred Backhouse, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Sydney, moved that the public examinations be abolished to be replaced by a Board of Examiners from the University which could examine a school at its request. A special sub-committee of the University Senate then endorsed this proposal.

The reactions to this suggestion were indicative of how far the engagement of the University and the local schools had become defined by the examination principle. Many in the Church and corporate schools, which had often criticised the public examinations, now supported them in preference to the proposed alternative. The Teachers’ Association of New South Wales, representing many of these schools, overwhelmingly agreed to protest against the ‘total abolition’ of the public exams despite support for the new proposal from the head master of Sydney Grammar School. And while the Minister of Public Instruction stated that public examinations were no longer necessary in the public school system because of the presence of
Geoffrey Sherington and Julia Horne

public school inspectors, this was not the view of the principal of Fort Street Model School where pupils had performed so well at the public exams. He claimed that the abolition of the public exams ‘would tend to lower the standard of public school work’. State teachers, he said, would like to ‘preserve this relationship with the University’ and its professors’.66 Examinations as much as scholarships and other forms of financial support had come to be seen as the way to foster talent.

With the coming Australian federation in 1901 many of the Australian States moved to establish state systems of secondary education as part of an early twentieth century ‘educational renaissance’.67 By the eve of the First World War there were universities in all the six capital cities in Australia. States had also moved to establish state school leaving certificates which still embraced the universities as an integral part of the examination process. All Australia’s universities were known as ‘public universities’, the pinnacle of state-funded public education systems, and through their public examinations exercised influence over all schools for the next half a century.

In New South Wales, through a series of reforms initiated in 1909-12, including provision to widen the composition of its governing body, the University agreed to accept changes, including recognition of a new state leaving certificate as the basis for matriculation to university on condition that university professors and staff would be involved in the assessment and award of the certificate. The State government increased the annual endowment to the University and consolidated support for a scheme of bursaries and bursary-related scholarships which had their origins in the 1870s so that by 1914 a significant proportion of students, including teacher trainees, had the opportunity for free university education.68 It was the culmination of an ideal of provision for a meritocracy that had begun 60 years earlier with the foundation of the University of Sydney.

Student culture and the sporting life

Universities in the nineteenth century were not just academic institutions. They were cultural institutions in the widest sense exhibiting specific behaviours, values and attitudes. And particularly significant was the growth of organised games and the ethics associated with sport. A number of historians have long commented on this process in Britain. Tony Mangan has argued that from the 1850s the cult of games was carried from the public schools into Oxford and Cambridge. Within a generation Oxbridge graduates had become obsessed with playing games, initially disturbing many dons who saw sports as destined to corrupt university studies. Mangan claims that the ‘bloods’ from the public school even sought to remake the ancient universities in their own image, separating themselves out from the ‘reading’ men and marginalising intellectual pursuits. ‘Athleticism’ became a prevailing ideology in Oxbridge undergraduate life as it had already become in the public and grammar schools.69

A more recent interpretation of sport at Oxford argues, however, that the undergraduate passion for games was more indigenous and original than hitherto recognised. Oxbridge sport, it is claimed, was not elitist and divisive but integrative and even ‘democratic’ with team sports playing an important part in undergraduate sociability.70 In this way, organised games came to replace the older forms of undergraduate ‘sport’ which had involved such activities as hunting, or just drinking and brawling. Undergraduate sociability began to take on new forms.71

The University of Sydney was founded at the very moment that the games revolution was taking hold in English public schools and universities. In contrast to
the debate at Oxford and elsewhere, there was never a view at Sydney that sport was inimical to studies. Students formed an informal cricket club in 1852 the very year that the University opened its doors. The University Senate encouraged sport by providing an oval once the University moved out of the central city. The early professors all encouraged sport and became not only patrons but also players in the clubs that soon formed in cricket, rugby, boating and athletics. And all this occurred initially before the spread of the ideology of athleticism from England to the Empire. It seems that such developments may thus support the view that the early impetus for sport at the University of Sydney was somehow spontaneous and not subjected to specific ideologies. It became a colonial form of sociability, but was also soon subjected to the ideological changes that would take place in the boys’ corporate schools.72

There was a specific feature of the University which encouraged such sociability. By its constitution the University was a secular university not formally attached to any religious denomination. The provision for residential colleges was a concession to the major Churches, all of which shared a sceptical outlook on secular higher education. The early Professors also ensured that Sydney University would become a teaching and examining university rather than a collegiate university. This left the residential colleges in somewhat of a dilemma. They could not be part of the collegiate teaching tradition formed first in Oxbridge and then exported to North America. And then there were the respective problems that each of the three male colleges founded in Sydney in the nineteenth century faced in respect to their own congregations. The three original colleges were associated with the major Anglican, Presbyterian and Catholic religions. Within the Church of England hierarchy there was suspicion of the Anglican St Paul’s College attached to a ‘godless University’. Amongst the Catholic laity there was initial resistance to the Catholic St John’s association with the Benedictine vision of education despite there being an Irish College rector. And finally divisions within Presbyterianism frustrated the foundation of the Presbyterian St Andrew’s College. Within these contexts, at the very least, sport could prove a diversion; at the most it provided an attachment and identity for College students. Organised games thus became a form of legitimacy for the Colleges within the University. And it was also in the interests of the wider University and even the professoriate that a sense of university corporate identity, ‘esprit de corps’, be formed amongst all the university student body and particularly the College students who came from a background of multiple faiths.73

Esprit de corps and sociability may thus explain much of the early history of sport at the University. The small College population played an important part in maintaining membership of the clubs and in particular fostering new games such as rugby which began at the University as early as 1863, the same year that the famous split occurred at Cambridge between the supporters of the rugby code and backers of what would become Association football.74 And it is at this point also that there was a growing close association with many of the local elite corporate schools with their students playing sport at school and then being recruited into the University football and other clubs. As with the University colleges, games at school became part of a collegiate life even though many of their students were day pupils. And such close associations would come to entrench a new engagement between the University and the boys’ corporate schools.75

Australian obsession with sport in boys’ schools was clearly influenced by the reforms in the English public schools and the older universities. Games such as rugby with their close associations and origins in the schools and universities were part of
the emerging culture of the English middle class, being associated with character formation rather than the fostering of intellect. While begun in Britain this process was soon transplanted to Australia with the appointment of new headmasters and assistant masters who were graduates of the English public schools and who had then been to Oxford and Cambridge before arriving in the Antipodes. Not only were new institutions influenced but also older foundations re-shaped.

One example of this change was Sydney Grammar School. While founded initially as an academic feeder school to the University of Sydney, Sydney Grammar School would soon provide a model of the reformed English public school tradition in Australia. Its first headmaster was W.J. Stephens, former schoolboy at Marlborough, a graduate with honours in classics and mathematics and then fellow and senior tutor of Queen’s College Oxford. He was also a personal friend of Woolley who may have engineered his appointment. The second headmaster, A.B. Weigall, had been educated at Macclesfield Grammar School; at Oxford he graduated in classics, his tutor being T.H. Green. After a period as a classical master at Scotch College, Melbourne (founded in 1851), Weigall became headmaster of Sydney Grammar School in 1867. Although he had not attended one of the ‘great’ public schools, like Woolley, he, too, admired Thomas Arnold. Assisted by a number of masters who had formerly taught at English public schools over a period of 40 years he transformed Sydney Grammar School from just an academic feeder school for the University to an institution with the machinery of an English public school, such as prefects, school uniforms and school colours as well as the new passion for organised games and all the paraphernalia associated with the ideology of ‘athleticism’ as a way to form character.

Throughout Australia the phenomenon of games became entrenched in boys’ schools from the 1870s. Simultaneously a new ethic of manliness and heroic endeavour was brought into the University. Even some of the new appointments at the University of Sydney soon supported such views. The new Professor of Physics from 1886 was Richard Threlfall aged 25. A product of Clifton, a graduate of Cambridge, and a rugby Blue, he claimed that ‘only an aversion from treading on a man’s face had prevented him from playing for England’. In Sydney he ‘turned out’ to play rugby with the students. Tannant Edgeworth David was appointed Professor of Geology in 1891. Born in Wales he had attended Magadalen College School Oxford where he was captain of the football and boat clubs before going on to University to ‘pull bow’ for New College. At the University of Sydney he actively supported the football and boat clubs.

Further developments assisted the consolidation of this new educational ideology in university student life. First, as in the corporate boys’ schools, ‘athleticism’ became almost the official ideology of the student body. A new student magazine Hermes, constantly reiterated that the true University student was one who combined studies and sport:

He is daring, courageous and honest. Any body ought to be proud to grasp this man by the hand, for he is the backbone of the University. We should not like to see him absent from lectures, for his good influence upon students is more than we can spare.

Second, in 1890, a Sports Union was formed to assist the development and raise the status of sport in the University. About 40 percent of the male student body joined the new organisation.
Associated with these developments was new endorsement for sport in the boys’ schools. In 1892 the Athletic Association of Great Public Schools was formed. This was the organisation of the socially elite male corporate schools in New South Wales (the state Sydney Boys’ High School was admitted to the organisation in 1906 on the grounds that it had a similar academic curriculum and played organised games). The association established rules and regulations for the major sports of athletics, cricket, rugby and rowing all of which now grew in prominence not only within the University but in outside and local sporting competitions. With a growing close association between such schools and the University, and particularly with the University colleges, many came to see the period from 1890 to the First World War as the ‘golden age’ of university sport.

By the early twentieth century these changes had also become infused with a new passion for sport as part of the bonds of Empire. The provision for scholarships to Oxford under the will of Cecil Rhodes reinforced not only the imperial aspect of sport in Australian universities but also the engagement between school and university. Rhodes sought to recognise not ‘mere bookworms’ but scholars of ‘attainments’ who had a ‘fondness and success in manly outdoor sports such as cricket, football and the like’ revealing ‘qualities of manhood’ and who had shown at school ‘moral force of character’ and ‘instincts to lead’. Of the 18 Rhodes scholarships awarded each year to students in the Empire to attend an Oxford College for three years, Australia received six. At the University of Sydney, the first Rhodes scholarship was awarded in 1905 to a student from St Paul’s College. College students and prominent members of the rugby and then boating clubs would dominate the list of recipients up until the First World War and beyond.

Male sport now absorbed much of student life, but it did not go unchallenged. By 1910, evening students were over one-sixth of enrolments. None of these were College students and few had time to engage in organised games. Even more significant was the admission of women students from the 1880s. The women soon indicated that they wanted their own separate associations. By 1892, there was a secular Women’s College in the University. The first principal was Louisa MacDonald born in Scotland and a graduate of the University of London in 1884. A supporter of the female suffrage she also sponsored sport as a way towards the independence of women.

Many of the Women’s College students had also attended the female corporate schools where organised games had become entrenched. Sydney Church of England Girls’ Grammar School under Edith Badham had even introduced its pupils to rowing. Students from such schools as well as other women at the University refused to join the male Sports Union. Instead, they formed their own clubs, in tennis, golf and hockey and even a boat club despite the ridicule from male students that there were now ‘oarswomen’ on Sydney harbour and that it was remarkable that ‘all the Ferry Boats have been mercifully spared’. Despite such male abuse the women persisted in creating their own sporting ethos and culture. By 1910, there was a separate Sydney University Women’s Sports Association. And when the males left for the War they eventually persuaded the University to grant their own space for hockey. It was an indication that the engagement between school and university could take on new dimensions that would challenge male dominance of student life.
Conclusion
In 1912 James Bryce, the British Ambassador to Washington, visited Australia. Author of The American Commonwealth, the text which had influenced debates on the future of Australian federalism in the 1890s, Bryce was interested in the new national federation and its system of universities. After speaking of the English, German and American university traditions, he told an audience at the University of Adelaide in 1912:

Australia is in one respect at a disadvantage. It is a continent in a remote ocean, far away from Europe and America and the ancient seats of learning, with their appliances for instruction. Australia has to make those for itself, but that disadvantage is one which will diminish … You have in Australia two great advantages already. Your universities are popular, and they are accessible to every class in the community. They enjoy also the confidence of the people and the confidence of the various State Governments each of which has shown itself sensible of the good the universities are doing.

       Australians are, moreover, the heirs of a noble tradition of Great Britain – the tradition that the function of a university is not only to discover and to teach, but to form the characters of men.94

As Bryce suggested, the ‘tyranny of distance’ had helped to shape the nature of the colonial Australian university. From the beginning the Australian university was principally a creation of state endowment, while the idea of university education in Australia was essentially founded on meritocratic principles which seemed to promise that access to higher education could be extended to those who qualified through competitive examination. Equally, the networks and ties of Empire continued to influence appropriate studies and student life. And if examinations and scholarships helped to form a new boundary of meritocratic performance between school and university, in the process helping to extend opportunities, then sport and its associated cultural values made those boundaries between school and university less diffuse while creating new cultural bonds around class and gender, supposedly helping to ‘form’ not just minds but ‘the characters of men’.

Notes

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66 Ibid., 294-95
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73 Ibid., 14-21.
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75 Ibid.
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79 Sherington and Georgakis, *Sydney University Sport*, 11.
80 Ibid.
81 Hermes, 25 July 1894, 1 (copy held in University of Sydney Archives).
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84 Sherington and Georgakis, 85-113.
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91 Cameron, *SCEGGS*, 42-43, 49.
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The University of Melbourne and the retreat from university extension 1922-1946

Gordon Dadswell

Abstract

This paper examines competing configurations of adult education and their relationship to the growth of sociology and the movement for national efficiency. Local political considerations were also at play in the decision by Melbourne University to promote extension classes. The conduct of extension at the University of Melbourne from 1891 to 1913 and the influence of university extension at the University of Cambridge are briefly considered. The paper then examines firstly the changes that occurred in the University following the arrival of the Workers’ Educational Association of Victoria in 1913, and secondly the actions of Vice-chancellor John Medley, from 1940 to 1946 as university extension was bequeathed to a Statutory Body.

