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Leadership with Liberal Arts: From Ehebia to Jepson

by

Shaye Ellis

Honors Thesis

in

*Jepson School of Leadership Studies
University of Richmond
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Advisor: Dr. Joanne Ciulla

Abstract

Leadership with Liberal Arts: From Ephebia to Jepson

Shaye Ellis

Committee members: *Dr. Joanne Ciulla, Dr. Kristin Bezio, and Professor Linda Hobgood*

With its commitment to the core principles of a liberal arts education and a multidisciplinary approach to studying the dynamics between leaders and followers, the Jepson School of Leadership Studies is a model program. Many leadership programs combine this field of study with other disciplines, thereby narrowing our definitions and comprehension of leadership. The following research observes the history of the liberal arts tradition from Plato and Aristotle up to modern example in a effort to determine why the combination of liberal arts and leadership studies is so effective to our understanding of leadership as a phenomena.

Signature Page for Leadership Studies Honors Thesis

Leadership with Liberal Arts: From Ephebia to Jepson

Thesis presented

by

Shaye Ellis

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by *Shaye Ellis* has been approved by his/her committee as satisfactory completion of the thesis requirement to earn honors in leadership studies.

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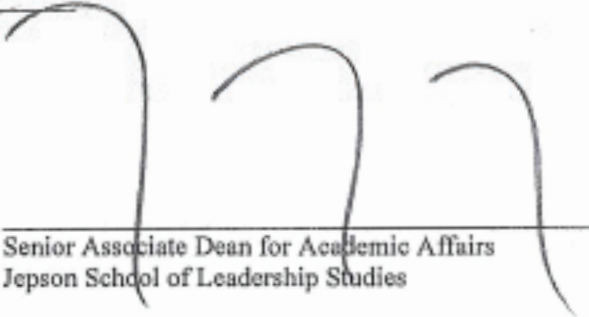

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“Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena.”¹¹ Despite his extensive research and knowledge in the field, James MacGregor Burns still professes the complexity of the concept of leadership. The abstract nature of the topic does not lend itself to a brief synopsis or a limited understanding of a specific aspect of leadership. In many ways it eludes being confined to a particular category and exists across and between different academic disciplines. In the absence of a prescribed curriculum or method of study, institutions of higher education establish programs and departments that disseminate a distinct model or interpretation of leadership. These specialized courses, concentrations, or majors dilute the wide range of intricacies and nuances that make leadership more complex than other disciplines into a manageable, even predictable, topic. Where math and science rely on finite values, proven theorems, and formulas, the study of leadership often relies on subjective analysis and theories about human behavior and relationships. What then is the approach best-suited for learning about what prominent scholars, like Burns, call a “phenomenon” rather than a discipline or subject? Based on the strength and diversity of the associated disciplines and the wealth of history to support the value of these studies in the development of citizens, the liberal arts are a perfect complement to the study of both leaders and the practice of leadership.

As the call for leaders across contexts, professions, and fields of study grows stronger, so does the incentive to look critically at the processes involved in creating these leaders. In the wake of these questions, an increasing number of institutions have founded leadership courses and programs of study. At different universities and under different titles, each one claims to be addressing the same profound need for leadership. Despite a common objective, these establishments vary in their approach to the cultivation of the next generation of leaders. At

¹¹ Wren, J. Thomas. "The Crisis of Leadership." In *The Leader's Companion: Insights on Leadership through the Ages*, 8-10. New York: Free Press, 1995.

Marietta College in Georgia, students of the McDonough Center for Leadership and Business “learn about the nature of leadership, undertake an extensive study of leadership development, and train to be a leader.”² The University of Virginia recently opened the doors of their newly endowed Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, where “everyone can become a more effective leader through the development of key skills.”³ The Virginia Military Institute offers a minor in leadership studies in addition to the rigorous ROTC training, which seeks the development of “leaders of character.”⁴ Given the historical and social significance of the liberal arts tradition in the preparation for community engagement, this educational approach seems a natural companion to the development of future leaders. The Jepson School of Leadership Studies opened doors to the first class of leadership majors and minors in 1992 and since that date, numerous institutions have attempted to emulate and model programs after the same idea. In its founding philosophy statement the stated purpose of the Jepson School was “to educate people *for* and *about* leadership.”⁵ The school’s curriculum is deeply versed in the values and practices of a liberal education, drawing from the classic thinkers and early theories of education as a means for cultivating knowledge, ethical character, and critical thinking skills through the study of leader and follower dynamics. Jepson does not explicitly claim to be producing the future leaders of communities, states, and countries; rather the challenge of creating a program to educate *for* leadership provided debate over the primary objective of the school. These discussions resulted in a mission to graduate students who “would not only feel responsible for

² Leadership Studies. (2013, February 20). *Marietta College — Academics*. Retrieved from http://www.marietta.edu/Academics/special_programs/leadership_studies.html

³ Learning to Lead. (2013). *Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy University of Virginia*. Retrieved from <http://batten.virginia.edu/content/about/why-batten/learning-lead>

⁴ Leadership - ROTC at VMI. (2013). *Virginia Military Institute*. Retrieved from <http://www.vmi.edu/content.aspx?id=4294972142>

⁵ Joanne B. Ciulla, Draft of Jepson School Philosophy Statement , September 3, 1991.

the world around them,” but who “understand the moral responsibilities of leadership and who are prepared to exercise leadership in services to society.”⁶ To study, analyze, and critique the theories and models of leadership, both positive and negative, we must take into account the numerous influences and experience that help shape leaders. Furthermore, this relationship raises interesting questions about the notion of educating leaders amidst an increasing demand for them and the growing presence of leadership studies programs.

Even from this brief interlude into select examples of leadership education, the varied spectrum of understandings and teaching styles are apparent. While rulings on the accuracy and efficacy of these various institutions remains subjective, the seemingly divergent approaches to the same end – a better understanding of leadership – all but beg for a comparison and careful insight into the motivating factors and decisions made during the early stages of construction. Before launching a full investigation into a critique of the contemporary examples, time must be spent unraveling the origins and historic influences of these programs. Individuals consolidated power, led their peers, and shaped civilization before the existence of executive training programs, self-guided books, and semester-long courses designed to prepare and educate them for such roles. Various systems of education and government have served as critical components in the emergence and performance of leaders. Society’s need for social order in addition to capable, wise, and superior leaders fostered the organization of lessons, values, and subjects into a curriculum capable of delivering those goals. The liberal arts are comprised of diverse areas of study including history, language, literature, and science, which endeavor to instill a general knowledge and intellectual capacity rather than the training and skills for a singular profession.

⁶ Joanne B. Ciulla. “The Jepson School: Liberal Arts as Leadership Studies.” Eds. R Riggio and M. Harvey, *Research Companion to Leadership Studies: The Dialogue of the Disciplines*. Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2011.

Today's understanding and application of the liberal arts is the result of centuries of compilations and revisions of academic methods and theories.

To accurately map the significant historical influences of contemporary practices and chart the progression of the liberal arts tradition, we begin with the ancients. Great thinkers and educators in the Greek and Roman empires laid the foundation for comprehensive approaches to education. From this birthplace we can trace the idea of educating the entire person, both mind and body. Education's objectives centered on preparation for citizenship and lifelong commitment to learning and personal development. These same principles first established in antiquity have had longstanding implications that are distinct and recognizable throughout history. This paper will explicate the significance of these theories and models of education. As we consider the objectives and missions of colleges and universities around the country, it is clear that the value of these ideas cannot be overstated. Alexander Astin argues that the quality of the education provided by "liberal arts colleges appears to be unmatched by any other institution,"⁷ and seemingly against numerous odds, the liberal arts remain an integral part of higher education. By exploring the origins and journey of the liberal arts tradition from antiquity to today, I will demonstrate how this diverse series of disciplines can and should inform modern leadership studies programs.

The Ancient Standard

The Greek *paideia* is among the most critical concepts to grasp in the greater context of the liberal arts and education. Plato and his successor Aristotle were key players in the introduction of the Greek *paideia* as a template for the education of the young members of society and the future members of the democracy. As a system of education, the *paideia* "was a

⁷ Alexander W. Astin. "How the Liberal Arts College Affects Students." *Daedalus* 128, no. 1 (Winter 1999): 77-100. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20027539>.

process of socialization, one that seeks above all to create the productive and loyal citizen.”⁸ The actual contents of the paideia proved to be the focus of continuous debate among the leading scholars, namely Plato, Aristotle, and Isocrates. Generally the education includes “grammatical and literary studies, mathematic and scientific learning, [and] medicine,”⁹ and Plato’s description included “athletic and musical fluency”¹⁰ as well. In summary, the paideia represented the training and education required for cultural preparedness and citizenship.

Plato’s prolific works touched upon the ideas of morality, justice, politics, and of course education. He philosophized and refined his educational creed with the help of his imagined version of Socrates in *The Republic*, challenged the Sophist’s educational practices in *Protagoras*, and explicated his preferred educational procedure in his *Laws*. Though he may not have been the first scholar, Plato’s indelible legacy in the core guiding principles of education will be a consistent presence throughout this paper. Elitism and education were essentially synonymous in the accounts of ancient education and the relationship between the two proved to be a recurring theme and point of contention in academia. This trend is observed in the first formal universities and arguably present in the selectivity of small private schools and Ivy League colleges. From a young age, the wealthy and privileged Athenians were placed on the track for accelerated and premier educations. Plato created a social hierarchy in his utopia based on intelligence and the virtue of a man’s soul, singling out the guardians for the best treatment. To fulfill the needs and interests of his idealized Republic, Plato emphasized the importance for a well-balanced education for his guardians warning that, “excessive care of the body, when

⁸ Yun Lee Too, *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pg. Introduction.

⁹ *ibid*

¹⁰ Mark Griffith, “Public and Private in Early Greek Institutions of Education.” In *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, ed. Yun Lee Too (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pg. 73.

carried beyond the rules of gymnastic, is most inimical to the practice of virtue.”¹¹ A balance between the delicate qualities instilled by lessons in music, harmony, and poetry and the brute aggressiveness of physical training was desired for the “harmonious soul must be both temperate and courageous.”¹² Not only did Plato philosophize about important advancements in educational and social organizations, he was responsible for the teaching of many bright young minds that furthered these beliefs.

Aristotle was among Plato’s disciples and contributed to the continuation and expansion of the liberal education. Again he acknowledged that education was, at a fundamental level, essential to the development of an intelligent and participative citizenry. However, he mitigated this claim by stressing that society’s leaders were by nature different from the general population and therefore “modes of education should be adapted to this distinction.”¹³ Education was meant to consist of more than the study of letters and music in times of leisure. Aristotle associated the study of the arts with the development of social virtues and morality in his pupils in preparation for their civic duties and obligations. Importantly, per Aristotle’s distinction between liberal and illiberal individuals, not everyone was capable or worthy of the total leisure required for intellectual studies. He qualified illiberal people as those who worked in servile or labor positions, with minds and souls “made slavish by their lowly occupations,” and unfit even for Greek citizenship. Conversely, liberal persons were characterized as “leisured, educated, and independent.”¹⁴ The implications of these social distinctions carried over into the qualities and

¹¹ Plato. "Book III." In *Plato's Republic*, translated by Benjamin Jowett. New York: Modern Library, 1982. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1497/1497-h/1497-h.htm>.

¹² *ibid*

¹³ Aristotle, A. D. Lindsay, and William Ellis. *Politics: A Treatise on Government - Translated from the Greek of Aristotle*. (Book VII) London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1931.

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/6762/6762-h/6762-h.htm>.

¹⁴ *ibid*

benefits of a liberal education that would “produce virtuous and free men fit to govern a good city.”¹⁵ Aristotle’s classifications influenced the distribution of arts and disciplines considered appropriate for the liberal education and the relationship between leisure and the luxury of procuring knowledge.

In addition to drafting the models for present and future systems of education, both Plato and Aristotle led premier schools where they imbued their students with the virtues, lessons, and skills that they perceived most valuable. Plato’s Academy and Aristotle’s Lyceum represent two pinnacles in the history of educational institutions. As a young Athenian, Aristotle studied under Plato at the Academy and naturally adapted some of his teacher’s methods for his own purposes. The Lyceum was among the first institutions to “pursue disciplined inquiry into virtually every field of knowledge.”¹⁶ Limited information exists today about the daily occurrences on the school’s sacred grounds; however, descriptions of the general curriculum allude to the meaningful role that the academic sphere played in preparing pupils for realistic social interactions. The Academy stressed the advancement of the top tier of society and the inclusion of political science in Plato’s teachings “provided councilors and law givers for republics and reigning sovereigns.”¹⁷ Aristotle’s school prioritized the community and for his students tutoring “meant a cooperative more than a dialectical relation among the members of the school” and a combination of “individual contributions and shared tasks.”¹⁸ As educational paradigms, these two institutions are often cited in the styles and practice of classrooms, curricula, and even

¹⁵ Andrea Wilson Nightingale “Liberal Education in Plato’s *Republic* and Aristotle’s *Politics*.” In *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, ed. Yun Lee Too (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pg. 135-136.

¹⁶ Bruce A. Kimball, *The Liberal Arts Tradition: A Documentary History* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010), 29.

¹⁷ Henri Irénée. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*. (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956), 99.

¹⁸ J. P. Lynch. *Aristotle's school; a study of a Greek educational institution*. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1972).

universities as a whole. Though today the social capital provided by schooling is often overshadowed, education in the antiquities was a mandatory precursor to public life and thus prepared students not only for their particular roles but their relationships with other members of the community.

