

## UNDERPAID AND UNDEREDUCATED PROFESSIONALS

December 9, 2002

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This is just the second meeting of our Club that I have been able to attend in the last five years, so, seeing many unfamiliar faces out there, I am prompted to offer a word of explanation for such an extended absence from this organization I cherish. I turned 70 in April, and my wife, Charlin, thinks it's time to come home to Cincinnati, so this situation may well change next fall. Of the Cincinnati institutions I miss the most, this great Literary Club is one, and our equally venerable Cincinnati Tennis Club is the other.

I retired after nineteen years as Headmaster of the Seven Hills School in 1996, and, uncertain about how best to spend the rest of my life, and feeling uncomfortable with lots of leisure, I spent two years as the major gifts fund raiser for Patty Boggs' and Nicholas Muni's Cincinnati Opera. Intensely missing school work, however, I have subsequently served in five interim headships, the first at the invitation of Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern California in a fascinating K-8 parish school near the inner city of Los Angeles, 50% of the enrollment made up of children of Korean ancestry, and another 30% children of African/Chicano/Hispanic/Latino origins. Next, it was off to the Potomac School in McLean, Virginia, just over the Potomac River's Charis Bridge from Washington, literally across the street from the CIA; then to Norfolk Academy where we enrolled numerous naval officer's children, just a step from Williamsburg, living in a condo on Virginia Beach at the precise point where Chesapeake Bay meets the Atlantic Ocean; then to Fort Worth, Texas, a city we also came to love, full of culture and cowboys, ranches and oil, and now we are living in the Inner Harbor of Baltimore, contemplating how to help what ranked at one time among the most prestigious small girls boarding schools in the country, St Timothy's, another affiliation with the Episcopal Church, a school on whose board Ted Gleason serves, a secondary school that needs to preserve rich traditions at the same time it learns how to accommodate changing times. It is fulfilling even exhilarating, in the twilight of a career, to use one's experience to help five fundamentally sound schools overcome different kinds of unforeseen obstacles, to help them attract excellent long-term Heads for the future, and to give these new Heads some ideas to consider, facilitating the most seamless possible transitions from their predecessors to them. And, it's been fun living for a year in these interesting cities, and learning, incidentally, how Cincinnati is perceived in other places. This is not always a pretty picture, alas, the happiest and most notable exception being our fine and performing arts, which are overwhelmingly acknowledged to be enjoying a cultural renaissance, and to be excellent by any national or international standard.

The major downside with those travels is being moved from one's closest friends, of course, losing touch with people one loves. One's best friends are indeed old friends.

When I finally come home for good, perhaps next summer, it is my hope to be able to assemble some old friends for the purpose of resurrecting the dream of the inner city Episcopal elementary day school, a project that some of us believed might be close to realization a couple of years back, and that we still hope may be worthy of the enthusiastic support of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio. We realize that such support will not happen quickly, but we sincerely believe that this school will not only make a major contribution to the quality of life of our city, and to community leadership and racial harmony, but also to the Diocese and its parishes. At a time when evangelism is a top priority of our Diocese there may be a higher priority than raising up children, but I'm at a loss to know what that higher priority may be.

In my last paper, in March of 2000, I came out of an intellectual closet, as it were, daring to celebrate my lifelong passion for sports, both as a participant and as a spectator, and I have chosen as my topic for tonight to discuss men's football and basketball in what the National Collegiate Athletic Association (henceforth called the NCAA) categorize as its Division 1-A, comprised of 114 of our country's biggest universities, all but a handful of them public ones, a topic that has increasingly confounded me during my travels these past five years, a topic that is so complicated that I can share only a few highlights with you tonight. You will find some of these universities in the top football rankings year after year, Miami of Florida, Oklahoma, Texas, Tennessee, Michigan, Ohio State, Nebraska, Washington (State), Virginia (Tech), Oregon, Penn State, Colorado, Southern California, Louisiana State, Wisconsin, 30 states across the nation, joined notably from the private sector by Boston College, Duke, Notre Dame and Stanford, universities that freely distribute grants-in-aid 85 each in football, universities that recruit talent unconscionably, and pay coaches obscenely. (I can't bring myself to call these grants "scholarships" or their recipients "student-athletes").

I spent last year in an independent school in Fort Worth, Texas, a part of the country that is a hotbed of Division 1-A sports, of course, when our young football coach unexpectedly resigned to accept a lucrative position in private industry. The school is an excellent one, not unlike Country Day or Seven Hills, a serious academic place boasting an excellent program, too. Thirty-seven of our ninety-two seniors received formal recognition from National Merit last year, for instance, and our SATs averaged 620 Verbal and 660 Math. Thirty are currently enrolled at Ivy, Little Three, Patriot League or Seven Sister colleges, and twenty-two others are at Texas University in Austin, half of them in its prestigious Plan 2 Honors Program. Several others attend colleges as prestigious as Northwestern, Rice, Stanford, Vanderbilt and West Virginia.

Remaining a convinced believer in secondary school programs that endeavor to develop all the academic, artistic, physical and spiritual sides of their students, I decided to recruit our new football coach from the ranks of the many young minority men who had played varsity football in Division 1-A in Texas, graduates of places such as Baylor University in Waco, SMU in Dallas, TCU in Fort Worth, Texas in Austin, Texas A&M in College Station and Texas Tech in Lubbock, and I was encouraged to think I might have some success when I read a report published by the NCAA celebrating the finding that these universities' most recent Division 1-A football lettermen were obtaining their

