

# **REFLECTIONS, 2016-2021**

**The Sequel to *AN ODYSSEY OF REFORM INITIATIVES, 1986-2015***

**Frank G. Splitt**

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## DEDICATION

This sequel to the *Odyssey* book is dedicated to the memory of General Andrew Jackson Goodpaster, 1915-2005, a soldier, engineer, and scholar who fought with uncommon valor in World War II, advised several presidents, and came out of retirement to serve as the superintendent of West Point.

He is an example of a truly enlightened military intellectual who used his considerable talents in the service of his country. His life story now serves as an inspiration to others who are challenged with the task of resolving complex domestic and foreign policy issues.

He is also one of my heroes as well as a second cousin—sharing our Polish great grandmother, Katarzyna Pytlic, the mother of Anna Pytlic Splitt, my paternal grandmother.



***General Andrew Jackson Goodpaster***

See page 39 for a *Daily Herald* letter that was read into the Congressional Record on March 21, 2019 by Illinois Congresswoman Janet Schakowsky.

Also, see page 56 for a review of C. Richard Nelsons' biography *The Life and Work of Andrew J. Goodpaster: Best Practices in National Security Affairs* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).

Note: The Splitt Polish family history is by virtue of Goodpaster's granddaughter, Sarah Nesnow.

## IN FOND REMEMBRANCE

*George Aschenbrenner*

*Robert Beam, Paul Bechtold, Shel Berman,*

*James Booth, William Brown, Morris Brodwin.*

*Jack Bridges, Richard Carsello, Robert Carsello, Justin Cloe,*

*Orrie Colby, Jerome Cohen, Stanton Cook, Steve Crowell, Robert Day,*

*Joe DeMarco, Wayne Duke, Harvey Duncan, Max Epstein, Ed Ernst, Ed Franzak,*

*Rea Frisbie, John Ferm, Tom Frost, Joe Hafenscher, Carl Heitz, Theodore Hesburgh,*

*Bill Hines, Wally Homerding, Rudy Hornacek, Ed Hughes, John Jacobs, Bob Janowiak,*

*Don Jaycox, Raymond Jenks, Arnold Kaplan, Bill Kashul, Donald Kayser, John Klemen,*

*Tom Kummerer, Ed Laramie, Grant Leslie, Bob Loftus, Gerry McCullough, Bob McKelvey,*

*Jim McKelvey, Emmett McMahon, Anthony Michel, Art Moeller, Bill Muhr, John Nowicki,*

*Jack O'Mara, Vernon Oie, Jim Ostler, John Pappas, Edson Peck, John Pope, Hal Raemer,*

*Andy Reddy, William Reddy, David Richter, Dwight Sandman, Ray Schaff, Arthur Schmitt,*

*George Schott, Paul Shylo, Arnold Siegert, Dave Solomon, Eugene Splitt, Duane Stewart,*

*Theodore Sunko, Allen Taflove, Jack Terry, Bob Tucker, Jim Vaughan,*

*Larry von Tersch, Earl Washburn,*

*Peter Wrenn, Robert Young,*

*Henry Zucker*

**Cherished friends, colleagues, mentors, and teammates who played a significant role in my life as did the mentors whom I never met:**

*Edward Birge, Thomas Berry, Joseph Campbell, Lou Gehrig,*

*Andrew Goodpaster, Aldo Leopold, Carl Sagan,*

*Jonas Salk, Claude Shannon, and*

*Fulton Sheen*

## Comments Re: *An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives, 1986-2015*

*Intercollegiate athletics, as currently practiced by many universities, compromise admissions standards, weaken the curriculum, and threaten other essential academic values. Neither coaches nor athletic directors, nor presidents, nor trustees can bring about real reform without help. Faculty members have the most at stake in upholding academic values; they represent the best hope of achieving genuine progress in making the kinds of changes required. As a result, I warmly endorse the arguments contained in this brief for involving faculty in a campaign for integrity in college sports.* (From his commentary on the 2003 brief, "Reclaiming Academic Primacy in Higher Education.")

—**Derek C. Bok**, the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary University Professor and former President, Harvard University

*A Great Brief! I'm staggered at the complexity of the total problem. Frank Splitt does an excellent job of organization and explanation. After reading the entire document, I believe that achieving the stated goals would not only be a boon to colleges and universities in the long run, but would also provide a tremendous, and needed, national challenge to primary and secondary education. The challenge would be to improve the quality of their graduates, and in the process, enable many school districts to emerge from a morass of continued mediocrity. This is a must read for university trustees.* (From his commentary on the 2003 brief, "Reclaiming Academic Primacy in Higher Education.")

—**Stanton R. Cook**, Retired Chairman, Tribune Company, Life Trustee, Northwestern University

*As Splitt concludes, reform will only occur when concerned faculty demand that college sports be mainstreamed into the university and realigned with academic values, and when citizens demand that public bodies such as governing boards, state government, and federal government cease the special treatment that shields intercollegiate athletics from the rules that govern the rest of higher education. This sequel joins Splitt's first paper as a must-read for those concerned about the future of higher education in America.* (From the foreword to the 2004 sequel to the brief, "The Faculty-Driven Movement to Reform College Sports")

—**James J. Duderstadt**, President Emeritus, University of Michigan

*How can one begin anywhere except to compliment the author in the strongest and most sincere terms for the time, effort, and insight he brought to the issues in education. As one who shares his interest in the subject, I much appreciate his entry into the arena. Anyone serious about reform should refrain from using the term "student-athlete." Reform will come only when faculty apply to themselves what they so freely demand of others. In other words, reform must begin with truth-telling disclosure. No disclosure; no reform.*

—**Jon L. Ericson**, Ellis & Nelle Levitt Professor emeritus and former Provost at Drake University, and author of *While Faculty Sleep: A Little Book About Big Corruption* (Lulu, 2015).

*I concur with Frank Splitt's views as expressed in this book, specifically, that we need to get priorities right at our nation's schools and that America's education enterprise should be focused on academics not athletics. The only way America will be able to maintain its place as the world's premier economic power is to fully develop the potential of its people. Meeting this challenge will require an education system in which the primacy of achievement and excellence in all spheres of life is absolutely clear. Funding priorities for our extracurricular programs as well as for core academics must be scrutinized, particularly our tendency to fund large sports programs that serve a small number of elite athletes at the expense of broad-based programs in music and the arts.*

—**John R. Gerdy**, former associate commissioner of the Southeastern Conference and author of *Ball or Bands: Football vs. Music as an Educational and Community Investment* (Archway Publishing, 2014).

*I have become acquainted with efforts to propose a seemingly minor but important and timely change to "ABET Engineering Criteria 2000" that would upgrade knowledge of environmental implications of engineering designs. I believe that such a move to foster and integrate environmental considerations BROADLY across engineering education is sorely needed. Essentially all engineering disciplines now play a role in the move toward "dematerialization" of net resource flows (lifecycle design) in providing goods and services.* (From his commentary on the 2002 trilogy "Engineering Education Reform")

—**John H. (Jack) Gibbons**, (former) Assistant to the President for Science and Technology and Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology

*The perspectives in this brief should prove to be of value as "grounding" material for all those taking on the formidable task of driving serious and comprehensive reform in, intercollegiate athletics requisite to preserving its role in the academic enterprise. It is a valuable contribution to the ongoing debate on reform efforts in higher education ... most worthy of widespread distribution, as well as serious attention and discussion by all those involved, or, that ought to be involved in higher education reform movements.* (From his foreword to the 2003 brief "Reclaiming Academic Primacy in Higher Education")

—**Theodore M. Hesburgh**, C.S.C., President Emeritus, University of Notre Dame

*In my 12 years as editor of a subscription-based news organization with a mission to provide all sides of every issue related to college athletics, I have interacted with hundreds of people who cover a wide spectrum of opinions on the subject. If asked to describe Frank Splitt in two words, I would say "Renaissance Man." As reflected in his Odyssey of Reform Initiatives, Frank is an idealist in the sense that he advocates for optimum resolution of complex issues. His odyssey reveals a passionate champion of academic and integrity and primacy, as well as transparency and accountability in all of the areas he addresses. Some might disagree with his opinions, but none can deny his perseverance, consistency and the compelling nature of his arguments.*

—**Nick Infante**, Editor College Athletics Clips

*I feel indebted to Frank Splitt for his years of responsible criticism of the impact of commercialism on American higher education. Frank has brought the insights of a thoughtful and highly skilled engineer to bear not only on the problems of engineering education, but on the educational role of athletics. His dogged and perceptive critique has alerted us both to what it is that we need to defend, and who it is that we need to beware. It is hard for me to believe that it is not too late to save intercollegiate athletics as a genuinely academic enterprise, but if we can, it will be because of the efforts of Frank and his allies. I am proud to be among that number.*

—**Stanley N. Katz**, Professor, Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University

*In 1985, the Institute for Educational Leadership published a very influential report authored by Harold L. Hodgkinson, "All One System: Demographics of Education, Kindergarten through Graduate School." The report had the broad effect of modifying the perception of American education as a set of discrete institutions serving students at each age level and working in isolation from each other. Hodgkinson argued that, "if people can begin to SEE the educational system as a single entity through which people move, they may begin to behave as if all (levels) of education were related." This is a vision that clearly informs the work of Frank Splitt in these collected papers. His passionate interest in reforming college athletics and restoring the priority of the academic mission of higher education led him inevitably to a thoughtful and well-informed consideration of related problems currently affecting K-12 education. Students at every level will benefit if his voice is heard.*

—**Michael Mangan**, Education Consultant (retired), Illinois State Board of Education

*The author of these three papers, the trilogy on engineering education reform, offers specific suggestions. In a true missionary spirit, he draws on extensive industrial experience, his participation in the early development of ABET EC 2000, and a substantial immersion in academe to provide his own noteworthy insights and a number of provocative ideas. Whether or not you agree with them, this interesting set of papers should be viewed as a valuable contribution to the literature on engineering education reform. It is worthy of serious attention and discussion by all stakeholders in engineering education. (From her foreword to the 2002 trilogy "Engineering Education Reform")*

—**Irene Peden**, Professor Emerita, University of Washington

*Changing the ABET engineering criteria to include environmental responsibilities should be enacted immediately. Environmental responsibility should become a core part of all engineering classes. New classes are not needed but current professors need to be educated on how to integrate environmental impact into their classes. Design projects can be geared to this as well, when applicable, which will get students thinking creatively about these issues outside of class. I endorse Frank Splitt's initiative as a positive step towards environmental literacy. (From her commentary on the 2002 trilogy "Engineering Education Reform")*

—**Manijeh Razeghi**, Walter P Murphy Professor, Director Center for Quantum Devices, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science, Northwestern University.

*Frank Splitt provides the public and academics with a straight-speaking, well-referenced book describing the ways in which universities are compromising their basic academic mission when they fail to adequately monitor sport and its place in their institutions. More important, he sets forth an agenda for faculty, telling them what they can do. Members of the academy should take the time to read the brief to discover what is happening all around them, become engaged, and go on to contribute to the restoration of academics to its rightful primacy in higher education. (From her commentary on the 2003 brief "Reclaiming Academic Primacy in Higher Education")*

—**Carol Simpson Stern**, Professor and former Dean of the Graduate School, Northwestern University and Past President of the American Association of University Professors

*Frank Splitt set the table for the college reform conversation. I showed up late but intend to add to what he started with my formation of Paper Class, Inc., [paperclassinc.com](http://paperclassinc.com), an organization dedicated to fighting on behalf of student-athletes for a fair and proper education.*

—**Mary Willingham**, Co-author (with Jay M. Smith) of *Cheated: The UNC Scandal, the Education of Athletes, and the Future of Big-time College Sports* (Potomac Books, 2015).

# Table of Contents

<b>Dedication</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Comments Re: <i>An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives, 1986-2015</i></b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Preface</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>Foreword</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>PART 1, 2016-2019</b>	
<b>Introduction</b>	
<b>An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives: The Back Story</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>America's Democracy: Eroding from within</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Educational Opportunities Lost When Schools Ban Native American Symbols</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>How Colleges Cope with a Perfect Storm</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Everyone Should Know the Brutal Truth About College Sports</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>On scandals and balance between academics and athletics</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>College Sports and the Federal False Claims Act: A Redux</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>An Ongoing American Tragedy in Higher Education: Where is the Outrage and Where Are the Governing Boards?</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>My Grandpa's Talk to Mrs. Dexter's STEM Classes</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>The Daily Herald: Letters to the Editor</b>	<b>36</b>
<i>Russian interference in the 2016 election</i>	
<i>Passing GOP tax reforms a likely Pyrrhic victory</i>	
<i>An unforgettable teacher</i>	
<i>Pitchforks also out for Chief Illiniwek</i>	
<i>'Moral catastrophes' and college sports</i>	
<i>A wake-up call for us all</i>	
<i>Another wake-up call for all of us</i>	
<i>An Illinoisan too important to ignore</i>	
<i>The real scandal in college admissions is sports recruiting</i>	
<i>Some schools cheat better than other</i>	
<i>Censure a better way than impeachment</i>	
<b>The Wall Street Journal: Letters to the Editor</b>	<b>42</b>
<i>College Athletes and the Big Lie</i>	
<i>Blame Cheating by U.S. Universities on Money and American Sports Culture</i>	
<i>Let Campus Debates Begin</i>	
<i>U. of Chicago Says 'No' to the Thought Police</i>	
<i>Trump's Made-in-U.S.A. Pledge: A pig-in-a-poke</i>	

*On the Contrary*  
*Practice makes perfect*  
*The Catholic Vote for Trump*  
*The Razzle-Dazzle Money Bowl*  
*The Catholic Vote*  
*Russian Interference in the 2016 Election*  
*U.S Catholic Bishops: A Contrarian Vote*  
*Peggy Noonan's Uncharacteristic Partisan Bias*  
*A Prescient Letter?*  
*Passing GOP Tax Reforms: A Likely Pyrrhic Victory*  
*Trump Made a Mountain Out of Mueller's Molehill*  
*Hypocrisy Abounds*  
*America Needs Media-literate Citizens*  
*College Sports Corruption: Also Look at Administrators and Governing Boards*  
*We Live in an Era of Feelings*  
*No Nobel Prize for Claude Shannon*  
*A Moral Catastrophe*  
*A Failure to Communicate*  
*On a Slippery Slope*  
*The College Admissions Racket*  
*Scrutiny Warranted*  
*Special admissions: The 'original sin' of college sports*  
*On Billion-Dollar 'Amateurs'*  
*Another unasked question*  
*No Competent Generals Wanted*  
*A Dual Obsession*  
*Here's a Gaudy Revelation: Some Schools Cheat Better Than Others*  
*Mission Creep in Higher Education*  
*A March of Folly*

**Book Reviews**

**52**

*A Must-read Book on the Resolution of Domestic and International Conflicts*  
*Review of A New Map for Relationships: Creating True Love at Home and Peace on the Planet*

*Schreiber Tells It How It Really Is*  
*Review of My Two Elaines: Coping and Surviving as an Alzheimer's Caregiver.*

*The Cherokee Nation: A Story of Survival against All Odds*  
*Review of Blood Moon: An American Epic of War and Splendor in the Cherokee Nation*

*A provocative book that forces the reader to think*  
*Review of The University We Need: Reforming American Higher Education*

*The Fifth Risk: A wake-up call for all of us*  
*Review of The Fifth Risk*

*A Must-read Story of American Civilian Heroes*  
*Review of A Brotherhood of Spies: The U-2 and the CIA's Secret War*

*Andrew Jackson Goodpaster: An unsung general too important to ignore*  
*Review of The Life and Work of Andrew J. Goodpaster: Best Practices in National Security Affairs*

*Tyler Kepner's K: A veritable time machine*  
*Review of K: A History of Baseball in Ten Pitches*

**56**



## ILLUSTRATIONS

### PART 2, 2020-2021

#### Introduction

<b>An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives: The Back Story Updated</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>COVID-19 Fatalities: A Long and Perilous Road Ahead</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Guest view: A divided America cannot stand</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Climate Still Crying for Political Attention</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Trumpism and Its Factions</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>The Trump Presidency: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Confirmation Bias and Today's Politics</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Baseball: My Dreams and Memories</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Judy Hagen Splitt: Music and Life</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Daily Herald: Letters to the Editor</b>	<b>37</b>
<i>A Bridge Too Far</i>	
<i>Americans are a resilient people</i>	
<i>COVID-19: A crisis of leadership</i>	
<i>Desperation, fear</i>	
<i>2020: A Year of Peril</i>	
<i>Trump Acquitted Not Vindicated</i>	
<b>The Wall Street Journal: Letters to the Editor</b>	<b>41</b>
<i>Lessons to Be Learned at West Point?</i>	
<i>The Impeachment Vote</i>	
<i>Charter Schools: Caveat Emptor,</i>	
<i>Minimize Political Extremism</i>	
<i>Affirmative Action Gone Awry?</i>	
<i>What About Eleanor Roosevelt?</i>	
<i>Thanks for the Mulligan</i>	
<i>Also Not in My House</i>	
<i>The Trump Presidency: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly</i>	
<i>Bad Behavior Demands Consequences</i>	
<i>Henninger Opts for Trump and Chaos</i>	
<i>Misdirected Attacks on Judge Barrett</i>	
<i>Needed: An Unselfish Way of Thinking</i>	
<i>Needed: An Honest and Balanced Account of American History</i>	
<i>The Scowcroft-Goodpaster Connection</i>	
<i>The Physics of a Political Crackup</i>	
<i>Factions At Play</i>	
<i>Ruinous American Factionalism</i>	
<i>All That Glitters Is Not Gold</i>	
<i>The U.S. Is a World Leader</i>	
<i>An Ongoing Tragedy</i>	
<i>Silence Is Complicity</i>	
<i>Loyalist ignores consequences of bad behavior</i>	<b>47</b>

<b>The Wall Street Journal: Letters to the Editor (Continued)</b>	<b>48</b>
<i>More on Banning Mass Gatherings</i>	
<i>CDC reporting has likely been trumped</i>	
<i>Assume all passengers are carriers</i>	
<i>The White House Defends the President</i>	
<i>Pandering for the president</i>	
<i>Who will tell the president?</i>	
<i>Americans are a tough and resilient people</i>	
<i>Cheating: Here There and Everywhere</i>	
<i>A Partisan Defense Against Impeachment</i>	
<i>A March of Folly</i>	
 <b>Books Reviewed</b>	 <b>51</b>
<i>Slaying Goliath</i> by Diane Ravitch	
<i>Charter Schools and Their Enemies</i> by Thomas Sowell	
<i>My NUNcommn Life</i> by Patricia Shevlin	
 <b>The New Reality... A Call for Leadership</b>	 <b>55</b>
 <b>Creating Our Common Future</b>	 <b>61</b>
 <b>A Word of Gratitude</b>	 <b>68</b>
 <b>The Author</b>	 <b>69</b>

## PREFACE

As the president-elect of The Drake Group, I came to find that Dr. Frank Splitt joined the Group in 2003, shortly before the publication of his brief “Reclaiming Academic Primacy in Higher Education.” Throughout his career, he has been a steady hand, a truth teller and chronicler of issues of concern related to the conduct intercollegiate athletics. Thus, it is appropriate during this, the 20<sup>th</sup> year of The Drake Group, that we post this collection of Dr. Splitt’s more recent commentaries, as a sequel to his 1986-2015 collection. Three years ago we were pleased to at least partially disaggregate the original collection so that his writings could be found via an issues search by topic.

His insight and prescience have been nothing short of incredible. Today we find ourselves on the cusp of Congressional intervention in the governance of intercollegiate athletics, an occurrence Splitt predicted in numerous writings.

He foresaw the inability of college presidents to control athletic programs on their own campuses. He recognized the same impotence of the NCAA to reign in the selfish power of the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) conference commissioners who arrogantly embraced commercialization and saw nothing wrong in championing professional football or basketball operations under the shield of a non-profit tax-exempt educational institution.

He identified the wrong turn at the crossroads - the inevitable result of the successful 1997 FBS threat to have their way. In that year, the FBS members threatened to leave the NCAA, which would have effectively pulled the Final Four financial rug out from under organization that was supporting the participation of 430,000 college athletes.

The FBS extortion worked. The FBS was given majority control of what is now the NCAA Board of Governors, the entity controlling distribution of NCAA national championship proceeds, and extorted the promise that 100% of the revenues of any NCAA national FBS football championship would go to FBS institutions alone. Over 1,100 other member institutions succumbed, beginning the slide down the slippery slope

Splitt accurately recognized that the 1997 vote was the death of any hope of the NCAA reforming from within. The one-member-one-vote check and balance system was gone and would never return under FBS control.

He began the drumbeat – only Congress had the power to overcome the FBS plutocracy. He applauded the House Ways and Means Committee in 2006 when they initiated an investigation into the tax-exempt status of the NCAA and again during the Obama administration in 2010, when then Secretary of Education Arne Duncan criticized the direction of intercollegiate athletics consistent with Splitt’s positions. He continues the theme of calling for Congressional intervention through today with The Drake Group enthusiastically embracing his baton.

Throughout his writings, Splitt's moral compass was always front and center: college athletes were being exploited and the academic integrity of higher education dragged in the mud to appease the God of winning football and basketball games.

Coaches and athletics directors were protecting their unjust salary riches. The leadership of our colleges and universities was ignoring their fiduciary obligation to ensure responsible use of institutional assets, looking the other way as vast sums of money were being spent on lavish facilities inaccessible to non-athlete students and designed to impress 17 year-old recruits. Splitt wrote on.

Like The Drake Group, Frank Splitt continues to exhibit the keys to successful reform: persistence in the accurate expression of facts and data, a commitment to exposing corrupt actions and decisions and an unwavering insistence on academic and administrative integrity. The Drake Group is honored to follow his lead.

Donna Lopiano, Ph.D.  
President, Sports Management Resources

## FOREWORD

In my 17 years as editor of a subscription-based service about the business of college athletics, I have interacted with hundreds of people who cover a wide spectrum of opinions on the subject. If asked to describe Frank Splitt in two words, I would say “Renaissance Man.”

As reflected in his book, *Odyssey of Reform Initiatives*, Frank is an idealist in the sense that he advocates for optimum resolution of complex issues. His odyssey reveals a passionate champion of academic integrity and primacy, as well as transparency and accountability in all of the areas he addresses. Some might disagree with his opinions, but none can deny his perseverance, consistency and the compelling nature of his arguments.

As the reader will see, Splitt has continued with his intrepid style as he addresses an even wider spectrum of issues.

The first piece in this sequel is “An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives: The Back Story.” It’s based on my extensive conversations with Splitt prior to publishing the *Clips* review of his book.

As the reader will also see, Splitt reveals his signature style in “America’s Democracy: Eroding from within” summarizing the many issues and challenges faced by our American democracy with a focus on the negative impact of the sports-money problem in higher education.

His guest column for the *Daily Herald* newspaper headlined “Educational Opportunities Lost When Schools Ban Native American Symbols” provides insights into the controversy surrounding the use of Native American imagery in America’s high schools and colleges, as well as how this imagery could have been, and can still be, used as a stepping stone to transformative education.

“How Colleges Cope with a Perfect Storm” reveals that among other things, schools must confront sports related academic corruption, sexual abuse and serious drinking problems. Splitt contends that schools will likely muddle on. He concludes “Perhaps that’s the best that can be expected from institutions fraught with human frailties that operate in a divided nation where its citizens are seemingly addicted to sports entertainment and gambling—prioritizing athletics over academics.”

In his last commentary, “Everyone Should Know the Brutal Truth About College Sports,” he argues that all schools cheat in some way or another, some better than others, and that deceit, deception, and exploitation are part and parcel of today’s college-sports programs and still further that everyone knows, or at least should know.

The author’s letters to the editors of *The Daily Herald* and *The Wall Street Journal* cover a wide variety of subjects including the political and religious. His book reviews reveal his passion for baseball, his background in intelligence work, as well as deep respect for Native Americans. His high regard for the life work of his cousin General Andrew Goodpaster can be seen in the March 9, 2019 letter to the editor of the *Daily Herald* that was read into the Congressional Record.

The author’s 2019 capstone essay “An Ongoing American Tragedy in Higher Education” is sure to spark attention, promote discussion, and potentially trigger The Drake Group’s long sought reforms.

Nick Infante  
Editor College Athletics Clips



The author with his wife Judy after the April 19, 2017, *Odyssey* book presentation ceremony at Northwestern University. *Photo by Anne Rassas.*

## **PART 1, 2016-2019**





# INTRODUCTION

*...there is nothing more difficult and dangerous, or more doubtful of success, than an attempt to introduce a new order of things... –Niccolo Machiavelli, 1513*

It's been four years since the publication of the *Odyssey*. About a year or so ago, friends and family members who saw that I was still writing, began asking, "Why don't you write an addendum to your book?" The following collection of published and unpublished reflections is my answer,

These past four year still found me commenting about hot-button issues raised in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and my local newspaper, *The Daily Herald*. It was akin to taking another trip back in time—rekindling fond memories of friends and colleagues who provided motivation, guidance, and support along the way. Also rekindled were not so fond memories of the formidable challenges to change and the deceitful and deceptive tactics used by defenders of the status quo.

As noted in the *Odyssey*, early in 2003 my focus turned to collegiate athletics reform and its negative impact on our nation's education system at all levels – a major focus thereafter. It has been troubling to learn that officials at colleges and universities that support big-time sports programs have taken a lesson from the bank robber Willie Sutton. They too know where the big money is and woe be to those who attempt to keep them from it by exposing what amounts to a money-making racket based on deceit, deception, and the exploitation of the names, images, and likeness' of their school's so-called student-athletes.

It was also troubling to learn that even officials at world-class schools can misbehave under the corruptive influence of big money and the NCAA that exerts a stranglehold-like power over officials at its member schools. Sad to say, these school officials not only have the power to readily terminate untenured faculty, but also the inclination to do so if the faculty person jeopardizes the viability of their sports programs in any way whatsoever. Likewise, presidents can face a similar fate at the hands of booster-driven school boards. [The U. of Chicago Ditched Big-Time Football, Why Haven't More Colleges Followed Suit?, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Sept. 27, 2019].

As a consequence of focus on college sports and the work of The Drake Group's Dave Ridpath, Gerry Gurney, and Donna Lopiano, as well as Sonny Vaccaro, Ramogi Huma, and Kain Coulter, the amateur model of intercollegiate athletics touted by the NCAA cartel (National Collegiate Athletic Association and its member colleges and universities) is under a multiplicity of powerful assaults.

These assaults include, among others, state legislation with regard to athlete's names, images, and likeness' (NILs) that NCAA President Mark Emmett considers as an existential threat, educational initiatives in the U.S. Congress that may very well lead to legislation aimed at vastly improved transparency, accountability, and governance of college sports, as well as books such as *Indentured: The Battle to End the Exploitation of College Athletes*, by Joe Nocera and Ben Strauss that serve to illuminate the darker sides of collegiate athletics.

"The sand is shifting under the feet of the NCAA," so said Andy Zimbalist, an economics professor at Smith College and co-author with Gerry Gurney and Donna Lopiano of the 2017 book *Unwinding Madness: What Went Wrong with College Sports—and How to Fix It*.

However, here is the brutal truth, paraphrasing Machiavelli: *There is nothing more difficult and dangerous, or more doubtful of success, than an attempt to introduce a new order of things in big-time, money-laden, politically-protected, collegiate athletics.* Witness the fact that the NCAA cartel has yet to face whistleblower-driven litigation for violation of the federal False Claims Act based on the false claim by the members of the cartel that its so-called student-athletes are primarily students rather than primarily athletes in the world of commercialized college sports entertainment.

For example the NCAA cartel, when pressed in 2015 by the strong player unionization effort, found the cartel in the best of all defensive positions. As reported in the *Wall Street Journal*: "Mr. Schapiro, Northwestern's president, has said the university would appeal a loss in federal court and take the case to the Supreme Court if necessary ," ["Ruling Expected on College Athlete's Union Bid," U.S. News, July 31, 2015].

How fortuitous for the NCAA cartel that it had its world-class Northwestern University, most likely the least corrupt of NCAA schools supporting big-time football and men's basketball programs, doing its dirty work. Northwestern has been front and center defending the cartel's money-driven exploitation of college athletes as well as its corrupting influence on the academic integrity of many of its member schools that support big-time sports programs, cf. my review of Jay Smith's and Mary Willingham's book "*Cheated: A Tale of Profit at the Expense of Academic Integrity*," Part 15-3 of the *Odyssey*.

America is a sports-entertainment-and-gambling-loving nation. When it comes to college sports, the culturally-rooted behavior of its citizens is not only intensely tribal in nature, but also very difficult to change. As reformers must know, it's all about money along with its awesome power to influence people and events. Money certainly makes strange bedfellows. Unfortunately, government officials, university presidents and trustees, along with many others who should be awake at the switch are willfully asleep. To try to wake them is to jolt them into a reality they just don't want to face.

To continue muddling on, perhaps that's the best that can be expected from institutions fraught with human frailties that operate in a divided nation where its citizens are seemingly addicted to sports entertainment and gambling—prioritizing athletics over academics. Nonetheless, critics should not despair, but rather keep up their courageous fight to provide the sunshine that illuminates the dark corners of the battlefield. For example, The Drake Group is presently working to catalyze resolution of the many troubling problems and issues in college sports that have had a profound negative effect on American higher education. Future efforts by The Drake Group and possibly ACTA could represent hope for breaking the NCAA stranglehold on higher education. Indeed, that would be a Grand Challenge.

It is my hope that this sequel to the *Odyssey* book will not only contribute to the ongoing process of knowledge creation and dissemination, but also provide lessons and insights into the difficulties associated with changing the order of things.

I still find Machiavelli to be dead right—working on reform initiatives, no matter what the area, is really not for the faint of heart. The formidable resistance to change demands no less than a formidable and coordinated response as well as able and respected leadership.

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December 31, 2019

# An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives: The Back Story

*A College Athletics Clips Book Review, 5-1-17, 8-24-17, 9-27-19*

*The book provides readers and researchers with case-study material about the difficulties associated with changing the order of things in college athletics and beyond. This review updates the list of colleges and universities that have accepted the book for their library collections.*

**Frank Splitt's book, titled An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives, 1986-2015:** From Engineering, K-12 and Higher: Education to the Environment, National Information Infrastructure, and Collegiate Athletics, (FutureVectors, Inc., 2015), is a collection of his writings and speeches covering a period of thirty years. It is expected to provide readers and researchers with case-study material as well as insights into the difficulties associated with changing the order of things in each of the areas specified in the book's title.

According to Splitt, the Odyssey was first cataloged by the Plum Lake Public Library in Sayner, Wisconsin where it was linked to Wisconsin's Merlin Catalog System. Thereafter, he created a CD that contains a PDF of the entire book as well as PDFs of each of its 15 parts and front end (Testimonials, Dedication, Table of Contents, Forewords, and Introduction).

Splitt notes that distribution of the book and CD has been restricted to gifting to public and university libraries as well as to selected individuals in the academy. However, he believes that the provision of free online access to on Engineering Education Reform, K-12 and Higher Education Reform, as well the material in the Odyssey book[1] will facilitate research as provide historical insights into concerns about our environment, the evolution of US Information Infrastructure, and Collegiate Athletics Reform.

The book features an impressive set of testimonials from Derek C. Bok, Stanton R. Cook, James J. Duderstadt, Jon L. Ericson, John R. Gerdy, John H. (Jack) Gibbons, Theodore M. Hesburgh, Nick Infante, Stanley N. Katz, Michael Mangan, Irene Peden, Manijeh Razeghi, Carol Simpson Stern, John P. (Sonny) Vaccaro, and Mary Willingham.

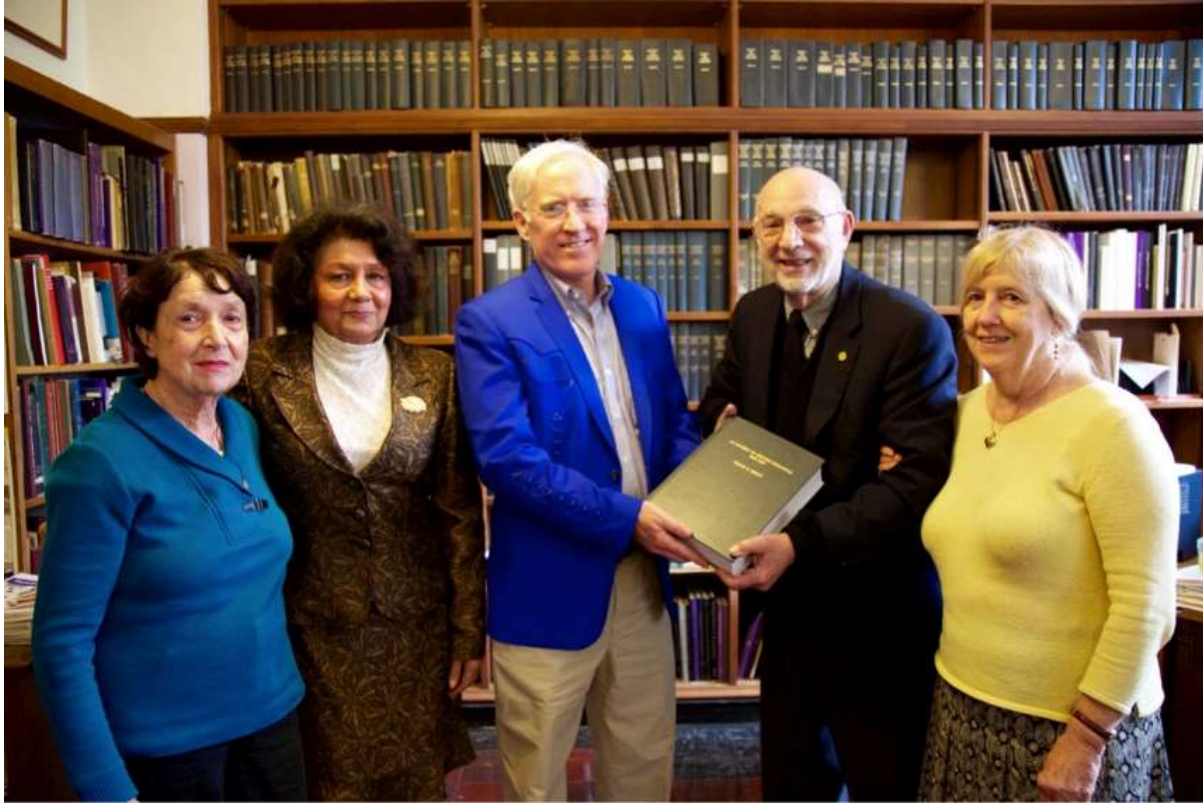
Descriptive book reviews written by John A. Prados and B. David Ridpath.[2, 3] were subsequently adapted to serve as the book's forewords. Also appended is a link to a related Daily Herald story[4] – a spinoff from Splitt's book presentation at Loyola U-Chicago on November 9, 2016. Again, according to Splitt, the story was based on copy submitted by the Mount Prospect Public Library where the book was first linked to WorldCat.

Splitt advises that there are a growing number of links to WorldCat from the following set of colleges and universities that have accepted the Odyssey for their library collections (with bold font indicating listing at WorldCat):

**Benedictine U., U. of California-Berkeley, U. of Chicago, Clemson U., U. of Denver, DePaul U., Dominican U.-River Forest, Drake U., Drexel U., Edgewood College, Georgia Institute of Technology, U. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Kansas U. at Lawrence, Lewis U., Loyola U.-Chicago, Luther College, Marquette U., U. of Michigan, North Central College, Montana State U., New Haven U., Northeastern U., Northern Arizona U., Northwestern U., U. of Notre Dame, Ohio U., Olivet Nazarene U., U. of Pennsylvania, Princeton U., Purdue U., Rutgers U., Saint Francis U., U. of South Carolina, U. of South Dakota, Stanford U., U. of Tennessee- Knoxville, Texas A&M U., Tufts U., U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Viterbo U., Washington U. in St. Louis, U. of Washington, Western Carolina U., and the U. of Wisconsin- Madison.**

A copy of the book and the CD are now part of the Distinctive Collections at the Northwestern University Archives. A related photo from the April 19, 2017, ceremony celebrating the presentation of the Odyssey book to the Northwestern University Libraries, pictures (left to right): Judy Splitt, Manijeh Razeghi, McCormick

School Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science and Director of the Center for Quantum Devices, Kevin Leonard, University Archivist, Frank Splitt, a former McCormick Faculty Fellow, and Carol Simpson Stern. School of Communications Professor of Performance Studies, a former dean of the Graduate School, and a past president of the American Association of University Professors.



*Photo courtesy of Kevin Leonard*

In his book review, John Prados concluded: "The Odyssey is destined to be a valuable reference for all those who have serious concerns about the future of education in America, and, as such, it would be a most worthy addition to public and university libraries." Donald Kayser, a 1952 graduating classmate of Frank Splitt at the Fournier Institute of Technology that was founded by Arthur J. Schmitt, made the following comment after reviewing the online text of the Odyssey: "Let's hope the book might motivate some leaders in academia to reassess the objectives of education and the distraction by the monetary influence of athletics." It seems fitting that the book and CD are being made part of the Arthur J. Schmitt Foundation Archives at the John T. Richardson Library at DePaul University.

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# America's Democracy: Eroding from within

*In his signature style, our guest author summarizes the many issues and challenges faced by our American democracy with a focus on the negative impact of the sports-money problem in higher education.*

*By Frank G. Splitt, 02-27-18, 03-24-18 (with Afterword)*

**Today's middle** and lower-class Americans see affluent individuals and large corporations accumulating ever more wealth as they wield more power and face fewer regulations while the #MeToo movement has exposed the significant impact of male power over women in the workplace. On the other hand, millions of struggling Americans must reduce their already modest standards of living to survive with the escalating cost of healthcare.

Today's Americans also want news; however, the real news business is suffering, the victim of the dependence on, and, an almost insatiable appetite for, social media of all too many citizens on 'news' from Google and Facebook. Both organizations have been and still are susceptible to trolling—foreigners sowing discord on the internet via fake news aimed at confusing and dividing Americans. In the absence of real news businesses, wild rumors and conspiracy theories can abound at the local and national level.

Adding to the divisions among Americans are vexing issues surrounding nuclear weapons, gun violence & control, abortion, immigration, race & civil rights, climate change, the environment, a failing K-12 school system, and the opioid crisis. Radically polarized views and apocalyptic positions on these issues rule the day while a dysfunctional government and the lack of visionary leadership adds to the morass.

It is of interest that *Time* magazine commissioned veteran conflict photographer James Nachtwey to document the opioid crisis over the past year through the people living it every day.[1] The entire issue was devoted to "The Opioid Diaries," a riveting photo-story of the worst addiction epidemic in U.S. history—a representative national emergency demanding our urgent attention.

All of this presents a not too pretty a picture of life in America's democracy that appears to be eroding from within. As we will see, that's not all. There exists still another pernicious problem facing America; it's in higher education.

To begin, I found it more than ironic that the USPS delivered the "opioid issue" of *Time* on the same day that it delivered the February 23, 2018, issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* featuring the cover story, "Unrivaled Power." [2] The story takes the reader inside Auburn University's secret effort to advance an athletic-friendly curriculum. It tells the now all too familiar story of how colleges and universities, supporting big-time football and men's basketball programs, seek fame and fortune by corrupting their academic integrity so as to field competitive teams in what have become professionalized venues—conferences, tournaments, and the like.

What was striking about the Auburn story is that the institution was subjected to the scrutiny of similar violations in the mid-2000s. As a consequence of this scrutiny, Dr. James Gundlach, an Emeritus Professor of Sociology, was the recipient of The Drake Group's 2008 *Robert Maynard Hutchins Award*, recognized for exposing systemic academic improprieties at Auburn and standing up for academic integrity while the focus of vitriol by Auburn fans, faculty and the administration.[3]

The attention-grabbing Auburn story followed a recent surge of other stories, each with revealing headlines, related to cheating and corruption in college sports, to wit: stories by Christian Smith,[4] Paul Campos,[5] Eric Kelderman,[6] and Bonestee & Hobson[7] When taken together, these stories reveal a troubling money-addictive situation involving an obsession with sports success and its tight relationship with fundraising, a situation that generally leads to cheating and academic corruption.[8] Here again we see a compelling demand for our attention.

School administrators and governing boards usually share these sports-success obsessions. Sad to say, for all intents and purposes, school presidents and their governing boards have made a Faustian bargain to gain and retain their prestigious positions. For example, they look the other way when it comes to the negative impact of sports programs on academic integrity so long as the programs contribute to their schools fame and fortune. Hypocrisy abounds. Sadly, wealthy governing board members usually are sports boosters who possess few discernible qualifications for overseeing large research universities beyond their ability to make huge philanthropic donations to the schools—often to the athletic department.

The scandal at Auburn is just the latest in a veritable litany of schools with sports-related scandals. Here are just a few of the schools: Michigan State University, Baylor University, Notre Dame University, the University of Florida, and the University of North Carolina. Noteworthy is the fact that the 20-year “Paper-class” cheating scandal at North Carolina was the subject of a detailed analysis in a recent book.[9] These scandals provide a cautionary tale for the many institutions that resemble these schools both on and off the playing field.

In view of the discord and sharp divisions on the issues within the American public and within its government, as well as the still unaddressed urgent need to resolve critical issues, one is again led to consider the possibility of a predicted outcome often attributed to Alexander Fraser Tyler (1747 -- 1813). To wit: "A democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until the voters discover that they can vote themselves largesse from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidates promising the most benefits from the public treasury with the result that a democracy always collapses over loose fiscal policy – always followed by a dictatorship."

This need not be so. Needless to say, difficult cultural changes would be required as would an electorate informed by real news and leaders who don't believe that money is everything. The *PBS* program “American Creed” reflects an effort to help meet these requirements by fostering a national conversation about America's ideals and identity.[10]

## AFTERWORD

*To Christians, the future does have a name, and its name is Hope. Feeling hopeful does not mean to be optimistically naïve and ignore the tragedy humanity is facing. Hope is the virtue of a heart that doesn't lock itself into darkness, that doesn't dwell on the past, does not simply get by in the present, but is able to see a tomorrow. Hope is the door that opens onto the future. Hope is a humble, hidden seed of life that with time, will develop into a large tree ... A single individual is enough for hope to exist, and that individual can be you.*

—**Pope Francis**, April 26, 2017

Previously, I wrote: “There exists still another pernicious problem facing America; it's in higher education. colleges and universities, supporting big-time football and men's basketball programs, seek fame and fortune by corrupting their academic integrity so as to field competitive teams in what have become professionalized venues—conferences, tournaments, and the like.” It's certainly reasonable to ask: What's the big deal? The answer can be found in the following excerpts from my 2005 essay on sports in America:[11]

America's love affair with big-time college-sports entertainment in combination with excessive cynicism, apathy (if not purposeful ignorance), and gambling, has been a recipe for growing commercialization at America's institutions of higher learning. Excessive commercialization has brought academic corruption, financial shenanigans, increasing expenditures on athletics, and money-focused presidents who view sports programs as an economic necessity and undergraduate education as an expensive nuisance. It is ironic that the government's subsidy of college sports via favorable tax policies is helping to fuel the destruction of what has been one of our nation's most precious resources.

Worse yet, greed, fanatic sports fans, an apathetic public and inconsistent government policies allow the commercially driven college-sports enterprise to grow unchecked, all but guaranteeing distracted, booster-beholden university administrators and an expanding set of fun-loving consumers for their

entertainment business ... a business that has hijacked the academic mission of many universities. The rising costs of residential higher education and improved technology-driven competitive education delivery systems lead to the conclusion that America's higher education enterprise is rapidly becoming untenable – unable to survive, just as predicted by Peter Drucker back in 1997.

And the beat goes on. Recent pieces on college sports issues in *The Wall Street Journal* (WSJ) by Joseph Epstein,[12] William McGurn,[13] and Jason Gay[14] tell similar stories....stories that have been told and retold for over the past 125 years. That is about the time since the Big-10 Conference was formed in 1895, perhaps even earlier. For more on the early history of corruption and how an athletic conference turned college football into big business, see Winton U. Solberg,[15]

From the very beginning, reformers have been faced with three brutal facts: There exists intense pressure on schools and their athletes to win at any cost (including cheating); Big money rules the day; Key academic leaders either feel no shame or simply suppress the feeling so as not to jeopardize their positions.

It was sad to see Notre Dame, a top college football program known for academic rigor and integrity, deal with a scandal involving players that cheated on class work. Although this scandal paled in comparison with the "Paper-class" scandal at the University of North Carolina mentioned earlier, it provided further evidence that college sports have likely passed a point of no return. Put another way: If it could happen at Notre Dame, it could happen anywhere. David J. Schmidly, a former president of Texas Tech, Oklahoma State and New Mexico, has said, "I don't think any institution is immune." [16] His statement had the same ring to it as then University of Chicago President Robert Maynard Hutchins' claim, back in 1939, "They all cheat."

The reformers are left to feel like bearers of unwelcome news, much like the feeling experienced by someone who, back in the day, suggested the use of Lifebuoy soap, in effect saying to the person that he has BO—a message no one really wants to hear.

When the Philadelphia Phillies played at the Baker Bowl during the 1920s, an outfield wall advertisement for Lifebuoy stated, "The Phillies use Lifebuoy" One night a vandal added, "And they still stink." See Wikipedia.[17]

Epstein wrote: "The fount of much corruption in college basketball and football is the alumni demand for winning teams." However, it's not just the alumni and the public that can be blamed. Cheating and corruption are dependent on school administrators and governing boards that believe the end justifies the means—believing fame and fortune justify overlooking academic corruption and cheating in their sports programs

Is there any hope for corrective action? In an attempt to answer that question, we go back to the future, to the year 1776 to be precise. But first, it was with the future in mind that Jim Duderstadt, President Emeritus and University Professor of Science and Engineering at the University of Michigan, wrote in 2000: "I believe that if university presidents would take a stand together and call for de-emphasis of big-time college sports, they would likely be successful. However, I also suspect it will take a major stimulus, a cosmic event, to galvanize such a united front as college sports careen out of control towards the edge of the cliff. Perhaps such opportunities will arise in the not-too-distant future." [18]

Indeed, cosmic events have occurred on an a regular basis in the ensuing 18 years ... scandalous events involving academic corruption and cheating, performance-enhancing drugs, athletes' name and image issues, violent athletes, sexual harassment, concussions, death, and more. Sadly, no matter how appalling, none of these events, even when taken together, have yet stimulated school presidents to band together to

reclaim academic primacy in higher education. Presidents are caught between a rock and a hard place, between a public that demands professional-level entertainment from their schools commercialized sports businesses, and their booster-packed governing boards that have the capacity and inclination to fire presidents who don't go along with winning at any cost.