Medley had recognised that the extension model as originally endorsed by the University Council in 1891 was no longer relevant in 1940. He clearly identified also that the work of the WEAV had effectively kept extension alive at Melbourne from 1914 to 1939. He developed a model that initially returned extension to the University, but the University was forced to face the vocational needs of returning service people, and it endorsed a model of vocational and subject specific learning aimed at the already educated adult requiring advanced vocational qualifications. The University of Melbourne had retreated from the key characteristics of James Stuart’s Cambridge model of extension – a non-vocational outcome and liberal in content.

But the Vice-chancellor also supported plans for a statutory Council of Adult Education, independent of the University, that continued the work of Stuart. For the past 60 years it has maintained the principles of a liberal, non-vocational process of learning, and has tempered these against the experience of the individual and, as importantly, against the demands of an increasingly regulated education and training environment.

The retreat from extension at the University of Melbourne was inevitable. James Barrett, an ophthalmologist and a member of the University of Melbourne Council, was greatly influenced by the national efficiency movement. His subsequent direct and continuous involvement with the Workers’ Educational Association of Victoria (WEAV) would ensure that the key principles of extension developed by James Stuart at Cambridge in 1871 would be lost to the pragmatic demands of efficiency.

Barrett, Sir James after 1918, has been described as ‘arrogant, forthright, indefatigable, and extraordinarily competent’. He was a prolific writer of letters and articles and public speaker. He dominated the affairs of the University of Melbourne from his initial appointment to the Council in 1901 until 1939. His biographers have been few and while they certainly refer to his role in relation to the WEAV they failed to grasp just how determined he was to see the organisation take over the extension activities of the University.

This paper addresses the decision by the University of Melbourne to deliberately support the establishment of the Council of Adult Education in 1946, and to officially pass to that organisation the key principles of extension. This decision...
was taken in 1946 by the University of Melbourne in response to the effects of the movement known as national efficiency. In particular the paper focuses on the role played by Barrett and William Moore, Professor of Law at the University, in securing the teaching of sociology at the University of Melbourne in their pursuit to ensure that the University adopted the tenets of the national efficiency movement.

The collapse of university extension at the University of Melbourne was exacerbated by a change in definition and application of sociological techniques. This collapse in methodology at the University can be seen as having two phases: first from 1919 to 1922 with the introduction of sociology into the University; and second, from 1923 to 1946. This latter phase saw a shift from what has been described as a literary sociological tradition, to one that became much more focused on statistics and practical analysis and reflected the growth in what Searle, in his definitive work on national efficiency, sees as technocracy.

There has been substantial work done on the relationship between sociology and the Workers’ Educational Association (WEA) in Australia. What has not been discussed is the effect the introduction of the subject had on extension. This paper aims to contribute to that discussion.

The paper initially identifies national efficiency as a movement. This is followed by a brief discussion on the development of university extension at the University of Cambridge in 1871 and the University of Melbourne in 1891. The conduct of extension at the University of Melbourne from 1891 to 1913 is also briefly mentioned. The main parts of the paper deal first, with the changes that occurred in the University as a result of the arrival of the WEA in 1913 through to 1939, and second they consider the processes undertaken by Vice-chancellor John Medley, from 1940 to 1946, to undo what remained of extension, that was then bequeathed to a Statutory Body.

**National efficiency**

National efficiency was an international movement. Initially it developed in the United States of America as a means of resolving social and human problems that were a by-product of the exponential growth of capitalism in that country in the 1880’s. The American experience can be seen to have created the need for problem solving through scientific methods, the use of statistical quantitative data to assist in decision-making as regards social change, and most importantly the significance of quantitative research across areas other than the physical sciences. The Americans were in the vanguard in the development of the social sciences including economics, education and sociology.

The movement developed significantly in Britain following the debacle of the Boer War, where the failure by the Army to resolve what appeared to be a relatively easy task was sheeted home to the maladministration of the war effort. At the heart of British concern was that as a nation they had been found wanting. This was also exacerbated by the spectacular economic growth of Germany and Japan, both of those countries having developed their economic success through the acceptance of the role of science and its dissemination through structured educational systems.

In Australia the national efficiency movement took a slightly different tack. There was almost unanimous endorsement of the German and American models but considerable disdain for the British. It was also very much an academic and professional movement based in the universities, the key aspect of which was a desire by intellectuals to manage the agenda for social change within the Australian
The importance of social research was acknowledged initially by a group of academics predominantly from the University of Sydney who had become aware of developments in the USA demonstrating that through the use of scientific methods a morally sustainable social ethic could be achieved. The principal intellectual in Australia was Francis Anderson, Professor of Logic and Mental Philosophy at Sydney, particularly interested in the importance of education in developing such an ethic.\(^1\)

The idea of efficiency was more fully explored in a series of lectures under the general title of ‘National Efficiency’ in 1915; given under the auspices of the Victorian Public Works Department they can be viewed as defining the Australian perspective of national efficiency.\(^1\) Meredith Atkinson, who in 1915 was the Director of Tutorial Classes at the University of Sydney, outlined his understanding of efficiency: first, that there was to be ‘high conception of civic duty’; second, that through education there would be a better understanding of all national problems; third, that there was a need for an increase in technical skills; and fourth that the state should be re-organised to promote and encourage efficiency and not just respond for the material demands of workers.\(^1\) As a disciple of Albert Mansbridge, he also pointed out that for adults the most effective vehicle for education was the WEA.\(^1\)

Other speakers replicated these views, notably Robert Irvine who introduced the idea of scientific management; Irvine was the first Professor of Economics at the University of Sydney and a strong supporter of the teaching of the social sciences.\(^1\) William Moore invoked the idea of the most appropriate people for the right job as well as noting that education for efficiency should not be made at the expense of ‘some loss in the spiritual moral of intellectual life’.\(^1\) William Osborne, Professor of Physiology and Histology at the University of Melbourne and a strong advocate of scientific research in Australia, introduced the concept of scientific training for everyone, including girls who would benefit from domestic science training.\(^1\) All of the speakers referred to the immediate imperative of employing people who had been trained in the techniques of social science. The views of Atkinson and Irvine in particular reflected an intellectual response that used efficiency as a model for reducing class struggle, and for viewing the role of the State as ‘to cultivate the moral initiative of its citizens’.\(^1\) The way forward to ensure that the masses were educated in efficiency was seen to be through arrangements such as university extension and the WEA.\(^1\)

National efficiency can be summarised as follows. Decisions made by business and government should be made on the basis of research and that to achieve this, information needed to be collected and stored as the basis for such study.\(^1\) As a result of the development of social science research methods there would be a growing confidence in applied learning, and this acceptance would acknowledge the importance of the scientific method to subjects other than the physical sciences.\(^1\) A concomitant aspect was that in order for applied learning to be implemented the education system must be in tune with the needs of the nation. National efficiency further recognised that improved education would also lead to personal efficiency.

**Establishment of extension in Cambridge 1871**
University extension can be defined as the extending of university level courses to a public that may not be eligible for university entry but who wish to pursue a formal course of study. The development of extension was primarily a feature of late nineteenth-century education, and can be viewed as a continuation of the move
towards a liberal education that developed from the London Working Men’s College in 1854. It was also a period of increasing competition within the tertiary sector. The university wanted to maintain its national influence and sought to provide a non-vocational learning option for the working class male, and more specifically for women. It may also be seen as a challenge both to the growth of technical education and to the development of the physical sciences.

James Stuart, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, was the initiator of the model we know as university extension, establishing the principles of extension as a result of contact with interested groups and through his subsequent lectures. The key principles were that the courses were non-vocational in outcome and liberal in content, in a programme initiated and delivered through a university. The practical administration of lectures was carried out by voluntary committees in the various cities and towns where lectures were delivered.

In 1871 Stuart wrote to resident members of the University of Cambridge outlining the need for the University to become more directly involved in extension work. This letter and submissions in support of Stuart from the societies, organisations and cities where he had lectured, asked the University to become accessible to non-resident students of all social classes, and following a survey conducted by the University, a Local Lectures Syndicate was established. The first courses commenced in Nottingham, Leicester and Derby in 1873.

Establishment of university extension at the University of Melbourne 1890-1891
There is a very strong link between the Universities of Cambridge and Melbourne in regard to extension. Edward Jenks, a Fellow of King’s College, Cambridge, and a lecturer for the Syndicate, arrived at Melbourne as Professor of Law in 1889, and joined a committee established by the Council of the University of Melbourne to investigate the feasibility of extension. The University Council had considered the foundation of extension at the University of Melbourne in February 1890, a committee was established and reported to the Council in early 1891. It was no coincidence that the report was a direct copy of the introduction to the Seventeenth Annual Report of the Cambridge Syndicate. Jenks ensured that Stuart’s model was replicated at Melbourne. A Statute was passed by the University Senate and approved by the Governor of the colony of Victoria in May 1891.

There was a highly significant difference between the Cambridge model and that implemented by Melbourne, however. Stuart developed a model based on the actual and identified needs of various communities. This was not the case in Melbourne. The assumption was that, ‘in a country with greater average wealth, and greater average education in the rudiments, than England’, the scheme was bound to be a success regardless of the ‘needs’ of the communities it was intending to serve. The most important reason however for establishing extension was political – to maintain support for the University from the colony’s conservative politicians, through the provision of lectures to rural Victoria.

The first meeting of the University Extension Board was in June 1891 and Jenks was appointed Secretary. It was not a propitious date. Victoria was on the verge of a collapse from a land boom that was closely followed by the withdrawal of loan facilities by British bankers which left many of the academic staff as well as the University caught up in the ensuing economic depression. The University of Melbourne as a colonial institution since 1854 was dependent on the government for its finance, a government also hit by the reduction in loan money, and the University
was subjected to a harsh reduction in funding.\textsuperscript{35} Despite these bad omens, interest in extension in Melbourne and country areas was stimulated as a result of considerable publicity, Jenks held local meetings and centres were established.\textsuperscript{36}

**University extension at Melbourne 1891-1913**

Challenges to the model became apparent as early as 1891. The most serious problem was a lack of finance. With the arrival of a slightly less conservative government in 1894 the University hoped to reclaim their previous funding, but their hopes were in vain. Victoria’s Premier, George Turner, was determined to reduce the state debt by cutting defence, public works and education funding even further, and the University was again forced to implement its own savings.\textsuperscript{37} It remained financially dependent on the new state government after 1901 following the federation of the six colonies into the Commonwealth of Australia, and lack of money was exacerbated in 1901 when two substantial frauds were revealed. A new Premier, Alexander Peacock, was unwilling to bail out the University and reduced its already meagre grant, the government punishing the University for inefficiency, but also for the incompetence of the government’s own auditors.\textsuperscript{38}

A Royal Commission followed in 1902, and recommended sweeping changes and increased resources for the University, including reimbursement to the University of funds that had been embezzled. This occurred in 1904 under the premiership of Thomas Bent who was concerned about the cultural welfare of the State and the importance of the University.\textsuperscript{39} Extension however did not benefit from this increase primarily because of the liberal aspect of the courses, where Bent was determined that courses would be practical and distinctly vocational.\textsuperscript{40}

The other significant challenge was the constant change of Secretaries that started with the resignation of Jenks in late 1891 and his return to England in 1892. Secretaries all worked in a voluntary capacity or in addition to their existing work as lecturers and were unable to commit adequate time to their task as secretaries to the Extension Board.\textsuperscript{41} The Board was concerned enough about the failure of extension to seek a review of future options. The only features remaining of Stuart’s model were the non-vocational and liberal structure of the lectures. Failure lay clearly with the Board; meetings were called but failed due to the lack of a quorum and replacing members was always difficult.\textsuperscript{42} The net effect of these challenges was that enrolments had dropped substantially and remained that way until the arrival of the WEA.

In 1913 extension was part of a major review conducted by the University, and recommendations included the development of tutorial classes with a new organisation, the WEA, one-off lectures that stimulated interest in longer study, correspondence study, evening classes and summer schools. The major recommendation was for the appointment of a paid Secretary, a recommendation was developed with the assistance of Mansbridge, General Secretary of the English WEA, who was then in Australia.\textsuperscript{43} It is unclear what advice he proffered, but as he was a member of the Cambridge Syndicate it undoubtedly would have reflected the Cambridge approach.\textsuperscript{44}

One of the major players in this review of 1913 was James Barrett, one of the Secretaries. What was not apparent in the report was the philosophy he brought to the committee as regards national efficiency and the need for social research.\textsuperscript{45} He was particularly concerned that the word ‘science’ had too limited a meaning and believed it should be applied ‘to a habit of mind which ensures the approach to all problems by
a dispassionate and methodical means’. He was also very clear that the models should be German and American, not British! Barrett had since 1902 consistently argued for the reform of education in Australia, particularly in Victoria and specifically at the University of Melbourne in order to improve the efficiency of the country as a whole: ‘If we produce efficient people, we materially raise the level not only of our business but also of our social and civic life’. He was convinced that the failure of education in Victoria that resulted in children ceasing their formal education at the primary level had provoked worker dissatisfaction when they became adults. This concern for social stability was a key issue for proponents of efficiency, to be discussed further, below.

