

Education for Justice¹

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It is an honor to be asked to speak to you during your *Transitions 2002* Workshop. My title, “Education for Justice,” may seem like bringing coals to Newcastle, since Jesuit higher education has long been committed to education for justice. Still, I think it worthwhile taking up this subject once again, because education for justice is not something obvious in the context of American society or American higher education today. It is more intelligible in the context of Catholic higher education, with its obligation to understand and interpret a long tradition of Catholic social teaching, than it might be in other kinds of colleges and universities. But Catholic higher education in general and even Jesuit colleges and universities are not immune to the surrounding culture, so that the first answer to the question what is education for might well not be justice.

I want to take as my text for this morning a passage from Decree four of Jesuit General Congregation 32, the document that committed the Society of Jesus to the service of faith and the promotion of justice:

We should pursue and intensify the work of formation in every sphere of education. . . . We must help prepare both young people and adults to live and labor for others and with others to build a more just world. Especially we should help form our Christian students in such a way that animated by a mature faith and personally devoted to Jesus Christ, they can find Him in others and having recognized Him there, they will serve Him in their neighbor. In this way we shall contribute to the formation of those who by a kind of multiplier-effect will share in the process of educating the world itself. (paragraph 60/109)²

That is the meaning of education for justice that I will want to explicate this morning, but first I want to consider three other common answers to the question what is education for. I’m not saying that these three other answers are wrong and education for justice is the right answer. Actually I believe all the answers are right, and if they are seen as rightly ordered, they are complementary and not contradictory. But I’m afraid at

the moment these three answers seem more like “rival versions” to take a phrase from a recent book by Alasdair MacIntyre, than they do like complementary parts of a whole.

The traditional answer to the question what is education for, and one very much alive and well in Jesuit higher education, is that it is for the cultivation of the liberal arts; its purpose is the formation of cultured, educated individuals with the wisdom and judgment necessary for them to provide leadership to the larger society. While the liberal arts curriculum includes the sciences, natural and social, its core is the literary, philosophical, and theological traditions that have for well over two thousand years allowed our ancestors to make sense of their world and to act responsibly in it.

Although the liberal arts understanding of higher education has not disappeared, it has been under overt or covert attack for over a century as the answer to the question what is education for, and the second and third answers have been offered as substitutes for it. Since the rise of the research universities at the end of the nineteenth century, the purpose of higher education has been seen as the disciplined search for new knowledge, in a broad sense of the term, science, and not the transmission and interpretation of tradition central to classical liberal arts education. It is worth remembering that early modern natural science was pursued largely outside the universities, and that it was only late in the nineteenth century that science began to be central in higher education. But the idea of the disciplined pursuit of new knowledge spread from the natural sciences to the other disciplines, even the humanities, as the central concern of higher education. It is interesting how this idea has been transmitted to students. I recently heard a professor of religious studies say that when he asked a variety of college students what is higher education for he got a remarkably uniform answer: it is to learn critical thinking. It is the ideal of natural science, based on universal doubt and the criticism of all received opinions that is being transmitted to students. The actual practice of “ordinary science,” as Thomas Kuhn taught us, is something rather different: filling in the gaps of received research traditions, something that goes on indefinitely until the next paradigm revolution

occurs. But the idea of higher education as critical thinking or, simply, criticism, is widespread among students and faculty today.

The third answer to what is education for is rather simple and probably dominant today: the purpose of higher education is job preparation, or more specifically, preparation to get a *good* job. It is not surprising that this answer makes sense for college-age young people in a society where all institutions are oriented to the bottom line and they are encouraged to look out for themselves as their main task in life. So it is natural that they think a lot about the jobs they are preparing for, especially the kind of jobs that will produce the income to make possible a good style of life. If a smattering of liberal arts and some capacity for critical thinking can be picked up along the way, then that is all to the good, but those are frills if the main purpose is job preparation. My coauthor Ann Swidler in a recent paper suggests the educational cost that is often paid by too exclusive a concern for the utilitarian benefits of higher education. She describes it as disinvestment in anything that doesn't have fairly immediate payoff:

