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**“Fellows and Fellowships: Supporting Research
in the Humanities and Social Sciences”**

A German-American Dialogue on the Future of the University

**The Institute for German Cultural Studies, Cornell University
and**

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I want to begin by thanking Peter Hohendahl, Arnim Meyburg and Dominic Boyer for convening us today to discuss the German and American university systems at a crucial juncture for both. It's a special pleasure to be part of a transnational dialogue in which there is so much common ground. There are those who may think, of course, that the ground is higher in some places than others. When I told one of my colleagues about this conference, he remembered his German-American grandmother, who, while she spoke English perfectly well, always prayed in German. “English is very good for many things,” she admonished him, “but it is not a language in which to speak to God.” And even when speaking to mere mortals, translation is not always a straightforward process, even between two cognate languages like English and German. Some of you may have heard a story told by Hanna Holborn Gray, the former president of the University of Chicago, about the times when her father Hajo Holborn would gather with other academic refugees from Nazism to practice English in the family's living room. Hanna recalled their coming to the New Testament verse, Matthew 26:41, which reads in German “Der Geist is bereit, aber das Fleisch ist schwach” (“The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak”). In their version, however, it became “The ghost is lively, but the meat is tired.” With your spirit and flesh both willing, I am sure we will have better luck this weekend translating our academic systems.

My charge this morning is to discuss the American system of support for research in the humanities and related social sciences, with special emphasis on the role of organizations such as my own, the American Council of Learned Societies. We are a nonprofit NGO whose mission is the advancement of humanistic studies in all fields of learning in the humanities and social sciences and the maintenance and strengthening of relations among the national societies—which now number 68—devoted to such studies. I will try to do so, but I want to enlarge my frame of reference. Our role is itself shaped by the dynamics that define the American system of higher education. While those dynamics have empowered and uplifted American higher education over the past 150 years, I will voice some concern that at this moment they both pose and face some very real challenges with which we must grapple. We must grapple with them precisely because the American system is held up as a model for much of the rest of the globe, especially the developing world.

Comparative higher education is a lively topic these days, with “convergence” of national structures and policies linked to processes of “globalization.” This convergence is not by any means accidental or spontaneous. Indeed, the World Bank, addressing the developing world, has prescribed the outline of an effective national university system in its 2000 report, *Peril and Promise*, which posits that the 21st century model of an effective national university system requires the following features:

- That it be a mixed system in which both public and private universities are financed by both public and private sources.
- That it be a stratified system in which the component universities have different purposes and, as a consequence, different levels of prestige.
- That universities have a culture and structure of shared governance in which the public authorities, the professoriate, and the university’s leaders and managers all have a role but none is all-powerful.
- That it be a system open to market influences, so that competition for students, faculty, outside support and prestige can engender an upward spiral of improvement and development.

This very quick summary does not do justice to the balanced and clear presentation of this thoughtful report, which, I must add, is emphatic that the humanities and the liberal arts must be a central component of higher education. But I wanted quickly to list these criteria not only because the report has become something of a charter for the Bank’s subsequent support for higher education, but also because the specified qualities describe the American university and—to greater or lesser degrees—the systems of other developed nations. This mirroring is not, of course, a coincidence, but it underlines our obligation to reflect on the trajectory of the western university, now the world model.

Another striking instance of educational convergence is, of course, the Bologna process, which now includes Russia and the nations of Eastern Europe in an effort to create one common higher education transnational system with compatible degree structures and student accrediting. Universities from Lisbon on the Atlantic to Vladivostok on the Pacific would form an interoperable network within which students and faculty could travel, study, teach, matriculate and graduate without regard for borders or local bureaucratic variations. A compelling vision, possibly, but I imagine that our German colleagues have opinions about the working reality of this project, and the degree to which conceptions—negative or positive—of American higher educational organization figure in this process.