degrees 60% of the time, given the NCAA's generously permissible span of six years, the highest percentage since the NCAA began tracking such figures in 1984, a percentage not very different from some of those universities' students at large. I wound up getting lucky and was able to hire a wonderful young African-American man named Christopher Brasfield, the son of a Baptist preacher from San Antonio who had always yearned to have a classical liberal arts education, married to a lovely young woman with bachelors and masters degrees from the University of Oregon who teaches in the Fort Worth public schools, an honors graduate in Economics at TCU with a masters degree in Liberal Studies, a soloist in church choirs, a two-year starter for the Dallas Cowboys until he tore up a knee, a talent scout for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers after that, a wonderful human being who felt called to come home and coach high school kids the way football should be played. This search shocked me in a couple of disillusioning ways, however, since I learned first that the NCAA's 60% graduation rate included all sports with the basketball and football rates being inflated by non-revenue-producing sports such as swimming, tennis, track & field and volleyball. For football and basketball, for instance, the graduation percentages fell to 49% and 38%, respectively, and for the African-Americans in the two sports, to 43% and 28%, respectively, a difference that is significant because 50% of the football players and 75% of the basketball players in Division 1-A are African Americans. It is even more significant because only ½ of 1% of these Division 1-A football players will ever play a single down or take a single shot in the National Football League or the National Basketball Association, yet 45% of them, when polled, insist that they plan to be part of this ½ of 1% and that this is, indeed, the main reason for their being in college. (I also learned that the conference that has the lowest graduation rate of all for basketball and football – compared against others such as the Big 10, the PAC 10, the Big 12 and even the Southeastern Conference – is Conference USA, including our own University of Cincinnati.)

I further learned that the degrees for most of those division 1-A male basketball and football players who do manage to earn degrees are overwhelmingly in fields such as Criminal Justice, Sports Management, Broadcasting, Jazz & the Blues, AIDS Awareness, and Coaching Theory and Practice. Many of the courses for which they receive credit, further, come from marginal Community and Junior colleges or from correspondence courses offered by diploma mills bearing names such as Southern College of the Assemblies of God in Florida. (In spite of the fact that they are intensively tutored by recruiters, and take the ACT or the SAT five or six times in high school, nearly half these athletes must forfeit a year of eligibility in their division 1-A colleges because they can never achieve a combined score of 750 and they can only qualify to play by virtue of these junior colleges and correspondence courses. The NCAA rightly loves to celebrate during intermissions on television the academic and personal accomplishments of talented young men such as Peyton Manning, Shane Battier and Chris Brasfield, but they are in fact notable exceptions that prove an unhappy rule. Studies show that 50% of these basketball players and football players who graduate from their colleges in six or fewer years do so without any college credits in English or American Literature, in college-level mathematics, in a hard science, in history or political science, or in a foreign language. Very few of you in this room would recognize most of the college courses these big-time athletes take.

The NCAA seems unconcerned that so many of these Division A-1 athletes are unprepared for college, ignoring the fact that there exist such substantial enormous disparities in the SATs and grade point averages of basketball and football players and mainstream students in Division 1-A universities. At Berkeley and UCLA, for instance, where mainstream students perform a well on entrance exams as Ivy Leaguers, average basketball or football player has a GPA 1.5 points lower than the average undergraduate, the difference between a 3.7 and a 2.2. There is a case in the courts right now in which a former Washington Redskin All-Pro in his 40's is suing Auburn University in Alabama for encouraging him to enroll there for six years – and star in football for four of them – at the same time the University acknowledged that he was still functionally illiterate when he left. Skip Prosser, our former Xavier University coach, inherited a Wake Forest team last year owning SATs averaging 829,400 points below the cutoff for the bottom quarter of the Universities freshman class. At the University of Virginia, another former Xavier coach, Pete Gillen, fields a basketball team with SATs averaging 510 points lower than those of the average freshman. AT Notre Dame two years ago, the median SAT for the freshman class was 1310, but only 894 for football players. At Michigan, the corresponding numbers were 1244 and 866.

Acknowledging, then, that the simplest academic barriers are set impossibly high for these young men the NCAA fondly calls its “student-athletes,” there turn out to be other barriers to academic success as well, the first of which is that they are required to compete on teams as freshmen in order to hold their grants.

If there were ever a clientele that urgently requires a year of adjustment and remediation to become acclimated academically to college, it is these academically marginal athletes, but the coaches need them and their grants are for four or five years, depending on whether or not they are red-shirted, which is to say restricted to non-playing practice teams their first year so they can develop physically and/or improve their skills. A friend of mine, Hunter Rawlings, a Trustee of Norfolk Academy in Virginia, where I spent the 2000-2001 academic year, recently retired as the President of Cornell, and before that President of the University of Iowa, became concerned with this freshman eligibility issue in 1989, admitting that he was humiliated to have several Iowa football and basketball players confess to a journalist that they were majoring in water coloring and archery. Dr. Rawlings went on to say that if the NCAA did not abolish freshman eligibility in basketball and football, he would do so unilaterally in Iowa. The coach called a press conference and threatened to quit, the Governor called Rawlings “insufferably naïve on television,” and the Board of Trustees resoundingly defeated a resolution urging support of their President’s position. Five years ago, Hunter Rawlings was one of six Ivy League Presidents who were refugees from these big Division 1-A public universities; all six cited athletic pressures as the single most important reason they moved.

Another reason for players’ academic shortcomings has to do with the required length of their training all year, and the large numbers of hours required to compete during their seasons. The average Division 1-A basketball or football player devotes an

average of 55 hours a week to his sport during the season, including twice-a-day practices in the preseason, travel, games, workouts with strength trainers, watching films and attendance at team meetings. That figure drops to 35 hours out of season, experts estimate, but the seasons keep getting longer and longer. In football, for instance, this season's length has been extended to 12 regular games for purely financial reasons, which can be 13 when the team play a game in August or travels to Hawaii, or 14 when the team is successful in a 12-member conference such as the Big 12 or SEC that sponsors a conference playoff in early December, or even 15 if the college goes to a Bowl in late December, as do 70 of the 114 members. Any team that wins at least 6 games now goes to a post-season bowl. This means that ten universities are playing 15 games this year, over a span of five months, only one less than our beloved Bengals. If Division 1-A football schedules are absurd, basketball is even worse. Xavier will play 34 games in 15 states during its regular season, for instance, over a span of five months and will be absent from Cincinnati for anywhere from two to four weeks when it competes in its Atlantic 10 Conference Championships, and in the competition the NCAA calls March Madness, the aptly named national basketball championship that involves 64 teams over 3 weeks in 21 locations and is, Las Vegas gamblers agree, by far the biggest single betting event of the year, bigger than any world championship heavyweight prize fight, any World Cup soccer finals, or any Super Bowl.

