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Organically Related: Professional and Liberal Education

Timothy J. Cash

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

“When we come to act in a tangible way we have to select or choose a particular act at a particular time, but any number of comprehensive ends may exist without competition, since they mean simply different ways of looking at the same scene. One cannot climb a number of different mountains simultaneously, but the views had when different mountains are ascended supplement one another: they do not set up incompatible, competing worlds.” John Dewey (1916), *Democracy and Education*, p. 110

The topic of this conference, the university and the marketplace, is primarily concerned about the effects commercialization has on education. One consequence that I see from the commercialization of education is the establishment of an unnecessary competition between liberal and professional education; between practical and technical rationality. Take, for instance, some of the questions this panel is asked to consider. “What are the practical consequences of thinking of higher education in market terms? Are there any viable alternatives or will some form of instrumental rationality always determine decision making in higher education? Do consumer culture and its associated values threaten liberal education?” It can be inferred from these questions, as well as from the distinctions that are drawn in the opening paragraph of the conference call for papers, that professional education can be considered to be at odds with, and may even threaten, liberal education and its associated values. In fact, Michael Oakeshott’s (1989) essay “A Place of Learning” essentially connects professional education with the marketplace by contending that the end of professional learning is to “satisfy contingent wants,” which is the same desired end held by the commercial marketplace, and therefore completely distinct from liberal learning. However, I think arguments like this, be they

for liberal or for professional education, only serve to act as an unnecessary wedge, where one community valorizes one type of knowledge over the other in what essentially becomes a turf war between professional and liberal education. It is also this type of thinking that leads many proponents of liberal learning to feel threatened by and in competition with the values of the marketplace. In this paper I argue that the distinctions between technical and practical rationality and between professional and liberal education are at times misplaced and overdrawn. To me there is little use and value in drawing clear divisions and distinctions between professional and liberal education or between technical and practical rationality because these differences, if anything, are of degree and not kind. Instead of viewing professional and liberal education; technical and practical rationality as being wholly separate and in competition, I see these types of education and rationality as being organically related, and this organic relationship is most clearly evident in the reflexive human action known as *praxis*. Taking the quote from John Dewey above as a guide, professional and liberal education may occupy different mountains, with sometimes different ends, but this in no way should necessarily set up competing worlds.

Competing worlds, however, is exactly what some proponents of both liberal and professional education attempt to establish in their epistemological and philosophical arguments. One such type of argument for liberal learning, as introduced in the introduction, comes from Michael Oakeshott (1989). For Oakeshott, education and knowledge is the human's ability to understand his life and world, which is a form of liberation. More specifically, an educated "human being is 'free', not because he has 'free will', but because he is *in* himself what he is *for* himself" (Oakeshott, p. 19).

Oakeshott argues that liberal education is distinct from professional learning “because it is liberated from the distracting business of satisfying contingent wants” (Oakeshott, p. 28). Contingent wants are an end sought by professions and are different from the desired end in liberal education, which is “human self-understanding” and “learning to participate in what is called a ‘culture’” (p. 28). Oakeshott does freely accept that professional learning is a genuine form of learning, in that it too allows one to better understand his life and world, like liberal learning, but it allows a person to understand his world in a particular way, i.e. as a world consisting of wants. Therefore, professional learning is clearly different from liberal learning because a different end, that of satisfying wants, is advanced. For me, it is conceiving the end of professional education as merely satisfying contingent wants that makes it possible to link professional education to the commercialization of education.

If the end of professional education is the satisfaction of contingent wants, then it is wholly logical to link professional education with the marketplace and commercialization, since consumer culture is inherently engaged with satisfying wants. Additionally, since professional education, in Oakeshott’s mode of thinking at least, has a different end and values from liberal learning, then it is also only logical to assume that professional education is in competition and even threatens liberal education. After all, if higher education is to be dictated by consumer culture and its values, then how can liberal education, with its desired end for self-understanding and culture, provide for an individual’s wants in the marketplace? If students are entering the university with the expectation of a consumer to only gain the necessary technical skills for future employment, which will fulfill a host of their wants, namely financial, then what is the

point for a student of accounting to read Melville's *Moby Dick*, for example?