The current global context, then, makes German-American dialogue on the university especially timely. Not only are our two national systems arguably the two most robust and influential structures of higher education, but their histories recall an earlier and well-known convergence, between the Anglophilic, church-based liberal arts college and the German research university in the middle to late nineteenth century. The proliferation of research seminars, the founding of learned societies, the advent of new scholarly journals, the creation of separate graduate schools, and—most of all—the spread of the Ph.D. were benchmarks of the convergence and of the influence of the German model.

Observing the resulting transformation of the American academy, George Santayana said that “[professors] are no longer the sort of persons that might have been clergymen or

schoolmasters; they have rather the type of mind of a doctor, an engineer, or a social reformer; the wide awake young man who can do most things better than old people, and who knows it.”¹

But not everyone applauded this development. Among the famously unhappy was Harvard’s William James, who saw the new dispensation as incompatible with our national values. His well known essay of only a century ago (1903), “The Ph.D. Octopus” decried what he saw as the rise of a new class of academic mandarins:

The spectacle of the “Rath” distinction in its innumerable spheres and grades, with which all Germany is crawling to-day, is displeasing to American eyes; and displeasing also in some respects is the institution of knighthood in England, which, aping as it does an aristocratic title, enables one's wife as well as one's self so easily to dazzle the servants at the house of one's friends. But are we Americans ourselves destined after all to hunger after similar vanities on an infinitely more contemptible scale? And is individuality with us also going to count for nothing unless stamped and licensed and authenticated by some title-giving machine? Let us pray that our ancient national genius may long preserve vitality enough to guard us from a future so unmanly and so unbeautiful!²

James’s, it turned out, was a minority opinion, and the research university grew in the U.S. But how was research to be supported? Not by the nation-state. Perhaps the single most important factor in the evolution of American higher education was absence of the federal government’s involvement until after World War II. Until then, for the sciences, and until 1967 for the humanities, most research support came from private or internal sources: individual philanthropists, foundations, or from a university’s internal resources. But to say that most support for research came from private sources does not mean that the university system as a whole could be described as “privatized.” Even if the source of foundation endowments was private donations, both public and private universities—those founded by state legislatures and those created by wealthy individuals, civic elites, or religious denominations—competed on equal footing for foundation support.

That very competition is another defining aspect of the American academic system. In the absence of any national governing authority defining or limiting the ambition of local institutions, each aspiring university could seek to improve its status and attractiveness by developing or acquiring the attributes of the new academic model. Universities competed for energetic, productive faculty, sometimes “buying” them wholesale as when the nascent University of Chicago lured a large portion of the faculty of Clark University in Massachusetts to fill its faculty ranks. Or later, in the 1930s, when the New School for Social Research was created in part to provide a haven for scholars fleeing European totalitarianism.

¹Robert McCaughey, *International Studies and Academic Enterprise: A Chapter in the Enclosure of American Learning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 32.

²William James, “The Ph.D. Octopus,” in Frederick Burkhardt, Ed., *The Works of William James: Essays, Comments, and Reviews* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), 74.

Universities competed for students as well as for foundation grants and promising faculty. We tend to forget that in the early years of the 20th century the leading private research universities—most notably Columbia University, the University of Chicago and the University of Pennsylvania—were also among the largest universities in the country at the time in terms of student enrollment. What was probably the most important federal intervention in higher education transformed the field. The GI Bill—more formally the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944—promised grants to all veterans of World War II who were admitted to any college, anywhere in the country. The enormous effects of this program—which over ten years provided almost \$50 billion (measured in 2004 dollars) in grants—included the transformation of American higher education from a system of elite access to one of (relatively) mass access. By allowing veterans to study at any university of their choice, the GI Bill helped newer institutions in the South and West compete with traditionally prestigious universities in the East and Midwest. The University of California, for example, grew rapidly as some veterans who had shipped out from Pacific ports decided that California would be a more attractive place to return to than their possibly snow-bound home states. But what is most remarkable about this catalytic federal intervention in higher education is that it was **not** conceived as an educational policy. Rather, it was an economic program to cope with the widely expected post-war recession and unemployment that had followed World War I, providing educational grants to lift demobilized soldiers out of disgruntled idleness into the edifying distractions of college life. To the degree that the GI Bill had educational aims, they were merely to enlarge the scope of American higher education, without altering at all its basic structure and dynamics. Its unintended consequences, however, were far-reaching.