The NCAA yet again displays its whimsical sense of humor when it insists that its member colleges' out-of-season physical training and team practices are voluntary, a change in reluctantly accepted in the late 1980s to pacify a committee of guilty college presidents who were under pressure to do something about all the widely-publicized failures of their "student-athletes." The Los Angeles Times wrote a long article last year about how voluntary Division 1-A universities' out-of-season practices in basketball and football really are, however, and found their enforcement of the spirit of the rules laughable. Players who didn't show up for out-of-season drills, the Times discovered simply sat on the bench for the rest of their careers, or were subject to public harassment, or were described as "slackers" in contacts with professional scouts, or lost their grants-in-aid. They lost their grants-in-aid because the NCAA voted in 1973 to change athlete scholarships from guaranteed four-year awards to one-year renewable grants. From their inception, the four-year deals had insured some minimal institutional commitment to an athlete's education; whether the player became an All-American, or a bench warmer, or never suited up due to injury, he could continue in college on scholarships. But the coaches, for obvious reasons, despised the four-year grants. From their viewpoint, the grants wasted slots on athletes who didn't perform up to expectations, so the coaches pressured the NCAA into changing all the grants into one-year awards, renewed or cancelled every July 1, with the coaches making all the decisions themselves. These one-year grants give coaches enormous power over their athletes, of course, and, in recent years, as college sports have become more popular and the rewards of winning even more lucrative for the coaches, in the form of enhanced contracts and endorsements, their demands on their athletes have escalated. There are barely any off-seasons any more. This is big business – half the football coaches in the PAC 10 and Big 12 Conferences are now earning over \$1 million a year, and you can count on the fact that they are not going to let some burned out 20-year-old who develops academic aspirations to interfere with

the program. Everybody in Baltimore cheered last week when the coach of Maryland's NCAA champion basketball team, Gary Williams, signed a five-year contract worth at least \$8 million. When Pete Gillen and Skip Prosser left for West Virginia and Lake Forest, which also play in the ACC with Duke and Maryland and North Carolina, they were mindful of such salaries.

It wasn't so long ago, some of you will recall, that the NCAA controlled national television of Division 1-A football and the country got to see only one game per week, at a cost to NBC of \$1.2 million per season. This so offended the President of Notre Dame, with all its "streetcar alumna across the country," that Father Theodore Hesburgh decried in 1952 what he called this "cartelization of TV as socialistic in nature, comparing it to Huey Long's Share the Wealth program of the 1930s." In 1975, Notre Dame and Penn State convened a conference in Chicago at which a new entity called the College Football Association, represented by 80 large universities, threatened to bolt from the NCAA unless that organization agreed to divide itself into three divisions, numbered 1 and 2 and 3, and then to divide Division 1 in two, 1-A and 1-AA, mostly to keep under the tent a very suspicious Ivy League. Division 1-A would have 105 members – now 114 – and play in stadiums that could seat at least 30,000 spectators. The NCAA capitulated and the member conferences of the NCAA began negotiating individually with TV networks. By 1997, ABC/ESPN was paying the ACC (Maryland and Florida State) \$70 million over 7 years, the Big East (Boston College and Miami of Florida) was receiving \$65 million over 7 years from CBS, the Big 10 (Ohio State & Michigan) and PAC 10 (USC and Washington) were receiving \$115 million each over ten years from ABC/ESPN, the SEC (Alabama & Tennessee) were receiving \$100 million over 7 years from CBS, and Notre Dame – determined to go it alone and refusing invitations to join three of the conferences was getting \$38 million all for itself. NBC in return for that network's exclusive rights to all its games over 5 years. Incredibly, when Notre Dame began to slip competitively during the life of the contract, NBC's lawyers gave serious consideration to demanding that Notre Dame begin to work harder to resume its winning ways, or the contract would be terminated.

This TV bonanza has not stopped there as the NCAA next commercialized its Bowls for its winningest teams, dreaming up a program called the Bow Championship Series. The Rose Bowl in Pasadena, for instance, paid each team \$925,000 in 1969, \$1.4 million in 1974, \$2.9 million in 1983, \$5.75 million in 1992, \$9.5 million in 1997, and is now at \$11 million per team as part of this BCS. Aided by a \$12 million, three-year sponsorship/naming rights deal with Frito Lay, the Tostito Fiesta Bowl in Tempe, Arizona went up to \$13.7 million per team, while the Orange and Sugar Bowls jumped to \$8.2 million per team, all for part of the BCS. TV advertising followed suit, of course, as thirty-second spots in the four BCS Bowls jumped to \$1 million in 2002, 200% more than they cost in 1995, and half the going rate for the NFL's Super Bowl. These are heady times for major college football and the financial stakes are high. In 1999, the most recent figures I could find, there were 30 Bowls involving 60 of the 120 Division 1-A teams, playing eleven conferences a total of \$101 million, in addition to the BCS games, \$95 million of which went to the six biggest conferences, including the Big 10 at \$24 million and the Big 12 at \$21 million. These bowls can pay these big awards because so

many high rollers pay big bucks to follow their teams to these warm weather locations in January. (An amusing story in 1999 that illustrates this point, involved a Mormon Institution in Utah, Brigham Young University, which went 13 and 1 in 1998 and ranked 5<sup>th</sup> nationally in all the polls, yet failed to get one of the 8 berths in the lucrative Bowl Championship Series. When asked for an explanation, a Bowl Championship Series official observed that “BYU does not travel well. They don’t drink and party the way our host cities prefer. Everyone is familiar with the old saying that BYU fans travel with a \$50 bill and the ten commandments in their pocket, and leave town without breaking either one.”)

