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A PROPOSAL: THE HUMANITIES AND PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES

Following Jonathan Smith's presentation on "changes in higher education" and my own exploratory piece discussed October 12, I have been giving more thought to what we might do next in the area of "the humanities and public policy." It is clear that this is an interest of keen current interest. It is also one in which the Center has invested considerable and sustained attention across the years. With these resources, it is possible to cultivate a unique approach to the subject. We do not come as legislators or decision makers, first of all, or even as those who are content to chronicle the flow of abstract ideas. Instead, through the years, the Center is recognized to stand for a more sophisticated and delicate nuancing of theoretical and practical components. I elaborated on the uniqueness of this approach in my paper when proposing that "application" is not the appropriate way of connecting the humanities with public policy issues. I suggested that the two components belong together intrinsically, and the task is to discern their multiple interdependencies.

With respect to an ongoing program on the subject, I can foresee something like the following. First, I think it would be appropriate to schedule a series of "dialogue sessions" over the next year or longer — the exact span of time to be determined by the way we want the energy to be paced and the depth at which we choose to probe. Each of these sessions would focus on a particular aspect of the subject. In conjunction with the series, it would be good to have a conference or two, one at the mid-way point and another as culmination. We can utilize the products of the series as materials for THE CENTER MAGAZINE, and we can contemplate publishing the edited proceedings in a single volume.

I would want my colleagues at the Center to decide if they want UCSB involvement in the project, and, if so, to what extent. In my own scenario,

I can see our requesting the participation of selected faculty members at strategic points. This, I am certain, we will want to do. But the campus also provides the facility to hold "public meetings" on the subject. This may argue for a composite approach: dialogue sessions (with one or two conferences) at the Center and a series of public lectures (perhaps followed by discussion of a "public forum" variety) on the campus. The persons we would invite to give papers at the Center could also be asked to give lectures at the campus.

Here I have simply projected a series of meetings on a number of topics that seem appropriate. The sequence itself is not important, though my listing is calculated to demonstrate that the series is already underway. The persons I have listed as presentors are, in some instances, more archetypal than actual: in these instances I have simply indicated the sort of resource person I have in mind, recognizing that specific identification will require further probing.

- I. Humanities and Public Policy: Can there be a fresh Approach?
(Center Dialogue, October 12)
- II. Innovations in Higher Education
(Jonathan Z. Smith, Dean of the College, University of Chicago, Center Dialogue, October 25)
- III. Current Trends in the Humanities, Part One*
(Joel Colton or Lydia Bronte, Director and Associate Director of Humanities, The Rockefeller Foundation, New York)
- IV. Current Trends in the Humanities, Part Two*
(Harold Cannon, Director of the Research Division, National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C.)

* The first meeting would involve an approach to the subject from the perspective of those working within the private foundation, the second, from the perspective of a federal agency.

- V. **The Humanities and the Sciences: Science Viewing the Humanities****
 (Donald Ploch, formerly with National Science Foundation, or Dr. Blanpied, currently with NSF division on "Science, Technology, and Human Values")
- VI. **The Humanities and the Sciences: Humanities Viewing the Sciences****
 (Huston Smith, formerly of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, now at Syracuse University, a humanist of the E. F. Schumacher A Guide for the Perplexed variety)

** This subject might be more effectively pursued through a conference than in dialogue sessions.

- VII. **The Learning Climate on Campus**
 (J. Edward Dirks, Vice Chancellor for Humanities, University of California, Santa Cruz, and former officer of the Danforth Foundation, St. Louis)
- VIII. **The Plight of the Private Liberal Arts College**
 (Sr. Helen Kelley, I.H.M., former President, Immaculate Heart College, Los Angeles; Note: Immaculate Heart College made the shift to a broadly-based community orientation)
- IX. **The Humanities and Cultural Criticism**
 (Steven Marcus, Department of English, Columbia University, and Director, National Humanities Center)
- X. **The Humanities and Philosophy of Science**
 (Stephen Toulmin, University of Chicago -- may be interchangeable with or complementary to item "V" above)
- XI. **The Humanities and Political Economy**
- XII. **The Humanities and Psychoanalysis**
 (Herbert Fingarette, Department of Philosophy, UCSB, or Ursula Malhendorf, German Language and Literature, UCSB, or Norman O. Brown, Classics, University of California, Santa Cruz)
- XIII. **The Humanities and Social Processes**
 (Victor Turner, University of Virginia, and author of recent Daedalus article on "Process, System, and Symbol: A New Anthropological Synthesis")
- XIV. **The Humanities and Ecological Sensitivity**
 (Daniel Peck, Department of English, UCSB, author of A World by Itself: The Pastoral Moment in Cooper's Fiction)

- XV. The Humanities and the City
(Art Seidenbaum, Columnist, The Los Angeles Times, a frequent writer on this subject)
- XVI. The Humanities and the City
(Mircea Eliade, University of Chicago, Center Associate)
- XVII. The Cultural Role of the Artist
(E. Gombrich, former Director, The Warburg Institute, London, and occasional visitor to the U.S.A.)
- XVIII. Toward an Science of Anticipatory Design
(someone from the School of Design, UC Berkeley)
- XIX. The Humanities and Planning
- XX. The Humanities and Public Policy
(conference on proceedings and results of the project, chaired by Bruce Sievers, California Council on the Humanities in Public Policy, San Francisco)

It is a possible scenario, though the schedule will be influenced by the availability of participants. I would also welcome suggestions from others.

With regard to funding, I would expect that the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Rockefeller Foundation would be the most appropriate supporting agencies. But we need to work this aspect separately, for it involves some decisions regarding University of California involvement, the matching-funds quotient, and other program and fiscal matters.

I want herein simply to demonstrate that we do indeed have a lively topic. I hope these suggestions will help carry it to the next stage of program development.

Walter H. Capps