There is also disinvestment as parents decide that college-age children should work to pay most of their expenses. I regularly teach college students who work 20 or 30 hours a week. Some can't afford to be full-time students, but others work because neither they nor their families think of their education as an endowment worth enormous collective sacrifice. Students take pride in having supported themselves through college, without realizing that while their efforts speak well for their character, energy, and efficiency, they have foregone the enduring benefits of a rich, full education and the self-development it permits. Many come to think of their education in purely instrumental terms, just like their work lives—an accumulation of credits toward a degree that will help them in the labor market. The idea that the college years allow time for the development of deeper understanding of history, cultures, and societies outside one's own, a deepened appreciation of one's own history and traditions, and reflection on the purpose and meaning of one's life in society—for appropriation of the enormous cultural endowment that is our birthright, won through generations of those who came before us—this conception of education is all but lost.

Here Ann is clearly lamenting the loss of the liberal arts understanding of higher education and its replacement by a utilitarian understanding, or, to take a broader view, a practical understanding of higher education.

Now where does justice as an answer to the question what is education for fit in to this threefold set of answers? I think we would have to say that justice fits in the third category, properly understood, that is justice is a practical answer, though not in the narrow sense of utilitarian job preparation. Justice is part of our practical participation in the world as citizens, but also very much in the occupational and professional fields as well. As I said at the beginning, I am not arguing that any of these three answers is wrong except when it becomes exclusive or severely downplays the other two. Much as I decry the invasion of the money world into higher education, I know that preparation for participation in the world of work has always been and still is a legitimate concern for higher education, especially when it grows organically out of liberal arts education and the capacity for critical thinking.

To help us understand why justice is central in a broad understanding of education as job preparation let me give you, borrowing from my colleague, William Sullivan, whose work I will be drawing from throughout this talk, a couple of conspicuous examples of engaged professionalism. Take the case of a giant pharmaceutical company whose profits derive in large part from the efficient production and sales of large quantities of a widely prescribed antibiotic drug. Because of the magnitude of the consequences, including not only deaths but lots of bad publicity and large legal costs, potentially defective or contaminated production of its drugs is not something the company can take lightly.

A few years ago, the engineers responsible for the drug's production reported to their superiors that there was a small, but statistically real possibility that some part of a major run of the drug might be contaminated. The company quickly convened a high-level meeting of managers, including the head of engineering for the drug, as well as the physician who served as medical director, and the firm's chief legal counsel. As the facts became clear, the marketing and finance managers began to argue that so small a likelihood of adverse consequences had to be weighed against the effects on the bottom line of canceling a 12 million dollar production run. The engineers, for their part, pointed

out that absolutely pure production was, after all, a statistical definition. The chief legal counsel fended off the issue by declaring it “medicine’s call.”

The attention, and the pressure, then focused on the medical director. Almost as instinct, he reported, he decided that he had to invoke the classic medical norm: Do no harm. Taking a deep breath, the physician went on record as vetoing release of this batch of the drug, costing the company 12 million dollars. Subsequently, contamination was discovered in some of the batch of the drug, so that the company’s higher management later upheld the doctor’s judgment. In order to understand the doctor’s decision, and why it was, as he said, “almost as instinct,” we have to assume that it did not come simply from his having taken a course in medical ethics in medical school, or that he consulted a handbook of decision making prepared by a philosophical ethicist. Rather it was his character, formed in family, church and college, as well as in medical school, that he was drawing on, a character that had internalized the virtues, and, in particular, the virtue of justice.