The Epilogue for the 2003 paperback edition of Duderstadt's book on intercollegiate athletics began with an epigraph consisting of the following quote from Thomas Paine's 1776 "Common Sense" ... a quote that applies equally well to this and most other writings on college sports reform: "*Perhaps the sentiments contained in these pages are not yet sufficiently fashionable to procure them general favour; a long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right, and raises at first a formidable defense of custom. But the tumult soon subsides. Time makes more converts than reason.*"

America is a sports-entertainment-and-gambling-loving nation. When it comes to college sports, the culturally-rooted behavior of its citizens is not only intensely tribal in nature, but also very difficult to change. This circumstance is best described by Harvard socio-biologist E.O. Wilson in a section of a 2015 PBS Documentary that focused on the football fans at the University of Alabama.[19]

To be sure, the blatant hypocrisy, manifest in big-time college sports, is not lost on conscientious students, faculty members, and a portion of the general public. No wonder why so many are losing respect for academic leaders and their institutions that have been such a vital part of *America's democracy*.

Experience indicates that hope for tomorrow lies not with the executive and legislative branches of government, but rather with the judicial branch as well as with action-oriented citizens like those involved with the "American Creed," current and former college athletes that bring cases to court and/or seek to unionize, reform-minded faculty members and organizations such as The Drake Group, the College Sport Research Institute, the National Coalition Against Violent Athletes, and the *College Athletes Players Association*.

Hope also lies with journalists and other 'sunshine' writers who provide the light that illuminates the darkness surrounding big-time college sports. It is my hope that this light, coupled with the persevering work of all concerned parties, will, in time, reverse the erosion of our nation's institutions of higher education and so, in turn, help reverse the erosion of America's democracy.

*The Athletic Department in the modern university puts at risk the university's integrity, reputation, and academic priorities.*

—James J. Duderstadt, President Emeritus and Professor of Science and Engineering, University of Michigan



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# Educational Opportunities Lost When Schools Ban Native American Symbols

By Frank G. Splitt, Guest columnist

*The Daily Herald*

May 29, 2018

Have you ever wondered why Chief Illiniwek was banished as the symbol of the University of Illinois and why all the fuss about the Warrior Chief at Maine West High School? Following are insights into the controversy surrounding the use of Native American imagery in America's high schools and colleges, as well as how this imagery could have been, and can still be, used as a stepping stone to transformative education.

First some background, Chief Illiniwek was conceived in 1926 as a symbol of the University of Illinois -- representing the heroic spirit of Illinois Indians and the finest qualities of the people of the state. In an April 1991 letter conveyed to Morton W. Weir, then the university chancellor, Florence H. Dvorak said she was "appalled at the allegation that the appearance of the Chief with the University of Illinois Band was a racist exploitation of the Indian people." The Chief was not considered to be a mascot by the Chief's creator, her husband, the late Raymond F. Dvorak.

Nevertheless, beginning in 1989, anti-Chief protests led to a documentary that mischaracterized the Chief as a mascot. This divisive and polemical documentary contributed to a drive to retire the Chief. The NCAA effectively killed the Chief with its 2005 ban on post-season play by any of its member schools using unendorsed Native American imagery. The ban, coupled with continuing anti-Chief rhetoric and runaway political correctness, led to the Chief's official banishment by the university in 2007.

Controversies faced by our nation's educational institutions that have used or are still using Native American images as symbols are ongoing. Witness recent news stories, to wit: at Maine West High School, there is the May 2 Daily Herald story "Indian mascot out; reactions mixed," and at the University of Illinois, the May 18, Champaign News-Gazette story, "Supporters hope to keep 'Fighting Illini,' reinvent Chief Illiniwek."

Pejorative mascot labeling of imagery once applied and steadfastly reinforced is difficult to remove -- leading to the loss of educational opportunities over the years. Unfortunately, many have been blinded to this educational opportunity.

Today's challenge to reconcile conflicting views is rooted in the 19th-century era of Manifest Destiny when American settlers widely believed that they were destined to expand the country without regard for the natural land rights of Native Americans. This is the often untold dark side of American history of genocide by way of ethnic cleansing that took place along with broken treaties that left Native Americans bitter and distrustful -- creating a cultural divide, a deep wound that is still with us.

Schools utilizing Native American symbols should have felt an educational imperative to teach the meaning behind the use of these symbols at student orientations and in the programs for athletic events. This would not only have been a good start toward healing the wound of the cultural divide, but also a critical step toward a more unified American citizenry.

Where do we go from here?

There is still ample room for creativity and imagination about how we can transit from negative narratives to being positive with transformative education by means of the use of Native American imagery and history to educate students, fans and the public. Working with the education arm of cognizant tribes would be a good first step toward covering the sacred nature of Native American imagery and its importance to the descendants of the survivors of ethnic cleansing.

To this end, a collaboration has been initiated with Charlene Teeters, the Academic Dean at the Institute of Indian Art. Also, it has been recommended that Wyoming's Sheridan College -- striving to make the school more welcoming to Native American students -- not only work with IAIA, but also work with the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation.

The foundation advocates transforming communities via American native arts and cultures that inspire "creative solutions to some of our nation's most difficult collective challenges."

American culture is far from being self-correcting; change will require concerted political action, as well as a vision for a common future characterized by healing the divisions that have riven our nation. America's Democracy depends on it.

Frank G. Splitt, author of "An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives" and a former McCormick Faculty Fellow at Northwestern University's McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science, has family connections to Chief Illiniwek's creator Ray Dvorak and is active in a drive to have the University of Illinois honor the Chief as a noble symbol of the university and the finest qualities of the people of Illinois.

# How Colleges Cope with a Perfect Storm

*Among other things, schools must confront sports related academic corruption, sexual abuse and serious drinking problems.*

By Frank G. Splitt, 10-01-18

**Introduction** – Though our nation's sports-and-money driven colleges and universities are still considered to be the envy of the world, this exalted stature raises a vexing question, to wit: How long can these schools be considered the envy of the world when weighted down by sports related academic corruption, sexual abuse and serious drinking problems, not to mention problems with grade inflation, unmotivated/coddled students, over reliance on adjuncts, persistent labeling as leftist, as well as free speech on campuses?<sup>1</sup> The answer will depend on how well school administrators deal with these complex and often interrelated problems.

**The Setting** – Our nation's academic institutions can now be likened to luxury-cruise ships attempting to stay afloat when encountering a perfect storm—academically adrift in a sea of sports, alcohol and sex abuse. This circumstance is not openly talked about and certainly not addressed in the annual ranking of our nation's colleges by *US News & World Report*. Here's what's going on in this secret battlefield in a divided America.<sup>2</sup>

**On Sports** – Back in 2011, some scholars questioned the gloomy picture of higher education outcomes in America painted by the authors of *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*.<sup>3</sup> My response to these doubters was a March 8, 2011, letter to the editor of *The Chronicle*.<sup>4</sup> that referenced Murray Sperber's book, *Beer and Circus: How Big-Time College Sports Is Crippling Undergraduate Education*, wherein Sperber argued that colleges are substituting a party-like, "beer and circus" social environment for a meaningful education—an environment that serves to keep students happy, to marginalize faculty, and to maintain an ongoing flow of evermore tuition dollars.<sup>5</sup>

The “beer-and-circus” descriptor is the basis for the luxury-cruise-ship metaphor as well as an insight into the contribution of sports to the perfect storm. America cannot compete in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century global marketplace by being the least-educated industrial nation in the world ... a nation in which its colleges and universities serve as prostitutes for the sports entertainment industry—with many focusing resources on athletics at the expense of academics.

**On Sexual Abuse** – The extent of the sexual abuse crisis at our nation's colleges and campuses can be seen via a viewing of the *CNN* documentary “The Hunting Ground.”<sup>6</sup> It's an exposé of rape crimes on U.S. college campuses, institutional cover-ups, and the devastating toll they take on students and their families. The documentary focuses on Annie E. Clark and Andrea Pino, two former University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill students who filed a Title IX complaint against UNC in response to their rapes while enrolled. They are now promoting their use of Title IX as a model for campus sexual assault cases at universities across the country.

**On Alcohol** – Alcohol contributes to the perfect storm as well. According to Robb Jones, senior vice president and general counsel for claims management at United Educators, “Alcohol is linked to violence and injuries on campus, including fights, sexual assault, hazing, slips and falls, and even fatalities. High-risk drinking also takes a financial toll by resulting in student attrition, emergency services, disciplinary actions, counseling services and property damage. One study of college insurance claims found that losses were 25% higher if a claim involved alcohol.”<sup>7</sup>

**The Current Coping Strategy** – Our nation's colleges and universities have responded to problems of sexual abuse and sports-related academic corruption by utilizing the cover-up playbook titled “See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil” to bamboozle and/or stonewall the media and authorities so as to

maintain the "life" of their institutions – looking the other way without regard to human costs and risk to the long-term viability of the entities they are trying to protect.

**Potential Mitigation Strategies** – So what can really be done to help right the institutional ship?

Commercialized college sports with attendant academic corruption, high-risk drinking, and sexual abuse among college students are complex problems with no easy solutions. Mitigating these problems requires a coordinated effort from all leadership at the schools. Insurance and risk management are a crucial part of that approach. So too would be the school's trustees, but therein lies still another problem.

It is ironic that trustees, who have the duty as well as the ultimate authority to ensure that all of their institutions programs are conducted ethically and responsibly, can be faulted for some of the problems in higher education. Unfortunately, many institutions offer no training for new board members. As a consequence, trustees are willing to accept the prestige and perks, but seem to believe that they are only expected to make substantial financial donations, provide political influence, and certainly not make waves by interfering with academic or athletic operations.

Therefore, it is no surprise that, for the most part, trustees stay behind the mask of institutional maintenance – fiduciary guardians and protectors of their school's reputation as well as its optics—embracing the cover-up play book as applied to campus sexual assaults as well as the loss of academic integrity at schools that strive to win at any cost. Examples can be found at Michigan State and Ohio State Universities.<sup>8</sup>

It would seem that a first order of business for schools that want to mitigate their problems would be the education of its trustees so they know that they are to serve as stewards of the professed mission and values of their institution as well as work to foster its long-term viability. In his related commentary, "It's Time for College Trustees to Get in the Game," Richard Chait goes so far as to say: "A respectable board would forensically investigate scandals retroactively and discipline perpetrators. The very best boards will act preventively."<sup>9</sup>

**Educational Resources** – To better understand what should be expected of them, trustees could become members of ACTA, the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, that is committed to academic freedom, excellence, and accountability at America's colleges and universities.<sup>10</sup>

Board members, presidents, and other administrators, as well as faculty members could also profit from giving thoughtful consideration to the work of The Drake Group that has as its mission the defense of academic integrity in higher education from the corrosive aspects of commercialized college sports.<sup>11</sup> For example, in response to the recently released report by the Independent Commission on College Basketball chaired by Dr. Condoleezza Rice, the Drakes challenged the Commission that left the NCAA off the hook with the absence of recommendations that would break the NCAA's stranglehold on its member institutions. Also see the Arne Duncan and Carol Cartwright commentary, "The NCAA Is Too Far Gone for Incremental Reform."<sup>12</sup>

Furthermore, trustees should give consideration to the work of The National Coalition Against Violent Athletes (NCAVA) that is dedicated to empowering individuals affected by athlete violence through comprehensive services including advocacy, legal aid, education and counseling and also works to eliminate off-the-field violence by athletes.<sup>13</sup> A trustee visit to the End Rape on Campus (EROC) website would be a learning experience—revealing additional resources.<sup>14</sup>

**Outlook for the Future** – The aforementioned educational resources will likely go unused since most, if not all schools are comfortable with the status quo because the very-well-paid powers that be at the schools apparently believe that alcohol and sexual abuse as well as sports-related academic corruption are simply the costs of doing business in the extremely competitive world of higher education. After all, this way of thinking is rooted in the chaotic history of higher education in America. Therefore, it would seem that coercion via government intervention is required, as painful and seemingly draconian as that may be.

College and university board members, presidents, and other administrators could be mandated to act by the U.S. Department of Education. Failure to comply with the mandate and a request for corrective action plans with timetables to address institutional issues of sports related academic corruption, sexual abuse, and binge drinking would lead to the loss of federal funding. Admittedly, mandated action by the government is highly unlikely in today's political climate. A much better way to navigate the treacherous waters in higher education would be for the presidents of our nation's institutions of higher education to recognize the devastating long-term consequences of letting their problems go unresolved and then take corrective action on their own. They could do this by exploiting all available resources to educate their trustees and then unleash them to provide transformational leadership for institution-wide corrective action.

Is it likely that this will happen? Don't bet on it. America's institutions of higher education will probably muddle on as they have successfully done in the past by using their fixers, lawyers, and enormous power – both political and financial – to deal with Title IX-based lawsuits and other legal challenges brought forth by students, parents, and concerned citizens.

**Final Words** – Muddle on, perhaps that's the best that can be expected from institutions fraught with human frailties that operate in a divided nation where its citizens are seemingly addicted to sports entertainment and gambling—prioritizing athletics over academics. Nonetheless, critics should not despair, but rather keep up their courageous fight to provide the sunshine that illuminates the dark corners of the battlefield.

My deep gratitude for his encouraging words and many thoughtful comments goes to Sol Gittleman, a preeminent scholar who served twenty-one years as the Provost of Tufts University.

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*Photo courtesy of Anne Rassas*

The above photo was taken on November 9, 2016, at the downtown campus of Loyola University- Chicago (LUC). The occasion was the formal presentation of the book, *An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives: 1986-2015*, to the LUC Library as a memorial to the late Arthur J. Schmitt, founder of the Fournier Institute of Technology, Frank Splitt's alma mater. Pictured (from left to right) are Judy Splitt, Frank Splitt, Patricia Shevlin, Executive Director of the Arthur J. Schmitt Foundation, Michelle Nickerson, LUC Professor of History, and Patricia Mooney-Melvin, Dean of the LUC Graduate School.

*Here's the brutal truth: There is nothing more difficult and dangerous, or more doubtful of success, than an attempt introduce a new order of things in big-time , money-laden, politically-protected, collegiate athletics.*

*All it takes is one booster; you're trying to build a \$50-million business school? Well, that donor sits up in that skybox every game. To say you don't want the \$50 million — you know, it's hard to say no to \$50 million.*

—Fritz Polite, a past president of The Drake Group



# Everyone Should Know the Brutal Truth About College Sports: Reflections by the Recipient of the Drake Group's 2006 Hutchins Award

*"They all cheat" claimed University of Chicago President Robert Maynard Hutchins back in 1939 when terminating the school's Big-10 football program. Everyone knows, or at least should know, that all schools cheat in some way or another, some better than others, and that deceit, deception, and exploitation are part and parcel of today's college-sports programs.*

By Frank G. Splitt. September 22, 2019 with Afterword

*Harper Lee had become transfixed by a scandal—a story rife with corruption, bias, rivalry, peculiarities of state politics, moral quandaries and a healthy dose of the absurd. This was the essence of college football captured in one neat letter.—Ben Cohen, The Wall Street Journal<sup>1</sup>*

**Introduction**—The following remarks represent old news that could very well be new news even for members of The Drake Group that is working to defend academic integrity in higher education and to many others as well. The remarks illuminate lessons to be learned about the world of college sports via a seemingly unrelated story about the first and only McCormick Faculty Fellows at Northwestern University's McCormick School of Engineering.

**Background** – October 5, 2019 marks the 14th anniversary of the publication of my letter, "Who Wants to Tackle Biggest Man on Campus?"<sup>2</sup> In a way, the letter captured the essence of the world of college football in 2005 as Ben Cohen said of Harper Lee's August 1963 letter in the epigraph as well as in sportswriter Skip Rozin's September 15, 2005 column, "The Brutal Truth About College Sports"<sup>3</sup> that concluded with the following paragraph:

Maybe it's time, suggests Drake Group Director David Ridpath, that the athletes themselves take control. How would it be at the start of the Orange Bowl if all the players refused to take the field? asks Mr. Ridpath, speaking with the heart of a reformer. They're saying: 'We're not getting an education and we're not getting taken care of. We're being exploited and we're not going to play.' A fantasy as interesting as it is unlikely, but it illustrates the frustration of those struggling to save college sports. Are they alone, or is the American public finally ready to listen?

Responding to Rozin's column were the Sept. 24, 2005, Letters to the Editor of the Journal titled "Can Colleges Control the NCAA Beast?"<sup>4</sup> Legendary professor and former provost at Tufts University, Sol Gittleman's lead letter set the tone for others that were also hypercritical of the NCAA.

All of the above Journal comments inspired the writing of my letter that was apparently read with chagrin by NCAA officials in Indianapolis. Officials at Northwestern University, especially those at its Office of Media Relations in Evanston were really upset as well—prompting the need for swift tactical action. Ideally, this action would separate their school, a member of the Big Ten,<sup>5</sup> from the author of what these NU officials must have surely considered to be a letter that disparaged the NCAA. As a member, the NCAA served as their money-making enabler.

**The NU Statement** – The tactic employed by NU's Office of Media Relations was to contrive a statement that not only aimed to put the legitimacy of the title McCormick Faculty Fellow in question, but also to demean its origin, to leave the impression that the title was not really official, and most important, disassociate the school from the author. And so it was by virtue of the following NU statement that was provided by NU's Director of Media Relations, to the editor of *College Athletics Clips*:<sup>7</sup> "The title 'Faculty Fellow' was held uniquely at Northwestern by Splitt. No one else in the entire University is so labeled. Though the title implied a kind of faculty status, 'Faculty Fellow' was not an established faculty rank or position; and appointment as 'Faculty Fellow' did not include review as is customary when academic appointments are made. The title was created and assigned to Splitt by a former dean of Engineering, without consultation with the Provost. The engineering school has been informed that the rank/position 'Faculty Fellow' does not exist at the University and that individuals should not so identify themselves."

**Unpacking the NU Statement** – The NU statement was obviously contrived as it made absolutely no sense to anyone familiar with the McCormick Faculty Fellow designation. Here's the story:

In the early 1990s, the late Jerry Cohen, then dean of the McCormick School, worked with Arnold R. Weber, then president of Northwestern University, to establish a new designation to honor industry leaders who were working closely with McCormick to improve ties with industry and to have them advise the school on the development of research and educational programs.

As announced in the fall-1993 issue of the *McCormick Dimension*, Walter B. Herbst was named as the first McCormick Faculty Fellow in Industrial Design and I was named as the first McCormick Faculty Fellow in Telecommunications. So the McCormick Faculty Fellow title was certainly not uniquely held by me.

Clearly the "Faculty Fellow" designation was created as an honorary title, not as a faculty rank/position requiring review or consultation with the Provost when academic appointments are made. The honorary title was somewhat akin to an award. Dr. Herbst and I both used the title for twelve years before the NU statement was issued.

Sad to say, there was an attempt to have Dr. Herbst voluntarily relinquish the use of the title so as to support the false claims made in the NU statement's first two sentences. To wit: "The title "Faculty Fellow" was held uniquely at Northwestern by Splitt. No one else in the entire University is so labeled."

The above cover-up effort was apparently orchestrated by the Office of Media Relations that used the Office of the Provost to inform the Dean of the McCormick School "that the rank/position "Faculty Fellow" does not exist at the University and that individuals should not so identify themselves." What else was the newly appointed dean to do other than comply with directions stemming from the NU statement that now came from the Office of the Provost, the university's chief academic officer?

The congratulatory email that I received from President Weber upon being named a McCormick Faculty Fellow provided unquestionable evidence that the title was created by Dean Cohen with the approval of the university president. The email conveniently went missing from the McCormick Faculty Fellow file at the McCormick School prior to the issuance of the NU statement.

**Appeals to Reconsider** – Over the years, I came to understand that appeals to reconsider the action stemming from the NU statement were made at the time the NU statement was issued and even sometime thereafter. These appeals, made to responsible NU officials by prominent faculty members as well as prominent trustee and the executive director of the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, were all to no avail—a salient example of the type of behavior that illuminates the stranglehold-like power that the NCAA exerts over officials at its member schools.

**The 2006 Hutchins Award and Related Events** – On January 31, 2006, The Drake Group announced via a press release that I was named to be the recipient of The Drake Group's 2006 *Robert Maynard Hutchins Award*.<sup>7</sup> The Award is "given annually to faculty or staff members who take a courageous stand to defend academic integrity at their institutions **in response to institutional pressure related to special treatment of athletes**, often risking job security in doing so."<sup>8</sup> The Award's citation read "For His Courageous Defense of Academic Integrity in Collegiate Athletics."

Radio interviews by Paul Finebaum and Bob Gilbert soon followed the Drake Group's press release. Appearances on these radio programs provided opportunities to tell the brutal truth about college sports.

The Beta Tau Chapter of the Eta Kappa Nu engineering honor society, at the McCormick School's Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, named me as a Notable Alumni at year-end 2005; and, at the recommendation of Jim Duderstadt, President Emeritus and University Professor of Science and Engineering at the University of Michigan, I received an invitation from the president of The

University of Montana and the president of Montana State University to contribute a paper that would appear opposite that of NCAA President Myles Brand in an upcoming issue of *The Montana Professor*. My paper, was titled “The U.S. Congress: New Hope for Constructive Engagement with the NCAA and Intercollegiate Athletics.”<sup>9</sup> Copies of the Spring-2007 issue of *The Montana Professor* received widespread distribution in the U. S Congress thanks to Montana Senator Max Baucus.

In 2016, some ten years after receiving the Hutchins Award, it was certainly gratifying to see the bio-like commentary “A Decade of Reform Efforts in College Sports Can Largely be Traced to One Man's Passion,” posted on *Forbes.com* by David Ridpath, the president of The Drake Group.<sup>11</sup> It is my understanding that it was Ridpath who nominated me for the Hutchins Award and posted his *Forbes*’ piece as a way of commemorating my 85th birthday.

**Lessons Learned** – It is all a matter of knowing that:

- 1) Officials at colleges and universities that support big -time sports programs have taken their own lesson from the bank robber Willie Sutton; they too know where the money is and woe be to those who attempt to keep them from it by exposing what amounts to a money-making racket based on deceit, deception, and the exploitation of the names, images, and likeness’ of their school’s so-called student-athletes who may not be students at all.
- 2) Officials at even world-class universities can misbehave under the corruptive influence of big money and the NCAA that exerts a stranglehold-like power over the officials at its member schools.
- 3) There is a good reason why it is so difficult to recruit even tenured faculty to join in the fight for academic integrity at NCAA member schools, especially those included in the Bowl Championship Series where really big money is involved.
- 4) Officials at schools supporting big-time sports programs not only have the power to terminate untenured faculty, but also the inclination to do so if the faculty person jeopardizes the viability of its sports programs in any way whatsoever.

Everyone should know the brutal truth about college sports. To learn more, see Branch,<sup>12</sup> Ericson,<sup>13</sup> Nocera<sup>14</sup> and Ridpath.<sup>15</sup>

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## **Appendix – An Excerpt from the author's October 5, 2005, letter to the editor of *The Wall Street Journal* headlined "Who Wants to Tackle Biggest Man on Campus?"**

The Sept. 24, Letters to the Editor in response to Skip Rosin's superb Sept. 15, Leisure & Arts column, "The Brutal Truth About College Sports," were aptly headlined, "Can Colleges Control the NCAA Beast?" The answer, plain and simple, is no. Here's why and what the Drake Group is doing about it.

Big-time (NCAA Div I-A) university and college presidents cannot advocate true reform without risking termination – cultivated by a storm of protest about fiscal irresponsibility and assorted emotional arguments by trustees/regents, boosters, alumni, and rabid fans.

Untenured faculty are too busy getting tenure to work for reform, while tenured faculty are too busy doing research and/or just don't want to get involved in controversial nonacademic affairs.

With the NCAA's apparently successful co-option of the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, there is no one charged with anything resembling responsibility for controlling the billion-dollar beast that has become expert at resisting true reform, exploited college athletes, provided weak rules enforcement, shown a lack of concern with regard to violence by college athletes and the connection of violence to the use of performance enhancing drugs, and shrouded its nefarious conduct in a veil of secrecy – protected by the Buckley Amendment to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. And in the midst of all this the NCAA maintains a nonprofit IRS status as an institution of higher education

Also, America's love affair with sports, its high tolerance for misbehavior by its heroes, and really big money, has helped bring us today's horrific mess in big-time, college sports ... a mess characterized by seemingly unrestrained growth in spending with a corresponding desperate need for additional revenues.

Over the past two years, members of the Drake Group [the organization's Web site states that its "mission ... is to help faculty and staff defend academic integrity in the face of the burgeoning college sport industry"] have been working to provide the Group's position on the above issues for easy availability to all concerned parties – especially to members of Congress where the Group is working a quid pro quo initiative on disclosure and the restoration of academic and financial integrity in our institutions of higher learning.

*Frank G. Splitt*  
*McCormick Faculty Fellow*  
*Northwestern University*  
*Evanston, Ill.*

## **AFTERWORD**

Northwestern University's Office of Media Relations went on to work with the NCAA to block the unionization of the members of NU's football team as discussed in my November 19, 2015, College Athletics Clips Commentary "University of Missouri Student Protests: Lesson Learned." An extended excerpt follows:

So what is the overarching lesson to be learned from the threatened strike by the Missouri football team? It's simply this: The mere threat of a strike by a revenue-producing college athletic team can not only bring about quick and decisive change, but also expose a school's real values. Here, for example, money is king, the potential loss of football revenue must be avoided at all cost.

This disruptive change mechanism could very well be independent of the merit of the case for the strike, i.e., have a weak or questionable basis. Most importantly, it could prove much more effective than the usual change mechanisms such as legal action, appeals to government entities (Congress and the Department of Education), as well as persuasive arguments set forth in Knight Commission reports, Network Programs, op-eds, academic journals, books, letters, and the like.

Can you imagine the power that can be exercised by college athletes to break free of their exploitation by the NCAA cartel? But what forces would the athletes be up against?

These forces and related mind sets are illuminated by the story behind Northwestern football players' unionizing effort in 2014 led by Ramogi Huma, president of the National College Players Association and Kain Colter, a former Northwestern quarterback, who spearheaded the effort. For background see the transcript and comments on the April 8, 2014 PBS Newshour program "Is 'student-athlete' a misnomer?"[5] My comment, "Kudos to the PBS Newshour" formed the basis for the College Athletics Clips Guest Commentary "NLRB Ruling on Northwestern Athletes: A Teaching Moment." [6]

The Northwestern players' effort was rewarded with the approval to unionize by the regional director of the NLRB. The effort exposed the "big-lie"—the NCAA's false claim that big-time college athletes are amateurs—first and foremost students. Simply stated, the intense professional level of practice and play required of these athletes to make the very best of them ready for the NFL or NBA leaves little time to study and renders them so tired that they miss classes or fall asleep during classes they do attend.

Nonetheless, the approval was rendered ineffective upon appeal by Northwestern. The regional ruling was not ratified by its Washington-based overseers who were, no doubt, subjected to intense lobbying pressure by representatives of the NCAA cartel since the case had the potential to break the NCAA's stranglehold on colleges and universities supporting big-time football and men's basketball programs by essentially classifying athletes more as employees rather than students.

How fortuitous for the cartel that it had world-class Northwestern doing its dirty work—defending the cartel's money-driven exploitation of college athletes as well as its corrupting influence on the academic integrity of many of its member schools. It should be clear that the unionization of college athletes was not about Northwestern University per se. It was about the NCAA cartel of which Northwestern is but one of many member institutions and a private one at that.

"We're glad the NLRB knew when to punt," opined the Wall Street Journal's editorial board, see my posted response, "The NCAA is even gladder." [7]

After the NLRB declined to ratify its regional office's ruling, Alan K. Cabbage, Northwestern's Vice President for University Relations, said the university is "pleased" by the board's decision and strongly believes "unionization and collective bargaining are not the appropriate methods to address the concerns raised by student-athletes."

Notwithstanding the weak nature of Northwestern's appeal, Cabbage's statement had a familiar NCAA ring to it. For insights on the weakness of the appeal see Pat Hruby's article "Appeal to Sanity." [8]

In view of the inordinate ability of the NCAA cartel to frustrate reform efforts as demonstrated in the Northwestern players' unionization effort, by virtue of its enormous legal, financial, and political resources, the following question looms large: Can college athletes rise up from seeming indentured servitude by exercising their civil right to strike so as to break the NCAA cartel's stranglehold with aims to not only bargain over issues such as medical care and practice times, but for equitable remuneration as well?

Only time will tell if such efforts can be mounted and then survive the countermeasures used to protect the ocean of money flowing to the NCAA cartel and the many others who benefit from the exploitation of college athletes.

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"We're glad the NLRB knew when to punt," so opined the Journal's editorial board. My posted comment:

The NCAA is even gladder. The NCAA is free to continue its money-driven exploitation of college athletes as well as its corrupting influence on the academic integrity of many of its member schools.

The NCAA works hard to protect the current "order of things." It's all about money and its power to influence events and control college athletes. The NCAA had the big money as well as political power while the union seekers had neither. Only time will tell if the NCAA's big money and political power can influence the courts.

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## On scandals and balance between academics and athletics

A comment on "Concerns About Sports, Backing for Obama: a Survey of Presidents," by Doug Lederman, Kevin Kiley and Scott Jaschik, *Inside Higher Ed*, March 8, 2012, <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/survey/concerns-about-sports-backing-obama-survey-presidents>

"About 7 in 10 college and university presidents believe that the past year's sports scandals have damaged all of higher education and that institutions spend way too much on intercollegiate athletics -- but barely a quarter say their own campuses are susceptible to such scandals or overspend on sports."

No surprise here. Presidents are appointed to serve at the pleasure of a school's governing board. And the pleasure of the most vocal and wealthiest of these board members at NCAA Div 1 schools usually involves winning football and basketball teams. If asked, these presidents would not only say they have a good balance between athletics and academics, but will say they don't cheat as well.

The balance is uneven—a mixed bag depending on the institution. It's also a function of time and a multitude of other variables some of which are external in nature, for example, reaction to exposure by whistle-blowers. My opinion on balance is grounded in Robert Maynard Hutchins' belief that "they all cheat." To that I would add: some more than others.

With that caveat in mind I would say relatively good balance is achieved at schools like Notre Dame, Duke, Stanford, Northwestern and Boston College while relatively poor balance is likely to be found at schools like Auburn, Alabama, Louisiana State, Oklahoma, Connecticut and Miami. To illustrate the point that even the best schools have troubling times, see *Under the Tarnished Dome: How Notre Dame betrayed its ideals for football glory* by Don Yaeger and Douglas Looney (Simon and Schuster, 1993).

No doubt, careful analysis would find a strong correlation between high national school rankings (BCS, March Madness Tournament, and conference) with an out-of-balance (athletics-over-academics) school ranking. As College Football Hall of Fame Coach Gil Dobie once quipped, "You can't win games with Phi Beta Kappas."

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# College Sports and the Federal False Claims Act: A Redux

By Frank G. Splitt

November 1, 2019

Back in 2015, the publication of Jay M. Smith's and Mary Willingham's book *Cheated*,<sup>1</sup> prompted another look at two circa 2006 *College Athletics Clips* commentaries<sup>2, 3</sup> that were then appended as references to a further commentary on the False Claims Act as applied to the NCAA's false claim that big-time college athletes are primarily students.<sup>4</sup>

It was my belief that this well-documented book provided prima facie evidence that could prove to be the undoing of corrupted big-time college sports programs supported by the NCAA and its member institutions, aka the NCAA cartel<sup>5, 6</sup>. Although there was no undoing, there was an occasion that prompted still another look at the False Claims Act.

It was on the morning of Sunday, October 19, 2019, that I found my letter to the *Daily Herald* editor, headlined "Some schools cheat better than others," in print<sup>7</sup> (also see copy on page 26). Subsequently, I began wondering about the ethical basis for the justification of cheating in college sports and returned to considering the possible remediation via the threat of litigation via the False Claims Act, so the redux.

Quoting from the *Daily Herald* letter: "Everyone knows, or at least should know, that all schools cheat in some way or another, some better than others, and that deceit, deception, and exploitation are part and parcel of today's college-sports programs." If that is indeed true, how can college and university presidents as well as the members of their governing boards justify support of the commercialized sports programs at their schools wherein many, if not most college athletes in big-time programs, are students in name only?

That big-time college athletes, so-called student-athletes, are primarily students, rather than employees, performers in the world of sports entertainment, is a claim made by members of the NCAA cartel, with no basis in fact.<sup>8</sup> It's a myth writ large—as American as the flag and apple pie. Jon Ericson, one of The Drake Group founders, termed the myth "the big lie."

Sports fans and gamblers really don't care about lies because they want to believe what they are incessantly told by the NCAA and its member schools as well as what they see on TV and in the movies. It's hard not to believe what is seen on the screen with propaganda skillfully presented as entertainment in hit football-related movies such as *Knute Rockne, All American*; *Rudy*; and *The Blindside*.

Most likely, university presidents and members of their governing boards rationalize their support of commercialized sports programs with its related cheating via Machiavellian consequentialism. Thus, from their point of view the end justifies the means, so a morally right act is one that will produce a good outcome or consequence. For example, the \$50-million, or so, Big Ten schools receive from the Big Ten Network must be considered to be a good outcome.<sup>9</sup> This manner of thinking ignores an important fact, to wit: These presidents could be the target of qui tam (whistleblower) litigation for violation of the False Claims Act.<sup>10</sup>

We learn from Machiavelli that appearances are really what count.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, it is not surprising that the NCAA and its member schools make every effort and spare no expense to avoid litigation and make it appear that their athletes are really students. Here a veneer of truth goes a long way in this deceptive and illicit practice.

In light of the above, it is indeed puzzling to see parents caught up in *Operation Varsity Blues* facing additional criminal charges for participating in the nationwide college-admission cheating scheme. One could argue that the parents, just like school presidents who have yet to face criminal charges, were seeking to produce a good outcome.

The parents sought admission of their children to elite schools while the presidents sought, and still seek, fame and fortune for their schools by falsely claiming that its athletes are primarily students. Nonetheless, it has been reported in *The Wall Street Journal* that "Prosecutors have struggled to identify damages and victims in the case where some parents paid mastermind William "Rick" Singer to secure admission to elite schools by cheating on admissions tests or falsely claiming kids were recruited athletes"<sup>12</sup> Dan Golden, a Pulitzer prize-winning, investigative reporter, had this to say about these elite schools: "Colleges have portrayed themselves as hapless victims of Rick Singer, in reality they have no one to blame but themselves."<sup>13</sup>

The government has been and is still being defrauded—cheated out of tax revenues from the NCAA cartel, donors, and others by virtue of the cartel's false claim that college athletes are primarily students and not primarily athletes. The fact-based narrative in *Cheated* could have formed a solid basis for a prima facie, false-claims case against the NCAA cartel in accordance with the False Claims Act.

As discussed in Reference 2, there is one thing you can be sure of, to wit: taking the NCAA cartel to court in accordance with the False Claims Act would not be an easy task as one might first think. Why so? It's because when evaluating the merit of a False Claims Act case, a potential whistleblower needs to consider a number of things that can represent formidable roadblocks to whistleblowers no matter how good the case appears from their perspective. The fear of retaliation and the potential of benefits a personal lawsuit and an out of court settlement are other considerations

Furthermore, the NCAA cartel will use all of its available political, financial, and legal resources to fight a false-claims case just as it fought against the NRLB Regional Office ruling in favor of the unionization effort by Northwestern football players wherein the players are to be considered the university's employee-athletes rather than student-athletes.

It is indeed ironic that the NCAA and its member schools violate the federal False Claims Act with their false claim that its athletes are primarily students while making an art form of misusing the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act<sup>14</sup> to avoid disclosure of the academic performance of these so-called student athletes.

Finally, a vexing question remains: Who and where are the whistleblowers as well as members of the Administration and Congress who have the political courage to take justifiable action against the NCAA cartel to recover tax revenues lost by virtue of its false claim that college athletes are students first?



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  7. <https://www.dailyherald.com/discuss/20191020/letter-some-schools-cheat-better-than-others>
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The NCAA must take the word of school administrators that athletes are really students on track to receive a bona fide, rather than a "pretend" college education. The fact that the NCAA has never endorsed proposals for academic disclosure by its member schools, seems to indicate that NCAA officials do not want to have public evidence that could prove embarrassing to their cartel's business interests. As far as the NCAA is concerned, its ignorance is bliss.

In many instances, some schools give every appearance of being secretive and untrustworthy in matters related to the eligibility of their athletes. Besides the potential loss of big-money, there is a compelling need for some schools to report very high graduation rates and passing Academic Progress Rates to justify/rationalize their high-profile programs and their extraordinary investments in academic support center staffs and facilities.
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- NOTE: In the interest of transparency and disclosure, schools could, for example, publish aggregated (Buckley-compliant) attendance records and academic data, including grades, from cohorts of football and basketball team.

*American culture is far from being self-correcting; change will require concerted political action, as well as a vision of a common future characterized by healing the divisions that have riven our nation. America's Democracy depends on it.*

# An Ongoing American Tragedy in Higher Education: Where is the Outrage and Where Are the Governing Boards?

By Frank G. Splitt

December 30, 2019

*When the most highly paid employee is the football coach, not the president, it's clear something is awry. When football tickets and fancy student centers are the currency of the day, rather than affordable and quality education, clearly something is awry. When most classes are scheduled only between Tuesday and Thursday and the institutional answer is to build more buildings to accommodate the demand, something is awry.*<sup>1</sup>—Anne Neal

**ABSTRACT** – This essay tells a sad but hopeful story—revealing what’s really going on with the continuing erosion of higher education in America and what can be done about it. The essay also serves as a challenge to members of college and university governing boards to rise to the occasion and recognize that they are directly responsible for the actions of the leadership at their institutions. Unfortunately, this leadership has led to an ongoing tragedy in higher education. This tragedy is fraught with interrelated problems and issues—sports-related academic corruption, excessive commercialization, mission creep with outsized focus on social justice issues (diversity, inclusion, and equity), administrative bloat, admission shenanigans, student loans and debt, the lowering of standards, and the graduation of students who can’t write or think critically and who won’t be able to compete in the global marketplace. Suggestions for remedial action are provided.

**INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND** – My work on reform spanning college sports and higher education began some 17 years ago after I finished reading the book *Intercollegiate Athletics and the American University* by Jim Duderstadt, President Emeritus of the University of Michigan. Inspired by his book and our subsequent conversations, a campaign on college sports reform was initiated that, in turn, led to Notre Dame's Fr. Ted Hesburgh writing the foreword for the brief, "Reclaiming Academic Primacy in Higher Education"<sup>2</sup> as well as my affiliation with The Drake Group. It was fitting that Duderstadt was able to write the foreword to the brief's sequel, "The Faculty-Driven Movement to Reform Big-Time College Sports."<sup>3</sup>

Both pieces were chronicled in my book *An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives, 1986-2015: From Engineering, K-12 and Higher Education to the Environment, National Information Infrastructure, and Collegiate Athletics*. The recently published sequel to this book, *Reflections, 2016-2019*, with a preface by Donna Lopiano and foreword by Nick Infante, provides a summary of my thinking as I continue to write about reform at the beginning of my 90<sup>th</sup> year.

Reference to the *Odyssey* and *Reflections* books, (accessible at [www.futurevectors.com](http://www.futurevectors.com)) will show that college sports, the so-called front porch for America’s elite colleges and universities, not only have had a debilitating impact on the academic mission of these institutions, but that there are derivative negative actors at play as well. A number of these factors were discussed in my 2018 commentary, “How Colleges Cope with a Perfect Storm.”<sup>4</sup>

Sometime early in 2011, at the behest of the late Stanton Cook, then a Life Trustee at Northwestern University and a former fellow member of the McCormick School of Engineering’s Advisory Council, I began to send copies of my commentaries to Anne Neal, then the president of the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA, an organization committed to academic freedom, excellence and accountability at America’s colleges and universities). The 2013 commentary "A Developing American Tragedy in Higher Education,"<sup>5</sup> a precursor to this piece, was among the copies emailed to Neal. My hope at the time was that ACTA would be able to formulate a response as to what best might be done about the tragic situation described in the commentary – the deterioration of higher education in America—thus helping to stem the tide of the debilitating forces that can potentially reduce America to a second-rate world power.

**AN EMBEDDED CHALLENGE** -- The present commentary is still another attempt to illuminate what's really going on in the continuing erosion of higher education in America. It also serves as a challenge to members of college and university governing boards to rise to the occasion and recognize that they are directly responsible for the actions of the leadership at their institutions—leadership that has led to an ongoing tragedy in higher education—excessive commercialization, the lowering of standards, and the graduation of students who can't write or think critically and who won't be able to compete in the global marketplace.

**EXCESSIVE COMMERCIALIZATION** -- Attention is first called to today's excessively commercialized institutions of higher education with particular focus on elite schools that support big-time, revenue-generating football and men's basketball programs.

Excessive commercialization has brought academic corruption, financial shenanigans, questionable admission practices, increasing expenditures on athletics, and money-focused presidents who appear to view sports programs as an economic necessity and undergraduate education as an expensive nuisance. To be sure, these undergraduates are not considered nuisances when it comes time to targeting them with tuition and a variety of other fees to keep sports programs afloat whenever revenues from the school's big-time sports programs prove insufficient to do so.

The additional background remarks that follow are taken from the aforementioned commentary "A Developing American Tragedy in Higher Education."<sup>5</sup>

For all intents and purposes, the U.S. government at all levels stands idle while many of its most prestigious schools prostitute themselves in a mostly futile quest for fame and fortune via their sports entertainment businesses. In December 2009, Darren Everson, Hannah Karp, and Mark Yost each published a college sports story in *The Wall Street Journal* that, taken together, offer chilling evidence that America's colleges and universities are helping to lead the way as the country slithers toward second-rate nationhood.

America's love affair with big-time college-sports entertainment in combination with excessive cynicism, apathy (if not purposeful ignorance), and gambling has been a recipe for growing commercialization at America's institutions of higher learning. Worse yet, greed, fanatic sports fans, an apathetic public and inconsistent government policies allow the commercially driven college-sports enterprise to grow unchecked, all but guaranteeing distracted, booster-beholden university administrators and an expanding set of fun-loving consumers for their entertainment business ... a business that has hijacked the academic mission of many universities.

If all of this is coupled with the rising costs of residential higher education (without corresponding improvements in academics) and improved technology-driven competitive education delivery systems, we are led to the conclusion that America's higher education enterprise is rapidly becoming untenable—unable to survive, just as predicted by Peter Drucker back in 1997.

**THE CHANGING MISSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION** -- There is a widely held view that American colleges and universities are academic institutions that have a mission that is primarily focused on the creation, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge, all based on freedom of inquiry. However, mounting evidence suggests that these institutions have subordinated their historic mission and are now operating as commercial businesses that are primarily focused on the pursuit of fame and fortune from their sports entertainment programs—graduating students who can't write or think critically and who won't be able to compete in the global marketplace, an American tragedy in higher education.

It was this tragedy that prompted Professor Richard Arum and ACTA to write to 10,000 college and university trustees in the early fall of 2011—calling on them to act. In his letter, Mr. Arum noted that

"problems of learning in higher education are real, deepening, and demand urgent attention. . . . Institutions that fail to set meaningful expectations, a rigorous curriculum and high standards for their students are putting these students and our country's future at risk."<sup>1</sup>

America's colleges and universities have apparently adopted an additional mission—placing emphasis on a new type of civics and the related woke factor with corresponding outsized emphasis on social justice issues such as diversity, inclusion, and equity (fairness and impartiality).<sup>6, 7</sup> "On campus, identity politics has become a dogma that damages independent thinking and the pursuit of truth," said Yale Law Professor Anthony Kronman.<sup>8</sup> Schools are now attempting to accommodate students who apparently want to be coddled—asking for trigger warnings and safe places lest their feelings be hurt via exposure to controversial ideas, real-world problems, and issues.

As example of what's going on, see Judge José A. Cabranes' op-ed, "Higher Education's Enemy Within," that was adapted from remarks he delivered on October 18, 2019, at an ACTA event honoring him with its Merrill Award for Outstanding Contributions to Liberal Arts Education.<sup>9</sup> Cabranes, a distinguished former university legal counsel and trustee, went so far as to say: "An army of nonfaculty staff push for action and social justice at the expense of free inquiry via alliances between student activists and nonfaculty administrators." More examples of mission creep follow.

Heather Mac Donald has said: "Few things upset American college students more than being told they aren't oppressed."<sup>10</sup> Mac Donald, a fellow at the Manhattan Institute and author of *The Diversity Delusion: How Race and Gender Pandering Corrupt the University and Undermine Our Culture*, goes on to say "the promiscuous labeling of disagreement as hate speech and the equation of such speech with violence will gain traction in the public arena, as college graduates take more positions of power." And this: George Washington University students claim that the Colonials, their team name, "glorifies the act of systemic oppression,"—apparently, America's founding isn't woke enough.<sup>11</sup>

Abigail Thompson, chair of the mathematics department at the University of California-Davis, has recently written: "'Diversity, Equity and Inclusion' statements, in which applicants for faculty positions profess their commitment to these social goals, have become required on eight UC campuses and at colleges across the country."<sup>12</sup> Thus, a sad consequence of mission creep is not only the apparent loss of civility and first amendment rights relative to free speech on America's college campuses, but the fact that faculty hiring based on disciplinary merit is bound to diminish—leading to a further dumbing down of higher education in America.