Introducing Eloquence to a Liberal Education

While the teaching approaches of Plato and Aristotle focused primarily on philosophy and general knowledge, Isocrates stands out for his commitment to the learning and practice of rhetoric. Rather than criticizing the Platonic curriculum and the philosopher's employment of the quadrivium, Isocrates sought to justify rhetoric's place and value in the academic discussion. Grasping the key concepts of subjects such as astronomy and geometry was not a waste of time, but Isocrates felt that the ability to speak and speak well about these topics was equally important. These two branches of education appeared codependent, as rhetoric required the wisdom and virtue gained from knowledge in order to deliver a compelling and rational argument. Isocrates wrote "men could improve themselves and be more useful to the community by setting themselves the objective of being able to speak well, by desiring to be able to convince their audience."¹⁹ The familiar patterns of goodness or morality, community involvement, and self-improvement are intertwined in Isocrates' teachings. Additionally these will be important to consider in the application of liberal arts in leadership studies as there is a present need for ethical, committed leaders in all areas of society.

Although both the Greek and Roman Empires displayed tremendous power and innovation, these cultures diverged on certain values and priorities. Anthony Corbeill described the popular understanding of these theoretical and practical differences saying, "the Greeks

¹⁹ Mark Joyal, Iain McDougall, and John Yardley. *Greek and Roman Education: A Sourcebook*. (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2009.)

created drama and metaphysics, while the Romans perfected sewer systems and legal codes.”²⁰

In the wake of brilliant orators, educators, and rulers the Roman intellectuals and authorities faced the task of adopting or appropriating the existing Greek standards and customs to construct a “uniquely Roman form of citizen training.” Without eradicating centuries’ worth of progress, Romans exercised restraint in incorporating select examples and practices from the past. Cicero stressed that their “inferiority to Greece in literature, art, and music should not be attributed to inferior talent” but rather the intentional understanding that subjects like geometry are of value “only for its utility in measurement and calculation.”²¹

While Cicero and his academically minded counterparts maintained some key components of the Greek *paideia*, they refocused their efforts on the “appropriate” class of students, the elites and the rhetors responsible for the future success of the Roman culture. *Ingenium* was the Roman term used to describe the inborn abilities and qualities of an individual and the prevailing assumptions favored the upper crust of society, whom was believed to have better and more refined set of characteristics.²² To an extent, Cicero amended his perspective allowing that through the study of mathematics, astronomy, and music one had the potential to improve his *ingenium*. Ultimately, by advancing the liberal influences of the Greek education system, he sought to cultivate the orator’s academic prowess and rhetorical skills. Cicero argued, “no one will be able to become an accomplished orator, praiseworthy in all respects, unless he gained a mastery of all the great fields of inquiry and knowledge.”²³ Furthermore, he claims that “arts which are oriented towards culture,” which would undoubtedly include eloquent and

²⁰ Anthony Corbeill, “Education in the Roman Republic: Creating Traditions,” in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity* ed. Yun Lee Too, (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pg. 261.

²¹ *ibid* 266

²² *ibid*

²³ Bruce A. Kimball, *The Liberal Arts Tradition: A Documentary History* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010), 206.

profound communication, “are interconnected and related to each other.”²⁴ Thus, Cicero’s model of the liberal arts was not only essential to the development of rhetorical ability, but by extension these arts would also nourish and protect cultural values and civic order that formed in the early days of the Roman Empire.

Quintilian accepted the value of rhetoric in education set forth by his fellow Roman scholar and the Greek orator Isocrates. Isocrates championed rhetoric to bring greater purpose to one’s acquired knowledge and Cicero emphasized the relationship between culture, elocution, and the arts. Expanding on those schools of thought, Quintilian’s concerns centered on the proper way to teach rhetoric to students, and he developed his own methods to prepare them to utilize rhetoric in their public and private lives. Rhetoric was a continuation of the life-long education outlined in the liberal arts and aspiring orators were expected, if not required, to receive adequate and appropriate schooling in their formative years. Pre-requisite schooling would ensure that those of strong moral character were learning techniques for effective and eloquent communication and would also provide the knowledge necessary for “equipping the students with examples (of great weight in all manner of cases) which he will use as the occasion requires.”²⁵ The talents of an orator were best cultivated through practice rather than abstract lessons, and the rhetorical teaching habits reflected these priorities. Rhetoric in particular is an interesting component of the liberal arts to consider for the importance of the discipline expanded and contracted over time to reflect the interests and objectives of various scholars and theorists. Additionally rhetoric is arguably one of the more relevant subjects comprising the

²⁴ *ibid*

²⁵ Joyal, Mark, Iain McDougall, and John Yardley. *Greek and Roman Education: A Sourcebook*. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2009.

liberal arts, as purposeful and persuasive speech is so closely linked to citizenship for both leaders and followers.

Defining and Refining the Liberal Arts

At the peak of the Roman Empire, Christians had been considered lower class citizens. Thus in their rise through social ranks in the medieval times, they condemned classical culture in favor of ecclesiastical texts and teaching methods. Augustine, a convert to Christianity himself, was a central figure in mediating the tensions between the pagan and religious perspectives. *On Christian Learning*, cited Cicero and other classical scholars, in order to justify the application of liberal fields of study in the promotion of the Church's ideals. He wrote "there are two things necessary to the treatment of Scriptures: a way of discovering those things which are to be understood, and a way of teaching what we have learned."²⁶ He perceived the liberal arts as the basics required for the pursuit and acquisition of wisdom and truth. In his treatises *On order* and *Soliloquies* he explains that the structure and knowledge provided by these subjects "purifies the mind to the point where it can once again see the Truth itself."²⁷ With the acceptance of Augustine's rationale, Martianus Capella helped to further define the relevance of liberal arts during the 5th century AD with a more secular approach than his contemporaries. *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury*, describes the fictional marriage between Mercury, a representation of eloquence, and Philology, meant to signify learning and the daughter of Wisdom. Following the lead of his peers, Capella also personified the newly redefined liberal arts as seven women. Instead of being drawn from reason and tradition as with the classics' interpretation of the arts, Philology provided the content with which to characterize each figure. "One could see what

²⁶ Bruce A. Kimball, *The Liberal Arts Tradition: A Documentary History* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010), 52.

²⁷ J. J. Chambliss. "Saint Augustine (354-430)." In *Philosophy of Education: An Encyclopedia*, 38-43. New York: Garland Pub., 1996.

books and what great volumes and the works of how many languages flowed from the mouth of the maiden.”²⁸ Each “maiden,” as the liberal arts were called, then adopted the necessary or relevant information leaving them to be divided amongst the Arts “as some were marked with musical notation,” and the Disciplines with “squares and polygonal shapes drawn to suit different theorems.”²⁹ Capella’s imaginative and elaborate language captivated medieval audiences and earned his work recognition as a textbook for students of the age. Though he is credited with coining the seven liberal arts and describing the physical manifestations of the disciplines, his work seems best attributed to the continuation of the thinkers who came before him.³⁰

Pier Paolo Vergerio is not a name commonly uttered in the standard dialogue surrounding the history of the liberal arts. Yet, as the author of perhaps one of the most popular works on liberal studies during the Renaissance, *On Noble Character and Liberal Studies of Youth*, his thoughts are worth mentioning in this paper, even if his social relevance and popularity was short-lived. Vergerio’s contributions to this discussion of the liberal arts tradition is significant because of his holistic, albeit at times disjointed, approach to education. During a time when scholars rediscovered the classics and breathed new life into classical studies and theories, Vergerio drew inspiration from each and every interpretation of the liberal arts, from the paideia up through the newly formed branch of humanistic studies. He defines liberal studies in the traditional sense as “those by which virtue and wisdom are either exercised or sought after, and by which the body or the mind is disposed in the direction of all the best things.”³¹ In reading

²⁸ William Harris. Stahl and Richard Johnson, *Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 47.

²⁹ *ibid*

³⁰ "Martianus Capella." In *Complete Dictionary of Scientific Biography*. Vol. 9., 140-141. Detroit: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2008. *Gale Virtual Reference Library*.

³¹ Bruce A. Kimball, *The Liberal Arts Tradition: A Documentary History* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010), 161.

Vergerio, it appears as though he simply wants to celebrate the wealth of subjects, disciplines, and arts available. Nevertheless, he constructed his ideal curriculum based on his perception of the most valuable and relevant areas of study. History, for example, was the highest ranked “on grounds both of its attractiveness and of its utility, qualities which appeal equally to the scholar and the statesman.”³² Again his educational theorizing reiterates the well-established Athenian and Roman traditions of education in preparation for civic participation and service. Specifically he embraces the Aristotelian perspective that free time is best spent dedicated to obtaining and maintaining knowledge. According to Vergerio, substantive knowledge is useful both in the active duties of citizens and politicians but is equally valuable to their moments of leisure for when one is not engaged in the public forums or engaged in other time-consuming distractions, “what can we do better than gather our books around us?”³³

Vergerio’s opinions on class divisions in education are subtler than those of his predecessors and sources of inspiration. He makes repeated references to the usefulness of education and studies for princes and statesmen without definitively assigning knowledge as the exclusive luxury of nobles, aristocrats, or wealthy elites. Instead, he distinguishes one child, or potential student, from another based on his intellectual capacity. He said “nature has endowed some children with so keen, so ready an intelligence, that without serious effort they...by aid of right guidance and sound learning reach in manhood the highest distinction.”³⁴ Vergerio treads the line between recommending that individuals focus their studies on only the subjects that are most relevant to their skills and interests, and seeing the value in a basic understanding of the

³² William Harrison Woodward, Pietro Paolo Vergerio, Leonardo Bruni, Pius II, and Battista Guarini. "The Treatise De Ingeniis Moribus." In *Vittorino Da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1964.

³³ *ibid*

³⁴ *ibid*

wide range of topics available. A diverse curriculum may provide a wide range of knowledge, but may also result in an incomplete mastery of numerous subjects. The acknowledgement that “all the disciplines are so related that none at all could be grasped to a distinguished degree, if the others are totally known,”³⁵ echoes the liberal academic traditions and influences of the *paideia*.

Francis Bacon’s impact on the liberal arts extends beyond his noteworthy contributions to the field of science in particular. Similar to Augustine, his academic philosophy successfully bridged the gap between a devout and narrow obsession with God’s word and the wealth of information available to mankind in the natural world. Quoting King Solomon from the Bible “the glory of God is to conceal a thing, but the glory of the king is to find it out,”³⁶ Bacon professed that education and knowledge were the keys to uncovering the “truth” which was ultimately embedded in the Holy Scripture. This reverence likely influenced Bacon’s urging for continuous and lifelong education, a theme fundamental to the study of liberal arts. “Let no one weakly imagine that man can search too far or be too well studied in the book of God’s word, and works, divinity, and philosophy.”³⁷ Interspersed throughout his philosophy for education are important liberal traditions that had expanded and contracted throughout history. He noted that a commitment to learning brought a man closer not only to understanding God, but also drew a connection between knowledge and success of leaders whether their accomplishments be military, political, or religious.

³⁵ Bruce A. Kimball, *The Liberal Arts Tradition: A Documentary History* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010), 167-168.

³⁶ Francis Bacon. "Book I." In *Advancement Of Learning And Novum Organum*. New York: Willey, 1944. PsycBOOKS.

³⁷ *ibid*

In his earlier works, Bacon spoke more generally of a well-rounded education creating a well-rounded man. Different subjects and different techniques cultivated the various facets of an individual and ultimately created someone who was, among other things, capable, virtuous, and wise. Schooling was a precursor to participation in the community, a place to learn the necessary social values and customs, in addition to the core subjects of the liberal arts. Indeed, Bacon's essay *Of Studies* demonstrates a purpose for these subjects that is greater than the intellectual development, "histories make men wise; poets witty; the mathematics [subtle]; natural philosophy deep; moral grave; logic and rhetoric able to contend."³⁸ Virtuous characters and productive citizens relied on the content of the education as well as the techniques employed in the delivery of information to students.

The Liberal Arts in Practice

Educational theories and the integration of the liberal arts traditions continued their ebb and flow throughout a range of historical and social contexts. From Aristotelians and Ciceronians, to Scholastics, and eventually to American Pragmatists, the different names represented mutations and adaptations of the same core ideology. The Pragmatists consisted of progressive American scholars and educators, among them John Dewey. Dewey wrote on education, psychology, morality, and politics. In his extensive writing on education, he both challenged and condemned the shortcomings of the system he observed, and built his own methods and plan of execution. Change had to begin at the very heart of education and Dewey described "the need for a philosophy of education is thus fundamentally the need for finding out what education really

³⁸ Francis Bacon. *The Essays of Francis Bacon*,. Edited by Mary Augusta Scott. New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1908.

is,³⁹ and by extension what education should accomplish. Dewey's definition of education conceived a process by which we procure and develop intellectual and moral capacities. Further he suggested, "the most formal and technical education in the world cannot safely depart from this general process. It can only organize it or differentiate in some particular direction." From this we must assume that some differentiations may be stronger than others. This is demonstrated through the various models of the liberal studies through history that have emphasized one field at the expense of others and modified the presentation of the material. Whether organized as the Greek paideia, the trivium and quadrivium, or rhetorical progymnasmata meant to inform intelligent speech, the basis of the educational process seems to remain in tact.

The goals of a traditional liberal education are compatible with his belief that education is more than just a limited period of training and teaching, rather it is a life long commitment and preparation for the social demands placed on free citizens. Details of Dewey's prescribed reforms for educations evoke the philosophies of his predecessors. As with Aristotle's Lyceum, the formation and preservation of the educational community was a key interest of John Dewey. Learning habits and lessons in isolation would not be sufficient preparation for joining a cooperative and collaborative society. The social implications of education not only influence the style and structure of the school but also the perception of education and the applicability of knowledge. Despite the infusion of traditional educational standards, Dewey strived to leave behind the elitist values that constrained the scope and purpose of earlier systems. Prior models were dominated by class and social hierarchy, which translated into the division of knowledge into categories based on the utility of certain topics for social power or labor and work. Certainly education fosters individual and personal growth but Dewey stressed that the system must also

³⁹ John Dewey and Reginald D. Archambault. *John Dewey on Education: Selected Writings*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974).

foster “the realization that knowledge is a possession held in trust for the furthering of the well-being of all.”⁴⁰ Yet again, a theory of education highlights an inherent link to government participation and lends greater purpose to a comprehensive curriculum that produces well-rounded, thoughtful, and engaged members of society.