A second example: In the aftermath of the World Trade Center disaster of September 11, 2001, perhaps no one experienced the tragedy more intimately than one of the building’s designers, the structural engineer Leslie E. Robertson. A former principal in the engineering firm that had partnered with the architects of the Twin Towers in the 1960s, Robertson described his situation this way: “The World Trade Center was a team effort, but the collapse of the World Trade Center is my responsibility, and that’s the way I feel about it.” Structural engineers work with architects to enable complex buildings to stand and function. They also work with both architects and firefighters to define and implement standards for public safety in buildings. In the case of the World Trade Center, the design had represented a relatively untested novelty in the 1960s. The buildings consisted of an outer steel tube linked to an inner core that carried the building’s functional infrastructure by lightweight floor trusses. The novelty of no interior bearing walls was made possible by the progress in materials engineering that followed World War Two. Inside, the WTC towers contained vast, completely open

office spaces on every floor. In the attacks, it was just those open floors, and the use of lightweight fire-retardant covering on the trusses instead of heavier concrete, that permitted the rapid spread of the fire. (Famously, Robertson had taken into account a Boeing 707's probable impact on the structure. But, of course, the huge heat of the fire produced by the explosion of a much bigger plane was beyond those calculations.) "Remember," Robertson pointed out, "this wasn't a corporate headquarters—a monument building. It was a profit-making proposition."

The predicament for structural engineers such as Robertson is that in planning and design, as well as in the setting of minimal safety standards, the participants all work within "an economy of wealth, image, and fame" that strains against the engineer's commitment to safe structures. In fact, though, "A lot of things worked well—people got out," continued Robertson. "I guess I'm proud of that." At the same time, the dimensions of the tragedy have continued to haunt him. "It's a tremendous responsibility, being an engineer. It's not so beautiful as science. I have a lot of tough nights... I go to sleep for a little bit, but I wake up thinking—I have so many thoughts." What bothers this engineer, in spite of the fact that the buildings stood long enough for the great majority of the occupants to escape, are the questions, did I act rightly, did I act justly, in designing the building?

Sullivan argues that the kind of engagement shown by these two professionals exhibit what can be called "civic professionalism." This is the practice of a profession in which technical expertise and judgment are deployed not only resourcefully but for public-regarding ends and in a public-regarding way. Thus beyond expertise, and certainly beyond the question of profit, the professional must ask, Is this right? Is this just? Unfortunately, too often professionals don't ask those questions—one thinks of those responsible for the design of the Ford Pinto, or recently, the executives at Enron or Arthur Anderson. But it is the responsibility of higher education, as it prepares people to enter the occupational world, to try to make sure that they always do ask those questions, that they never let the bottom line determine all the decisions. Our common life, our

common safety, depends on that kind of job preparation, which is indeed academic, but about which we can never say it is “just academic.”

As I have already implied, I don’t want to use these examples as an argument for adding ethics courses in professional education or even in undergraduate education, as though ethics is some kind of technical fix that we can just add on to the existing “education industry.” A deep concern for justice as part of one’s character is not an add-on that can be attained from a one-shot course in ethics. Rather it is a matter of what has traditionally been called formation. In the Catholic tradition formation has been used particularly for the process of entering the religious life, becoming a priest or a nun, but it really applies more generally to all of us as we learn what it is to become a responsible adult.

William Sullivan, in his work as director of the professional education project of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, has discovered that in theological education the question of “formation” has become increasingly salient. The need for such a term arose from changing demographics among aspirants to the ministry, priesthood, and rabbinate. Traditionally, candidates for the clergy came from families with long experience in the religious tradition for which the candidate was being trained. Such candidates possessed what is sometimes termed “tacit knowledge” or experiential knowledge of the particular religious tradition. In recent decades, however, increasing numbers of men and women are coming to seminaries with much less informal exposure to traditional religious practice. They lack long familiarity with the mores and sensibility of the community that they are being prepared to lead. Or, to put it differently, they have not been “formed” by life experience so that they can feel the community’s tradition as “second nature.” To address this perceived lack of intuitive engagement, some denominations have developed, as part of professional preparation, self-conscious pedagogies of immersion in the community’s ethos and ways. The aim of such efforts is to shape or form, consciously, a deep engagement with the central practices and meanings thought to be necessary for anyone aspiring to religious leadership in that

community. Without such deep, intuitive understanding, it is thought, clergy are not able to function effectively.