**ADMISSION PROBLEMS** – College admission is a process fraught with problems and issues, somewhat like a complex game, with players having different objectives and/or exhibiting bad behavior. Nonetheless, all are involved with making money in one way or another. The process has been described as stressful, unpredictable, inequitable, and seemingly irrational.<sup>13</sup>

To begin, Pulitzer prize-winning author Daniel Golden not only exposes how institutional greed taints educational decisions that ought to be driven by merit, but he also devotes an entire chapter in a new edition of his book to the sordid story of Rick Singer's criminal college admission scam that was the target of the federal Operation Varsity Blues investigation.<sup>14</sup> Golden had this to say about these elite schools: "Colleges have portrayed themselves as hapless victims of Rick Singer, in reality they have no one to blame but themselves." This revealing quote was also used as an epigraph in Golden's *Chronicle Review* commentary "The Epitome of Sleaze."<sup>15</sup>

Sports recruiting is the real college-admissions scandal, while special admissions has been called the 'original sin' of college sports. College athletes, especially those in revenue producing sports, are more likely to receive waivers of the institution's normal academic standards for admission which puts them at a competitive disadvantage in the classroom relative to their better-prepared, non-athlete student counterparts. These special admissions start the domino effect of academic fraud – counseling or forcing athletes to register in less demanding academic majors and classes that do not interfere with their training

or classes with professors who are athletics-boosters. Subsequent to committing the 'sin' of special admission, corruption, cheating, and cover-ups have become endemic at those schools seeking fame and fortune via sports entertainment businesses. Often, despite the conflict of interest, athletic departments rather than campus academic authorities run their own academic support programs to create the outward appearance that the athletes are primarily students.

Colleges and universities supporting big-time football and men's basketball programs have developed methods of cheating, corruption and cover-ups to an art form, while school administrators and supporters live in a world of seemingly boundless hypocrisy. The college admissions racket is only the tip of the iceberg of fraud at our nation's colleges and universities supporting these revenue-generating sports programs. Sad to say, the flurry of reporting on this "tip" was overshadowed by the NCAA's billion-dollar March Madness bracket racket.

Poor graduation rates in the revenue sports of football and basketball are purposely hidden by aggregating graduation rates of athletes in all sports. Federal Graduation Rates of Division I basketball and football players are significantly below those of non-athlete students and athletes in other sports. Athletes of color are overrepresented in these populations and are more likely to receive waivers of the institution's normal academic standards for admission—a practice that not only puts them at a competitive disadvantage in the classroom, but also triggers a cycle of less demanding course and major selection as well as intense tutoring to keep athletes eligible for competition. All too often, these athletes either fail to graduate or they graduate with meaningless 'diploma-mill' degrees.

Reasonably high standards of admission have been a victim of the argument that standardized tests were unfair to minorities and/or poor students applying to elite schools. For example, the University of California System is considering dropping the College Board's SAT test as a requirement for admission notwithstanding the facts that the SAT is a fairly strong predictor of college performance when coupled with high school grades and that the College Board has redesigned the SAT test as well as introduced free online SAT tutoring with minorities and income inequality of the test takers in mind.<sup>16</sup>

It can also be argued that lower college admission standards begin with a pipeline of subpar K-12 graduates. America's entertainment and social media saturated K-12 students rank scandalously low on academic tests compared to their international peers—an inconvenient truth avoided by Washington politicians. The anti-testing trend tends to eliminate state requirements for end-of-course testing aimed at minimizing the graduation of students that are ill-prepared for college-level academics. "High schools confer diplomas that attest that a student can read, write and do math at a 12th-grade level when, in fact, most cannot. That means most high school diplomas represent fraudulent documents," says Walter Williams.<sup>17</sup> Shoe-horning these unqualified, tuition-paying students into an educational regime with high standards leads to a need for expensive remedial education, their failure, or a lowering of standards.

Adding even more fuel to the fire of questionable, if not deceptive, admission practices at elite institutions are the following. First, an exposé by *The Wall Street Journal* revealed how these institutions purchased SAT-Takers' names and personal information from the College Board for forty-seven cents each.<sup>18</sup> These data were then used in a scheme to enhance the appearance of their school's exclusivity. The second was the action by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) that removed several provisions from its Code of Ethics and Professional Practice that will likely provide the rich and famous the ability to secure early admission to elite institutions via incentives.<sup>19, 20</sup>

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS** – The absence of strong institutional leadership on the part of presidents looms large as a major contributor to the problems in higher education. Unfortunately, the government's continuing subsidy of college sports via favorable tax policies aids and abets the position taken by institutions re: the financial value of the institution's sports business as well as its false claim that its athletes are primarily students.

Presidents regularly focus on fund raising and the growth of their institutions while protecting the status quo. Emeritus Professor William Dowling, recipient of The Drake Group's 2012 *Robert Maynard Hutchins Award*, provides a must-read, inside view of the modus operandi of today's school presidents.<sup>21</sup>

**WHERE ARE THE GOVERNING BOARDS?** – If not the institution's president, who then should be ultimately accountable for the plight of America's institutions of higher education? Simply stated, it's the institution's governing board of trustees/regents. Here, I find myself in complete agreement with Anne Neal's assertions in a 2011 *Wall Street Journal* op-ed,<sup>1</sup> to wit: "Reckoning must begin and end with the governing board. It is responsible for the actions of university leaders, and its members owe taxpayers and students accountability and transparency.....It is the governing board's duty to address competing priorities and to ensure that the distinctive educational purpose of the American university remains at the forefront of every other activity." Here is a portion of my related email message sent to Neal:

The PSU board was likely heavy with very wealthy boosters. These boosters did not act to restrain the out-of-control football program and PSU's over-dependence on its revenues. No doubt, a conspiracy of silence existed among the board members—enabling Joe Paterno to reign supreme while the board members basked in the reflected limelight.

Sadly, most, if not all, big-time college and university boards are populated with very wealthy boosters whose donations buy power to corrupt by compromising their school's integrity and core academic values so as to compete at the highest level in the murky world of big-time collegiate athletics.

It is ironic that trustees, who have the duty as well as the ultimate authority to ensure that all of their institutions programs are conducted ethically and responsibly, can be faulted for some of the problems in higher education. Unfortunately, many institutions offer no training for new board members. As a consequence, trustees are willing to accept the prestige and perks, but seem to believe that they are only expected to make substantial financial donations, provide political influence, and certainly not make waves by interfering with academic or athletic operations.

Therefore, it is no surprise that, for the most part, trustees look the other way as they stay behind the mask of institutional maintenance as fiduciary guardians and protectors of their school's reputation as well as its optics—embracing a cover-up play book as applied to campus sexual assaults as well as the loss of academic integrity at schools that strive to win at any cost.

**WHERE IS THE OUTRAGE?** – America has the most to lose as it confronts new global realities with its colleges and universities prioritizing athletics over academics—primarily focusing on the pursuit of fame and fortune from sports entertainment programs—and outsized focusing on social justice issues, all the while handicapped by the public's continued obsession with sports entertainment. America's present-day position does not present a pretty picture.

With all of the above background in mind, some might feel that a special dose of outrage is required after they come to know what's really going on in America's elite institutions of higher education. However, it is a sad reality that many, if not most, Americans must not only see that the government's continuing subsidy of college sports via favorable tax policies is helping to fuel the destruction of what has been one of our nation's most precious resources, but have also become numb to abuse, cheating, incompetence, and corruption in their churches, businesses and government. The upshot is that this background material will likely not give rise to a special dose of outrage, but rather, could very well be taken as just another story in an ugly catalog titled "Who Cares?" Consequently, those that do care have a lot more work to do.

**SUGESTIONS FOR REMEDIAL ACTION** – So what can really be done to help right the institutional ship? Commercialized college sports with attendant academic corruption, high-risk drinking, and sexual abuse among students are complex problems at America's colleges and universities with no easy solutions. Mitigating these problems requires a coordinated effort from all leadership at the schools. Insurance and risk management are a crucial part of that approach, so too would be the school's

governing board. It would seem that a first order of business for schools that want to mitigate their problems would be the education of its governing board; this so that board members know that they are to serve as stewards of the professed educational mission and values of their institution as well as work to foster its long-term viability. It's time for college trustees to better understand what should be expected of them.

A governing board can only navigate the treacherous waters in higher education if its leaders recognize the devastating long-term consequences of letting their institution's problems go unresolved, for example, by not taking corrective action on their own by exploiting all available resources to educate board members who then can go on to provide transformational leadership for institution-wide corrective action. Suggested reading could begin by reading Robert Zaretsky's essay, "How Football Can Wreck a University,"<sup>22</sup> to be followed by Chait,<sup>23</sup> Sperber,<sup>24</sup> Arum,<sup>25</sup> Salzberg,<sup>26</sup> as well as via ACTA publications, ([www.goacta.org](http://www.goacta.org)).

Also, stories and commentaries that provide insights into the negative impacts of college sports and college admission scams, are not only notable in their own right, but would prove extremely valuable in future broader, all encompassing, investigative reporting as well. It is suggested that serious consideration be given to such reporting on America's elite institutions of higher education—spanning the gamut of the deceptive, deceitful, and exploitive practices employed by excessively commercialized colleges and universities. Investigative organizations that come to mind are *ProPublica* ([www.propublica.org](http://www.propublica.org)) and *Reveal* ([www.revealnews.org/](http://www.revealnews.org/)), as do investigative reporters such as Douglas Belkin, Taylor Branch, Jodi Cohen, Dan Golden, and Joe Nocera.

The reporting should definitely include but not be limited to the lack of transparency at an institution's sports entertainment business and the institution's admission practices—asking tough questions to determine the underlying reasons why the Arum-ACTA letter campaign spawned no apparent corrective actions. Resulting comprehensive, fact-based reports would not only be compelling reads, but could hopefully serve as game changers for higher education in America as well.

The outcome of reason-based discussions on what can be done about America's dilemma can be amplified by the media. The discussions could be initiated by the leaders of ACTA, The Drake Group (TDG), the College Sports Research Institute (CSRI), the National College Players Association (NCPA), and other reform-minded organizations at venues such as the annual *CSRI Conference on College Sport*.

**OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE** – It is most likely that the aforementioned suggestions involving action to be taken by colleges and universities will not be acted upon since most, if not all schools are very comfortable with the status quo. School administrators and trustees seem to believe that sports-related academic corruption is simply the cost of doing business in the extremely competitive world of higher education. After all, this way of thinking is rooted in the chaotic history of higher education in America. As painful and seemingly draconian as it may be, it would seem that coercion via government intervention is required.

Is it likely that any of this will happen? Don't bet on it. America's governmental agencies and institutions of higher education will probably muddle on as they have successfully done in the past. College and university leaders will continue using fixers, lawyers, and their enormous power – both political and financial – to deal with legal challenges brought forth by students, parents, and concerned citizens.

**THE LAST WORDS** – Muddle on, perhaps that's the best that can be expected from institutions fraught with human frailties that operate in a divided nation where its citizens are seemingly addicted to sports entertainment and gambling—prioritizing athletics over academics, but it really doesn't have to go on this way. The Drake Group has as its mission the defense of academic integrity in higher education from the corrosive impact of commercialized college sports. Future efforts by The Drake Group and ACTA could represent hope for breaking the NCAA stranglehold on higher education. Indeed, that would be a Grand Challenge.



The Drake Group is presently working to catalyze resolution of the many troubling problems and issues in college sports that have had a profound negative effect on American higher education. The Group envisions the first step in this process being a two year Congressional study to not only exhaustively identify these problems and issues, but also identify optimal remedial mechanisms. A Congressional bill that aims to do this has been filed as H.R. 5528, titled “Congressional Advisory Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics Act of 2019.” Work is in progress to get as many Democratic and Republican members of the House of Representatives as possible to provide bipartisan support for the bill.

The very last words are simply these:

We need to wake up and face reality: higher education in America is declining relative to education in nations that prioritize academics over athletics.”<sup>27</sup>

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# **My Grandpa's Talk to Mrs. Dexter's STEM Classes**

## **An Interview by Emilie Wenzelman for Mrs. William's**

### **3<sup>rd</sup>-year English Class at Herscher High School, April 2017**

The day was Tuesday, April 24, 2014, when I would be spending my day at your Limestone Middle School where you were an eighth-grade student.

I rolled out of bed, sat up, and smiled thinking of what the day had in store. I got dressed, then went down to the kitchen to make coffee. I poured the coffee into one of the old yellow mugs with the fading flowers and took a sip. "Judy we have to leave in forty-five minutes! Anne will be here soon," I called up to your grandmother.

"Yes Frank," she called back down in a sighing tone as if to tell me she did not need me to inform her again and again about when we would have to leave. Anne arrived shortly and went upstairs to coax your grandmother out of the bathroom and into the car. I gathered up everything I needed for my talk; a multitude of papers, a few books, a baseball, and more, and headed out having forgotten the large print depicting the landing of the Space Shuttle Atlantis in all the excitement.

About an hour and a half later we arrived at your school and made our way up to Mrs. Dexter's room. She was your teacher in the STEM class who had asked her students' parents if they knew anyone who could come and talk to the class about science, technology, engineering, or mathematics. As you know I was an engineer who loved math. Your mother told me how great it would be if I came in to give a talk and be able to tell you and your classmates about what I loved so much, especially baseball and engineering.

I began by telling the students that I attended Annunciation grammar school and Saint Philip high school in Chicago, as well as Chicago's Wright Junior College. At Wright, my aim was to become a Chemical Engineer, that is, if I was not able to play professional baseball. If the truth be told I was really trying to pursue my dream of being a pitcher in the major leagues.

As luck would have it, our Wright baseball team was quite good as we were co-champions of the Illinois Junior College Baseball Conference in 1950. I was the lead pitcher and was scouted by the Chicago White Sox. The scout arranged a tryout at Comiskey Park after the season ended. There I met the Sox manager, pitching Hall-of-Famer Ted Lyons, and former Sox pitcher Johnny Rigney who towered over me at well over six feet and 200 pounds. However, there was a game changer. About a week or so before the tryout, I was offered an unbelievable Arthur J. Schmitt Scholarship in Electrical Engineering at the Fournier Institute of Technology that would allow me to complete my last two years of college free of charge. The scholarship covered room, board, tuition, and uniforms.

A no-brainer decision to accept the scholarship shaped my destiny to be an Electrical Engineer and not a professional baseball player, much to the chagrin of my father. In all honesty, the decision must have been unconsciously influenced by the physical size of Lyons, Rigney, and the other players I saw in the locker room. At that time I was a skinny 152 pounder.

My first engineering job after graduation in 1952 was at the Admiral Corporation. I also began taking evening graduate-school courses at Northwestern University that ended in 1963 with a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. As I told the students about all of this, I showed them a baseball from the last game I pitched for Wright, a memento from the recovery of the Jupiter-C nose cone, a Post Co. slide rule, and a Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers bumper sticker. These 'Show & Tell' items illustrated the wide range of activities in my life as a STEM-educated person.

The talk concluded with a focus on the Golden Ratio and a numerical experiment on how it works. The students were intrigued and tried it for themselves, discovering that each group would end up with the almost the same answer. Seeing the students discover something new filled me with joy. It was so important to me to get across to them that their curiosity and academics will go a long way in their life.

Throughout the day as I told each class about my life and the things that are possible in their own lives, your presence made it so much more special since I had an opportunity to tell you a good part of my life story. To watch you figure out the problems given to the class is a memory I will always hold dear. Family is important and I hope you know how much you and your family mean to me.

(Two handouts follow)

## **My Grandpa's Talk to Mrs. Dexter's STEM Classes – Handout #1 of 2**

SPLITT – Re: April 29, 2014, Talk to Mrs. Sarah Dexter's 8th-Grade STEM-class students at Limestone Elementary School, 963 N 5000W Rd, Kankakee, IL 60901

### **How it all began (with curiosity and education)**

Curiosity -- Forest Gump/Favorite book Curious George, Mars Rover  
3-legged-STEM Stool -- with engineering as the seat

### **Education**

- o Wright JC, Baseball
- o Scholarship to Fournier Institute of Technology
- o Chicago White Sox tryout, Semipro
- o Grad school at Northwestern, MS 1957, PhD. 1963

### **Work**

- o Admiral Corp. -- QC, B&W and Color TV (1952-1954)
- o Raytheon Corp. -- Color TV (1954-1956)
- o Cook Electric Co.(1956-1977)
  - Research Labs -- COMSEC, Radar, Sonar
  - Tech Center – Orbiting Astronomical Observatory (OAO), Doppler DF, Tape Transports
- o Northern Telecom, Cook Electric Div. (1977-1988)
- o Northern Telecom Central Division (1988-1993)

**International Engineering Consortium BOD (1986-2006)**

**Northwestern University's McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science  
Advisory Council (1990-2006)**

### **SHOW & TELL**

#### **Props**

Baseball and Memento of the recovery of the Jupiter C Nose Cone (Circa 1960), Smithsonian  
*Frederick Post* (1936, 12.5-inch) and *Pickett & Eckel* (1962, 6-inch) Slide Rules  
Cook Central Office 303 Gas-tube module with heat coil  
*Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers* bumper sticker

#### **Books**

*Engineers of Victory: The Problem Solvers who turned the tide in the second world war*  
*Surge Protection for Telecommunications*  
*The Idea Factory: Bell Labs and the Great Age of American Innovation*  
*A Proud Legacy of Quality Assurance in the Preparation of Technical Professionals*  
*A Sand County Almanac: With Essays on Conservation From Round River*  
*Stuff: The materials the world is made of*  
*When Technology Fails: A Manual for Self Reliance & Planetary Survival*  
*The Mathematical Theory of Communication*

#### **Essays**

Creating Our Common Future: Reflections on the Four Es -- Environment,  
Education, Energy, and Economics  
The U.S. Information Industry -- Creating 21st Century Infrastructure (Cultural Event Lecture  
at North Central College, May 10,1994

#### **Magazines**

*The Bridge (Eta Kappa Nu)*, Autumn 2010, Shining a Light on Electronic Design in the 21st Century  
*TIME*, February 17, 2014, "Quantum Leap: Inside the tangled quest for the future of computing"

### **HANDOUT**

STEM's Ubiquitous Mathematical Constants (see next page)

## My Grandpa's Talk to Mrs. Dexter's STEM Classes – Handout #2 of 2

### STEM's Ubiquitous Mathematical Constants

**Pi:** The number is approximately equal to 3.14159. It's the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter and has been represented by the Greek letter " $\pi$ " since the mid-18th century though it is also sometimes spelled out as "pi" Being an irrational number,  $\pi$  cannot be expressed exactly as a common fraction. Consequently its decimal representation never ends and never settles into a permanent repeating pattern.

For more on Pi, go to <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pi>

**e:** The number  $e$  is approximately equal to 2.71828, it is the base of the natural logarithm and is the limit of  $(1 + 1/n)^n$  as  $n$  approaches infinity, an expression that arises in the study of compound interest and often communication theory. It can also be calculated as the sum of the infinite series

$$e = 1 + 1/1 + 1/1 \times 1 + 1/1 \times 2 + 1/1 \times 2 \times 3 + 1/1 \times 2 \times 3 \times 4 + 1/1 \times 2 \times 3 \times 4 \times 5 + \dots$$

For more on  $e$ , go to [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E\\_\(mathematical\\_constant\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E_(mathematical_constant))

**Phi:** Its value is equal to  $(1 + \sqrt{5})/2$  and is approximately equal to 1.618034. Two quantities, say  $a$  and  $b$  where  $b > a$  and  $a$  not equal to zero, are a golden ratio if  $b/a$  is the same as the ratio of their sum,  $(a+b)$  to the larger of the two quantities, i.e.  $\Phi = b/a = (b+a)/b$  where the Greek letter phi represents the golden ratio. The golden ratio is also called the golden section, golden mean, golden proportion, and golden number.

Some twentieth-century artists and architects have proportioned their works to approximate the golden ratio—especially in the form of the golden rectangle, in which the ratio of the longer side to the shorter is the golden ratio—believing this proportion to be aesthetically pleasing. The golden ratio has also been used to analyze the proportions of natural objects.

A Class Experiment – Pick any two whole numbers, then form a third number by adding the first and second number, form a fourth number by adding the second number to the third number, and so on until you get up to the 10<sup>th</sup> number, then divide this number by the previous number and record the resulting last ratio. For example, if you pick 2 and 7, then you would get,

2, 7, 9, 16, 25, 41, 66, 107, 173, 280 and  $280/173 = 1.618497\dots$

What happens when you use your numbers and go up to the 12<sup>th</sup> number then divide it by the 11<sup>th</sup> number? What happens when the last ratios for your entire class are averaged? What's going on?

For more on Phi, go to <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pi>

# Daily Herald: Letters to the Editor

## URLs

### ***Russian interference in the 2016 election***

Nov 16, 2017, at <https://www.dailyherald.com/discuss/20171116/russian-interference-in-the-2016-election>

### ***Passing GOP tax reforms a likely Pyrrhic victory***

Dec 14, 2017, at <https://www.dailyherald.com/discuss/20171214/passing-gop-tax-reforms-a-likely-pyrrhic-victory>

### ***An unforgettable teacher***

Jan 18, 2018, at <https://www.dailyherald.com/discuss/20180118/an-unforgettable-teacher>

### ***Pitchforks also out for Chief Illiniwek***

Apr 24, 2018, at <https://www.dailyherald.com/discuss/20180422/pitchforks-also-out-for-chief-illiniwek>

### ***'Moral catastrophes' and college sports***

Oct 23, 2018, <https://www.dailyherald.com/discuss/20181018/moral-catastrophes-and-college-sports>

### ***A wake-up call for us all***

Nov 29, 2018, at <https://www.dailyherald.com/discuss/20181129/a-wake-up-call-for-us-all>

### ***Another wake-up call for all of us***

Jan 9, 2019, <https://www.dailyherald.com/discuss/20190107/another-wake-up-call-for-all-of-us>

### ***An Illinoisan too important to ignore***

Mar 8, 2019, at <https://www.dailyherald.com/discuss/20190307/an-illinoisan-too-important-to-ignore>

### ***The real scandal in college admissions is sports recruiting***

Apr 5, 2019, at <https://www.dailyherald.com/discuss/20190405/letter-to-the-editor-the-real-scandal-in-college-admissions-is-sports-recruiting>

### ***Some Schools Cheat Better Than Others***

Oct. 19, 2019, at <https://www.dailyherald.com/discuss/20191020/letter-some-schools-cheat-better-than-others>

### ***Censure a better way than impeachment***

Dec. 8, 2019, <https://www.dailyherald.com/discuss/20191207/censure-a-better-way-than-impeachment>

# Daily Herald: Letters to the Editor

## *Russian interference in the 2016 election*

November 16, 2017 - The American public deserves to know the impact of what the Russians accomplished with their interference in the 2016 election.

For an example of this impact, one need look no further than John Podesta's hacked emails. Some of these leaked emails contained what can best be described as demeaning comments about Catholics. The publication of these emails, coupled with "messages" from single-issue (pro-life) minded bishops, enhanced by Russian social-media posts designed to polarize viewers, no doubt influenced a decisive anti-Hillary vote in previously Blue Midwest states

Hopefully, Catholic bishops have learned that it was a mistake to support a presidential candidate simply because he professed to be opposed to abortion. "Indeed, the pro-life cause, like the concern for religious liberty, will emerge bruised and battered from its having been associated with this man," writes Michael Sean Winters in "What should the Catholic Church have learned this year," The National Catholic Reporter, Nov. 8.

It was just another example of a predicted outcome often attributed to Alexander Fraser Tyler (1747 -- 1813), to wit: "A democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until the voters discover that they can vote themselves largesse from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidates promising the most benefits from the public treasury with the result that a democracy always collapses over loose fiscal policy -- always followed by a dictatorship."

The Russians took advantage of the fact that people will vote for what they want for themselves and their narrow vision, although important on personal level, it misses the big picture -- thereby weakening our democracy in the process.

## *Passing GOP tax reforms a likely Pyrrhic victory*

December 14, 2017 - President Trump, Senate Majority Leader McConnell, and House Speaker Ryan have all but declared a major political victory with the passing of GOP tax reforms, but are now considering revisions, ("Sources: GOP leaders may shrink corporate tax cuts," Business, Dec. 7). For all intents and purposes, as of today, the GOP reforms overwhelmingly help the wealthy and are most likely to prove a net negative for almost everyone else. .

The \$1.5 trillion in the national debt over a decade due to the reforms' current tax cuts would no doubt be used as a rationale to make draconian cuts in investments in welfare, education, health care, and other popular social programs. Slashing these investments that primarily benefit the non-wealthy will weaken America's overall economy as well as stunt its future prosperity.

Unless substantial changes are made, passing the current widely unpopular tax reforms will bode for unprecedented voter backlash in upcoming elections, likely proving its passage to be a Pyrrhic victory

## *An unforgettable teacher*

January 18, 2018 - With reference to Doug Graham's Jan. 12, tribute to Thomas Toman, "Longtime suburban youth sports official dies at 77," it is to be noted that Mr. Toman's earlier work as an inspirational gym teacher at Windsor School, District 25, in Arlington Heights left indelible positive impressions on seven children in my extended family and undoubtedly many more over the years. These impressions go well beyond physical education as they include mental and life lessons as well. Unforgettably fond memories of Tom Toman are treasured by all.

## ***Pitchforks also out for Chief Illiniwek***

April 24, 2018 - Karl Rove's April 5 Wall Street Journal opinion piece, "The Pitchforks Are Out For McKinley" exposes the harm being done in Arcata, California, via labeling and false narratives. Here's a salient example of harm that has already been done right here in Illinois.

Chief Illiniwek was conceived in 1926 as a sacred symbol of the University of Illinois -- representing the heroic spirit of Illinois Indians. Chief Illiniwek was never considered to be a mascot by the chief's creator, the late Raymond Dvorak, or by the 36 outstanding Illini students who were honored to be selected to portray the chief, nonetheless, false narratives labeling the chief as a mascot surfaced in recent years. Unfortunately, such labeling led to the chief's official banishment by the university in 2007.

The chief's banishment was aided and abetted by the NCAA that abused its power while serving its own self-interest by diverting attention away from heightened concerns over its exploitation of minority college athletes, by a divisive mischaracterization of Chief Illiniwek as a mascot in a one-sided documentary and by the related July 17, 2017, Huffington Post piece, "Twenty Years of Fighting Native American Mascots with 'In Whose Honor?'"

Chris Quintana's March 30, 2018, column in The Chronicle of Higher Education is representative of continuing chief-as-mascot propaganda, The column's title and subtitle set the stage for an unbalanced mascot-label-rich narrative, to wit: "The Mascot is Fiction, The War is Real." and "Why a made-up retired mascot still inspires pain and pride at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign."

Paraphrasing Rove, the anti-Chief Illiniwek rhetoric has been so unbalanced and warped that only willful ignorance and runaway political correctness explains their destructive action.

## ***Moral Catastrophes and College Sports***

October 18, 2017 - The sexual-abuse scandals and hierarchal coverups in the Catholic Church have torn at the faith of many devoted Catholics. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that this wrongdoing would eventually be described as a moral catastrophe. So it was when the Editor's Note in the Oct. 5, issue of The National Catholic Reporter focused on Georgetown University's Sept. 25, panel discussion "Confronting a Moral Catastrophe: Lay Leadership, Catholic Social Teaching, and the Sexual Abuse Crisis. The Editor's Note was aptly headlined "Church's 'moral catastrophe.'"

Here's another circumstance that somehow has escaped the same level of scrutiny and publicity as that afforded the Catholic Church. The moral wrongdoings associated with cover-ups of sports-related corruption, sexual abuse, and alcohol abuse in our nation's colleges and universities are of such a serious nature and wide-scale as to collectively qualify as a moral catastrophe somewhat on par with the sexual-abuse cover-ups in the Church.

What a dilemma that is for Catholic and other Christian colleges and universities that tend to claim the moral high ground in higher education. For more, see "How Colleges Cope with a Perfect Storm," <<https://thedrakegroup.org/2012/10/07/how-colleges-cope-with-a-perfect-storm/>>.

## ***A wake-up call for us all***

November 29, 2018 - We live in a time when it is easy to be discouraged with the news. All too many citizens are disheartened by today's political discourse that has not only become vulgar, but strongly polarized as well.

It can be argued that, in large part, this situation is attributable to the leadership of a master showman who is skilled in the effective employment of the dark arts of lying, exaggeration, manipulation, hate-mongering and scapegoating.

In the eyes of his followers, he is a hardworking, super-alpha male getting things done very much to their liking -- no matter the increase to our nation's already vast debt as well as to the loss of its core values and reputation as a world leader.

Most troubling is the state of governmental affairs hallmarked by the apparently deliberate chaos, willful ignorance and strategic incompetence of an administration that literally dazzles the public and the



media with an almost daily barrage of accounts of bizarre, if not outrageous, behavior that dominates the news cycle.

In the meantime, the structure of our federal government's institutions are being eroded or dismantled, while a distracted public sleeps and the media is played like a fiddle as it dances to the tunes of the showman.

Isn't it time for all Americans to take stock and come to understand that they have a responsibility as citizens to put aside their differences and wake up to what's really happening at the working levels of their government?

### ***Another wake-up call for all of us***

January 9, 2019 - On Jan. 2, President Trump boasted to reporters: "They say I am the most popular president in the history of the Republican Party."

In his Jan. 1 opinion piece "Trump's reckoning is under way," Eugene Robinson writes: "Anyone who thinks Trump is a master politician is wrong. He is a master illusionist .... Trump is talented at making it appear he has more than he really does -- more money, more respect, more support." This observation brought to mind Les Hinton's selection of Tom Bower's 1995 book, "Maxwell: The Final Verdict" as one of the five best books on giants of the press.

According to Bower, Robert Maxwell, who owned the New York Daily News, London Daily Mirror and much, much more, was a crook a blowhard and a boaster -- committing crimes even as many suspected there was something very fishy about him. Bower summed up his conclusion about Maxwell's success, a conclusion that is also applicable to the Maxwell-like giants in today's world of business and politics: "(He) prospered because hundreds of otherwise intelligent people willfully suspended any moral judgment and succumbed to their avarice and self-interest."

So what has been wrought by "hundreds of otherwise intelligent people" with the success of Donald Trump, the giant master showman and illusionist, who was elected to the presidency of the United States? Joan Chittister, O.S.B., a Benedictine nun, theologian and author, has an answer worth pondering in her Jan. 2, column in The National Catholic Reporter: "For the first time in modern American history, the presidency, the great stabilizer of American government, is being destabilized by the president himself." It appears to be another wake-up call for all of us.

**NOTE: The letter below was read into the Congressional Record on March 21, 2019 by Congresswoman Janet Schakowsky (IL - 9<sup>th</sup>) as follows:**

"Madam Speaker I want to recognize the following letter submitted to the Daily Herald newspaper By my constituent Frank G. Splitt Mount Prospect, Illinois. Mr. Splitt rightly acknowledges the contributions to our nation made by General Andrew J. Goodpaster, who amongst other things, served as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, and superintendent of West Point. I encourage all my colleagues to learn about the contributions made by this legendary general from Illinois."

### ***An Illinoisan too important to ignore***

3/8/2019 - In a recent Wall Street Journal column, "Five Best Books on American Generals" Winston Groom recommended works about military leaders. C. Richard Nelson's book, "The Life and Work of General Andrew J. Goodpaster," was conspicuous by virtue of its absence from Groom's list. So too was the absence of General Goodpaster from the Herald's March 3 supplement, "Illinois' Rich History, People Places & Things that Make Illinois Stand Out."

Readers of Nelson's biography will find that Goodpaster (1915-2005), born in Granite City, Illinois, graduated from West Point in 1939. He was a soldier, engineer and scholar who led and fought with uncommon valor in World War II, advised several presidents, most notably President Dwight D. Eisenhower and served as NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (1969-1974). He has been called the finest officer of our era.

Goodpaster was brought out of retirement in 1977 to serve as the superintendent of West Point as it was reeling from a cheating scandal. In his four-year tenure at the academy, he sought to substitute "positive leadership" for hazing and personal abuse.

Subsequent to Goodpaster's government service, among other things, he served as the Chairman of the George C. Marshall Foundation and as a senior fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. He was the recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, by President Reagan in 1984, for "lifetime accomplishments that changed the face and soul of our country."

Goodpaster's approach to analysis and decision making provides valuable lessons for current and aspiring leaders. His life story should serve as an inspiration to others who are challenged with the task of resolving complex domestic and foreign policy issues. It has been said that General Goodpaster remains "too important to ignore."

### ***Letter to the Editor: The real scandal in college sports is sports recruiting***

4/5/2019 - With reference to the widespread media coverage of the college-admissions scandal, the scandal comes as no surprise to those concerned with college sports reform.

Sports recruiting is the real college-admissions scandal, while special admissions has been called the 'original sin' of college sports.

Subsequent to committing this 'sin,' corruption, cheating, and cover-ups have become endemic at those schools seeking fame and fortune via sports entertainment businesses.

Colleges and universities supporting big-time football and men's basketball programs have developed methods of cheating, corruption and cover-ups to an art form, while school administrators and supporters live in a world of seemingly boundless hypocrisy.

The college admissions racket is only the tip of the iceberg of fraud at our nation's colleges and universities supporting these revenue-generating sports programs. Sad to say, it is expected that the flurry of reporting on this "tip" has been overshadowed by the NCAA's billion-dollar March Madness bracket racket.

### ***Letter: Some schools cheat better than others***

10/19/19 - S. C. Gwynne reviewed Lars Anderson's book, "Chasing the Bear," in the Fall Books section of the Sept. 28, 2019 issue of The Wall Street Journal. In his review, headlined "Even Better Than the Bear," he claimed to be seeking a "gaudy revelation" behind the success of Alabama football coach Nick Saban, but settled for "The answer may be that Mr. Saban's process can only be seen as a totality: Every piece of what he does is as important as every other piece ... And perhaps Nick Saban's "secret" is just that he does everything a little bit better than everyone else. Indeed, the University Alabama and Coach Saban likely do everything a little bit better than everyone else

To be sure, the "gaudy revelation" sought by Mr. Gwynne" won't be found in Anderson's book. The following may very well be the sought-after revelation: "They all cheat" as claimed University of Chicago President Robert Maynard Hutchins back in 1939 when terminating the school's Big-10 football program. Everyone knows, or at least should know, that all schools cheat in some way or another, some better than others, and that deceit, deception, and exploitation are part and parcel of today's college-sports programs.

### ***Censure a better way than impeachment***

12/08/19 - That President Donald Trump strikes deep fear in the hearts of Republican members of Congress should be accepted as an unfortunate fact when consideration is given to his impeachment. One needs to look no further than Senate Judiciary Committee chairman Lindsey Graham, (R-South Carolina), who faces re-election in a deep-red state and who now serves as the president's emissary in the

Republicans' latest effort to counter the House impeachment inquiry by requesting documents related to former Vice President Joe Biden's communications with Ukrainian officials.

A partisan House vote to impeach President Trump over his wrongdoings that were convincingly illuminated by the recent House impeachment inquiry could very well be an unwise, if not a fatefully futile, course of action. It would not only surely fail in the Senate that is held by Republicans beholden to Trump for their political survival, but it could also alienate independent 2020 voters and so jeopardize the opportunity to remove Trump from office via the ballot box.

The Democrats should instead use the information garnered from the House inquiries to write detailed articles for a resolution of censure based on the president's abuse of power and obstruction of these inquiries—an enumeration of his most egregious affronts to the spirit of the law and the Constitution, and to the honor and dignity of the office he holds. That in a nutshell appears to be a more realistic option for Congressional Democrats.

# **The Wall Street Journal: Letters to the Editor**

**Frank G. Splitt**

*Mount Prospect, Ill.*

## ***College Athletes and the Big Lie***

March 29, 2016 - Howard P. Chudacoff writes: "Yes, surveys show that most big-time athletes devote 40-60 hours a week practicing, playing and traveling for their sport, and some do help earn millions for their school....So perhaps the next best thing to being a millionaire is living like one—all while getting a free college education," ["Let's Not Pay College Athletes," Opinion, March 29].

Here's another manifestation of the "big lie" that college athletes at schools supporting big-time, football and mens' basketball programs are receiving a real "college education. Academically-under-prepared athletes who do not have the skills to do real college-level work, have to devote 40--60 hours a week to their sport, and are tired, if not exhausted, when they do come to class, cannot be expected to acquire anything close to what can be called a legitimate college education, no matter how skilled their tutors and how lavish their academic-eligibility-support facilities.

## ***Blame Cheating by U.S. Universities on Money and American Sports Culture***

June 24, 2016 - In her comment, headlined "Don't Blame Cheating on Chinese Culture," (Letters, June 24), Helen Qiang Raleigh brought deep insights beyond Prof. Carolyn's explanation that "what Americans perceive as cheating is perceived by Asians as a form of respect" while stating that Boiarsky was "just plain wrong."

Raleigh went on to say: "The only way forward for American universities is to address the academic-cheating issue head on with a zero-tolerance policy." However, the only credible way American universities supporting big-time football and mens' basketball programs would be to adopt a zero-tolerance policy directed toward the rampant academic-cheating that forms the basis for the money-and-culture-driven false claim that their athletes are students first.

The time has come for a Presidential Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics. A bill filed in Congress would do just that. It's H.R. 2731 that's all about transparency. The bill is now in the House Committee on Education and the Work Force with bipartisan support.

## ***Let Campus Debates Begin***

August 28, 2016 - Kudos to Robert Zimmer president of the University of Chicago (UC) for his forthright comments on the purpose of a university education based on rigorous debate and discussion of complex and possibly divisive issues, ["Free Speech Is the Basis of a True Education," Opinion, Aug. 26].

Also consider the view of the late Milton Friedman, a former UC professor, who said "Universities exist to transmit understanding, ideals, and values to students and to add to the body of intellectual knowledge not to provide entertainment for spectators or employment for athletes" and the view of a world renowned educator and a Zimmer predecessor, the late Robert Maynard Hutchins, who said, when he was terminating the school's football program in 1939, "To be successful, one must cheat. Everyone is cheating and I refuse to cheat."

Would that our colleges and universities that support big time football and men's basketball programs welcome campus debates on the efficacy of commercialized football and basketball programs that not only compromise the academic mission of their institutions, but also lead to the loss of academic integrity as well related cheating and corruption.

## ***U. of Chicago Says 'No' to the Thought Police***

"Universities exist to transmit understanding, ideals, and values to students and to add to the body of intellectual knowledge"

Aug. 29, 2016 - Kudos to Robert J. Zimmer, president of the University of Chicago, for his forthright comments on the purpose of a university education based on rigorous debate and discussion of complex and possibly divisive issues ("Free Speech Is the Basis of a True Education," op-ed, Aug. 26).

Also consider the view of the late Milton Friedman, a former UC professor, who said: "Universities exist to transmit knowledge and understanding of ideas and values to students not to provide entertainment for spectators or employment for athletes."

**Frank G. Splitt**  
*Mount Prospect, Ill.*

*Opinion/Letters, August 30, 2016*

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/u-of-chicago-says-no-to-the-thought-police-1472501288>

### ***On the Contrary***

October 30, 2016 - The editors write: "Among our favorites, because it speaks to us now, was Wolf's last sentence in a 1989 piece that methodically took apart the U.S. "decline school," which was popular then, as now. "The rhetoric of decline," he concluded, "is wrong because it portrays a past that wasn't, a present that isn't, and a future that probably won't be," ["Charles Wolf Review & Outlook, Oct. 29-30].

On the contrary, the rhetoric of decline appears to be right because it portrays a past that was, a present that is, and a future that probably will be. One need look no further than the same-issue opinion pieces: "1776: Would You Like to Reconsider" by Andrew Roberts, and "The Great Disappointment of 2016" by Peggy Noonan. Better yet, take a look at the present-day school wars that do not bode well for the future of K-12 education in America.

### ***Trump's Made-in-U.S.A. Pledge: A pig-in-a-poke***

November 19, 2016 - Kathy Chu and Juro Osawa *are* spot on regarding President-elect Trump's pledge to bring manufacturing jobs home. ["Trump's Made-in-U.S.A. Snag: Asia," Business & Finance, Nov. 17]. Even with the Asia factor aside, it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for Trump to honor his pledge to the disaffected white blue-collar workers in the upper Midwest.

We now live in a digital world where past, current, and future advances in technology will present a huge impediment to manufacturing job creation. Eventually, the general public and politicians from both parties will have to contend with the end of work as we have known it. See Jeremy Rifkin's prescient book *The End of Work: The Decline of the Global Work Force and the Dawn of the Post Market Era*, (Putnam. 1995).

It appears that the disaffected blue-collar workers that helped Trump smash Clinton's blue wall were sold a "pig-in-a-poke."

### ***An Excellent Example of Title IX Abuses***

April 11, 2017 - In his April 11, op-ed "How to End a Campus Injustice With the Stroke of a Pen," Stuart Taylor Jr., calls attention to flagrant abuses of Title IX.

Northwestern Professor Laura Kipnis provides an excellent example of Title IX abuses in an excerpt from her new book, *Unwanted Advances: Sexual Paranoia Comes to Campus*. Titled "Eyewitness to a Title IX Witch Trial" the excerpt appeared in the April 7, 2017, issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

Kipnis states that the trial documents, related to the case of disgraced Northwestern philosophy professor Peter Ludlow, offer an unprecedented view of the incompetent, kangaroo-court system that reigns on campuses."

### ***Practice makes perfect***

May 14, 2017 - Kudos to John Taranto for his informative interview with 'Mindshift' author Barbara Oakley who said "One mistake we make in the school system is we emphasize understanding, [Opinion, May 13-14]. But if you don't build those neural circuits with practice, it'll all slip away. You can understand out the wazoo, but it'll just disappear if you're not practicing with it."

By virtue of the technology-driven, corporate assault on America's education system, there has been a loss of focus on an old adage: Practice makes perfect. This adage applies equally well to shaping and strengthening neural pathways in the brain as well as the neural pathways that are the basis for so called "muscle memory" in athletics.

### ***The Catholic Vote for Trump***

July 28, 2017 - Not mentioned by Daniel Henninger with his thoughtful insights as to why Hillary lost the 2016 election was the Catholic vote in the Midwest's deep- blue states that helped turned the tide toward Trump, ("The Post-Hillary Democrats," OPINION, July 27). Among the contributing factors for this Trump boost were backlash from the anti-Catholic tone revealed in some of John Podesta's hacked emails and messages to Catholic parishioners from single-issue minded Catholic bishops to vote for the anti-abortion candidate.

### ***The Razzle-Dazzle Money Bowl***

August 22, 2017 - Kudos to Jason Gay who tells truth to power – advising that big-time college sports programs are throwing millions at absurdly luxurious amenities as a diversion from the real issue: fair compensation for their school's athletic entertainers (The Money Bowl, Review, C1, Aug. 19-20). It's the quintessential "razzle-dazzle" diversion technique that was on full display in "Chicago," winner of the 2002 Academy Award for best picture. In the movie, Richard Gere gave a terrific razzle-dazzle performance as Billy Flynn, the town's slickest lawyer with a superb talent for turning notorious criminal defendants into local heroes. One could not ask for a better metaphor for the money-making powers behind professionalized college football and men's basketball programs.

### ***The Catholic Vote***

November 1, 2017 - The concluding paragraph of the Oct. 31, Review & Outlook, "The Manafort Indictment," begins with "Americans deserve to know how Russia interfered in the 2016 campaign...." One need look no further than John Podesta's leaked emails. Some of these Russian hacked emails contained what can best be described as demeaning comments about Catholics. The publication of these leaked emails, coupled with 'messages from single-issue (pro-life) minded bishops, enhanced by Russian social-media posts, no doubt influenced a decisive anti-Hillary vote in previously Blue mid-west states. That's just one piece of Russian interference.

### ***Russian Interference in the 2016 Election***

November 6, 2017 - Further to Jerry D, Palmer's comment, "You should have started and ended with noting that Americans deserve to know what the Russians did and how ..." ["Mueller Tax Indictment May Yield More Information," Letter to the editor, Nov. 16]:

One need look no further than John Podesta's Russian hacked emails. Some of these leaked emails contained what can best be described as demeaning comments about Catholics. The publication of these leaked emails, coupled with 'messages' from single-issue (pro-life) minded bishops, enhanced by Russian social-media posts, no doubt influenced a decisive anti-Hillary vote in previously Blue mid-west states.

It was just another example of a predicted outcome often attributed to Alexander Fraser Tyler (1747 – 1813), to wit: "A democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until the voters discover that they can vote themselves largesse from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidates promising the most benefits from the public treasury with the result that a democracy always collapses over loose fiscal policy—always followed by a dictatorship."

The Russians took advantage of the fact that people will vote for what they want for themselves and their narrow vision, although important on personal level it misses the big picture—thereby weakening our democracy in the process.

### ***U.S Catholic Bishops: A Contrarian Vote***

November 15, 2017 - Authors Ian Lovett and Francis X. Rocca draw sharp attention to a contrarian vote for the chair of the committee on Pro-Life Activities at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, ["Papal Agenda Meets Bishop's Resistance," U.S. News, Nov. 15]. The vote signals the U.S. bishops lack of support for Pope Francis by not voting for his proxy, Chicago Cardinal Blase Cupich but rather for the more theologically conservative Kansas City Archbishop Joseph Naumann who was singled out for praise by the outgoing chair of the committee, New York's Cardinal Timothy Dolan. In 2008, Naumann, following the lead of ultra conservative Los Angeles Cardinal Raymond Burke, told Gov. Kathleen Sebelius that she should not partake in Holy Communion because of her pro-choice position.

Pope Francis' pro-life position is based on the consistent ethic of life originally espoused by the late Chicago Cardinal Joseph Bernardin in Dec. 1983. This ethic values the whole life of a person, not just the more narrow (single-minded) conservative view that focuses on life's beginning (abortion). It is somewhat ironic that, in a sense, the bishops voted against the ethic adopted by the U.S Bishops in their Revised Plan for Pro-Life Activities in November 1985.

No doubt, there will be political consequences related to the outcome of the bishops' vote.

### ***Peggy Noonan's Uncharacteristic Partisan Bias***

November 26, 2017 - With reference to the testimony of Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill at Thomas' 1991 Senate Confirmation Hearings, Peggy Noonan said: "In the end, I believed Mr. Thomas. But nobody knows, or rather only two people do," ("The Sexual-Harassment Racket is Over," OPINION, Nov. 25).