Paul Woodruff’s observation and analysis of the democratic practices of Ancient Athens yielded interesting insights and raised valuable questions about the role of education, and more specifically the Greek *paideia*, in the enactment of the government. He discusses the benefits and shortcomings of the *paideia* and addresses the distinct and deliberate gap between the education of the elites and the general public. Among the challenges in the *paideia* is striking a balance between preserving democracy, without allowing a system that will perpetuate an inadequate status quo and leave citizens educated, yet complacent or unaware of injustices. Woodruff asks in his closing thoughts “who [now] is educating people for good lives as citizens?”⁴¹ Herein lies the most influential aspect of the ancient model for education, preparation for citizenship. Too often in our systems of education, from elementary to university, there seems to be a focus on education as a means to professional achievement rather than gaining competency as citizens. The relationship between education and democracy appears to be codependent when Woodruff describes “education as the hope of democracy,” and “concludes that a true democracy must be willing to pay the price of education for thoughtful citizenship.”⁴² If the great teachers of ancient times, Protagoras, Aristotle, and Plato came at a high price, the pressing question becomes how the remaining citizens of Athens were instilled with the virtues and knowledge associated with the *paideia* system of higher education. The answer, according to Woodruff’s historical account

⁴⁰ *ibid*,

⁴¹ Paul Woodruff, *First Democracy: The Challenge of an Ancient Idea* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), pg. 228, EBSCOhost - EBooks Collection.

⁴² *ibid*, 211

was the theater, where “Greek tragic plays, especially, were laced with the ethical views that were popular in democratic Athens and affected everyone through public performance.”⁴³

Although Woodruff launches repeated challenges to the paideia as an elitist routine with insignificant and impractical results, his arguments leave room to attribute the system’s flaws to execution rather than actual content and substance. Ultimately the paideia is portrayed as a foundational education, one that will adequately prepare students for competent interactions in the community. While critiques note the paideia’s lack of specialized skill that may be required for a specific career, as previously mentioned the historical tradition of the liberal arts is to promote the life long process of learning and the acquisition of knowledge. Thus, the liberal and the vocational education may not be mutually exclusive, and indeed may be quite compatible if obtained in the proper order.

Tensions about the limited scope of education have existed, since the Ancient Greeks and Plato’s Academy. A liberal education and the paideia were meant to provide well-rounded educations that were fundamental to the cultivation of an active citizenry; however, the benefits typically befell the prominent members of society as the future leaders of politics and thought. In more recent history, Ivy League Universities have enacted their own interpretations of providing a diverse education and the training of the “power elite.” C. Wright Mills delineated the specialized training of the upper circles of society, the so-called elites, to “command the impersonal institutional hierarchies of modern society.”⁴⁴ Though Harvard and Yale were matriculating community leaders, Mills noted “the prep school, Ivy League College, and law school sequence of the metropolitan 400 is not up to the demands now made upon members of

⁴³ *ibid*, 199

⁴⁴ C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), pg. 15.

the power elite.”⁴⁵ Student bodies in our universities today, encompass a much broader segment of the population than the narrow group of individuals that Mills wrote about. Therefore, the liberal arts are no longer designed for the needs of those already destined to be leaders by virtue of circumstance, but a collection of students with varied interests, backgrounds, and career paths.⁴⁶ Mills perspective was influenced by changes in the understanding of education “from the political to the economic: to train people for better-paying jobs and thus to get ahead.” This led to the divergence between those already designated for positions in politics, military, and other high-power, high-status positions. The implications of this shift in the perceived values of education undoubtedly sets up an important distinction for the contemporary leadership programs and resurgence of the liberal arts in higher education.

The Ancient Ephebia and the Complexities of Leadership Studies

Along with the liberal arts, the ancient ephebic tradition also offers insights into how to properly educate leaders. In this tradition, tutors, parents, and cultural traditions, molded young individuals into ideal citizens. This investment in the future of the nation targeted certain segments of the population, namely those who were destined for political or military leadership. Culled from the upper echelons of society, young men would become a part of the ephebia (ephebeia). Through this educational organization individuals received formalized and comprehensive training in “a number of specialized subjects that ran concurrently and between which there was a certain amount of healthy rivalry.”⁴⁷ While the intent of the early ephebia was to cultivate the next generation of Greeks, ultimately it “existed for the benefit of young men

⁴⁵ *ibid* 295

⁴⁶ Joanne B. Ciulla. “The Jepson School: Liberal Arts as Leadership Studies.” Eds. R Riggio and M. Harvey, *Research Companion to Leadership Studies: The Dialogue of the Disciplines*. Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2011.

⁴⁷ Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, 103.

who had no need to work for their living.”⁴⁸ Translated, this means that those fortunate enough to be labeled ephebe, and to complete the program in its entirety would most certainly obtain positions of high stature and power.

Information available about the ephebic tradition is limited. While the program was certainly widely spread throughout the ancient world, some of the best accounts and documentation of the system exist in the histories of the Spartan, Greek, and Roman empires. Within these different cultures there were several permutations of the structure of the ephebia, yet numerous similarities can still be found. The origins of the ephebia lie in citizenship and military service. In the early years, young men were obligated to train as ephebes and complete a mandatory term in the military as a part of earning the coveted status awarded to full citizens. Transitions away from the influence of militaristic cultures like Sparta meant “intellectual culture came to be included more and more in its curriculum.”⁴⁹ Sport and competition remained important for the Greeks who held annual competitions for the ephebes, yet history reveals a growing dedication to a “wide syllabus” including literature, rhetoric, philosophy and the sciences.

For the purposes of the this paper, the ephebia will act as an important touchstone for the observations about traditions in education, the liberal arts, and how these may inform modern leadership studies programs like the Jepson School and the McDonough Center. It will serve as a site for discussion about many of the themes and topics that persist throughout the history of education including notions of class, leadership, morality, and citizenship. Perhaps due to the ambiguity of the remaining information, the perceptions of the success or value of the ephebia is open to interpretation. Henri Marrou’s account of education in antiquity positions the system as a

⁴⁸ *ibid*

⁴⁹ *ibid*

major player in our historical and contemporary understandings of education, yet leaves it up to the individual to determine whether it is “a model to be copied or as an error to be avoided.”⁵⁰ As with many other readings of liberal approaches to education there is both merit and cause for concern in the attempt to cultivate knowledge about a wide range of subjects.

Leadership, in recent history, has increased in popularity, visibility, and in some ways transformed into a growing industry. At nearly every level of business, politics, and education questions of leadership regarding origin, legitimacy, influence, and effect have generated considerable discussion and debate. Perhaps the most significant argument concerns the education of the leaders and questions about whether or not they can be taught, who should be leading, and what they should be learning. Jonathan Doh posed similar questions to a panel of professors with business backgrounds to gain insight into the general understanding of leadership as an academic field of study. Responses included the general consensus that leadership can be taught, with “differences in their views regarding how successfully leadership skills can be developed through formal courses and coaching.”⁵¹ Other thoughts “were that such programs should be highly practical, include training or coaching from practitioners, that students may learn as much or more from failures in leadership as they would in attempting to replicate successes.”⁵² These questions attempt to construct the challenge that arises from ambiguity and complexity of learning about leadership and developing leaders. Answers would almost certainly vary if Doh conducted interviews with politicians or professionals or academics with expertise unrelated to business. The division and appropriation of leadership studies by various disciplines

⁵⁰ Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, 297.

⁵¹ Jonathan P. Doh. "Can Leadership Be Taught? Perspectives From Management Educators." *Academy Of Management Learning & Education* 2.1 (2003): 54-67. *Business Source Complete*. Web.

⁵² *ibid*

has led to programs that are not necessarily inaccurate or inferior, but instead geared to “different learning outcomes claiming the same result – a student who has earned at least minimal competency in the practice of leadership.”⁵³ Barbara Kellerman’s contributions to the leadership field are extensive, yet she expresses a profound concern for the “gap between the teaching of leadership and the practice of leadership.” She maintains that countless books, blogs, courses, and concentrations have “brought us no closer to leadership nirvana than we were previously; that we don’t have much better an idea of how to grow leaders, or of how to stop or at least slow bad leaders, than we did a hundred or even a thousand years ago.”⁵⁴ To address these fundamental problems that exist in the vast majority of current institutions, the motivating social factors and intent behind these leadership studies programs should be reevaluated. That individuals “ought also to know in what manner freemen ought to govern, as well as be governed...[as] the duty of a good man,”⁵⁵ seems to move in the right direction to ameliorate Kellerman’s grievances with the current trend of education in leadership.

The cause of these challenges to the study of leadership can be attributed to numerous factors; however, careful observation of what and how we choose to study leadership would be a worthy use of our time. An understanding of today’s leaders and citizens more generally requires an understanding of the types of education these individuals are receiving. In antiquity, leaders were still trained and tutored yet, instead of the acquisition of tools and techniques required to lead, they were educated in a wide range of disciplines that developed the individual rather than the politician or the soldier exclusively. The arc of the liberal arts in education begins with the

⁵³ David M. Rosch and Michelle L. Kusel. "Bottom Line: What Do We Mean When We Talk About 'Leadership?'" *About Campus* 15.5 (2010): 29-32. Academic Search Complete. Web.

⁵⁴ Kellerman, Barbara. *The End of Leadership*. New York: Harper Business, 2012.

⁵⁵ Aristotle, A. D. Lindsay, and William Ellis. *Politics: A Treatise on Government - Translated from the Greek of Aristotle*. London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1931.
<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/6762/6762-h/6762-h.htm>.

great minds of Ancient Greece and Rome and continues on to contemporary institutions of higher education. Along the way this educational approach has shifted and adapted to reflect the changes in the needs and the values of society. Throughout this evolution, preparation for citizenship has been a driving force and inherent in that process is the development of leaders as well. In the following pages, I will analyze the multitude of topics, theories, and methods that culminate in the unique tradition of the liberal arts education. After taking into consideration the history and values of this tradition I will observe how the liberal arts can inform modern leadership studies programs. Through the comparison of several existing institutions, most importantly The Jepson School of Leadership Studies at the University of Richmond, I will draw conclusions about the application to varying degrees of the liberal arts and the associated positive and negative effects.

Chapter One

The following pages will observe the evolution of the liberal arts from antiquity to contemporary times and further consider how this system both can and should inform modern leadership studies programs at today's universities. An adequate analysis of such rich historical content begins first by defining and clarifying the key terms and topics that will be at the core of the future commentary in this paper. While these systems have been renamed and revised numerous times since their conception in antiquity, the general curriculum and methods have remained, at least in part, consistent and in tact. The longevity and timeless quality of not only the disciplines but the teaching methods mean that the liberal arts as originally conceived in ancient times can still be useful in our modern curricula. Indeed, there are educational scholars who wish to reinstate these classic methods in truer form, as with Mortimer Adler's *The Paideia Proposal*.⁵⁶

Defining and Differentiating Systems of Education

Fittingly, the *paideia* is perhaps the most important system of education in the antiquities to study. *Paideia* is often translated to mean education in the most general sense; yet, such an abbreviated definition fails to capture the objective of the Greek *paideia* and, more broadly, the objective of education in antiquity. Truthfully, a singular agreed upon definition of what constitutes the *paideia* is difficult to come by and the various cultures and classrooms that implemented this method throughout history would likely describe slightly different and unique interpretations of the same core idea. The phrase *enkyklios paideia* is often used interchangeably to further emphasize the completeness of this general education, with *enkyklios* referring to

⁵⁶ Mortimer Adler, *The Paideia Proposal: An Educational Manifesto* (New York: Macmillan, 1982).

something that is circular or recurrent.⁵⁷ The fact that the paideia is deliberately structured to be cyclical and compounding only lends greater significance and relevance to this terminology. Each topic prepared students with the knowledge and skills necessary for the next step in their education and lessons typically referred back to or expanded upon prior instruction. Though abiding by the guidelines of the paideia meant subjects had to be presented in a clear order, different teaching styles, abilities, and students, meant that the order was subject to change.⁵⁸ As previously stated the use of the paideia was both widespread and varied throughout Greek and Roman antiquity especially, and typically incorporated some combination of rhetoric, grammar, philosophy, music, gymnastics, and mathematics among other disciplines.⁵⁹ The following selection from Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* provides a fitting example of the interrelated nature of topics in elementary education.

For the art of writing is combined with that of speaking, and correct reading precedes interpretation...Nor is it sufficient to have read the poets only; every kind of writer must be carefully studied, not merely for the subject matter, but for the vocabulary...Nor can such training be regarded as complete if it stop short of music, for the teacher of literature has to speak of metre and rhythm: nor again if he be ignorant of astronomy, can he understand the poets; for they, to mention no further points, frequently give their indications of time by reference to the rising and setting of the stars. Ignorance of philosophy is an equal drawback, since there are numerous passages in almost every poem based on the most intricate questions of natural philosophy.⁶⁰

As the understanding of one subject proved mutually beneficial to comprehension in other disciplines, so would the diversity of topics provided in a student's education prove beneficial to their overall development and preparation for life outside of school. "True

⁵⁷ Raffaella Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 129.

⁵⁸ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 161.