Hypothetically, a defender of liberal learning may argue that liberal learning helps to mold a person's self-understanding and culture, which is essential to life. This is basically the argument that liberal education can soften the edges or polish the professional, which Nel Noddings (1992) attacks. For Noddings, belief that knowledge about history, rhetoric, art, or mathematics will somehow make the professional a better citizen is a stretch and possibly rather naïve. Noddings argument is attributable to thinking of professional and liberal education as being entirely separate. However, not only the defenders of liberal education are guilty of valorizing one form of knowledge over the other. Proponents of professional education on the other hand may argue that the knowledge that is truly valuable is the technical and students should not waste time with reading books that are of no relevance to the immediate task of preparing them to become successful professionals in a given field. In addition, these same proponents of technical education can argue that the parents are paying high tuition dollars to provide their children with an education and they want their sons and daughters to leave the university with the necessary technical skills to earn well paying jobs. This is essentially the old argument of giving the people what they want. These are the types of unfruitful arguments that I see when the ends of professional and liberal learning, as well as technical and practical rationality, are seen as wholly separate. Unfortunately, valorizing and defending one type of knowledge over the other is not the only consequence of thinking of the ends of professional and liberal education as separate.

Another consequence of seeing professional and liberal education as consisting of different ends allows Oakeshott to argue that these two types of learning should naturally

occur in different places. In fact, he contends that “until recently schools and universities were just such places of (liberal) learning, sheltered enough from the demands of utility to be undistracted in their concern with these adventures and expressions of human self-understanding” (parenthesis added, Oakeshott, p. 27). We do know from reading Newman (1852) that one demand made for utility in education was advanced by John Locke in the 18th century (pp. 139-143). So, in stating that universities were “recently... sheltered enough from the demands of utility,” Oakeshott is most likely referring to a time before The Enlightenment, when these places of learning were detached “from what Hegel called the *hic et nunc*, the here and now, of current living” (Oakeshott, p. 24). In particular, Oakeshott refers to wandering scholars of the twelfth century as the exemplar of liberal learning. Oakeshott’s historical understanding of education, however, stands in sharp contrast with another prominent view.

In *Democracy and Education* (1916) John Dewey contends that “in the past, education has been much more vocational in fact than in name” (p. 311). And he takes Oakeshott’s view of liberal learning for the sake of self-understanding and culture to be “a peculiar superstition” (p. 312). “To a considerable extent,” Dewey argues, “the education of the dominant classes was essentially vocational- it only happened that their pursuits of ruling and of enjoying were not called professions” (p. 312). According to Dewey, it was once thought that a profession was only concerned with vocations or employment that consisted of one of the following three factors, either individually or in some combination of: manual labor, working in direct exchange for money, or offering personal services to persons. Education for leisure and culture, i.e. Oakeshott’s liberal education, was still an education directed toward an end that had as its purpose more than

self-understanding and culture. For Dewey its purpose was also that of management and control. Dewey considers Oakeshott's idea of liberal education as being mainly for wealthy aristocrats who control government and industry. Liberal education, like professional or vocational education is still a type of training. It is education with a purpose and aim, like all education, it is just that the purpose and aim in this instance is to rule and enjoy life. For Dewey, "at the bottom of these distinctions (between professional and liberal education) is undoubtedly the tradition which recognizes as employment only those pursuits where one is responsible for his work to a specific employer, rather than to the ultimate employer, the community" (parenthesis added, p. 313). Dewey's idea of the community being the ultimate employer is central to my understanding of professional and liberal education being organically related in *praxis*.

These arguments surrounding education and its purpose are in no way new. In fact, they extend as far back as classical Greece. Aristotle, for example, considered the work of a master-fabricator as the exemplar of rationality (Dunne & Pendlebury, 2003). For Aristotle, a carpenter, for example, is the exemplar of rationality because he is able to take a natural resource, in this case wood, and place it under human control by creating an end product, like a chair. To the Greeks, this human activity is known as *poiesis* (making action) and the form of knowledge it requires is *techne*. *Techne* resides in a world of related dualities that to this day "still animate our conception of technical rationality" (Dunne & Pendlebury, p. 200). Of these dualities are those of "matter and form, means and end, planning and execution" (Dunne & Pendlebury, p. 200). In the case of the carpenter, one can easily distinguish between the matter (wood) and the form (design of the chair) as well as between the means (tools and materials) and the end

(chair). However, as Aristotle knew full well, not all of human activity, even in some areas of fabrication, are accurately reflected in *poiesis* and *techne*.