It would be interesting to know the basis for Noonan's belief as well as for her intense focus on the predatory conduct of Bill Clinton while passing over that of President Donald Trump—a glaring omission since he was accused of unwanted sexual contacts by some 15 or more women prior to the 2016 presidential election, admitting during a taped 2005 Access Hollywood television interview with Billy Bush that he groped women saying: "I don't even wait. And when you're a star, they let you do it, you can do anything... grab them by the p\_\_\_y," but now, according to the New York Times, claiming the tape was fake.

Nonetheless, Noonan's opinion piece had the appearance of uncharacteristic partisan bias.

### ***A Prescient Letter?***

December 4, 2017 - Peggy Noonan quotes a twenty-some year old letter that's a great read, however, she fails to mention the traditional second-class treatment of women in the Catholic Church, ("John Paul II's Prescient 1995 Letter to Women," OPINION, Dec. 2-3).

Women seem to be an easy target for popes and bishops. For example, consider the recent persecution via investigation of American women religious by Pope Benedict XVI's inquisitor, Cardinal Gerhard Müller. Another case in point is BVM Sr. Helen Maher Garvey's futile appeal to then Pope John Paul II for the elevation of women's role in the church's hierarchy during his visit to the United States in 1987. The quoted letter shows why we need pay heed to the cautionary adage "Watch what they do, not what they say."

### ***Passing GOP Tax Reforms: A Likely Pyrrhic Victory***

December 6, 2017 - President Trump, Senate Majority Leader McConnell, and House Speaker Ryan have all but declared a major political victory with the passing of GOP tax reforms as they pivot to welfare, ("After Taxes, Republicans Pivot to Welfare," U.S. News, Dec. 6).

For all intents and purposes, the GOP reforms overwhelmingly help the wealthy and are most likely to prove a net negative for almost everyone else.

The \$1 trillion or more increase in the national debt due to the reform's tax cuts will no doubt be used as a rationale to substantially reduce investments in welfare, education, health care and worker training.

Slashing these investments that primarily benefit the non-wealthy will weaken America's overall economy as well as stunt its future prosperity.

All of this may prove that passing the GOP tax reforms will likely be a pyrrhic victory as it bodes for unprecedented voter backlash in upcoming elections

### ***Trump Made a Mountain Out of Mueller's Molehill***

February 21, 2018 - Holman W Jenkins, Jr, the Journal's self-appointed intelligence expert, claims the "molehill" Special Counsel Robert Mueller focused on was Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election, ("Mueller Focuses on Molehills," Opinion, Feb. 21). Jenkins wrote: "Let's be realistic: The Russian propaganda activities detailed in Robert Mueller's indictment last week had less impact on the election than 20 second of cable TV coverage (pick a channel) of any of Mr. Trump's rallies."

If nothing else, Mueller's focus on this molehill triggered an out-of-control weekend Twitter-storm by the president that prompted Jenkin's Journal colleague William A. Galston to write an adjacent opinion piece headlined "The Clear and Present Danger of Trump" in which he states: "In November 2016, 46%

of the American people made a mistake, elevating to the highest office in the land a man incapable of discharging its duties. Now our country and our friends around the world are wrestling with the consequences,"

In his last paragraph, Jenkins writes: "the real struggle is yet to come. It will involve pulling teeth to get information from the FBI and CIA that they don't want us to know." How about the real struggle to reveal President Trump's tax returns that contain information he apparently does not want us to know about? Perhaps hard facts will emerge from the decade-ago admission by Donald Trump Jr. that many Trump family assets come from Russia. No doubt the facts will be all about money and the laundering thereof.

### ***Hypocrisy Abounds***

March 2, 2018 - Kudos to Jason Gay for going to the heart of past and present NCAA scandals, ["Secret Cash Isn't an NCAA scandal, Amateurism Is," SPORTS, Feb. 27].

A flurry of recent sports-news stories again reveal a pernicious problem in higher education. It's the troubling money-addictive obsession with sports success and its tight relationship with fundraising, a situation that generally leads to cheating and academic corruption.

School administrators and governing boards usually share these sports-success obsessions—making a Faustian bargain to gain and retain their prestigious positions. For example, they go along with the NCAA's amateur student-athlete myth and look the other way when it comes to the negative impact of sports programs on academic integrity so long as the programs contribute to their school's fame and fortune—hypocrisy abounds.

### ***America Needs Media-literate Citizens***

March 3, 2018 - Tech giant, Facebook, discounted the impact of Russian meddling in the 2016 election, ["Tone-Deaf: Facebook's Russia Bungle," A1, March 3]. Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg stated in November 2016: "Personally I think the idea that fake news on Facebook...influenced the election in any way is a pretty crazy idea." Not crazy at all, Russian meddling on Facebook likely made a difference in the election. Here's why:

. When used to amplify prevailing political, economic, and religious divisions, interference in American elections is one of Russia's most powerful and easy to execute anti-democracy weapons

As a cradle Catholic, it was disheartening to find a salient example of exploitation of a division in my church. Thinly veiled pro-Trump "messages" from single-issue (pro-life) minded bishops were aided and abetted by the publication of the Russian hacked emails of Hillary Clinton's campaign chairman.

No doubt, Russian meddling, designed to polarize viewers, influenced what may have been a decisive pro-Trump Catholic vote in previously Blue Midwest states.

Unless and until its electorate consists of discerning and media literate citizens, America's democracy will continue to decline. A return to reading newspapers would be a good start.

### ***College Sports Corruption: Also Look at Administrators and Governing Boards***

March 16, 2018 - "The fount of much corruption in college basketball and football is the alumni demand for winning teams," says Joseph Epstein, ("I Loved College Basketball, but Now I Feel March Sadness," Opinion, Mar.16).

Further to Epstein's elucidation of ever more blatant and uglier scandals besetting college sports: A pernicious problem in higher education is its money-addictive obsession with sports success and its tight relationship with fundraising. This obsession generally leads to cheating and academic corruption.

School administrators and governing boards operate with a simple philosophy: Money justifies overlooking academic corruption and cheating in their sports programs. To be sure their hypocrisy is not lost on conscientious students, faculty members, and the general public. Reformers are faced with the brutal facts that big money rules the day and key academic leaders feel no shame. No wonder why so many are losing respect for these leaders and their institutions.



### ***We Live in an Era of Feelings***

May 25, 2018 - "No matter what you do to try to appease unhappy progressives, you will be wrong," writes Henninger, ["Starbucks' Homeless Problem," Opinion, May 24]. Who would've thought this piece could be related to the 2007 retirement of Chief Illiniwek at the University of Illinois?

In 1989, anti-Chief protests led to a divisive and polemical documentary that characterized the Chief as a mascot. Efforts to appease the protestors went for naught as the documentary coupled with runaway political correctness, contributed to the Chief's official banishment by the university.

Paula Marantz Cohen captures the times in her essay "It's the Era of Feelings, and Not Necessarily Good Ones," [OPINION, .May, 5].

### ***No Nobel Prize for Claude Shannon***

October 2, 2018 - Kudos to James Hagerty for his superb and well-deserved tribute to Charles Kao, "Early Bet on Optical Fibers Yielded Pipes for Internet," Obituaries, Sept. 29-30. Not mentioned, was the fact that Claude Shannon, whose foundational 1948 paper on the mathematical theory of communication set the stage for the development of the Internet and wireless technology, also died of Alzheimer disease in 2001. Unfortunately, he was never awarded a Nobel Prize for his pioneering work.

### ***A Moral Catastrophe***

October 30, 2018 - As a cradle Catholic, I found it difficult to believe that Pope Francis actually repeated the warnings he has made in recent weeks against the "Great Accuser," or the devil; who seeks to soil the church, [Pope Assails Church's 'Persecution,' World News, Oct. 29]. It seems painfully obvious to all but the church's patriarchal hierarchy that it has been priestly sexual abuse and their own related cover-ups that have not only soiled the image of the church, but have also torn at the faith of all too many devoted Catholics. One need only look to the mandated rule of celibacy and the lack of women in its leadership positions to find the real "devil" that has led to a moral catastrophe.

### ***A Failure to Communicate***

November 16, 2018 - It appears that the US bishops were not able to convince Pope Francis that the sex-abuse scandal is a crisis of grave proportions—an existential threat to the Catholic Church in the United States that requires immediate corrective action (The Catholic Bishops Who Couldn't, House of Worship, Nov. 16).

It also seems that the bishops were not able to convince Pope Francis that the church is not being persecuted as he claimed in his remarks at the recent Synod of Bishops and reported by Francis Rocca, (Pope Assails Church's 'Persecution', Oct. 29). A quote from the prison warden in the 1967 film "Cool Hand Luke," is applicable; it begins with "What we've got here is failure to communicate."

### ***On a Slippery Slope***

January 27, 2019 - Kudos to Alejandro Bermudez for his thoughtful comments on Notre Dame's disappointing cave to the extreme left, ["Catholics Against Columbus," House of Worship, Jan. 25]. The author raises a troubling question: "If murals that portray Columbus bringing the faith to this hemisphere are not welcome at a Catholic university, what part of Catholic identity is?"

Here's an even more troubling question: Is this another step on a slippery slope which, if followed to the end, will make us into devils where we wish to always see things worse than they really are?

It is ironic that the "Notable & Quotable column in the next day's print issue was taken from C.S. Lewis's "Mere Christianity" published in 1952, wherein Lewis concludes by saying: "Finally, we shall insist on seeing everything—God and our friends and ourselves included—as bad, and not be able to stop doing it: we shall be fixed for ever in a universe of pure hatred." A prescient comment on current atonement declarations.

<???

### ***The College Admissions Racket***

March 17, 2019 - With regard to your editorial, "The College Admissions Racket" (Mar. 14): Corruption, cheating, and cover-ups are widespread in our nation's colleges and universities that are beholden to wealthy donors, but are endemic to those schools seeking fame and fortune via football and men's basketball entertainment businesses.

Colleges and universities supporting big-time football and men's basketball programs have developed methods of cheating, corruption, and cover-ups to an art form while school administrators and supporters live in a world of seemingly boundless hypocrisy. The existence of a college admissions racket comes as no surprise to those concerned with college sports reform.

### ***Scrutiny Warranted***

March 17, 2019 - Congressional scrutiny is warranted since the scandal not only involved cheating to help children gain access to elite colleges and universities, but also involved getting a tax deduction for illicit payments. In addition to their focus on admission practices, House Democrats working on rewriting federal law governing higher education should also consider clarification of the rules for those who want to make legitimate charitable donations to colleges and universities.

### ***Special admissions: The 'original sin' of college sports***

March 18, 2019 - The admissions scandal comes as no surprise to those concerned with college sports reform ("Scandal Puts Focus on Athletes' Special Admissions," U.S. NEWS, Mar. 18). Sports recruiting is the real college admissions scandal while special admissions has been called the 'original sin' of college sports.

Subsequent to this 'sin', corruption, cheating, and cover-ups have become endemic to those schools seeking fame and fortune via football and men's basketball entertainment businesses.

Colleges and universities supporting big-time football and men's basketball programs have developed methods of cheating, corruption, and cover-ups to an art form while school administrators and supporters live in a world of seemingly boundless hypocrisy.

### ***On Billion-Dollar 'Amateurs'***

March 19, 2019 – William McGurn's opinion piece, "Billion-Dollar 'Amateurs'" takes the reader on a road well traveled by The Drake Group and other organizations dedicated to college-sports reform (Opinion, Mar. 19). It also brings to mind William Rhoden's 2006 book *Forty Million Dollar Slaves: The Rise, Fall, and Redemption of the Black Athlete*.

Sad to say, Rhoden's prophetic book, along with many similar books, articles, and TV documentaries focused on college-sports reform, have yet to render significant corrective action to reign in the exploitation of black athletes as well free our nation's institutions of higher education that are held hostage by their sports entertainment businesses. Perhaps the recent exposure of the college admissions racket will provide impetus for requisite corrective action by the U.S. Congress and/or the federal courts.

### ***Another unasked question***

April 9, 2019 - Kudos to William McGurn for relating the Felicity Huffman SAT-cheating admissions scandal to Harvard's discrimination-in-admissions-court case, (Cheating on the SATs, OPINION, April 9).

Sports recruiting is also a college-admissions scandal with special admissions called the 'original sin' of college sports. Subsequent to committing this 'sin', corruption, cheating, and cover-ups, the 'sinful' 3Cs, have become endemic at those schools seeking fame and fortune via sports entertainment businesses.

Those watching the NCAA's March Madness title game saw the college entertainment business doing what it does best—making an ocean of money by exploiting black male athletes who, according to Kevin Blackstone, "are immensely under remunerated for their labor and whose well-being is not valued."

Here's another unasked question: How is what the college entertainment businesses do to make huge amounts of money morally different from the criminal charges against Felicity Huffman?

### ***No Competent Generals Wanted***

July 21, 2019 - Robert D. Kaplan's July 18 opinion piece "Why We Need Someone Like Ike" should give all Americans serious pause, especially members of Congress—even more so when coupled with the July 16 US News piece "Generals Fall Out of Favor With Trump."

These generals were long on discipline, integrity, and competence with regard to worldwide threats—attributes sadly lacking in Trump.

It may be recalled that Ike and his six presidential successors relied on General Andrew J. Goodpaster when challenged with the task of resolving complex domestic and foreign policy issues. Sad to say, even General Goodpaster would likely have no place in the present administration.

### ***A Dual Obsession***

August 8, 2019 - Kudos to Anthony Kronman for his well-written, spot-on piece, "The Downside of Diversity," (Review, C1, Aug. 3-4).

Our nation's colleges and universities, long obsessed with highly commercialized sports programs, have succumbed to still another obsession with politically correct diversity by also falsely claiming academic value.

This dual obsession is sowing the seeds of a suicide-like destruction of a precious resource, American higher education dedicated to excellence and truth.

### ***Here's a Gaudy Revelation: Some Schools Cheat Better Than Others***

October 2, 2019 - In his review of Lars Anderson's book, "Chasing the Bear," S. C. Gwynne, writes: "The answer may be that Mr. Saban's process can only be seen as a totality: Every piece of what he does is as important as every other piece. And perhaps, in spite of my desire for gaudy revelations, that really is the message of Mr. Anderson's book: Nick Saban's "secret" is just that he does everything a little bit better than everyone else ["Even Better Than the Bear," Fall Books, Sept. 28-29].

The "gaudy revelation" sought by Mr. Gwynne" won't be found in Anderson's book. The following may very well be the sought-after revelation: "They all cheat" as claimed University of Chicago President Robert Maynard Hutchins back in 1939 when terminating the school's Big-10 football program. Everyone knows, or at least should know, that all schools cheat in some way or another, some better than others, and that deceit, deception, and exploitation are part and parcel of today's college-sports programs.

### ***Mission Creep in Higher Education***

December 21, 2019, Kudos to Abigail Thompson for continuing to highlight yet another aspect of the American tragedy in higher education, ("The University's New Loyalty Oath," Opinion, Dec. 20). Today's excessively commercialized institutions of higher education at schools that support revenue-generating football and men's basketball programs have brought academic corruption, financial shenanigans, questionable admission practices, and increasing expenditures on athletics.

"When the most highly paid employee is the football coach, not the president, it's clear something is awry. When football tickets and fancy student centers are the currency of the day, rather than affordable and quality education, clearly something is awry," said Anne Neal in a Nov. 30, 2011 Journal Op-ed.

American colleges and universities are academic institutions that claim to have a mission that is primarily focused on the creation, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge, all based on freedom of inquiry. Therefore, something is also awry when non-faculty administrators exhibit misplaced sensitivity and expand their school's mission—placing outsized emphasis on social justice issues such as diversity, inclusion, and equity. As a consequence of this mission creep, faculty hiring based on disciplinary merit is bound to diminish—leading to a further dumbing down of higher education in America.

## ***A March of Folly***

December 27, 2019, Recent higher-education related op-eds by Judge José Cabranes, Heather MacDonald, and Professor Abigail Thompson, as well as columns by Melissa Korn and Douglas Belkin reflect a vigorous attempt to call public attention to the continuing erosion of excellence in American higher education.

These writings also serve as a challenge to college and university governing boards to rise to the occasion and recognize that they are directly responsible for the debilitating leadership actions at their institutions. We learn how vigorously administrators retreat from excellence and meritocracy via the defense of their school's diversity statements, (UC Davis Defends Its 'Diversity Statements,' Letters, Dec. 27).

Institutional leadership has led to an ongoing tragedy in higher education—excessive commercialization, administrative bloat, mission creep via outsized focus on social-justice issues (such as diversity, equity, and inclusion), the lowering of standards, and the graduation of students who can't write or think critically and who won't be able to compete in the global marketplace.

Political leaders in China and Russia must certainly be amused at this march of folly.

## Book Reviews\*

### ***A Must-read Book on the Resolution of Domestic and International Conflicts***

February 9, 2018 - Review of *A New Map for Relationships: Creating True Love at Home and Peace on the Planet* by Dorothea and Martin Hellman.

Living in today's real world, characterized by mind-boggling challenges, discontentment, and debilitating tensions, is disconcerting to say the very least. What is desperately needed are some signs of hope. As if on cue comes Dorothea and Martin Hellman's book and their new holistic way of thinking about interpersonal and international relationships.

The authors deftly apply the insights they gained, while successfully resolving issues in their marriage, to address and help resolve critical global issues—issues that put our planet and civilization at risk.

Consider, for example, our nation's seeming need to enter into needless conflicts and wars as well as its apparent need to rely on a defense strategy based on nuclear deterrence. Several such conflicts are included as case studies in the book. These studies, performed at Stanford University's Center for International Security and Cooperation, applied a risk-informed approach to our nation's nuclear strategy that focuses on conflicts that could escalate to nuclear threats.

The Hellman's well written book is a valuable contribution to the literature in the field of domestic as well as international relationships and very well worth the read. It is also well worth parents considering the book as a gift to their married or about to be married children.

### ***Schreiber Tells How It Really Is***

February 11, 2018 - Review of *My Two Elaines: Coping and Surviving as an Alzheimer's Caregiver*, by Martin Schreiber.

What better way to describe the journey of an Alzheimer's spouse and caregiver to others than by referring them to Martin Schreiber's book, *My Two Elaines*. Schreiber's last two lines just about say it all. "I still get to hold her hand every day. If Alzheimers is the worst thing that can happen to me, I've got the best of the worst." I would only add: We've had a wonderful life that's still wonderful in a different way.

### ***The Cherokee Nation: A Story of Survival against All Odds***

May 13, 2018 - Review of *Blood Moon: An American Epic of War and Splendor in the Cherokee Nation* by John Sedgwick.

This book is well worth the read for anyone who is not only interested in the impact of the Cherokee on the history and politics of early America, but the survival of the Cherokee Nation as well. I read it with the aim of learning as much as I could about the travails of Native American tribes that encountered and then interfaced with Old World explorers and settlers who believed they had found a New World. The book met my aim and then some. It's a well-researched tour de force of the historic plight of the Cherokee. The book certainly lived up to its subtitle as an American epic of war and splendor. The splendor comes through by virtue of insights on how the Cherokee people were able to survive as a nation—overcoming all odds to do so.

We learn that the Cherokee were an offshoot of the Iroquois people that migrated from the north, arriving in what would become the American Southeast sometime after the English established Jamestown in 1607. And when the Cherokee reached their destination they took the land from its occupants by the same forceful means that the predominantly Scots-Irish white settlers would employ against them—a continuation of the tribal fighting that is a hallmark of human history.

In large part, Sedgwick centers this well illustrated book on two of the Cherokee's principle chiefs, John Ross and The Ridge (He Who Walks on Mountaintops). Each was of mixed blood, with The Ridge looking more like his Cherokee father than his Scots grandfather, and the much more white-looking Ross resembling seven of his white great-grandparents. For decades the two worked together fighting against and then collaborating with whites, and eventually fighting against each other for the future of the Cherokee nation. Cherokee father than his Scots grandfather, and the much more white-looking Ross resembling seven of his white great-grandparents. For decades the two worked together fighting against

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\*Posted at Amazon.com

and then collaborating with whites, and eventually fighting against each other for the future of the Cherokee nation.

The issue that finally drove Ross and The Ridge apart was either to retreat in the face of white settlement pressure, or stay and fight against overwhelming odds? According to Sedgwick, an 1826 census showed that the Cherokee population "had increased only slightly to just under 14,000, and they were surrounded by well over one-million whites," a population differential that among other things led to unrelenting pressure for removing the Cherokee people thus setting the stage for the subsequent struggle over the Cherokee lands.

Despite knowing that the chiefs in question did not have the authority to bind whole tribes because of the dispersed nature of tribal governance, the white federal and state governments bribed Indian leaders to sign treaties surrendering tribal lands. The 1828 discovery of gold in Georgia also doomed the Cherokee in their homeland. It intensified the pressure on the tribe dramatically. Sedgwick writes, "Once the gold appeared, the Cherokee hills of northern Georgia no longer belonged to the Cherokee; they belonged to just about anyone with a shovel. No law, no religion, no morality could ever hold back gold fever."

The U.S. government aided and abetted the taking of Cherokee lands when, in 1830, Congress approved and President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act. Jackson cast the measure as a good thing, saying "To save him from this alternative, or perhaps utter annihilation, the general government kindly offers him a new home, and proposes to pay the whole expense of his removal and settlement." Yet the president made clear that the move wasn't optional. The Cherokee considered Jackson to be a hard man. Modern Cherokee understandably liken him to Hitler. But he and The Ridge were probably right in saying that the only hope for Cherokee survival was for them to get out of the way of the ever increasing onslaught of white settlers.

The Cherokee simply had to go. The Removal Act split the Cherokee. The one party followed John Ross and determined to hold the land, no matter the cost. The other party followed The Ridge, who reluctantly agreed with Jackson that staying in Georgia risked the annihilation of the tribe. And so began the trail of tears by land and by river. Eventually, the U.S. Army compelled all the Cherokee to leave. The removal was a humanitarian disaster. Of 15,000 Cherokee who embarked on the winter journey, some 4,000 died of disease, exposure and starvation—an American Holocaust. How could this be?

The 19th-century was an era of Manifest Destiny when white American settlers widely believed that they were destined to expand the country across North America without regard for the natural land rights of Native Americans. What might have been done differently that could have the situation much better? Given the imbalance in numbers and the context of the times, it is difficult to think of an alternative scenario. Nonetheless, this is the tragic—usually untold—dark side of American history of genocide by way of ethnic cleansing that took place during this era.

Along with broken treaties, these government actions not only runs counter to how most Americans like to think of themselves and the principles they and their country stand for, but it also left the Cherokee and other Native Americans bitter and distrustful—creating a cultural divide, a deep wound that I believe is still with us today

The Cherokee troubles didn't end with the forced march and relocation to the northeastern part of Oklahoma. Sedgwick's epic story goes on through the Civil War, which again split the Cherokee, with The Ridge's family members of the tribe fighting on the side of the Union.

In the end, the divided and decimated Cherokee rose from the ashes to make an almost unbelievable comeback in their new home centered in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Today the Cherokee Nation is comprised of close to 300-thousand citizens—that's a twenty-fold increase over the population at the time when the Removal Act was enforced. Sadly, the Cherokee still live with the inaccurate portrayal of history taught in Oklahoma schools that Columbus and Europeans were the first to "discover" the Americas. More on the current life of the Cherokee people can be found at the Cherokee Nation's website.

### ***A provocative book that forces the reader to think***

September 5, 2018 - Review of *The University We Need: Reforming American Higher Education* by Warren Treadgold.

I first became aware of Warren Treadgold's book "The University We Need." via John Leo's review, "Rethinking College" in the July 19, 2018, print edition of The Wall Street Journal. Reading the review prompted a question: Isn't it a wonder how so many things can be wrong with our American

universities and still have them considered the best in the world.

Then came a letter-to-the-editor response to Leo's review in the July 27, 2018 issue of the Journal, "Rethinking the Best Universities in the World," by Emeritus Prof. Sol Gittleman (Tufts University) who wrote

"In the 1930s we were a homogeneous faculty and student body, harmonious, agreeable, and mediocre. Now we have anarchy, are diverse in faculty and student body, with a million students from all over the world in our dreadful colleges and universities, with another million wishing they could get in. Perhaps 150 of our Nobel laureate's chose American universities for their research and emigrated. We have all of those terrible qualities that Messrs. Leo and Treadgold identify -- but could the Journal quietly tell its readers that we have the greatest higher education "anarchy" in the world? It is a mess, chaotic, sports-driven, with incompetent administrators trying to lead ungovernable faculty and students. Perhaps that's the price you pay for being the envy of the world."

After emailing Gittleman to tell him that I liked his letter but questioned how long can schools supporting big-time football and men's basketball programs be considered the "envy of the world" when weighted down by related academic corruption, not to mention the adjunct and unmotivated-student problems -- commenting that I don't believe schools like MIT and Cal Tech should have a problem, so too with the professional schools within universities, such as medical, law, and those involving STEM and other professional disciplines. I also advised him that I ordered a copy of Treadgold's book to see firsthand what he really has to say with the intent of writing my own review of the book.

However, Joel Eissenberg's spot-on, critical AMAZON customer review of Treadgold's book spared me the task of writing a similar review since he noted essentially the same deficiencies in the book as I noted. Nevertheless, here are a few personal observations:

1. Rather than fault so-called leftist faculties and administrations I would fault college and university boards of trustees/regents for many of the problems cited by Treadgold. Who better to blame than stonewalling board members who hide behind the mask of institutional maintenance -- fiduciary guardians and protectors of their school's reputation? These board members espouse the cover-up play book titled "See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil" as applied to campus sexual assaults as well as the loss of academic integrity at most of our schools supporting big-time football and men's basketball programs that strive to win at any cost for fame and fortune.
2. It is also a wonder that college and university boards allow what Treadgold sees as an anti-conservative bent in today's colleges and universities when, for the most part, board members are active or retired bankers and/or corporate officers that are generally wealthy (read donors) and very conservative. Could they possibly be neutralized by lavish perks and awards?
3. On page 142, Treadgold writes "In theory, no doubt, enlightened trustees could try to choose a determined and forceful new president for an already distinguished University." He goes on to say: "Yet, I am not aware of any existing major university that has such enlightened trustees." One would think that the first order of business for our colleges and universities would be to educate their board members. Unfortunately, most schools offer no such education for new board members. To this end, see veteran board member Allen C. Guelzo's op-ed "Back-to-School Advice for College Trustees" in the Aug. 25, 2018, issue of the Journal.
4. Reading Treadgold's book would also be a worthwhile exercise for current and future board members. So too would becoming a member of ACTA, the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, an independent, non-profit organization committed to academic freedom, excellence, and accountability at America's colleges and universities.
5. Board members, presidents, and other administrators, as well as faculty members could very well profit from viewing "The Hunting Ground," a CNN documentary/exposé that covers the campus rape epidemic at colleges across America. Thoughtful consideration should also be given to the work of The National

Coalition Against Violent Athletes (NCAVA) that is dedicated to empowering individuals affected by athlete violence through comprehensive services including advocacy, legal aid, education and counseling and also works to eliminate off-the-field violence by athletes. Similarly, thoughtful consideration should be given to the work of The Drake Group that has as its mission the defense of academic integrity in higher education from the corrosive aspects of commercialized college sports.

6. The aforementioned educational resources will likely go unused since most, if not all colleges are comfortable with the status quo. It would seem that coercion via government intervention is required – painful as that may be. Rather than building and staffing a new university that we don't need, education of college and university board members, presidents, and other administrators could be mandated by the U.S. Department of Education. Failure to comply with the mandate and a request for corrective action plans to address issues of sports related academic corruption and sexual abuse will result in the loss of the school's tax-exempt status as well as the loss of federal funding.

7. Though written from a narrow perspective, this provocative book is considered to be a must read for anyone interested in reforming our nation's institutions of higher education. Why so? Because, despite the deficiencies cited by Eissenberg, the book forces the reader to think about alternative solutions to the formidable problems facing our nation's institutions of higher education.

### ***The Fifth Risk: A wake-up call for all of us***

December 3, 2018 - Review of *The Fifth Risk* by Michael Lewis.

We live in a time when it is easy to be discouraged with the news from Washington. All too many citizens are disheartened by today's political discourse that has not only become vulgar, but strongly polarized as well. It can be argued that, in large part, this situation is attributable to the leadership of a president who appears to have little regard for science, scientists, and facts. This becomes all too evident in Michael Lewis' book, *The Fifth Risk*.

The reader learns that the fifth risk is the habit of responding to long-term risks with quick fixes, i.e., short-term solutions that stem from short-sighted program management. In a nutshell, it's the existential threat that you never see or even imagine as a risk. It's the innovation that never occurs, and the knowledge that is never created because you have ceased to lay the groundwork for it. It's what you never learned that might have saved you.

If you want to preserve a simplified instinct-level worldview, it really helps to gut science. The administration's budget, like the social forces behind it, is powered by a seeming perverse desire—to remain ignorant. The battle flag for the Trump administration ought to be emblazoned IGNORANCE IS BLISS. Why so?

If you don't understand what government institutions do and why they do it, you can never know the negative consequences of directed cutbacks and changes as well as of incompetent leadership and staffing at these institutions.

The author makes this abundantly clear when he begins his tale of woe at the get-go of the newly-elected administration. To the astonishment of the secretaries and staffers at the various departments of the government, no members of the new administration's transition team showed up to be briefed on their department's mission, financials, staffing, current issues, and other matters pertinent to the operation of the department. How could this be? The answer, plain and simple, was that there were no transition teams—the incoming administration was not prepared to run a federal government that was beyond its understanding.

The fact is that people don't notice when things are going right—these are the things the government does. It manages everything that underpins our lives, from funding free school meals, to policing rogue nuclear activity, to predicting extreme weather events. It steps in where private investment fears to tread, innovates and creates knowledge, as well as assesses extreme long-term risk.

The author reveals how our government is under attack by its own leaders. Willful ignorance fuels the destruction of our country's fabric. Exposing America and the world to the biggest risk of all: it's what you will never learn that might have saved you.



Lewis makes a case in point with the Department of Energy (DOE) that deals with complex technical problems including the two greatest risks to human existence: nuclear weapons and climate change. (The other risks involve North Korea, Iran, and the Electric grid.)

When they did arrive the administration's so-called "Beachhead Team" reflected a mind-set to the effect that "Everything the government does is stupid and bad and the people in it are stupid and bad." It is ironic that President Trump appointed Rick Perry as the secretary of the department. It was Perry that said he would eliminate the DOE if he were president—obviously not knowing that the DOE is responsible for the science that helps minimize threats to our nation from attack or natural disaster.

The author goes on to tell about similar fiascos at the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce. Along the way the reader will come to know what is really supposed to go on in these departments via the author's extended interviews with experts in related fields ranging from wild fires to data science and extreme-weather forecasting.

A thoughtful reading of this book may very well lead to a question: Isn't it time for all Americans to take stock and come to understand that they have a responsibility as citizens to put aside their differences and wake up to what's really happening at the working levels of their government? Reading this book would be a good first step in that process.

Hope for a viable future of America's democracy will rely on a well-informed electorate that can help place experienced as well as competent and trustworthy men and women at all levels of government no matter their political affiliation.

### ***A Must-read Story of American Civilian Heroes***

January 13, 2019 – Review of *A Brotherhood of Spies: The U-2 and the CIA's Secret War* by Monte Reel.

Monte Reel's *A Brotherhood of Spies* is a captivating tale of the intense American effort that brought US intelligence into the modern age of information technology and data analysis.

The author sets the stage in his prologue that takes the reader back to what was happening in America when on May 1, 1960 Francis Gary (Frank) Power's CIA-sponsored photographic-intelligence-gathering mission's U-2 spy plane was shot down over the Soviet Union.

Reel then proceeds to tell the stories of a remarkably small group of four men who were vital to the success of a mission that would, over the years provide the US intelligence of immeasurable value. He investigates the most important milestones of the Cold War with a novelist's eye for detail that brings each of the stories to life---getting into the minds and personalities of the masterminds of the top-secret U-2 spy plane program, Polaroid's Edwin Land, Lockheed's Clarence "Kelly" Johnson, CIA's Richard Bissell, and CIA's Frank Powers.

At the book's core is Powers, the man who against all odds survived the Soviet S-75 Dvina missile attack on his U-2, was captured, tried, found guilty, imprisoned then released by the Soviets, and how he and his wife, Barbara coped in an international political chess game. Steven Spielberg's movie "Bridge of Spies" tells the story of his dramatic release.

Of particular interest to some could very well be the author's account of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. For those who viewed President Kennedy's October 22, Oval Office address outlining the crisis, these were worrisome days with Saturday, October 27, later described as "the most dangerous moment in human history."

The steady and patient leadership of Presidents Eisenhower, during the development of the U-2, and Kennedy, during the Cuban missile crisis, stands in sharp contrast to today's presidential chaos and scare-mongering with a patently made-up immigration crisis.

On a personal note, Reel's incredibly engaging story of the U-2 and the CIA's secret war brought back vivid memories of experience with high-pressure classified R&D programs for US Air Force Development and Intelligence Agencies in the overlapping 1956-1967 timeframe. Also, I was pleasantly surprised to find that my (second) cousin, Andrew Goodpaster was involved with the U-2 program in his capacity as President Eisenhower's Staff Secretary and Liaison to the Department of Defense. He went on to become NATO's Supreme Commander and the Superintendent of West Point.

This book is a must read for anyone interested in real non-military American heroes as well as the leadership and critical ingredients required for urgent large-scale product development.

## ***Andrew Jackson Goodpaster: An unsung general too important to ignore***

February 12, 2019 - Review of *The Life and Work of Andrew J. Goodpaster: Best Practices in National Security Affairs* by C. Richard Nelson.

Famous American author Winston Groom recently recommended works about leaders who took the nation's soldiers into battle ("Five Best Books on American Generals," *The Wall Street Journal*, Books, Feb. 9-10, 2019). C. Richard Nelson's book, *The Life and Work of General Andrew J. Goodpaster: Best Practices in National Security Affairs*, was conspicuous by virtue of its absence from Groom's list. Having read this superbly written book about General Goodpaster who has been called the finest officer of our era, this absence inspired the writing of this review.

We learn that General Andrew Jackson Goodpaster (1915-2005), was a soldier, engineer, and scholar who led and fought with uncommon valor in World War II, advised several presidents, most notably President Dwight D. Eisenhower, and served as NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (1969-1974).

He was called out of retirement in 1977 to serve as the superintendent of West Point as it was reeling from a cheating scandal. In his four-year tenure at the academy, he sought to substitute "positive leadership" for hazing and personal abuse, to bolster courses in the humanities and public policy, as well as ease the admission of women.

Subsequent to General Goodpaster's government service, he served as the Chairman of the George C. Marshall Foundation, as a senior fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and as a founder and Chairman of the Eisenhower Institute that focused on national security issues. These and a number of other selected events appear in a chronology of Goodpaster's life with the year and his age at the time. Notable is that

Goodpaster was the recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, by President Reagan in 1984, for "lifetime accomplishments that changed the face and soul of our country."

Also included is a chapter titled "The Goodpaster Legacies." It covers the lessons highlighted in the book that deal with the ideas and ideals that led Goodpaster to be repeatedly chosen by leaders to participate in national security affairs at the highest levels. A summary of his approach to analysis and decision making provides valuable lessons for current and aspiring leaders.

General Goodpaster was the personal hero of Brent Scowcroft, Lt. General (ret.); National Security Advisor for Presidents George H.W. Bush and Gerald R. Ford. It was Scowcroft who, in 2010, said General Goodpaster remains "too important to ignore."

Nelson's book reveals General Goodpaster as an example of a truly enlightened military intellectual, a soldier-scholar, who used his considerable talents in the service of his country. His life story should serve as an inspiration to others who are challenged with the task of resolving complex domestic and foreign policy issues

## ***Tyler Kepner's K: A veritable time machine***

May 1, 2019 - Review of *K: A History of Baseball in Ten Pitches* by Tyler Kepner.

Those of us who have had the good fortune to pitch a baseball in competition at any level should enjoy Tyler Kepner's inside view on the art of pitching. His book, *K: A History of Baseball in 10 Pitches*, covers various kinds of pitches, ball grip and release, finger pressure, and body mechanics, as well as the major-leaguers that mastered the art of delivering each of ten pitches. But that's not all.

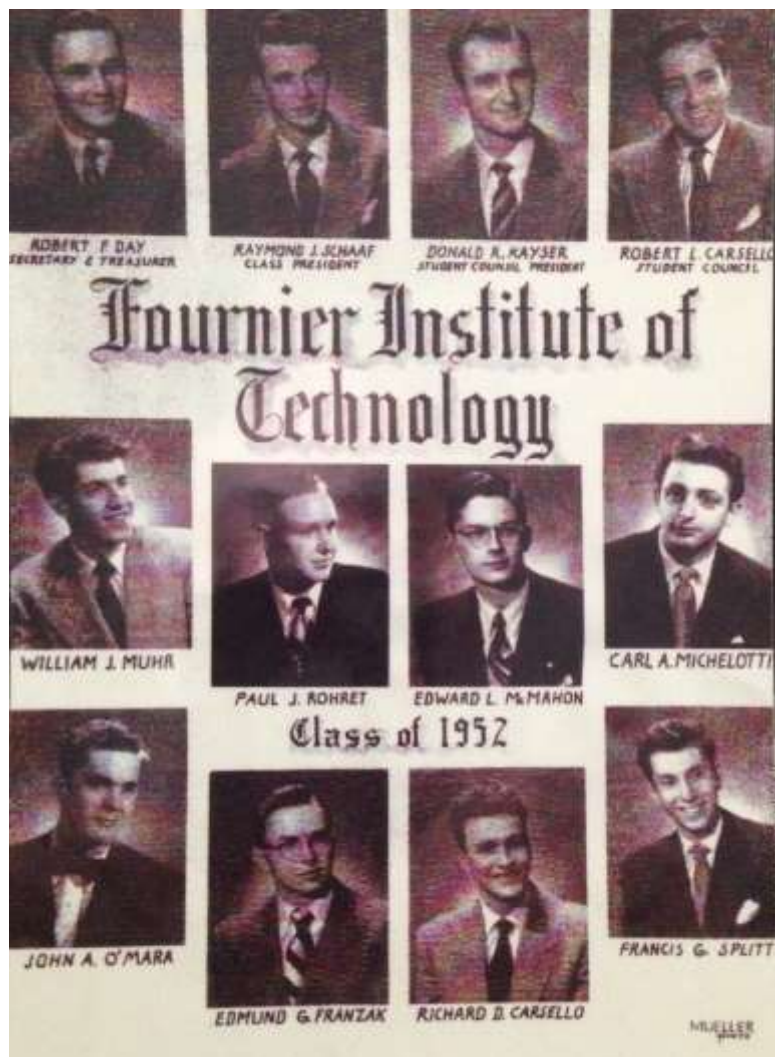
Anecdotes from the great pitchers of the game, both past and present, spice-up the author's narrative making the book an enjoyable read from start to finish. It was hard to put down as it rekindled fond memories of wins, losses, championships, and friendships of long ago.

I had a baseball in hand as I read this well written book—learning the proper names for pitches I threw from the mid-1940s to the mid-1950s without the help of any kind of pitching coach that proliferate in today's game.. For me, the book was a veritable time machine. It literally transported me back to the days of my youth and early adulthood when I had a tryout with the Chicago White Sox in 1950 at age 19. If I only knew then what I know now.

If you love baseball, you will enjoy this book while gaining a deeper understanding of the game and its players, as well as pitching strategy and tactics.

# ILLUSTRATIONS

*Every name and picture tells a story.  
Each has its own uncanny way of  
Making the past seem present.*



Arthur J. Schmitt, Founder of the Fournier Institute of Technology,  
pictured with the author's son Matthew, circa 1959



Judy and Frank Splitt with the late Joseph Hafenscher – a life-long friend, teammate, and staunch supporter,  
Photo circa 1983.



Northern Telecom-Cook Electric Engineering Department Directors and senior staff members  
pictured with the author (3<sup>rd</sup> from left) Donald Jaycox, Robert Young, William Brown,  
William Hines, David Richter, Grant Leslie, and Eric .  
Photo circa 1983.



Top, the author pictured with Diana Lady Dougan, U.S. Ambassador for Telecommunications, at Northern Telecom's *Telecom '83 U.S. Pavilion* in Geneva, Switzerland, and with wife Judy (bottom) at Northern Telecom's *Digital World Exhibit*, October 1983. Photos by Bob Stoffels, *TEM* magazine.





Top, Frank and Judy Splitt pictured at the IEEE Chicago Section 1986 Fellow Award Ceremony where Robert Janowiak, Executive Director of the National Engineering Consortium presented the author with a gavel signifying his chairmanship of the 1986 National Communications Forum. Middle, The author with Jack Bridges, his Fellow Award Nominator, Bottom, (left to right) Robert and Judy Janowiak, Frank and Judy Splitt, William and Christine Kashul.





The author and wife Judy pictured at the 1986 IEEE Chicago Section Fellow Awards Ceremony with:  
 Top (l to r), Ed and Margaret Ernst, Rudy Hornacek, Center. Peter & Joan Wrenn and John & Virginia Gearen  
 Bottom: (l to r) John Prados, Ed Ernst, and Frank Splitt at the 1992 ABET Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas



University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign College of Engineering Advisory Board's 1987-1988, Executive Committee: Front row seated: Frank G. Splitt, Gary Wells, Roger Van Heyningen, Stanley I. Weiss, Harold Sandburg, Barbara A. Kucera, Louis J. Jacobs, Back row standing: Gene Corley, Robert M. Janowiak, Porter J. Womeldorff, Richard W. Reynolds, Dean Mac E. Van Valkenburg



Judy Splitt at the UIUC's Union building exhibit dedicated to Chief Illiniwek, the symbol of the university until 2007. It was created in 1926 by Judy's Uncle Ray Dvorak with Bob Zuppke, Photo circa 1991.



The author and his wife Judy (right) with College of Engineering Dean William Schowalter and his wife Jane at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign (UIUC). Photo circa 1991.



The author (center) pictured with Joseph De Marco, William Brown, Henry Antolak, and Arnold Kaplan, circa 1990



The author pictured with his PhD advisor and co-founder of the International Engineering Consortium, Northwestern Professor Emeritus Robert E. Beam, at the Consortium's 1994 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ceremony..





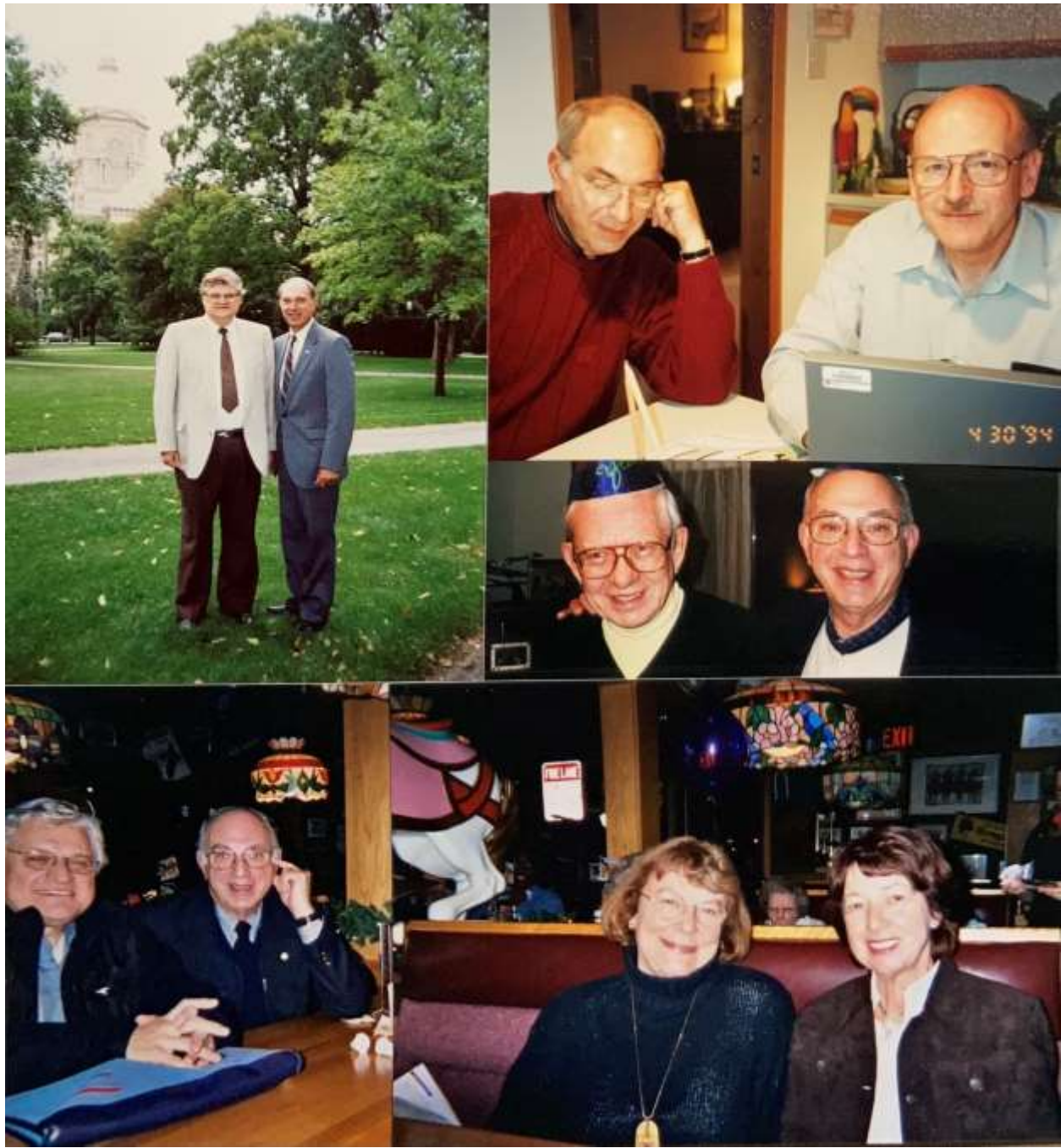
Beyond War Midwest Region: Workshops at Lake Geneva (top) and Sinsinawa, WI (bottom)



Top, the author with his wife Judy at right next to Ed Kyser. Bottom, Judy with Regina Roney. In the rear are Midwest Region organizers Ed and Barbara Kyser. Photos taken at the Beyond War Office, Palo Alto, CA, circa 1990.