⁵⁹ paideia. Dictionary.com. © Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc.. Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc.. <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/paideia>

⁶⁰ Quintilian "Institutio Oratoria," trans. H.E. Butler (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920), 63.

education means the awakening of abilities asleep in the soul. It starts the functioning of the organ by which we learn and understand... it turns the soul round to the source from which light (knowledge) flows.”⁶¹ This awakening is of course achieved through the teaching of core subjects and practices deemed most valuable or useful for the present and future lives of students, but extends far beyond the intellectual as well. A primary aim of the *paideia* is the cultivation of the entire being, including the body and spirit in addition to the mind. Plato delineated two branches of education that addressed these facets, gymnastics and music respectively. Within each of these categories existed a variety of lessons and examples that would contribute to the productivity and ability of the students. Wrestling ensures physical health and fitness as well as serving as a valuable precursor to military training whereas music instills beauty and creativity in the soul.⁶²

Exceeding the capacity of imparting knowledge and reasoning among the students, the *paideia* had significant cultural implications. *Paideia* can also be translated as “child-rearing,” stemming from the Greek word for child *pais*. Thus, inherent in this system is the responsibility of raising a child, and not just in the ways of books and mathematics, but also in the rights, duties, and customs of being a citizen of his state and nation. Though at times this multi-faceted approach to education may seem overly complicated, the core values of ancient culture provide clarity and purpose. In the eyes of the Greeks education and culture were synonymous, which establishes an inherent link between education, the preservation of culture, and claims to citizenship. Raffaella Cribiore claimed that “life imitated school,” explaining that the Greek approach to school did not separate education and the rest of life into the rigid categories or

⁶¹ Werner Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideal of Greek Culture, Volume II*. Translated by Gilbert Highet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1945), 295.

⁶² Plato. "Book VII." In *Plato's Laws*, translated by Benjamin Jowett. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1750/1750-h/1750-h.htm>.

timelines that we rely on today, but rather the values were assimilated by students and became central to their way of life. Arguably, as school preceded entrance into the public sphere, school was designed to imitate life rather than the other way around. Children begin their education and during their time in school learn the lessons and customs necessary to be successful adults, engaging in “a slow vegetable growth that affected people through the course of their lives and embraced more than the purely intellectual.”⁶³ The paideia was not only about learning numbers and letters but it was also an important period of social development.

The connection between training both the mind and the body also carried over into the *progymnasmata*. Essentially, “the *progymnasmata* were a gymnastic training for the mind, true to the root sense of the verb *gymnazô*, shaping it for certain activities just as athletics shaped the body.”⁶⁴ Largely similar to the general paideia in theory and in practice, the *progymnasmata* is associated most closely with the education and cultivation of rhetorical skills and techniques for future orators. Many of the most renowned names in ancient times are those of scholars, yes, but brilliant rhetoricians and orators as well. The writing of Cicero, Quintilian, and Isocrates together form a prolific collection of works dedicated to the art of speech, dialogue, and presentation among other topics dedicated to language. The *progymnasmata* mimicked the organization of the paideia, beginning with the simplest concepts pertinent to effect speaking and listening before providing greater challenges to the students. In fact, the *progymnasmata* likely depended heavily on the progress a student achieved in their early years of the paideia as these exercises “formed the transition from the study of grammar and the reading of texts – the domain of the

⁶³ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 243-244.

⁶⁴ Ruth Webb, “Progymnasmata as Practice,” in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity* 2001, ed. Yun Lee Too (Boston: Brill), 292.

grammarian – to writing and speaking.”⁶⁵ Not only would students need fundamental reading and writing skills, but they would also need an introduction to topics across a wide range of subjects that were valuable for the construction of the arguments and opinions.

Each of these systems is a precursor to the liberal arts in some shape or form. Liberal may mean general or all encompassing in our contemporary vernacular but the etymology of the word is the Greek term *liber* meaning free. The liberal arts then were exclusive to the privileged or free men of society and different from the servile arts, which referred to manual labor and positions reserved for slaves and inferior members of the community. Differentiating between the liberal and servile arts requires additional distinctions between the types of knowledge or education required for certain positions. In short it requires a decision regarding what is and is not art, an argument that is particularly important to the proper categorization of a subject or discipline as a *techné*. The actual meaning of *techné* as art is lost in translation; rather than signifying “individual creation subject to no rules,” *techné* is meant to encompass “any profession based on special knowledge—not only painting and sculpture, architecture and music, but just as much, or even more, medicine, strategy, or helmsmanship.”⁶⁶ In opposition to this concept of art is *episteme*, or knowledge. Plato leads readers to believe that these two labels are synonymous in *Gorgias*, or that at the very least *episteme* is a required component of *techné*.⁶⁷ Aristotle, distinguished *techné* and *episteme* in his five intellectual virtues outlined in *Nicomachean Ethics*, where they translate to art and scientific knowledge respectively. The technical aspect of

⁶⁵ *ibid* 289

⁶⁶ Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture, Volume II: In Search of the Divine Centre*, 129-130.

⁶⁷ Richard Parry. "Episteme and Techne", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2008 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/episteme-techne/>>.

techné endures as an art considered “identical with a state of capacity to make.”⁶⁸ Scientific knowledge is appropriately described as rational and concrete such that “every science is thought to be capable of being taught, and its object of being learned.”⁶⁹ The possession of both in conjunction with the remaining intellectual virtues, practical wisdom, philosophic wisdom, and intuitive reason, allow the soul to possess truth.

The subjects that were first outlined in the early examples of the paideia and *progymnasmata* were eventually compiled into what we now traditionally understand to be the liberal arts. In lieu of their Roman and Greek roots, the first reference to these disciplines as the seven liberal arts or *septem artes liberales* is credited to Martianus Capella in the fifth century with the publication of *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii* (On the Marriage of Philology and Mercury).⁷⁰ The Middle Ages were a critical time in the history of education as the learning objectives and aims of the liberal arts took on a significantly more religious tone. The seven liberal arts were also organized into two branches to reflect the focus of the disciplines themselves. The trivium, geared towards language, consisted of rhetoric, grammar, and logic. The quadrivium housed the mathematic and scientific subjects: arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music. Interestingly, some definitions allude to the idea that quadrivium is the “advanced” division of the liberal arts,⁷¹ yet is far less well documented in the publications of the time period. “The real secular education of the Middle Ages was the trivium.”⁷² As the subjects included in the trivium were each deemed necessary to the understanding of Scripture, which was then the

⁶⁸ Aristotle, “Nicomachean Ethics, Book VI” 350 BCE, translated by WD Ross, <<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.6.vi.html>>

⁶⁹ *ibid*

⁷⁰ Bruce A. Kimball, *Orators & Philosophers: A History of the Idea of Liberal Education* (New York: Teachers College Press), 31.

⁷¹ “Quadrivium,” *Random House Unabridged Dictionary*, 2nd ed.

⁷² Kimball, *Orators & Philosophers*, 35.

primary intent of education, perhaps the quadrivium was perceived as valuable, if potentially problematic content. Knowledge of the natural sciences would have been at odds with and threatened to undermine the religious doctrines of the church. Most important to note in the continuation of the liberal arts tradition is the flexibility and creativity offered by this system of education. The core remained the same, but from the foundation of the seven liberal arts “variety was introduced in the personalities and level of scholarship of the teachers,” through the introduction of different Saints and pieces of history. Such license is a trademark of the liberal arts both in antiquity and in present day. The following chapters will explicate key themes that emerge in the study of the liberal arts throughout history. While the core subjects are central to an understanding of a liberal arts education, more important are the objectives of such an education in preparing competent humans and intelligent citizens capable of drawing on their diversified knowledge in a variety of contexts.

Chapter Two

Primary Education in the Paideia

If we cannot do justice to the history of the liberal arts without starting at the beginning, we can no more adequately discuss the process of a liberal education without acknowledging the beginning of that journey as well. The previous section established that the paideia was designed to provide a comprehensive and diverse introduction to education. Fittingly, the etymology of the term *paideia* can also be traced back to the rearing of a child. Thus, this singular notion envelops both the content and manner of the child’s development. The importance of beginning education at an early age is a common theme in Plato’s *Republic* and Erasmus’ thoughts *On Education for Children* and yet is equally relevant to the musings of Mortimer Adler on contemporary

education and the need for a reinvigorated commitment to a model grounded in the liberal arts. Throughout history education embodied a more holistic approach such as a stronger commitment to the morality and physical well-being of the students than it does today. Modern schooling relies on standardized curricula and placement exams to set thresholds and specific time constraints for attaining certain levels of knowledge. Though Plato and his academic successors followed general guidelines for the introduction of various values and subjects, they were far more cognizant and respectful of the greater purpose of schooling. More than just numbers, letters, and history, education served as a touchstone for all future human development of mind, body, and spirit. This developmental process was as valuable to the maintenance of the society and culture as it was to the individual, and as such was presented in a way that encouraged a lifetime of knowledge acquisition and personal growth.

Plato's name is in many ways synonymous with ancient models of education. In addition to the legacy of his renowned Academy, his surviving works provide valuable insight into the style and structure of education that he believed to be the most appropriate and advantageous for his students. In Plato's writing, the importance of the student's age and impressionability is established, key factors that will prove pertinent for future scholars. Following the guidelines of the paideia and the underlying principle that fundamentals must precede more advanced skills, the intellectual journey was meant to begin soon after a child was born. Children, born free of vice and worldly imperfections, still possessed basic animal instincts that could not be left unchecked for "in infancy more than at any other time the character is ingrained by habit."⁷³ Thus it was imperative that a child be exposed to all that was good and virtuous while at the same time remain protected from anything that was mean or evil. Indeed Plato continues on in

⁷³ Plato's Laws, Book VII

his *Laws* to speculate whether or not it was ridiculous to suggest that pregnant women should be “kept from violent or excessive pleasures and pains, and should at that time cultivate gentleness and benevolence and kindness.”⁷⁴ Such careful consideration was important for the protection of the child’s soul in addition to his body.

Plato’s education desired to produce citizens with harmonious souls or natures. His ideal specimen was the guardian, who was both temperate and courageous and charged with guiding and protecting the state. The development of these characters required a balanced education that incorporated physical and mental components, or gymnastics and music. Each field was responsible for developing a part of an individual’s character. Overindulgence in either gymnastics or music would lead to an inharmonious soul, someone who was either hard and savage or soft and effeminate.⁷⁵ The development of strong bodies, though important to early primary education, was not the central focus of Plato’s paideia; instead he believed “not that the good body by any bodily excellence improves the soul, but, on the contrary, that the good soul, by her own excellence, improves the body as far as this may be possible.”⁷⁶ Music, encompassing literature, letters, and rhythm, was an appropriate means of cultivating a good and virtuous soul. Before a child could even read on his own he could hear stories from nurses and mothers. These too were to be censored to prevent young children from hearing and adopting poor lessons and habits, which they would need to avoid or unlearn as adults.⁷⁷ The upbringing and education of a child were to be seamless and consistent, instilling values and lessons that would introduce virtue into the soul and prepare them as active citizens.

⁷⁴ *ibid*

⁷⁵ Plato. *Plato's Republic*, Book III

⁷⁶ *ibid*, Book III

⁷⁷ *ibid*, Book II

The timeline for the recommended lessons is incomplete based on the level of detail provided in Plato's discussion of the general paideia and early education. A far more descriptive outline of education is delineated in his later discussion of the guardians. For those elites, he projects the progress of their studies at twenty, thirty, even fifty years of age. Such a lengthy commitment to cultivating these individuals suggested the importance of providing a robust education for social elites, which will be discussed later in greater detail, and the relevance of liberal education beyond childhood. He does mention that a child of ten years should spend about three years on his letters.⁷⁸ Learning to read was an important milestone in a child's education as it opened the door to the study of an abundance of subjects. Prior to this age the child may be in the care of his parents or be meeting in the local church in co-educational classrooms.⁷⁹ A young child may not yet be ready for formal tutoring but he was still capable of self-improvement through non-academic pursuits. A child's game play cannot be underestimated as it is often a mimicry of and preparation for their future roles. If a boy is going to imitate the individuals he sees in his childhood, then it is of even greater importance to guard him from unsatisfactory role models and to expose him to behaviors that are suitable to his intended profession.⁸⁰

Aristotle too understands the importance of play and amusement in the early years of an individual's life. The core subjects in the paideia, reading and writing, gymnastics, music and even drawing, all serve the purpose of cultivating a particular facet of the individual student. Aristotle likely interpreted the content of music differently from Plato when he singled the branch out as an object of pleasure. He described that music is relevant to education "because

⁷⁸ *ibid*, Book VII

⁷⁹ Werner Jaeger, *Paideia: the Ideals of Greek Culture, Volume 3-The Conflict of Cultural Ideals in the Age of Plato*, trans. Gilbert Highet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1945), 250.

⁸⁰ Plato. *Plato's Republic*, Book III

nature herself...requires that we should be able not only to work well, but to use leisure well.”⁸¹ Leisure is the absence of work⁸², something that Aristotle associates with the illiberal or servile arts. To have leisure meant to have time to dedicate to the liberal arts and the subjects worthy of a freeman. Both Plato and Aristotle agreed that the simultaneous training of the mind and body was difficult, as focus on one sphere hindered progress in the other, and should be alternated during the course of a student’s education.⁸³ Unlike his tutor, however, Aristotle championed the physical development of his new students above their mental development, “both to form their bodies and teach them their exercises.”⁸⁴ Further explanations as to why the needs of the body were so significant will come in later discussions regarding the qualities of leadership, power, and citizenship established in Greek and Roman antiquity.

Aristotle established gymnastics as a pillar in children’s education. Certainly the physical components are central to the paideia, especially in certain military states like Sparta. The physical side is just one piece of a man and not even the most important characteristic of his person. Philosophers, academics, and scholars define man based on his ability for complex thought and reason. This intellectual prowess is what separates man from beast, not his physical accomplishments. Erasmus, too, comments on the physical status of mankind when he considers the education of children. Nature has left man’s body “weak, naked, and defenseless”⁸⁵ yet she equipped his mind with phenomenal intellectual potential. This inherent academic capacity is similar to the eye of the soul Plato describes in *The Republic*, insisting that knowledge already

⁸¹ Aristotle, *Politics: A Treatise on Government - Translated from the Greek of Aristotle*, Book VIII, Chapter III

⁸² Joanne Ciulla. Chapter 11. In *Working Life: The Promise and Betrayal of Modern Work*. (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2000).

