Introduction

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In 1899 Thorstein Veblen wrote:

> Institutions are products of the past process, are adapted to past circumstance, and are therefore never in full accord with the requirements of the present. . . . The readjustment of institutions and habitual views to an altered environment is made in response to pressure from without. . . If any portion or class of society is sheltered from the action of the environment in any essential respect, that portion of the community, or that class, will adapt its views and its scheme of life more tardily to the altered general situation; it will in so far tend to retard the process of social transformation. (Veblen, 1918, p. 191–93)

Veblen was one of America's most insightful social critics, but his recommendations for social change are often seen as elitist and unrealistic. Veblen's contemporary, John Dewey, was an equally profound critic, but his recommendations for institutional and social change have better stood the test of time.

John Dewey described one institution—education—as "the growing edge of culture." Education is the institution and process through which society organizes itself to shape the future. This is true at all levels, from nursery school through graduate school. And it is at that growing edge of culture that the most significant controversies occur. Indeed, if education is not controversial, it is not fulfilling its function. If education is not disputed territory, it is not dealing with those issues about which people feel most deeply.

In the last decade the wisdom of Veblen's insights has been confirmed by the experience of those working in professional education. We struggle in a number of arenas to keep up with the needs of our rapidly changing environment. We are charged with—among other sins of omission—failing to prepare individuals to make sound ethical judgments in the confusing, complex world of work in the United States. The results of this failure are evident daily in business, government, and other settings. Abuses of knowledge in the business world create huge fortunes for the few and increasing poverty for the

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many. In government we see repeated scandals, further signs of weak moral judgment.

Practitioners report that their professional education programs do not prepare them to deal with the profound moral conflicts and developmental challenges of their working lives. They experience tensions between personal and professional values, organizational mores and individual commitments, and bureaucratic expectations and their own standards, and they feel ill-prepared to work productively amidst these dilemmas.

Conservatives and liberals agree that we have focused too exclusively on narrow technical competence and have failed to teach students how to deal with the complexities and ambiguities of late twentieth-century American life. Robert Bellah writes:

> There is a profound gap in our culture between technical reason, the knowledge with which we design computers or analyze the structure of DNA, and the practical or moral reason, the ways we understand how we should live. We often hear that only technical reason can really be taught, and our educational commitments from primary school to university seem to embody that belief. But technical reason alone is insufficient to manage our social difficulties or make sense of our lives. (Bellah et al., 1991, p. 429).

The 1980s and 1990s in America have seen an unusual amount of argument over education at all levels. The conservative hegemony in politics was accompanied by efforts to effect what Ira Shor calls "the conservative restoration" in education (Shor, p. 111). Conservative politicians, experiencing success in the political arena, attempted to institutionalize that success through the judicial system, in the broad social realm, and in education. They had substantial success in the federal courts, where the appointive power of the president encountered much protest, but few effective limits. They had somewhat less success in the social domain, where Congress and state governments held back some of the conservative tide. And, in spite of massive rhetorical assaults, they had even less impact on education, where the organized opposition, as well as the institutional inertia that Veblen described, provided effective resistance to the most reactionary efforts of the conservative movement.

The effort to impose conservative values on schools and colleges has been widely publicized and can only be summarized here. Beginning with *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 and continuing through a series of conservative articles, reports, and books by such writers as William Bennett (1984), Allen Bloom (1987), and Dinesh d'Souza (1991), there has been an outpouring of attacks on education. While their targets

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and their anger vary, these authors have generally asserted that American society is failing economically, politically, socially, and spiritually, and that to return to a better America we must restore "traditional" educational values and practices.

Specifically, these books and authors have called for "back to the basics" in content and methods and for abandoning government meddling in the form of affirmative action, bilingual education, compensatory education, gender studies, and multicultural education. They stridently call for giving families educational "choice" (among public, private, and religious schools), assuming that market forces will create positive educational competition. For these writers, the world and education were better places when there was a consensus on a canon of a predominantly traditional, patriarchal, Western curriculum. Even lifetime liberals like Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. support parts of this traditional message (Schlesinger, Jr., 1992).

Educational institutions are porous; controversies at any level tend to seep upward and downward to other tiers and to change as they move. As these dialogues penetrate into the arena of professional education the question becomes: to what degree should this education be plain-and-simple task- training and to what degree should it continue and extend the liberal education that has supposedly permeated earlier education in schools and colleges? Meetings and journals of professional educators are replete with arguments, manifestos, and proposals on all sides of this critical issue (Mann, 1988).