Top: Jane Stavoe, Judy Splitt, and Jane McAllister, Midwest Region Beyond War Stalworths, circa 1991  
 Middle: Bruce DeMaeyer and Bob Janowiak sailing Lake Michigan, circa 1994.  
 Bottom: The author with his wife Judy, Marty Cooper and his wife Arlene, as above.

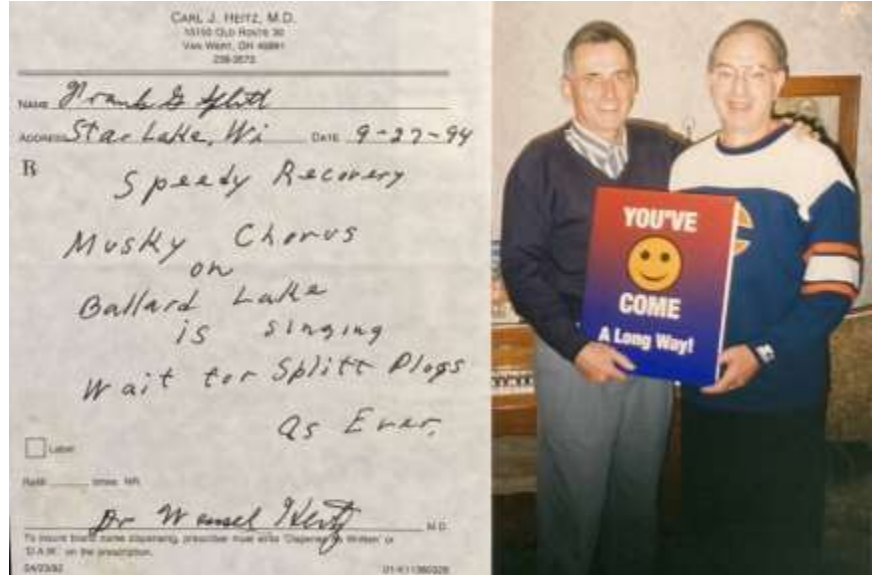


Bottom right. Judy Splitt pictured with Leone Michel on December 3, 2003. Clockwise from the lower left, the author pictured with Tony Michel on December 3, 2003, on September 21, 1988, with Jack Terry on April 30, 1994, and with Jim McKelvey on January 1, 2002.





Fournier Institute of Technology Class of 1952 Reunion: Back row (left to right) Don Kayser, Pal Rohert, Edmund Franzak, Richard Carsello, Frank Splitt, Carl Michelotti, Ray Schaff; Center row Terry Carsello, Bob Carsello, Arlene Michelotti, Jean Schaff, Agnes Franzak; Front row Theresa Rohret, Mary Carsello, Judy Splitt and Mary Kayser. May 1994.



Pre-op “Speedy Recovery” prescription from Doctor Carl (Doc) Heitz (left)  
Post-op visit from Bob Janowiak with a best-wishes card from members of the International Engineering Consortium’s Executive Council, October 1994 (right).



Top: Bob and Judy Janowiak on a visit to the post-surgery author's and his wife Judy's home in Mt. Prospect, Oct. 1994  
 Middle: Jack and Dorothy Terry pictured with Frank and Judy Splitt at the June 24, 1995 IEEE Honors Ceremony in Washington DC. Terry was the recipient of the 1995 IEEE Engineering Leadership Recognition Award.  
 Bottom: The author shown with the late Richard D. Carsello, college classmate, and life-long friend, circa 1994.



# THE INTERFACE



## IEEE



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THE JOINT NEWSLETTER OF THE IEEE EDUCATION SOCIETY AND THE ASEE ELECTRICAL AND COMPUTER ENGINEERING DIVISION

<http://www.ewh.ieee.org/soc/es/>

## ENVIRONMENTALLY SMART ENGINEERING EDUCATION: ENGINEERING EDUCATION REFORM:

### A Trilogy (Part 1): A Brief on a Paradigm in Progress

Frank G. Splitt

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**T**his article is appearing in the *ASEE Journal of Engineering Education*. It is being reprinted here in *The Interface*, with permission, in order to achieve the widest possible distribution among those interested in engineering education.

#### DEDICATION

This publication is dedicated to the memory of the late Arthur J. Schmitt, the inventive industrialist who founded the Amphenol Corporation in 1932 and the philanthropist who founded the Arthur J. Schmitt Foundation in 1941. Concerned that engineers were being too narrowly educated and that industrial leadership was going by default to those with backgrounds in general education, he became the educational innovator who founded the Fournier Institute of Technology in 1943. Mr. Schmitt's quest was for leadership. His aim was to provide effective industrial leadership via electrical engineers skilled not only in their profession, but in business administration and communications as well. His vehicle was education. Mr. Schmitt often paid tribute to America's engineering genius and cited the importance of engineers in America's future. He believed there was no field with richer rewards, none more intriguing, and none more important to the growth and defense of our nation. His mission continues through the work of the Arthur J. Schmitt Foundation.

(Photo courtesy of the Arthur J. Schmitt Foundation)

For more on Arthur J. Schmitt see: Schaefer, Arthur J., *Quest for Leadership: The Arthur J. Schmitt Story*, Cathedral Publishing, Chicago, IL.



Arthur J. Schmitt

*The International Engineering Consortium sponsored the publication of this trilogy as a public service to academia, government and industry. The Consortium is a nonprofit organization dedicated to catalyzing positive change in the information industry and university communities. It provides high-quality education for industry professionals, academics, and students. Among its initiatives are educational conferences, technology exhibitions, on-line educational programs, and the publication of research studies that focus on major issues and emerging technologies. More than 70 leading high-technology universities are currently affiliated with the Consortium. Industry is represented through the involvement of thousands of executives, managers, and professionals. For more information visit [www.iec.org](http://www.iec.org).*

#### FOREWORD

In a changing environment and under pressure we do what we can to avoid being left behind or dealt out. We fall back where we can on the status quo to maintain our comfort zones. So it is with our professions and with undergraduate education reform.



Top: The author seen at commencement ceremonies for Northwestern University's McCormick School of Engineering with Robert Barnett, Dean John Birge, and Associate Dean Stephen Carr in 2001. Bottom: Presentation of the Margaret and Muir Frey Prize for Innovation and Creativity to graduate Chanda Davis in 2003.



Fr. Theodore Hesburgh pictured with Judy and Frank Splitt, December 2003  
*Photo by Melanie Chapleau, University of Notre Dame*



B. David Ridpath, Frank Splitt, Richard Lapchick, Allen Sack. Ellen Staurowsky, and Jason Lanter,  
 At The Drake Group's 2006 *Robert Maynard Hutchins Award* Ceremony, March 31, 2006.





Allen Sack seen presenting the 2006 *Robert Maynard Hutchins Award* to the author at the Drake Group's Awards Dinner at University Place, Indiana University Purdue University, Indianapolis Indiana, March 31, 2006



Judy Splitt shown with the author's ardent supporters, the late Jim Vaughan and his wife Kay, at their home in Star Lake, Wisconsin, shortly after the 2006 *Robert Maynard Hutchins Award* ceremony.



The author pictured with: Top, his mother Marie and siblings (left to right) Valerie Zimmerman, Walter, and Barbara Kummerer, circa 1993; Center, Rick Rothstein (l) and Joseph Heitz (r), 2014.; Bottom, Marge & Orrie Colby, Judy Splitt and Shel Berman, 2015



The author with his wife Judy after presiding over his last annual meeting as president of the Ballard, Irving, White Birch Lake Association, circa 2008.



The author and wife Judy (center), with Robert Tucker, John & Carolyn Jacobs, Peggy McKelvey, Carol Tucker, and Robert McKelvey, 2011



The author and wife Judy (rear), pictured with Don & Marge Wood, Darlene Stewart, Sherry (nee Stewart) Sands, and Bozena Gabzdy.





Mary Willingham, co-author of *Cheated*, with Frank and Judy Splitt in Mount Prospect, IL on April 14, 2015, prior to her book-signing event at *Bookends and Beginnings* in Evanston. *Photo by Anne Rassas.*



Frank and Judy Splitt with Sisters Pauline Wittry, FSPA, and Karen Kappell, FSPA, long-time supporters from the Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center, Arbor Vitae, Wisconsin. *Photo by Pam Hoffman, 2015.*



Star Lakers circa 2011:

Top: Judy Splitt, Carol Tucker, Carolyn Jacobs, Mary Gollash, Peg McKelvey, Mary Jane Caraway, and Sharon Oie  
 Bottom: Fred Gollash, Jim McKelvey, Frank Splitt, Vern Oie, John Jacobs, Bob Tucker, and Bob McKelvey,





Top: Tom & Louise Gitter (left) and Sue & John Pope (right) pictured with Frank & Judy Splitt  
Center: *College Athletics Clips* Editor Nick Infante (left) pictured with Sonny Vaccaro, 2013  
Bottom: Jennifer Heitz with Judy Splitt, circa 2013



The author pictured gifting his *Odyssey* book to the Public Library in the Town of Plum Lake, Wisconsin with Library Director Ida Nemec (rear) and her assistant Nancy Minx (sitting), September 22, 2015.  
Photo by Wally Geist, *Vilas County News Review*.



Judy Splitt pictured with John Nowicki reviewing the *Odyssey* at the Garlands in Arlington Heights, Illinois, April 20, 2016.



Michael and Editor Margaret Mangan viewing a copy of the *Odyssey* with Judy Splitt, April 25, 2016



*Photo courtesy of Katie Vesperman, Edgewood College*

Shown at the June 19, 2017, *Odyssey* book presentation at Edgewood College in Madison, Wisconsin, are (left to right) Thomas Gitter, Louise Hagen Gitter, Gary Klein, Vice President of Edgewood's Office of Institutional Advancement, Frank Splitt, and Judith Hagen Splitt. The occasion also marked the institution of the Judith Hagen Splitt '56 Education Scholarship in memory of George and Emilie Hagen.



Northwestern University 2003 Commencement photo: From left to right, Kathy Faber, the author, Manijeh Razeghi, and Mildred Dresselhaus, recipient of an honorary Doctor of Science degree



Sarah Gitter, the author's niece, pictured at the 2020 SPIE Photonics West Awards Ceremony after accepting a lifetime achievement award on the author's behalf from Northwestern University Professor Manijeh Razeghi

## **PART 2, 2020-2021**





# INTRODUCTION

*...there is nothing more difficult and dangerous, or more doubtful of success, than an attempt to introduce a new order of things...* —**Niccolo Machiavelli**, 1513

It's been six years since the publication of my *Odyssey* book. About 5 years ago, friends and family members who saw that I was still writing, began asking, "Why don't you write an addendum to your book?" The collection of published and unpublished reflections that comprised *Reflections, 2016-2019* was my answer. Then came 2020, a year of peril like no other as it was fraught with the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic and the sometimes wild machinations surrounding the presidential election—providing much to opine about.

In 2020 my focus turned away from collegiate athletics reform. It remains a major focus of The Drake Group that fully understands that schools supporting big-time sports programs persist in what amounts to a money-making racket based on deceit, deception, and the exploitation of the names, images, and likeness' of their school's so-called student-athletes. The NCAA's amateur model of intercollegiate athletics is under a multiplicity of powerful assaults—including skeptical questions from Supreme Court Justices on pay limits.

These past two year still found me commenting on hot-button issues raised in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and my local newspaper, *The Daily Herald*. Again, it was akin to taking another trip back in time—rekindling fond memories of friends and colleagues who provided motivation, guidance, and support along the way. It also rekindled not so fond memories of the formidable challenges to change and the deceitful and deceptive tactics used by defenders of the status quo, especially in politics. All of this can be seen via a cursory view of the Table of Contents and the expanded gallery of photos.

Two items are worthy of special note. Both are directly related to my March 3, 2021, Zoom interview by Carla Slawson, the Executive Director of the Arthur J. Schmitt Foundation. (It can be viewed at < <https://youtu.be/UH1Tsr7AQ6E>>). The first item stems from comments on Arthur J. Schmitt's quest for leadership and was the basis for including "The New Reality ... A Quest for Leadership" as the first of the two capstone end pieces for this sequel. The second item relates to probing interview questions about the roots of leadership.

In my response, I told how my wife Judy persuaded me to become involved with The Beyond War Foundation, later known as The Foundation for Global Community. It was my good fortune to meet and work with truly inspirational leaders as well as observe deftly applied leadership skills. This involvement became a transformative experience that led to the calling for a "we are one" paradigm shift: from "me and mine and survival of the fittest," to "we and ours and survival of us all together." It began with my opening remarks at the National Engineering Consortium's March 1991, *2021 AD: Visions of the Future* ComForum session headlined "Environment 2021." The call was repeated the following year in the paper "Creating Our Common Future," in several related presentations, as well as in letters to the *Atlantic Magazine* and *The Wall Street Journal* in 2020 as even more relevant some 30 years later. The paper appears as the second capstone piece.

It is my hope that this sequel to the previous *Reflections* book will not only contribute to the ongoing process of knowledge creation and dissemination, but also provide lessons and insights into the difficulties associated with changing the order of things. More than ever, I found Machiavelli to be dead right—working on reform initiatives, no matter what the area, is really not for the faint of heart.

Frank G. Splitt  
Former McCormick Faculty Fellow  
McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science  
Northwestern University  
Evanston, Illinois

April 9, 2021

*Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;  
The best lack all conviction, while the worst  
Are full of passionate intensity.*

—William Butler Yeats, "The Second Coming," 1919



# An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives: The Back Story Updated

*A College Athletics Clips Book Review, 5-1-17, 8-24-17, 9-27-19, 3-19-21*

*The book provides readers and researchers with case-study material about the difficulties associated with changing the order of things in college athletics and beyond. This review updates the list of colleges and universities that have accepted the book for their library collections.*

**Frank Splitt's book, titled An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives, 1986-2015:** From Engineering, K-12 and Higher: Education to the Environment, National Information Infrastructure, and Collegiate Athletics, (FutureVectors, Inc., 2015), is a collection of his writings and speeches covering a period of thirty years. It is expected to provide readers and researchers with case-study material as well as insights into the difficulties associated with changing the order of things in each of the areas specified in the book's title.

According to Splitt, the Odyssey was first cataloged by the Plum Lake Public Library in Sayner, Wisconsin where it was linked to Wisconsin's Merlin Catalog System. Thereafter, he created a CD that contains a PDF of the entire book as well as PDFs of each of its 15 parts and front end (Testimonials, Dedication, Table of Contents, Forewords, and Introduction).

Splitt notes that distribution of the book and CD has been restricted to gifting to public and university libraries as well as to selected individuals in the academy. However, he believes that the provision of free online access to on Engineering Education Reform, K-12 and Higher Education Reform, as well the material in the Odyssey book[1] will facilitate research as provide historical insights into concerns about our environment, the evolution of US Information Infrastructure, and Collegiate Athletics Reform.

The book features an impressive set of testimonials from Derek C. Bok, Stanton R. Cook, James J. Duderstadt, Jon L. Ericson, John R. Gerdy, John H. (Jack) Gibbons, Theodore M. Hesburgh, Nick Infante, Stanley N. Katz, Michael Mangan, Irene Peden, Manijeh Razeghi, Carol Simpson Stern, John P. (Sonny) Vaccaro, and Mary Willingham.

ok reviews written by John A. Prados and B. David Ridpath.[2, 3] were subsequently adapted to serve as the book's forewords. Also appended is a link to a related Daily Herald story[4] – a spinoff from Splitt's book presentation at Loyola U-Chicago on November 9, 2016. Again, according to Splitt, the story was based on copy submitted by the Mount Prospect Public Library where the book was first linked to WorldCat.

Splitt advises that there are a growing number of links to WorldCat from the following set of colleges and universities that have accepted the Odyssey for their library collections (with bold font indicating listing at WorldCat):

**Benedictine U., U. of California-Berkeley, U. of Chicago, Clemson U., U. of Denver, DePaul U., Dominican U.-River Forest, Drake U., Drexel U., Edgewood College, Georgia Institute of Technology, U. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Kansas U. at Lawrence, Lewis U., Loyola U.-Chicago, Luther College, Marquette U., U. of Michigan, North Central College, Montana State U., New Haven U., Northeastern U., Northern Arizona U., Northwestern U., U. of Notre Dame, Ohio U., Olivet Nazarene U., U. of Pennsylvania, Princeton U., Purdue U., Rutgers U., Saint Francis U., U. of South Carolina, U. of South Dakota, Stanford U., U. of Tennessee- Knoxville, Texas A&M U., Tufts U., U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Viterbo U., Washington U. in St. Louis, U. of Washington, Western Carolina U., and the U. of Wisconsin- Madison.**

A copy of the book and the CD are now part of the Distinctive Collections at the Northwestern University Archives. A related photo from the April 19, 2017, ceremony celebrating the presentation of the Odyssey book to the Northwestern University Libraries, pictures (left to right): Judy Splitt, Manijeh Razeghi, McCormick School Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science and Director of the Center

for Quantum Devices, Kevin Leonard, University Archivist, Frank Splitt, a former McCormick Faculty Fellow, and Carol Simpson Stern. School of Communications Professor of Performance Studies, a former dean of the Graduate School, and a past president of the American Association of University Professors.



*Photo courtesy of Kevin Leonard*

In his book review, John Prados concluded: "The Odyssey is destined to be a valuable reference for all those who have serious concerns about the future of education in America, and, as such, it would be a most worthy addition to public and university libraries." Donald Kayser, a 1952 graduating classmate of Frank Splitt at the Fournier Institute of Technology that was founded by Arthur J. Schmitt, made the following comment after reviewing the online text of the Odyssey: "Let's hope the book might motivate some leaders in academia to reassess the objectives of education and the distraction by the monetary influence of athletics." It seems fitting that the book and CD are being made part of the Arthur J. Schmitt Foundation Archives at the John T. Richardson Library at DePaul University.

## NOTES

1. <http://www.futurevectors.com>
2. Prados, John, "Frank Splitt's Odyssey: A worthy addition to public and university libraries" College Athletics Clips, Feb. 5, 2016. <https://collegeathleticsclips.com/news/franksplittsodysseyaworthyadditio...>
3. Ridpath, B. David, "A Decade of Efforts to Reform College Sports Can Largely be Traced to One Man's Passion," Forbes, Feb. 25, 2016, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/bdavidridpath/2016/02/25/a-decade-of-reform...>
4. Twohey, Norrine, "Mount Prospect scholar's writings recently published," Dec. 17, 2016, <http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20161215/submitted/161219304/>

# COVID-19 Fatalities: A Long and Perilous Road Ahead

*As a matter of fact, all epidemiology, concerned as it is with the variation of disease from time to time or from place to place, must be considered mathematically, however many variables as implicated, if it is to be considered scientifically at all.*—Sir Ronald Ross, MD, 1857 – 1932

By Frank G. Splitt

June 5, 2020, Updated June 22, 2020

**ABSTRACT** – Despite the rising COVID-19 death toll in America, there are still voices and activities that do not reflect the serious nature of this disease and its associated killing potential.

Health care officials face formidable challenges that include but are not limited to individuals who minimize the seriousness of the COVID-19 pandemic, ignorance and confusion with respect to the true number of those infected, and the number of its related fatalities, as well as general knowledge as to its intrinsic killing potential – the expected death toll if mitigation measures were not employed.

The novel coronavirus is still a potent killer despite hopes, dreams, and rumors to the contrary. Without mitigation, the U.S. death toll would have ranged from about one to two million fatalities.

This commentary addresses this and other important questions about COVID-19 with the aim of providing insights as we all work to understand and learn to live with this stealthy disease that is a real threat to the life of those with co-morbidities and those 65 and older who account for 80% of the deaths.

**INTRODUCTION** – COVID-19 presents the U.S. with a set of complex and formidable challenges. None the least of these challenges are the voices of prominent individuals such as Elon Musk, chief executive of Tesla Inc., who minimize the seriousness of the COVID-19 pandemic. Also consider Alex Berenson, a former reporter at the *New York Times* and author of *Unreported Truths About COVID-19 and Lockdowns*, who not only questioned lockdowns, but also questions whether the novel coronavirus is as deadly as has been suggested.

Another significant challenge is our ignorance and confusion with respect to the true number of those infected and the number of COVID-19 related fatalities. Lauren Gardner, a Johns Hopkins University associate engineering professor who leads the team that built the schools widely-cited COVID-19 tracker, believes countries including the US and China, have broadly undercounted cases and deaths.<sup>1</sup>

Many COVID-19 related deaths do not get reported as related to the new coronavirus because testing not only remains limited, but sporadic as well. Death statistics indicate that few countries are accurately capturing fatalities from the new coronavirus. In some cases the shortfall could be significant—by as much as 2 to 3 times the number of deaths attributed to COVID-19.

It is hoped that the following insights and answers to some of the most important questions about COVID-19 will be of some help as we all work to understand and learn to live with this disease.

**COVID-19 IS STILL A REAL KILLER DISEASE** – The novel coronavirus is still a real killer that will simply not go away thereby presenting a significant challenge to America's health care systems and to all Americans, especially those with co-morbidities and those 65 and older who, according to CDC, data, account for 80% of COVID-19 related deaths.

Apparently unrecognized by the general public is the viruses' immense potential to wreak havoc on a non-immune U.S. population that does not treat the COVID-19 disease with appropriate caution, after restrictions on businesses and personal behavior are eased as the U.S. labors to reopen its economy.

Super-spreader gatherings are to be avoided.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, media reports indicate that many Americans have been participating in such events, most recently in the nationwide protest demonstrations related to the recent tragic homicide in Minneapolis. These protests coupled with Phase 3 business reopening in

Chicago prompted pleas for extreme caution by Dr. Allison Arwady, the city's Public Health Commissioner, and this from the World Health Organization:

"We need to be exceptionally careful that we are not creating a sense that all of a sudden the virus has decided to be less pathogenic. That is not the case at all," said Dr. Mike Ryan, executive director of the WHO's emergencies program, while Dr. Maria Van Kerkhove, head of WHO's emerging diseases and zoonosis unit, said "if we let the virus go, it will transmit. If we let the virus go, it will infect people and it will cause severe illness in about 20% of people."<sup>3</sup> Note that the remaining 80% will not seek medical care as they likely have very mild or moderate illness and, in some cases, be asymptomatic—not even know that they have been infected and are contagious.

As the economy reopens with an easing of restrictions, Americans, especially those with co-morbidities and those 65 and older who need to continue voluntary mitigation measures and exercising common sense while hoping for the expeditious development of anti-viral treatment regimens and vaccines that work for the elderly.<sup>4,5</sup> Also, non-politicized guidance for businesses and others is readily available from the University of Minnesota's Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy.<sup>6</sup>

**REPORTED COVID-19 CASES** – As of June 22, 2020, there have been some 2.29 million reported U.S. cases of COVID-19, up from 1.9 million reported on June 5, 2020.<sup>7</sup> If we assume that the reported cases are undercounted by a factor of 2, we get a conservative estimate of less than 6 million possible U.S. COVID-19 cases. Given a U.S. population of approximately 330 million, there remains a population of some 324 million Americans that are potential targets for the novel coronavirus as the U.S.

By the way, 6 million cases would represent less than 2% of the total population and far less than the 70% to 90% required for herd immunity according to the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.<sup>8</sup> Speaking of herd immunity, Dr. Anders Tegnell, Sweden's chief epidemiologist, while hoping to achieve herd immunity over time, did not shut down the country or its economy but rather relied largely on voluntary action, social distancing and personal hygiene advice. Tegnell has seen worldwide criticism for his country's method of fighting the coronavirus which has resulted in one of the highest death rates per capita in the world.

The development of medications that can provide treatment of the disease and/or the development and widespread distribution of safe and effective vaccines, not herd immunity, will be able to eventually stem the COVID-19 death toll.

**REPORTED AND ESTIMATED COVID-19 FATALITIES** – The ever increasing number of reported, but likely undercounted, COVID-19 deaths was 120,106 as of June 22, 2020.<sup>7</sup> Multiplying the number of reported deaths by a factor of 2 renders an estimate of less than half a million COVID-19 fatalities to date.

An important related question remains, to wit: How many COVID-19 related fatalities would have occurred in the U.S. if no mitigating intervention measures, such as social distancing/staying at home, mask wearing, and hand washing, were taken.

**White House Coronavirus Task Force Estimate** – On March 31, the White House Coronavirus Task Force estimated that without intervention 1.5 to 2.2 million Americans would die. It was also estimated that with mitigating intervention the death toll could be significantly reduced to 100 to 240 thousand. The Task Force estimates were based on a model that was, in turn, based on a combination of models from around the world.

**Michael Osterholm Estimate** – During the course of an interview with Judy Woodruff on the April 24, 2020, *PBS NewsHour* program, Dr. Michael Osterholm, Director of the University of Minnesota's Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy, estimated that there would be 800 thousand to 1.6 million fatalities under the same circumstances, i.e., in the absence of mitigating interventions.<sup>9</sup>

***Modifications of the Michael Osterholm Estimate*** – It can be shown that a range of from 1.07 million to 2.15 million fatalities would obtain in Osterholm's modeling if a population of 330 million rather than 320 million is used and that 65% infection of the exposed population is used rather than 50%.<sup>10</sup>

The upper and lower limits of the modified Osterholm model not only include the upper limit of the Osterholm original upper and lower limits of the Task Force estimate, but also that the average value of the modified Osterholm model's upper and lower limits, 1.5 million fatalities, are approximately equal to these two other limits. Furthermore, the average value of the lower limits for the three scenarios is 1.12 fatalities and 1.98 fatalities for the average of the upper limits—suggesting that without mitigation, the death toll would have ranged from about one to two million.

According to CDC data, fatalities for Americans 65 and older account for about 80% of the COVID-10 death toll. Reference to Note 10 will show, via an additional modification of the Osterholm model, that there would have been from about 700 to 1,400 thousand fatalities in this older group with no mitigation while those younger than 65 would have accounted for about 180 to 360 thousand fatalities, so that the total number of fatalities without any mitigation would have ranged from about 880 to 1,760. Based on this and the above estimates, for all intents and purposes, the death toll would have ranged from about one to two million without mitigating interventions.

Reference to Note 10 will also show that the death toll can be limited to about 88 thousand to 176 thousand if the equivalent of 90% of the population is quarantined while the remaining 10% do not employ mitigating intervention measures. This estimated death toll range is comparable to that of the March 31, 2020, White House Task Force's estimated reduced range of 100 thousand to 240 thousand fatalities with intervention.

**CONCLUDING REMARKS** – The novel coronavirus is still a potent killer despite hopes, dreams, and rumors to the contrary. Without mitigating intervention, the U.S. death toll would have ranged from about one to two million fatalities—a rough estimate of the killing potential of COVID-19.

Fatalities for Americans 65 and older account for about 80% of the COVID-10 death toll or from about 700 to 1,400 thousand fatalities with no mitigating intervention while those younger than 65 would have accounted for about 180 to 360 thousand fatalities, so that the total number of fatalities without any intervention would have ranged from about 880 to 1,760 thousand.

The U.S. death toll would have ranged from about 88 thousand to 176 thousand fatalities if the equivalent of 90% of the population is quarantined while the remaining 10% do not employ mitigating intervention measures—an estimated death toll range comparable to the March 31, 2020, White House Task Force's estimated reduced range of 100 thousand to 240 thousand fatalities with intervention.

Virus-laden aerosols, particles smaller than droplets, can hang in the air for hours after being released in confined spaces, so large groups of people gathered indoors in close proximity without proper ventilation are a recipe for numerous infections and potential fatalities.

Today there remains a population of at least 324 million Americans that are potential targets for the novel coronavirus. Of those that become infected, about 20% will deal with a serious illness while the remaining 80% will likely have very mild or moderate illness and not seek medical care. In some cases they can be asymptomatic—not even know that they have been infected and can be contagious.

The U.S. is not even close to establishing herd immunity and so must rely on the development of medications that can provide treatment of the disease and/or the development and widespread distribution of safe and effective vaccines that will be able to stem the COVID-19 death toll over time.

In the meantime, cautious human behavior should be the watchword—Americans, especially those 65 and older as well as those with co-morbidities, need to continue voluntary mitigation measures consisting of social distancing/staying at home and avoiding gatherings in confined spaces, mask wearing, hand

washing, and exercising common sense while hoping for the expeditious development of effective treatments and vaccines.

All indications are that there is a very long and perilous road ahead as Americans go on to live and work with a stealthy killer.

## NOTES

1. Michaels, Daniel, "Statistics suggest virus deaths undercounted," *The Wall Street Journal*, May, 29, 2020.
2. A recent study by the National Academy of Sciences discussed the mechanisms involved in spreading the novel coronavirus—indicating that one minute of loud speech was enough to produce thousands of droplets that remain airborne for about 12 minutes, potentially able to infect anyone in the area. Similar studies have shown that virus-laden aerosols, particles smaller than droplets, can hang in the air for hours after being released in confined spaces. Without safe and effective vaccines and treatments, large groups of people gathered indoors in close proximity are a recipe for numerous infections and potential fatalities. Also see Hernandez, Daniela, et al, "How Exactly Do You Catch Covid-19? There Is a Growing Consensus." *The Wall Street Journal*, June 17, 2020, page 1, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/how-exactly-do-you-catch-covid-19-there-is-a-growing-consensus-11592317650>
3. Lovelace, Berkeley Jr., "WHO says coronavirus isn't losing potency: 'This is still a killer virus,'" *CNBC News*, June 1, 2020, <https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/01/who-says-coronavirus-isnt-losing-potency-this-is-still-a-killer-virus.html>
4. Hopkins, Jared S., "Vaccine Efforts Turn to Seniors," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 22, 2020. Page 1, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/efforts-for-coronavirus-vaccine-focus-on-vulnerable-group-older-adults-11592731801>
5. Even without an effective treatment or vaccine, the novel coronavirus can still be effectively controlled, when reopening the economy by banning mass gatherings, hardening all home and business spaces against infections, and executing behavioral protocols based on the assumption that all contacts are potentially infectious. This would require that:
  - 1) Everyone behaves with caution, especially the most susceptible (people with underlying conditions and those beyond 65 years of age).
  - 2) The standard infection prevention mechanisms be employed: a) Finding and isolating exposed people who have been identified by testing and contact tracing, b) Practicing strict social distancing and avoiding crowds, c) Wearing masks, d) Washing hands, and e) Cleaning surfaces.
  - 3) Hardened business and worship spaces with tight control of the purity of air flow in confined spaces via a combination of HEPA filtration and UV radiation.
6. "CIDRAP at the University of Minnesota outlines COVID-19 realities, advises on next steps," at <https://twin-cities.umn.edu/news-events/new-report-cidrap-university-minnesota-outlines-covid-19-realities-advises-next-steps>
7. Johns Hopkins COVID-19 Dashboard, <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.htm>
8. D'Souza, Gypsyamber, and Dowdy, David, "What is Herd Immunity and How Can We Achieve It With COVID-19?," April 10, 2020, <https://www.jhsph.edu/covid-19/articles/achieving-herd-immunity-with-covid19.html>
9. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/an-infectious-disease-expert-on-the-dangers-of-trumps-non-scientific-claims>

## 10. COVID-19 Fatality Modeling

*General* – Mathematical modeling of the spread of infectious diseases is quite complex, for example, see Weiss.<sup>11</sup>

To get a sense of what's going on in the segment concerned with fatality modeling, consider the following models that all stem from the *PBS NewsHour* presentation by Dr. Michael Osterholm.<sup>9</sup>

1. It goes like this: Given a well-mixed population  $P$  of Americans. Of these, assume that there is a subpopulation,  $(1-s)P$ , with this entire subpopulation not only exposed and susceptible to the disease, but also taking no precautions to prevent/mitigate its spread. Here, the sequestration factor  $(1-s)$  represents the percentage of the population that is exposed to infection.
2. Of those exposed to infection  $k_1\%$  will likely get infected. Of those infected, about  $k_2\%$ , will likely seek medical care (those not seeking medical care will likely have very mild or moderate illness and, in some cases are asymptomatic—not even know that they have been infected and can be contagious). Of those seeking medical advice, about  $k_3\%$ , will likely require hospitalization. Of those requiring hospitalization, about  $k_4\%$  will likely require intensive care in an ICU. Of those admitted to the ICU, about  $k_5\%$  will not survive.

All of these percentages represent mutually exclusive events so the percentage divided by 100 corresponds to an approximation of the probability of that event. Thus, the number of fatalities,  $F$ , would be given by  $F = (1-s)P(k_1/100)(k_2/100)(k_3/100)(k_4/100)(k_5/100)$

*Osterholm's PBS Model Example* – If we take the likely population parameter and "k" percentages used by Osterholm on the *PBS NewsHour* Program, then  $(1-s)P = 320$  million,  $(k_1/100 = 0.5)$ ,  $(k_2/100 = 0.2)$ ,  $(k_3/100 = 0.5)$ ,  $(k_4/100 = 0.5)$  and  $(k_5/100 = 0.1 \text{ or } 0.2)$ , so that  $F = 320 \times 10^6 (0.025)(k_5/100)$ , and  $F = 800$  thousand for  $k_5 = 10\%$ , and  $F = 1.6$  million for  $k_5 = 20\%$

*Modifications of the Osterholm Model* – Fatality data from the CDC indicates that the fatalities,  $f_O$ , for Americans 65 and older account for about 80% of the COVID-10 death toll while the fatalities,  $f_Y$ , for Americans younger than 65 account for the remaining 20% of the total fatalities, i.e.,  $F = f_O + f_Y$ , where  $f_O = 0.8F$ , and  $f_Y = 0.2F$ .

To develop an estimate for the number of fatalities in each group we partition the total U.S. population of 330 million Americans into its older group of 54 million, of those 65 and older, and its relatively younger group of 276 million, of those less than 65.

Now assume that  $(1-s)P = 54 \times 10^6$ —reflecting the fact that the 276 million people in the younger group have been sequestered, so that  $f_O = 54 \times 10^6 K_O$  where  $K_O$  equals the product  $(k_{O1}/100)(k_{O2}/100)(k_{O3}/100)(k_{YO}/100)(k_{O5}/100)$ .

Similarly,  $f_Y = 276 \times 10^6 K_Y$  where  $K_Y = (k_{Y1}/100)(k_{Y2}/100)(k_{Y3}/100)(k_{Y4}/100)(k_{Y5}/100)$

Values for the "k" percentages for each of the two age groups that are consistent with the death toll for each group are as follows:  $(k_{O1}/100) = 0.65$ ,  $(k_{O2}/100) = 0.2$ ,  $(k_{O3}/100) = 0.5$ ,  $(k_{O4}/100) = 0.5$ ,  $(k_{O5}/100) = 0.4$  to  $0.8$  and  $(k_{Y1}/100) = 0.65$ ,  $(k_{Y2}/100) = 0.1$ ,  $(k_{Y3}/100) = 0.5$ ,  $(k_{Y4}/100) = 0.2$ ,  $(k_{Y5}/100) = 0.1$  to  $0.2$  leading to  $K_O = 0.013$  to  $0.26$ ;  $K_Y = 0.00065$  to  $0.0013$ , and  $f_O = 54K_O \approx 700$  to  $1,400$  thousand fatalities, and  $f_Y = 276K_Y \approx 180$  to  $360$  thousand fatalities, so that the total number of fatalities, the sum of the fatalities in each age group,  $F = f_O + f_Y$ ,  $F \approx 880$  to  $1,760$  thousand fatalities

Now consider fatalities for this case as a function of  $s$ , the mitigation factor. This would give the following linear equations that represent rough approximate bounds on fatalities as a function of the level of mitigation:  $F = 0.88(1-s)$  million for  $k_5 = 10\%$ , and  $F = 1.76(1-s)$  million for  $k_5 = 20\%$

To determine the value of  $F$  when 90 % of the population is quarantined, we set  $s = 0.9$ , to render lower and upper limits of 88 thousand fatalities and 176 thousand fatalities.

11. Weiss, Howard "The SIR model and the Foundations Public Health," July 1, 2013, <http://mat.uab.cat/matmat/PDFv2013/v2013n03.pdf>

**In fond remembrance of U.S. Marine Corporal Justin W. Cloe, August 2, 1980 – June 5, 2010**



## Guest view: A divided America cannot stand



America, confronted by its divisions, is still in the long search for that more perfect union. AP Photo/Susan Walsh

By Frank G. Splitt

***The Daily Herald***

Guest columnist

Posted 8/24/2020

Much happened in America before and after the year 1619 that was highlighted by Nikole Hannah-Jones in her Pulitzer Prize-winning paper "The 1619 Project" on the history of the sordid treatment of American Blacks.

Recent research indicates that the first Americans came from East Asia some 30,000 years ago. These indigenous peoples were the ancestors of today's Native Americans. So, from that perspective, "The 1619 Project" covers less than 2% of humankind's history in America -- albeit a small but important piece of a complex mosaic of human behavior in America.

To be complete, this historical mosaic must also include the ignoble treatment of Native Americans during the era of Manifest Destiny and the ongoing prejudicial treatment of racial, ethnic and sexual minorities, as well as immigrants and women.



History, evolutionary and socio biology, as well as the physics of entropy tell us that the arc of human behavior bends toward disorder, tribalism, oppression and poverty.

America's liberal democratic republic, with all of its past faults and present imperfections, has proved to be somewhat of an aberration, the best known exception to this brutal course of human behavior and affairs.

Nonetheless, America is a country still struggling to become a more perfect union -- attempting to live up to the ideals expressed in its Declaration of Independence, Constitution and to the system of laws, liberties, rights and obligations that flow from these documents.

It must be understood that these documents were written by imperfect human beings who were subject to the mores and political pressures of their times.

Almost daily news accounts tell of disordering factional forces such as illiberalism and revisionism that are hard at work -- leading to a potential political crackup feared by our Founding Fathers in Federalist No. 10, when in 1787, James Madison wrote: "Unrestrained factionalism may do significant damage to the fabric of government -- warning of impetuous mobs or factions united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community."

The revisionist faction challenges the work of America's Founding Fathers -- attempting to wholly rewrite American history as a litany of racial transgressions.

For example, "The 1619 Project" challenges America's founding on principles of freedom -- rather considering it a founding designed to maintain a system of slavery without mentioning that it was a painful compromise made to secure ratification of the U.S. Constitution.

The illiberal faction does not respect free speech.

It apparently has its roots in America's academic institutions that ostensibly claim to have a mission primarily focused on the creation, preservation and dissemination of knowledge, all based on freedom of inquiry.

Instead we see strong evidence that these institutions are being roiled by cancel-culture and speech-code enthusiasts.

Something is amiss when non-faculty administrators expand their school's mission by placing over-the-top emphasis on social justice issues such as diversity, inclusion and equity, as important as these issues are and always have been.

A consequence of this inordinate and distorting emphasis, faculty hiring based on disciplinary merit is bound to diminish -- leading to a further dumbing down of higher education in America. Where is the outrage and where are the governing boards? What to do?

We can begin by restoring intellectual honesty in our educational institutions, from K-12 through higher education.

It could be an important corrective action that would reverse the fragmentation of America by political factions by providing an honest account of history at all levels -- with the aim of understanding both its good and bad parts in the context of those past times.

For example, see John Oliver's video "We need to upgrade the way we teach our history," at (<https://www.newsandguts.com/video/john-oliver-we-need-to-upgrade-the-way-we-teach-our-history/>). Also see "Educational Opportunities Lost When Schools Ban Native American Symbols," and "The Cherokee Nation: A Story of Survival against All Odds," on pages 7-8 and 46-47 in Reflections: 2016-2019 at (<https://www.thedrakegroup.org/2019/10/06/reflections-2016-19-a-sequel-to-an-odyssey-of-reform-initiatives-1986-2015/>).

We find ourselves at a defining, if not perilous, moment in America's history -- bringing to mind the memorable line from Abraham Lincoln's June 1858 address right here in Illinois at the Republican State Convention in Springfield.

To wit: "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

Lincoln also had this advice concerning leadership: "Be with a leader when he is right, stay with him when he is still right, but, leave him when he is wrong."

Come November, hope for a viable future of America's democracy will rely on a well-informed electorate that can help place experienced as well as competent and trustworthy men and women at all levels of government no matter their political affiliation.

Moderates from both political parties will then have to work to find common ground to reunite America.

A divided America cannot stand.

- Frank G. Splitt, author of the book "An Odyssey of Reform Initiatives: 1986-2015" and its sequel "Reflections: 2016-2019," is a former McCormick Faculty Fellow at Northwestern University's McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science and was a Vice President Emeritus of Nortel Networks.

# Climate Still Crying for Political Attention

*If the ways of God are inscrutable the path of man has become incomprehensible. Modern man, despite the wonderful body of knowledge and information that he has accumulated and the means to apply it, appears to be muddling ahead as if he were blind or drugged staggering from one crisis to another.*—**Aurelio Peccei and Alexander King**, 1977

By Frank G. Splitt  
September 1, 2020

The *Daily Herald's* August 28, 2020, Opinion page was topped by a compelling editorial titled "Climate crying for attention," and subtitled "As political campaigns begin, hurricanes and wildfires remind us of continuing crisis."<sup>1</sup> The epigraph calls attention to a sad truth about human behavior that continues on to this day. It is why the climate is still crying for political attention. No doubt, it is why the *Daily Herald* editors wrote the following

To be sure, candidates' positions on social issues demand our attention, and those who would curry our votes must demonstrate the ability to handle the simmering crises facing health care and the economy. But we also must not let them forget the long-term devastation that awaits if we let our attention to climate change fall by the wayside.

Views on climate change, as we've said before, are not the sole prerequisite voters should demand of candidates in the upcoming elections, but they are the first. Unfortunately, they did not find that place in either the Democratic or Republican national conventions.

Perhaps as the campaigns progress, the combination of a catastrophic hurricane and raging wildfires will help get the environment back into the spotlight of our political conversations.

My perspective on climate and the environment began to evolve back in the late 1980s. It was then that my wife Judy and I became involved with the *Foundation for Global Community* (previously known as the *Beyond War Foundation*). It was this involvement that led to the writing and initial publication by the National Engineering Consortium of the monograph *Creating Our Common Future*.<sup>3</sup> Subtitled *Reflections on the Four Es: Environment, Education, Energy, and Economics*, the monograph carried an environmental message and the need for a call to action. For example:

As we approach the new millennium, there is a growing awareness that our world has changed dramatically. Through science, technology, engineering, and our expanding numbers, we humans have created a new reality. Central to this new reality is the fact that we are fast approaching the carrying capacity for meaningful life on this fragile planet Earth.

The monograph also saw widespread promulgation, distribution, and use in addressing climate change, see Appendix 1. Here are its closing paragraphs:

Educational institutions at all levels can play a crucial role by refurbishing and expanding their learning-tool kits, as well as by placing strong emphasis on global education, individual responsibility, and the value of conservation... using only what is needed, and then reusing and recycling after that. All students should be made aware of the dynamic interrelationships and the balance required among the environment, our energy needs, and our economy. Educators can also collaborate with both parents and the business community to improve the teaching and learning processes.

*We need to become a learning people . . . learning together what we need to learn and then learning it. As a matter of fact, we need to become a learning global community.*

On a personal basis, each of us might look deep within to learn what we can contribute to this critical effort to ensure meaningful survival for the human species. All of us can contribute to a new and real beginning, to the creation of our common future, by setting an example as leaders in balancing the *Four Es* within our business and educational organizations, and by making our voices heard—loudly and clearly within our families and communities. The choice is ours.... I hope that our children and those of generations yet to come will not have found us lacking.

A related letter to the editor of *The Bent*, the *Tau Beta Pi* engineering honor society publication, can be found in the Appendix 2. In the letter I concluded by saying: “The stakes are high; there is much to be gained. And, **WHAT** do we have to lose?”

That was some 27 years ago. The climate is still crying for political attention.

With regard to the upcoming election, American voters will surely need information about their presidential candidate’s views on climate. For this information, see, for example, Cheung,<sup>3</sup> Bruggers,<sup>4</sup> Feldman,<sup>5</sup> and McKibblen.<sup>6</sup>

*There is only one thing in the lives of men, nations, and countries that is without price. That thing is honour.— Józef Beck, Polish foreign minister, 1939*

As stated in a recent *Daily Herald* Guest view:<sup>7</sup> “Come November, hope for a viable future of America’s democracy will rely on a well-informed electorate that can help place experienced as well as competent and trustworthy men and women at all levels of government no matter their political affiliations. Moderates from both political parties will then have to work to find common ground to reunite America.”

Finally, it is my fervent hope that American voters will not only pay heed to the *Daily Herald*’s editorial opinion piece, but also exercise sound judgement and elect honorable leaders who respect science. American voters must guard against being distracted from the continuing climate and other crises—scared away by politically-motivated lies and divisive rhetoric aimed at stoking fears for their safety.

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# Trumpism and Its Factions

## *Existential Threats to America's Democracy*

By Frank G. Splitt

September 20, 2020

*The experience is shattering. How much stupidity! What delusion among such cultured and actually clever people! Just unconditional belief in the Führer, delight that 'finally our weapons speak'.*<sup>1</sup>

—Erich Ebermayer, September 3, 1939

**ABSTRACT --** This commentary follows a previous piece that was published as a *Daily Herald* Guest View and headlined “The lessons of the past need to be remembered today.” It dealt with factions that are now dividing America just as was feared by our founding fathers. Here the focus is on Trumpism and its related factions, composed of a number of elements foremost of which is the Trump loyalist faction. It argues that it is the combination of President Trump’s polarizing rhetoric and the Trumpist faction that divides America, a serious threat to America’s democracy. It concludes by saying moderates from both political parties must work to find common ground to reunite America. A divided America cannot stand.

**BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION** – In a previous paper,<sup>2</sup> I discussed factional forces that could lead to a political crackup in America. As if on cue, a related column<sup>3</sup> by Ms. Ayaan Hersi Ali focused on two ideological factions with a view towards illuminating what these quite different factions have in common.