Division 1-A men’s basketball has been catching up fast with football revenues, incidentally, increasing its sport’s share of the total athletic revenues on average from 8% in 1980 to 26% in 1996, and even more in 2003, in spite of the fact that basketball teams don’t need nearly as many players or coaches as football teams. The biggest part of this increase is due to the NCAA’s year-end tournament called March Madness, contested over three long weekends, the biggest single gambling event in the world, currently estimated at \$1 billion legally and \$5 billion illegally, the end product of a modest tournament that had begun with 8 teams in 1939, and a championship stipend of \$750, and climbed by 1994 to 64 teams and \$2.2 million for each of the teams reaching its final four. In 1995, CBS paid the NCAA \$1.75 billion for the right to televise all 63 tournament games live for eight years, through 2002, and the upcoming contract is even larger. In the 1997 championship games, five years ago, a 30-second spot cost an advertiser \$600,000, and the demand was so great that there were 16 minutes of commercials balancing 40 minutes of playing time in all the games, with numerous broadcasters protesting that all of the TV time-outs were unfairly influencing the outcomes of the competition. The NCAA never budged; the TV money from these ads was the only thin that mattered.

With all these BCS, TV and March Madness dollars, we might go along with the popular conception that the Division 1-A athletic programs with the most successful basketball and football programs are making bundles of money for their universities, but that isn’t the case. The NCAA persists in keeping a dirty little secret, in fact, which is that these big-time athletic programs consistently lose money, with only a handful barely breaking even, and economists believing that this handful routinely cook their books to disguise reality. The most respected economists cite the University of Michigan as a prime example, here, a highly successful athletic program that generated more than \$50 million in revenue in 2000, \$16 million from football gate receipts, \$2 million from basketball gate receipts and \$12 million in gate receipts from all other sports, for a total of \$30 million, with athletic boosters contributing \$7 million, and with \$8 million coming from sponsorship signage and licensing fees, an \$9 million from television revenues. What, then, can be the bottom line problem for a Michigan program that won the Big 10 and the Citrus Bowl in football and saw its men’s basketball reach the Sweet 16 in March, its gymnastics team win its national championship, and saw its program finish fourth in the NCAA’s Sears Cup (the annual ranking that compares all the Division 1-A colleges on the basis of the breath and success of their overall programs for both men and women, and that is always won by either Stanford or Texas.)

“This is the year,” the then startled authors of a University of Michigan Audit Committee reported to the President and Trustees, that “the music has stopped.” When the athletic department’s fiscal year ended in June of 2000, and in spite of its record \$50 million in income, the bottom line showed a deficit of \$2 million. By September, when more current audited statements were published, the deficit had risen to \$2.8 million; when capital expenditures and transfers were later included, the shortfall rose to \$3.8 million.

How was it possible, in this same year that the football team set a national attendance record of 111,000 fans attending its six home games, at an average of \$50 a ticket, the University’s Audit Committee asked, was it that Michigan’s athletic department could show this loss of \$3.8 million?

In the previous year, 1999, it turned out, when Michigan’s basketball and football teams both won national titles, revenues from apparel sales – sweatshirts and hats and the like – totaled \$5.7 million, but in 2000, those royalties dropped to \$3.6 million. Kids are fickle, marketers determined, and it seemed that young people were beginning to buy Tommy Hilfinger sweatshirts faster than collegiate logos. Further, Michigan had naively and steadfastly resisted installing high-priced luxury corporate sky boxes in its stadium, out of some archaic sense of amateurism, and it still prohibited all advertising in its facilities. And, while revenues had grown 30% between 1994 and 2000, expenses had increased 70%. In 2000, when the university poured money into upgrades of its athletic facilities, and spent \$500,000 to launch a state-of-the-art Web Site, and its championship men’s basketball team lost three sophomore stars who opted to join the NBA rather than finish their college careers – the most famous of whom, Chris Webber of the Sacramento Kings is on his way to being a convicted felon for lying about his income in college – the financial wheels simply began to come off. Recognizing the incongruity between steadily rising costs and wildly fluctuating sources of revenue, the University’s internal review committee took issue with “the broadly held perception that we at Michigan are so successful that we are insulated from national trends, and that the athletic department is a money machine, and that our financial challenges simply reflect aberrations that will soon be corrected.”

The 2000 budget was quietly covered by drawing upon a \$19 million reserve fund that had been built up over many years. Tighter budget controls were implemented. If extraordinary success and an impressive local and national fan base could not prevent this \$3.8 million deficit at Michigan University, administrators asked all over the country, how could other less successful colleges expect sports to produce the pot of gold of sports lore? In fact, in 1997, 40% of the 114 Division 1-A colleges reported operating with surpluses, even though most economists doubted their numbers, and the average Division 1-A college reported an operating deficit of \$825,000. The economists believe that almost all the athletic departments reporting surpluses accomplished that by shifting costs in their departments to other university departments. They point to grants for athletes that wound up in general financial aid budgets, to telephone and travel costs connected to athletic recruitment that were assigned to general university overhead or to undergraduate



admissions, to salaries and benefits of athletic administrators and coaches that were allocated to the general faculty salary pool. They regularly benefited from alumni gifts that had come at the expense of unrestricted giving to the Annual Fund. Expenses for the construction and maintenance of sports facilities, as well as for security, sanitation and infrastructure, were regularly allocated to buildings and grounds, general debt reserve, and campus security. Legal expenses and program review costs related to alleged NCAA violations were assigned to the overall legal budget. So it went. Under generally accepted accounting principles, the economists agreed, there were only four or five Division 1-A athletic budgets that truly broke even in 2000, let alone made any money.

It's rarely related, but I can't resist sharing a story about the University of Wisconsin's rare visit to the Rose Bowl, in 1999, when the payoff for participation in Pasadena was still only \$1.8 million, and the athletic department's annual operating deficit for the year was an announced \$1.1 million. In addition to the players and their coaches, the University imitated the example of most colleges going to bowl games, and also took along the families of the coaches, plus six baby-sitters for their kids, plus 90 other athletic department personnel and their spouses and children, plus the members of something called the Faculty Board of Control of Intercollegiate Athletics and their spouses, plus the marching bands and cheerleaders, plus all three of the University's mascots. The official traveling party totaled 832 people and they all stayed at the Beverly Hills Hotel and ate two nights at Spago. The bill came to \$2.1 million, and the disgusted travel manager of a major corporation in Milwaukee, after examining a breakdown of the expenses at the request of a state legislator, concluded: "They could have done the trip for at least a fifth the cost and still stayed at nice hotels and eaten well. I've never seen so many freeloaders or so much waste on any corporate trip."