In this book—which is intended primarily for teachers of adults—we present dialogues and case studies on this topic. Lewis & Clark College faces these issues as they are formulated in the setting of small liberal arts colleges. A bit of history here may help readers see the applicability of our experience to their own thinking, planning, and teaching. In 1985 (just as the current educational debate was catching fire), Lewis & Clark, Oregon's largest private college, integrated several professional preparation programs into a graduate school of professional studies. The act of creating such a school thrust our faculty into the midst of the liberal/technical debate.

Our programs in teacher education, educational administration, special education, public administration, and counseling psychology had previously focused primarily on technical training for specific professional roles. We recognized, however, the urgent need for education to assist professionals to deal with issues that transcend their specialties. Professionals continue to mature and develop personally throughout their careers and work in organizations and environments that pose important sociocultural concerns and dilem-

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mas. The question of how individuals might thrive and continue to develop within organizational contexts receives little attention in most professional education programs. Yet how people respond to these challenges profoundly affects their work in public service.

Integrating our programs caused the faculty to ask what might hold them together. What do these professions have in common? All are primarily public service occupations, and those who work in them face issues of ethical practice, of bureaucracy, of personal development, and of the place of the professions in the larger social order.

Our faculty made a conscious decision to extend liberal education processes into professional education—although we drastically revised the content of that education. While students in our programs have had sound undergraduate liberal arts preparation, they have not had the opportunity to face "liberal" issues in the context of professional education and practice. The faculty insisted that effective teachers, counselors, and administrators must be responsive to pressing problems: the power and purpose of high technology, emerging issues of gender, and the challenges of working in diverse cultural and international communities.

We designed a series of seminars and classes that require students to consider deep personal, ethical, intellectual, and social dilemmas as they manifest themselves in professional work. And, since all our students are in public service occupations with some similar problems, we require students to undertake these "core" studies together, while taking most of their professional courses within their separate programs. Thus people working at different levels and in varied jobs in public service share their perspectives with a range of colleagues.

We invite students to join a learning community in which we confront fundamental questions that are at the core of a liberal arts approach to professional education: "What *should* I do with my life?" "What *can* I do with my life?" "What kind of society do I wish to live in?" These questions turn into particular commitments that we make as we design and teach our classes. Our curriculum must help students deal with the conflicting moral claims that they encounter in their personal and professional lives, prepare them to deal with the ethical ambiguities involved in their choices, assist them to live with the uncertainties that surround their decision making, and encourage the deep and continuous self-criticism that enables professionals to adapt to changing circumstances. (See Morgan, chapter 1, for elaboration on these questions and commitments.)

We recognized also that we needed a broader epistemology and methodology that reflected inherent tensions between professional

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knowledge and the contexts—psychological, social, cultural—in which it is applied. We tried to realize collaborative possibilities among faculty by requiring that core classes be team taught and that the pedagogy support multiple forms of inquiry, ways of knowing, and knowledge creation among students and teachers. We work continuously to challenge the traditional classroom pattern through which future professionals are usually inducted and in which teachers are authoritative transmitters of knowledge. We maintain that learning is a process of co-construction, which emerges out of dialogue between teacher and student and student and student. We recognize the contribution of adult learners to their own reflective inquiry and to the creation of a community of learners.

We made another equally significant decision: to resist conservative calls for an orthodox definition of this continued liberal education. We rejected appeals to narrow the liberal curriculum, and we designed programs with firm commitments to gender studies, to multicultural and global education, and to straightforward attention to ethical and political issues. This did not mean that we agreed on a party line to be imposed on students—although as we will note later, some perceived parts of our curriculum that way. It did mean that we required new and experienced professionals to confront major social issues in the context of their professional work. For example, how do all of us handle our own inclinations to stereotype, to classify and sort our clients by race, gender, sexual identity, and social class? How can we overcome these habits so that we can serve our clients and society in ways that honor diversity and promote equity?

Without making a conscious decision to do so, our own planning and the responses of our students led us to "teach the conflicts," as Gerald Graff proposes (1992). Our students are sufficiently perceptive and confident to resist efforts to mold them according to some liberal/professional ideology. The honest and effective way to help them deal with these issues is to provide them with materials and activities that immerse them emotionally and intellectually in major social, political, and educational controversies, and this we try to do.

How do we achieve this when our faculty members have their own generally liberal-to-radical political and social commitments? Our teachers are personally and publicly committed to gender equity, to multicultural education, and to fair treatment for all persons in our society. We hope that our students have similar convictions, and most do, but they all face the challenge of expressing their commitments in complex, often conservative and patriarchal bureaucracies. Our decision, in effect, has been—as one instructor put it—to be "objective but not neutral." We can teach students representing a range of religious,

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social, and political backgrounds without demeaning them or their ideas. And we can help them move beyond the dichotomous thinking to which some are accustomed toward more complex and sophisticated analyses of important issues.