I want to argue that if this is a problem for theological education, it is also a problem for college education. We can no longer, if we ever could, assume very much about the formation our students have received before they come to us. Neither the family nor primary and secondary education seems to be doing a very good job these days in this regard. I remember some years ago a sociologist at the College of Notre Dame on the peninsula consulted me about a study she was doing of family traditions of Catholic spirituality. In her interviews with practicing Catholics in good standing in their parishes she asked about their family traditions and was told almost uniformly, “We don’t have any traditions, sister, but we’d love it if you’d teach us some.” Bill Sullivan, who taught for some years at LaSalle University in Philadelphia before going to the Carnegie Foundation, told me how frustrating it was in teaching courses on Augustine and Thomas to find that his students, most of whom had had parochial school education and had gone to mass most of their lives, knew virtually nothing about the Christian tradition, not even the Bible, that they had presumably heard read every week of their lives. Just in one ear and out the other, or perhaps television had usurped the space where religious formation might have occurred. But I’m afraid these specifically Catholic examples are only the tip of the iceberg. Those of us who have taught at a secular institution such as the University of California at Berkeley have found a remarkable lack of what social scientists call “cultural capital” in the students coming to us from secondary school. And it’s not only in class that we find formation lacking. The ballooning of student services budgets in recent years is due to the fact that students bring behavior difficulties with them to college that have not been resolved in their earlier years.

What I am suggesting is that whether we like it or not, or even whether we understand it or not, formation is more than ever a central aspect of college education today. And if we consider where formation might occur, while for Catholic students in a

Catholic college a program in Catholic Studies might make sense, more generally it must be through the liberal arts curriculum that formation takes place.

Indeed at the core of liberal education, as Sullivan has pointed out, is what the classical Greeks called *paideia*, the same word they used for what we call “culture.” When Cicero translated that term into Latin, he coined the word *humanitas*. The Latin word conveys something of the existential flavor of the Greek original. This kind of education is above all a kind of shaping of the person. Knowledge is a result of “reason,” understood as insight into the structure of reality, and the cosmos is understood as a meaningful order of value. Thus, education is a kind of reflexive training of insight, allowing the student to gradually grasp—and imitate—the order of the whole. Historically, this was the animating ideal of education and knowledge embedded in the Classical heritage. Appropriated, with modifications, by historic Christianity, it received its American institutional form in the liberal arts curriculum taught in the liberal arts college.

I think one of the great advantages that Jesuit institutions have is that this understanding of liberal arts education still makes (some kind of?) sense to you. In secular and particularly in public universities this whole idea has come under increasing attack. First of all there is the attack on the very idea of a canon, without which liberal arts education makes no sense at all, but the questions, whose canon? who decides the canon? why isn't the canon more inclusive? etc., are serious questions and must be answered. Canons have always changed and obviously must continue to do so, but throwing out the idea of a canon altogether is simply a total abdication of responsibility; it would be the end of liberal arts education.

The second attack on the liberal arts idea overlaps with the first, though its roots are deeper than political correctness. This is the objection that we now know so much that we could never teach it all, so we shouldn't even try to teach substance, but only methods. While it is true enough that we now have the canons of all the great traditions

available to us and the problem of selection is prodigious, I believe that the real basis for this argument comes from the second understanding of higher education that I discussed at the beginning of this talk, that is the basis of higher education not in the liberal arts but in science, and the emphasis above all is on “critical thinking.” I might take as an example my own alma mater, Harvard College. As an undergraduate I had the benefit of the general education program that was put in effect in the immediate years after World War II, an effort to include liberal arts education in a great research university. But thirty years later the general education curriculum no longer made sense to the Harvard faculty and was replaced by what was called the core curriculum (like the general education curriculum, widely imitated elsewhere). What the core curriculum did was to substitute method for substance. Thus when Martha Nussbaum, then teaching at Harvard, wanted to offer a course on the ethics of Plato and Aristotle in the humanities part of the core curriculum, the course was rejected. Martha was told that they didn’t want a course on Plato and Aristotle but a course on “moral reasoning,” so she resubmitted her course under the title “The Moral Reasoning of Plato and Aristotle” and it was accepted.