Similarly, when the federal government did begin the sustained support of university-based research, it did so by emulating the structures developed by private philanthropy. It is no coincidence that it was the National Science **Foundation** that was created to continue in peacetime (or, actually, the Cold War) the experimental funding for university scientific research pioneered during World War II. The NSF and the National Institutes of Health (which began soon after NSF) made competitive peer-review of individual projects the principal form of research support, thus reinforcing already established patterns.

As we are all too well aware, “science” in American usage is a much more limiting term than “Wissenschaft” is in German, and the National Science Foundation, while including the social and behavioral sciences, did not extend to the humanities. In 1967, concerted action among several leading private academic groups, with ACLS in the lead, did succeed in providing Congress with a convincing rationale for the creation of the National Endowment for the Humanities. It does not diminish the importance of NEH as an element in the national infrastructure supporting the humanities to note that the budget requested for NEH in 2005 (\$135 million) is less than 2.5% of the budget requested for NSF (\$5.7 billion). But this comparison does highlight the difficulties confronted by university leaders as they seek to enact “the idea of a university” that will pursue and strengthen all fields of knowledge. To address this problem, in 2001 the American Association of Universities convened a task force on the humanities, on which Hunter Rawlings and I served, which has issued a report, *Reinvigorating the Humanities*, that aims to catalyze campus and national opinion on the importance of our fields to knowledge and to the public and on how they can best move forward. AAU and ACLS together will follow up on this report by seeding and synthesizing

discussions at the campus and national level, culminating in a national convocation tentatively scheduled for 2006.

The absence of the humanities from the first draft of the federal research establishment also reflected other earlier patterns. The ideology of early twentieth-century foundations was “scientific philanthropy,” that is, the search for and targeting of the root causes of social problems, not the mere palliation of suffering that had been the preoccupation of charity for centuries. Science, with all its newfound power, was the means for both search and cure. Could the Humanities, the least “scientific” of fields join in this model? In surveying the history of humanistic inquiry and practice between 1890 and 1920, Laurence Veysey remarked that the humanities had no precise definition during that period. “Theirs is the story,” he writes, “not so much of the creation of professions from scratch, as of the transition from an older, long existing professional outlook and mentality to newer, more specialized versions of it.”³ But the coalescence of older traditions into the modern humanities did not automatically bring with it the means of self-confident self-promotion. One prominent scholar in the 1920s confessed to a foundation officer that “the humanities had their innings for centuries while the sciences [are] just coming into theirs.”⁴ In writing to another foundation officer, James Breasted, a celebrated archaeologist, conceded that “the traditional enterprises of the humanist, and especially of the classicist, have been. . . largely limited to small and even insignificant tasks, like Julius Caesar's use of the ablative.”⁵

Such cavils aside, by the mid-1920s, the major philanthropic foundations of the time, Ford and Carnegie, did develop programs for the support of the humanities. ACLS, which had been created in 1919 to represent US scholarship in the International Academic Union, became a major element of foundation programming. As a federation of scholarly societies, ACLS was both representative of and responsible to the academic community. As a small secretariat, the Council had the administrative coherence to be an appropriate partner with the foundations in developing national mechanisms for the support of humanities scholars in the highly decentralized American university system. With ACLS as a partner, foundations could work across and through universities in early efforts to nurture what subsequently became known as area studies or to incubate new disciplines such as musicology. Most notably, ACLS had the standing to develop structures of peer-review—one of the pillars of scholarly self-governance—for the support of individual scholars and their projects.

Against this background, let me focus now on the contemporary scene. What are the structures of research support for the humanities and what are some of the consequences—intended and unintended—of the design features of those structures? It is important to keep in mind that the governing assumption of all of them is that what the humanist scholar requires above all is time, and release from other faculty responsibilities.