The national efficiency mantra of social investigation had reached the University of Melbourne by 1912. The Royal Commission of 1904 had been unimpressed with work by the Professor of History and Political Economy, John Elkington, and the University was also under some pressure to introduce courses that allowed for social analysis in a more scientific manner. Elkington resigned, the University deciding to create two chairs, one in history and the other in economics and sociology. The latter chair required government finance and Premier William Watt, insisted that the position should go to an Australian, but the University objected to this political interference and the position was left vacant.

WEAV and university extension 1913-1922
Albert Mansbridge and his wife had formed an Association to Promote the Higher Education of Working Men in England in 1903, which in 1905 became the WEA. In three articles published in the University Extension Journal in 1903, Mansbridge clearly indicated that the need for social cohesion was important for the development for national economic as well as for personal effectiveness. In other words he was identifying the responsibility of the new organisation to respond to the demand for national efficiency.

The underlying educational principles that supported the Association were the same as for extension. Programmes were to be non-vocational, and to be, ‘regarded as the process of development of body, mind and spirit’. Not only could the WEA deliver its own courses but it could also form an alliance with universities and develop tutorial classes. In this model it was the delivery methodology that differed from extension; the concept of a course of lectures, followed by discussion and exams was replaced with a two hourly tutorial class and fortnightly essays, these to be organised and promoted by the Association using lecturers from a university. The control of content and the engagement of tutors were to be managed by a joint committee drawn equally from the university and the Association. So the work of the WEA was not seen as a replacement for extension, but viewed as another option for adults who were seeking education.

Barrett invited Mansbridge and his wife to visit Australia in 1913 following his attendance at the Congress of Universities of the British Empire held in London in 1912 where he gave a paper on the potential for the universities to exchange educational officers and contributed to a debate about university extension. The various university extension boards in Australia were aware of the WEA before this visit; Archbishop Temple, who was President of the Association, had visited in 1910 and gave lectures on Education and Democracy in Adelaide, Sydney and Melbourne. The universities had subsequently corresponded with him and became affiliated with the English Association. Mansbridge established the first Australian
branch in September 1913 in a Melbourne café when a provisional committee was formed to draft a Constitution.\(^5\)

The WEA model appealed to the University of Melbourne in two ways. The most immediate requirement was to revive its extension activities, as it had failed to develop Stuart’s model between 1891 and 1913. The major reasons for this had been a lack of financial commitment by the University and failure to ensure that the Secretary of the Extension Board was full-time and paid. There was still a desire by the University to retain the key principles, but they seemed unwilling to commit the resources to ensure that they could be implemented.

Barrett’s interest in the WEA was born out of his visit in 1912 to the University of Wisconsin: ‘I became profoundly impressed with the educationalists who saw in adult education a remedy for many of our social ills’.\(^5\) He was incredibly impressed with that university’s extension programme. He then went to Oxford where he met A.L. Smith, the Master of Balliol College, who knew of the Wisconsin work and had translated it into an English format by recognising that there would be a potential problem for working class men to relate effectively to a university. His idea was to encourage the WEA to manage itself and for its work to be assisted by the university.\(^6\)

Barrett and Moore were effectively to drive the development of the WEAV. Barrett became Vice-President of the organisation, whilst Moore was President, also on the University Council, Chairman of the Extension Board, and became Chairman of the one and only effective Joint Committee; he oversaw the formation of the Joint Committee in 1914 without seeking approval from the University Council or the Extension Board. Tutorial classes were commenced also without approval.\(^6\)

Barrett had identified one of the key aspects of national efficiency, that of the remediation of social ills, and this characteristic was the second reason that the WEAV appealed to the University. Following failure by the government to allow appointment of the best candidate for the position of Professor of Economics and Sociology in 1912, Barrett and Moore became the champions of the social sciences, and in particular of economics and sociology. They ensured that the underpinning principle of the WEA model in Victoria was to promote an educated populace with the aim of maintaining efficiency, effectively appropriating the WEAV as a vehicle for social change.\(^6\) They had an unswerving belief in the suitability of this organisation as a means of assisting the Victorian government to manage organised labour. This was made quite explicit in a submission to the Government:

> National welfare requires that working classes base their actions on knowledge and not mere feelings of class interest. Classes [tutorial] provide the means to developing knowledge.

> Failure will mean that they will be informed by mere propaganda of political literature.\(^6\)

Moore also went ahead with his plan for efficiency through the introduction of economics and sociology into the University, inviting Atkinson to come to the University from Sydney.\(^6\) Atkinson arrived in Melbourne in early 1918. At the University he was to implement two significant developments, firstly delivering the first course in sociology, and secondly re-configuring the relationship between the University and the WEAV so that the latter organisation took control of extension.\(^6\)

Atkinson had several reasons for wishing to move to Melbourne. The first was clearly the offer of a Professorship to deliver a course in economics and
sociology, though he did point out to Moore that he had ‘no desire to be Professor of Economics, as I have no taste for or knowledge of the commercial side of the subject’; this was not what Moore wanted to hear, as he wanted economics taught at the University. (Moore knew that the only way was through the WEAV; he had achieved the teaching of sociology at the University by virtue of government funding provided for Tutorial Classes.) A second reason behind Atkinson’s move from Sydney was a desire to distance himself from a conscription entanglement in which he had become embroiled with the WEA of New South Wales.

Atkinson completely revolutionised the way extension was delivered, and as part of this reorganisation he appointed a General Secretary, Samuel Thompson. Atkinson recognised that from 1891 the University of Melbourne Extension Board had relied on part-time and voluntary Secretaries with disastrous results. The University of Melbourne Council then agreed to a merging of the Joint Committee and the Extension Board, ensuring that the Director of Tutorial Classes became the Director of Extension and Chairman of the restructured Board. Barrett had initiated these decisions, wanting to ensure that the WEAV would become the dominant player in extension and in this role to deliver a course in sociology. He had been critical in 1914 about the failure of the University’s extension programme and saw its replacement as being the WEAV. The Council also amended the relevant Statute to enable parity of membership on the Board between the University and the WEAV, the usual basis for a Joint Committee; what was unusual was that there would be a Secretary who had a vote, and Thompson was engaged as Secretary to the Board.

This decision had a dramatic effect on extension. The WEAV effectively and legitimately controlled a University Board. Atkinson made his final change in 1920 when the tutorial class methodology established by Mansbridge was abandoned; two years later he resigned, primarily because there was no on-going guarantee of government funding for his position, and left Australia. Effectively the University had retreated from extension but over the next nineteen years it would fight to regain control.

WEAV and university extension 1923-1939
Atkinson’s successor was John Gunn, Fellow of the University of Liverpool, and Lecturer in Psychology and Economics with the University’s Extension Board. Gunn brought two pieces of baggage with him to Melbourne both of which he may have wished he had left behind: the first was a certain understanding about the relationship between university extension and the WEA; the second was his model of sociology.

His understanding of the relationship between the two organisations was that the university was the dominant party and the WEA played a supporting role. That understanding had actually become out of date in Liverpool by 1922; he appeared to be unaware that the University of Liverpool’s extension board had become closely aligned with the local WEA District Council and in fact carried out almost no traditional extension work. Indeed it appears that the model was very similar to that in Melbourne, and Gunn’s model was of little use in Victoria; he was not advised before his arrival in Australia about the changes that had occurred between the University Extension Board and the WEAV.

His other piece of luggage was his understanding of sociology. Gunn believed sociology to be the holistic study of humankind, encompassing psychological, physical and biological factors. Sociology was there to maintain social solidarity; in
his courses on sociology he included political philosophy, basic economic history, social psychology and biology, and the latter subject was mainly eugenics.79

His appointment had been by no means sure, given substantial competition from two very experienced Australian adult educators. Both of these men (Douglas Copland in Tasmania, and Herbert Heaton in Tasmania and South Australia) had been directly involved in the WEA, though Barrett ruled out Heaton fairly quickly on the basis that he was seen to be engulfed in controversy as he was very outspoken on national policy.80 Copland was rejected on the basis of his earlier exemption in New Zealand from army service in the First World War, a sensitive area for Barrett as one of his sons had been killed in France.81

Copland was however also a great friend of Samuel Thompson who had been General Secretary of the WEA of Tasmania and who engaged Copland as a lecturer in history and economics; he would therefore have also brought with him substantial experience as the founding Professor of Economics and first dean of commerce at the University of Tasmania, and these latter two strengths were soon to dramatically affect extension at Melbourne.82 Copland was an excellent example of national efficiency at work, very well educated and clearly identifying the importance of economics to a national economy; during his time in Tasmania he had also provided professional advice on economics and education to various Tasmanian governments.83

Gunn commenced work in 1923, and immediately clashed with Thompson. This left him in no doubt about the strength of the local Association and the weakness of the University.84 Tensions were so severe that in 1924 in an attempt to re-assert the primacy of the Extension Board the University established what was to be the first of four inquiries, in which Barrett was directly involved;85 he wanted to ensure that the WEAV would not be found to be the cause of the failure of extension. The reports of these inquiries provide clear evidence of the failure of extension within the University. The relationship between WEAV and Extension Board was administratively untenable. The actual provision of extension in Victoria through the joint arrangement was not meeting the main goals of either organisation. The University wanted to increase their public and political acceptance by organising and conducting tutorial classes and university extension lectures at university standards. The WEAV on the other hand wanted to deliver learning options based on the needs of all adults, not just those who were interested in university level courses.86

The real issue was that the model of sociology Gunn had brought with him was outdated and his defence of his position left him little time to manage extension. He was also faced, as was the University, with a shift towards the physical sciences and also quantitative social sciences and away from liberal education. This became very apparent in 1924 when his nemesis, Copland, was appointed the first Professor of Economics at the University.87 In a move to establish a Professorship in sociology Gunn’s holistic argument regarding the value of sociology was soundly rebuffed in favour of that of Copland who favoured the discrete development of the social sciences and who thought that sociology was too broad and ambiguous.88 Gunn also did not help himself with his book Livelihood (1927). It was an economic text and was roundly criticised primarily on the grounds that it was, ‘useless, elementary, out of date and poorly organised’.89 This unfortunate situation was a gift to Copland. There was a high level of personal animosity between the two men and this made Copland’s victory all the sweeter.90 He chaired a review of the teaching of sociology that included philosophy, economics and modern political institutions in the Faculty of Arts, the outcome of which was that Gunn no longer had a subject to profess and was relegated to extension lectures and miscellaneous work around the University.91
Sociology remained as the history of Political Philosophy but failed to return to the University in its own name until well after the Second World War.\textsuperscript{92}

The other social sciences did have supporters within the Faculty of Arts. Political Institutions, International Relations and Journalism were being taught and there was pressure for Psychology and Political Philosophy. The Arts Faculty however was understaffed, like much of the University, and struggled to meet demand. The Faculty was willing to work with the more utilitarian research faculties in the overall research process in the University.\textsuperscript{93} This was an uphill battle as chairs in the Faculty were almost non-existent from 1886 whilst support was given to the more utilitarian Faculties.\textsuperscript{94} The growth of the commerce school and of economics remained in the Faculty of Arts and increased its popularity.\textsuperscript{95}

Copland became one of the many intellectuals who sat on government inquiries and were involved in developing reports on foreign affairs, trade tariffs and banking. The public economists, of whom Copland was a major exemplar, had become an unofficial bureaucracy that managed the operations of both the State and Federal governments.\textsuperscript{96} The holistic literary sociological tradition of Atkinson, Irvine, Moore, Barrett and Gunn became a thing of the past. The tradition however, continued to be taught through quarterly conferences and weekend schools run by the WEA until 1939.\textsuperscript{97} The desire to aid government in maintaining social efficiency was replaced by courses that drew the University closer to business and government.\textsuperscript{98} National efficiency had triumphed.

Stuart’s key principles remained officially in the University even if the reality was entirely the opposite. This fiction was imperative: the 1923 University Act had made provision for a grant to be paid annually to the University for extension.\textsuperscript{99} Extension lectures were being managed by the WEA and not by the University, and the WEA had established a model for the future development of adult learning in Victoria that was to effectively sidestep the University. The model was more reflective of the demand for a variety of adult learning opportunities but at the same time maintained the key principles.

**University extension at Melbourne 1940 to 1946**

Following the report of the last of the four inquiries in 1937, Gunn had been effectively dismissed, and a new Director of Extension, Colin Badger, appointed.\textsuperscript{100} A new Vice-Chancellor, John Medley, was appointed in March 1938 following a considerably acrimonious selection process, and commenced in July of that year, and Badger and Medley would work together to ensure that a new model for the delivery of liberal education would be put in place in Victoria.\textsuperscript{101}

The model would replace those of extension and the WEA. It would retain the key principles of being non-vocational in outcome and liberal in content. Medley was the prime mover in this development, his interest in adult learning based on his concern that education, including that in universities, was becoming increasingly overloaded with vocational training, rather than attempting to include more liberal aspects of education.\textsuperscript{102} He can be seen attempting to balance two positions within national efficiency, that is, the need for business efficiency that naturally implied an education providing technical skills, against social efficiency where education sought to develop the ‘whole person’.

In order to promote his liberal education agenda Medley used several processes. These included writing and speaking publicly on the topic, making himself available for appointment to various Federal and State organisations and ensuring that
Badger was also engaged by external organisations to publish and conduct inquiries and produce reports that would further the cause of adult learning. He also needed to resolve the impasse between the WEAV and the University Extension Board.