⁸³ Aristotle. *Politics*, Book VII, Chapter IV.; Plato. *The Republic*, Book VII.

⁸⁴ Aristotle. *Politics*, Book VII, Chapter III.

⁸⁵ Erasmus "On Education for Children," in *The Erasmus Reader*, edited by Erika Rummel, 65-100. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

exists in the soul and that education can help to improve and enrich the soul.⁸⁶ Notably, Plato explains that the entire body is needed to turn the eye towards the light, providing yet another example of the codependent relationship between the mind and the body. Drawing inspiration from Aristotle, Erasmus specifies that human happiness can be accomplished with a combination of natural ability, proper instruction, and actual experience. Any one without the others would be insufficient. Unbridled raw potential could lead to mistakes and vice, whereas practice alone does not guarantee success in the absence of training or talent. Here Erasmus outlines what can be viewed as three stages of a liberal education. The natural ability mirrors Plato's myth of the soul and other elitist approaches to education. Proper instruction is clearly the *paideia*, a well-rounded cycle of formal education. Last, actual experience is the practice and application of the lessons learned as a student. Education can lead to human happiness through the preparation of individuals for adulthood and active participation in the community.⁸⁷ The majority of his book focuses on how to impart the knowledge to children rather than what specific subjects should be covered in the classroom. Games for instance were an important precursor to formal education but also had value in the teaching process as well. He recommended the incorporation of some amusements as a way of making lessons more enjoyable to young students. One clever father used archery targets in the form of alphabet letters as a means of teaching his son Greek and Latin during his favorite activity.⁸⁸ Yet again, there is the engagement of both the mind and the body in the cultivation of a student's intellect.

Michel de Montaigne was forthcoming about the challenges of devising and executing the appropriate lesson plan for young people, remarking "that the greatest and the most important

⁸⁶ Plato. *The Republic*, Book VII.

⁸⁷ Erasmus, "On Education for Children," 77.

⁸⁸ *ibid* 98

difficulty known to human learning seems to lie in that area which treats how to bring up children and how to educate them.”⁸⁹ He was however, accurate in targeting students in their childhood, as education was best shared and absorbed from an early age. Plato said be careful about who a child has the opportunity to imitate, Montaigne urged his aristocratic companion to be thoughtful in the selection of a tutor, placing “character and intelligence before knowledge,”⁹⁰ as the success of her son’s education rested on the skills of the tutor. Virtue should be a priority at every stage from the selection of a wife and mother, to the choosing of nursemaid who should possess a moral character, and to the selection of an adequate tutor.⁹¹ People’s future depended on the attentiveness of their parents and the types of characters and experiences that they were exposed to in their childhood. To stress the importance of investing time and money into a child’s education, Erasmus chastised parents who ensured the training of their horses and servants before that of their own child.⁹² Montaigne fully embraces the methodology of the *paideia* and encourages tutors to have students demonstrate their understanding and “whether he has really grasped it and made it part of himself”⁹³ rather than simply regurgitating the information. This manner of teaching emphasizes the potential in the liberal arts for abstract topics to provide concrete skills such as critical thinking and eloquence.

Mortimer Adler is among the present-day proponents for the traditional *paideia* model of education. He approves of the diversity of the curriculum but resists any “ordering of the departments of knowledge or the fields of learning that is hierarchical or that is ascending or descending in a scale of values involving judgments about what is more or less fundamental,

⁸⁹ Michel de Montaigne and M. A. Screech. *The essays: a selection* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), 41.

⁹⁰ *ibid*, 42.

⁹¹ Erasmus “On Education for Children,” 65-100.

⁹² Erasmus, “On Education for Children,” 71.

⁹³ Montaigne, 43.

important, or significant...”⁹⁴ Rearranging and editing the curriculum to compile a narrow list of the right subjects is in opposition to a truly liberal and general education. Further, a confined set of topics and lessons suggests that education can be construed as a finite process. A set curriculum establishes a definitive beginning and end, as if completing a certain number of predetermined lessons or unit hours entitled a student to claim all-encompassing knowledge. Paideia may be associated with raising a child but, unlike the body which “does not continue to grow after eighteen or twenty years of life,” the “mental, moral, and spiritual growth can go on and should go on for a lifetime.”⁹⁵ Neither Plato, nor Aristotle, nor other prominent education scholars have made the argument that one individual can comprehend every subject available to him. Thus a true liberal education is never completely finished, but an ongoing and evolving process. One individual cannot claim to comprehend each and every subject available to him, In order for a lifetime of fruitful learning and studies, a child must first have the opportunity to attend school and receive the proper education. In his *Paideia Proposal*, Adler suggests that in recent scenarios students are entering school when they are too old and therefore less impressionable or open to education, which inhibits them from reaching their full potential. Ancient practices demonstrate how a child’s education began from the earliest of ages, with opportunities for learning found in stories, games, and songs. Regardless of their background, children were developed or educated based on their exposure to certain role models, behaviors, and values. All children are impressionable, yet not all children come from families with access to expensive tutors and schools. Beyond the influence of the their upper class upbringing, elite

⁹⁴ Mortimer J. Adler, *A Guidebook to Learning: For the Lifelong Pursuit of Wisdom* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986), 90-91.

⁹⁵ Adler, *The Paideia Proposal*, 10.

members of society benefitted greatly from the rigorous formal education available to them based on their social status.

Chapter Three

A proper education is allegedly one that begins in childhood and spans decades to enrich both the mind and the soul and create a complete man. An education of this caliber requires time, energy, and certainly financial means. For the aforementioned reasons education, at least a high-quality education, has often been limited to the upper classes of societies. Throughout history students were young men who had the good fortune of not having to work, but also those who were predestined based on birth or station to be future cultural and political leaders. The previous chapter outlined the basic *paideia* that an average student may be able to secure through a combination of home tutoring as well as attendance in an academic institution. Particularly in an Athenian democracy, the success of the nation depended on an educated voting population capable of understanding, enacting, and abiding by policies. The representative structure of the assembly demanded citizens who were knowledgeable enough to speak and vote on important matters of state. This was the expectation for the average member of the voting polis. Individuals in positions of greater power, most commonly elites, would have been held to even higher standards as those who introduced such matters to the rest of the assembly. An aristocratic pedigree may have gained them an authoritative title, but the skills necessary to fulfill such a role were not always inherent. Future kings, lawmakers, and democratic rulers were subjected to rigorous training to ensure their preparedness for important leadership roles. As far back as Confucius, the belief that “the government and administration of the state should be exclusively

entrusted to a moral and intellectual elite of gentlemen,”⁹⁶ forged a strong connection between education and power. The manner in which the upper class was defined varied based on the system of government and social structure, however, the idea that a specialized or advanced curriculum was required to train elites endured across centuries from Plato in 4th century BCE Greece to C. Wright Mills in 1950s America.

Education for Elites

The existence of class systems dividing the inferior from the superior is not a foreign concept in human history. Education is among the systems and resources that can widen the gap between these social and economic groups. Even in Plato’s utopian *Republic* a class system emerged; more involved than a line of nobility based on birth, his elite class was singled out by virtue of the content and quality of their soul. The *Republic* explains Plato’s well-known explanation of the soul, which in effect is that which makes one human.⁹⁷ The myth describes that individuals are born with one of three metals incorporated in their soul and that this will determine their role in society. To maintain this ordered class structure Plato’s myth dictates that certain members of society should marry and have children to ensure the purity of future souls, particularly for those born with gold souls representing the mark of a guardian. In keeping with the idea that education and upbringing still played a role however, it was possible that a child with the potential for a more virtuous and desirable soul than his parents should immediately be sequestered and raised under the proper conditions so as to establish the correct virtues. This distinguishing feature is further enhanced based on the differences in the systems of education designed for the guardians rather than the average citizen for the “guardians who have been

⁹⁶ Confucius, *The Analects*, trans. Simon Leys (New York : W.W. Norton, 1997.), Introduction.

⁹⁷ Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, “Ancient Theories of Soul,”
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ancient-soul/>.

brought up on [a] model system” are both inherently and intellectually more perfect than “the cobblers whose education has been cobbling.”⁹⁸ The guardians were designated as the fairest and noblest of the humans present in that society. In his analysis of the Greek paideia, Werner Jaeger clarified “if the rule of the best men and women is to be founded on the best education, the best education in its turn demands the best natural abilities.”⁹⁹ Plato further explains this in his discussion of selecting rulers with the appropriate qualities from the elite class. He explained that preference should be given to those with the most desirable tempers and obvious strengths of character, as well as “natural gifts which will facilitate their education.”¹⁰⁰ Without natural aptitude and zeal for learning, they would be incapable of enduring and excelling in the demanding course of study outlined for them in the dialogue of the *Republic*. The lessons and subjects incorporated in their development were designed with the intent to prepare them as both warriors and philosophers. Beyond the basics of music and gymnastics, guardians were to become proficient in geometry and astronomy to serve both purposes and to draw the soul towards truth and eternal knowledge.¹⁰¹

In his *Treatise on Government*, Aristotle considered the various styles of government, including monarchy, oligarchy, and democracy. The divisions of social classes and the distribution of resources and opportunities varies within each of these systems, thus his explanation of differing educations for different social classes is less explicit than some. He acknowledged that some of his contemporaries “affirm that the education of those who are intended to command should, from the beginning, be different from other citizens...as if those

⁹⁸ Plato. *Plato's Republic*, Book V

⁹⁹ Jaeger, *Paideia* vol 2, 247

¹⁰⁰ Plato, *Plato's Republic*, Book VII

¹⁰¹ *ibid*

who are to rule were to have an education peculiar to themselves.”¹⁰² His stance on the need for a specialized education is inconclusive, perhaps because he is unable to definitively express which system of government among the monarchy, aristocracy, and free state or democracy is the most preferable. The future political and civic demands likely contributed to the type of education required during an individual’s formative years. Aristotle allowed that “what is necessary ought to be taught to all: but that which is necessary for one is not necessary for all.” Differentiating between freemen and slaves, liberal and illiberal subjects are divided between these two social categories respectively. While a primary concern is that freeman must avoid work that makes the spirit mean and deforms the body, the intent or objective of studying is also influential to determining whether a topic is properly liberal. According to his *Politics*, “it is not illiberal to engage in [art] for one's self, one's friend, or in the cause of virtue,”¹⁰³ meaning the intent of one’s studies was as relevant as the actual subject. Aristotle’s freemen were not just capable of engaging in leisurely activities, more importantly they were able to participate because their life was characterized by a freedom from the necessity of work and labor. Thus when Aristotle explains that certain men do not need to learn all subjects it applies to the elites who may avoid the technical and servile training as well as the slaves and laborers on whom a liberal arts education would be wasted. Leisure was not only indicative of one’s status based on his ability to avoid a career requiring manual labor, but the appropriate employment of leisure and rest was a secondary aim of a liberal education as well.

Xenophon’s *Education of Cyrus*, tells the story of the upbringing of young Persian soldier managing his leisure with education and military service. In effect the story can serve as an

¹⁰² Aristotle, *Politics: A Treatise on Government - Translated from the Greek of Aristotle*, Book III, Chapter IV

¹⁰³ *ibid*, Book VII, Chapter II.

outline of the appropriate education for an elite young man as well as a text that students can read as a part of their studies. Werner Jaeger is critical of how useful the tale is in providing insight into the elite curriculum. Despite the deceiving title, Jaeger is able to see how the “educational purpose” of the paideia is enacted in the story. Cyrus is portrayed as the “model monarch who gradually conquers his position both by his own right character and by right conduct.”¹⁰⁴ The Persian society, according to Xenophon’s recollection, is divided into four classes based on the age and level of military training accomplished. Jaeger also notes that while Xenophon mentions that social status no longer determined entrance into the school, “the [cadets] who went into it must have nearly all belonged to the landowning Persian aristocracy.”¹⁰⁵ As the biography unfolds, readers follow Cyrus’ progress through these stages. The elitist elements are evident from the beginning as his father teaches the young Cyrus “the ruler should be marked out from other men, not by taking life easily, but by his forethought and his wisdom and his eagerness for work.” The education that follows demonstrates an eagerness to develop skills and knowledge not just for the sake of mastery but also such that he can someday “achieve some noble end.”¹⁰⁶ As he practices more and receives better training, the distinctions between him and his peers become more pronounced and he steps into his role as a military and political ruler. Descriptions of the Persian system clearly demonstrate how the completion of each level of education creates a greater distinction between the elites and the rest of the population. Initially, students are only able to enter the system if they are not required to work, replicating Aristotle’s idea of freedom from necessity. Without this prerequisite education

¹⁰⁴ Jaeger, *Paideia: the Ideals of Greek Culture, Volume 3-The Conflict of Cultural Ideals in the Age of Plato*, 162.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*, 165.

¹⁰⁶ Xenophon, *Cyropaideia - The Education of Cyrus*, trans. Henry Graham Dakyns (New York: Gutenberg.org, 2009) http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2085/2085-h/2085-h.htm#2H_4_0004.

as a youth, students are then prevented from serving in the ranks of men, and without earning that honor they are exempt from the status of elders. The trajectory of an individual's life is thus determined from their first exposure to the "noble circle of learning," as that is the only means that would "win them the flower of excellence," and a position of power and authority in society.¹⁰⁷

C. Wright Mills, writing centuries after the fact, defined the American power elite as a class of their own, distinguished by more than superior wealth. In keeping with the description of Plato's guardians, Mills assessed the upper class members of society based on moral and psychological criteria, as "people of superior character and energy."¹⁰⁸ He also maintained the same belief that education was an equally valuable asset in securing the power elite's status and insuring future success in social, political, or commercial endeavors. Where tutors and scholars in antiquity described a desire to cultivate liberal men, Mills discussed the growing need across multiple industries for "broad-gauge men, that is, men capable of making decisions that involve institutional areas other than their own."¹⁰⁹ The terminology varies yet the salient points remain the same – the liberal arts tradition is alive and remains applicable. He did diverge from the ancients when he reflected on the modern system of education, which allegedly fell short of addressing the needs of these select few in preparation for service to society. The elites no longer had programs that allowed them to be "separated from the mediocre and given the best education possible to supply the country with leadership."¹¹⁰ The Ivy League institutions that bred the next generation of the elite, differed from the Academy, Lyceum, and other private academies founded in antiquity. These institutions allowed for the blurring rather than the sharpening of

¹⁰⁷ *ibid*

¹⁰⁸ Mills, *The Power Elite*, 13.