This second model for higher education, which the Harvard core curriculum was taking as normative, derives from the Enlightenment’s notion that genuine knowledge is *Wissenschaft* or “science.” In this view reason no longer means insight into a value-laden structure of nature. Instead, reason is identified with procedures for the testing—and correcting—of claims to truth. Hence, rational education is not about shaping the self in relation to the world. It consists in learning to test and criticize beliefs with the object of building up a body of well-established “facts” and principles or laws of how things work. In this view through the use of appropriate methods we accumulate valuable information. Such a scientific education shapes a detached, critical mind, not an engaged one. The scholar, in so far as he or she is a scholar, should be, to use Max Weber’s term, value neutral. If this kind of education does not grow organically out of a notion of liberal arts as formation, it also does not eventuate in ethical practice. About what is called “policy” science must remain agnostic. It supplies only information to those with the responsibility to “apply” it.

However inadequate I think this second model of higher education as science is, I don't in the least want to deny its achievements, or its educational value. Indeed freeing science from the embrace of metaphysics and theology was a necessary precondition for its healthy development. Approaching nature with objectivity and distance has proved enormously fruitful in the production of accurate information. It has also provided new powers to control and transform the natural processes understood in this way, as the achievements of modern technology powerfully demonstrate. The neat, bounded quality of the observer's stance is one of the charms of scientific theory. The pursuit of science provides a sense of security, so welcome compared to the uncertainty and anxiety of decision that pervades the realm of practice. To a greater or lesser degree the disciplined knowing that is characteristic of science dominates the disciplines that make up the university curriculum, and it is part of our responsibility as scholars to communicate that to our students.

But in the broader perspective of liberal arts education, it is important to remember that science can produce information but not meaning. What characterizes the humanities, however, in at least partial contrast to the natural and social sciences, is the centrality of issues of meaning. In the humanities too, we need "knowledge about" but that is always secondary to "the meaning of." In his famous essay "Science as a Vocation" Max Weber wrote, "Who—aside from certain big children who are indeed found in the natural sciences—still believes that the findings of astronomy, biology, physics, or chemistry could teach us anything about the *meaning* of the world?" (p. 143) He goes on to quote Tolstoy approvingly when the latter said "Science is meaningless because it gives no answer to our question, the only question important for us: 'What shall we do and how shall we live?'" (p. 143) But these are just the questions that higher education as liberal arts must face. If, in our desire to avoid indoctrination, we deprive our students of the knowledge of how the great traditions have answered these questions we are surely short-changing them. We are giving them no help with the questions that precede and follow scientific inquiry. We are avoiding the question of why should I

study this in the first place, why should I study this instead of that? We are avoiding the question of what to do with scientific knowledge once it is attained. And above all we are giving them no help in trying to make sense of their lives.

In the face of this situation, Sullivan suggests an understanding of a modern version of higher education as involving a three-fold circuit. The starting point is the formation that begins in childhood and secondary education but continues more critically and reflexively in the humanities curriculum. Here formation means the understanding of self and world, of the meaning and value of society and nature, and of the kind of person who is courageous, moderate, just, wise and responsible, in a word, virtuous. The second movement of higher education is disciplinary and is concerned with methods, analysis, and criticism. The relation between the first and second movements should ideally be dialectical: formation does not, I hope, mean the creation of fundamentalists who know all the answers, but of persons with a sense of the meaning and value of life who are also open to criticism, even of their most basic beliefs, where new facts seem to demand it. Nor should we be producing scientists who are so wedded to positivistic methods that they can never ask the questions of the value relevance of their research.