³ Laurence Veysey, “The Plural Organized Worlds of the Humanities,” in Alexandra Oleson and John Voss, eds. *The Organization of Knowledge in Modern America, 1860-1920* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 58.

⁴ Philip Shorey to Abraham Flexner, May 23, 1925, Record Group 1, Series 2, Box 314, folder 3277, Papers of the General Education Board, Rockefeller Archive Center, Sleepy Hollow, New York.

⁵ James Breasted to Wickliffe Rose, May 1, 1925, Record Group 1, Series 2, Box 314, folder 3277, Papers of the General Education Board, Rockefeller Archive Center.

The structure:

- Most support comes directly from universities via investment in faculty—to whom they provide research time by means of appropriate teaching loads and sabbatical leaves. The definition of “appropriate” is, of course, much debated and differs from field to field.
- Campus-based centers, funded by universities and augmented by grants and philanthropy, have become increasingly prominent on the scene. There are now more than 100 of them, most of which offer forms of individual and collaborative research support or teaching release on a competitive basis.
- Portable fellowships from organizations like the ACLS, NEH and the Guggenheim Foundation may support six to twelve months of research leave. National residential research centers, like the National Humanities Center, the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford, the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, and the Center for Scholars and Writers at the New York Public Library, provide similar fellowship support, but require relocation for up to a year.
- Individual fellowships are extremely competitive (at the ACLS the ratio of awardees to applicants is approximately 1:14) and limited in number. In recent years there were fewer than seven hundred portable and residential fellowships awarded to humanists and social scientists, while the total number of teaching faculty in these fields in the US is about 140,000.
- Foundation support for the humanities is increasing in absolute dollars donated but decreasing as a share of overall foundation philanthropy. A recent report by the Foundation Center and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences stated that humanities grants constituted only a little more than 2% of all foundation donations.
- The national infrastructure supporting humanities scholarship is quite limited.

Let me illustrate these patterns by speaking directly from the recent history and current experience of ACLS. In an article published in 1997, just before becoming president of the ACLS, my predecessor John D’Arms noted that all elements of national humanities infrastructure had weakened in the 1980s and 1990s. NEH’s severe budget reductions in 1995 were magnified by a shift away from academic programs in favor of public activities. With a few notable exceptions, foundations had reduced their support for the humanities. Private entities—the ACLS, the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Humanities Center—had seen the value of their fellowship awards erode against inflation and the growth of faculty salaries.⁶ D’Arms warned:

Fellowships are not just a re-distribution of wealth but are the platform which supports a national consciousness and community in scholarship, by signaling selection committees’ vision of high standards. If there are fewer of these national panels of first-rate scholarly assessors, or if those which do exist have fewer resources to distribute and therefore less opportunity to exercise

⁶ John H. D’Arms, “Funding Trends in the Academic Humanities, 1970-1995: Reflections on the Stability of the System,” in Alvin Kernan, ed., *What’s Happened to the Humanities?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 32-62.

comparative judgments of scholarly quality, the entire national system of **evaluating** (as well as of **supporting**) thoughtful, imaginative, venturesome, high quality work in the humanities is diminished.⁷

A simple remedy followed from John D'Arms' diagnosis: national agencies such as ACLS needed to increase their support for individual scholars. But where was the necessary new money to come from? John's answer to that question demonstrated the validity of his diagnosis. ACLS turned to foundations and to individuals for support of a campaign to double its endowment devoted to fellowships over ten years and then re-double it in the next five. Thus far, the campaign has had considerable success, and as a consequence, ACLS has been able to more than double its direct support of its fellows (\$4.8 million awarded in fellowship stipends last year) and plans to increase it further in the years ahead, assuming, of course, reasonable investment returns. When you bear in mind that ACLS is one of only 3 national sources of "portable" fellowships—support that does not require residence at a particular university or research center—you appreciate the significance of this effort, even as we recognize that there is so much more to be done.