¹⁰⁹ *ibid*, 294-295.

¹¹⁰ *ibid*

social lines between elites and non-elites offering the same education to any enrolled student irrespective of background and complicating the ideas about leadership roles. Regardless of Mills' personal preferences on the separation of education, the cultivation of citizenship is inseparable from the liberal arts tradition and society consists of greater diversity than a community of elites.

Chapter Four

Military Training as Liberal Education for Citizenship

As this paper has provided a sufficient introduction and discussion of key themes and practices of the liberal arts, we now begin to weave these elements together. Now, by considering the values and aims of military training and service we can see a more advanced application of the liberal studies as we consider how this tradition manifests in higher education and the study of leadership specifically. In his extensive history of the liberal arts, Bruce Kimball recognized and questioned the prominent repetition of military metaphors and references in the discussion of a liberal education.¹¹¹ To provide some measure of explanation for Kimball's question, we must consider the significant role that military service played not only as a means of defense, but also as a factor in citizenship and the successful functioning of society. Military training is relevant both to an understanding of early systems of education as well as the study and development of leaders – a topic that will dominate the latter half of this paper. The military, its objectives and its values, are infused with aspects of citizenship and leadership. Additionally, there is the matter of how these military skills are taught and practiced that demonstrates its strong connection to the tradition of a liberal education.

¹¹¹ Kimball, *The Liberal Arts Tradition: A Documentary History*, 61.

Aristotle's *Politics* described the various styles of government and how these political structures influenced the definitions and rights of citizenship across ancient states. Instead of a universal military program, states approached the training and education of soldiers in various ways based on the needs and objectives of the individual community. Sparta, in particular, stands as an exemplary model of a military culture that defined citizenship, political engagement, and education. Sparta's military reflected the social and political environment of ancient Greece. Rather than the knights and warriors described in mythology, Spartan men were raised as soldiers serving a city-state both on and off the fields of battle. The frequency with which the state engaged in war demanded a capable citizenry that could conquer, defend, and maintain order. This specialized and dominant segment of the population, known as the Spartiates, was cultivated to be fully committed to the state and to military success. The Spartans placed a greater emphasis on physical education, already a central part in the more traditional *paideia*, because of their focus on the military. As a result, "very soon the boy began to do real military training as well as gymnastics, learning how to with others in formation, how to handle arms, how to fence and throw javelin and so on."¹¹² This system, known as the *agogē*, set the standard for formal physical training in Greece and was developed as early as the sixth century BC. During their upbringing, Spartan boys were exposed to "the most demanding training in military skills and the most unremitting discipline."¹¹³ Physical strength and military training are merely one part of this dichotomous status of the citizen-soldier. As an elite class of society, with

¹¹² *ibid* 44

¹¹³ Derek Heater, "The History of Citizenship Education: A Comparative Outline," *Parliamentary Affairs* 55, no. 3 (2002): 457

extensive training and education, spanning approximately from ages 7 to 30, Spartiates were also adequately equipped to participate in the Spartan political assembly.¹¹⁴

Elsewhere in Greece, the execution of military training programs took different forms. In Athens a system known as the *ephebia* marked a critical juncture in a young man's educational journey, signifying the right of passage or symbolic coming-of-age when he leaves behind his childhood for adulthood, public life and, the next step in his education.¹¹⁵ Around fourth century BC this system became more formalized as process of military training and service. The surviving details of the ephebic history and tradition are limited. Additionally, over centuries of existence the ephebia changed in structure, importance, and objective, which contributes to the presence of convoluted and, at times, conflicting accounts. Nevertheless, the ephebia represented a combination of elements of Greek education liberal arts, military training, and civic engagement as well as leadership. While Sparta indoctrinated future soldiers, Athens' military education was "introducing a balance of civilian elements."¹¹⁶ As this system continued to evolve, it became increasingly focused on the incorporation of intellectual elements such as literature and music and other aspects of the *paideia*'s liberal curriculum.¹¹⁷

Despite their differences in intensity and depth of training, at their roots the ephebia and the *agogē* were similar systems, and both fulfilled important roles in the social structure and function of the state. First and foremost these systems trained young men for their compulsory military service in the state. In conjunction with this militaristic objective, was the inseparable concept of civic education, or preparation for citizenship. Both systems educated and trained

¹¹⁴ "Sparta." *A Guide to the Ancient World*, HW. Wilson. Bronx: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1986.

¹¹⁵ Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, 315.

¹¹⁶ *ibid*

¹¹⁷ Saskia Hin, "Ephebe, Ephebia," *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, 1st ed. (Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2013)

young men during their transition from a non-citizen or partial citizen to a full member of the community, and their completion marked an important rite of passage. Based on the style of government and the political structure, the level of citizen involvement and influence varied. Sparta's program cultivated cadet-citizens, forging the link between military service and claims to citizenship, and giving Spartiates the dual responsibility of both defending and governing the state.¹¹⁸ Within the political sphere, the Spartiates enacted their civilian duties through participation in the elite and well-educated general assembly of citizens. Plato, however, questioned the balance of Spartan civic engagement given the singular focus of the state's education and political system with "regard to one part of virtue only- the virtue of the soldier, which gives victory in war."¹¹⁹ The Spartiates may have been charged with helping to create and execute the law and order of the state even at peace, but their skills and abilities would be limited because they "had never engaged in any employment higher than war."¹²⁰ Indeed, their advanced and elite upbringing still did not afford them the highest position in the Spartan government. Neither a democracy, nor a complete oligarchy, the citizens assembly had the power to annually elect the five leading officials, the ephors, from within the group and then submitted to their authority. Despite their previously equal status, during their term ephors were given a significant amount of power over the rest of the Spartan assembly and even had authority over the Spartan kings regarding some matters of state.¹²¹

Prior to serving their military term, the Athenian ephebes took the ephebic oath in which they too pledged loyalty and obedience to the state. This pledge "assumes that the responsibility

¹¹⁸ Heater, *The History of Citizenship Education*, 457; Derek Heater, *A Brief History of Citizenship* (Great Britain: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 8.

¹¹⁹ Aristotle "Politics: A Treatise on Government," Book II, Chapter IX, trans. Ben Jowett.

¹²⁰ *ibid*

¹²¹ Ephors. (2013). In *The Columbia Encyclopedia*.

for the defense of the country is implied in citizenship.”¹²² Within the ephebia, citizenship was both a pre-requisite and an objective, because a boy had to prove the citizenship of his parents in order to receive the training and complete the service that would in turn earn him a full range of rights in society. The majority of ephebic systems lasted only about 2 years, during which time young soldiers would be exempt from civic obligations such as taxes but were also prohibited from a voting role in the government.¹²³ Upon the completion of their term, they would gain entrance into the *ekklesia*, or general assembly. Athens never mastered a true democracy either, yet the political structure embodied more obvious democratic principles. Active members of the *ekklesia* participated in a direct democracy, voting in person on the decisions discussed at the meetings. More extensive than the political engagement offered to Spartiates, Athenian citizens would have still been subordinate to the control of The Council, a body composed of 500 representatives from each territory of the state.¹²⁴ Even this representative democratic system helps to explain the differences in the content and approach to the Athenian ephebia in contrast to the Spartan agogē. Military training was curtailed for ephebes not only because of a moderate military culture, but also because the inclusion of a more liberal education, as outlined in the *paideia*, would have better prepared and educated young men for their active political lives.

That is not to say, however, that military service was an obstacle to the development of well-rounded citizens. The concept of virtue or *arête*, encompassing moral and technical excellence, was a primary objective of the development of both citizens and soldiers. Aristotle delineated the virtues that would be valuable, if not required, for effective citizenship describing

¹²² John Wilson Taylor, “The Athenian Ephebic Oath,” *The Classical Journal* 13, no. 7 (Apr., 1918): 500.

¹²³ O. W. Reinmuth, “The Ephebate and Citizenship in Attica,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, Vol. 79, (1948): 212.

¹²⁴ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, s. v. “democracy,” accessed March 24, 2014, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/157129/democracy>.

the need for temperance, justice, courage, and wisdom. Even at the superficial level these virtues are representative of civilian and military ideals. Contrasting Plato's earlier criticisms of Sparta's ineptitude during peacetime, Aristotle indicated the social benefits of a military background. Upon returning from war soldier "gave themselves into the legislator's hand, already prepared by the discipline of a soldier's life (in which there are many elements of virtue), to receive his enactments."¹²⁵ Once established as a soldier, these values and experiences translated easily into fulfilling the obligations of a regular citizen.

In many ways, the ephebia, more so than the overly specific example provided by the agogē, can be interpreted as a microcosm of the patterns seen throughout liberal education more generally. The interplay of public versus elite education, the shifting balance of subjects and content, and the aims of education can all be observed within the context of this system. Within the ephebia itself, we can observe the wide range of components that are represented in the liberal education tradition. This chapter has emphasized the military service and training facet, yet inherently this system is still an educational institution incorporating the development of mental faculties through the study of philosophy, literature, and music and the introduction of political life and obligations through peer interaction in a formal context. The ephebia, like a general liberal education strived for the creation of a "physically sound individual, acquainted with the history, literature, thought, governmental structure, and religious aspirations of the people, a part of which he was to become."¹²⁶ Different accounts of the ephebia throughout its centuries of existence portray it at times to be an educational sect designated for the rich and powerful and later as a more inclusive system for the polis. Conceivably, a broader range of ephebes was beneficial to the overall educational experience. Within the ephebia itself the

¹²⁵ Aristotle, "Politics: A Treatise on Government," Book II, Chapter IX, trans. Benjamin Jowett.

¹²⁶ Reinmuth, "The Ephebate Citizenship in Attica," 230.

students' relationships mimicked the hierarchy of the state. "Sons of the rich could distinguish themselves from their fellow ephebes who stood a few rungs below them on the social ladder,"¹²⁷ by taking on positions of authority or special titles within their class. These classifications were made possible by a family's wealth or citizenship and compounded by the differences in education between elites and the rest of the polis. In addition to capping a student's education and providing them with the knowledge necessary for citizenship, the system also normalized the social and political roles that the students would adopt once they became full-fledged members of the community. At the conclusion of their ephebic process, the young Athenians should be fully versed in the virtues, physical skills, and knowledge required of a true citizen. Subsequently, the ephebia was reformed around 330 BC to focus more on academics that would enrich students' civic and moral education, though the details of these curriculum changes are not specified.¹²⁸ The ephebia was a means of cultivating the next generation of citizens in such a way that would maintain the success of the state, whether that be preserving the status quo through the internalization of norms or moving the population towards more democratic procedures by infusing the education with certain civic ideologies.

Additionally, the ephebia is an effective maneuver towards the discussion of higher education because of the intellectual component and leadership by way of the military training. As the "highest rung on the educational ladder,"¹²⁹ the ephebia is comparable to the earning of a degree at a college or university. Marrou described the system further highlighting the comparison:

¹²⁷ Saskia Hin, "Class and Society in the Cities of the Greek East," *Ancient Society* 37, (2007): 53.

¹²⁸ Josiah Ober, "The Debate Over Civic Education in Classical Athens," in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity 2001, The Best American Travel Writing*, ed. Yun Lee Too (Netherlands: Brill, 2008), 204.

¹²⁹ Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, 256

“They had a very wide syllabus, and it can only be described as ‘advanced’ in the sense that the ephebes had got beyond secondary school age and went to the ephebia after they had finished their secondary schooling, for one of the purposes...was to complete the literary culture which was absolutely central in Hellenistic secondary school education.”¹³⁰

From this example, the ephebia acts as a bridge connecting the paideia central to early education with the more advanced application and study of the liberal arts found in university. Like the ephebes, it is at this advanced stage in their studies when a student is able to apply and exercise their knowledge of core principle to more complex ideas and experiences. Not only was this physical training incorporated as a step in higher education, but the physical sites that hosted the ephebia and other military and civilian exercises, the *gymnasia*, also transformed over time to accommodate academic pursuits and philosophical studies as observed in the spaces at The Academy and the Lyceum.¹³¹ Similarly, the ephebia possessed greater cultural significance than just a means of defense and the promotion of virtues and excellence through military training. As representatives of the ideal model of Greek citizenship, ephebes contributed to a broader civic education and spirit.

Chapter Five

Liberal Civic Education for the General Public

Historical accounts of education prove that in many contexts education has been decidedly elitist and exclusive. Yet, individuals in lower social strata also had to be raised and educated, at least to some degree. A more careful consideration reveals that useful knowledge could be developed independent of formal institutions, curricula, and teachers. Perhaps, the

¹³⁰ *ibid* 257

¹³¹ John Patrick Lynch "Gymnasium." In *Encyclopedia of Classical Philosophy*. Westport: Greenwood, 1997.

process and content of this general education is of equal or greater importance. By general I mean to encompass both the general population as the beneficiaries and well as a non-specific, wide-ranging program of study. Education on a broader scale becomes increasingly relevant as the social and political atmosphere shifts towards egalitarian and democratic values. We see the concepts of public education thrive in democracies, like the United States, where the people are not only eligible but expected to participate and contribute to the government. In some countries, prior to formalized, public elementary and higher education, the public received a liberal and civic education in open public forums. Dramas, lectures, and even public military ceremonies for the ephebia exposed the average individual to the values and expectations of citizenship. These academic displays evolved from ancient dramatic festivals to the American lecture circuits of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Annually Greek theatres would host a festival in honor of the god, Dionysus. The Great Dionysia was a momentous, cultural ceremony with military, civic, religious, and artistic undertones overlapping during the course of several days.¹³² Importantly, this was not merely a celebration but rather a valuable opportunity for residents of the state to converge on a cultural hub like Athens and partake in intellectually stimulating content. Fourteen thousand individuals allegedly flocked to Athens to join the festivities, of which an estimated 6,000 of them were citizens and members of the Assembly.¹³³ The large size of the audience indicates that the majority of participants were not elites. As a civic duty and right, participation in this festival was significant not only for reaffirming one's place in the community, but also in expanding their civic knowledge and engagement. The theoric fund offered subsidies for poorer citizens to

¹³² Simon Goldhill, "The Great Dionysia and Civic Ideology," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 107, (The Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies): 58.