If even the very most successful athletic departments are barely breaking even, then in these Division 1-A universities, why does this continue to be tolerated, I wondered? The answer turned out to be a simple one: This is a major way these universities obtain public funding, and it has been an effective marketing tool to attract more undergraduates in hard economic times.

The Carnegie Corporation did a massive survey of college students with respect to college choice in the 1980s, and discovered that "during tours of Division 1-A colleges, prospective students and their parents learn lots about festive occasions, but almost nothing about who teaches undergraduate classes. They visit the student union and the dorms, not the library. The winning basketball and football records are discussed, but little mention is made of academic honors. Visitors hear about fraternity parties, not about concerts and lectures. One has the distinct impression that these campuses are places with abundant social life. Education is ignored: "On their questionnaire for the study, the Carnegie Corporation asked male undergraduates in Division 1-A colleges how important a factor was the fame of the college's intercollegiate football and basketball teams and how closely, in turn, the fame of the college's party scenes was connected to those successes. 60% of the undergraduates considered these social factors "very important or moderately important," 30% "neither important nor unimportant," and 10% "moderately unimportant or very unimportant." Undergraduates in Ivy League, Patriot League and Division III colleges places such as Amherst and Bucknell and Yale, on the

other hand, responded in ways that were exactly opposite the Division 1-A figures. The study cited a comment by an undergraduate at Emory University in Atlanta: “What kind of dumb ass chooses a college on the basis of its sports teams and boozing? Does anyone actually say yes to these questions?” The answer was “yes.”

In the 1990s, large majorities of students at the University of Oregon in Eugene and the Oregon State University in Corvallis responded affirmatively to similar questions, having selected those colleges, in substantial part, on the basis of their top 10 rankings in football and basketball and their high rankings on the Princeton Review and Yale Insider Party School lists.

During the 1980s and early 1990s, interestingly, when there was a demographic crisis in higher education, many Division 1-A colleges openly marketed their teams and parties and successfully maintained or increased their enrollments in the process. The University of Oregon, in Eugene, had been the film location of the movie Animal House, but Oregon’s long-term Vice-President for Public Affairs, in a recent interview, freely conceded that the University wasn’t like that when the movie was made in the 1970s. That was when Oregon and Oregon State were regarded as havens for health and environmentally conscious students, full of jogging trails, almost all the students from the home state. That was when their football and basketball teams were consistently at the bottom of the intensely competitive PAC 10 Conference, ignored by most undergraduates, performing in empty stadia, rarely on television. A small fraternity contingent existed, but it didn’t remotely resemble the Delta House of Animal House.

Then, in the 1980s, both University administrations made conscious decisions to upgrade their men’s football programs, whatever the cost. By 1990, they were playing in their first Bowl games and the colleges were no longer hiding their Animal House connections and their big time sports aspirations, and their precarious enrollments began to hold steady and even to increase, an important boost to their finances in a time of federal cutbacks to higher education, and in a decade when the state of Oregon drastically reduced its funding from 53% of the University’s budgets in 1980 to 14% in 1990. The Oregon Universities’ responses, based on careful demographic research, were simple: They carefully surveyed the even worse financial condition of higher education in neighboring California – caused by even more draconian cuts in state funding there – and commissioned an expensive recruitment campaign of California high school seniors with an emphasis on their new collegiate image. As part of their supreme confidence in this bold marketing concept, they convinced their Boards of Trustees to double out-of-state tuitions to increase the anticipated flow of tuition dollars from south of their borders. Their athletic departments ran up big deficits in Corvallis and Eugene in the 1980s, and Oregon’s state legislature refused to help them cover their losses – in fact, more than a few politicians urged them to drop out of PAC-10 and play sports at a less competitive level, but the Presidents persisted. They continued publicly to assert that PAC-10 membership and winning teams were absolutely essential to their recruiting out-of-state students, and they fought proposals to de-emphasize, raising money from boosters to make up the difference. These “repositioned” Oregon Universities gradually seemed more “student friendly” and to offer a more comfortable collegiate climate than

California's deteriorating colleges. (Berkeley and UCLA were notable exceptions, of course, but they can accommodate only a tiny percentage of California undergraduates.) The plan paid dividends: Many more full-paying freshmen began to enroll from out of state, the big majority from affluent California suburbs, willingly paying the doubled out-of-state tuitions. The first year after Oregon and Oregon State both achieved top 10 ranking in football, applications jumped 20%, the increases entirely from out of state, overwhelmingly California. Oregon's admission saga is admittedly unusual, since its success is closely connected to a financial crisis in higher education and to a contiguous state with an enormous and affluent population, but the lesson is still clear: Some Division 1-A universities are prepared to tolerate losses in their athletic department budgets if this will help them stabilize enrollments and the additional tuition dollars that are the result.

I witnessed firsthand the importance of sports in recruitment last year in Fort Worth at Texas Christian University, a very respectable private college that is constantly struggling to fill its undergraduate enrollment, a college competing against such less expensive public universities nearby, a college that was dismissed from the prestigious Southwest Conference several years ago when SWC universities such as Texas departed to join an expanded Big 12 conference and Arkansas a prestigious SEC. I asked TCU's President last year why he had chosen to join Conference USA, where travel is so time-consuming and expensive, and where athletic graduation rates are consistently the lowest in the NCAA. "It's marketing, Peter," he replied. "We are convinced that the establishment of traditional rivalries in cities such as Birmingham, Cincinnati, Louisville, Memphis and New Orleans will help us with recruitment and help us to avoid such an overwhelming reliance on Texas with respect to our recruitment of students." I can't help remembering how devastated that President was when his football coach broke a lucrative contract two years ago to accept an even more lucrative one at Alabama, Bear Bryant's old college. The loss of a Nobel Laureate could not possibly have saddened him any more. Just last month, for the same reason, the Utah State University, located in a small town just 10 miles south of the Idaho border, competing in-state for students against BYU and The University of Utah, joined something called the Sunbelt Conference, made up of universities in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico and Texas.