The factions considered by Ali in her analysis were rooted in the ideologies of Islamism and Wokeism, a term she coined to include things like cancel culture, social justice, critical race theory, and intersectionality that were considered in the previous paper.

**IDEOLOGICAL FACTIONS** – Ali found that both ideologies “aim to tear down the existing system and replace it with utopias that always turn out to be hellish anarchies” and that both “are collectivist: Group identity trumps the individual. Both tolerate—and often glorify—violence carried out by zealots.” She also found that members of these factions share the following salient attributes:

- 1) Relentless pursuit of ideological purity
- 2) Certainty in the belief of the absolute rightfulness of their cause

In view of the above, it was of interest to inquire as to the existence of what might be called the opposite of Wokeism—an overarching set of right-wing ideological factions that matches these attributes. There is no need to look any further than Trumpism for the answer.

**TRUMPISM** – For the record, Trumpism, as defined in Wikipedia, “is a political ideology and style of government which was specifically developed by President Donald Trump. It resembles the philosophy of recent right-wing conservative - neonationalist or national-populist movements in western democracies.”<sup>4</sup>

However, a more reality-based definition was given by Ron Christie, a Republican analyst, who worked in the White House of President George W. Bush. Christie said Trumpism is “what the president believes on any particular moment on any particular day about any particular subject.”<sup>5</sup> By virtue of this definition, Trumpism will necessarily include a wide variety of divisive elemental factions—often with overlapping grievances and objectives. Taken together, these elemental factions form the so-called Trump base of mostly working-class white voters.

**THE TRUMP LOYALISTS** – Foremost among these elemental factions are the Trump-loyalists. Members of this faction have cult-like, unconditional belief in Trump, their leader. For insight to the

phenomenon of unconditional belief, see the epigraph and Note 1. For example, this would include belief in his only partially true claim that “Unlike so many who came before me, I keep my promises.”<sup>6</sup>

Trump loyalists are chagrined by the fact that President Trump has likely had more invective and hatred strewn on him by the FBI, the Justice Department, the media, the Democrats, the never-Trump Republicans, trusted aides, federal district-court judges and ex-military brass than any president in modern history. His loyal followers cannot accept the countering fact that the president's well publicized erratic, wrathful, and shameful personal behavior, before and after his election, has consequences such as evoking "the invective and hatred strewn upon him." These Trump loyalists are precisely the people he must have had in mind when he claimed that he could "stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody" and not "lose any voters."

Trump's polarizing, anything-goes style of leadership, no matter how bizarre or unbecoming of the presidency, is accepted by his loyal followers as is his deviation from presidential norms and traditions. So too is lying, denying, and blaming others to avoid taking responsibility for his action or inaction. This can only happen if otherwise intelligent people willfully suspend any moral judgement and succumb to their self-interests. Some loyalists rationalize this behavior by focusing on what they call substance rather than style and character—separating his policies that are to their liking from his personality traits that they may detest as bad and deplorable.

Mental separation leaves Trump loyalists free to vote against the opposition that is painted as socialist, baby-killers. They claim that they are not really voting for Trump but rather for other things. In a recent email message titled “I'm not voting for Trump” that I received from a Trump supporter, these other things were: the Second Amendment, the next Supreme Court Justice, secure borders, every unborn soul, the Electoral College, the police, law and order, freedom of speech and religion, the American flag, the American Dream, good and against evil, the future of my country.

**THE TRUMPIST FACTION** – In light of the above, members of the Trump-loyalist faction can be found in one or more of other elemental Trumpist factions in the following representative listing:

**Law-and-order** – Members believe America is in dire peril---plagued by lawlessness, poverty, and violence, constantly under threat, and at great risk of being driven into Socialism by the radical left.

**Anti-Immigration** – Members advocate for Trump's border wall with some even opposing legal immigration.

**Anti-Public School** – Members are pro-choice, advocate for charter schools, and bash teachers unions.

**Anti-globalism** – Members believe America is suffering from economic angst. Americanism, not globalism is their credo.

**Pro-gun** – Members fiercely defend 2nd Amendment rights.

**Anti-abortion** – Members are primarily composed of Evangelical Christians and far-right, Anti-Pope Francis Catholics that claim Godless Dems will go to hell.<sup>7</sup>

**Climate-denier** – Members reject the proposition that climate change is occurring and is a global threat caused by human activity. They believe it's a hoax.

**Racist** – Members reject the idea that systemic racism exists in America. They include open and closeted white supremacists.

**Monetary** – Members believe Trump will do everything he can to increase their wealth including the elimination of as many as possible of existing rules and regulations.

**Pro-Israel** – Members are single-issue Trump voters.

**Judicial** – Members advocate for conservative judges.

**Health-care** – Members aim to repeal, defund, or weaken the Affordable Care Act.

**Hoax & Conspirator** – Members believe something is a hoax, fake news, and/or a conspiracy if Trump says it is, no matter how many times he has been proven wrong.

**Tax** – Members believe they and/or their businesses are over taxed.

*There is only one thing in the lives of men, nations and countries that is without price. That thing is honor.—Józef Beck, Polish foreign minister, 1939*

**REPUBLICAN PARTY TRANSFORMATION** – Noteworthy is the fact that there are no things in the above listing that are related to national honor. Driven by President Trump and Trumpist factions, the Republican Party appears to be in the process of transforming itself into an authoritarian institution, an existential threat to America’s democracy. This transformative process is aided and abetted by Trump’s powerful allies: Attorney General William Barr in the U.S. Department of Justice and Republican Majority Leader Mitch McConnell in the U.S. Senate.

Barr, a far-right Catholic and proponent of the theory of the unitary executive, not only believes the president has the power to control the entire executive branch of the U.S. government, but is also using the Department of Justice to support his 2020 Reelection Campaign’s “law-and-order” strategic initiative. McConnell, on the other hand was a harsh critic of Trump prior to his 2016 election. After the election, Trump promptly appointed McConnell’s wife, Elaine Chao, as U.S. Secretary of Transportation. It should come as no surprise that McConnell is now an all-in Trump loyalist who provides unwavering support for the president’s agenda, particularly with regard to appointments to the federal judiciary.

Apparently, the Trump Republican Party seeks not to preserve American democracy but to undermine it, if not destroy it, by such tactics as spreading disinformation, gerrymandering congressional districts, and hindering the voting process by crippling the operation of the U.S. Postal Service.

**OBSERVATIONS** – The president’s polarizing political rhetoric draws both Wokeist and Trumpist extremists stimulating protests and creating fodder for the media. Wokeist motivations and grievances are ideological, not merely economic. Therefore, they won’t be satisfied with more entitlements. The Trumpist faction will only be satisfied with gaining and maintaining more power via the president’s reelection.

President Trump, a faithful student of Roy Cohn, his disgraced attorney and teacher, will likely continue to employ Cohn’s modus operandi of lying, denying, and blaming that has proven to be so successful during his first term.

He has recently praised Marjorie Taylor Green, the Republican candidate nominated for Georgia’s 14<sup>th</sup> congressional district and promoter of QAnon, a right-wing domestic terror group. Trump has also named politically conservative senators and judges as potential appointees to the Supreme Court and will certainly amplify his anti-abortion rhetoric so as to keep evangelical Christians and conservative Catholics in his fold.

Trump’s enthusiastic loyalist supporters will likely continue to ignore the following facts: the U.S. is currently the world leader in COVID-19 disease deaths that can be attributed to the administration bungled response—politicalized by the president’s lack of leadership and obsessive focus on his reelection; a large number of true American patriots resigned or were fired; promised manufacturing jobs in the Midwest decreased rather than increased; tax cuts benefited the wealthy and corporations; the administration is attempting to roll back more than 90 EPA rules and regulations to favor industry at the expense of human health and the environment; and America is more deeply polarized than it was before the 2016 presidential election.

It would seem that it matters not a whit to Trump’s loyal supporters that America has not only lost its position as the world leader, but has also lost its national honor. To explore what America has already lost, and what it still may lose, see *The American Crisis*.<sup>8</sup>

**CONCLUDING REMARKS** – Reflection on all of above, leads to the following question: Has Trumpism made America great again? The question should be answered by each and every voting

Americans come November 3, 2020. Thus, the American electorate finds itself at a defining, if not perilous, moment in our nation's history.

Like Ali, I cling to the hope that most Americans are still willing as a nation to fight and, if necessary, to die to preserve our freedoms, our rights, our customs, and our history as imperfect as it happens to be.

Hope for a viable future of America's democracy will depend on the outcome of the 2020 election that will, in turn, rely on a well-informed electorate that can help place experienced as well as competent and trustworthy men and women at all levels of government no matter their political affiliation.

Trumpism and its related factions have divided America. Moderates from both political parties must work to find common ground to reunite America. A divided America cannot stand.

## NOTES

1. Ebermayer, a German liberal intellectual, made these remarks after an encounter with aristocratic neighbors who, as Hitler-loyalists, expressed boundless uncritical faith in their leader. The encounter was on the day Britain and France went to war with Germany after it invaded Poland. See pages 368-69 of Frederick Taylor's book *1939: A People's History of the Coming of the Second World War* (Norton, 2020).

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# The Trump Presidency: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

By Frank G. Splitt

November 18, 2020

*The experience is shattering. How much stupidity! What delusion among such cultured and actually clever people! Just unconditional belief in the Führer, delight that 'finally our weapons speak'.*<sup>1</sup>  
—Erich Ebermayer, September 3, 1939

My essay "Trumpism and Its Factions: An Existential Threat to America's Democracy," began with the above epigraph and concluded with the following three questions:<sup>2</sup>

If the president has his way, who would be able to stop him from using all the levers of government to not only contest the results of the upcoming election if he loses, but also who would stop him from realizing his personal and political aims as well as his ambition if he wins either by votes cast or by a SCOTUS decision as in *Bush v. Gore*, 531 U.S. 98 (2000)? Shades of Germany in the 1930s?"

President Trump's ardent supporters counter such concerns as well as any and all criticism by citing his policies that resulted in ostensibly good if not great accomplishments.<sup>3</sup> It has been claimed that these accomplishments have been negated by the president's offsetting personality.<sup>2</sup> However, these "good" accomplishments are only part of an ugly story that goes far beyond the president's personality.

Not mentioned by his supporters have been vast international reputational as well as social and human costs that are still being paid for these accomplishments. Consider first the likely long-lasting impact of President Trump's assault on America's democracy and democratic values, as well as his demeaning of the office of the president via corruption, cruelty, incompetence, and obstruction of justice. Also consider the cost of the president's divide-and-conquer strategy that not only tore American's asunder, but also bolstered America's slide towards autocracy.

Bad behavior and policies have steep costs as well. The list includes: the minority-voter suppression highlighted in a recent *Commonweal Magazine* editorial,<sup>4</sup> blatant lies and gross exaggerations, flagrant self-dealing, the tax evasion, the separation of children from their parents, the encouragement of white supremacists, conspiratorialists, and radical right-wing factions such as neo-Nazis, and, perhaps one of the most egregious of all in terms of lives lost, the downplaying and politicization of COVID-19.

An ugly state of affairs has pervaded the fabric of our nation. Sadly, none of this ugliness has any apparent bearing on the actions of President Trump's loyal cult-like supporters of their führer as well as on the president's sycophantic congressional enablers.

The latter group seems to believe the president has the right to impede the transition to the Biden presidency to suit his self-centered interests—raising money, firing-up his base, and undermining the next administration—no matter the cost to national security and the health of American citizens.

## NOTES

1. Ebermayer, a German liberal intellectual, made these remarks after an encounter with aristocratic neighbors who, as Hitler-loyalists, expressed boundless uncritical faith in their leader. The encounter was on the day Britain and France went to war with Germany after it invaded Poland. See pages 368-69 of Frederick Taylor's book *1939: A People's History of the Coming of the Second World War* (Norton, 2020).
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# Confirmation Bias and Today's Politics

By Frank G. Splitt

January 10, 2021, Afterword, January 18, 2021

*I am a conservative, better to have a conservative  
in the oval office than a liberal, even if he's crazy.<sup>1</sup>*

—James A. Baker III

*Please remove my name from your mailing list. Not in  
your camp. I voted for Trump and would do so again!!<sup>2</sup>*

—A Catholic Voter

**Abstract** – The aim of the following narrative is to foster a better understanding of why people believe what they believe and vote as they do. It is a natural extension of remarks made in “The Legacy of Trumpism.”<sup>3</sup>

The first of the above epigraphs, attributed to James A. Baker III, one of the great politicians and statesmen of the late American Century, points to his extremely strong bias of conservatism over liberalism and to his related vote for presidential candidate Donald J. Trump in 2016.

The second epigraph lies at the heart of the narrative—expressing the view of many loyal Trump supporters who prefers to avoid information that's contrary to their beliefs or preferences that in this case could involve abortion policy.

Confirmation bias is described and examples are given of its influence in today's politics,

**Confirmation Bias Described** – “All Gaul is divided into three parts;” so begins Julius Caesar's “Commentaries on the Gallic War” (58-49 BC) in which he observed: “The general tendency of people to believe what they hope for.”

Caesar's observation provides an early recognition of what is now understood to be a psychological phenomenon called confirmation bias. This bias is usually described as a tendency to notice or search out information that confirms what one already believes, or would like to believe, and to avoid or discount information that's contrary to one's beliefs or preferences.

**Confirmation Bias in Today's Politics** – Confirmation bias helps explain why millions of President Trump loyalists really believe his baseless claim that he won reelection. It can also help explain why some Trump supporters have focused on President Elect Joe Biden's recent accidental reference to Vice President Kamala Harris as President Elect Harris---claiming the accidental reference not only as evidence of the gaffe-prone President Elect's stupidity, but also evidence of the stupidity of those that voted for him. Recall that Biden's “stupidity” was a recurrent theme employed by President Trump during his reelection campaign.

**Confirmation Bias Exploited** – Confirmation bias can also be exploited to gain political advantage. For example, Conservatives have called Vice President Elect Harris a “socialist Trojan horse,” claiming that she will push an ultra-progressive agenda and make Biden bend to her agenda. Although this characterization was strongly dismissed during Biden's first presidential debate with President Trump, Conservatives continue to discount Biden's dismissal of the socialist characterization and press on ever harder to paint Biden as cognitively deficient and too weak to contain Harris as well as far-left-leaning Sen. Bernie Sanders and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

To wit: a recent fund-raising email from the president of Hillsdale College titled "Socialism Rising?" highlighted the threat of socialism citing a recent poll that showed 70% of Millennials are either somewhat likely or extremely likely to vote for candidates with socialist positions because of the "progressive" Left's increasing success in hijacking American education at both the K-12 and college levels.

On the other hand, *Stand for America*, an advocacy group which promotes the presidential ambitions of Nikki Haley, the former US Ambassador to the United Nations, has picked the potential winning issue for 2024: Socialism—trumpeting its anti-Socialism message: "The dangerous ideology, which has failed everywhere it has been tried and ruined countless lives, is on its way to becoming the default economic policy of the Democratic Party. This terrifying trend threatens the future of every American." No doubt, this message will be repeated time and time again as a mantra, no matter how effectively President Biden governs as a moderate centrist.

**Confirmation Bias Enables a Political Blind Eye** – The power of confirmation bias to avoid or discount information that's contrary to one's beliefs or preferences can readily be seen via the passive reaction of Trump loyalists who cast a blind eye on the recording of President Trump pressuring Georgia election officials to overturn the election results.

It can be seen in the number of comments that disagreed with *The Wall Street Journal* editorial that claimed: "The GOP stunt over the Electoral College will hurt the country and the party."<sup>4</sup> Similarly, many Trump supporters commented with their disagreement with the position taken by the Journal's editor at large, who wrote: "The GOP election challenge marks a new low-water mark for political cynicism."<sup>5</sup>

Unfortunately, it can also be seen in the votes cast by 147 Republican members of the U.S. Congress in objection to the electoral votes cast by the states notwithstanding the violent pro-Trump assault on the Capital. These members of Congress also cast a blind eye to the fact that there was no constitutionally viable means for the Congress to overturn an election wherein the states have certified and sent their electors. Their actions have been rationalized with "What-about?"-ery and statements to the effect that they were reflecting the views of their election-results-denying constituents who believed the election was stolen. These beliefs, in turn, provide a perfect example of what Caesar observed: "The general tendency of people to believe what they hope for."

Finally, consider how the Republican reelection campaign assiduously worked to get out the "Catholic Vote" for President Trump—gaining 50% of that vote. Many of these Catholics were single-issue, anti-abortion voters who avoided information contrary to their religious beliefs. Catholic Trump supporters felt if they could get an anti-abortion president, the rest would turn out OK no matter how autocratic, demagogic, and flawed the person they were electing. It doesn't work that way as English history has proven.<sup>7</sup>

## Afterword

The foregoing commentary was widely distributed on January 10, 2021, with the following covering message along with a request for comments:

The attached commentary was motivated by the responses to my January 5, 2021 email, Subject: "Confirmation bias and politics of the day" and to the events at the Capitol the following day. To be more specific, it was motivated by the persistent denial of the results of the 2020 presidential election by Trump supporters.

These deniers believe that President Trump did not lose reelection. It brought to mind the 2016 movie "Denial" wherein well known Holocaust denier and Nazi apologist David Irving sued Emory University historian Deborah Lipstadt in the 1990s—issuing a libel complaint under British law that required the American academic to prove that the Holocaust actually took place.

Although her barrister won the case, it proved to be no easy task. Sadly, in spite of this case, there still remain a large number of Holocaust deniers worldwide. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that many Trump supporters will remain convinced that the election was stolen. That's the power of confirmation bias.

Before providing answers to questions associated with solicited comments on the commentary, I must say that it has been troubling to see the die-hard nature of Trump loyalists who seem to be unable to admit that they might have made a mistake in their support of the autocratic, demagogic, and flawed person that they elected. This support surprisingly held even after Trump's incitement of the January 6, 2021, assault on the U.S. Capitol in his last desperate attempt to halt verification of the results of the Electoral College. Apparently, Trump's loyal supporters accept life in Trump's alternate universe with its alternate facts and rampant deceptions—believing his persistent falsehoods about fake-news, masks, election fraud, socialist takeover, and virulent antifa activity in America

Psychologists tell us mistakes can be very hard to digest, so we tend to double down rather than face the fact that we may have made a bad choice. They call this distress cognitive dissonance *wherein* stress is experienced when we hold two contradictory thoughts, beliefs, opinions or attitudes. This is precisely where confirmation bias comes into play—causing us to seek out evidence to prove what we already believe or want to believe. It's the "My mind's made up, don't bother me with facts" syndrome. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that in the days after Trump lost his reelection bid in November many die-hard Trump supporters no longer trusted Fox News—believing the cable channel had gone over to "the other side." Instead they consume news produced by the pro-Trump, far-right Newsmax and use far-right social-media platforms such as Parler, Rumble, Gab, and MeWe for messaging instead of Facebook.

Loyal Trump supporters in the U.S. Senate will no doubt resort to political expediency if and when required to vote on his impeachment for inciting the assault on the Capitol—opting to put their political career ahead of what is morally right.

With all that aside, following are answers to questions associated with solicited comments on the commentary, specifically with regard to comments on my use of Holocaust deniers as an examples in the covering email as well as to questions related to my use of the term "What-about?"-ery and my view of the "Catholic vote"

**Holocaust deniers** -- The Holocaust deniers example was used to illustrate the extreme sticking power of the several contemporary examples of confirmation bias presented in the commentary. I could think of no better example of denial than that of those who deny the Holocaust, notwithstanding the facts that the event will not only be remembered by most civilized people as the most horrendous event in human history, but was also proven against determined deniers in the British Court to have actually occurred.

The question also prompted an explanation to the effect that though often overshadowed by the extermination of the Jewish people in Germany, there were a considerable number of Polish

victims of the Holocaust. It is estimated that the Germans killed between 1.8 and 1.9 million non-Jewish Polish civilians during World War II. In addition, the Germans murdered at least 3 million Jewish citizens of Poland.<sup>8</sup> Another insight into my Polish sensibility was provided via the appended copy of my 2013 Amazon book review.

**"What-about?"-ery** – This euphemism, also known as "whataboutism" was used to label weak, false-equivalency, counter-arguments used to claim that the pro-Trump supporter's January 6, 2021 assault on the U.S. Capitol was somehow equivalent to last summer's Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests.

Republican lawmakers defending President Trump made the comparison again when arguing their case against impeachment. The two events were fundamentally different. One was an intentional, direct attack on a democratic institution, with the goal of overturning a fair and free election. The other was a nationwide protest movement focused on racial injustice that occasionally turned violent.

It has also been argued that President Trump's riot-inciting rhetoric was somehow equivalent to the BLM-protest-related rhetoric of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other Democratic leaders. For other examples and much more on this subject, see excerpts from a January 12, 2021, *Journal* op-ed "No Excuses for Trump and the Capitol Riot"<sup>9</sup> and to the January 13, *USA Today* op-ed "Place the blame where it belongs: Trump's rabid supporters, not antifa, stormed the Capitol."<sup>10</sup>

**The "Catholic Vote"** – In a November 1, 2017, letter submission to *The Wall Street Journal* headlined "The Catholic Vote" I wrote:

The concluding paragraph of the Oct. 31, Review & Outlook, "The Manafort Indictment," begins with "Americans deserve to know how Russia interfered in the 2016 campaign...." One need look no further than John Podesta's leaked emails. Some of these Russian hacked emails contained what can best be described as demeaning comments about Catholics. The publication of these leaked emails, coupled with 'messages from single-issue (pro-life) minded bishops, enhanced by Russian social-media posts, no doubt influenced a decisive anti-Hillary vote in previously Blue mid-west states. That's just one piece of Russian interference.

This was written as a so-called "Cradle Catholic" who believes that abortion ultimately is a matter of an informed conscience and that it should be: safe, legal, and extremely rare as well as based on a consistent ethic of all life issues as espoused by the late Chicago Cardinal Archbishop Joseph Bernardin.<sup>11</sup>

What follows bears on the above as well as on a related prior reference in the commentary, to wit: "What would St. Thomas More say to Catholic Trump supporters?"<sup>7</sup>

Fr. James Martin, SJ, in an *America Magazine* essay addresses the role played by an "alarming number" of Catholic clergy.<sup>12</sup> These single-issue (pro-life) minded Catholic leaders successfully labored to get the Catholic vote for President Trump in 2016 with unintended consequences of that labor. Martin wrote:

The mistake for which Catholic leaders should be corrected, the mistake for which the church now needs to repent, is not simply casting this election in terms of good and

evil; it is pretending that real questions of good and evil could be simplified to the point where violent responses, even acts of domestic terrorism, become thinkable and then are carried out.

As such, an alarming number of Catholic clergy contributed to an environment that led to the fatal riots at the U.S. Capitol. Ironically, priests and bishops who count themselves as pro-life helped spawn a hate-filled environment that led to mayhem, violence and, ultimately, death.

Although Fr. Martin makes a compelling argument for the primacy of conscience and discernment spanning all issues, I have no doubt that many Catholics will not be dissuaded from their view that abortion outweighs all other issues, allowing them to feel comfortable—justifying their unyielding support for Trump as a means to their desired end no matter how bad his personal behavior. This unyielding, cult-like support of an errant leader has been explained by Steven Hassan.<sup>13</sup>

## **Appendix 1 – “A Moving Tribute to Forgotten Heroes” by Frank G. Splitt**

February 22, 2013 – Review of *A Question of Honor: The Kosciuszko Squadron: Forgotten Heroes of World War II* by Lynne Olson:

I first read this book back in 2010. It was loaned to me by a close Polish friend who, when considering my paternal Polish heritage, thought I would find it of great interest--indeed I did. As a matter of fact, reading the book was a truly rewarding as well as emotional experience.

In a nutshell, British and American fears of offending the Soviets, who were then occupying Poland, relegated heroic Polish pilots to the sidelines in post-war victory celebrations. It was these very same pilots who contributed so much to the Allied war effort, especially in the Battle of Britain. The authors do a fine job in getting the reader to know several of the pilots, so their traumatic experiences in battle and in the post-war betrayal are felt on a somewhat personal level.

Therefore, it was nice to see Paul Kennedy note the Polish contribution to the war effort in his recent book *Engineers of Victory: The Problem Solvers Who Turned the Tide in the Second World War*, since the Polish contribution is usually ignored or superficially understood. Notably, Kennedy tells of two Polish squadrons that flew in the battle of Britain with one having the best record of any RAF squadron in this epic 1940 struggle; and, of the two Polish squadrons that were given the honor of providing air cover for the June 6, 1944 Allied D-Day landings in Normandy. However, Kennedy did not mention the fact that the Polish contribution was ignored in the post-war victory celebrations.

Based on the above, I decided to re-read *A Question of Honor*. Not only that, but I also plan to order a copy of my own as well as copies for family members. What better recommendation can I give for this well-written, profusely illustrated, and moving book?

## **Appendix 2 – Excerpts from Gerard Baker’s “No Excuses for Trump and the Capitol Riot”<sup>9</sup>**

Yes, the left does bad things too. Conservatives are supposed to believe in objective moral truth

It’s a measure of the depravity to which our national political conversation has fallen that however bad one side’s latest transgression against norms, morality or the law, there’s always something it can point to that the other side did first. The earlier outrage may not exactly justify



the latest offense. But by reminding an already highly partisan audience that there is prior sinfulness in the actions of your opponents, you can dilute the negative public impact of your own wrongdoing or, at a minimum, apply some balm to a troubled private conscience.

This equivalence play, or “whataboutism,” can, if we’re not careful, neuter all efforts to hold our leaders’ actions to some objective standard. It inflicts on all judgments the terminal paralysis of moral relativism. As with the widespread undermining of objective factual truth in recent years, so the erosion of the idea of objective moral truth steadily weakens the foundations of political and civil community and softens us up for a final descent into the invented truths of totalitarianism.

In the wake of last week’s violent incursion at the U.S. Capitol, President Trump’s supporters have been working overtime on the moral-equivalence shift.

Sure, the president’s claims of a stolen election are dubious, but they’re nothing worse than what Democrats and the media did for four years in promoting the false Russia-collusion story, refusing to acknowledge the legitimacy of the Trump presidency, and trying to destroy it.

Yes, the violence at the Capitol was terrible, but so too was the mayhem perpetrated by Black Lives Matter and antifa in dozens of American cities last summer.

OK, the president’s language and affect are autocratic, but what about the rapidly encroaching illiberalism of the tech and media giants that is narrowing the boundaries of free speech?

All legitimate objections. And there have been and will be many times when all these alarming instances of progressive extremism should be thoroughly exposed and condemned.

But now is not that time.

## Notes

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2. Private communication, January 5, 2021.
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6. Baker, Gerard, "An Awesome Spectacle of Dishonesty and Opportunism," *The Wall Street Journal, Free Expression*, January 5, 2021.
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# Baseball: My Dreams and Memories

By Frank G. Splitt

February 12, 2021

**Introduction** – Reading and writing a review of Tyler Kepner's book, *K: A History of Baseball in Ten Pitches*, stirred up many baseball related memories in my life—prompting me to begin writing about my recollections in the spring of 2019.<sup>1</sup> This memoir builds on these recollections and so reveals a story worth the telling of baseball's impact on my life story of 90 years.

**Early Years** – Many pictures from the late 1930s and early 1940s, show me holding and/or throwing a ball of one kind or another. This brief history is focused on pitching a baseball with a circumference of 9-inches as opposed to a 16-inch 'Chicago' softball—that's another story.

In the mid-1920s my father played semipro baseball for Chicago Curtain Supply, loved the game and the Chicago Cubs. He introduced me to Cubs baseball as a 7-year old at a game during the summer of 1938. I still have a vivid memory of sitting in the crowded right-field bleachers when my dad left to get a beer (or two). After what seemed to be forever, I became frightened—thinking I was abandoned. I was incredibly relieved when he returned and with a soda for me. At that early age, I really did not understand the game or appreciate the fact that the Cubs had a championship team that would win the National League pennant and go on to play the New York Yankees in the World Series.

My earliest recollections of playing in any kind of ball game came about a year later after 3<sup>rd</sup> grade during the summer of 1939. The older kids on the block let me play in a game of "skush" that took place at the end of the block west of our home at 2012 Cortland Street on Chicago's northwest side. A rubber ball about 8 inches in circumference was pitched underhand to the hitter who hit the ball with a swinging fist. Improvised bases were located on the street to form the ball diamond. I have an indelible impression from that time of the flashy gold and green uniforms worn by members of the Iroquois, a neighborhood teenage 16-inch softball team, who watched us play.

Dad equipped me with my first glove, a tiny Coca-Cola advertising give away. An upgrade followed a year or two later when he threw a ringer at a Saint Bartholomew Church Carnival—selecting a glove model named after Frank Demaree who played right field for Cubs on that memorable afternoon in 1938. That glove was to be a constant companion over the next few summers. I often played catch with my dad who made a point of the need to field short hops. I carried my glove with me along with a black taped ball—asking anyone and everyone if they wanted to play catch.

The year 1942 is memorable on many accounts, none the least of which was the fact that America was at war and not doing too well at that. On the brighter side, my dad's sister, my beloved Aunt Mae, gifted me with Paul Gallico's just published book *The Pride of the Yankees*, the life story of the legionary Lou Gehrig. I read the book with intense interest. Sometime later that year, she took me downtown to the *Chicago Theater* to see the movie of the same title starring Gary Cooper. That did it, not only did Lou Gehrig become my hero, but I really got into baseball with the beginning of related dreams of playing baseball and living life like he did.

**High School Years** – I began to pitch a baseball in competition in 1945 at age 14. This was just after my freshman year at Saint Philip High School on Jackson Boulevard in Chicago, a school without a baseball team. The Chicago Park District junior league provided the opportunity at Hermosa Park located at the corner of Kilbourn and Lyndale Avenues on Chicago's northwest side. Our 'uniforms' consisted of Old Timer's League T-shirts. I have memories of playing catch with Chuck Hockstetter, who played first-base for Kelvyn Park High School and lived nearby. He and Nick Paragud, the team's shortstop, were selected as Chicago North-side All Stars— playing a game at Wrigley Field against the South-side All

Stars that I watched with Joe Hafenschner, my friend and Hermosa Park teammate. Chuck went on to play for the bearded House of David barnstorming baseball team.

At the time, Joe and I were over-the-top Cub fans, using our *Chicago Herald American* paper-route earnings to pay for grandstand seats and a hot dog for as many Cub games as we could afford that pennant winning 1945 season. I have clear memories of two games: a win by Hank Wyse on a very cold spring afternoon and the first game pitched (and won) by the just acquired Yankee ace Hank Borowy.

Another notable baseball related memory comes from April 13, 1946 when a few of my Hermosa Park teammates and I witnessed a fatal plane crash close to our baseball diamond located at the southwest corner of Hermosa Park. The plane, a 2-seat variant of the P-51 Mustang, crashed about 75 yards, or so, from where we were practicing. My position was near home plate on the baseball diamond. We were shielded from the explosive impact of the crash by a railroad embankment that ran in a north-south direction several yards to the west of the diamond's left-field foul line.

Fr. Tobin, my St. Philip High School homeroom Biology teacher, invited me to tell the story of the crash to my sophomore classmates. I recall telling them that the plane was apparently stunting and flying upside down before the crash demolished the plane, killing the pilot and his passenger while setting homes on fire and injuring eight residents. It was said that the plane's engine was buried eight feet into the ground.<sup>2</sup>

In 1947, Harvey Duncan, the Hermosa Park supervisor, moved me up to the park's senior-level team for that and the 1948 summer baseball seasons. Since my high-school didn't have a baseball team, the move would prove crucial. It provided me with experience playing with and pitching against seasoned high-school ballplayers. Hermosa Park's senior team was mostly composed of members of the Kelvyn Park High School team that was led by Harry Olson, their catcher and captain, and Gordon Pitts, their standout basketball player and pitcher who was free with tips.

**The Wright Junior College Years** – I enrolled at Chicago's Wright Junior College in the fall of 1948 with my good friend Dick Carsello. My aim was to become a Chemical Engineer, that is, if I was not able to play professional baseball. If the truth be told I was really trying to pursue my youthful dream of being a major-league pitcher.

The experience playing with the Hermosa Park teams paid off when I tried out for and made Wright's baseball team early in 1949 along with Hank Antolak, a friend and fellow graduate of St. Philip High School. The spring of 1949 was the second semester of my freshman year.

I tried out as a pitcher. It was not an auspicious occasion. We were asked to long toss across the width of the gym and, as a consequence, I was cut by the captain of the previous year's team who accused me of throwing curve balls. With no high school pitching background shown on his chart, it was an easy cut. I was not trying to throw a curveball but I must've put a lot of rotation on the ball because of my wrist action. I spoke to Mr. Gilson, the baseball coach and asked for another chance which he gave me. I became the number-two starter that year behind veteran sophomore Don Larsen, a fireballing left-hander. Hank became the 3<sup>rd</sup>-baseman and two-time captain of our Wright team. Of note is the fact that Hank and I were the only players on the team that did not play high-school baseball.

As a measure of my determination, I set up a gym in our attic featuring a York barbell set, a homemade inclined bench, hand grippers, and a baseball-sized steel ball bearing. All this equipment was used with a view toward improving my overall body strength with special focus on my right arm and wrist.

The next year found our Wright team to be really quite good as we became the 1950 co-champions of the Illinois Junior College Baseball Conference. I was the lead pitcher and was scouted by a Mr. Komanges who had pitched in the Chicago White Sox organization. He told my father that I could be a right-handed Billy Pierce, the left-handed ace of the Chicago White Sox pitching staff at the time—hyperbole readily accepted by my dad.

**The Post Wright Junior College Years** – After Wright's season ended, a tryout was arranged by Mr. Komanges who drove me and my father to Comiskey Park where we arrived before a night game in mid-June 1950. There he introduced us to the White Sox manager, pitching Hall-of-Famer Ted Lyons who told me to suit up. I was to show my stuff to former Sox pitching great Johnny Rigney.

Mr. Rigney took me onto the field where I “pitched” to a Sox catcher while he stood behind me on the mound—dwarfing me at well over 6 feet and close to 200 pounds. He must have seen what I was often told by my catchers, particularly Gil Lande, that I had a great curve ball and a live but not overpowering fastball. Although radar guns were not available until after 1954, I am sure my fastball was nowhere near 90 mph. I don't recall throwing a four-seam fastball too often. I gripped the ball with my index finger along one of the long seams, to the right would give me an in-shoot to a right handed batter while to the left of the seam I would get an out-shoot that came in on a left-handed batter. A slow curve and knuckleball provided the rest of my stuff – all used to set up the batter for my fast downward breaking curveball. Also, there were no smartphone cameras to capture the event with a video or even a photo (unbelievable in today's age).

All seemed to go well, however there was a major complication with regard the White Sox tryout. Based on our Wright transcripts, with outstanding grades in Mathematical Analysis and Calculus, both Dick Carsello and I had been offered and had accepted Arthur J. Schmitt Academic Scholarships in Electrical Engineering at the Fournier Institute of Technology in Lemont Illinois. The scholarships would cover room, board, tuition, books, and uniforms—allowing us to complete our last two years of college free of charge. All of this took place after an interview by Fournier's president, Fr. Eugene Hoffman that occurred weeks before the tryout.

It was a sad day in my father's life when I told him that I had previously accepted the Fourier scholarship, was now committed to that decision, and would not sign a minor-league contract. As a matter of fact, both Dick and I were already taking summer courses at the Illinois Institute of Technology so as to help us “catch up” with our future ten classmates and go on to form the 12-man Fournier Class of 1952.

Although much to the chagrin of my father, in retrospect, it was ‘no-brainer’ decision to accept the scholarship as it came to shape my destiny to be an Electrical Engineer and not a professional baseball player. In all honesty, the decision might have been unconsciously influenced by the physical size of Lyons, Rigney, and the other players I saw in the White Sox locker room. At that time I was just a skinny 152 pounder with a fairly whippy right arm and a snappy wrist.

It was really the end of my dreams of a baseball career as I was quite sure that I did not have the physical attributes and major league stuff to be a right-handed Billy Pierce. Although I experienced some pain in admitting this to myself, it was time to focus on finishing my last two years of college. It was only after many years that I came to know that I made the right choice in not pursuing a futile objective.

**Semipro Years** – Not finished was my baseball “career” as I would get still another chance to pitch. It came via my then very good friend Hank Antolak. So it was in the summer of 1951 that I began to pitch for Pops Grabowski's Rak's Appliance team in the Midwest Semipro League. Our home field was located in Hanson Park at the southwest corner of Fullerton and Long Avenues on Chicago's northwest side.

Across from the baseball diamond on Long Avenue was St. Stanislaus Catholic Church and across the diamond on Fullerton Avenue was a tavern where Pops paid me with an after-game ‘egg-in-my-beer’ and an occasional \$20 from his gambling winnings. As I recall in was during the 1953 and 1954 seasons, Pops asked me to pitch two days in a row—promising to relieve me if I could not finish. He relieved once and so did Hank Antolak. It took almost a whole week to recover from those extremely taxing efforts.

A frequent “guest” on our bench was the father of New York Yankee star Bill “Moose” Skowron Moose and his younger brother, our sometime right fielder. Moose was Hank's St. Stanislaus grammar school classmate and lifelong friend. He attended Weber High School where he played football and basketball

with Ed Spera, my Annunciation Grammar school classmate and captain of our 1944 Chicago Catholic League 16-inch softball championship team. Ed once dated my sister Valerie. It certainly is a small world.

Hank and I were both married in 1952, but we still went on to play for Pops through the 1953 and 1954 seasons. However, that was not the end of my ball playing. In 1955 the Lobos, a neighborhood 16-inch softball team that I organized in 1946 and captained in its formative years, won the Illinois State 16-inch Softball Championship. It was then captained by Joe Hafenschner who got me out of retirement to wind up pitching and winning a championship game against the tournament-favored Portage Park Tom Thumbs under the lights at Hinkley Park in Park Ridge, Illinois on September 8, 1955. That was my last ball game.

**Postscript** – The fall of 1954, found me working as a television engineer at the Admiral Corporation and just accepted in Northwestern University's Graduate School. This acceptance came only after meeting a stringent requirement imposed by Northwestern officials because they did not consider the Fournier Institute of Technology to be an accredited institution. The requirement was to receive an A grade in three specified graduate courses and agree not to receive the related 9-credit hours. Thus began my journey to an MSEE in 1957 and a PhD. in Electrical and Computer Engineering in 1963.

Hank graduated from the School of Dentistry at the University of Illinois and joined the U.S. Navy as a dental officer in the fall of 1954—playing 3<sup>rd</sup> base for the Great Lakes Naval Training Station for several seasons. I found it ironic that Hank was now playing for the team that gave me considerable trouble in starts against them in 1949 and 1950. After his Navy service, Hank established a successful dental practice in Westchester, Illinois that included challenging work in orthodontics. As of this writing, he is retired and living in Florida. We are still sharing memories of our baseball years.

Dick Carsello and Joe Hafenschner went on to lead very productive lives. Dick, a father of nine, retired from Motorola in 2000 as Vice President of Paging Operations representing Motorola and the U.S. Telcom industry in establishing the Third Generation Cellular Standards used at the time. Joe, a father of four, retired as the Chair of the Department of Social Studies and a highly regarded teacher after thirty-one years of service at Willowbrook High School in Villa Park, Illinois. Dick and Joe remained my fast friends until their passing in 2006 and 2013 respectively.

Finally, I spoke with Wright teammate Gil Lande toward the end of October 2020. Gil played centerfield and caught me a few times. He signed with the Pittsburgh Pirates and played in their farm system until he was sent overseas during the Korean War. He was wounded twice in the back but nevertheless, signed with the Brooklyn Dodgers when he returned to the U.S.—playing with the Dodgers' Kentucky farm team in the Mountain States League. His teammate Johnny Podres went on to become a major league pitching great. To his misfortune Gil was never able to regain his prodigious hitting ability. He scouted for the Chicago Cubs after winding down a successful career as an insurance adjuster. About 10 years ago, Gil wrote the following note on his Christmas card: "I still think the Cubs could have used you!" He floored me at the end of our conversation—telling me that he spoke to Sandy Koufax about the pitcher he caught while in college who had a good curve ball and great movement on his fastball.

## Notes & Images

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Chicago Curtain Supply Semipro team, circa mid-1920s,  
Second baseman Frank Splitt, Sr., top row center



Frank Splitt the pitcher: Left, for the Hermosa Park Old Timer's league  
Senior Team, circa 1947, Right, for Wright Junior College, circa 1950

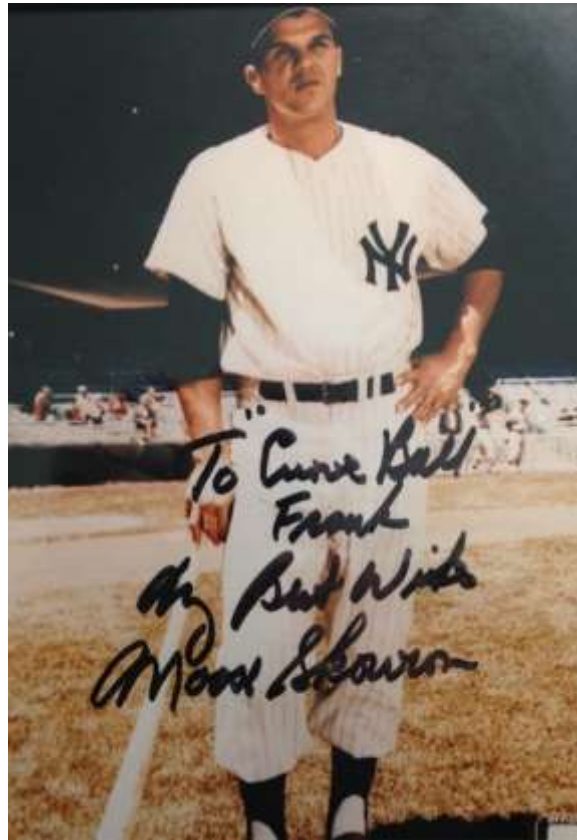




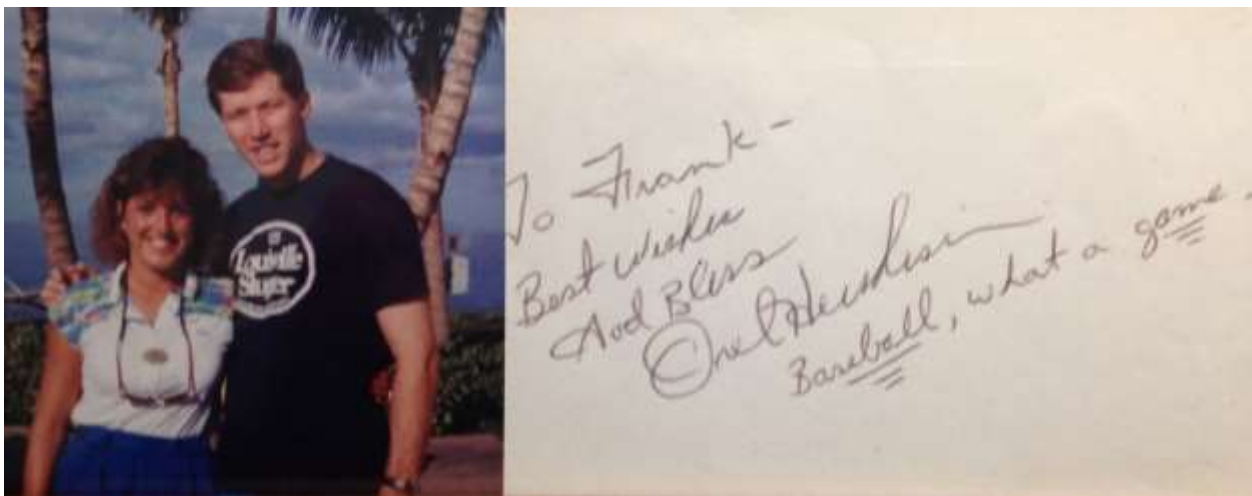
Hank Antolak and Frank Splitt friends and Rak's Appliance teammates at Chicago's Hanson Park, circa 1954



The author (center) with Frank Splitt, Sr. and Mae A. Splitt at Northwestern University Commencement, 1963



Bill "Moose" Skowron, New York Yankee first baseman, 1954—62,  
Eight-time American League All Star



Anne Splitt White with Los Angeles Dodger pitching great Orel Herershiser, Maui, Hawaii, circa 1992.

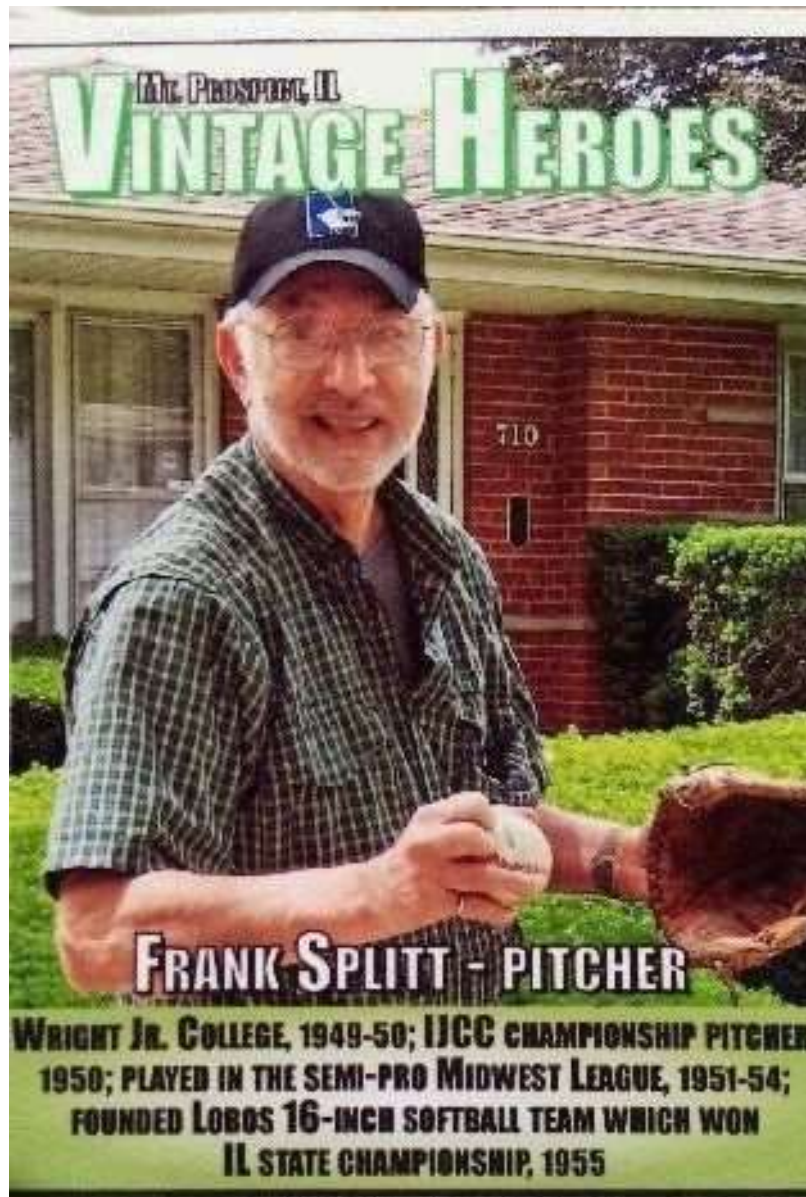




The author on the mound at the Field of Dreams in Dyersville, Iowa  
Sister Ruth Schiffer, BVM, is behind the plate and Judy Splitt is 'at bat',  
April 1994



Sisters of Charity, BVM, Ruth Shiffler and Agnes Purcell with Judy Splitt at  
the Saint Joseph Motherhouse and Convent in Dubuque, Iowa, April 1994.  
The sisters were the author's teachers , grades 4-6, at Annunciation School..