¹³³ Derek W.M. Barker, *Tragedy and Citizenship: Conflict, Reconciliation, and Democracy from Haemon to Hegel* (Albany: University of New York Press, 2009), 12.

facilitate their inclusion in the productions, proving the inclusivity of this spectacle as a source of general education. Arguably, this helps to demonstrate that the Great Dionysia was better attended and “may have been even more democratic than the Assembly.”¹³⁴

Potentially the largest civil gathering in Athens, the involvement of influential political and military figures in the days’ events indicate additional purposes of the festival besides entertainment and amusement. Certainly, not all of the rituals and processions were for the sake of religious pomp and circumstance or idle entertainment, but rather “a public display of the success in military and political terms of the city. It used the state festival to glorify the state.”¹³⁵ Among these ceremonies was the recognition of the ephebes for their excellence in service to the state. From a practical perspective, this event acknowledged the completion of the ephebe’s training and military service and marked their rite of passage in becoming full citizens. Interestingly, this celebration was turned into a theatrical production for the benefit of the entire crowd so that it might instill a sense of patriotism or civic spirit in the audience. Highlighting the strengths and accomplishments of the state, “the whole audience is stimulated by such a ceremony to do service to the polis.”¹³⁶ Civic education and active citizen participation have already been established as a primary objective of a liberal arts education. Despite differences in social class, all citizens can contribute to the success of the polis and these festivals helped to reiterate the values needed to do so.

Most importantly the Great Dionysia centered on theatre and a competition of tragic plays. If we can consider the theatre itself as a quasi-academic space, then the Greek tragedies would be the academic content. Now to assert the scholarly value of this festival is not to claim

¹³⁴ *ibid*

¹³⁵ Goldhill, “The Great Dionysia and Civic Ideology,” 61.

¹³⁶ *ibid* 63

that it was a comparable in breadth or depth to an education received in formal institutions. Plays composed by Aristophanes and Sophocles did not explicate the basics of grammar and arithmetic. Rather, the intellectual benefits of these works is in the themes and messages that touched upon ethics, virtues, and politics and the fact that these ideas could be transmitted to a greater portion of the population. Tragic plays often incorporated lessons on reverence, justice, and good judgment, virtues that were “praised by the choruses, and when they [were] missing in the tyrants, the plays show that disaster is on the way.” *Antigone*’s tyrant Creon pays the price for his lack of reverence and poor decisions through the destruction of his own family.¹³⁷ Through the rise and fall of the plays characters, audiences were able to decipher what behaviors were desired, dangerous, or expected of an active Greek citizen.

The concrete subjects outlined in the paideia like astronomy, mathematics may have been absent, but that says nothing of the presence of grammar, poetry, and music. Implicitly many of these play incorporated traditional elements of a liberal education through the songs of the chorus and the dialogue of the actors. Furthermore, plays encouraged the thought and reflection useful to the framework of a fledgling democracy. Paul Woodruff explains how “the theater of Athens was about freedom and tyranny, law and religion, power and language, even gender and difference.”¹³⁸ Through this open forum, audience members were able to identify with and comment on the complexities of their social and political realities. Viewing these plays in many ways helped to reaffirm the culture and spirit of the state and “contributed to a developing moral and political consciousness with important implications for democracy and citizenship.”¹³⁹ Not

¹³⁷ Woodruff, *The First Democracy*, 199.

¹³⁸ *ibid* 229

¹³⁹ Barker, 14

only did participants learn about the values of a democratic society, they were given the chance to exercise their civic duties through a voting process that selected the winning tragic play.

The concept of a public forum for the cultivation of intellectual and socio-political ideals was not left behind as a relic of the ancient Greeks. In 19th and 20th century America, popular speaker circuits called the Lyceum movement, spread across the nation, giving all Americans access to new ideas and opinions. And, like their ancient ancestors, the programs offered up bands and comedians for entertainment. Founded in 1826, the Lyceum movement borrowed its illustrious title from Aristotle's school. With a name that essentially embodies the very origins of a liberal education, the American Lyceum endeavored to provide an expansive range of subjects that would reach and resonate with the general public. Josiah Holbrook, the founder of the movement, outlined key principles that would dictate content and presentation. These principles encompassed several common themes from the history of the liberal arts tradition. Lyceums would provide a thrifty opportunity for a general education and focus on information that was considered practical and relevant for the future.¹⁴⁰ In these guidelines we see the echoes of the *paideia* as the consecutive lectures on a similar topic mimicked the progression of a liberal education, building from a general introduction of a subject to more complex analyses as the series progressed. This format is conducive to the teaching of a broad education in which abstract topics can help to develop concrete, useful skills and a particular way of thinking. One historian, Carl Bode explained that the teaching in the lyceum was “in a real sense liberal and humane,” such that “lessons included little that the mechanic could use at his bench but much that would allow him to understand the heavens he saw above him and the universe he inhabited.”¹⁴¹ Per

¹⁴⁰ Fredrick J. Antczak, *Thought and Character: The Rhetoric of Democratic Education*, (Ames: The Iowa State University Press, 1985), 62.

¹⁴¹ *ibid* 63

usual, citizenship was also at the forefront of the lyceum. Holbrook hoped that the democratic space would exert moral and political influence on his audiences, much like tragic plays did in ancient Greece.¹⁴²

The Great Dionysia took place in the spacious amphitheatres of ancient Greece bringing together the population in an open forum. Centuries later, the construction of the massive, temporary tent signified the arrival of the Chautauqua movement in town's across the nation.¹⁴³ This traveling speaker series was the continuation of the lyceum movement in the late 19th century and continues to exist as a permanent summer program in New York. Similar in style and structure to the lyceum, the Chautauqua played a significant part in the progression of intellectual and political competency in the United States. This lecture series strengthened the democratic culture by physically bringing together members of the community and giving them the time and insight to discuss important social topics. Attended both learned the fundamentals of a civic education and actively practiced citizen behaviors. As a result, the Chautauqua movement was instrumental in bringing about meaningful change in public policies including the eight-hour workday, food and drug regulations, direct election of US senators, and women's suffrage.¹⁴⁴ Regardless of the informal and voluntary participation of these gatherings, numerous aspects of both movements firmly relate back to key principles of the liberal arts tradition. The diversity of topics reflects the comprehensive and holistic nature of the paideia and other early systems of education that valued proficiency in varied subjects. The vast scope of the liberal arts means that full comprehension and proficiency of all the interrelated subjects is never completely finished. That these were directed at an adult audience reiterates the belief in practicing lifelong

¹⁴² *ibid* 62

¹⁴³ *ibid* 75

¹⁴⁴ *ibid* 85

education and the continued pursuit of knowledge, in a public forum or in a formal institution of higher education.

Chapter Six

We are familiar with the stereotypes of liberal arts universities and colleges in the United States. With ivy covered brick buildings and students discussing philosophy, literature, and history on sprawling campuses, liberal arts institutions have defined our university system as places that encourage growth of intelligence and character. The earliest university, however, predates even our oldest American institutions by centuries. A diverse and well-rounded primary school education, like the programs discussed in prior chapters, would have produced knowledgeable and competent students. Yet, an enduring theme of the liberal arts tradition is life long learning. Throughout history universities have provided yet another context for the cultivation of intellect in the liberal arts tradition.

The Liberal Arts in Higher Education

The first universities date back to around the 12th century, although the official founding of certain schools is often contested. Confusion as to which institution opened first is caused by the variety of schools through Europe and differing definitions of what constitutes a university. Furthermore, dates are skewed by the desire for the exclusivity and status of the title of the oldest European university.¹⁴⁵ Even with this disparity in opinion, The University of Paris in France and the University of Bologna in Italy are among some of the first institutions to properly be called universities in Europe. As to why these programs developed, scholars span a wide range of opinions. A slightly idyllic camp, occupied by minds like Herbert Grundmann, promotes the idea

¹⁴⁵ Walter Rüegg, "Themes," in *A History of the University in Europe* ed. Hilde de Ridder-Symoens, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 6-8.

that the rise of universities was stimulated by “scholarly and scientific interest, the desire to learn and to know, the *amor sciendi*.”¹⁴⁶ More optimistic than probable in the 21st century, it is still pleasant to entertain the notion that higher education is a voluntary and self-motivated pursuit of the type of student whose “ambition was as active, his rivalries as intense, his desire for learning quite as keen.”¹⁴⁷ The more plausible explanation is that social, political, economic, and intellectual advancements during that period coalesced to create a desirable environment for intellectual advancement and the founding of universities. In reality the true impetus for the founding of the university was a combination of two motivations, “the impulse to seek the truth and the desire of many persons to acquire practical training.”¹⁴⁸ These opposing objectives may have worked in tandem to give rise to universities but today we grapple with the dichotomy of vocational or professional education and the liberal arts. A definitive conclusion as to the exact inspiration for the university is less important than the trajectory of this academic institution in history. For our purposes specifically the most relevant aspect is the continued presence of the liberal arts influence in the curricula.

Universities were and continue to be an extension of the existing academic practices. Importantly, the medieval university benefited greatly from the revival of classical texts and practices. Medieval universities owe their organization, structure, and subject matter to the systems and scholars that came before them. Influences date from theological figures like Saint Augustine, back to the theories of Quintilian, and the wisdom derived from Aristotle and

¹⁴⁶ *ibid* 11

¹⁴⁷ Charles Homer Haskins, *The Rise of Universities*, (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2002), 126.

¹⁴⁸ Walter Rüegg, “Themes,” 11-13.

Cicero.¹⁴⁹ Traditional texts from antiquity became widely available in Latin translations, thereby becoming central components in the course of study. Additionally Martianus Capella's famous publication, *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury* was instrumental in bringing classical themes and disciplines to the middle ages. The legacy of the liberal arts continued on in the teachings of the trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic or logic) and the quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music).

The desire for truth and fundamental knowledge remained, but was met with a growing fervor for training in increasingly useful professions and careers. In accordance with these shifting aims "by the twelfth century, the university curriculum consisted of these seven liberal arts, but also of what was called the new logic and the new mathematics, as well as the advanced courses in law, medicine, and theology."¹⁵⁰ The majority of schools during the Middle Ages boasted one or more faculties dedicated to the disciplines of medicine, law, and theology. Throughout history, specific aspects of the curriculum have been subjugated in favor of those that served a greater purpose. Numerous universities were born from connections to the church and as a result early institutions desired to provide a theological education that would produce an understanding and appreciation for scripture. In the United States the earliest founded schools of higher education, Harvard, William & Mary, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, were associated with a religious denomination and opened with the purpose of training members of the clergy.¹⁵¹ The University of Paris originated from the cathedral schools of Notre Dame and evolved into one of the premiere theological schools in Europe. Such strong influences led to a hierarchy of subjects

¹⁴⁹ Jacques Verger, "Patterns," in *A History of the University in Europe* ed. Hilde de Ridder-Symoens, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 42.

¹⁵⁰ Haskins, introduction xxxii-xxxiii

¹⁵¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*, s. v. "university," accessed April 02, 2014, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/618194/university>.

“governed by positive criteria such as the more or less directly religious character of each discipline, its social usefulness, and its intellectual dignity.”¹⁵² With the control of education largely in the hands of the Church, the trivium was the favored method of educating students on the word of God. Rhetoric, according to Augustine, was instrumental to the interpretation of scripture that involved both discovering and communicating the meaning of the text. While he acknowledged the dangers of rhetoric devoid of wisdom, Augustine explained that rhetoric must be used to “communicate what is good and eradicate what is bad, and in the same process of speaking must win over the antagonistic and rouse the apathetic.”¹⁵³ The liberal arts, though not completely eradicated from universities were often subordinate or inferior to the more practical subjects. Even with a limited influence, the essence of the liberal arts is essentially their “propaedeutic value,” and their role in “helping one to gain access to the truly higher and self-sufficient forms of knowledge.”¹⁵⁴ The liberal arts are not meant to be an end but rather a means of pursuing knowledge and truth.

Cardinal John Henry Newman was a product of Oxford University, one of the institutions founded in the prolific academic period in the 12th and 13th centuries. As a beneficiary of the liberal education he extolled the value of higher education in his well-known publication, *The Idea of a University*. Newman’s thoughts on the power of a university successfully combine the importance of a liberal education and the virtues of a theological education. He makes the claim that the liberal tradition is inherent to the basic understanding of the university as an institution. He writes, “As to the range of University teaching, certainly the very name of University is

¹⁵² Verger “Patterns,” 42.

¹⁵³ Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, ed. and trans. R.P.H Green, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 201.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid 43

inconsistent with restrictions of any kind...a University should teach universal knowledge.”¹⁵⁵

This universal mode of teaching that he described referenced both the breadth of subjects and materials covered as well as the importance of a religious perspective. In his eyes, the value of a university was in its ability to produce a “gentleman.” Many of Newman’s perspectives on education are indicative of the longstanding values of the liberal arts. He carefully distinguishes between education and instruction, harkening back to the difference between liberal and servile arts. “Education is a higher word; it implies an action upon our mental nature, and the formation of character; it is something individual and permanent, and is commonly spoken of in connection with religion and virtue.”¹⁵⁶ His greater appreciation for the merits of the liberal arts is surpassed by his commitment to religious studies.