One insight that truly startled me during my research for this paper is described by Arthur Levine, the President of Columbia University Teacher's College: "A mutual nonaggression pact is developing between many students and their professors in many of these Division 1-A universities, a pact that essentially says "I won't bother with you if you don't bother me." We encountered colleges in Division 1-A where there was a general agreement among both students and faculty that academics are weak, and grade inflation is prevalent, and where students and faculty have a tacit agreement not to burden one another." Ernest Boyer's Carnegie Corporation report reached a similar conclusion: "Ironically, the first years of university studies, the most formative years for students are usually the least satisfactory. Professors dislike teaching introductory courses because the material is so far from their research, and TAs rarely come armed with serious training in pedagogy. Class sizes are huge, not uncommonly lectures for 200, 300, 400, even 500 students. As a result, freshmen, the students who need the very best teaching,

may actually receive the worst.” Scores of polls of graduates of these places show that they feel anything from indifference to disaffection as adults, explaining in substantial part why their rates of participation in Annual Giving are so low in these large public universities.

Explained another way, scholars agree, that many of these big universities are prepared to tolerate the fact that their undergraduate programs are not academically rigorous ones. The Carnegie Corporation and Columbia Teacher’s College surveys of the average time undergraduates spend on homework in these Division 1-A public universities reveal that 20% of the graduates report they study one to five hours per week, that 35% study six to ten hours per week, that 30% study eleven to fifteen hours per week, and that only 15% study sixteen or more hours per week.

It is vitally important to note, of course, that many regular undergraduates at these universities fight the system and gain meaningful educations – a testament to their extraordinary determination. Similarly, many faculty members in the universities teach their undergraduate courses conscientiously, devoting great care and long hours to the task, an indication of their idealism. And two important groups overcome the “nonaggression pact” altogether, using monies that the bigger enrollments and out-of-state tuition dollars make possible. These are the groups one sees celebrated by the public relations arm of the NCAA on television at the half times of big games.

1. First-rate scholarly research is being conducted at the graduate level at these Division 1-A universities. The presidents and professors care passionately about this, and it is a substantial reason the so-called “non-aggression pact” exists.

2. Increasing numbers of the universities are concentrating their energies on honors programs – elite colleges within big universities – tutorials and small classes for highly motivated and very able students – senior faculty – competitions to enroll, 5% to 10% of ablest freshmen -- competing with the Ivies and Division III for National Merit Scholars and valedictorians – very substantial commitments of institutional resources. And here’s where it turned out how naïve I was, blessed as I was to have worked at excellent schools such as Seven Hills and Potomac and Norfolk Academy and Fort Worth CDS, to take for granted how easily our graduates are able to step routinely into these honors programs in places such as Ann Arbor, Berkeley Austin, Charlottesville, Chapel Hill, and Oxford.

A recurring myth about these big-time sports teams is that they stimulate unrestricted annual giving and other significant loyalty among parents and alums, both dollars and participation, when they win big, but it turns out that this simply isn’t so. If one looks at various rates of Annual Giving, for instance, The Chronicle for Higher Education consistently reports, it turns out that the top ten leaders always include six Ivies, plus Notre Dame, Cal Tech, Duke & MIT. The second ten are currently Rice, Lehigh, Wake Forest, Emory, Chicago, Cornell, Stanford, Washington (University of St. Louis) and Brandeis, respectively. Normally well regarded universities such as Wisconsin, Michigan, UCLA, Texas and Washington (Seattle) rank 126, 128, 134, 136

and 144 respectively. Only 8% of Minnesota's alums make gifts to their college, at the bottom of the Chronicle's charts. Father Richard W. Conklin, the Senior Vice President of Notre Dame, state the case succinctly: "repeat after me: There is no empirical evidence demonstrating a correlation between athletic department achievement and alumni fund-raising success. A number of researchers have explored this putative relationship, and they have all concluded that it does not exist. The myth persists, however, aided by anecdotal evidence from sports reporters who apparently spend more time in bars than in development offices." He goes on: "We at Notre Dame have had extensive experience trying to turn the athletic interests of our so-called 'subway alums' to academic development purposes, and we have had no success. There is no evidence that the typical non-alum fan of Notre Dame has any interest in the educational mission."

John DiBiaggio, the former President of Michigan State, now President of Tufts, agrees: "No data support the oft-quoted claim that wins on the field or on the court bring in more private funds, or more state and federal programs. To be sure, wins can and do often bring in more support for athletic programs. But the myth of institutional dependency on athletic revenues – therefore on athletic victories – needs to be aggressively refuted."

Athletic boosters in these universities do give money, of course, but their gifts are overwhelmingly restricted for sports. This is the money that makes possible big salaries for top coaches, that brings choice seats and sky-view boxes in places such as the Cintas and Shoemaker Centers and prime tickets for BCS games and March Madness, such payments called "priority surcharges," and that sometimes furnish illegal payments for recruited players. There are widely publicized occasions, indeed, when athletic program have hurt general fund-raising, as in times of widely publicized scandals, and losing, and Notre Dame has experienced this phenomenon. So recently did Georgetown, with its recruitment of the convicted felon Allen Iverson, and its aggressively reverse racist coach, John Thompson, and even Duke, with its legendary Coach K's \$2.5 million a year compensation, including \$1 million from Nike, with six players leaving early for the NBA the past three years, with the over-the-top vulgarity regularly seen on national TV in its Cameron Indoor Center. Indiana's alumni participation in annual giving actually increased 20% the year after Bobby Knight was finally fired.

It's an easy fact to overlook, but it is prominent alums of the great private colleges who most often become members of their Boards of Trustees, a big honor, something not to be taken for granted as they make educational policy and guide their institutions into the future. This is what ultimately separates places such as Duke and Notre Dame and Stanford from many of their Division 1-A rivals, and it is what caused Division 3 colleges such as Middlebury and Denison, and Division 1-AA colleges such as the Ivies and Patriot League (Bucknell and Lafayette) to begin jumping off the NCAA bandwagon. Unhappily, many of the board members of the Division 1-A public universities turn out to be political appointees, lacking little understanding or appreciation of the broad educational missions of their institutions, and sometimes guilty, sadly, of allowing their universities to go in the opposite direction, enlarging their intercollegiate athletic programs at the expense of their undergraduate educational ones. Indeed, many trustees

of these big-time sports universities are rich entrepreneurs who are also rabid sports fans, not only condoning their teams' sins, but sometimes contributing to them.