The third movement in this three-fold circuit is, as I suggested at the beginning, practice, not in the utilitarian sense, but in the Aristotelian sense of practical reason, which involves ethics as much as expertise. In one sense practice is more the focus of professional education than of college education, but the third movement can't wait until professional school; it already begins in college. Service learning is one obvious example. Studies have shown that when service learning is done in a purely individual basis, an accumulation of volunteer hours to put on one's resume, it has little educational effect. But where service learning is integrated into actual course work, where it is done together with others, and, above all, where it takes place in a context of on-going reflection about the meaning and value of the work, it can have life-changing consequences. In terms of my argument, service learning as part of the three-fold circuit

of modern liberal arts education can be a powerful kind of teaching and a powerful expression of education for justice, but without that context it amounts to little.

There is a danger of thinking of the practical moment too narrowly in terms of something like service learning. That would approximate just the dichotomy between theory and application that I believe needs to be avoided. In humanities classes we are always confronting students with implications for their own lives. When I used to teach the sociology of religion, I used a comparative and historical framework in which I tried to explain the various traditions as their adherents understood them before analyzing them sociologically. One day after a class when I had tried to set forth the Confucian understanding of the world, with some passion, I admit, because I find it attractive, a student dropped a note on my desk as he was leaving class. When I opened and read it, it said, “Scratch one Presbyterian, add one Confucian.” I wasn’t trying to convert anyone. I was just doing what a teacher of Plato or Shakespeare would do—try to get the student to understand the material. How can we criticize what we don’t understand? But I was not sorry that this student “got it” that Confucianism is a serious existential position well worth considering in the framework of one’s own life.

In the social sciences, however much we claim value neutrality, most of us with any insight into what we are doing, know that we are seldom neutral. When we teach about poverty, or gender, or race do we not usually imply that the facts we have uncovered suggest all is not well, that things could be better than they are? And in the natural sciences I think things are not so different. One of our most influential living biologists, E. O. Wilson, has argued fervently for biodiversity and the ecological cause. It is hard for those who study gorillas or chimpanzees in the wild not to become active in the effort to preserve them. Atomic scientists have been famously concerned about the danger of atomic weapons, and so on down the line. In short, in every field in the college curriculum we would really have to work hard to avoid communicating to students that there are practical implications of what we are teaching, that questions of justice are

intrinsic to our subject matter. Of course we must avoid indoctrination, but raising questions that all of us as citizens must try to answer is part of our job.

To sum up the three-fold circuit that could characterize a modern liberal arts education we can think of it as characterized by three phases: the formative, the critical or scientific, and the performative. These are not just three “rival versions, “ or three kinds of enterprise going on side by side, though often they are viewed that way. It is the essence of thinking of higher education as practical reason in the Aristotelian sense that we see these as three mutually engaged phases. If, on the other hand, we remain fixated on one of the phases, various kinds of pathology ensue. If we think our obligation is exclusively to tradition, we lose the sense of a living tradition responding to the world and become traditionalists, devoted more to the defense of embalmed texts than to their possible current application. Or if we are devoted to the critical or scientific phase alone, we run the risk of cynicism on the one hand, or positivism on the other, as though “the facts” ever speak for themselves. To be fixated on the performative phase is to imagine that the moral issues are clear and our only obligation is to act, a position one might call romantic activism, one all too attractive, I’m afraid, to students in time of stress.

In remembering that the three phases should always go together, I think your Catholic tradition provides you with something that is largely lacking in the secular education dominated by positivism: namely, the practical syllogism. If the major premise is that human rights are to be respected and the minor premise is that in some situation human rights are being violated, then the logical conclusion is not just about knowledge but about action. What is the just thing to do about it? The practical syllogism doesn’t tell us what to do about the situation. For that we need all the wisdom and all the knowledge and all the judgment we can bring to bear on it. But the practical syllogism tells us we can’t just stand idly by. Often the reality is, we can’t do much; but the obligation to do what we can remains. It is here that we must bring our commitment to justice to bear.