In many instances, *poiesis* and *techne* are limited in their ability to accurately reflect what truly occurs in certain forms of human activity that have a different relationship between means and end. If we substitute our carpenter with a teacher, for example, the difficulties become rather obvious. After all, what is the teacher making, what is the end? With the carpenter, the end is clearly a chair or some other tangible product, but in education the end is not nearly as clear or universal. In addition, what are the means of education? For the carpenter, the means are clearly tools and materials, but for teachers the means are vast and debatable. The important distinction to be made here is that in *poiesis* the end is generally distinct from the means. So, in the example of the carpenter the chair is clearly a distinct end produced from the means. In a human activity such as teaching and education, the relationship between the end and means is rather different. As Dewey contends education “is always both ends and means, the distinction being only one of convenience” (p. 106). In other words, Dewey sees the end of education as being of the aims and means and vice versa. As a result of the differences between certain human activities and their means and ends, Aristotle introduces the conception of *praxis* and *phronesis*.

The Greek word *praxis* is roughly equivalent to our modern notion of practice. But, it is important to keep in mind that the “conceptual structures” of *praxis* are somewhat distinct from what many often mean today when using the term practice. Practice today frequently takes on a technical meaning, (e.g. practice vs. theory) which falls more under the human action of *poiesis*. *Praxis*, on the other hand, refers “to a

distinctive way of life- the *bios praktikos*- a life devoted to right living through the pursuit of the human good (Carr, 1995, p. 67). Alasdair MacIntyre (1984) offers an elaborate definition of practice for today's world which is in many ways a reconstruction of the previously given definition of *praxis*. For MacIntyre, a practice is

Any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended. (1984, p. 187)

In this way the desired end in MacIntyre's practice is like Carr's *praxis*, which is the human good. For MacIntyre, however, the good is not so general. In fact, the good is an extension of the standards of excellence which allows for a practice to progress.

Although being more specific as to the type of human good, it is still nonetheless a conception of the human good that is the desired end.

Given this understanding, the end in practice or *praxis* is rather different than the desired end in *poiesis*. Unlike *poiesis*, where the desired end is a tangible product that is known before taking action and is then made, *praxis* is concerned with realizing a morally worthwhile good. It is done and not made, hence *praxis* being action doing, not action making. Therefore, the end in *praxis*, unlike in *poiesis*, is not distinct from the means. The human good is both means and end, whereas an end in *poiesis*, the carpenter producing a chair, for example, is an end distinct from the means.

Given this fact, the necessary knowledge needed in *praxis* is not *techne*, but *phronesis*, which is understood to be the “virtue of knowing which general ethical principle to apply in a particular situation” (Carr, p. 71). Central to the concept of *phronesis* is deliberation and judgment. The *phronimos*, or person of practical wisdom, is concerned with the human good as the end, and these moral and ethical concerns play a central role in the deliberation concerning the proper course of action in a given situation. The *phronimos* is not only able to see the particularities in a given situation, but through wisdom in experience is able to incorporate universal or general principles in deliberating about the particular situation at hand, in order to bring about a human good that is morally worthwhile. In this way a person has to deliberate and take into account moral and ethical considerations when thinking about the proper action that is necessary to achieve the desired end. *Phronesis* is therefore the essential knowledge of *praxis*, like *techne* is for *poiesis*. Education and teaching, in contrast with an activity such as carpentry, clearly reflects a human action that falls under *praxis*.

It is also important to not only distinguish between *poiesis* (action making) and *praxis* (action doing), like that between carpentry and teaching, but also between different human activities that fall under *praxis*, like the *bios praktikos* and the *bios theoretikos*, or life devoted to right living and the contemplative life. The real distinctions to be made between the *bios praktikos* and the *bios theoretikos* or between professional and liberal education are not however “between knowledge and action, thinking and doing, ‘knowing that’ and ‘knowing how’”. Rather, it is a way of articulating two different forms of socially embedded human activities, each with its own intellectual commitments and its own moral demands” (Carr, p. 67). Given this understanding of *praxis*, it seems rather

pointless then to debate the differences in knowledge between professional and liberal education, since both fall under the human action known as *praxis*. One type of education might be devoted to right living and the other the contemplative life, but they both are important in contributing to the human good, which is the desired end of *praxis*. What is truly needed in understanding the organic relationship between professional and liberal education is an examination of the “intellectual commitments and moral demands” of the two types of education. One place to begin is with the aims of education.