As this paper developed, I found myself increasingly wondering why the presidents of these Division 1-A universities, the educators, haven't been able to do more to correct these flawed policies and practices, and I think I finally understand why. Three or four anecdotes will be instructive; and I've already described what happened to Hunter Rawlings when he tried to abolish freshman eligibility at Iowa, and wound up moving to Cornell twelve months later.

It's not surprising, in the first place, that most university presidents fall into one of two categories: those who have little or no interest in sports or those who are intensely interested in winning. The presidents with little or no interest, not surprisingly, feel comfortable delegating decisions to their ADs or to their faculty representatives to the various conferences, while the ones with intense interest enjoy associating themselves with big-time programs and the attendant perks, and show little desire to upset the NCAA apple cart. Walter Byers, the excellent retired Executive Director of the NCAA, who frequently laments what has happened inside his old organization, recently put it this way: "There's currently a so-called Presidential reform movement, which is now about fifteen years old, but it has been all form and no substance. Presidential control has merely led to increased commercialization and a clear commitment by the Presidents to achieve as much money in the marketplace as they can.

It is also significant how rapidly these big state university presidencies turn over. In the five years between 1990 and 1995, 58% of the Presidents of Division 1-A universities changed jobs; in the decade between 1985 and 1995, the figure was 81%. These presidents are simply not around long enough, observers agree, to warrant the investment of their time and energy in this quagmire of big-time athletics, given the enormity of their other multiple responsibilities.

Thomas Ehrlich, the former President of Indiana, remembers Indiana's love affair with basketball and Bob Knight from when he assumed office in 1987. "In my first year I learned an essential lesson: Athletics can be an all-consuming diversion from the academic objectives of a University President . . ."

1987 was the year when Bob Knight appeared on a national television show discussing the topic of job stress, and was asked by Connie Chung how he handled the intense pressure involved in coaching a big-time basketball team. He compared the pressure to rape, noting that "if rape is inevitable, relax and enjoy it," yet again revealing the isolated and wacko world in which Knight lived. Predictably, many IU faculty protested to President Ehrlich, so he issued a mild statement indicating that Knight's views did not represent the views of the University. This so enraged Knight, in turn, that he threatened to accept a lucrative offer he had just received to move to the University of New Mexico. The matter consumed the startled Ehrlich and the media of the state of Indiana for months, and Ehrlich, a gentlemanly Ivy Leaguer, backed down, apologized to Knight, helped convince the coach to stay, and, in retrospect, blighted his Presidency. On

the one hand he wound up offending Knight, of course, and politically appointed Board of Trustees who were avid supporters of Knight. On the other hand, he also offended the fellow academics who were in theory his natural allies. The diplomatic skills he had developed as an Ivy League administrator simply failed him in a totally different culture, he recalls in one autobiography, and his administration of IU never fully recovered.

There was John DiBiaggio in 1990, at Michigan State, who decided as a matter of principle to try to prevent his very successful football coach from also becoming the University's Athletic Director. DiBiaggio, who was interested in expanding and improving the so-called "minor sports," and women's sports and intramurals at Michigan State, launched a national search to identify a person who agreed with his philosophy and who would not devote excessive energy and money to his own high visibility sport. The Board of Trustees, fearing that the coach might accept an outstanding offer to join the NFL's New York Giants, reversed DiBiaggio and suddenly awarded the coach a ten year appointment as A.D. DiBiaggio first learned of the decision over coffee one morning in the newspaper and was the President of Tufts a year later.

Also in 1990, President A. Max Lennoh and A.D. Bobby Robinson of Clemson University in South Carolina negotiated the sensitive resignation of the University's football coach after he was implicated in 14 separate NCAA rules regulations in two years, a feat that is not easy to accomplish, given the laxity of the NCAA's small enforcement staff. In the week following Ford's resignation, which wound up costing the University over \$1 million in settlement payments, Tiger fans called for the resignation of both the President and the A.D. Both needed round-the-clock police protection after several death threats were received. President Lennoh became Clemson's second president in ten years to resign over widely publicized disputes with his trustees over the administration of his University's athletic program.

National Public Radio sponsored a seminar last year in Washington addressing these big-time college sports, attended by people such as Bill Bradley, George Will and Robert Lipsyte of the New York Times, where Frank Deford, who was Bradley's classmate and teammate at Princeton, lamented that the "cause of big-time college sports is lost, the train has left the station," to which stated there was nary a single raised eyebrow. Most of the conference was devoted to considering ways that these excesses can somehow still be avoided in women's sports, in the Ivy and Patriot Leagues, in Division 3, and even in high schools. The participants agreed that it is probably only the federal and state governments that may be strong enough to help here, and that the NCAA is beyond recovery.

It is an understatement to state that the NCAA is exhibiting little or no leadership in trying to clean up big-time college sports, with the fat compensation packages it pays its key executives and its close ties to corporations such as Budweiser, Nike, and the TV networks. Its policies contribute, indirectly, to the widely publicized "binge drinking" that is so prevalent on college campuses these days. One of the best attended workshops at the NCAA's annual conference last year involved legal counsel for three of the

Universities advising athletic administrators how to drive underage drinking off campus in order to avoid costly lawsuits.

Every line of the NCAA budget has grown exponentially, for instance, in the past ten years, with the single exception of that of the department that is charged to enforce the organizations rules governing the universities, and that line has gone down 25%. The NCAA spends \$2 million of a \$300 million budget to enforce its rules.

There's a revealing Newsletter story, incidentally, about the reason the NCAA moved its headquarters eleven years ago from Kansas City to Washington, D.C. "We made an early and intuitive decision, at substantial cost, to locate our office at 1 DuPont Circle, alongside other prestigious higher education associations, including the AAUP and American Council on Education. Because of our office location, we are perceived and treated as one of the higher education associations. It has improved and developed our position with the higher education community. We understand how important appearances are."