In concluding let me suggest that there is a very big practical syllogism that faces all of us in American higher education: the syllogism of globalization, one that raises the problem of justice to the nth degree. We live in a world where globalization is going on relentlessly at many levels and in many ways and we Americans are at the center of it. One way of thinking about our present situation in which the United States is the cultural model, the economic dynamo, and the only military superpower, is that globalization is really a new kind of empire, foreshadowed only by the Rome of two millennia ago. Unlike recent world history, there is now only one empire, with the United States at its center, though there are still a few unruly barbarians on the peripheries, and the potential danger of what Arnold Toynbee called “the internal proletariat” within.

Following the Roman analogy, we can imagine several possibilities. A “civilizing mission” under leaders who might emulate the examples of Trajan, Hadrian, and Marcus Aurelius is conceivable and might even gain us some gratitude along with inevitable resentment. Those Christians who defend the empire today in the name of just war theory must hope for such leaders and must work for the reforms that would make them possible. If the task of reforming a nation is daunting, reforming an empire is doubly daunting. But if not us, who? The future of the world is much more in the hands of the United States (and to some extent Europe and East Asia) than in the hands of al-Qaida, or indeed the poorer nations of the earth. Some Christians whom I greatly respect follow Martin Luther King, Jr. in insisting on non-violence as the authentic Christian witness. Rather than reform the empire they believe it would be better to try to build an alternative city, within the very pores of empire. That is one answer to how to embody justice today.

Is there a third possibility, one that fuses reform with the alternative city? Could we renounce the blasphemous claim that we are the Kingdom of God on earth, that we alone have the knowledge of good and evil, that we (contrary to Matthew 25) will separate the sheep from the goats, that we, with advice from no one, will decide who belongs to the “axis of evil”? Could we, with all our imperial power, give up the idea of empire? *Imperare* means command. Could we give up command and instead work for a

network of treaties, agreements, even international police forces, so that no one commands and no one is left out? Instead of sabotaging every treaty—ABM Treaty, Kyoto Protocol, International Criminal Court, Land Mines Treaty, Small Arms Control Treaty, etc., etc., etc.—could we weave every treaty, until there is no empire, until the democracy which we claim to embrace really becomes the principle of international order—not the Hobbesian war of all against all, not the “I am the king of the mountain and you will do what I say”—but all of us bound by a thousand ties of interdependence with everyone on earth?

But to give it up? To desire not to command, but to devote ourselves not just to nation building, but to world building? To disappear into a global democracy where all are equal? To actualize what we once believed, that “All men are created equal”? Isn’t it too much to ask? What empire, even Rome or Britain at their finest, ever did that?

What my globalization syllogism is posing for you is the fact that, like it or not, we are educating the citizens of the only empire there is, and that means asking the question of justice in such an empire. I don’t say Americans ever asked for this responsibility: unlike the Romans or the British who really wanted to build an empire, we became the greatest empire the world has ever known almost by default. That is one of our problems. How, in this deeply provincial nation, do we educate citizens responsible for the whole world? But if an effective liberal arts education cannot at least try to face the question of justice in a global empire, what good will it be?

¹ This paper draws heavily on the work of my colleague and former coauthor, William M. Sullivan, who is currently directing a study of professional education at the Carnegie foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

² I am indebted to Si Hendry, S.J., for this reference. This passage is beautifully explicated in “Commitment to Justice in Jesuit Higher Education,” a talk by Rev. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., Superior General of the Society of Jesus, delivered at Santa Clara University on October 6, 2000. It is further developed by several articles in the Spring 2001 issue of *Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education*, a copy of which was kindly sent to me by Joseph Palacios, S.J.