A resolution of the impasse in the University’s favour was imperative for Medley and Badger who wanted to ensure that the University of Melbourne would be the primary organisation in the future development of adult education in Victoria. Medley sought advice from Badger who had brought with him a model from the University of Western Australia. In that state there was no WEA but there was a Board in the University that managed the functions of extension and adult education. Medley was pleased with this model and supported Badger in his engineering of the removal of the WEA from its dominant position in the University even in the face of Barrett who was appalled at the possibility that the WEA would lose its power. Badger achieved this in 1941; Barrett had lost all influence at the University by this time and was no longer in a position to defend the WEA.

The role of the Extension Board was strengthened when Medley became its Chair, the work of the Board being identical to that originally managed by the WEA. Extension courses however took on a different meaning from that developed by Stuart. They were now unambiguously vocational in content, the forerunners of what is now termed continuing professional education.

Medley helped Badger in his work through his frequent public addresses on the nature of education, one important talk being given through the Australian Broadcasting Commission on the topic Peace in our Time? (1940). This speech indicated that post-war reconstruction could not see a return to a situation where people would remain uneducated. Medley was reinforcing his liberal message, that there was a need to ‘temper professional training with the liberal spirit’.

In regard to adult education his views were very clear:

> radical changes in our aims and methods must be anticipated, and I feel sure that those who are responsible for the welfare of the Movement [adult education] are capable, as never before, of doing all that is possible in the present uncertainty.

Medley clearly saw one of these major shifts as being the redundancy of the terms ‘university extension’ and ‘workers’ education’. They should make way for the encompassing term ‘adult education’:

> The conception of education as a life-long process is now generally accepted by the whole American people. It has been shown that adult education can set and maintain its own standards, that it can avoid the pitfalls of insincerity and propaganda and that it can be both directed and financed under local leadership.

Medley became directly involved in various organisations, for example as Vice-Chairman of the Australian Council for Educational Research. In this position he was able to support the need for educational change generally but more importantly to publish his plan for post-war reconstruction in adult education in Education for Democracy (1943), and in this pamphlet he reiterated his view that, ‘the business of any educational system is not only to provide the means of making a living and the passing of examinations’. As well as publishing his own thoughts he encouraged the Council to invite Badger to write a pamphlet on post-war adult education.
Medley was also a member of the Victorian Council of Public Education. In 1942 he recommended that the Council prepare a report to the State Government on the current condition of education in Victoria; this was agreed, as was the establishment of special sub-committees to investigate specific aspects, one of which was adult education, and Badger was invited to become a member of this sub-committee. \(^{113}\) Medley worked with Badger on the preparation of both reports, visiting their colleagues at the University of Sydney and discussing a model that had been developed by Walter Duncan, Director of Tutorial Classes there. \(^{114}\) This model was reported to the University of Melbourne Extension Board in mid 1943 and identified the characteristics that would be required for a successful national adult education scheme. As far as Medley and Badger were concerned the critical aspect was that there would be an adult education board run as a department of the university, described publicly in Badger’s *Adult Education in Post-War Australia* (1944). \(^{115}\)

In mid 1944 Badger presented the report for the Council of Public Education to the Extension Board, containing a more precise definition of the material that had been presented the previous year and describing short- and long-term policies. \(^{116}\) The short-term plan adopted by the Board, it was sent to the Premier as an appropriate policy for the state. \(^{117}\) The full Council of Public Education report including the section on adult education was printed in 1945 and sent to the Government. The long-term policy for adult education indicated that with the development of a state-wide adult education system a new process may be required that probably could not be effectively managed by the University. The major development would have a State Board providing general policy, allocation of grants and supporting local adult education centres. \(^{118}\)

The other major process implemented by Medley was to report to the University his vision for its post-war structure, envisaging four divisions: Junior, Undergraduate, Postgraduate, and Extension. \(^{119}\) This vision was to come under challenge in 1945. The Second World War of course dominated the period from 1939 to 1946. While it had broad effects across the University there was a single development that effectively removed extension and adult education from its post-war agenda. Medley’s vision for extension was destroyed by the impact of the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme, as he was faced with demands on the University from the Commonwealth Government to ensure that returning service people had access to university places. Importantly, this was to be funded by the Commonwealth Government. \(^{120}\)

The Second World War also saw the establishment of the Australian Army Education Service. The official government policy was for the delivery of a liberal adult education scheme to be followed by one that was more technical and vocationally based. \(^{121}\) The management machinery of the Service was an Australian Military Education Council with a Standing Committee and a Committee in each State. In 1941 Medley became Chairman of this Council, John Seitz, Director of Education in Victoria chaired the State Advisory Committee, Medley and Badger also sat. \(^{122}\) At the end of the war with Japan and with the effects of the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Training Scheme very much in mind, Medley would have been aware that the Victorian State Advisory Committee was about to wind up. Its final meeting moved that the Victorian Government be approached with a view to establishing, ‘an Advisory Committee on Adult Education … to advise the Minister regarding plans for the advancement of adult education in Victoria’. \(^{123}\)

Following discussions with the Minister by Seitz, the Minister ensured that the Cabinet decision was changed to investigate the ‘constitution and functions of a
statutory Council of Adult Education’. A new Committee met in May 1946, reported in August, and legislation creating the Council of Adult Education passed both Houses of Parliament in December 1946. Its functions were identical to those that had initially been implemented by the WEAV in 1920. The Council commenced operations on 23 May 1947, and the University Extension Board became an Extension Committee in 1948.

Conclusion
Barrett died in April 1945 well before the move by Medley to support the establishment of the Council of Adult Education. Barrett would have been unhappy about the excising of the WEAV from the University in 1941, his aim always having been to ensure that the WEAV would become the linchpin of an extension service to Victorians along the lines of the Wisconsin model. It was not to be. The organisation had moved to retain Stuart’s principles, and its failure to acknowledge the model of efficiency expounded by Barrett would have been abhorrent to him.

The processes taken forward by Medley from 1939 to 1946 ensured the transfer to a statutory authority of the key principles enunciated by Stuart in 1871. Medley had recognised that the extension model as originally endorsed by the University Council in 1891 was no longer relevant in 1940. He clearly identified also that the work of the WEAV had effectively kept extension alive at Melbourne from 1914 to 1939. He and Badger had developed a model that initially returned extension to the University, but events at the end of the Second World War in 1945 meant the abandonment of this model. The University was forced to face the vocational needs of returning service people; the management of extension by the University had been a failure and had ‘created permanent dissatisfaction’. Stuart’s model could have either vanished or been expanded. The University could not take on board the required expansion and endorsed a model of vocational and subject specific learning that was aimed at the already educated adult. Medley however was sufficiently concerned about the future of adult education to whole-heartedly support the drafting of the Council of Adult Education Act.

The University of Melbourne had retreated from the key characteristics of Stuart’s model of extension – a non-vocational outcome and liberal in content. They continued to provide single and sequential lectures and indeed provided lecturers to centres that were established in regional areas of Victoria in conjunction with the new Council, but their own programmes were clearly vocational and aimed at people who required advanced qualifications. It was the Council of Adult Education in Victoria that continued the work of Stuart; for the past 60 years it has maintained the principles of a liberal, non-vocational process of learning, and it has tempered these against the experience of the individual, and against the demands of an increasingly regulated education and training environment.

Notes

1 I acknowledge the advice and comments of Dr. Edward Reid-Smith in the writing of this paper.
9 Ibid., 8.
11 Ibid., 33.
12 Ibid., 54-59.
16 Public Works Department, *National Efficiency* (Melbourne: Public Works Department, 1915); Rowse, *Australian Liberalism and National Character*, 73.
18 British Library. Mansbridge Papers ADD 65219/folio 181-185 Albert Mansbridge (1876-1952) was founder in 1903 of the prototype WEA in England, and subsequently of international branches in Australia (1913) and Canada, before establishing a World Association of Adult Education in 1918 (see below).
23 Ibid., 22-23.
29 Ibid., 35-40, 43-44, 64, 139.
30 University of Melbourne Archives (UMA): University of Melbourne (UM) Council: Minutes, 18 April 1891 UM174 Acc. No. 93/44.
31 UMA: UM Council: Minutes, 17 December 1889 UM174 Acc. No. 93/44.
32 UMA: UM Council: Minutes, 18 May 1891 UM174 Acc. No. 93/44.
33 UMA: UM Council: Minutes 1 December 1890 UM174 Acc. No. 93/44.
34 UMA: UM Council: Minutes, 22 June 1891 UM174 Acc. No. 93/44.
40 Selleck, *The Shop*, 441.
43 UMA: UM Council: *Report of the Committee of Inquiry ... Upon the Present and Future Requirements of the University*, 1913: 10-12 UM 174 Acc. No. 94/86.
46 Ibid., vol. 2, 474.
48 Ibid., vol. 1, 24.
49 Ibid., vol. 1, 272.
50 Selleck, *The Shop*, 505.
51 Ibid., 506.
54 Ibid., 41.
55 Barrett, *The Twin Ideals*, v1, 163, 135-144.
57 Mansbridge, *The Kingdom of the Mind*, 33.
60 Ibid.
64 UMA: Tutorial Classes, Government Grant Negotiations Mr. Meredith Atkinson, Appointment Mr Meredith Atkinson, Alteration of Regulations re Status: Atkinson to Moore: 13 October 1917 UM312 Acc. No. 1917/363.
67 Bourke, ‘Social scientists as intellectuals’, 53.


UMA: University Council: Minutes 16 May 1921 UM174 Acc. No. 94/86.

UMA: UM Extension Board Minutes 4 March 1921 Acc. No. 93/2.


UMA: University Extension Board: Minutes, 4 March 1921, UM 174 Acc. No. 94/86.

UMA: UM Extension Board Minutes, 10 June 1921: 93/21.

Ibid.

UMA: UM Council, Handwritten Notes from a Meeting of Committee of Selection 8 December 1922; UMA: Directorship of Tutorial Classes: Appointment of Dr. A. Gunn, UM312 Acc. No. 1922/434, 1923/482A.

Welch, *The Peripatetic University*, 70.

Bourke, ‘Social scientists as intellectuals’, 55-56.

Bourke, ‘Social scientists as intellectuals’, 61.


UMA: UM Council Report of the Special Committee of Enquiry … by Mr Justice Schutt, 1924; Registrars Correspondence Registrar to Barrett UM312 1934/175.


Bourke, ‘Social Scientists as Intellectuals’, 56-57.

Ibid., 57.

Ibid., 56.

Ibid.

Ibid., 58.


Blainey, *A Centenary History of the University of Melbourne*, 156.

Ibid., 157.

Alomes, ‘Intellectuals as Publicists 1920’s to 1940’s’, 77.


Selleck, *The Shop*, 599.


University of Melbourne and university extension

110 Ibid., 20.
113 Public Record Office (PRO) Victoria, Melbourne: Council of Public Education: Minutes, 8 December 1942 and 17 August 1943, VPRS 11353 Item P1.
114 UMA: UM Extension Board, Minutes, 16 February 1943, 93/21.
116 UMA: University Extension Board, Minutes, 30 June 1944, 93/21.
117 UMA: UM Correspondence. Adult Education .Medley to Dunstan, 8 August 1944.
120 Australian Archives, Canberra: Further Memorandum on Grants to Universities 21 June 1945, Series A1361/1 Item 1/17/4 Part 1.
124 Ibid.
125 Ibid.
126 Victoria, Government, Legislative Council, Hansard, 1946: 4303-4315.
Trapped in a local history:  
why did extramural fail to engage in the era of engagement?¹

Chris Duke

Thesis

My proposition is that extramural liberal adult education (LAE), as conceived in the particular UK tradition, was doomed by its high-minded origins and its privileged status. As a ‘responsible body’, or RB, it attracted special government grant direct to the university extramural department (EMD), in return for accepting responsibility to deliver liberal adult education to a specified region according to Department of Education and Science Regulations. Trapped in protected but marginalised departments, it became inward-looking and equally marginal to the challenges and possibilities for universities, as the higher education (HE) system evolved into the era of mass higher education. It contributed little to the new, albeit grandiose, concepts of education permanente, lifelong learning, the knowledge society, the learning society and region, or to the new understandings of university engagement and regional development becoming prominent with the new millennium. A shrinking cadre of believers held to the language and concepts of an earlier era while practice – indeed often extramural departments’ own practice – and purpose moved on.

More broadly and with hesitancy I am reaching the view that the very ‘idea of a university’ within which the extramural ‘Great Tradition’ is located obstructs clear seeing and capable policy development. Although it should not be swept away in the wave of post-modernity, idealisation of the university obscures a reality: that the whole is actually less than the sum of its parts. This proposition has wider purchase than any antiquarian interest in the demise of extramural departments and of the liberal tradition: it challenges central assumptions about how modern universities should be both led and managed. It connects to the practical nature of engagement, and to the structure of tertiary and higher education. And it poses a tension between multiple little-orchestrated partnerships and systemically planned regional engagement.

In a different and more specific sense my thesis is unoriginal: it is that right-minded actions may have unintended, far-reaching and perverse consequences. The protection afforded by RB status created a benevolent climate for the growth of extramural studies; but in the end the arrangement was unable to survive the prevailing competitive neo-liberal environment. The final straw is likely to be the Government’s insistence on what is now called ‘ELQ’ – equivalent or lower qualification. This new policy, now being implemented, means excluding from government grant support to the university anyone studying towards a qualification equivalent to, or lower than, one already held by that student, with the exception of the shorter, vocationally oriented and employer-linked, foundation degrees. Learning may be ‘lifelong’ both in reality and in political rhetoric; but henceforth university adult education is to be all but privatised for those already qualified.