A writer for the Chronicle of Higher Education, which relentlessly covers big-time sports and the NCAA, described last year what the NCAA does best: "It knows how to make contacts and keep them. Its people know when to talk, listen and ask. They know how to cut a deal. Most of all, they know how to handle the tricky business of handing out tickets to the most popular sporting event in the country – the finals of the Division 1 men's basketball tournament."

The thing that makes me the angriest about all this is what it is doing to the values of young people in these universities.

Consider this recent lead editorial, for instance, in an influential trade publication called "Trusteeship."

"Much of the public believes higher education institutions are compromising their academic integrity in the name of big-time intercollegiate athletics. The public has come to view college athletics as more about entertainment and winning than about education. As a result, you who serve on these Boards of Trustees will face the increasingly unpleasant challenge of determining just how much damage to institutional integrity the institution can absorb as a result of the widely-held perception that big-time college athletics are out of control."

And here's Ernest Boyer of Carnegie, at the end of his acclaimed study called *The Undergraduate Experience in America*: "The cynicism that stems from all the abuses in college athletics infects the rest of student life, from promoting academic dishonesty to the loss of individual ideals. We find it disturbing that students who admit to cheating usually excuse their conduct as being set by the college example . . . of athletic dishonesty."



I finished the first draft of this paper exactly one month ago today, and there have been these subsequent events:

1. The Board Chairman and Chancellor of the University of Kansas recommended that the NCAA adopt a package of reform measures for its Division 1-A universities designed to place greater emphasis on grade point averages and core high school courses than test scores. The reform package will increase the number of high school core courses required by athletes to participate in sports as freshmen from 13 to 14, will maintain the requirement of a 2.0 GPA in these core courses, and will . . . eliminate the minimum test score currently in place.” There are other parts of this proposal, and it will be fascinating to follow what happens to it. The coaches will know how to deal with the last part eliminating the minimum test score.

2. The NCAA will never let this happen but many experts agree that one of the saddest charades in college sports exists because so many talented young athletes, half of them African Americans, see big-time competition as the only route to the pros even though only ½ of 1% of them will actually reach that level. Young men who have no academic talent and/or interest in attending college feel compelled to be there. Universities prostitute themselves by accepting special admits and offering them phony programs. There is no integrity in the process, and the whole world knows it. What the straight forward thing to do would be field teams made of players who have no necessary academic connection to the universities. Rather, the basketball and football teams, perhaps subsidized by the pros, would be separate business entities. The players might even be state employees, with the various perks such people receive. The team’s budgets would be separate from the universities. Some of the players might enroll as part-time students but that wouldn’t be required. They might be paid minor-league equivalent salaries. They could wear the universities’ colors and play in their gyms and stadia. Will something like this happen? Of course not, but it would be the honest thing to do and Divisions 1-AA and III (the Ivies and Patriot League and small private colleges) should continue to distance themselves from the NCAA and its Division 1-A universities and govern themselves in ways that are consistent with their traditional ideals and missions.

3. Two coaches from Miami University in Oxford were disciplined for their behavior following a close defeat at the hands of Marshall, while Columbus police will wind up arresting at least 50 Ohio State undergraduates who rioted off campus following the big win over Michigan, and several U.C. Players repeatedly appeared on national television after participating in post-game fights after a heartbreaker in Hawaii. There were similar fights and arrests the same day following traditional games between California and Stanford, Clemson and South Carolina, Georgia and Georgia Tech, and Florida State-North Carolina State, perhaps others. Binge drinking was rampant in all instances, all of it, happily, for the universities, off campus.

4. Dr. Steger announced his upcoming retirement as President of U.C., and there was a chorus of editorials rightly praising his construction of handsome new buildings, his money-raising, and lots of prestigious scholarly research. I saw no mention anyplace of what happened to undergraduate education at U.C. on his watch.

5. Sports Illustrated published its first of what will be four lengthy special reports on “High School Sports: Inside the Changing World of America’s Young Athletes.” Bucking a powerful trend towards specialization, this report cites commercialism in high school sports that is creeping down from the colleges, and begs the high schools to be careful.

6. One Reuben Patterson became the third NBA graduate in 10 months of Bob Huggins’ basketball academy at U.C. to be arrested for beating up a wife or a girl friend. U.C. and his team’s attorney had no comment, as advised by legal counsel.

7. The New York Times wondered if Division 1-A excesses are creeping into the Ivies and Patriot League and Division 3, and wrote an extensive piece about Williams College, which has won the Division 3 equivalent of the Sears Cup (Top record for all sports, men and women) 6 of the past 7 years, and has won 84% of its competitions over that span. The Williams’ faculty is worried that 86 slots in an entering class of 525 are reserved for what the admission office calls “athletic protects,” although these athletic protects are obviously lots abler than the young men we have been discussing in this paper, as members of a college where the SATs average 1408 and the average class rank is in the top 50%. With 31 varsity teams, 40% of Williams’ student body plays an intercollegiate sport. Amherst, Bowdoin and Wesleyan are all joining Williams, at their faculties’ insistence, in reducing these so-called “athletic protects.” It’s a fascinating controversy. Five families threatened to sue Williams last May, by the way, when the college’s women’s lacross team, ranked #1 nationally in Division III, was prohibited by the President from competing in the year-end NCAA championships because the play-offs conflicted with exams.

8. You will be spared an unrelated comment about the Cincinnati Bengals, because of the late hour, with their half-billion taxpayer-funded stadium. Forbes Magazine keeps track of what the various NFL franchises are worth, and the Bengals, have increased in value, thanks in most substantial part to the stadium, which Mike Brown uses 10 afternoons a year, from \$80 million 1990 to \$507 million today. Here’s how I concluded my piece about the Bengals three years ago: “If fielding a competitive team isn’t important to Mr. Brown, or is beyond his capabilities to achieve, he should sell the team, reap his taxpayer-furnished windfall, and go away.”

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