*Photo courtesy of Rick and Sue Rothstein, circa 2013*

## Judy Hagen Splitt: Music and Life

**Preface** – The following biographical sketch of my wife Judy's life story was prepared in response to a request from Nancy Bailey, editor of the *Nokomis News* published by the Nokomis Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution. The story is told via most of Judy's own words that were extracted from a bio she wrote in her freshman year at Edgewood College and an autobiography published in the October 2001 issue of *Edgewood College The Magazine*. The bio was published in the January 2021 issue of the *Nokomis News* with the headline "Getting to Know Judith Hagen Splitt, Member of Nokomis Chapter, NSDAR." — Frank G. Splitt

**A Glance at the Past** – My father's ancestors all lived in Germany, and consequently I know very little of their history. On the other hand, we're rather proud of the fact that Harry Hunt, my mother's father, had ancestors that pushed their way to America in 1634. They were of English and Welch extraction, and were a very upright and straight-faced group. Beyond all doubt my maternal grandma Ellie Hunt had a great impact on my early life. However, it was my grandpa's side that provided the link to a colonial family member who was active during the revolutionary war and who, in turn, provided the basis for my mother's and my membership in the DAR. I must say, my membership was a direct consequence of the recruiting effort of the Nokomis DAR's Barbara Novak. Now here's my story:

**A New Face in the Family** – On a hot sultry day in August of 1934, Mr. George Hagen was nervously eating dinner with relatives. "Well," said he, "let's hope it's at least an eight-pound boy." The telephone jangled in response. "The baby came sooner than expected," a voice announced on the other end. "You're the father of a six-pound girl." And so, a new face was added to the family. My sister, who was three at the time I arrived, was much in awe of me and was heard to say frequently, "My, what a small head it has."

According to my mother, I was a rather temperamental baby who laughed and cried alternately. This was quite a change after having my even-tempered older sister who loved to tell me what to do, and also had a habit of getting the better of me in any game we played. This little habit of hers caused much screaming on my part, and sometimes ended in a hair-pulling match. These experiences taught me to stand up for my rights at an early age.

**Grammar School and the Piano** – Optimistic though they may have been, my parents were sure that I had been blessed with musical talent. They arrived at this supposition after talking to my first-grade teacher at the Holy Redeemer Grade School in Milwaukee. Sister thought it was marvelous because I had performed the astounding feat of composing a melody to a poem in our reader.

I vividly recall the day that two burly men carried in our second-hand piano. I was quite taken with the piano, but not so with the lessons. In fact, I used every excuse in the books to avoid those lessons.

Sister Waldemara was my first music instructor. Time flew, and before long, there I was – on the brink of my first piano recital! It was to be held in the grade school, and I was to play the stirring piece – "Dance of Olden Times."

I arrived at the first-grade room at the appointed time, all shining and freshly scrubbed. Naïve as I was, I wasn't the least bit frightened. I probably was too young to realize that I should be scared. Anyway, following Sister's instructions, I curtsied – too soon, but nevertheless I curtsied, and then breezed across the room to the piano. The audience burst out laughing, but it didn't faze me in the least.

I held my hands poised over the keyboard as Sister had taught me, and swooped down on the first note like a seagull grabbing a fish. I then proceeded to zip through the piece automatically, like a typist doing a warm-up exercise, without a mistake. Suddenly it was all over, and I marched out of the room grinning from ear to ear.

Although, in many piano recitals since, and I can honestly say that my first recital was first and last in which I was completely at ease.

**High School Years** – I entered Edgerton High School on September 10, 1948 in Edgerton, Wisconsin. That was a big day. The high school looked large, and the seniors seemed so sophisticated. The teachers were insignificant, and of course social life was vitally important. Certain engagements such as slumber parties were life or death matters, and a horrible incident as having one's oboe squeak in the high school band was enough to drive one insane.

Naturally, a fourteen-year-old knows more than her parents, and one's gang of friends is the only worthwhile group to associate with in the area. It's a shame, but parents just don't seem to comprehend the serious problems one has at fourteen.

What I would like to know is, how did my parents ever put up with me about that time? How did my poor mother tolerate it when each night after school we jitter-bugged all over the living room in time to a hideous boogie record? Or when I was in love with the fifteen-year-old boy across the street, who slept through most of his classes, but was a terrific football player?

I somehow completed my freshman year, and it was then that the terrible blow came. We decided to move to Madison because of my father's job. It was like a bolt out of the blue, and a tragedy as far as I was concerned. It's a fact that in the early teens it's hard to leave your hometown, and I definitely thought my life was shattered. With many tears I left my friends whom I had grown up with since second grade, and dismally came to Madison.

I entered Edgewood High School as a sophomore without knowing a soul in the school. I can clearly remember crying my eyes out each night the first week of school—nothing seemed right to me. I wasn't used to the nuns, the girls snobbish, the boys foolish, and the whole school seemed quite cold.

I now realize the change was for the best, and the religious atmosphere was good for me. I grew to love Edgewood. I received certain ideals and training that stuck with me throughout my life. Another positive aspect of the move was the fact my sister and I would not have to take the train from Edgerton to Madison for music lessons (violin for my sister and piano for me with Miss Strehlow) at the Wisconsin School of Music that were ongoing since early in grammar school.

**College Years** – After graduating from high school, I knew exactly what I wanted to do. Since I've always liked art, music, children, and teaching, what was there to do, but to be an elementary school teacher?

Another factor that aided me in continuing my education was the tedious office job I had during summer after graduation. After filing licenses in the Motor Vehicle Department for about a month, I found myself having fond thoughts of school.

And so, there I was, a freshman at Edgewood College in Madison—still preferring art as a favorite subject, and just barely passing science courses as I've done for twelve years. At that moment in time I saw myself teaching small children in a kindergarten right here in Wisconsin. Somehow, I felt that I could make myself much more useful in teaching children than I could in traveling, or in entering an already overcrowded field such as dress designing. Someday, I hoped to have a home of my own, and to teach my own children with the help of my training and the grace of God.

More education in music came at Edgewood where I also benefited from the liberal arts education and the life experience at a small college while still living at home. I majored in primary education with a double minor in art and English. Two educational areas stand-out: the excellent preparation and hands-on training given to us for teaching and dealing with children the other was the teaching of the sacredness of life. Theology and philosophy classes that I took at Edgewood also planted seeds in my life—opening my mind to concern for all of life. Through a diverse assortment of classes I was provided with knowledge that was instrumental in the development of my teaching profession—preparing me for life after college.

**Teaching, Life, and Retirement** – I began my career teaching kindergarten in West Allis and Wauwatosa, Wisconsin in the fall of 1956—firmly believing what a wise teacher once said: "Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, and life to everything."

It didn't take long during my first year of teaching five-year-olds to realize how well prepared I was thanking God for Sister Mary Rosary, head of the primary education department, and Sister Justinia for the excellent classes and teaching of children's music. Although I had years of piano behind me the methods I learned on how best to teach young children proved to be invaluable then and throughout my teaching career.



Many years I later accepted a position in Mount Prospect, Illinois teaching kindergarten and preschool I developed a program called “Music for Children” in 1985. Classes were held at a large, well-run park district site. Children ages 4 to 6 were exposed to various forms of music suitable for their ages. Within these music groups were children with Down’s Syndrome, some with behavior problems, and those who couldn’t get along in any other program. Surprising to me was how receptive these children were and how well they were able to find “life” in music. Many parents have told me how their children have played instruments or were in bands—saying their musical aptitude began had its roots in the “Music for Children” program.

Along with music, art has also played a large role in my life and my teaching. I believe it is also a vital part of educating the whole child. Edgewood’s Sister Teresita instilled in me the value of art and educating the soul.

In the early 1990s I painted murals on the hall walls of my Wisconsin summer home where, except for the Covid year of 2020, my husband Frank and I spent half of the year in the north woods.

Our time in retirement found us participating in our parish and hospital ministries as well as working with the international group, Foundation for Global Community. I also volunteered at the Minocqua Wildlife Center. Both my husband and attended classes at Marywood, a Franciscan spirituality center, as we believe it’s important to never stop learning.

Finally, I find myself well into the winter of my life enduring the ravages of Alzheimer’s disease. Although I struggle to remember the call of the loon and the flight of the eagle that had such a profound meaning for me as did all of life, I know that I have had a wonderful life



Frank and Judy Splitt, at Starlake, WI  
*Photo by Jennifer Heitz, October 2019.*

# Daily Herald: Letters to the Editor

## A Bridge Too Far

1/15/20

Former Chicago mayor, Rahm Emanuel, wrote an eye-catching piece for the opinion page in the Feb. 1 edition of The Wall Street Journal. His op-ed, headlined "Democrats May Be Blowing Their Chance" tells how overly aggressive progressives seem to be forgetting the opponent in the 2020 election is Donald Trump not Bill Clinton or Barack Obama who they believe were not progressive enough during their presidential terms in office.

"Mr. Trump's consistently low job approval suggest he is uniquely vulnerable, but with the unemployment hovering near record lows the Democratic nominee will need both substance and style that contrast well with Mr. Trump's conflict and chaos," said Emanuel.

It is my view that revolution-like progressivism could possibly win the popular vote, but unrealistic aims and rousing rhetoric will not gain the majority of 270 electoral votes required for election. It's a bridge too far.

Extreme progressivism will also all but guarantee another Republican Senate majority led by Mitch McConnell, who Trump converted from an opponent to his 'man' when he appointed McConnell's wife, Elaine Chao, to his cabinet as the U.S. Secretary of Transportation..

## Americans are a resilient people

3/27/20

Kudos to Barry Rozner for his spot-on essay "Right now, things are hard. Like always, we will bounce back," (Sports, Mar.15).

The essay sure fit our present times as well as the times of my generation.

Born in 1930, we lived through the Great Depression, World War II, and all the wars thereafter.

There was the insidious threat of the polio virus during our youths. On a personal note there was the traumatic impact of cancer and heart problems during the 1990s, as well as my wife's devastating Alzheimer's diagnosis in 2008—troubling if not dire outlooks from all. Nonetheless, we are still alive and enjoying life as best we can with the help of friends and family.

During my three-year battle with cancer, my wife often said: "When the going gets tough, the tough get going," Therefore, I wholeheartedly agree that we as a nation are fully capable of bouncing back once again as we did in Rozner's example of 9/11.

Americans are a resilient people. It's in our DNA to adapt to circumstances no matter how challenging these circumstances may be.

## **COVID-19: A crisis of leadership**

5/2/2020

"In facing our new public threat, as in the past, mature, insightful leadership is crucial," said Carthage College professor Arthur Cyr ("Government's evolving role fighting crises," Opinion, April 1).

Notwithstanding intelligence reports that a pandemic was likely, President Trump persisted with misleading messaging -- continuously downplaying the COVID-19 threat. His message was amplified by Fox News as well as by loyalists on social media. The upshot is that the U.S. lost at least a month of precious time, so it is currently facing the worst outbreak in the industrialized world. Thanks to Drs. Anthony Fauci and Deborah Birx who got the president to recognize the serious nature of the threat.

The president, a master showman, piggybacked on daily COVID-19 press briefings -- starring in a reelection campaign reality side show. Revering followers saw the president as hardworking while seemingly blind to his lack of mature, insightful leadership capabilities. Showmanship is not leadership.

It is what it is. We are where we are with a crisis of leadership. How can one explain such a bizarre situation? Voltaire gave it a try some 300 years ago when he said: "It is difficult to free fools from the chains they revere."

I hesitate to think about where we would be without Drs. Fauci, Birx and our nation's governors and mayors. Generals McMaster, Kelly and Mattis are long gone when we need them most -- removed from the administration once the president found that they were not only smarter and wiser than he, but also well respected and prone to speak truth to power.

November 2020 will soon be upon us. Hope for a viable future of America's democracy will rely on a well-informed electorate that can help place experienced as well as competent and trustworthy men and women at all levels of government no matter their political affiliation.

## **Desperation, fear**

10/29/2020

Why is President Trump frantically campaigning to win his reelection and why did he pressure Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to expedite the confirmation of his SCOTUS nominee, Judge Amy Coney Barrett? Here's why:

The president's frenetic behavior appears to border on desperation driven by deep fear. He likely fears losing the power of the presidency that has protected him and his assets from creditors as well as litigation in courts of law. Losing his presidency could very well have dire consequences that could see him descending into poverty, going to prison or possibly having to live with both scenarios. In a forthcoming Commonweal Magazine essay titled "Not a Normal Election," Yale Professor Timothy Snyder provides a likely explanation for the president's behavior of late. Snyder writes: "The plan is not to win the popular (or even the electoral) vote, but rather to stay

in power in some other way. He will declare victory regardless of what happens, expect state governments to act contrary to vote counts claim fraud from postal ballots, court chaos from white nationalists (and perhaps the Department of Homeland Security) and expect the Supreme Court to install him."

Judge Barrett fits the plan. Like her mentor, the late Antonin Scalia, she adheres to a nearly limitless view of executive power.

American citizens need to vote to reclaim our nation's democracy that is sliding toward autocracy. They need to demand restoration of the system of governance that made America a great nation with the checks and balances and separate institutional responsibilities laid out in our constitution. We need an effective government system populated with competent individuals at all levels.

For more, search online for "Trumpism and Its Factions: Existential Threats to America's Democracy."

To: fencepost@dailyherald.com <fencepost@dailyherald.com>  
Sent: Fri, Nov 13, 2020 12:31 pm  
Subject: Charter Schools: Caveat Emptor

## **Charter Schools: Caveat Emptor**

Walter Williams touts charter schools, specifically referencing Thomas Sowell's book "Charter Schools and Their Enemies" and the relative success of a Success Academy charter school that operated in the same setting as New York City's public school ("Should Blacks support destruction of charter schools?" Nov. 11, 2020).

As Diane Ravitch, education historian, author, and public-school advocate, reveals in her 2020 book, "Slaying Goliath: The Passionate Resistance to Privatization and the Fight to Save America's Public Schools," not all charter schools and charter management organizations are of the caliber considered by Sowell.

As a matter of fact, political and other forms of corruption can and do abound as do draconian disciplinary measures. All that glitters is not gold as evidenced by the aggressive tactics employed by Success Academy administrators to rid their charter schools of students they believe are disruptive and/or will not be accepted by institutions of higher education. Sowell recognizes, oversight of charters is a definite requirement, possibly by the courts.

Caveat Emptor applies. Let potential buyers of Walter Williams' charter-school "happy talk" beware.



To: [fencepost@dailyherald.com](mailto:fencepost@dailyherald.com) <[fencepost@dailyherald.com](mailto:fencepost@dailyherald.com)>

Sent: Mon, Dec 7, 2020 3:27 pm

Subject: Updated Copy: 2020: A Year of Peril

## **2020: A Year of Peril**

The year 2020 has been a year of peril, a year like none other—a global pandemic, a recession, nation-wide racial tensions, a controversial presidency, a historic presidential election, and a contested post-election period.

Taken together, these events are troubling...indeed even more so since President Trump has not only worked to undermine confidence in the electoral process, but has also been able to convince tens of millions of his loyal followers, without evidence, that the election was rigged and that he, not Joe Biden, should be America's president elect.

Therein lies a serious downstream existential threat to America's democracy. For insights into what is involved with this threat search online for Diane Ravitch's blog: "Frank G. Splitt: The Legacy of Trumpism."

Thoughtful consideration of the above should leave little doubt that the future of America's democracy is in peril.

Frank G. Splitt  
Mount Prospect

To: [fencepost@dailyherald.com](mailto:fencepost@dailyherald.com) <[fencepost@dailyherald.com](mailto:fencepost@dailyherald.com)>

Sent: Sun, Feb 14, 2021 12:06 pm

Subject: Trump Acquitted Not Vindicated

## **Trump Acquitted Not Vindicated**

“SENATE ACQUITS TRUMP A SECOND TIME” so read the Feb. 14, 2021, Daily Herald headline. Just the day before, Peggy Noonan opined in her Wall Street Journal Declarations column, "A Vote to Acquit Is a Vote for a Lie," writing "Conviction would be an act of self-respect and reverence for the place (the Capitol) where fortune has placed them (Senators)."

Donald J. Trump should have been impeached for the high crime and misdemeanor related to his verbiage and actions taken to subvert the results of the 2020 presidential election. Foremost of these efforts was his (recorded) call to get Georgia's secretary of state to "find" enough votes to give him a victory there in the presidential election.

Trump's contribution to the January 6, 2021 assault on the U.S. Capitol was the capstone event in a series of well documented actions he took to destroy our nation's long-held tradition of a peaceful transition of presidential power—attempting to halt the certification of Joe Biden's Electoral College victory.

That being said, those senators who voted to acquit likely did so not out of reverence and self-respect, but because of political expediency—rationalizing that the end (staying in office and avoiding the wrath of Trump and his cult-like followers) justifies the means.

Donald J. Trump was acquitted but surely not vindicated.

# **The Wall Street Journal: Letters to the Editor**

Note: All of the following letter submissions were based on the author's posted comments on the WSJ website corresponding to referenced story.

## ***Lessons to be learned at West Point?***

4/17/21: "The academy hadn't faced an honor breach like this since 1976 when dozens of cadets cheated on an electrical-engineering exam." writes Tawnell Hobbs, ("West Point Scandal Spurs End to Leniency," Page 1, April 17).

Gen. Andrew Jackson Goodpaster (1915-2005), a 1939 West Point graduate was brought out of retirement in 1977 to serve for four years as the superintendent of West Point as it was reeling from that cheating scandal.

C. Richard Nelson's biography, *The Life and Work General Andrew J. Goodpaster*, describes him as a soldier, engineer and scholar who led and fought with uncommon valor in World War II, advised several presidents, and served as NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (1969-1974)—noting that he has been called the finest officer of our era.

Perhaps Goodpaster's tenure as superintendent can provide valuable lessons for the current superintendent.

## ***The Impeachment Vote***

2/13/21: "Conviction would be an act of self-respect and reverence for the place (the Capitol) where fortune has placed them (Senators)," so writes Peggy Noonan ("A Vote to Acquit Is a Vote for a Lie" Opinion, Feb. 13-14).

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Trump's contribution to the January 6, 2021 assault on the U.S. Capitol was the capstone action in a series of well documented actions he took to deny Joe Biden the presidency.

That being said, those senators who will vote to acquit will do so not out of reverence and self-respect, but because of political expediency---rationalizing that the end (staying in office and avoiding the wrath of Trumpists) justifies the means.

## ***Charter Schools: Caveat Emptor,***

2/10/21: In his union-bashing opinion piece, Jason L. Riley touts charter schools ("Have Teachers Unions Finally Overplayed Their Hand?," Feb. 10). He specifically references Thomas Sowell's book "Charter Schools and Their Enemies" that highlights the relative success of a Success Academy charter school that operated in the same setting as New York City's public schools

As Diane Ravitch, reveals in her 2020 book, "Slaying Goliath: The Passionate Resistance to Privatization and the Fight to Save America's Public Schools," not all charter schools and charter management organizations are of the caliber considered by Sowell.

Political and other forms of corruption can and do abound as do draconian disciplinary measures. All that glitters is not gold as evidenced by the aggressive tactics employed by Success Academy administrators to rid their charter schools of students they believe are disruptive and/or will not be accepted by institutions of higher education. Caveat Emptor applies. Let potential buyers of Riley's charter-school "happy talk" beware.

## ***Minimize Political Extremism***

1/30/21: The Journal republished a divisive New York Sun editorial response to Katie Couric's so-called swipe at Trump supporters (Notable & Quotable: Program," Opinion, Jan. 28). Couric told Bill Maher: "The question is how are we going to really almost deprogram these people who have signed up for the cult of Trump."

Couric's question should have been: how do we develop and offer educational procedures for deprogramming brainwashed Americans on both the left and the right? America can do best when united, not divided---being governed from the center without extremists at the ends of the political spectrum.

This approach, rather than taking "swipes" at supporters of extremist leaders such as socialist-leaning Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez on the left and fascist-leaning Donald Trump on the right, should help center most Americans. However, this will not be an easy task.

For example, according to Steven Hassan, a leading cult expert, Trump has apparently mastered messianic-like cult leadership skills. So, consider the difficulty of deprogramming Trump's Catholic supporters, see *The National Catholic Reporter's* Jan. 14, story "How Catholics got conned by Donald Trump."

### ***Affirmative Action Gone Awry?***

1/29/21: The report by Ken Thomas on a new \$20 bill was indeed thought provoking, ("New Push Made for Tubman Bill," US NEWS, Jan. 26)

Though Harriet Tubman has much to commend her for consideration for the honor of replacing Andrew Jackson on the front of the \$20 bill, I am at a loss as to why Tubman was selected rather than Eleanor Roosevelt, notwithstanding the fact that Roosevelt has significantly more achievements. Could it be that Roosevelt suffers from the fact that she was white and not born a black slave, or simply affirmative action gone awry?

It appears that the Biden Administration's Treasury Department is intent on sending a "1619"--like message that will likely receive justified criticism from Republicans and moderate Democrats as well. Ignoring Roosevelt will also cast suspicion on the criteria used by the administration in its selection of cabinet and other officials, Is it seeking to meet politically expedient racial diversity and equity goals rather than seeking out the best person for the job.

### ***What About Eleanor Roosevelt?***

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So, what about Eleanor Roosevelt?

### ***Thanks for the Mulligan***

12/15/20: Kudos to Paul Gigot for the mulligan extended to the "Biden crowd" in response to their over the top reaction to the Joseph Epstein op-ed in Saturday's Journal ("The Biden Team Strikes Back," (Opinion, Dec. 14). It brought to mind the humor I find in my wife's often repeated rejoinder following any of my medical advice: "You're not that kind of doctor."

### ***Also Not in My House***

12/12/20: Kudos to Joseph Epstein for his advisory piece "Is There a Doctor in the White House? Not if You Need an M.D." (Opinion, Dec. 12-13). It brought to mind my wife's often repeated rejoinder following any of my medical advice: "You're not that kind of doctor."

### ***The Trump Presidency: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly***

11/18/20: Joseph Epstein touts President Trump's effectiveness in office— citing the president's policies that "should have counted for a lot had his rebarbative personality not served to negate these accomplishments," ("Donald Trump, the President His Detractors Love to Hate," Opinion, Nov. 14). However, this supposed good is only part of a story that goes well beyond the president's personality. Not

mentioned were vast international reputational as well as social and human costs paid for these accomplishments.

Consider first the likely long-lasting impact of Trump's assault on America's democracy and democratic values, as well as his demeaning of the office of the president via corruption, cruelty, incompetence, and obstruction of justice. Also consider the cost of the president's divide-and-conquer strategy that not only tore American's asunder, but also bolstered America's slide towards autocracy.

Bad behavior and policies have steep costs as well. The list includes: blatant lies and gross exaggerations, flagrant self-dealing, the tax evasion, voter suppression, the separation of children from their parents, the encouragement of white supremacists, conspiratorists, and radical right-wing factions such as neo-Nazis, and perhaps one of the most egregious of all in terms of lives lost was the downplaying and politicization of COVID-19.

An ugly state of affairs has pervaded the fabric of our nation. Sadly, none of this ugliness has any apparent bearing on the actions of Trump loyalists and the president's sycophantic congressional enablers who seem to believe the president has the right to impede the transition to the Biden presidency no matter the costs.

### ***Bad Behavior Demands Consequences***

10/24/20: Northwestern President Morton Shapiro need look no further than to the late Fr. Ted Hesburgh for guidance on how to respond to student bad behavior (Notable & Quotable: Northwestern Protests, Opinion, Oct. 23).

During the Vietnam War in the late 1960s and early '70s, Notre Dame was the scene of protests and demonstrations that permeated most college campuses. As Notre Dame's president, Hesburgh maintained order at a time when college presidents throughout the country were unsure of how to handle the situations on their campuses—fearing the repercussions of their actions.

Hesburgh believed that bad behavior demands consequences. His February 1969 letter with its "15-minute Rule," spelled out consequences for those who abused the right of dissent and disrupted the school's academic enterprise—stating that peaceful protests were permitted and even encouraged. On the other hand, interference with the civil rights of others would not be permitted, and that those who violated this principle would be given 15 minutes to reflect on their actions. Either cease and desist or face expulsion.

### ***Henninger Opts for Trump and Chaos***

10/22/20: Daniel Henninger asks: "At its finish, this presidential election is of a piece with everything else in 2020—the desire that some things just go away. So which is it, Donald Trump or the Democratic Party?" ("Trump, Biden, Hunter, Chaos," Opinion, Oct, 22).

It comes as no surprise that Henninger answers with the Democratic Party, thus opting for Trump and chaos.

On the other hand, many Americans think it is Trump that needs to go away; and that the greater national need is for the Republican Party to rethink what it has become with its profound alienation from pre-Trump core values, history, traditions and identity of the United States as a democratic republic as opposed to a demagogic autocracy.

The bigger risk is to have one of America's two major parties go far off the tracks as it blindly follows an aberrant leader whose self-centered behavior is best characterized by disruption, divisiveness, deceit, and deception.

### ***Misdirected Attacks on Judge Barrett***

10/8/20: With reference to Brian Hagedorn's piece "Bigoted Attacks on Amy Coney Barrett Will Backfire," these attacks are not only inappropriate, but misdirected as are attacks on her likely positions on Roe v. Wade and the Affordable Care Act, (Opinion, Oct. 8)

What should be of preeminent concern is that Judge Barrett subscribes to the theory of the unitary executive that allows for almost limitless presidential control of the entire executive

branch—a particularly dangerous situation given President Trump's apparent disregard for America's democratic norms not to mention decorum, honor, civility, and just plain common decency. Beyond that, why be concerned? Here's why:

To begin, there have been troubling revelations with regard to the politicization of the departments in the Executive Branch of Government, specifically the DOJ, DHS, and DHHS, particularly the CDC, as evidenced by obvious efforts to help President Trump in the upcoming election..

Likely, President Trump fears the consequences of not being reelected, when he would have to appear in courts as an ordinary citizen to face multiple litigations. Therefore, everything will be done to get his nominee Amy Coney Barrett confirmed for the short-term purpose of increasing his odds for a favorable outcome in the election that he will certainly contest if he loses.

Who then would be there to stop Trump from using all the levers of government to not only contest the results of the upcoming election if he loses, but also stop him from realizing his personal and political aims as well as his ambition if he wins either by votes cast or by a SCOTUS decision as in *Bush v. Gore*, 531 U.S. 98 (2000)?

### ***Needed: An Unselfish Way of Thinking***

8/13/20: Kudos to Alan Blinder for taking on the anti-maskers (*Individual Choice Is a Bad Fit for Covid Safety*, Opinion, Aug. 13). Likely to be lost by White House policy defenders in his op-ed is the fact that the U.S. is still without a coherent and coordinated national strategy to combat COVID-19 via testing, contact tracing, and isolation.

At the present time, mask wearing, social distancing avoiding crowds in confined spaces, personal hygiene, and an unselfish way of thinking are about the only tactics that can be deployed against this highly contagious coronavirus.

Unfortunately, our American culture of rugged individualism with its related thinking of "me and mine and survival of the fittest," as opposed to, "we and ours and survival of us all together" has contributed to the U.S. position of world leadership in cases and fatalities.

### ***Needed: An Honest and Balanced Account of American History***

8/11/20: The real lesson to be learned from the first 20 years of this century, it is that the need for an honest and balanced account of American history is inescapable ("*A Hood in the Closet*," Books, Aug. 8-9). In the spotlight cast by "The 1619 Project" and Black Lives Matter, Americans have witnessed how certain elements of our cultural memory cry out to be recognized. Ralph Eubanks is correct in saying these elements "cannot continue to be ignored or disguised by mythology. It is indeed difficult for some Americans to come to terms with the burdens and wrongs of the past."

Much happened in America before and after the year 1619 that was highlighted by Nikole Hannah-Jones in her Pulitzer-Prize-winning paper "The 1619 Project" on the history of the sordid treatment of American Blacks. Recent research indicates that the first Americans came from East Asia some 30,000 years ago. These indigenous peoples were the ancestors of today's Native Americans. So, from that perspective, "The 1619 Project" covers less than 2% of humankind's history in America---albeit a small but important piece of a complex mosaic of "elements" of human behavior in America. To be complete, this historical mosaic must also include the ignoble treatment of Native Americans during the era of Manifest Destiny and the ongoing prejudicial treatment of racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities, as well as immigrants, and women.

### ***The Scowcroft-Goodpaster Connection***

8/9/20: In his obituary for General Brent Scowcroft, "Top Adviser Shaped Policy Of Cold War," Warren Strobel wrote: "He became a protégé and aide to Henry Kissinger, who served as President Nixon's national security advisor (U.S. News, Aug. 8-9). General Scowcroft was a graduate of the National War College Class of 1968, under the command of the late General Andrew J. Goodpaster who previously served as President Dwight Eisenhower's staff secretary. He was the de facto originator of the National Security Council process---serving as a mentor and role model to his successors, one of whom was General Scowcroft who became a lifelong friend.

C. Richard Nelson's 2016 book, *The Life and Work of General Andrew J. Goodpaster*, contains a Scowcroft tribute to Goodpaster who he claimed as his hero.

### ***The Physics of a Political Crackup***

8/3/20: Andy Kessler uses the physics of resonance as a metaphor ("The Physics of a Political Crackup," Opinion. Aug. 3). History, evolutionary biology, and the physics of entropy tell us that the arc of human affairs bends toward disorder, tribalism, oppression, and poverty. America's liberal democratic republic, with all of its imperfections, has proven to be an exception to this course of human affairs.

Nevertheless, disordering factional forces such as illiberalism and historical revisionism are hard at work---leading to a potential political crackup feared by our founding fathers (see Federalist No.10

### ***Factions At Play***

8/2/20: It was 1787 when James Madison wrote in Federalist No. 10, "Unrestrained factionalism may do significant damage to the fabric of government—warning of impetuous mobs or factions ...” Consider two such factions implicitly highlighted by Andrew Michta ("The Captive Mind and America's Resegregation, " Opinion, Aug. 1-2).

The revisionist faction challenges the work of America's founding fathers—attempting to rewrite history as a litany of racial transgressions. For example, *The 1619 Project* challenges America's founding on principles of freedom---rather considering it a founding designed to maintain a system of slavery without mentioning that it was a painful compromise made to secure ratification of the U.S. Constitution.

The illiberal faction does not respect free speech. It apparently has its roots in America's academic institutions that ostensibly claim to have a mission primarily focused on the creation, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge, all based on freedom of inquiry. Instead we see strong evidence that these institutions are being rolled by cancel-culture and speech-code enthusiasts.

Something is amiss when non-faculty administrators expand their school's mission with regard to wokeness—placing outsized emphasis on social justice issues such as diversity, inclusion, and equity. As a consequence, faculty hiring based on disciplinary merit is bound to diminish—leading to a further dumbing down of higher education in America. Where is the outrage and where are the governing boards?

### ***Ruinous American Factionalism***

7/31/20: In 1787, Federalist No. 10, James Madison wrote “Unrestrained factionalism may do significant damage to the fabric of government—warning of impetuous mobs or factions "united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community."

Daniel Schwammmenthal illuminates a number of such factions, ("To America, From a Worried European Friend," *The Wall Street Journal*, July 29, p.A17).

To begin, there are the revisionist factions eroding the work of America's founding fathers. Take for example *The New York Times's 1619 Project* that challenges America's founding on principles of freedom---rather considering it a founding designed to maintain a system of slavery and white supremacy.

Though still a relatively small minority, the far-right faction of white supremacists, with its Nazi infatuation, is obviously a danger to American democracy.

Also eroding America's founding principles is a rising tide of illiberalism that describes a faction that does not respect individual rights and freedoms, most importantly, free speech. It apparently has its roots in America's academic institutions that claim to have a mission that is primarily focused on the creation, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge, all based on freedom of inquiry.

Something is awry when non-faculty administrators exhibit misplaced sensitivity and expand their school's mission with regard to wokeness—placing outsized emphasis on social justice issues such as diversity, inclusion, and equity. As a consequence of this mission creep, faculty hiring based on disciplinary merit is bound to diminish—leading to a further dumbing down of higher education in America as well as its future leaders.

### ***All That Glitters Is Not Gold***

7/27/20: "The educational success of these charter schools undermines theories of genetic determinism, claims of cultural bias in the tests, assertions that racial 'integration' is necessary for blacks to reach educational parity and presumptions that income differences are among the 'root causes' of educational differences," Mr. Sowell writes ("Thomas Sowell Has Been Right From the Start," *Opinion*, July 22).

The educational success of the charter schools studied by Dr. Sowell will also show that these schools have financial and operational advantages over public schools as well. For example, consider the Success Academy charter schools he cited, saying that the schools have effectively closed the academic achievement gap between black and white students.

Not said was that Eva Moskowitz's Success Academy charter schools are not only funded by the city of New York, but also receive multi-million dollar gifts from billionaires as well from the big-money funded group Families for Excellent Schools.

In large part, the Success Academy charters owe their success to a combination of other factors as well. These would include intense test prep preparation, parental involvement, high levels of attrition, and/or exclusion of students a charter does not want (those with severe disabilities, behavior problems and who don't conform to its regimen)—all of whom must be served by public schools.

All that glitters is not gold.

### ***The U.S. Is a World Leader***

The 7/21/20: U.S., the world leader in COVID-19 cases, is still struggling, a point well made by the authors, ("Western Europe Avoids New Surge," *World News*, A6, July 21). Give credit where credit is due.

The first White House words on the novel coronavirus were: "We have it under control. It's going to be just fine." And so on January 22, 2020, began Donald J. Trump's failure to fulfill his duties as the President of the United States. He has yet to use the full force of the federal government to implement measures requisite to controlling the spread of the novel coronavirus. A self-centered focus on his reelection apparently blinded him to the ominous and serious nature of the threat.

So six months into the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. is still lacking in a coordinated national policy for securing and distributing supplies, equipment, and laboratory services for testing, contact tracing and isolation protocols to control the spread of the virus.

In the meantime the president flails about blaming China and others as he does everything in his power to open schools to help restart an economy that's controlled by a virus that has no concern for his reelection. Only willful ignorance would allow him to ignore the fact that the virus is less contained in many regions then it was when schools closed last spring.

### ***An Ongoing Tragedy***

7/6/20: Professor Ellis provides still another telling of the ongoing tragedy in American Higher Education ("Campus Culture Seizes the Streets," Opinion, July 6). The continuing erosion of higher education in America begs two questions: Where is the Outrage and Where Are the Governing Boards?

Members of college and university governing boards need to be challenged to rise to the occasion and recognize that they are directly responsible for the actions of the leadership at their institutions.

Unfortunately, this leadership has led to a tragedy that is fraught with interrelated problems and issues that demand resolution, to wit: sports-related academic corruption, excessive commercialization, mission creep with outsized focus on social justice issues, administrative bloat, admission shenanigans, student loans and debt, the lowering of standards, and the graduation of students who can't write or think critically and who won't be able to compete in the global marketplace.

### ***Silence Is Complicity***

6/25/20: According to Daniel Henninger: "The collapse of liberal elites under a leftist offensive has been in the making for years," ("Smiley Face Liberalism," Opinion, June 25).

When Donald Trump embarked on his presidential MAGA campaign, many thought that conservative members of the Republican Party, especially those in the U.S. Congress, would be able to constrain his erratic behavior if he was ever elected. He was elected and they all caved. They continue to cave as his lies and bad behavior are exposed while America's loss of world leadership deepens.

Paraphrasing Mr. Henninger: Acts of denial as conservative traditions eroded were mostly petty self interest, If you didn't lose your job, you were OK. This is what "silence is complicity" really looks like.

### ***Loyalist ignores consequences of bad behavior***

6/11/20: A June 10, letter in response to the June 5, editorial, "The Revenge of Jim Mattis," stated: "It seems to me that President Trump has had more invective and hatred strewn on him by the FBI, the Justice Department, the media, the Democrats, the never-Trump Republicans, trusted aides, federal district-court judges and ex-military brass than any president in modern history."

Upon reading the letter, what immediately came to mind was Donald Trump's controversial claim that he could "stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody" and not "lose any voters." The letter writer must surely be one of these voters, a Trump loyalist, who has apparently not given thoughtful consideration to a key question: Why, after being so reticent about speaking out about the president's questionable behavior in office, would General Mattis not only speak out at this time, but why would other highly regarded military leaders issue supporting statements soon thereafter?



Trump loyalists seemingly cannot accept the fact that the president's well publicized erratic, wrathful, and shameful personal behavior, before and after his election, has consequences such as evoking "the invective and hatred strewn upon him?"

### ***More on Banning Mass Gatherings***

5/22/20: Bojan Pancevski referred to a recent study by the National Academy of Sciences that discussed the mechanisms involved in spreading the novel coronavirus---indicating that in the absence of safe and effective vaccines and treatments, large groups of people gathered in close proximity are a recipe for infections and consequent fatalities, ("Scientists Back Ban on Mass Gatherings," May 21, page 1).

Even without an effective treatment or vaccine, the novel coronavirus can still be effectively controlled, i.e. prevention of exponential growth, when reopening the economy by banning mass gatherings, hardening all home and business spaces against infections, and executing behavioral protocols based on the assumption that all contacts are potentially infectious.

This would require that: 1) Everyone behaves with caution, especially the most susceptible (people with underlying conditions and those beyond 65 years of age), 2) Standard infection prevention mechanisms be employed: a) Finding and isolating exposed people who have been identified by testing and contact tracing, b) Strict social distancing and crowd avoidance, c) Wearing masks, d) Washing hands, and e) Cleaning surfaces, and 3) Minimizing viral load via control of air flow and purity in confined business spaces via a combination of HEPA filtration and UV radiation.

### ***CDC reporting has likely been trumped***

5/20/20: Scott Gottlieb writes: "The more information about how to reduce the risk of spread and the severity of sickness, the more lives that can be saved, and the more comfortable Americans will feel about starting to resume normal," ("Cut Through the Fog of Covid War," Opinion, May 18).

It follows that the CDC and its highly capable career experts would normally be elevated to play their role in reporting on these findings in real time, so medical practice can be quickly informed of the latest information about Covid patients. However, the CDC has spoken infrequently and with more reticence than is customary in public-health crises.

It is more than likely that CDC reporting has been tightly limited because the president worries that prescriptive guidance and descriptive clinical findings will not only fuel public fears, but more importantly constrain a reopening that would jeopardize his chances for re-election as well.

### ***Assume all passengers are carriers***

5/16/20: The authors write: "Some TSA officials have resisted implementation of temperature scans because they think a person's temperature is a poor indicator of coronavirus infection, because it won't detect asymptomatic carriers and ...," (TSA Plans to Check Temperatures of Airline Passengers," page 1, May 16-17).

"Some TSA officials" are spot on as evidenced by a recent report titled "Study: Many asymptomatic COVID-19 cases undetected" from the University of Minnesota's Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy (CIDRAP) that found screening for symptoms of COVID-19 is by no means a trustworthy indicator of infection.

White House pressure on the TSA and the airlines to open up air travel coupled with our current inability to rapidly and accurately test for this novel coronavirus suggest that airlines can do no better than assume that all passengers are carriers. This would mean the use of N-95

masking and spacing of the passengers as well as the deployment of UV radiation in the cabin and air filtration system for starters.

### ***The White House Defends the President***

4/21/20: It's unusual to see the National Security Advisor writing an op-ed in the middle of a crisis, the sole purpose of which is to defend the president ("Seven Fateful Coronavirus Decisions," Opinion. April 21). Here Robert O'Brien aims to counteract the mounting criticism of the president's slow and weak response to the oncoming COVID-19 pandemic

Ostensibly written by Mr. O'Brien, the op-ed was most likely orchestrated by the president's 2020 Re-Election Campaign's PR team.

Contrary to the op-ed, the president did not act with dispatch, rather there was a lack of any semblance of strong presidential leadership.

For example, there was no call to action in early to mid-February build up the U.S. Strategic Reserve of medical supplies covering PPE as well as the wherewithal for diagnostic and serological testing.

Never in my almost 90 years have I seen a president so dependent on yes men and women to consistently defend ineptitude. I doubt officials in any previous administration have had to exhibit the ongoing praise of their commander in chief that's on full display at the president's mini political rallies a.k.a. COVID-19 Task Force briefings

### ***Pandering for the president***

4/13/20: George Gilder opines: "an optimistic, patriotic, practical-minded politician like Donald Trump, who over the past few years presided over a period of singular economic success, is exactly the man to provide the correct, if undoubtedly painful, cure for the current crisis. We may not envy him his decisions, but he is in the best position to make them," ("We Need Politicians in a Pandemic," Opinion, April 13).

Mr. Gilder is blatantly pandering for the president. That's precisely what many, if not most, intelligent Germans thought about Adolf Hitler, their pathologically narcissistic leader in the 1930s.

### ***Who will tell the president?***

4/9/20: Trump should thank *The Wall Street Journal's* Editorial Board for good advice, (Trump's Wasted Briefings," Review & Outlook, April 9).

The Journal provides advice that the president would certainly not get from his 2020 Re-election Campaign staff or from his loyal followers. Who among them would speak truth to power for fear of the president's wrath upon being criticized?

How could anyone in the president's orbit possibly question a campaign tactic that serves as a free-of-charge substitute for his expensive political rallies and where the president stars in a well-staged, daily show with high ratings?

The Journal's editors were able to tell their readers why the Trump-led briefings are wasted. Now who will tell the president?

### ***Americans are a tough and resilient people***

3/18/20: Holman Jenkins thought-provoking remarks sure fit our present times as well as the times of my own generation, ("Questioning the Clampdown, Opinion. Mar. 18, page A15).

Born in 1930, I and my cohort lived through the Great Depression, World War II, and all the wars thereafter while facing the insidious threat of the crippling polio virus in our youth. As we

grew older, we faced the traumatic impact of cancer and heart problems, as well as a potentially devastating Alzheimer's diagnosis among other maladies—troubling if not dire outlooks from all.

With the help of friends and family many of us are still alive and enjoying life in self-isolation as best we can as long as we can.

During my three-year battle with cancer, my wife often said: "When the going gets tough, the tough get going." We as a nation are fully capable of bouncing back as we have done in other crises. Americans are a tough and resilient people. It's in our DNA to adapt to circumstances no matter how challenging these circumstances may be.

### ***Cheating: Here There and Everywhere***

2/15/20 Kudos to Jonathan Vaughters for his open letter to Major League Baseball, ("Dear Baseball: Please Fix Yourself," Sports, Feb.15-16). His comments are spot on and widely applicable. For example, consider colleges and universities supporting big-time football and men's basketball programs where cheating to achieve a competitive edge is endemic. As William Maynard Hutchins said back in 1938 when he was president of the University of Chicago: "They all cheat."

Cheating goes on and on no matter how many cases of academic corruption become public. It seems apparent that cheating and brain injuries have been the price that the American public has been willing to pay for its entertainment and gambling pleasures.

Corrective action could be on the horizon—beginning with H.R.5528, "Congressional Advisory Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics Act of 2019." The bill, co-sponsored by Representatives Donna Schalala, D- FL 27<sup>th</sup>, and Ross Spano, R-FL 15<sup>th</sup>, envisions a two-year Congressional study to not only exhaustively identify problems and issues stemming from college sports, but also identify optimal remedial mechanisms.

### ***A Partisan Defense Against Impeachment***

1/15/20: Vice President Mike Pence's, question as to who among Senate Democrats will stand up against the passions of their party and so be the 2020 Profile in Courage should be flipped, ("A partisan Impeachment, A Profile in Courage," Opinion, Jan. 17). Here's why:

Given that Republican Senators as well as Vice President Pence live in dire fear of the wrath of President Trump and his political base, it is likely that the president will be acquitted no matter how much evidence is stacked against him.

The real question is: Who, among the Senate Republicans, will stand up to the passions of their party this time? Who will stand up against "legislative mob rule" by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and for the rule of law? Who will be the 2020 Profile in Courage?

### ***A March of Folly***

1/3/20: Kudos to the authors of the letters defending Professor Abigail Thompson's call for public attention to the continuing erosion of American higher education, ("It Sure Sounds Like a Loyalty Oath to Them", Letters, Jan. 3). The long-term cost of the UC Davis campus administrator's retreat from excellence and meritocracy via their defense of the school's diversity statements needs to be identified.

This type of institutional leadership has not only brought outsized focus on social-justice issues, but has also led to excessive commercialization, administrative bloat, the lowering of standards, and the graduation of students who can't write or think critically and who won't be able to compete in the global marketplace.

Political leaders in China and Russia must certainly be amused at this march of folly.