Meanwhile ‘the university’ grows and changes in diverse and important ways and directions little informed by the commendable and abiding purposes for which extramural LAE was founded. As universities come to deepen their interest in engagement, and often their commitment to regional partnerships and development, this occurs without benefit of the socially
informed liberal perspectives of and the facilitation skills honed in EMDs. University engagement in regional development has been the more unbalanced towards the (neo-)liberal economic and the technical/skills agenda. Universities as well as regions are the poorer as a result. As the world experiences new forms and intensities of economic, environmental, geopolitical and cultural crisis, rebalancing in favour of a wider civic mission becomes the more urgent.  

A personal note of apologia

By way of explaining my interest and perspective, I sketch my own involvement since starting full-time work in higher education in 1961. I was a natural recruit to the liberal tradition: an optimist, humanist, modernist from a hard-working self-improving and teetotal family reared in a democratic congregational low-church tradition. My first girlfriend’s parents pronounced me cut out for the Ministry – prescient, given the way that ex-priests and ministers have populated the ranks of university extramural teachers.

My failure to become an unquestioning adherent of the Great Tradition, as university liberal adult education came to be named, may be put down to first working for five years in an old London polytechnic, founded by Quentin Hogg in the 1880s. There I taught across a spectrum from liberal studies for apprentices and re-sit A levels by the first nonconforming secondary school-age baby-boomers, through to students working towards London external BA degrees, also developing curriculum for the first new-style CNAA degrees. As a historian I was immersed in the mid-Victorian era of self-help and administrative reform, but I adopted the newer scepticism of the sociologist in the University of Leeds’ Department of Adult Education and Extramural Studies in 1966. Oxbridge history first class honours graduates were at that time ten-a-penny, sociologists scarce as hen’s teeth.

At Leeds I joined forces with fellow social scientist Stuart Marriott to examine our own house. The Department of Adult Education and Extramural Studies was a powerful empire unto itself. The building where the Department was housed carried the fitting name of WEA founder Albert Mansbridge. To his credit, gritty Yorkshireman, Professor and Head of Department and Grand Old Man of the Great Tradition S.G. Raybould, pressed us to widen, write up and publish the resulting study of liberal adult education. This exposed the hollowness of being already partly in thrall to accreditation. ‘Credit’ later became the Achilles’ heel of LAE, driving the last nail, ELQ, into the extramural coffin, even as credit recognition and transfer was growing up as a promising means to better access, opportunity and progression.

A decade later Marriott, having moved to Edinburgh to work with the innovative John Lowe, who was frowned upon by the older somewhat clubbish EMD directorate, published an insightful history of ‘extramural empires’. Lowe himself left the UK to lead OECD’s adult education work for many years. For my own part I went to Australia, thereby exemplifying Raybould’s neo-colonial practice of exporting liberal adult education to the Commonwealth. More of that presently. Curiously, appointed founding Director of Continuing Education (a title, narrowly favoured over Adult, or Adult and Continuing) at the Australian National University (ANU) in 1969, I was expected to define a new way forward, despite coming from the old world. (My failure to mobilise and engage the whole University rather than replicate another variant of marginalisation from mainstream academic life is another story.)

Sixteen years later I returned to England to start a new Department at the new and suspect entrepreneurial University of Warwick. Warwick, pushed by the Head of
its Business School, also narrowly favoured ‘Continuing Education’ over the by then prevailing ‘Adult and Continuing’. I had been warned off Warwick, pilloried by Edward Thompson as a business university, by the influential, gentlemanly, and truly liberal, Michael Stephens. Stephens, who held the prestigious Robert Peers Chair at Nottingham, however advised me as a visiting academic at Nottingham, to visit Warwick in rounding off a study tour of UK extramural trends in the early eighties.\(^7\) New World visitor and new business university chimed; three years later I started an eleven year term as the newest recruit to the RB ‘Directors’ Club’, with a reputation of institutional piracy to live down.

The new Warwick Department strengthened the University’s existing clear regional mission. It was launched on the basis of an RB remit for LAE. That is to say, dedicated funds were drawn direct from the Department of Education and Science to provide liberal adult education to three local authority areas carved away from venerable University of Birmingham Extramural Department territory. On such a bloodied battlefield one could scarcely not take local outreach responsibilities seriously.

Meanwhile a former lecturer colleague at the ANU had teamed up with old soldier, Head of Hull’s extramural department to write \textit{The Demise of the Liberal Tradition}.\(^8\) This and my earlier monograph with Stuart Marriott marked me among Great Tradition survivors. Reflecting my polytechnic teaching origins I became the token ‘old university’ person on several CNAA policy committees to do with the new agenda of Access, Quality, and Credit Transfer. By then Peter Scott had published \textit{The Crisis of the University};\(^9\) the Faure report was twelve years old;\(^10\) and the first cycle of recurrent education for lifelong learning had come and gone (OECD 1974).\(^11\)

The year when I left Warwick saw not only the Dearing Report (1996)\(^12\) which succeeded Robbins’ sixties blueprint for system expansion,\(^13\) but also the Delors Report following Faure,\(^14\) and the European Year of Lifelong Learning, followed in 1997 by the arrival in office in the UK of New Labour, and the explosion of new information and communication technologies (ICT), together with the coming of age of ‘the global’. In our own neck of the woods the term \textit{engagement} had appeared, while a diminishing band of extramural departments soldiered on.

By the time I returned to Australia in 1996 the last remains of extramural had been razed there, eradicating Mansbridge’s initial and Raybould’s later efforts. Two erstwhile bastions, the New South Wales Workers’ Educational Association (WEA) and the University of Sydney Adult Education Department, were sad examples of survival at any price, while regional engagement and partnership were commanding attention. A little later I developed the notion of engagement as a ‘fifth scholarship’ to help my then University, the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, colonial twin to Hogg’s Woolwich Polytechnic, to accept, in its mission and planning, that engagement ranked alongside Boyer’s other four modes of scholarship (discovery, integration, application and teaching).\(^15\)

It is important to close this apologia with an explicit clarification: that my thesis corresponds essentially to the period starting when I entered the extramural world in Britain in the mid-sixties. Among the various broad-brush historical studies and institutional monographs, Roger Fieldhouse’s stands out as the most thorough. It is told, with careful attention to detail, in the 40-page eighth chapter of \textit{A History of Modern British Adult Education},\(^16\) essentially from the perspective of an adult education movement rather than from a university and higher education system perspective. My perspective, informed by personal experience and subsequent career
trajectory ‘into the mainstream’, is different. I will return to this, and to Fieldhouse’s analytic narrative, in concluding.

This brings me from personal narrative to narrative and language in a wider sense.

**Language and narrative**

Harold Wiltshire created a powerful ideological metaphor in 1956, in naming *liberal adult education* as the Great Tradition, and implying a movement. The term has rallied, and haunted, the extramural movement to this day. There has been much play with the term *extramural – trans-mural* and *intra-mural* – along with dismantling the walls. *Extension* has a similar connotation of taking university education out from its on-campus teaching heartland, *outreach* likewise. Extension predates extramural, being the term adopted when Cambridge University began such practices, guided by James Stuart in 1873 and quickly followed by others. Each of these terms suggests that the university is taking something, perhaps some quite small part, of its riches out from a rather closed scholarly community, on its own terms, to a wider *audience* or, as we would now say, *clientele*. The notion of *(learning) partner*(ship) was uncommon.

More controversial in the later history of extramural education were the terms *adult education*, the education of adults, and latterly *adult learning*. They, along with the *joint tutorial classes* arranged with the WEA, stood in contrast to *extension*, a term sustained and reinvented to refer to non-RB, and not administratively ‘liberal’ (but not therefore necessarily illiberal) university education for student clienteles not enrolled for a degree. It also contrasted with *continuing education*, the term more widely adopted for such programmes, often for professional groups, among the already well educated.

As *lifelong learning* entered the stage – entered stage right from a traditional LAE perspective – in principle it subsumed all forms of educational endeavour from early years through adult life, but in practice tended to be used as the more favoured term for adult continuing education of all kinds. *Adult education* was by then coming to be seen as old-fashioned and ideologically bounded. It now enjoyed a renewal, and came to hold its ground in terms of a more radically purposeful form of education. Those UK universities which still have an identifiable department or unit including some academic or academic-related staff now favour the term *continuing education* and/or *lifelong learning*. Because lifelong learning was adopted and preempted by skills-oriented economically-focused policy-makers, adult education has in more recent years been retained by the ‘liberal soft left’ as purposeful in a social, civic and cultural sense. Lifelong learning is now omnipresent in the documents of the European Community, OECD and now too the World Bank. It is also, partly by this association, sometimes stigmatised as a tool of global capitalism and its oppressions.

Language is important, powerful, and problematic when used loosely. Stuart Hall recently pronounced himself silenced by New Labour’s misappropriation of all the keywords in his language; nothing he could say or write any longer had meaning. On the other hand, terms and metaphors can focus, define and direct. The University of Warwick, successful research-led global entrepreneur and infamous bedfellow of big business in its early days, now in its sixth decade under its fifth vice-chancellor, still describes its reputation in staff recruitment adverts as enviable ‘for educational opportunities, first rate research and its commitment to the local community’ [emphasis added].
More than ever in these days of league tables, mission statements and talk of diversity, every university needs a narrative: a metaphor or story-line to rally and inspire itself to live and work with confidence. Unfortunately, as the era of branding and spin approached, the extramural liberal adult education tradition failed to cohere convincingly around a new informing purpose connected to current reality, that could match the inspiring social and political purpose of earlier years (however unevenly and even spuriously in terms of actual practice) named as a Great Tradition.

An extramural story
This is emphatically my own selective sketch: an extramural story, partly explained by my critical engagement with the extramural world, and my subsequent insider-outsider identity as an Anglo-Australian working for most of my life also in wider Asian, European and international settings. The most thorough synoptic account of British university adult education was provided by Roger Fieldhouse in his history of modern British adult education, and told from an adult education movement perspective.22

In a recent editorial asking whether future shock means the end of history, the Editors of International Journal of Lifelong Education reflect on a past discounted by ‘neophilia’ and the devaluing of history as ‘mere antiquarianism’. They conclude that, in such times ‘when the powerful wish us to think the past of no account’, historical analysis and understanding offer an essential perspective.23 It is from such a perspective, acknowledging my bias as participant actor, that I revisit the universities’ extramural liberal adult education story.

I argue that the important special funding of initially highly valued liberal work ultimately played an unintended and fateful part in engendering an inward-looking and backward-looking mentality. The protection afforded by RB funding absolved extramural departments (EMDs) from fighting their case in Senates and other committees as vigorously as others. It allowed universities to provide conveniently subsidised general educational opportunities, in the main to an increasingly middle class local community, at a cost that until recently seemed too miniscule to worry finance officers and committees.

On the other hand it also bred lack of wider institutional involvement and commitment, even resentment that the extramural department, with its cheques direct from Whitehall to Extramural Director, had such an easy ride, while doing non-award-bearing work the academic standing of which was unproven and could be contested. Changing funding regimes later came to require EMDs to certify, accredit and partly standardise work against an internal academic tariff; and a new breed of financial controllers with new IT armoured was enjoined to assess more precisely what such work did cost. Meanwhile from within ‘the movement’ as well as from outside, the Great Tradition was attacked for failing to serve the social, civic and even political purposes which underpinned its story. The extramural narrative had more the ring of hollow mythology than the authority of contemporary account.

Almost imperceptibly, extramural courses drifted from Cabinet-making – the early joint tutorial classes were university to Attlee’s Welfare State Administration – to cabinet-making – a Director of Lifelong Learning colleague is now studying cabinet-making to enrich future life after work. Attacked from without and hollowed out in terms of its own cohering and exhorting narrative, liberal adult education fell victim to a brutally utilitarian ‘neo-liberal’ environment – note the ironic echo of that word – with its new skills narrative. The accreditation noose has been fatally
tightly, to the point of throttling, by means of ELQ. It seems unlikely that either
supply or demand for LAE will prove robust in this bracing environment.\textsuperscript{24}

Belated attempts to embed traditional along with professional updating work
with adults in the regular mission, structure and work of academic faculties, schools
and departments have generally failed in universities within this tradition, whereas
non-RB universities have approached access and engagement unhampered by RB
privilege. They have tended to perform better and with greater confidence in the areas
of lifelong learning and regional engagement.