For Dewey an aim in education, regardless if it is professional or liberal education “implies an orderly and ordered activity” which “means foresight in advance of the end or possible termination” (p. 102). It is here where Oakeshott’s argument for the end of liberal education being self-understanding and culture breaks down. How can one ever possibly achieve the end of self-understanding and culture in any other way but death? Therefore for Dewey

It is nonsense to talk about the aim of education- or any other undertaking- where conditions do not permit of foresight of results, and do not stimulate a person to look ahead to see what the outcome of a given activity is to be. (p. 102)

In other words, education must look with foresight to the results and the outcomes or ends, and thereby aims, of a given activity. In addition, for Dewey there is always a specific purpose in mind. Therefore, the intellectual commitment for education, either professional or liberal education, is not just learning for the sake of learning, but for learning with a practical purpose and end.

It is also important to note that in educational aims it is not simply looking ahead by focusing exclusively upon that activity alone, but also looking outside of the activity.

In order to know where one should go with an aim in education, it is important to understanding what is happening around you. The outside world, or the here and now, plays a central role in determining the foresight of certain results and ends in education. This fact clearly stands in contrast to Oakeshott's view of liberal learning being free from the noises and distractions of the outside world. Oakeshott is far too idealistic in his imagined place of liberal learning. After all, practically nothing in education is completely free from some influence of the outside world, and nor should it be. As Dewey argues, defenders of liberal education like Oakeshott may claim the end of liberal education is self-understanding and culture, which could very well be true, but that end still has a practical importance that is connected to the outside world. For example, how is it that topics such as race, feminist, or gay and lesbian studies receive interest as topics being worthy of study, if not for the influence of current events in the outside world? Certainly the outside world is having some influence on the topics of interest in liberal education. And on the other hand do these studies not sometimes help in shaping the outside world's discussion of these topics? If the outside world was of no relevance, then people in academia would create the same arguments on the same topics over and over again without any new perspectives. Although this certainly does happen quite a bit, thankfully there are moments when an article or book is published which changes the way we see and think about our lives and world. These particular articles or books are successful because they often speak to us in the language of the here and now, allowing for a new way of understanding not only our past, but our present worlds. If this is not Oakeshott's aim of liberal education being self-understanding and culture, then I do not know what is. An aim in education, therefore, regardless if it is in professional or liberal

education, draws upon the outside world. However, the outside world that is external to the activity should not dictate educational aims.

A good aim must come out of an existing condition. Therefore, aims in education must be internal and not external. The second criteria Dewey establishes for good aims is that they must be flexible. Aims, after all, are concerned with foresight, so in that way aims are produced before a given activity begins. Again, aims are not capricious and concerned merely with results, but aims are concerned with results and ends. This is where Dewey mostly clearly links *poiesis*, where the aims and end of an activity is known before an activity begins, with *praxis*. Since good aims are created before an activity commences, it is necessary in the course of the activity for one to be flexible and willing to alter the aims if a situation dictates. Since education is clearly a human activity engaged in *praxis*, this type of judgment is clearly *phronesis*. Finally, an “aim must always represent a freeing of activities” (p. 105) or in other words, have a clear object as an end in sight. In this way Oakeshott’s idea of education as being a liberating experience connects with Dewey. To further illustrate this point, Dewey presents the activity of shooting at a target. The target itself is not the end, but merely the object. Hitting the target is the end and hitting the target frees that person from one activity and allows him to move on to another one with freedom having learned from that experience. Once someone has gained experience in an activity, then that knowledge allows a person to have more self-understanding and therefore more freedom within a given human activity. This is the result of good educational aims and they are not that different than Oakeshott’s understanding of education as being liberation.