But the important point for today's discussion is that nearly 2/3 of our donations come from colleges and universities. John's appeal to presidents and chancellors highlighted our distinct purpose. Both ACLS and universities, he would say, are in the business of identifying and celebrating excellence in scholarship. It is therefore particularly important to have national metrics of excellence; a robust ACLS fellowship program is one such metric. Over time, it is likely that your faculty, Madame University President, will be receiving ACLS fellowships (at higher stipends), but the larger purpose served will be the strengthening of a national system. That colleges and universities, especially 31 of our leading research universities have responded so generously demonstrates, I think, the perceived need for a national structure in a decentralized system.

What are the issues and challenges that currently confront ACLS as we seek to carry out our role in supporting scholarly research, and that we all face as we contemplate the future of the university? I would mention just four, among many that could be identified: the different stages of the scholarly career; the "crisis of the monograph"; the vitality of the humanities in less advantaged institutions; and the viability of the paradigm of the professor as someone who is both scholar and teacher. Each raises a number of important questions.

Understanding the stages of the scholarly career. Unlike many career paths, academic scholarship has a schematic set of ranks and gradations that are designed to promote and demarcate achievement. Do they? Does tenure free the scholar to undertake particularly ambitious projects, or does the imperative of achieving tenure narrow and perhaps distort research designs? A generation ago, a promising dissertation could win a young scholar appointment as an assistant professor, and the publication of that dissertation merited permanent employment. Today, in some fields, we see advanced assistant professors working on—and nearing—the publication of their third book. Do these rising requirements advance scholarship or distort the profession? Do they oblige young scholars to extend their graduate education or take post-docs in order to build a tenurable publication record? Georgetown Provost James O'Donnell recently noted that a survey of newly appointed assistant professors

⁷ John H. D'Arms to Alison Bernstein, November 5, 1997.

at his institutions found an average age of 37, with many in their 40s (as appears to be the case in a Habilitation-expectant Germany). When your rising generation is, in Jim's words, "slightly older than Mozart's corpse" (and barely eligible for a Humboldt Fellowship!), are you limiting the potential for dramatic innovation in scholarship?

This is something ACLS has sought to address, with the support of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, by creating two special fellowship programs focused on particular career stages: Burkhardt and Ryskamp. The former targets recently tenured associate professors and the latter advanced assistant professors who have passed their pre-tenure reviews. By incorporating additional support beyond a year's release time, both aim to support projects with broader and more adventuresome aims than might be possible with normal sabbatical leaves. If the fellows selected in the first several competitions are indeed exemplars for the rising generation, then we can look forward to much ambitious and creative scholarship that can resist incentives to package scholarship in easily marketable wrapping.

This brings us to the "crisis of the monograph." I will not review the complex economic, technological and organizational issues here, nor will I venture an opinion as to the reality of a crisis defined as declining publishing opportunities. But I will assert that there is indeed a conceptual crisis of the monograph, one that encompasses many of the points I just made. Do we in the humanities suffer from the hegemony of the monograph as the currency of promotion, tenure, and—yes, I must add—peer-reviewed fellowship programs? Does the model of individualized research in which single scholars pursue topics defined, ultimately, by their expository destination in a monograph still make sense? Are we missing out on opportunities to take up galvanizing projects because we do not have much experience in collaborative work? The importance of these questions is not diminished by my inability to answer them at this point. I will simply note that at ACLS we are reflecting on how the very structure of our fellowship peer-review process may reinforce the monomaniacal culture of the mono-monograph.