At the time of peak confidence and activity extramural academic staff fell into
two main camps. The majority might be called tenants of convenience. They lodged in
EMDs to teach, study and write within their own disciplines, from archaeology to
zoology: maybe because there was no room in an internal department; maybe because
they preferred teaching the more challenging and responsive clientele of adult
students. Maybe they had a strong sense of social purpose and service in terms of
equity and social development, much on the ‘missionary’ lines that launched
University Extension in the 1870s, and the more rigorous and demanding Joint
Tutorial Classes inspired by Albert Mansbridge and the WEA early in the new
century. The acme of this early sense of social purpose is captured in two substantial
volumes reissued by Nottingham’s doyen extramural Department of Adult Education
six decades later: \textit{The 1919 Report}, and the \textit{WEA Education Year Book 1918}.\textsuperscript{25}

A different kind of extramural academic emerged as the Departments came of
age and expanded after the Second World War. Adult education became a field of
study, claiming a place in the academic sun through terms such as \textit{andragogy}. The
Departments, some now named Adult Education and Extramural Studies (AE&EMS),
housed most such specialists. Some developed and located their scholarship anchored
in the theory and practice of AE&EMS, with the liberal tradition at the moral
pinnacle. Others reached out into fields of curriculum and tutor or staff development,
education for development, community processes and change, and so on.\textsuperscript{26} The
marginality that afflicted EMDs also characterised this field of scholarly practice.
Breasts were periodically beaten about the atheoretical and intellectually
impoverished nature of the field. Such self-criticism was partly justified, but scholars
such as J.F.C. Harrison, Richard Hoggart, E.P. Thompson and Raymond Williams
produced important work of both academic and wider significance.\textsuperscript{27}

There also persisted a vein of self-reflective philosophising and special
pleading about the Great Tradition and the liberal cause. Three university EMDs,
Nottingham, Manchester and Leeds, played key parts. I have mentioned the
Nottingham Department’s reprint of the 1918 and 1919 volumes. There was also
Rogers’ edited volume honouring Harold Wiltshire, architect of the ‘Great
Tradition’,\textsuperscript{28} and Lawson’s 1975 and 1982 monographs,\textsuperscript{29} from Manchester Hostler’s
and Ruddock’s 1980 and 1981 monographs,\textsuperscript{30} and a number of Leeds studies,
including the 1996 Fiftieth Anniversary volume edited by Taylor.\textsuperscript{31} Much of this work
was grounded in John Henry Newman’s ‘idea of a university’ legacy.\textsuperscript{32}

Among histories of the earlier period, Stuart Marriott’s 1984 centennial of
‘extramural empires’ was pertinent and insightful on political and organisational
dynamics.\textsuperscript{33} Marriott discerns a ‘massively simplified and Manichean view of
extramural history’, suggesting that generous grant-aid from 1908 for liberal adult
education (the later ‘RB system’) was collusively exploited by selective play with a
market mode, as a basis for extramural empire-building. Marriott links this to Burton
Clark’s theory of marginality, developed mid-century in the United States: ‘he
declared that high-minded statements of “philosophy” so characteristic of adult
education serve to cloak what it is found expedient to do’. Marriott also suggests a connection between a sense of inferiority (‘second-class educational citizenship’) joined with inward-looking claims to virtuous distinctiveness, and a schizoid attitude on the part of parent universities.

Less anchored in the study of history, other work sought to widen the remit and to explore and promote continuing (professional) education, along with community development, recurrent education, and lifelong learning. Nottingham was instrumental in pushing out some boundaries and widening the discussion internationally while retaining strong traditional-philosophical anchorage. Other studies sounded the alarm for the Great Tradition, Crombie and Harries-Jenkins unsentimentally in 1983, the ‘intelligent pessimism’ (p.156) of McIlroy and Spencer, passionately introduced by Richard Hoggart, in 1988. More assertively, Jane Thompson from a strongly sociological and feminist perspective in 1980 published *Adult Education for a Change*, leading an ‘emperor’s no clothes’ assault by more radical critics from within.

So there was serious thought and writing about changing social functions in a changing world of new opportunities, wealth, media etc, and the need for a more inclusive agenda more centrally engaged with the parent institutions. Nonetheless, caution and a fateful gradualism prevailed. Conditions for retaining RB grant narrowed and tightened from the early Thatcher years to ELQ in 2008. The quest for new meaning persisted, and the life-urge to survive allowed progressive and expedient expansion of roles and activities, without ever seriously moving to the new paradigm that I naively proposed at that time.

Language continued to drift, and to worry people: from *Adult Education* (or AE&EMS) with and through *Extension to Continuing (Professional) Education* (or Studies), and on to the near-universal *Lifelong Learning* (LLL). This with *Continuing Education* (CE) has generally replaced both AE and EMS. The membership lists in successive annual reports of the body now known as UALL, the Universities Association for Lifelong Learning, show the progressive demise of the LAE and EMD identity. UALL itself was formerly the Universities Council for Adult Education (UCAE) and then UCACE to accommodate ‘Continuing’, then UACE for Universities Association for Continuing Education. New universities joining the Council either adopted Continuing Education or Lifelong Learning, or they used a term like Access or Widening Participation to signify their remit. Significant as language is, more serious was the disappearance of full departments in favour of units, groups, or named individuals with a remit within the central registrar’s area. This change is summarised more fully in an appendix note below.

By the early years of the new century the demise of liberal adult education in EMDs was all but complete, awaiting only ELQ to deliver the *coup de grace*. No doubt some programmes will continue to recruit students for non-vocational study by one financial stratagem or another; but the era of the Great Tradition is over. Some who worked as extramural academic ‘subject tutors’ moved into the internal subject specialist departments, some to central academic-related organising roles. Some adult education specialists went into Education Schools, Faculties or Departments as groups with expertise in aspects of adult learning, maybe widening their interest to address issues such as skills and credit, staff and curriculum development. A handful remain to wrestle with the impact of ELQ in those few universities, like Cambridge and Warwick, where there is some semblance of continuity.
Looking abroad and to wider engagement
Some literature referred to community and regional involvement within the extramural era and movement. However it did nothing to address an emerging new agenda to do with the contribution of higher education to regional development. Thornton and Stephens’ 1977 study of the university in its region analysed 16 accounts of extramural practice within and of the liberal adult education movement.\textsuperscript{42} Stephens acknowledges the traditionalism of English [sic] universities and the pressures for change, while remaining entirely within an individualistic learner paradigm in adding the need for updating (alias lifelong learning) to ‘liberal’ work. He does however finger a crucial organisational problem in referring to ‘tradition and favourable Department of Education and Science (DES) [RB] funding, and the price paid for establishing extramural departments’: ‘they have been viewed by the universities as just another department, but at the same time a reason for a university to forget about adult education provision [and one might add regional engagement]… The best of the style of a Registrar’s Department needs to be wedded to the professionalism of the adult educator …’\textsuperscript{43} In practice most EMDs were inclined to get on with their separate mission, and keep well away from their Registrars.

A book using ‘the spirit and the form’ in its title was published in Nottingham the previous year.\textsuperscript{44} It included a paper given by Wiltshire in 1971, on Britain’s international contribution in adult education. This, as one of Raybould’s later exporters, I tend to think of as a form of neo-colonialism that saw Mansbridge start up WEs in several Australian States, and elsewhere around what became the Commonwealth. Whitelock recorded this for Australia, starting with extension at Melbourne and Sydney (Australia’s shadows of Oxbridge) in the 1890s.\textsuperscript{45}

The Californian sociologist of higher education Martin Trow once observed (apropos the binary era) how very similar all our HE institutions looked from a distance, for all the stress on diversity in our local discourse. Similar parochialism pervaded much extramural thinking vis-à-vis overseas links and approaches, as, too, apropos the LAE/EMD university world vis-à-vis other developments in higher education at home. There was a strong missionary urge to take the tradition along with the WEA to other countries. As a result both old and new Commonwealth came to be peppered with AE&EMDs. Many have subsequently died.\textsuperscript{46} Others struggled to make a case for their marginal existence, or transformed into quite different kinds of operations. We were, so to speak, more blessed in the giving than in the receiving of ideas. The exporting of extramuralism and the subsequent stories of demise would be amusing were they not a little sad. The case of the NSW WEA in Sydney could serve as a parable for the whole phenomenon.\textsuperscript{47}

Adult education scholars located in AE&EMDs certainly contributed to wider debates and studies, notably in community studies and community development, and in cultural studies. There is clear lineage and an honourable roll-call from Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams through E.P. Thompson to Stuart Hall. Historians like J.F.C. Harrison as well as Edward Thompson contributed significantly to a wider social history.\textsuperscript{48} Others who grew up in what were AE&EMDs have made a useful contribution to the study of changing higher education policy at a macro level, and to areas of teaching and learning, staff and curriculum development, new technologies etc., of wider application. In the main however the growth of mass higher education and the explosion from the elite pre-Robbins world, in forty years, to what is now called universal higher, or simply tertiary, mass education largely passed by an extramural world trapped in a liberal and non-vocational Newman-based value framework and RB dependency.
More remarkable is how the ‘access movement’ with its massive commitment of ingenuity and resources to trying to shift the class base of undergraduate intake, especially into the older, more elite, ‘research-led’ universities where EMDs were to be found, seemed largely to pass the EMD world by. It grew up with new networks, arrangements and funding streams. It has greatly interested and perturbed the higher education policy community, but as something separate from the extramural world. The Great Tradition was owned by the older universities; the new university sector made most of the running in access and wider participation despite the earlier Oxbridge and civic traditions. 49

Not only did RB funding keep its focus on work that was ‘liberal’ and fitted the changing RB regulations (notwithstanding the sometimes profligate EMD opportunism that accompanied this and was described by Marriott in 1984). 50 The claim that this work brought comparable educational opportunity and experience to working class men and women was proving hollow: student records showed it to be untrue. There was internecine strife between extramural ‘old boys’, keepers of a shaky faith and guardians of the RB income stream, and a more strident and confident, often female and feminist, younger and sociologically informed movement who accurately critiqued the Tradition. 51

Unquestioning individualism also inhibited consideration of social and community purpose (increasingly anyway tainted as ‘social engineering’), and probably of the richer meaning of embedded regional engagement that was growing up, alongside a wider understanding of lifelong learning, social change and national and regional development internationally. Bodies like Unesco, whose fine rhetoric of lifelong learning was selectively raided, and the OECD, which anchored educational policy analysis in the uncomfortable and suspect world of economic analysis, indicators and growth, attracted little serious interest.

There were academic exchanges and joint conference activities with the United States; but it is hard to discern deep questioning of UK university practice as a result of contact with that newer world which itself lacked a strong liberal tradition, let alone RB funds. A Croom Helm volume in the Radical Forum on Adult Education series comparing university adult education in England and the USA made a serious attempt to conceptualise the liberal tradition and its ills in both countries. 52 The series editor, elegantly spanning discourses and straining to hold the ends together, concluded that ‘the frequent failure of the practice to live up to the theory must not be allowed to obscure the need to return to the fundamentals of the liberal tradition’, and called for ‘a radical re-interpretation of the liberal tradition’.

Twenty years later the very language of AE&EMD was fading from memory. At the beginning of this decade just one English, one Scottish and one Welsh member of the Universities Association for Continuing Education mentioned adult education in their titles, and ‘extramural’ had disappeared entirely from the vocabulary (see appendix below for more detail). The language of the age of skills sounds as different from the Radical Forum series as it does from Newman’s ‘idea of a university’.

Looking wider, at the burgeoning HE policy literature along the road to mass higher education typified by the many Open University Press listings through the last decades of last century and on, it is evident that new fields were opening up. There was the interest in binary and post-binary systems; the place and relationship between different kinds of universities, and between higher education and further education, were prominent. There was new work on philosophical underpinnings (see for example the numerous writings of Ronald Barnett). There was much on access, wider participation and the functions of universities vis-à-vis both social class and economic
development. There is also a ‘technical’ literature about teaching and learning, assessment and accreditation, in the new ICT era. Personalised and student-centred learning are in vogue. Lifelong learning came to occupy centre stage as the extramural tradition vacated it. The main contribution from the liberal tradition has been the not unreasonable plea to remember that there is more to learning (word of choice) and education (sometimes almost politically incorrect even to mention) than skill acquisition and jobs. The dominant paradigm however remains individualistic, in line with the fragmentation and individualisation that characterise the Thatcher and post-Thatcher years, with their targets-and-audit culture.

A particular curse for the embattled extramural world, as for liberal higher education and engagement more generally, has been the ever stronger influence of research assessment, and more recently of world league tables and competitive world-class thinking. In this environment extramural departments were doomed. Their structure denied the penny numbers of scholars in different disciplines the necessary critical mass. The study of adult education is marginal; within the low-status discipline of education it has little appeal for research-led universities. The very idea of local, especially liberal, outreach education looks uninviting in a fiercely competitive global environment.

And yet, despite the threat that international league tables and ‘world class’ aspirations represent to university engagement with the region, this and the access agenda have both gained in salience and in dedicated higher education funding. As RB funding faded away, both widening participation (WP) and then also regional engagement or third stream/third mission funding increased. Such funds tempt and even require universities to develop and sustain WP provision and monitoring, and to strengthen links with their regions in the name of a third mission.

Lifelong Learning Networks, a recent English Higher Education Funding Council (HEFC) initiative, may prove no more sustainable than other governmental and funding council initiatives. They do however encourage regional engagement with locally expressed equity – albeit with a skills agenda to avoid ‘wasting human resources’ at least as much as from a sense of social justice. The Association of Commonwealth Universities concluded a major consultation on engagement as a core value of the university with a substantial compendium in 2003 on the idea of engagement. The OECD conducted an international action research project on the contribution of higher education to regional development from 2004 to 2007. It is now taking this inquiry into a second cycle, such is the international interest. The International Observatory Pascal, which grew out of earlier OECD work on regional development and universities, is meanwhile launching a wider network-based study of what works and how to overcomes the barriers (see the Pascal website for the PURE project).

Europe in particular has a number of learning city and region networks; universities lead or are at least central to most of them.

This is not to imply that universities in general have firmly settled their policy and practice in favour of one form of engagement or another. Nor indeed is regional development a clear-cut matter, given the ambiguity, diversity and often fragility of regions. Both remain evolving, complex and sometimes contested domains. But then so do access, the ‘access movement’, and the role of HE in respect of social equalisation and social inclusion. All are matters for active scrutiny and development here and abroad, even as some of these traditions, notably those of continental Europe, evolve under the influence of Bologna and the EU in broadly Anglo-Saxon neo-liberal (but not Newmanite-liberal) directions. They are firmly on the policy
agenda of systems and institutions everywhere, while the voices of the Great Tradition fade into the mists of Avalon, along with the departments themselves.

**Idealisation and mission, management and leadership**

Given what has happened, what might achieve more effective engagement?