Anyone reading our course titles, descriptions, and bibliographies might understandably accuse us of the liberal sin of "political correctness" (PC). Our response to such charges must be mixed. If "political correctness" means that we are committed to principles of equity, diversity, and justice, we must plead guilty as charged. If, however, PC connotes indoctrinating our students with our beliefs, we declare ourselves innocent in intention, if not always in action. Challenges by occasional students to our approach to controversial issues shows that we are sometimes perceived as "moving from preaching to meddling," as the old Southern saying goes. A recent seminar on demilitarizing the economy, for example, brought objections from some students that we presented a one-sided, antimilitary point of view. Our students occasionally pull us up short and make us reflect on our own commitments, those of the college of which we are a part, and of the professions within which we work.

While we struggle not to fall into a doctrinaire PC trap on the left, we have no trouble avoiding what Robert Hughes identifies as the other PC ("Patriotic Correctness") snare on the right (Hughes, p.28). The narrow, strident, dogmatic calls by Patrick Buchanan and others for reimposing a supposed earlier consensus in politics and education have little appeal or relevance for us or for our students. We believe that we must help our students and their clients to move toward a broader global patriotism that unites, rather than divides, the people of the world.

With Frederick Crews, we reject the "'transfusion' model of education, whereby the stored-up wisdom of the classics is considered a kind of plasma that will drip beneficially into our veins if we only stay sufficiently passive in its presence." We share his vision of learning as "keen debate, not reverence for great books; historical consciousness and self-reflection, not supposedly timeless values; and continual expansion of our national canon to match a necessarily unsettled sense of who 'we' are and what we ultimately care about" (quoted in Hughes, p. 109).

So our vision of education is not that of Bennett, Bloom, d'Souza and other conservatives. It is, rather, the broader, more humane, more liberal vision of people like Carol Gilligan, John Dewey, Nel Noddings, Robert Coles, Jerome Bruner, Michael Harrington, Robert Bellah, James Banks, and James Comer. Our vision is of a society and of

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institutions that celebrate diversity, promote equity, acknowledge the contributions of all groups, and broaden conceptions of human growth and development. Education is inevitably political; any educational decision explicitly or implicitly promotes a political agenda, and ours can be no different. We have chosen in our small way, to help our students become part of Dewey's "growing edge of culture."

These issues and commitments will become clearer, we hope, in the chapters that follow. We will describe and interpret our own work in professional education, but we think that our setting and our experiences are typical enough so that others can find in our experiences ideas, support, encouragement, and perhaps even some measure of inspiration. We can resist the calls of those who would drag us back to a more elitist and less equal world; we can, instead, move humanely and realistically toward a liberal and professional education worthy of our heritage.

A Description of the Core Program

This book grew out of the experiences of a graduate faculty working to develop and implement a core program. This is a multidisciplinary liberal arts curriculum that challenges adult students and practicing professionals to confront and engage with issues and concerns of their specialties from individual, professional, and societal perspectives.

Our graduate programs require students to design and complete a selection of core courses and critical issues seminars. The seminars are organized around annual themes that address current sociocultural issues faced by professionals in the broader community. Students, practitioners, community members, and international, national, and regional experts spend one to two days exploring issues through presentations, exercises, small-group discussions, and faculty-guided projects. These seminars confront current questions from multiple perspectives and act as learning laboratories for participants. Seminar themes have included: Multicultural Perspectives on the Re-making of America; Global and Cultural Diversity; Societies and Cultures in Transformation; Advocating for Children; Giving Voice to Children's Needs; and Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Peace.

Within these themes, seminars have addressed such specific topics as Reassessing American Capitalism, Racism in America, American Attitudes Toward Immigration, Mutual Aid and Self-Help, Living and Working in Small Communities, Ethical Dilemmas of the

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Modern Professional, Caring as a Moral Dimension of the Professions, Comparable Worth as A Gender Issue in the Workplace, The Culture of the Deaf, Writing for Critical Inquiry in the Professions, and Balancing Work and Family Life.

Courses and seminars are team taught and interdisciplinary, drawing heavily on the humanities, arts, and social sciences, and emphasizing ethical, gender, cultural, and international perspectives. One central course, offered every term, is Adult Development and Organizational Life, which creates a context for examining intersecting issues of personal and professional life. Participants explore ideas about adult and organizational development by considering the interplay of cultural mores and the norms of their families, peers, and workplaces. This involves an examination of individual choices and commitments in the context of organizational life.