The vitality of the humanities in less advantaged institutions. In our 2003-04 fellowship selections, ACLS made 104 awards in our endowed and career stage programs. Only 15 of these awards went to scholars working in institutions that were not "first tier" universities or colleges.⁸ This result may not be surprising, but it is worrisome. Are faculty outside of the top-tier institutions less intellectually acute? That is highly debatable, but what is highly certain is that faculty at what we might call "comprehensive" institutions—e.g., the CUNY system, the California State Universities—have much higher teaching loads and much less opportunity to develop compelling fellowship applications. These comprehensive institutions educate fully one-third of the undergraduates pursuing bachelor's degrees in the United States. Comprehensive universities in metropolitan locations serve a demographically changing student body, many of whom are first-generation college students from minority or immigrant populations. Yet these institutions are asked by state legislatures to do more with less, to enroll and graduate a larger student population even as budgets are cut. How can we help assure that their faculty will be "teacher-scholars" on the Humboldtian model?

The viability of the teacher-scholar model itself. Over the past 150 years, American higher education has grown in scope and expanded in power on the basis of an idealized

⁸ That is, that were not "Doctoral Extensive" (old "Research I") or medallion liberal arts colleges.

model of faculty-student development. This paradigm—so deeply assumed that it is often implicit—posits that the scholar-teacher whose intellectual horizons are broadened by research can best educate students of the liberal arts, broadening their intellectual horizons and inculcating in them the same habits of lifelong critical inquiry practiced by the scholar-teacher. Thus the “pastoral mentor mediating received knowledge” has become almost wholly replaced by the scholar-teacher “working at the front-line of knowledge production.”⁹

Today this model is subject to multiple pressures and could become undone in our lifetimes. Some question whether educational and professional expectations can co-exist. Others describe a “steady, irreversible shift of faculty allegiance away from the goals of a given institution and toward those of an academic specialty . . . leading to increased emphasis on research and on publication and on teaching one’s specialty in favor of general introduction courses, often at the expense of coherence in an academic curriculum.”¹⁰ Still others wonder whether the fundamental commitment to teaching itself may be at risk. Here I only need to cite a passage from the preface to a recent work on medieval history: “The administration of Stanford University deserves my special thanks for having convinced me over the years, along with many other junior members of the faculty, that research is more important than teaching. Without its relentless pressure I might be a different human being.”¹¹ I don’t know if this is high irony (I’ve been told it’s not), a thinly disguised *cri de coeur* or something competing institutions should put in their undergraduate recruitment brochures, but in any event it may confirm the suspicion of an imbalance in a cherished model about which we should all be concerned.

The issues ACLS confronts thus lead back to consideration of the American university system as a whole. Not to put too fine a point on it, let me ask: Are the very dynamics which powered the rise of American higher education turning against it?

It has been a strength of the US system of higher education that it blends the public and private roles in finance and governance. Both public and private institutions receive both public and private funds, albeit in different proportions. But public, that is governmental support for higher education is declining significantly, and we are only beginning to glimpse the implications of that decline. Does a mixed system make it easier for one supporter to decrease its effort?

In a paper delivered at the ACLS Annual Meeting earlier this year, the Cornell economist Ronald Ehrenberg noted that while in 1982-83 over 50% of federal financial aid was in the form of grant aid, by 2002-03, this percentage had fallen to 40%.¹² Most federal

⁹ Kimberly Benston, paper presently titled “Beyond the Circle: Challenges and Opportunities for the contemporary Liberal Arts Teacher-Scholar” presented at a conference on Liberal Arts Colleges in American Higher Education, Williamstown, Massachusetts, November 13-15, 2003. Forthcoming as an *ACLS Occasional Paper*.

¹⁰ Robert Zemsky and William F. Massy, “Cost Containment: Commitment to a New Economic Reality,” *Change* 22: November/December 1990), 22. Quoted in William F. Massy, *Honoring the Trust: Quality and Cost Containment in Higher Education* (Boston: Anker Publishing Co., 2003), 97-98.

¹¹ Philippe Buc, preface to *The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), viii.

¹² Ronald G. Ehrenberg, “Key Issues Currently Facing American Higher Education,” (The Idea and Ideals of the University, Public Session, ACLS Annual Meeting, Washington, D. C., May 8, 2004). Forthcoming as *ACLS Occasional Paper* #58.

financial aid now comes in the form of loans, a form of support that students from lower-income families are less willingly than other students to take on large loan burdens to finance their higher education. Federal grant aid, moreover, lags behind increases in the cost of higher education.