The extramural predicament distanced these departments from the central leadership and direction of universities and of the fast-changing heartland higher education system. New debates took place. New policies and processes evolved for funding new forms and modes of provision for new clienteles, sometimes the very clienteles whom the Great Tradition claimed to address. Adult educators were mostly absent from the table, their departments operating almost like separate institutions on or beyond the margins. They recruited individual academics of similar persuasion to work with them in their good cause, but avoided the centres of university power and leadership, other than to protect their own units.

With EMDs thus preoccupied, these and wider territories came to be served independently of RB responsibility by increasing numbers of other university outreach endeavours. Many were by business and professional schools, including medicine. Some new initiatives such as school partnerships were centrally led. EMDs had spawned new fields and sub-fields of disciplinary study and professional development from the early heroic days and on through much of last century. Now, far from creating and nurturing links and partnerships, the surviving departments seemed to stand aside from the equally entrepreneurial if more vocationally oriented efforts of other faculties and schools.

What is needed to promote university engagement and balanced regional social and economic development in the spirit of the early extension and tutorial classes today?

To borrow from the title of a book cited in this paper, something of the spirit might conceivably be rekindled, in a world desperately needing applied humanistic intelligence for the sake of sustained and balanced development of the eco-system and the social systems which we inhabit. But the form will have to be different. An effective solution will require clear and competent institutional leadership. This means courage and staying power, along with effective and confident delegation to and empowerment of strongly motivated academic organisational units or AOU\(s\), along with effective bridge-builders or boundary-spanners, on lines set out by Burton Clark a decade ago.\(^{56}\) The extramural tradition should have been a natural breeding ground for the latter.\(^{57}\) Whether the new managerialism that prevails in many universities will produce this mix remains to be seen. Whether the competitive but changing environment of RAE and league tables will allow it is also a moot point.

A prior wider question concerns university mission and what is best in terms of the whole higher education system. Can and should all universities ‘engage’ regionally? Can and should every university attempt to do everything? Moreover, in an era when planning higher education systems becomes integral to national economic planning and development, how far can and do individual institutions really decide what they will do? If the Funding Council sneezes universities catch a cold; if it nods or blinks, much less sets aside a modicum of competitive development funding, few institutions will resist the temptation to modify direction and even mission accordingly, as the system has seen ever since the days of ‘Enterprise in Higher Education’.\(^{58}\) Engagement may no longer be a matter just for individual universities in a time of national economic development priorities, and specified third stream
funding. Should we stop talking about the university as a single, almost reified, entity and identity?

We have long since employed typologies and sub-categories of universities (and more widely of higher and tertiary education institutions) according to their history, status, balance and range of work, and influence. The smaller Australian system made use of a five-way typology proposed by Simon Marginson some years ago, and Peter Scott formulated a larger set for the UK. There is keen interest on the part of neo-liberal-minded governments, and of the more privileged and prestigious institutions, to bring back the more formal demarcation and mission separation of a binary system. The several generations of new universities are equally resistant to this.

It may seem tempting to charge only lower-status ‘regional universities’ or reconstituted polytechnics with regional engagement, leaving elite research-led institutions to concentrate just on a world-class league. I argue instead for the integration of third stream work into all teaching and research, and for collective responsibility for the full spread of mission to be shared across systems of tertiary and higher education institutions on a regional basis. Note that extension and extramural work started with the most prestigious Oxbridge universities, which needed to win recognition and friends nationally and in the regional and local community. They were quickly followed by the local civic universities of the day, which have since become Russell Group big hitters. These provided the strongest and most productive EMDs in the heyday of that movement. To leave engagement to so-called teaching-only institutions would be oddly ahistorical indeed, and quite unrealistic in terms of who is legitimated and enabled to disseminate and engage what scholarship.

The role of university leadership in turbulent and difficult times is to provide the institution with a confident identity. A university needs a ‘narrative’, much as Wiltshire’s Great Tradition provided a justificatory and rallying narrative and thus a raison d’être, for that time. Engagement today needs a compelling narrative that legitimises community and regional engagement work as integral to mission and policy, effectively embedded in the practice of the whole university as ‘what we do here’.

I have assumed throughout that there is something beyond a legal charter that makes and is ‘the university’. In this I am with the mainstream of higher education policy discourse in the land of the taken-for-granted. Lately perhaps the sociological sceptic has won ground over the philosopher; thus I found myself telling a recent World Bank Forum (apropos ‘engagement’ and the SME sector of industry) that when it comes to the university, what it can contribute and how, the whole is less than the sum of the parts. Maybe this was over-reaction to misplaced and clumsy ‘strategic planning’ and other misapplied managerial tools that have come to mesmerise some contemporary university executives. But it is evident that the partnership and reciprocity on which effective and mutually fruitful engagement depend cannot be dictated, orchestrated and managed in fine detail by the Registry or Chancery. They rely on commitment, trust, tacit knowledge and personal contacts. Any attempt to document and regulate the work of partnership and engagement in pursuit of social, civic and cultural as well as economic development is risky. If pursued ruthlessly it will destroy the very work. So maybe it is ‘farewell to Newman and all that’, at least until the pendulum has swung back from the managerial and neo-liberal excesses too common today, and until university executives too prone to micro-manage give way to leaders.
Have we now travelled the full distance from marginalised RB ‘responsibility’ to institution-wide social and regional irresponsibility in pursuit of institutionally selfish enterprise? Or, recognising that ‘selfish’ ends are best served through reciprocity, are we approaching a new sense of systemic partnership and engagement, which will come to inform the university’s raison d’être and modus vivendi? This would mean being connected interdependently, and collaborating while competing with other universities and tertiary institutions, as well as with the many other organisations and institutions that make up the fabric of society. Certainly this is my hope.

Reconciling perspectives

That is where my conference keynote ended. Reflecting on the discussions that it provoked, it seems sensible to add some paragraphs prompted by these discussions and then by revisiting some sources in light of this prompting. In particular I looked again at Fieldhouse (1996), and at some of Harold Wiltshire’s work. I conclude in a semi-autobiographical vein similar to that in which I started: so much of the extramural story, and especially the liberal adult education and RB strand, is personal, and raised strong passions. From its very beginnings in 1947 UCAE was divided in contesting the execution of the RB mandate, and the desirable character and identity of extramural departments and studies.

Fieldhouse accurately if unintentionally portrayed me, in observing that ‘the growing number of full-time tutors appointed to extramural departments at that time brought this culture with them into the world of adult education’, referring to the more radical challenging culture of Britain in the 1960s: ‘they tended to be left of centre, politically active, and somewhat anti-Establishment. They believed the world could and should be changed for the better’.

I conducted myself thus at Leeds in the late sixties, applying the principles on which the movement was founded by forming an action-research WEA joint tutorial class with ethnic minority students in inner city Leeds which engaged directly in issues of housing discrimination, and later took direct action against a racist pub landlord. The nonconformist anti-Establishment tendency was reflected in the work with Marriott on extramural awards published in 1973.

Both then and later, when I returned to the UK and became the Honorary Secretary of UCACE, later UACE, before and during the binary merger, the contradictions and defensiveness of the extramural world concerned me. Ironically, as one of its sterner critics, I became central to the rearguard action to protect liberal adult education and the extramural tradition, as departments crumbled and protectiveness inhibited the kind of lateral thinking that seemed necessary. Looking back, it is evident that the die was cast well before I entered the field. I now see the 1954 Ashby Report as an almost irreversible turning point. Valuing universities’ external partnerships and a connected spectrum of adult education providers, it argued against ‘mainstreaming’ RB funds into the UGC stream although, in Fieldhouse’s words, ‘it did suggest that sooner or later this transfer would be desirable, and that university adult education would then have to fight for a full recognition within the higher education sector’.

There followed two decades of protected and privileged opportunistic growth. This ad hoc entrepreneurialism, which Marriott (1984) analysed and is referred to above, divided the extramural world ideologically. In 1956 Wiltshire observed that the Great Tradition was already dying. In 1973, a year after Jepson at Leeds called for
revived social relevance in order to contribute to the emergent community education, the Russell Report echoed Ashby’s support for continuing the ear-marked and separate DES RB direct grant: ‘university adult education should be regarded, and funded, as part of a comprehensive adult education service rather than as an integral part of higher education’. Looking back it seems clear that the last nail in the coffin was not today’s ELQ but this repeated choice.

Commentary on the later struggle to preserve liberal adult education within the integrative funding of the HEFC regime notices its defensiveness. In fact, this fortress tendency goes back much further. The choice not to take the risk of mainstreaming into the funding and thereby the central policy-making of the universities meant that, when it came, mainstreaming was involuntary, under protest, and without the authority and conviction to challenge and inspire universities to a mission of equity and social development in the way that Mansbridge displayed.

It is too simple to argue that the work could only survive by continuing special funding; the clear choice, articulated by Ashby and Russell, to locate in a nominally unitary national adult education ‘movement’ rather than act as part of the heartland of the university and of a fast-growing and changing HE system, condemned an honourable tradition to continuing marginality and ultimately to irrelevance. It might be argued that universities are too selfish to act in any sense pro bono, but so long as autonomy and academic freedom are valued there is no other way to go. In fact much has been done, by persuasion, by selective Funding Council funding, and out of a sense of institutional mission, to wrestle with social inequalities through access and widening participation programmes. The government higher education policy papers of 1978 and 1991 cited by Fieldhouse made adult and continuing education more central to universities’ work, but through mainstream incorporation, often dissolving extramural departments. CE in the new context of lifelong learning took off down a largely economic and utilitarian track, leaving the liberal tradition and extramural departments behind. It was the polytechnics, now as new universities, that provided a relevant model and led the way: here ‘adult continuing education permeated the whole institution’.

This post-conference reprise confirms for me that becoming central to the university, and not resting on the comfort of ear-marked RB funding, was – more clearly with hindsight – the only game in town. That game was lost even before I joined the field and the movement, full of modernistic optimism about making things better. Going back to the work of Harold Wiltshire however brought home to me a deeper explanation for this – again with hindsight – ill-chosen stance.

With a disarming frankness befitting the realpolitik of a latter-day Research Assessment Era departmental head, Wiltshire wrote in 1983 that doing more adult education research along with graduate teaching would make EMDs more strategically defensible in the tougher times ahead. Wiltshire moreover argued from the position that far from departments being subservient to universities, which would mean an EMD reflecting and replicating the range of the university’s work, it is the reverse which is true: it is the departments which are the prime movers … it is the departments that can then confer this status and authority upon the university … such lustre as it has is derived from them … So a department of adult education, like a department of chemistry, can best serve its university not by reflecting it but by being itself and going about its own business.
We could not have moved further from the founding purposes and ambitions for the universities and society of both James Stuart and Albert Mansbridge. Wiltshire’s proposition closely resembles that today confronting those remaining continental universities and systems in which ‘the university’ simply cannot engage with its region because it is powerless to assemble and orient legally independent departments. Bologna reforms and a taste for the entrepreneurial are putting an end to that. For liberal adult education as a university mission – and notwithstanding my own sense that when it comes to effective engagement the whole is less than the sum of its parts – this very traditional and centrifugal posture might endear Wiltshire to the more baronial heads, but it graphically displays the loss of direction by those privileged by the world of RB funding to fight for what they believed in, for and within the university itself.

Appendix
One way to trace the evolution of universities’ contribution to the education of adults, and to this aspect of engagement with their society and regions, is through the national body that represented extramural activity. A Universities Extra-Mural Consultative Committee, created in 1926, was succeeded by the Universities Council for Adult Education (UCAE) in 1947. Open to all UK universities and university colleges, UCAE by the early seventies had 39 members (UCAE 1970). Council membership in 1972-73 was dominated by the extramural directors of 26 universities enjoying RB status. Twenty-five of these carried the title Adult Education (7), Extra-Mural Studies (14) or AE&EMS (4). The other 14 included four that used Extension, and a disparate range of other units and officers (UCAE 1974).

Midway through the binary period, in 1979-80 the majority of the membership of just over 40 institutions still called themselves Extramural (13 including one adding CE), Adult Education (6), or AE&EMS (4). By then eight members were using Continuing Education, including the Open University. Four still used Extension Studies, and Oxford uniquely stayed with External Studies. Five non-RB newer and ex-College of Advanced Technology universities had diverse officers at Council, while the new universities of Lancaster, Warwick and York, along with Cranfield, were Associates, trailing new full member, Sussex.

Changes through the next two decades reflected efforts to adapt and extend, with the onrush of mass higher education post-Robbins, and the end of the binary divide in the early nineties. The changing nomenclature of academic organisational units or AOUs (extramural departments etc.) revealed a flight from the extramural adult education LAE heartland. Although interest in RB work and the DES regulations governing it continued to preoccupy the more senior directors and universities, to the irritation of non-RB members, UCAE first become the Universities Council for Adult and Continuing Education (UCACE), and then with the end of the binary divide and an attempt to join forces with the ex-polytechnics, the Universities Association for Continuing Education (UACE). More recently still it followed international, especially European, trends to become the Universities Association for Lifelong Learning (UALL).

Midway into the present decade the following picture is found in UALL’s Annual Report and Yearbook: eighty-six higher education institutions are listed as Members of Council, together with a few other bodies sharing similar interests. 

Twenty-three of these 86 are named Lifelong Learning, some with an additional or qualifying further term. Twenty are named Continuing Education, some with an
additional term which in three cases only includes Adult Education. A further 29 members are represented through central administration, from the Vice-Chancellor or a Deputy through to a quite lowly specified officer. Another 14 carry a plethora of other names, a few of them within disciplinary departments, schools or faculties, but the majority probably reporting to and through central administration. There is no longer any Extramural Department; Adult Education survives only as a twin to Continuing Education, and only in three places.