## Book Reviews\*

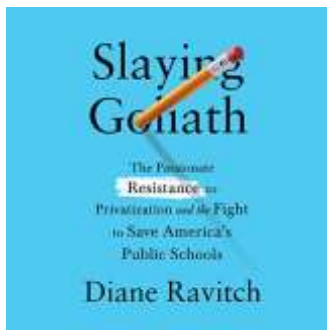
### *An Educational Whodunit with a Happy Ending*

*Slaying Goliath*: Reviewed in the United States on April 18, 2020

5 out of five stars

For anyone still wondering about what happened to the highly touted education reform programs, such as Common Core, Race to the Top, and Value Added Measures, wonder no more. Diane Ravitch puts on her education historian hat once again—telling a page-turning story.

It's a whodunit that begins by naming the villains (Goliaths), the millionaires and billionaires who targeted America's public schools—labeling these schools as poorly managed havens for bad teachers who are protected by their powerful unions.



The villains aimed to replace public schools with charter schools and/or voucher programs while ferreting out so-called bad teachers on the basis of student test scores. For some, public schools presented a rich marketing opportunity ripe for the taking. And take they did with the cooperation of federal, state, and local governments. At the federal level, the U.S. Department of Education under the administrations of President's George W. Bush, Barack H. Obama,

and Donald J. Trump have all been deeply complicit to varying degrees.

The heroes (Davids) in the story are the teachers, students, administrators, and parents who formed the ill-funded, passionate resistance to the privatization and corporatization of America's public school system. It was this passionate resistance that slayed Goliath.

I would also count Diane Ravitch among these heroes. She sees public education as a basic public responsibility—warning Americans not to be persuaded by a false crisis narrative to privatize it while urging parents, educators, and other concerned citizens to join together to strengthen our public schools and preserve them for future generations.

In this book, Ravitch has exposed the rampant corruption involved with the villain's takeovers, the baseless notion of evaluating teacher via student test scores, as well as the damage done to communities, schools, students and teachers that will take years to heal, especially so while dealing with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Although this is not another book about education reform per se, one is left to wonder where American public education would be today if the Goliaths respected the sound principle of giving to meet needs instead of giving to selfishly impose their ideas and take control of K-12 education in America.

My thanks go to primary teachers Holly Rothstein Balk, Katianne Rothstein Olson, Chelsea Gabzdyl, and Margaret Zamzow Wenzelman, as well as high school teachers Margaret Mangan, (the late) Joseph Hafenscher and to retired Illinois State Board of Education staff member

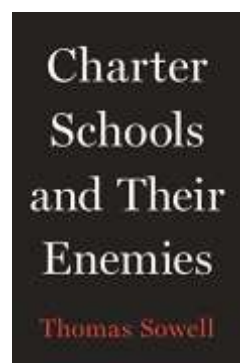
Mangan, for their insights into the Common Core State Standards, Value Added Measures, and the impact of the standards and related over-the-top testing regimes on school administrators, teachers, and their students.

This is a must read book for parents, teachers, government officials, and other concerned citizens as well.

## ***A Great Book on a Provocative Subject***

*Charter Schools and Their Enemies*: Reviewed in the United States on September 8, 2020

5 out of five stars Verified Purchase



The publication of *Charter Schools and Their Enemies* comes at a time when charter schools are under intense scrutiny—with even their right to exist in question. Sowell consistently reminds readers of what’s at stake, to wit: the education of children ... children whose futures hang in the balance. To counter adversaries of charter schools he asks and re-asks a penetrating question: “How, specifically, is this going to make the education of children better?”

Sowell writes with clarity and moral authority. He quickly dispels the notion that race and social justice issues such as housing, immigration, policing, and incarceration, are holding back children of color rather than second-rate schools in which they attend. To this end, he uses Dunbar High School, in Washington, D.C. as proof of concept. From 1870 to 1955, the school produced the first black federal judge, the first black general, the first black cabinet member, and America’s first three black women PhDs—all of it in the years before *Brown v. Board of Education*.

His tight focus on New York City charters that occupy classrooms in public-school facilities provides a solid basis for a comparative analysis. Sowell limits his comparisons to well-established networks, or charter management organizations with schools in five or more buildings. These are the KIPP, Success Academy, Explore Schools, Uncommon Schools, and Achievement First, with Explore is the negative outlier. The study demonstrates significantly better educational outcomes at the charters relative to public-school classes at the same facility. In the aggregate, the charter school students achieve proficiency in English language arts at a rate five times better than students in competing public schools in the same buildings. In math, the proficiency advantage swells to nearly seven to one. Seventy-two pages of tables are provided for the readers to make their own comparisons. Note that a contrarian view on the reported educational outcomes appears below.

This educational success is most likely attributable not only to the value placed on education by the student’s sponsor (parent or guardian) for the charter school’s lottery, but also to the tight discipline and good student behavior characteristic of charter-school classrooms. Sowell notes: “The most fundamental fact about traditional public schools is that compulsory attendance laws guarantee that children of all sorts of dispositions and capabilities must attend. To assume that they all want to be there, and all are striving to achieve success there, is to ignore the most blatant realities.”

America’s charter schools have yet to produce a Dunbar High. It likely the charters never will unless the movement can successfully address threats from teachers unions, politicians, and

regulators. Sowell describes these many and varied threats in detail. A particularly vicious threat are attempts to make the charter schools look more like the traditional schools, as for example by requiring the charters to adhere to less stringent rules and regulations re: student behavior. In many cases, families are generally seeking out charters because of better discipline.

Sowell is dismissive of the charge that charters are “segregated” schools. They are “schools in predominantly minority communities, where minority parents/guardians, who value education and discipline, seek out charters for their children where they will be educated along with other minority students,” Sowell writes. “The successful track record of these charter schools, and the contrasting educational futility of racial ‘integration’ crusades, both demonstrate that white classmates are neither necessary nor sufficient for non-white students to achieve educational success.”

Sowell also counters the idea that America’s educational failures are due to racism—not school culture or competence, or the ability to nurture student initiative—or that black excellence is not possible without inclusion.

This is a well written account of the significant educational achievements garnered by the New York City charters considered by Sowell, as well the threats these schools face. As Diane Ravitch, education historian, author, and public-school advocate, reveals in her 2020 book, *Slaying Goliath: The Passionate Resistance to Privatization and the Fight to Save America’s Public Schools*, not all charter schools and charter management organizations are of the caliber considered by Sowell. As a matter of fact, political and other forms of corruption as well as the use of extreme methods can exist. For example, Ravitch contends that the Success Academy achieves it’s very high test scores by carefully culling students and parents, by minimizing the number of students with disabilities or English learners, and by employing a draconian discipline policy that calls for the suspension or expulsion of students for relatively minor infractions. Strict oversight of all charters should be required, with Sowell suggesting that courts be used to perform this function.

As with *Slaying Goliath*, this is a must read book for parents, teachers, government officials, and other concerned citizens as well. To obtain a balanced view of this provocative subject, I recommend that both books be read, see above for my Amazon review of *Slaying Goliath*.

As an almost 90-year-old product of both public and private schools, I can see the advantages and disadvantages inherent in both educational venues. In the end, the choice of a school depends on prevailing circumstances and should be subject to due diligence

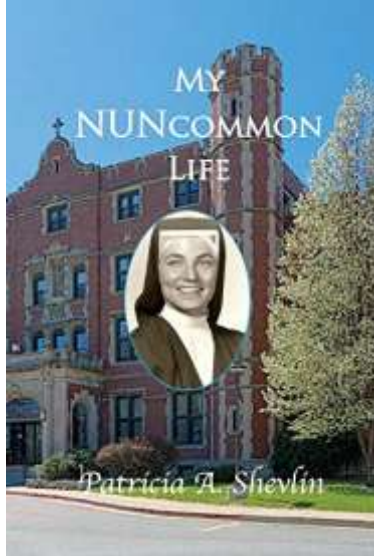
## *A Woman of Spirit*

*My NUNcommon Life*: Reviewed in the United States on March 13, 2021

Top review from the United States

5 out of five stars

"Why would a woman leave behind all these goods: a family, a husband, children?" so asks the late Cokie Roberts as she begins to narrate "Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters in America," a



chronicle covering the lives of courageous women who have served millions of Americans over some 300 years—providing incalculable contributions to the building of this nation.

The author is one such woman of spirit. She answers Roberts' question in no uncertain terms via a series of brief but informative vignettes that are not only a delight to read, but also a delight to view with an abundance of supporting photographs.

Her stories span the 1950s to the present: the "Baltimore Catechism" era, the Second Vatican Council, and the revelation of the sexual abuse scandal within the Catholic Church. Along the way, the author addresses the three questions she is most often asked: Why did you become a nun? Why did you leave religious life?, and What did you do next?

Patricia Shevlin's *NUNcommon Life* journey was a truly inspiring read, so much so that I purchased several additional copies to gift to family and friends.

# The New Reality... A Call for Leadership\*

The BENT of Tau Beta Pi, Spring 1991

by Dr. Frank G. Splitt, Illinois Alpha '52

It has been 38 years since I graduated with a B.S.E.E. Imagine 38 years spent in the engineering profession! To place this time span in a historical context, 1948, the year that I began my college studies, was the same year that Bell Telephone Laboratories announced the development of the transistor and Claude E. Shannon, Michigan Gamma '36, again of Bell Labs, published his classic paper, "The Mathematical Theory of Communications." Taken together, these two events have had a profound influence on my professional life, as well as on the lives of countless others.

The technology associated with engineering has indeed been exciting to live with... an exhilarating experience, to say the least. Surprisingly, to some, engineering has also introduced me to the most articulate, enthusiastic, and positive people I've ever met. I give engineering credit for teaching me to think simply and more clearly... and to communicate briefly, but to the point.

The competitive world of new product development demands disciplined, strategic thinking that helps give priority and perspective to our ideas. Each year American industry expends untold time, energy, and money on the strategic planning process. When appraising a new product, most companies usually keep several strategy-related questions in mind. Representative questions would be:

1. "What has the market been for products of this type?"
2. Where could this product be positioned in the market... realistically?
3. How can this product get there?
4. Is the product getting there? ... Is it really making it?"

These four questions are so penetrating that they could apply to many things. As a matter of fact, we have applied them to the seminars sponsored by the National Engineering Consortium. You could even apply them to your life, if you consider yourself a product currently under development with Product Launch of New and Improved Graduates into the Information Age

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\*This paper was adapted from a speech delivered at the Illinois Alpha Chapter initiation banquet at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign on November 9, 1990. Addresses at the 1988 & 1991 National Engineering Consortium Internship Program Colloquia, the 1988 Industry-Day banquet at Notre Dame University, and the 1988 Eta Kappa Nu banquet at Marquette University were based on essentially the same material. The electronic version was developed by the International Engineering Consortium in November 2000.



Market Place scheduled in the next year or so. Again, for the sake of discussion, let's think about how you could be sold as a product. That brings us to the first of these four questions:

***What has the market been for products of your type?***

Well, you have been living in America... the oldest continuous democracy in history, where according to a TIME cover story on ethics.... hypocrisy, betrayal, and greed unsettle the nation's soul.

. For the sake of discussion, think of yourselves as new products under development with Product Launch of New and Improved Graduates into the Information Age Marketplace scheduled in the next year or so. Again, for the sake of discussion, let's think about how you can be sold as a new product. That brings us to the first of these four questions:

On November 2, 1990, "Hall of Shame" titled the Wall Street Journal's lead article that described how a host of professionals paved the way for the S&L crisis. Here I quote: "They were mid-level figures, some of the thousands of ordinary people – lawyers, consultants, regulators, congressional staffers, state officials, and investment bankers who helped create the crisis, often by calculating their own self-interest first. The list is so long that some observers conclude there is something profoundly wrong with the country's political and financial systems, which appear easily undone by feckless and reckless behavior. In fact, they say, the behavior of this nation's professional class itself. No more vital question could be posed: Where were the professionals?" Most of you have also heard it claimed that

- We have come to live dangerously, in near runaway debt, and agonize over the budgeting process as many of our nation's needs go unfulfilled... physical infrastructure and education to name but two.
- We have paid lip service to the importance of technology and have not backed it with commitment.
- We have failed to integrate research and development with corporate planning, business units, and manufacturing.
- We have placed most of our emphasis on short-term profits and have entered a process of restructuring corporate America bringing much personal pain, confusion, and uncertainty to our more mature and experienced work force.
- We place exaggerated value on the legal profession. Japan trains 10 engineers for every lawyer; we train 10 lawyers for every engineer. So, does it come as any surprise that we have competed with the Japanese and lost...steel, TV receivers, VCRs, industrial robotics, and a large portion of the auto and banking businesses? Another question of the day is: "Can America compete?"

The headline of a recent issue of Business Week covered a special report on "Human Capital – the Decline of America's Work Force." Let me quote from the report: "The nation's ability to compete is threatened by inadequate investment in our most important resource: people. Put simply, too many workers lack the skills to perform more demanding jobs."

From 1945 until about 1975, we saw 30 years of unprecedented progress with the commercialization of TV and the development of a ubiquitous national communications system, not to mention placing a man on the moon. Unfortunately, during the intervening years, we

somehow became complacent and lax in our business and educational affairs. We did not consider seriously those who were copying what we were doing well, and correcting what we weren't doing so well, to improve their own competitive positions. In today's complex and high-tempo global marketplace, there is simply no room for complacency and laxness.

Archibald MacLeish, a past poet laureate of Illinois said, "We have survived adversity, but we may not survive prosperity." If that's true, then our best years may have been our worst time for character building and the tough years ahead are going to be our best for bringing out our finest qualities.

It is generally accepted that we are living at a time of great chaos and crisis. As a matter of fact, Albert Einstein foresaw our current crisis and challenge in 1946 when, with great insight, he declared: "The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking and we thus drift toward unparalleled catastrophe."

As we approach the new millennium, there is a growing awareness that our world has changed dramatically. Through science, technology, engineering, and our expanding numbers, we humans have created a new reality. Central to this new reality is the fact that we are fast approaching the carrying capacity for meaningful life on this fragile planet Earth. This could be one of the most critical times in our history, as well as that of humankind. We cannot afford to drift; positive change demands a new way of thinking.

The challenge to affect an appropriate level of positive change to save the Earth is of breathtaking proportions. As Jonas and Johnathan Salk stated in their book, *World Population and Human Values: A New Reality*: "Individually and collectively, we share the responsibility for the future course of events on the planet, whether it be positive or negative."

A bad time for all us? Maybe not! Perhaps it is time for all of us to reassess ourselves and the marketplace in which we exist. While apocalyptic events loom on our national and world horizons, it's important to remember that we are a resilient people and Yogi Berra's "It ain't over till it's over" means just that.

In his book, *The Closing of the American Mind*, Allan Bloom, a distinguished University of Chicago professor, speaks about our young people who, lacking an understanding of the past and a vision of the future, live in an impoverished present... and, I might add, are bored. As a matter of fact, if you are looking for socially threatening circumstances, adventure, and excitement, you should have been born during the Revolution, the Civil War, or right now! Indeed, things should not be boring for any of us. That makes this a wide-open marketplace and a particularly good time in which you can play a vital role as a new product..., which leads to Question No. 2:

### ***Where Could You Be Positioned in the Market...Realistically?***

In spite of my somewhat depressing remarks on the marketplace, I see enormous opportunity and a great future for you. With great hope for our common future, I challenge you Tau Bates to consider a lifelong career in the fine art of leadership! Introducing, our Leaders for the Information Age! It has a certain ring, don't you think? It will certainly get attention if you put that on your resume. Can you imagine the market's reaction to an influx of New and Improved Leaders from the Illinois Alpha Chapter of Tau Beta Pi? You could really shake up all the well-intentioned "professionals" who've hung "Do Not Disturb" signs on their careers and their *modus operandi*. You may also cause a bit of trouble... and you know that the last thing you

want to do is cause trouble. So, if you want a less troublesome career, remember

- It is less trouble for most of us to melt into the background than it is to stand up for our beliefs!
- It is less trouble to accept mediocre education than it is to insist on good education!
- It is less trouble to just do our jobs than it is to become involved with professional activities as well!
- It is less trouble to offer easy and preferred answers than it is to take on the hard work associated with the development of better, but potentially unpopular answers!
- It is less trouble to avoid questions of what constitutes right and wrong than it is to address them head-on!
- It is less trouble for some of us to go along with the drug scene than it is to stand up and just say NO!
- It is less trouble to be silent than it is to speak out on issues involving the new reality: explosive population growth, economic justice, world peace, depletion of non-renewable resources, environmental deterioration, and a host of other problems impeding our evolution to a truly secure and sustainable society!
- It is less trouble to follow than it is to lead!

But consider the potential of a career in leadership! If you elect to develop yourself as a leader, you will join an impressive group. Some are here with you at the University of Illinois. They are leaders because they could not remain in neutral and not gear up for progress.

Again, you need also to be challenged to bring your unique expertise and training to address the new reality. For example, in October 1989, Dr. John H. Sununu, Massachusetts Delta '61, the White House chief of staff and former governor of New Hampshire, addressed the National Academy of Engineers. Gov. Sununu, a Ph.D.-level mechanical engineer by training, stated that, "Virtually no major decision made by a world leader today can be made without considering technology." After setting the stage with those words, he then went on to chide engineers for being negligent with regard to contributions to governmental policy making, shaping, and implementation.

The first step in addressing these concerns is one of developing a sense of awareness and appreciation of non-technical areas.

Here I'd like to recognize a leader who had a profound influence on my thinking, career, and direction in my life, the late Arthur J. Schmitt. He was the inventive industrialist who founded the Amphenol Corporation in 1932 and the philanthropist who founded the Arthur J. Schmitt Foundation in 1941. He was also the educational innovator who founded the Fournier Institute of Technology, my alma mater.

Mr. Schmitt's quest was for leadership. His aim was to provide effective industrial leadership via electrical engineers skilled not only in their profession, but in business administration and communications as well. His vehicle was education. Mr. Schmitt often paid tribute to

America's engineering genius and cited the importance of engineers in America's future. He believed there was no field with richer rewards, none more intriguing, and none more important to the growth and defense of our nation. And to that, I would add: as well as the continued evolution of humankind.

Not only do leaders of this caliber march to the beat of Thoreau's "different drummer," they strongly influence others to march to the beat that they hear! To them, life is to be lived by high standards... across the board! And, that is just what I am calling you to do! So, now that we have positioned you in our marketplace as developing new leaders, you're ready for Question No. 3:

### ***How Can You Get There?***

How do you put it all together and be a leader – and I mean a successful leader? The answer is simple... learn to work with people, to communicate, be inventive, creative, have ideas, and the courage to see them through. That's it, but maybe not so simple after all.

There are few people who can really work well with others...in a team approach, if you will. Somehow many of us seem to perceive teamwork as counter to our American culture of rugged individualism... rugged individualism that many now view as rampant and irresponsible.

There are few people in life that can communicate with ease both in the written and spoken work. Development of these skills has not been considered as important as gaining application-specific technical knowledge. One of the hallmarks of a true leader is superb communications skills.

There are very few people who have ideas, and even fewer still who have the courage to put them up against all odds. As you know, ideas can be risky. Ideas call for action and, most likely, change. Ideas call for commitment; big ideas call for total commitment and high risk. Commitment takes courage to act in accordance with your beliefs in spite of criticism.

So to be a successful leader, learn to inter-work with others; communications is a catalyst for this component of our recipe. The interesting thing about the other ingredients, ideas and courage, is that you can't really learn how to have either while sitting in a classroom. Ideas and courage go together. Ideas are the spark and starting power to our daily lives. Courage is that drive in our heart that pushes us on when in conflict or under adversity... certainly in the face of criticism. Both are what the world needs. Our country needs them, your community needs them, and our industry needs them.

These attributes can't be taught, but they can, perhaps, be developed by you through a process of thoughtful assimilation, integration, and living it out... a different kind of learning than usually takes place via formal education. A part of the answer may also be found in an expression coined by Edmund Fuller, a book reviewer for the Wall Street Journal: "You are what you read"! Some time ago, he said that we don't hear enough about "aliteracy." Aliteracy is to literacy what amorality is to morality. It denotes, Fuller says, hosts of people who can read, but don't or won't. That is the deliberate discarding, the wanton neglect, by most, of a heritage available to all. Fuller also says, "The book is the greatest medium for general education and for the rich furnishing of the mind"

If the university is doing its job, it is passing on to you a passion for reading that will only grow

over the years. If not, then you need to develop this passion on your own, for therein lies the key. Reading will help you develop a strong sense of history as well as a sense of what can and cannot be done. It also leads to IDEAS if you are open to them and take the trouble and the time to think... to press for connections... to make linkages... to see relationships... to see possibilities.

Another part of the answer may be in the broadening of your horizons. Teamwork, communications, courage, and idea formation can be developed and nourished if you open yourselves to religious, philosophical, political, and social issues, and not limit yourselves to technical pursuits alone.

If you get involved with social, civic, and church activities, you'll reap many benefits from each new discipline of thought you enter and from relationships you build. You will be developing a richness of human spirit, a broader view of life. You will also develop a more holistic view as you step up to the new reality occasioned by the explosive growth of world population with its related environmental, social, and economic problems. Necessity previously demanded the solution of problems related to science and technology, but now the demand will be for the solution of problems involving human values, attitudes, and behavior, as well as the interrelationships and dynamics of social, political, and economic systems on a global basis. How better to apply and live out the organizing principles of Tau Beta Pi!

By way of involvement in diverse non-technical activities, you will also be taking key steps toward your position as a responsible leader in the Information Age. Each one of you can make a difference... all of you can make a really big difference.

Did you ever see the movie, *High Noon*, starring Gary Cooper as the recently married sheriff of a small town in the early West? It was about a man who ultimately had to face his innermost self all alone... a personal Armageddon. The movie was a favorite of my parents, but it is much more than that to Tom DeMint, of the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency. Tom, who is an innovative leader and a friend, speaks about this movie with an almost religious fervor. He often refers to this classic morality play to make a point, as I will now.

In the story, the deputy, played by Lloyd Bridges, refused to help the sheriff or go with him to meet the noon train and his fate. The sheriff didn't want to meet that train: nobody in town wanted him to meet the train because there would be trouble! But you knew by the look in his eyes that he had to go. In a unique bedroom scene, actress Kate Jurado, a long-time friend who secretly still loved the sheriff, turns to the cowardly and jealous deputy and says, "... you're a good looking boy; you have big, broad shoulders, but... it takes more than big, broad shoulders to make a man... and you have a long way to go. You know something? I don't think you will ever make it."

On this endangered planet Earth, in a country now flush with a widespread sense of moral disarray, where we seem to be confused about who we are and what we should be doing, we all have to face that possibility.

So, for those of you who accept my challenge, every day for the rest of your academic and working life, you need to assess your progress toward success... of putting it all together... by asking yourself Question No. 4:

***Am I making it as a Responsible Leader for the Information Age?***

# *Creating Our Common Future*

## *Reflections on the Four Es: Environment, Education, Energy, and Economics*

*Dr. Frank G. Splitt*

### *Clear, Present and Future Danger*

*“If the ways of God are inscrutable the path of man has become incomprehensible. Modern man, despite the wonderful body of knowledge and information that he has accumulated and the means to apply it appears to be muddling ahead as if he were blind or drugged staggering from one crisis to another.”* So wrote the Club of Rome’s Aurelio Peccei and Alexander King in 1977 when addressing goals for humankind.

In this light, reflection on recent global and domestic events during the course of my year-long *2021 AD ComForum* experience has led me to believe that the clear, present and future danger faced by the world in general, and the United States in particular, has to do with two polarities. The first is the ecological polarity between human activities and the life-sustaining capacity of the Earth. The second is between the haves and have-nots . . . the so-called North-South economic polarity addressed in the late 1970s by Willy Brant and his independent commission on international development issues.

These polarities are strongly interrelated as they both involve the closely coupled *Four Es: Environment, Education, Energy, and Economics*. In combination, these ecological and economic polarities threaten the security of the world at large. More importantly, they represent two important dimensions of the real challenge we have before us . . . the challenge to create a secure and sustainable future for all of us. This means meeting the needs of those alive today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

As we approach the new millennium, there is a growing awareness that our world has changed dramatically. Through science, technology, engineering, and our expanding numbers, we humans have created a new reality. Central to this new reality is the fact that we are fast approaching the carrying capacity for meaningful life on this fragile planet Earth.

A salient response to this new reality came in 1983 when the United Nations General Assembly established the World Commission on Environment and Development. Chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland, the commission was charged with proposing long-term strategies for integrating environmental protection and development. Their final report, *Our Common Future*, was published in 1987. It stated that the keys to

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#### **NOTES Re: Appendix, Genesis and Distribution**

1. The author’s related letter to the editor of *THE BENT of Tau Beta Pi* is appended. Headlined “Sustainable Development,” it was published in *THE BENT*’s Spring 1993 issue.

2. This paper was based on a presentation at the 1991 National Communications Forum’s University-Industry Colloquium, *2021 AD: Visions and Directions*, on September 29, 1991. It was first published as a monograph by the National Engineering Consortium in April, 1992, and, as an adapted paper, in the Fall 1992 issue of *THE BENT of Tau Beta Pi*.

Copies of the monograph were distributed by Frank Popoff, the CEO and chairman of the board of the Dow Chemical Company, at an April 21, 1992, White House meeting with President George H.W. Bush and other American business executives. The monograph provided the themes for the keynote addresses as well as the Ameritech *SuperSchool* and the Nortel environmental initiatives at *SUPERCOMM/ICC ’92* where some 8,000 copies were distributed. It was included in the Proceedings of the April 3, 1992, Graduate Business Conference, Indiana University and served as the background document for the author’s June 30, 1993, invited address to the World Future Society “Conference on Creating the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” in Washington, DC.

The monograph served as the basis for the author’s addresses as follows: in January, 1992, at Northwestern University; in March, 1992, at the University of Illinois at Chicago and the Western Society of Engineers; in May, 1992, as a keynote at the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Computer Science Conference and at Northeastern Illinois University; in September, 1992, at Clemson University; and in June, 1993, at the Society of Women Engineers National Convention in Chicago. The monograph was also used as one of the background documents for the 1994 NSF Workshop on Engineering Education and the 1998 Engineering Foundation Conference on Realizing the New Paradigm for Engineering Education.

sustainable development include equitable growth in impoverished countries and adoption of lifestyles that are “*within the planets’ ecological means*,” particularly in the industrial world.

Indeed, all of this presents a formidable challenge, involving no less than the building of a comprehensive framework for our common future, a future beyond mere survival . . . a future that will ensure the continued evolution of the human species. Albert Einstein foresaw this challenge in 1946 when, with great insight, he declared:

*The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything, save our modes of thinking, and we thus drift toward unparalleled catastrophe.* “This could be one of the most critical times in our history, as well as that of humankind. We cannot afford to drift; positive change demands new ways of thinking and doing . . . a new way of being. As Senator Albert Gore put it in his recent book: “*the earth is in the balance.*”

### ***The Opportunity Today***

Notwithstanding the seemingly overwhelming problems of the day, the opportunity still exists to create our common future. However, to move beyond today’s problems, and to ensure evolution toward a secure and sustainable future for all humanity, requires the individual and collective realization that we are living in a time of transition, sometimes characterized by great chaos and crisis . . . *a time of correspondingly great opportunity . . . which could be the opportunity of Earth’s lifetime.* Successful seizure of the opportunity requires recognition that we are both part of the ecological and economic polarization problems and a major part of a workable systemic solution. By we, I mean us... all of us.

We can ill afford to be distracted from the main event issue... ensuring the survival and continued evolution of the human species. There exists persuasive evidence that our Planet Earth is fast approaching the limits of its ability to support meaningful life. Explosive population growth, environmental degradation, and financial disequilibrium are the prime culprits with each feeding upon the other to multiply the overall negative impact. Continued reliance upon our old ways will assure accelerated slippage of the earth community toward virtual extinction while mesmerized by the twin illusions of prosperity and progress.

To me, this threat stresses the need for the unifying global paradigm: “*we are one.*” Not only does the survival of the earth community depend upon our ability to change, to form new values, new ways of thinking, and a corresponding set of life-saving organizing principles, it also depends upon our ability to reorder our priorities and address a whole host of interrelated, main-event issues affecting our common future.

### ***Clearing the Way***

First and foremost, there is the urgent need to eliminate the threat of ecological collapse. Our modern throwaway society, in combination with staggering population growth and the concept of planned obsolescence, as well as with an addiction to “low cost” fossil-fuel-based energy, not only contributes to atmospheric problems, but to water pollution as well. Additionally, toxic waste and rubbish are generated to the extent that we are being overwhelmed with our waste products. The Gulf War, with its oil fires, spills, and usage has brought our assault on the Earth’s biosphere into dramatically sharp focus . . . for those who choose to see. Interrelated atmospheric issues, involving air pollution, heat trapping, and ozone-layer depletion, pose a critical threat to one of the global commons and set the stage for severe disruptions in life, as we now know it.

Understanding and implementing an appropriate global policy regarding the *Four Es* will be critical to our survival and fundamental to the creation of a sustainable future. Here at home, our nation’s increasing oil vulnerability demands a lasting strategy that balances energy needs with the imperatives of the environment, education, and overall economics. Taken together, these represent a daunting set of problems of almost paralyzing complexity. These problems are all the more difficult to address since they are characterized by very slow erosion-like developments... developments so gradual that they are almost imperceptible,

certainly beyond our day-to-day awareness. In many cases, the threats are also beyond our senses. They cannot be seen, heard, tasted, smelled, or felt . . . and so, can easily be put out of mind. We have only to look at ozone-layer depletion for an example of these insidious threats. The challenge to affect an appropriate level of positive change to create a sustainable future is certainly of breathtaking proportions.

### ***Effects of Population Growth***

By no means is concern with the negative effects of population growth a recent phenomenon. In 1798, Thomas Malthus predicted the difficult problem of expanding food output to keep up with exponential growth in population. With reference to Figure 1, today's world population of 5.3 billion reflects a doubling since 1950 with anticipated continued exponential growth. World population is expected to reach 8.5 billion by 2021. Related economic activity and natural resource usage will create overbearing pressure on the Earth's life-support system. Projections from the United Nations, the World Bank, and the University of Chicago provide estimates for the limits of the Earth's carrying capacity that range from 8 to 12-billion people. The upper limit will be surpassed by 2050 if present growth rates continue, thus increasing the likelihood of an ecological collapse.

### ***Paradigm Shift***

As indicated previously, we are living in a time of transition. This can be seen with reference to Figure 2. As we move through this transition time, we can continue with our old ways of thinking and acting, or we can adapt and change. It is my personal view that old ways will assure continued preoccupation with enemies, perpetuation of military-industrial complexes, arms trade, and world-wide conflicts despite their huge human and financial costs. The alternative path is to work cooperatively to reduce or eliminate, as appropriate, all significant threats to the security and survival of the earth community. What is required is no less than an era of unprecedented global cooperation and commitment. Consequently, there needs to be a drive for a paradigm shift from pre-transition Epoch A's "*me and mine, and survival of the fittest*" to post-transition Epoch B's "*we and ours, and survival of us altogether.*" This shift can be brought about via the unifying global transition paradigm "*we are one.*"

### ***No Guarantees***

Based upon the magnitude of the problems and the high stakes involved, it would seem obvious that it is in our vital interest to work together in addressing these issues and so create a sustainable common future. We can no longer afford the luxury of muddling . . . of engaging in resource draining activities that divert our attention from main-event issues. Likewise, we cannot be deterred by naysayers who would either discount the threat as Malthusian doomsdaying or else would call the approach naive, and so label the effort futile ...wishful thinking, beyond the capacity of mere humans to even contemplate.

It is my view that to succumb to this negativism and do nothing would ensure the eventual devastation of the Earth community — possibly within the lifetime of some of my own children, but certainly my grandchildren. There appears to be no option but to respond with resolute intensity, resources, and vigor akin to that used to prosecute the Gulf War. Will it happen? Unfortunately, not immediately; perhaps it may never happen at all.

The *Global 2000 Report to the President*, issued in the early 1980s, indicated the potential for global problems of alarming proportions by the year 2000. Despite this clear warning and the salient efforts of the United Nations, Club of Rome, Worldwatch Institute, World Resources Institute, Natural Resources Defense Council, and many others, we continue to drift. We are seemingly unable to breakthrough the wall of apathy to launch an effort commensurate with the task of ensuring the continued evolution of the human species.

Surely, the 1990s will be a critical decade. Continued delay will allow the problems to magnify to the extent that they will explode beyond our capacity to exercise control. We must do much better than we have thus



far with “Earth Days” and the like. There is no guarantee that we will respond in time, just as there is no guarantee that we will survive and continue to evolve as a species.

### ***The Real Beginning***

As Jonas and Jonathan Salk stated in their book, *World Population and Human Values —A New Reality*: “Individually and collectively, we share the responsibility for the future course of events on the planet, whether it be positive or negative.” Unlike war-related initiatives, attendant nerve-tingling excitement, passionate flag-waving, and 24-hour media coverage are not to be expected in this type of effort. Commitment, resourcefulness, persistence, hard work, and never-ending patience will be the battle order of the day. A major challenge will be to overcome the apathy of the general public, the characteristic inertia and short-term thinking of governmental administrations, and the nagging fear that we may already be too late with requisite action.

A real beginning demands a shared vision supported by a coordinated and sustained grass-roots thrust with power of the magnitude that brought down the Berlin Wall and launched the wave of democracy in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Absent this level of thrust, a catastrophic event such as a severe drought, or other dramatic climatic change, will be required to shock us out of our illusions, denials, and addictive behaviors.

In 1820, some 22 years after Malthus’s dire predictions relative to exponential population growth, Thomas Jefferson said, “*I know of no safe repository of the ultimate power of society but the people. And ~f we think them not enlightened enough, the remedy is not to take the power from them, but to inform them by education.*” It is my view that widespread knowledge and understanding will be the key to the real beginning. *Education will be the vehicle . . .* first to public awareness, followed by public demand, and finally governmental action. A step in the right direction is our America 2000 national education strategy announced this past April by President Bush. A positive force will be the continued expansion of world trade and telecommunications. Both will enhance global integration by promoting inter-dependence and cooperation among nation-states, thus bringing life to the unifying “*we are one*” transition paradigm.

Most likely, non-governmental organizations, populated by concerned citizens and working in conjunction with a revitalized United Nations, will be the real leaders in creating our common future. The Carter Center, for example, is doing seminal work in this area. Religious groups and our business enterprises will all have significant roles based upon the enormous potential influence of the religious groups and the proven ability of business enterprises to get things done; both need rise to the challenge.

### ***What Can We Do?***

I firmly believe that we, in the business and academic sectors of the information industry, are in a high-leverage, trim-tab-like position. I also believe that we will have one of the more vital roles to play in addressing this formidable challenge. We should be leading the charge in at least two areas. The first is in tele-commuting to help reduce the significant environmental and energy costs associated with the transportation sector... 10 of the 17-million barrels per day of U.S. oil-based energy consumption. The second is in tele-education to further enhance the free movement of ideas and the dissemination of appropriate learning materials within the context of the “*Bringing America On-Line*” component of our America 2000 initiative. This involves the development of new and more appropriate learning tools as well as expanded distant learning vehicles to address widespread educational inequities . . . all based upon modern computer and telecommunications technology.

Additionally, we in the business community can provide proactive programs to help educate as well as encourage our employees to become involved in both educational and environmental affairs... and we are beginning to make some real progress! For example, Motorola, IBM, and Apple have become pacesetters in the K-12 education area. I am pleased to see my own company become a leader in the environmental area, particularly with respect to the elimination of ozone-depleting CFCs. It is encouraging

to see an increase in the number of corporations committing to balance environmental and educational imperatives with energy needs and economic vitality. Most of all, I am proud of the growing number of my colleagues in the information industry who are working to create our common future.

Educational institutions at all levels can play a crucial role by refurbishing and expanding their learning-tool kits, as well as by placing strong emphasis on global education, individual responsibility, and the value of conservation... using only what is needed, and then reusing and recycling after that. All students should be made aware of the dynamic interrelationships and the balance required among the environment, our energy needs, and our economy. Educators can also collaborate with both parents and the business community to improve the teaching and learning processes.

***We need to become a learning people . . . learning together what we need to learn and then learning it. As a matter of fact, we need to become a learning global community.***

On a personal basis, each of us might look deep within to learn what we can contribute to this critical effort to ensure meaningful survival for the human species. All of us can contribute to a new and real beginning, to the creation of our common future, by setting an example as leaders in balancing the *Four Es* within our business and educational organizations, and by making our voices heard—loudly and clearly within our families and communities. The choice is ours.... I hope that our children and those of generations yet to come will not have found us lacking.

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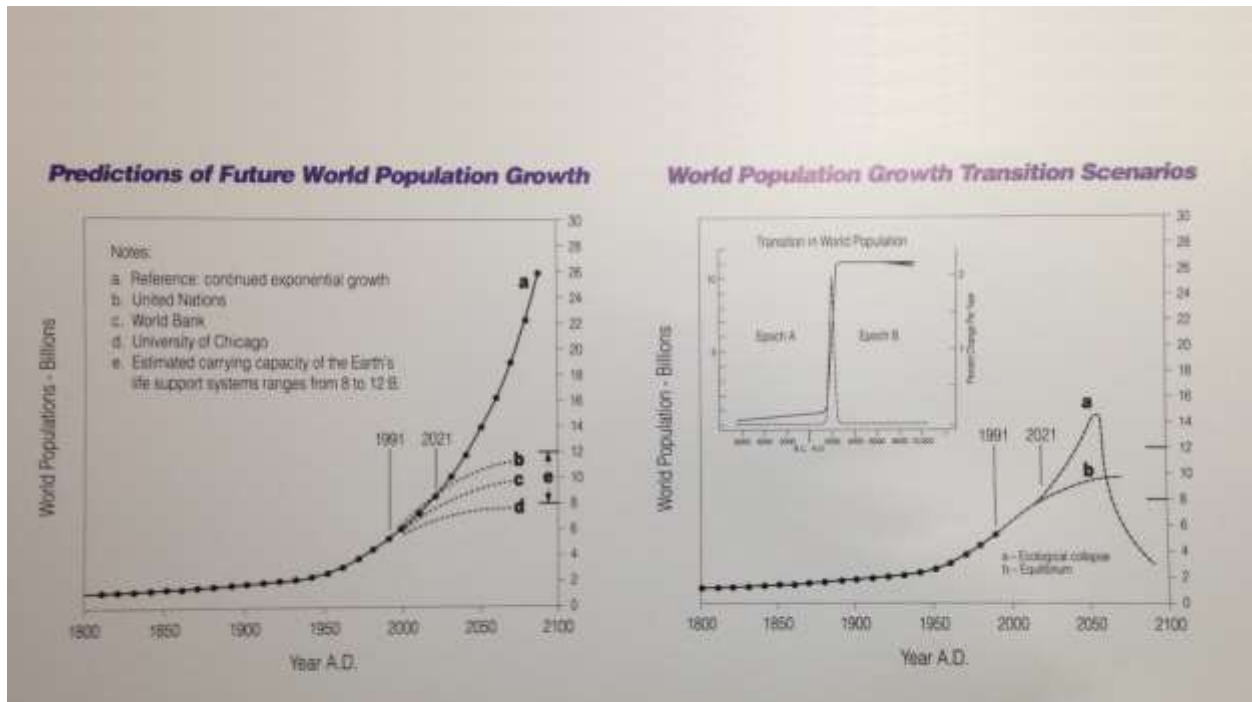


Figure 1

Figure 2

## ***SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT***

My article, “*Creating Our Common Future: Reflections on the 4Es: Environment, Education, Energy and Economics*,” [Fall 1992] triggered several interesting responses [Winter 1992]. These comments are addressed to readers who would argue that human intervention to save our planet from the threats of global-warming, environmental degradation, over-consumption, and population growth is but mere folly, as well as to those who would argue that we are not doing enough soon enough. I ask both groups to consider the following:

Last November 18, the Union of Concerned Scientists issued a document entitled *World Scientists’ Warning to Humanity*. It catalogs the damage to the atmosphere, oceans, soil and living species and states categorically that continuation of destructive human activities, such as unrestricted population growth, “*may so alter the living world that it will be unable to sustain life in the manner we know.*” The report was signed by 1,575 scientists from 69 countries including 99 of the 196 living scientists who are Nobel laureates.

As stated in *Time* magazine’s special fall issue on the future: “*The state of the environment in the latter part of the next century will be determined largely by one factor: human population, the species doubles its numbers by 2050, to nearly 11 billion, humanity may complete the devastation that accelerated so steeply in this century.*”

Vice President Albert Gore addressed population growth in his book *Earth in the Balance* where he says: “*Just as no problem better illustrates the dramatic change in humankind’s impact on the global environment, none better illustrates the necessity of adopting a truly global solution and designing it in a strategic fashion... What’s required, then, is foresight, maturity of commitment and philosophical cohesion...*”

To me, these are but representative examples of many thoughtful reflections and recommendations to precipitate action on population growth and other human-made problems that threaten the evolution of humankind. Also, according to the World Engineering Partnership for Sustainable Development, meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs will be the dominant economic, environmental, and social issue of the 21st century.

Perhaps, more of us in the engineering community, acting as responsible Earth citizens, will join the effort to create our common future. We have much to contribute in the way of time, talent, and leadership abilities to help overcome extant confusion, disappointment, and frustration, as well as to address the arguments of entrenched special-interest groups. The stakes are high; there is much to be gained. And, **WHAT** do we have to lose?

*Frank G. Splitt, IL Alpha ’52*

*THE BENT of Tau Beta Pi*  
Spring 1993

## A WORD OF GRATITUDE

*Vision with action can change the world.*

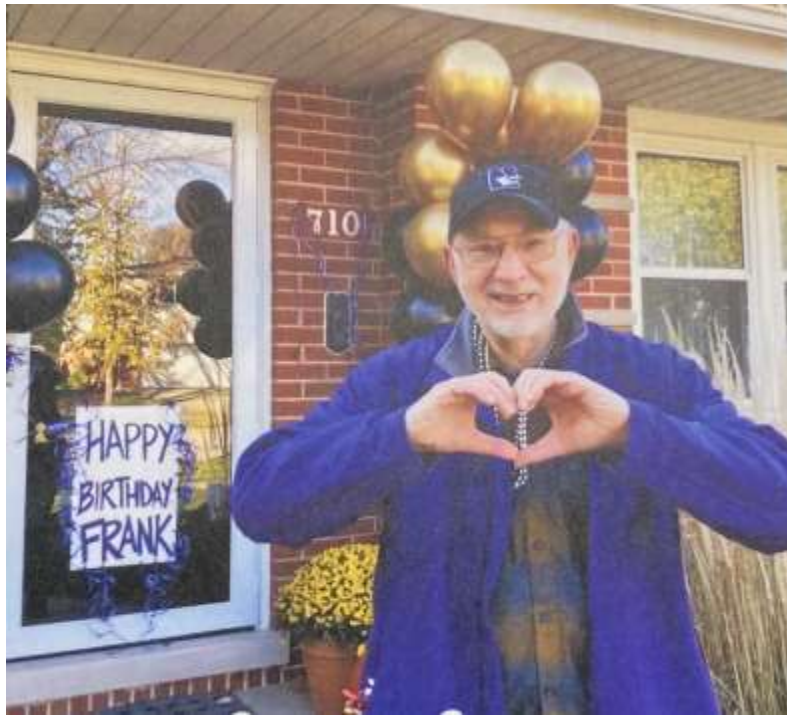
—Joel A. Barker

*Lou Gehrig was my hero as I was growing up with dreams of becoming a professional baseball player. Gehrig, a baseball legend had a tragically brief life, just short of 38 years. He began his July 4, 1939 farewell speech in Yankee Stadium by saying "I'm the luckiest man on the face of the earth." And so say I.*

*I've been truly blessed with wonderful family, friends, mentors, teammates, and colleagues who have had a profound positive influence on my life journey. I am now well into the winter of this journey following my bliss while striving to persevere in vision with action.*

*I am grateful to all who have been part of what has been a wonderful life.*

Frank



*90<sup>th</sup> birthday photo by Anne Rassas, 2020*

## THE AUTHOR

Frank G. Splitt was born in Chicago Illinois where he graduated from Annunciation Grammar School in 1944 and from Saint Philip High School in 1948. After attending the city's Wilbur Wright Junior College for two years, he was awarded an Arthur J. Schmitt academic scholarship to the Fournier Institute of Technology in Lemont Illinois, graduating with a BSEE in 1952.

He holds an MSEE (1957) and a Ph.D. in Electrical and Computer Engineering (1963) from Northwestern University where he served (1993-2005) as the McCormick Faculty Fellow of Telecommunications at the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science.



He is a member of The Drake Group, a member of the College Sport Research Institute's Advisory Committee, University of South Carolina, a member of the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE), and was the Vice President Emeritus Educational and Environmental Initiatives for NTI, the U.S. subsidiary of Nortel Networks, formerly known as Northern Telecom Limited.

As a Director of the International Engineering Consortium, he chaired the Consortium's Committee on the Future and its Fellow Awards Committee.

*Photo by Jennifer Heitz.* Dr. Splitt was a member of the Advisory Board for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign College of Engineering, and chaired its Electrical and Computer Engineering Department Committee. He was also a member of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) inaugural Industry Advisory Council, the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) Educational Activities Board, and the IEEE's Corporate Recognition's Committee.

His professional career covered research & development, marketing, administration, teaching, and public service. He has authored numerous technical papers, as well as articles on public affairs. He is a Fellow of the International Engineering Consortium, a Life Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, an Eminent Engineer of Tau Beta Pi, the recipient of The Drake Group's 2006 *Robert Maynard Hutchins Award* "for his courageous defense of academic integrity in collegiate sports," and a lifetime achievement award from SPIE, the International Society for Optics and Photonics, as well as the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award from Marquis Who's Who. He has also been recognized by the state of Wisconsin for Outstanding Lake Stewardship.

His interests involved research and planning for the future of engineering education, environmental protection and conservation, and college sports reform. He and his wife Judy reside in Mt. Prospect, Illinois, and in Star Lake, Wisconsin.

A Bio & CV along with links to his essays and commentaries on college sports reform can be found at <http://www.futurevectors.com>

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