Faculty also develop innovative and experimental courses that integrate their own interests and expertise with the perceived needs of graduate students. Examples of such courses are Cross-cultural Perspectives on the Family; Cross-national Perspectives on Organizational Culture; Ecological Knowledge for Environmental Problem-solving; Gender and Education; Leadership and Collaboration; The Life-span—An Interdisciplinary Approach; Narrative and Voice: Themes of Gender and Culture; Professional Authority in Organizations—An International Perspective; Professional Ethics and Organizational Authority; Racism and the Law; Ways of Seeing, Ways of Knowing; and Women at Midlife.

The Organization of this Book

Three themes recur throughout this volume: first, that new and experienced professionals should confront issues of their specialties from individual, occupational, and social perspectives within interdisciplinary contexts; second, that students and faculty together must question traditional sources of knowledge so that question-posing, as well as answer-seeking, becomes part of our practice; and third, that there are unanticipated issues of faculty development and organizational culture that emerge during the implementation of programs like ours.

The nature of ethical and social issues depends on the history of the particular context and the ability of professionals to see anew—to be able to define the issue itself. This book explains how teachers and students in one program grapple with questions and dilemmas famil-

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iar to most members of higher education in western societies. The contributors offer analyses of the concerns that drove their thinking and practice as they developed a core curriculum in a professional development program. They provide descriptions of their experiences in designing educational activities that foster critical and self-reflective inquiry. The authors discuss the ways in which curriculum and pedagogy can expand ways of knowing, the structure of knowledge, and the practice of teaching and learning for professionals. Each author has participated as a teacher and learner in the graduate core program.

Our authors are generous in integrating student writing into their chapters. We take pride in the voices of our students, whose needs and interests are at the heart of the program. In several chapters their words and ideas exemplify the pivotal role that student thinking can have in professional education.

We have organized the book in three sections based on the contributors' approach to our central concerns: ethical and social issues in professional education. In Part I, "Challenges to Professional Education," Douglas Morgan and Celeste Brody explore the theoretical and practical concerns of faculty who are redefining their work as an expression of a liberal arts perspective for professional education. The authors examine the tensions between professionals' interest in self and career and their larger duty to serve the public and their communities. They invite the reader to consider the value of dialogue about questions of meaning and purpose that are at the very heart of a liberally educated professional.

Part II, "Thematic Responses to Ethical and Social Issues in Professional Education," includes chapters by Celeste Brody and Carol Witherell (with Ken Donald and Ruth Lundblad), Robert Klein, Joanne E. Cooper, Terrence Whaley, Zaher Wahab, Charles Ault, and Jack Corbett. Each of these authors examines possibilities for classroom dialogue and curriculum construction in professional education. These chapters include the voices of both teachers and students as they work with particular themes from various professional areas. They demonstrate how faculty in a graduate school, from different disciplines and orientations, can implement the goals of a professional liberal arts program.

Part III, "Reflections on a Graduate Core Program," examines what happens when a professional school faculty develops an issue-oriented curriculum. The writers give particular attention to the organizational considerations involved in creating interdisciplinary programs and suggest that the ideas we ask students to grapple with

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in relation to their own organizations apply equally to the assessment of our own faculty interaction. Writers reflect on their own teaching, learning, and administering in a liberal arts core program. Contributors are Mary Henning-Stout, James Wallace, Gordon Lindbloom, and Carolyn Bullard. Ken Kempner concludes with an outside observer's perspective on the applicability of this experience to other higher education organizations, and he challenges other institutions to examine themselves in similar ways.

John Dewey defined education as "that reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience and which increases the ability to direct the course of subsequent experience" (Dewey, 1916, p. 76). As Lawrence Cremin wrote in 1989, Dewey "lamented the conflict and confusion that characterized the world of learning, but he sought solutions not in what he saw as a retreat into traditionalism but rather in a radical reconstruction of liberal education that would unite it with vocational and professional education and render it burningly relevant to the flux of the present" (Cremin, 1989, p. 8). We hope that this book will help us and our readers to productively direct our future endeavors as we assist our students to integrate and enrich their professional lives. The ethical challenge facing those of us who educate professionals is to create organizational contexts that encourage us to reframe the questions we ask and answer with our students. Writing and editing this book has helped the editors and authors to add meaning to their own educational experiences. We invite our readers to join us in this important dialogue as we all work to make professional education more meaningful and more transformative.

For more information about the Lewis & Clark College graduate core program, contact: Coordinator, Graduate Core Program, Campus Box 93, Lewis & Clark College, Portland, Oregon, 97219. Phone: 503-768-7701; Fax: 503-768-7715.

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