Alasdair MacIntyre's (1984) internal goods of *praxis* are also quite similar to Dewey's good educational aims. Like Dewey, the key to a human activity for MacIntyre is that it realizes goods which are internal to the activity itself. Just as the aims of an activity should come from within, or from doing the activity, so too should the goods of the activity. An internal good of an activity is the attempt "to achieve those standards of excellence appropriate to... that form of activity" (p. 187). With that being stated, the goods of *praxis* are not fame, riches, glory or honor, although those too might be attained, but what is of importance is the achievement of excellence, not just for the individual, but also for the public to enjoy, to learn about, and to imagine new forms of greatness by watching a master achieve standards of excellence. This public component of MacIntyre's *praxis* or practice is similar to Dewey's assertion that a profession's ultimate employer is the community.

Christopher Higgins (2003) elaborates upon the desired end of MacIntyre's public good of practice by drawing three important distinctions between his internal goods. One, playing chess is an internal good that can demonstrate an excellence of character, i.e. playing chess with skill and strategy (p. 188). For example, the excellence of playing chess well is an act realized by the chess player and anyone who observes the match with any type knowledge of the game. Thereby anyone witnessing the match realizes the unique excellence of skill and strategy and is thus rewarded by the experience. This is in one sense what I think MacIntyre is pointing to when he illustrates that the power of human excellences are extended, not only for the prestige of the individual, but also for the advancement of the practice and for the fulfillment of the public as a good. To realize when one is, to use a cliché, "in the presence of greatness" seems to best capture this

moment. Michael Jordan certainly elevated the game of professional basketball, which extended the practice into uncharted human territories, but he also extended his display of excellence to the benefit all people willing to watch and appreciate. Therefore, the aims of demonstrating excellence is not solely for the selfish reasons of success and fame, although these are surely part of it, but it is for the advancement of the practice for the good of all, as is seen in the extension of a practice.

A second aspect of internal goods is what Higgins refers to as the biographical genre or what it means to be engaged in *praxis*. For example, what it means to live as a writer. All writers are individuals with their own unique styles and approaches, but by the very nature of consciously sharing in *praxis* there is a connection among writers, regardless if one writes prose or science fiction. It is a shared community of experiences. In the end, the life of a writer is not distinguished from their practice. A writer is a writer, no matter if he is actively writing at that very moment or not. His being a writer is part of the fabric of who he is. Their practice is part of their biography or who they are.

The third distinction that Higgins makes with MacIntyre's (1984) internal goods is that which he terms a moral phenomenology, (p. 287) or a pleasure that is also more than pleasure. For Higgins, MacIntyre asks too much of pleasure. In fact, moral phenomenology "is more than pleasure in that it is participation in a particular state of being that one deems worthwhile" (p. 287). These practitioners teach us what it is like to be in the world, by demonstrating how they are in the world. To this end, Higgins produces the example of the chef. All of the things a chef encounters, both good and bad, pleasure and pain, everything that is encompassing in the life of practice of a chef that he and other chefs know intimately, teach those of us outside of the practice, at least those

who are conscious enough and willing to see, “how it is excellent to be in the world by teaching us how to be in a particular world” (p. 288). This is the moral phenomenology of internal goods. But just as Dewey presented internal aims that are good because they are internal to the activity, like MacIntyre’s internal goods, so too are there bad aims.

A bad educational aim is one that is external to an activity. As the first criteria of a good aim establishes, a good aim comes out of an existing condition. The good aim is intrinsically connected to the activity itself. When an external aim is foisted from without, the means are divorced from the end, which converts the human activity of *praxis* into *poiesis*. It is possible that today’s evidence-based culture, where technical rationality is often placed above practical rationality, is a product of aims being external to the activity. As Oakeshott argues, education is liberation or freedom. With human freedom comes much responsibility, because an educated person is responsible for his thoughts and their outcomes in action. Today this great responsibility of freedom is often “viewed with misgivings and even counted a misery to be escaped” (Oakeshott, p. 20). One course of escape is to allow *techne* to subsume *phronesis* in any form of human action, regardless if the type of human action is *praxis*. This is a major consequence of external aims from without. Similar to this idea of bad educational aims is MacIntyre’s external goods.