The share of states' higher education budgets that goes to public academic institutions has also declined over time. When Clark Kerr, the man who coined the term "multi-university," was chancellor of UC Berkeley in the 1950s the state provided 70% of the campus's budget; in the 1980s, that percentage fell to 50%; by 2000, it was 34%. At UCLA, because it has a largely extramurally funded hospital and medical school, the percentage was 21% when I left last year. For the University of Michigan in 2000 the figure was 11%. At the University of Virginia it's now 8%, the same percentage to which the private university Stanford is state-funded. This change burdens both these public institutions and their students, forcing them to raise tuition just as the support that students can hope for from government loans is declining, more likely to be a loan than a grant, and less likely to be need-based.

Tuition-payers—students and their families—are thus picking up part of the gap between revenue and expense produced by declining public support, and that fact is changing the nature of the student body. "As a result [of these changes]," Ehrenberg notes, "the U.S. has not achieved its goal of reducing educational inequality based upon family income levels—differentials in college enrollment by family income quartiles are almost as large today as they were thirty years ago."¹³

The costs of declining public support are also being borne by the faculty. Not just by the nation's tenure-track faculty, but by the growing numbers of part-time and non tenure track faculty on whom more universities are relying to teach classes and balance budgets in a move that can be compared to the outsourcing of many industries. This phenomenon is what Martin Finkelstein called "The Morphing of the American Academic Profession."¹⁴ Finkelstein and his colleague, Jack Schuster have analyzed and documented the significant restructuring of the American professoriate now afoot. While I can't do justice to the breadth and care of their work, let me emphasize two important findings:

First, that full-time tenure track faculty members are a rapidly shrinking fraction of the teaching force. This category of faculty—teacher-scholars—were only ¼ of the new hires in 2001. The fastest growing segment of the professoriate is not the part-time adjunct faculty with whose often difficult situations we have become alarmingly familiar. We see the greatest growth, rather, in *full-time* "contingent," i.e. non-tenure track, faculty.

And second, that there is no conspiracy here. Much of it can be attributed to the demonstrated need to provide the very research leaves I've been describing, which take tenured faculty out of the classroom. This change is both a persuasive and radically de-centered phenomenon. Refusing to point fingers, Schuster and Finkelstein set this change in the context of global "seismic economic realignments" that have brought with them

¹³ Ehrenberg.

¹⁴ Martin Finkelstein, "The Morphing of the American Academic Profession," *Liberal Education* (Fall 2003): 6-15.

reconceptualizations of organizations and of work.¹⁵ We must ask: does a decentralized system of higher education give these forces wider play?

Finally, we must ask if the market orientation and competitive practices that have always been a part of American higher education have increased to the point where they are eroding the concept of education and learning as a public good. Each year, colleges and universities behave more like profit-making corporations. Not just in competition for students and faculty but in developing marketable products – digital collections, course content, research results. Private, profit-making universities—DeVry, Strayer, the University of Phoenix—capitalized through listings on the New York Stock Exchange, are capturing a growing segment of the higher education market by emphasizing a new business model that relies almost entirely on part-time faculty. It should not be surprising, therefore, that when Members of Congress call for legislation to halt or at least regulate the increase in college tuition they deploy a vocabulary of “predatory pricing” that would apply to the pharmaceutical industry or to speculators seeking to corner the market in sugar futures.

I do not want to conclude on a pessimistic note, for I do not believe that these problems are insurmountable. They absorb our attention precisely because they are systemic—that is, their origins can be traced to some of the defining qualities of the American university system. Meetings such as this are crucial to both understanding and tackling the issues that will shape the future of universities in both Germany and the United States. So let me conclude by calling to mind Carl Jung’s observation that “Humankind must have difficulties; they are necessary for health.” If that is so, we are, I think, very healthy.

¹⁵ Finkelstein, 10.