No less striking is the confusing plethora of terms employed to locate the 2007 UALL members organisationally. Apart from a number of individual officers not identified by location, and some apparently free-standing ‘Directors’, Council Members are located variously in Departments, Schools, Institutes, Divisions, Centres, as a Faculty, or in an Office or Division. About half the membership is now represented from central administration rather than a free-standing extramural department, but this has not in general accompanied greater institutional commitment, or indeed clarity of purpose.

Notes

1 Acknowledgement:
It would be both remiss and unfair not to acknowledge the University which hosted the Conference at which this paper was presented, and co-convenor Dick Taylor, with whom I have argued and frequently disagreed, always amiably, for nigh on forty years. Cambridge was the first university to start Extension Classes, in 1873, and I think the most recent to create a professorship in adult/continuing/lifelong education, the post occupied by Professor Taylor today. It may be optimistic to hope that Cambridge’s slowness off this latter mark may make it the precursor of a new wave; but nothing is lost by hoping.


6 S. Marriott, Extramural Empires: Service and Self-Interest in English University Adult Education (Nottingham: University of Nottingham, Department of Adult Education, 1984).


Trapped in a local history

17 Wiltshire, ‘The Great Tradition’.
18 B. Pashley University Extension Reconsidered (Leicester: University of Leicester, DAE, 1968).
21 Meanwhile preference for adult learning rather than adult education is reaping a predictable nemesis. Having significantly cut back general adult education and introduced ELQ, the government recently launched an inquiry into informal adult learning. Preferring learning enables government to distinguish it from adult education, which requires provision for learning and costs money.
22 Fieldhouse, A History of Modern British Adult Education.
24 Ambrose et al., All Change!; Davies and Wheeler, Credit Where It’s Due; Duke and Marriott, Paper Awards.
26 see for example D. Legge, The Education of Adults in Britain (Milton Keynes: The Open University Press, 1982); R. Ruddock, Perspectives on Adult Education (Manchester: University of Manchester, DAHE, 1980); and the wide-ranging work published by Peter Jarvis.
28 Rogers, The Spirit and the Form.
30 J. Hostler, The Aims of Adult Education (Manchester: University of Manchester, DAHE, 1981); Ruddock Perspectives; Ruddock 1981.
33 Marriott, Extramural Empires.
34 Ibid., 9-10.
35 Ibid., 8,11.
37 Crombie and Harries-Jenkins Demise of the Liberal Tradition.
39 Thompson, Adult Education.
40 For a participant’s account of the end of the special DES relationship and RB funding, see W. Forster, ‘The Department of Education and Science and the University Responsible


42 Thornton and Stephens *The University in its Region*.

43 Ibid., 186.

44 Rogers, *The Spirit and the Form*.


46 So has the International Council for Universities Adult Education (ICUAE), ‘trading company’ for this strand of internationalism; the Council ceased to function in the 80s, and its Journal, *IJUAE*, limped on for another decade.

47 Its middle class clientele in the 1980s resented having to run the gauntlet of unemployed workers in the ground floor government job-seekers’ premises rented from the WEA, as they took the lift to their 8th floor classes in the WEA’s new central city property-deal premises.

48 See note 27 above.

49 See for example Keith Vernon’s conference paper on the University of Liverpool ‘Civic Universities and Community Engagement in Inter-war England’ (above).

50 Marriott, *Extramural Empires*.


55 Pascal International Observatory PURE project, see www.obs-pascal.com


57 It was pointed out in discussion following this paper that EMDs had been sites of innovation for new fields of university study and teaching, especially in the social sciences. It would be interesting to analyse what originated here, and what similar innovations occurred elsewhere in RB universities, and in non-RB universities. Note however that this was more about changes flowing into the internal curriculum than about processes and outcomes of boundary-spanning.

58 Enterprise in Higher Education was initiative by the UK government’s former Employment Department that ran from 1988 to 1996, its aims being to make HE programmes more vocationally oriented and encourage students’ personal development through improvement of generic skills.


60 The Russell Group, founded in 1994, to represent the interests of the twenty most prestigious research universities in Britain (representing 65% of research income, 56% of all doctorates awarded, and 30% of students from outside the European Union). Sometimes likened to the Ivy League in the USA.


63 Fieldhouse, *A History of Modern British Adult Education*: 215; *Adult Education in Great Britain* (London: HMSO, 1954) was the report of a committee chaired by Eric (later Lord) Ashby, Vice-chancellor of Belfast University.

65 Ibid., 223.
66 Ibid., 225.
67 Ibid., 233; Polytechnics were re-designated as universities (still commonly known as the ‘new universities’) in 1992.
Notes on Contributors

Prof Sir David Watson is an historian and Professor of Higher Education Management at the Institute of Education, University of London. He was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Brighton between 1990 and 2005. His most recent books are Managing Civic and Community Engagement (2007), The Dearing Report: ten years on (2007), and The Question of Morale: managing happiness and unhappiness in university life (2009). He has contributed widely to developments in UK higher education, including as a member of the Council for National Academic Awards (1977-1993), the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council (1988-92), and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (1992-96). He was a member of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation’s National Commission on Education (whose report Learning to Succeed was published in 1993), and the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education chaired by Sir Ron Dearing (whose report Higher Education in the Learning Society was published in 1997). He was the elected chair of the Universities Association for Continuing Education between 1994 and 1998, and chaired the Longer Term Strategy Group of Universities UK between 1999 and 2005. He is a Trustee of the Nuffield Foundation, a Companion of the Institute of Management, and a National Teaching Fellow (2008). He chaired the national ‘Inquiry into the Future for Lifelong Learning’, and co-authored its report Learning Through Life (2009). He was knighted in 1998 for services to higher education.

Prof Bill Jones graduated in English and joined the Adult Continuing Education Department at Southampton University, where he became Director, before appointment in 1998 as Professor of Lifelong Learning at Newcastle University. From 2003-2008 he was head of Higher Education for the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE). He is now a consultant in lifelong learning, and holds an Honorary Chair in Lifelong Learning at the University of Leicester. His research interests include the history and practice of adult education, with a particular focus on rural provision, and interdisciplinary links with his other research field of English literature especially of the eighteenth century. He has published widely in both these fields, including a history of rural adult education, a definitive edition of the poetical works of William Falconer, and a comparative study of widening participation policy and practice in South Africa.

Dr Keith Vernon is a Principal Lecturer in History at the University of Central Lancashire, where he teaches modern British history, history of medicine and history of education. He has researched and written on various aspects of the history of science and higher education in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, especially on the relationships between universities and the state in England and on the student experience at provincial universities between the wars. Recent publications include Universities and the State in England, 1850-1939 (2004) and ‘The health and welfare of university students in interwar Britain’ History of Education 37 (2008).

Prof David McKitterick is Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, Honorary Professor of Historical Bibliography in the University, and a Fellow of the British Academy. At Trinity College he is Librarian of the Wren Library. He is author of the three-volume History of Cambridge University Press, a definitive history of the oldest press in the world from its origins in a royal charter of Henry VIII to its present
international organisation with authors and customers across the world. His *Print, Manuscript and the Search for Order, 1450-1830* (2003) re-examined fundamental aspects of the ‘printing revolution’ of the early modern period, re-evaluating modern myths and misconceptions surrounding the emergence of print, and invites readers to work forward from the past, rather than backwards into it.

**Dr Paul Aubin** is an independent researcher affiliated to the Centre Interuniversitaire d’études Québécoises (Université Laval) and to the Groupe de Recherche sur l’édition Littéraire (Université de Sherbrooke), and is vice-president of the Bibliographical Society of Canada. He has undertaken an extensive programme of research on the history of textbooks, especially those published and adopted in Quebec, which led to his organisation of a major exhibition ‘300 years of School Textbooks in Quebec’ from November 2006 to April 2007 at the National Library in Montreal. Author of numerous publications on this subject, he also created the online site for school textbooks at Laval University library: http://www.bibl.ulaval.ca/ress/manscol.


**Dr Sandra Raban** is an Emeritus Fellow of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. She spent much of her career at Homerton College, Cambridge, lecturing in History and preparing secondary teachers for the classroom. For more than twenty years she also represented the University on the board of what is now known as Cambridge Assessment. Most recently she edited *Examining the World: A History of the University of Cambridge*.
Local Examinations Syndicate celebrating the 150th anniversary of its establishment. She is a historian of the Middle Ages by discipline and most of her publications are concerned with English administrative and tenurial history. She is currently editing and translating the early fourteenth-century accounts of Peterborough Abbey as part of a project funded by the Mellows Trust to publish all its surviving manuscripts.

Prof Geoffrey Sherington is professor in the history of education where he has taught for three decades. His initial research was on the First World War and English education. He had an early interest in the history of immigration to Australia including the British child migration schemes and the work of the early Rhodes scholar Kingsley Fairbridge and the Fairbridge Society. He has published extensively on secondary education and youth policy, is the author of a number of school histories, and co-author of a history of the Australian comprehensive high school. More recently he has been one of the authors of a study of school choice in Australia. He has written extensively on the history of the University of Sydney, and is co-author, along with Dr Julia Horne, of a forthcoming study of aspects of the University’s history. He is also working towards what will be the first general history of universities and colleges in Australia and New Zealand from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century.

Dr Julia Horne is University Historian and Senior Research Fellow (History) at the University of Sydney, Australia. She has published on the history of universities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with a particular interest in understanding Australian universities as social institutions. Before moving to the University of Sydney, she was head of the Oral History Project in the UNSW Archives where she conducted several major historical surveys and oral history projects on student life and the career patterns of women academics. She has published on the cultural transmission of ideas to Australia, and is the author of several biographical works on academics that explore questions of professionalization in the twentieth century as well as the place of intellectuals in Australian society. Recent research includes a major project with Professor Geoffrey Sherington on the public university in Australasia, 1850-1918, and a forthcoming study of the University of Sydney (co-authored with Geoffrey Sherington) that addresses some of the major questions that have faced Australian universities since the University’s foundation in 1850. She is also working towards a history of university philanthropy in Australia.

Gordon Dadswell has worked as a librarian and adult educator since 1969. He has Masters Degrees in Librarianship and in Education and is currently enrolled as a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne. Gordon has published in the areas of librarianship and the history of adult education. His particular interest in both subjects is the importance for adults to have access to non-accredited and non-vocational learning opportunities. Gordon’s emphasis is on the role played by voluntary groups in making available such opportunities. As part of his PhD he is addressing the educational role of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation’s Division of Forest Products, in the period 1926 to 1971.

Prof Chris Duke graduated as a major scholar with first class honours in history at Jesus College Cambridge in 1960. He became involved in British extramural adult education (UAE) in 1966, leaving Woolwich Polytechnic to join the Adult Education and Extramural Studies Department of the University of Leeds as a sociologist with a
doctorate in history from King’s London. From Leeds he migrated to Australia to found, and for 16 years direct, the ANU Centre for Continuing Education. He returned to become foundation Professor and Head of Continuing Education at Warwick 1985-96, a new ‘Responsible Body’ in the old UK system, and for four years Pro-Vice-Chancellor. He again left the UK system, returning to Australia as President of UWS Nepean before returning to UAE first in Auckland and then, as ‘community partnerships’, at RMIT in Melbourne. In 2002-05 he was also Director, Higher Education, for NIACE in Leicester, re-engaging with the English extramural world from a broader adult education base.

Dr Peter Cunningham is Bye-Fellow of Homerton College, Cambridge and Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Education, University of London. An historian and educationist, he lectured at Westminster College, Oxford, and in the Faculty of Education at Cambridge. He has published books and articles on the social and cultural history of education with particular interests in school curricula and pedagogies, teachers and their professional identities, higher education and educational policy development. He has researched and written on educational innovators and progressives, and is a contributor to the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. He has been active nationally and internationally in organisations for the study of educational history and on the editorial boards of learned journals. Forthcoming books include: Politics and the Primary Teacher (2010).

Prof Richard Taylor is a Professorial Fellow of Wolfson College, and former Director of the Institute of Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning at the University of Cambridge. He was previously Professor of Continuing Education at the University of Leeds and has been Secretary of the Universities Association for Continuing Education (UACE), Chair of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Workers’ Educational Association (WEA). He studied philosophy, politics and economics (PPE) at Oxford followed by doctoral research on the history and politics of the British Peace Movement in the 1950s and 1960s. His research and publications on adult education and higher education include ‘Lifelong learning and the Labour governments, 1997-2004’ in Education and the Labour Government: An Evaluation of Two Terms, ed. G. Walford, (2006), For a Radical Higher Education: After Postmodernism with Jean Barr and Tom Steele (2002), and Lifelong Learning and the University: A Post-Dearing Agenda with David Watson (1998).

Dr Susan Oosthuizen is University Senior Lecturer for Landscape History and Field Archaeology at the University of Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education, and a Fellow of Wolfson College, Cambridge. She is Vice-Chair of the Universities Association for Lifelong Learning (UALL), a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London, a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, and a member of the Editorial Board of Studies in the Education of Adults. She directed the Community Education and Outreach Division at the Institute between 2005 and 2008, has undertaken numerous externally-funded outreach projects with adult learners in higher education, and received a National Award for History Teaching in Higher Education in 2003. Her major publications are in landscape history, including: An atlas of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire history with Tony Kirby (2000) and Landscapes decoded: the origins and development of Cambridgeshire’s medieval fields (2006).