In describing an external good, MacIntyre (1984) offers the extremely helpful example of teaching a young child how to play chess. One can reward a child for playing chess by giving him candy; and in this scenario MacIntyre establishes that the child will receive double the amount of candy if he can win. The child in question is in no way intrinsically interested in chess, but he *is* rather interested in obtaining candy. The candy

in this hypothetical situation is an external and not an internal good, since there is no connection between excellence in playing chess and candy, at least not to my knowledge, but I am in no ways an expert chess player. This for Dewey is the problem with external aims. Since candy is not an internal aim or good of playing chess, it forces one to separate the means from the ends, which is problematic in *praxis*.

Going back to the chess example, if the child is not overly concerned with the internal aims and goods of the activity itself, then the display of excellence in skill and strategy matters little to him. What is of utmost concern is the end, in this case the external good of obtaining candy. Therefore, there is little to stop the child from attempting to achieve the maximum amount of candy by any means necessary, which includes cheating. After all, the child is not interested in the internal goods of chess, which is trying to play in such a way as to demonstrate excellent skill and strategy. He is only playing chess and trying to win for an external good- candy. These are the consequences of external aims or goods that separate the means from the end in *praxis*. If there are differences between the ends in professional and liberal education as Oakeshott maintains, these different ends are still not, as Dewey argues, necessarily incompatible and in competing worlds. This is an extremely important point to make because there are grave practical dangers if too much time and energy is devoted to valorizing one type of knowledge over the other. For example, if the proponents of professional education argue that technical rationality is of more importance in professional education than practical rationality, what happens if professional and liberal education are separate, as Oakeshott recommends, and a college of business or law or engineering churns out technical experts who lack moral and ethical judgment, a key

component in achieving the desired end of *praxis*? The result is what William M. Sullivan (2005) sees happening in today's society, which he calls the crisis of professionalism.

In his book *Work and Integrity* (2005) Sullivan asserts that the main problem facing professionalism in the United States today stems from people's limited understanding, both inside and outside of the professions, of the professional. To many the professional is solely a technical expert. The future promise of professionalism Sullivan argues is not technical, but civic. A civic professional is able to join technical and practical rationality in *praxis* to bring about the human good. In civic professionalism, for example, the public confers upon members of the professions their privileged status in exchange for the professions using their formal knowledge and skills to responsibly serve the human good. Sullivan argues "this kind of social partnership demands both accountability and responsibility on the part of the professions. It also calls for active participation and public concern on the part of citizens whom the professions serve" (2005, p. 5). In many ways Sullivan is attempting to reclaim the historical understanding of a profession as presented by William F. May (1992). Etymologically, the word profession means to publicly "profess something that defines one's fundamental commitment" (May, p. 28). There is clearly a public and moral responsibility in this action of professing. In fact, the word profession in Medieval Roman Catholic Europe was often used in conjunction with monks who made a public profession to commit their lives to a relationship with God on behalf of the human race (p. 28). This social contract between the public and the professions is the heart of civic professionalism, and can commonly be seen in any organized profession's charter,

mission or goals. “To become a professional,” Sullivan asserts, “is not only to join an occupation; it is to assume a civic identity” (p. 23). It is “professing one’s fundamental commitment.”

The civic professional’s fundamental commitment, both intellectual and moral, lies in *praxis*. In *praxis*, the competing worlds of professional and liberal education in arguments like Oakeshott’s serve as a detriment to establishing civic professionalism. What is needed is an organic relationship between professional and liberal education and between technical and practical rationality. This organic relationship is wholly necessary, if the desired end of *praxis* is to be achieved. For Sullivan, professional *praxis* relies upon a “three-fold” pattern or cycle (2002). This is particularly poignant in demonstrating the organic relationship of professional and liberal education. The three-fold process consists of “a rhythm of moving back and forth from engagement with the concrete situation, through detached observation and analysis, and back again to a more informed engagement with the person and situation” (2002, p. 5). Here Sullivan is clearly describing *phronesis*. It can be argued that within this three-fold cycle exists what Aristotle, in book VI of *Nicomachean Ethics*, refers to as the “states by virtue of which the soul possesses truth” (p. 1799). In the three-fold cycle, the experienced professional truly comprehends the situation, possesses and synthesizes knowledge, which contains both practical and philosophic wisdom, and makes an experienced judgment as to a particular course of action. Aristotle understands this three-fold cycle as one where

All the states we have considered converge, as might be expected, on the same point; for when we speak of judgment and understanding and practical wisdom

and comprehension we credit the same people with possessing judgment and comprehension and with having practical wisdom and understanding. (p. 1805)

The people that Aristotle is referring to, these people who possess judgment, comprehension, practical wisdom and understanding are the *phronimos*. It is this very act of convergence, i.e. *phronesis* that is at the heart of Sullivan's three-fold cycle. It is also this fact why I argue for eliminating unnecessary arguments that rely upon distinctions between the different types of knowledge and ends of professional and liberal education. In Sullivan's three-fold cycle, not only does the professional need to possess *techne*, which is knowledge necessary for action making, but also *phronesis*, knowledge for action doing. And this person, the *phronimos*, needs to hold these types of technical and practical rationality in balance. How is it that this three-fold cycle, which is at the heart of civic professionalism, can occur if both proponents of professional and liberal education are engaged in creating incompatible and competing worlds?

If Oakeshott's argument that the end of professional education is concerned with satisfying contingent wants is true, then what's to stop the commercialization of education from destroying liberal education? If the consumer of education wants to receive nothing but technical rationality or training, then what's the point of offering liberal education? Following the values of the marketplace a university should simply serve the people and give them what they want, correct? What are the consequences? Again, Sullivan's civic professional and the three-fold cycle of professional *praxis* is the key. If the professional is educated to be simply a technical expert, as society might demand as consumers, society painfully learns the consequences of such demands. Take for instance Enron and the Arthur Andersen accounting scandals earlier in this decade or

the more recent Bernard Madoff case in the past year. The public's good faith that the profession would wisely use their judgment to regulate their own work in the interests of the public good failed to occur. The reason why the public's reaction to Arthur Andersen was so vitriolic, aside from the fact that their actions defrauded investors millions of dollars, was that this trust or good faith that is essential to civic professionalism was broken. Unfortunately, the public often does not think of professions in civic terms until the system breaks down and they are left wondering what happened. In this view, the crux of the problem, the erosion of civic professionalism in the modern professions, lies heavily with a belief in the power of instrumental rationality. Academics in the university, when arguing for a separation of the technical and the practical, contributes to the problem.

As is clearly seen in the three-fold cycle of *praxis*, instrumental rationality alone is antithetical to an understanding of civic professionalism because "instrumental thinking concerns itself with means rather than ends or final values. It asks, relentlessly: How well is this approach working?" (Sullivan, 2005, p. 135). One need not look very far to discover that instrumental thinking holds much sway in today's world. In fact, Tony Blair's Labour government ran under the slogan 'what matters is what works' in 1997 (Nutley, Walter, & Davies, 2007). As another illustration, simply type in "what works," "what works best" or "evidence based research" into an internet search engine and one will find many governmental agencies advocating what approaches, based upon evidence, work best in any number of areas. The "What Works Clearinghouse" sponsored by the Department of Education is just one such example in education. Although there is much value in thinking about means, a consideration of what works

without also bearing in mind possible ends or values has the potential to create, quite literally, a Pandora's Box. For instance, just because a certain drug might be proven to extend the life of a patient does not necessarily mean that administering the drug is what is best for the patient, the patient's family, or society at large. Technical rationality alone only focuses on what works and how well. Since civic professionalism also focuses on ends or final values, it is no wonder that a professional education that concerns itself with only technical rationality over practical rationality is problematic.

In conclusion, what can and should be done? The first task, in my opinion, is to eliminate a way of thinking that attempts to distinguish the primary end of professional education as satisfying contingent human wants, which is somehow different from the end of liberal education. As the quote from John Dewey that began this paper illustrates, professional and liberal education are only different ways of looking at the same scene. All ends in education have some sort of practical end, and it is "superstitious" for proponents of liberal education to argue against this fact. Therefore, it is necessary for professional and liberal education to acknowledge their organic relationship in the common ground of *praxis* which seeks the human good. What is needed is not to balkanize the various colleges of learning in today's university, like Oakeshott argues, but rather to bring them together in order to achieve the realization of the human good. How this is to be done in practice is an excellent question with no one answer, but for me a productive start can only be made by losing the old unnecessary distinctions between professional and liberal education and coming to see the two as organically related.

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