Theology, more so than any other discipline, is integral to Newman’s model of higher education. “Theology’s presence provides a necessary context for the proper conduct of the other disciplines...all knowledge is connected. Truths about any part of the universe are qualified by their relation to the truths about other parts of the universe. This interrelatedness of all truth is essential to his ideal of an educated person.”¹⁵⁷ Theology and the liberal arts share a reciprocal relationship. The various subjects comprising the arts and sciences help to bring clarity and meaning to theology and in turn theology provides the context in which to discuss the connections between these diverse topics. By today’s standards, theology is a far less central focus of liberal arts universities. Religion departments and theological studies have their place within the framework, but their presence does not overwhelm the other disciplines.

¹⁵⁵ John Henry Newman and Martha McMackin Garland. *The idea of a university*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 25.

¹⁵⁶ *ibid* 85

¹⁵⁷ *ibid* 302

In the 350 years or so after the first formally recognized liberal arts institution, approximately 80 universities were founded throughout Europe. Some were acknowledged for excellence in ecclesiastical studies, others as premiere law schools, and still more for their top medical education. The liberal arts remained a present, if less revered, member of university faculties. As education became increasingly secularized, the liberal arts gained ground on the other disciplines. More recently, the model of the small liberal arts college in the United States borrows an Aristotelian perspective, diverging from technical or vocational modes of education. Society may demand laborers, politicians, and doctors but, “the liberal college must leave the special and technical training for these trades and professions to be done in other schools and by other methods.”¹⁵⁸ Though we no longer distinguish between slaves and free men as Aristotle did in his classification of the liberal arts and servile arts, such universities are “committed to intellectual training of the liberal type, whatever that may mean, and to that mission it must be faithful.”¹⁵⁹ Even Newman agreed that, independent of the Church’s influence and objectives, a university “contemplates neither moral impression nor mechanical production;” rather “its function is intellectual.”¹⁶⁰

A practical outcome of the university, specifically one dedicated to the liberal arts, is producing good members of society, which necessarily requires an understanding of the “the moral strivings, intellectual endeavors, and the aesthetic experiences,”¹⁶¹ of mankind. This awareness can be accomplished through the courses of study offered at a liberal college including philosophy, social sciences, natural sciences, history, religion, and literature. The first

¹⁵⁸ Alexander Meiklejohn, *The Liberal College*, (New York: Arno Press & The New York Times, 1969), 31.

¹⁵⁹ *ibid*

¹⁶⁰ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 92

¹⁶¹ *ibid* 46

three subjects cultivate an understanding of human motivations, beliefs and how they interact with the world around them, while the latter two helped to both organize and demonstrate human progress and experience. The paideia influence is clearly represented in the imbricated curriculum of the liberal college such that early lessons bear on problems and questions in later years. For example, freshmen courses in math and logic “lead directly into the study of logic and ethics, which in turn leads into the history of thought, which again gives another body of content for the Senior course.”¹⁶²

The Current State of the Liberal Arts

Today the liberal arts seem to be in a defensive position in which they are constantly having to prove their worth and purpose. Particularly in tough economic times with many recent graduates leaving universities with degrees but no job offers, there seems to be a cloud of doubt concerning the value of a liberal arts education. After much research and consideration of the prevailing criticisms of the liberal arts, there is little evidence or data showing that the liberal arts are an unworthy endeavor. Instead, criticisms seem to be a matter of public opinion fueled by misconceptions that the measure of success is earning power and a lack of recognition for merits and benefits of a liberal education. With rising costs of tuition, the average is about \$43,000, students feel pressure to consider majors that will provide a quick and successful return on investment.¹⁶³ Degrees in professional or pre-professional disciplines offer the allure of job offers well in advance of graduation, along with signing bonuses and a clear post-graduate plan. On top of skepticism about their value, the arts and sciences face the continued threat of budget cuts and limited funding in favor of more “useful” professional and science, technology,

¹⁶² *ibid* 143

¹⁶³ Kevin Kiley. “Making the Case,” *Inside Higher Ed*, November 19, 2012; <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2012/11/19/liberal-arts-colleges-rethink-their-messaging-face-criticism>.

engineering and math or STEM disciplines. A 2013 budget resolution explained that that cuts in the National Endowment for the Humanities would result in “dramatically scaling back lower-priority, or ‘nice-to-have’ programs.”¹⁶⁴ In addition to the threat of financial insecurity, technology has made it possible for universities to conveniently offer online courses at a fraction of the cost. The perception of the liberal arts and sciences as a luxury of sorts does a disservice to their social and intellectual value. Evidence shows that liberal colleges have responded in kind to these pressures to evolve or exit. To remain competitive and relevant in the quest for new students, some liberal colleges have resorted to introducing vocational and professional curricular programs contributing to a decrease in the number of American liberal arts colleges from 212 in a 1990 report to only 130 in 2002.¹⁶⁵ Perhaps the liberal arts also must combat the lingering stereotypes that are deeply entrenched in the history of the tradition, that these subjects are best suited for an elite class with the leisure time appropriate for the proper pursuit of knowledge. The outdated elitist and exclusive reputation undermines the argument for the liberal arts as a useful and beneficial for the education of thoughtful, engaged citizens.

Indeed, while the criticism of the liberal arts seems to be coming from all sides, there are organizations that are working to refresh the public image and the social importance of the liberal arts in higher education. This involves not only breaking down the prevailing stereotypes that surround majors, particularly in the humanities, but also demonstrating the practical nature of a liberal education:

¹⁶⁴ Doug Lederman, “House proposal would slash funding for NEH in half, part of broader trend,” *Inside Higher Ed*, July, 23, 2013; <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/07/23/house-proposal-would-slash-funding-neh-half-part-broader-trend>.

¹⁶⁵ Vicki L. Baker, Roger G. Baldwin, and Sumedha Makker. “Where Are They Now? Revisiting Breneman’s Study of Liberal Arts Colleges.” *Association of American Colleges and Universities* 98, no. 3, Summer 2012. http://www.aacu.org/liberaleducation/le-su12/baker_baldwin_makker.cfm

“To do this we must show that the college is intellectual, not as opposed to practical and interests and purposes, but as opposed to unpractical and unwise methods of work. The issue is not between practical and intellectual aims but between the immediate and the remote aim, between the hasty and they measured procedure, between the demand for results at once and the willingness to wait for the best results.”¹⁶⁶

There is a common perception that degrees in the arts and sciences are unlikely to lead to good jobs after graduation. The liberal arts should not pretend to provide profitable technical skills and career specific knowledge, “that not only is irrelevant to them but corrupts them, orienting them toward goals that are instrumental in nature and preventing them from serving their true humanistic and civic purposes.”¹⁶⁷ Diluting the content of the liberal arts or making it subordinate to curricular additions will not make it appear any more valuable or useful. This value comes in the intellectual perspective that a graduate of the liberal arts gains during their education. The breadth of knowledge challenges students to be analytical, critical, ethical, and engaged not only in regards to their studies but to their roles in society after they leave college. Skills and insights such as these are desirable traits in a potential candidate for a job as the employee will be well-equipped to continue to grow in the company and offer a way of thinking that cannot be developed in a vocational setting.

Chapter Seven

The Liberal Arts and Leadership Studies

Leadership studies, as a relatively new field, has been subjected to its own set of critiques. One of the questions at the heart of these discussions is whether leaders are born or made. If the former were true, then the study of leadership would be descriptive and relatively

¹⁶⁶ Meiklejohn, *The Liberal College*, 39.

¹⁶⁷ Johann Neem, “Don’t make an economic case for the liberal arts,” October 23, 2012; <http://www.insidehighered.com/views/2012/10/23/dont-make-economic-case-liberal-arts-essay>

uninteresting. Acceptance of this perspective would not warrant thoughtful study or critical analysis. If leaders are made, then the capacity to create leaders would expand the field but assign the subject to practical training and instruction rather than an occasion for a liberal education. As scholars have advanced our understanding of leadership as a process, a relationship, and a continuously evolving phenomenon, the opportunity for a meaningful study of leadership has become increasingly clear. As a complex and far-reaching concept, leadership is comprised of numerous theories and models that apply to certain individuals, relationships and contexts. Though a true understanding of leadership would best be accomplished through a holistic and exhaustive study of these various components, current programs have yet to reach a consensus on the appropriate methods for educating students on leadership so as to prepare them not for future careers, but for their role as citizens.

Universities throughout the country have joined the trend of founding leadership programs, many of them claiming to offer a curriculum that trains and teaches students on the subject. This explosion of seminars, courses, minors, and majors, surrounding this topic suggests that there has are likely a notable percentage of institutions that simply “slap the "leadership" label on programs that are not really grounded in leadership studies.”¹⁶⁸ These existing departments are then able to make slight adjustments that allow them to capitalize on a popular buzzword, all the while suggesting that they are providing students some form of leadership education. Even in the well-established disciplines there are slight variations between different programs at different universities. These distinctions are why we hold a business degree from Harvard University to a higher esteem than one from a community college. The same is true of

¹⁶⁸ Richard Greenwald, “Today’s Students Need Leadership Training Like Never Before,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, December 5, 2010. <https://chronicle.com/article/Todays-Students-Need/125604/>.

leadership studies. “Not all programs are equal...Some still reflect old thinking with a focus on leader development as an end in itself, whereas others provide a complex mixture of curricular depth and co-curricular offerings.”¹⁶⁹ These vastly different approaches are very important to the future of leadership studies and to the focus of this paper.

Exploring the “And” - Leadership Studies Programs Outside of the Liberal Arts

An observation of the available programs dedicated to leadership studies reveals an interesting and frequent trend. For those institutions with the means of establishing a designated school or concentration, there is an overwhelming tendency to partner leadership with another established discipline or academic department. At the University of Virginia, students can enroll in the Frank Batten School of Leadership *and* Public Policy. Marietta College in Georgia boasts the McDonough Center for Leadership *and* Business. Purdue University lists Organizational Leadership *and* Supervision under the degrees available in the College of Technology, while Franklin University’s College of Business offers Management *and* Leadership. These are just a few of countless examples that demonstrate the dreaded “and” that appears to be plaguing leadership studies. All of these programs suggest to students that they are receiving an education in leadership, when in actuality the coursework prompts students to study only one small faction of leadership as it pertains to a specific topic. Furthermore, by associating leadership with a professionally minded discipline, education in the subject is slowly replaced by elements of practical training. Too often when leadership is discussed in conjunction with business, the term is used interchangeably with management. Management fails to appreciate the reciprocal relationship and exchange that occurs between a leader and his followers. In contrast to a manager, a leader is one who “innovates rather than copies, keeps an eye on the horizon rather

¹⁶⁹ Gama Perruci and Robert M. McManus, “The State of Leadership Studies,” *Journal of Leadership Studies* 6, no. 3, 52.

than merely on the bottom line, inspires trust rather than merely relying on control, and is able to lead meaningful organizational change.”¹⁷⁰ The Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy clearly supports the notion that leaders can be made expressing a commitment to “teaching leadership,” so that, “everyone can become a more effective leader through the development of key skills...persuasion, motivation, advocacy, consensus building, conflict resolution.”¹⁷¹ Public policy may be a practice of leadership, but it does not get to the core of the phenomenon, as a true leadership studies program should. The McDonough Center, which was a model for the liberal arts approach prior to Jepson, also interprets leadership studies as a means of professional development. The minor in leadership studies includes an experiential component that tailors the program to fit whatever career path is dictated by a student’s major.¹⁷² Perhaps this is indicative of the pressure on the liberal arts to appear useful from a vocational perspective. This commentary is not to suggest that these students may not be learning about leadership or the associated skills and traits; instead, it considers what is lacking in a student’s understanding of leadership when it is separated from a liberal education. Leadership studies ought to be recognized as inherently complex and multidisciplinary. Leadership studies need the contextual insight of a wide range of disciplines. It needs the liberal arts.

It is significant to note that like leadership studies, the liberal arts also face the challenge of being divided up and disseminated piecemeal. “The STEM fields – science, technology, engineering and math, some of them liberal arts disciplines, themselves -- are often promoted

¹⁷⁰ Warren Bennis, "Management." *Encyclopedia of Leadership*. Ed. George R. Goethals, Georgia J. Sorenson, and James MacGregor Burns. Vol. 3. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Reference, 2004. 944-949. Gale Virtual Reference Library.

¹⁷¹ The Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, “Learning to Lead.” <http://batten.virginia.edu/content/about/why-batten/learning-lead>.

¹⁷² The McDonough Center for Leadership and Business, “The Minor in Leadership Studies.” <http://webapps.marietta.edu/~lead/?q=Leadership%20Studies%20Minor>.

with no mention of the other components of a liberal education.”¹⁷³ When properly integrated, the liberal arts and the study of leadership combat the overly specialized, narrow, vocational tendencies that many systems of higher education encourage today. The Jepson School of Leadership Studies allows students to observe the dynamics and behaviors of both leader and follows across endless situations and subjects. This school does not simply use the liberal arts institution as its home, but truly embraces the spirit and intent of a liberal education. Scholars from diverse fields of expertise converge in this school to demonstrate the fluidity and prevalence of leadership in the world around us and provide students with an ethical perspective and capacity for critical thinking.

The Jepson School of Leadership Studies

Now we come to the focus and inspiration of this paper: The Jepson School of Leadership Studies. Specifically, The Jepson School is a premiere example of how the liberal arts are well suited for the study of leadership. The tradition of the liberal arts clearly demonstrates a commitment to and emphasis of a complete education in every sense of the word. Not only do the liberal arts incorporate diverse subjects for intellectual purposes, it educates the entire person. From its conception, the Jepson School has strived to embody the best qualities and wisdom of the liberal arts tradition, borrowing from the examples set forth by Plato and Aristotle. To create an iconic school of leadership studies, it seems only fitting to turn to the creators of such iconic institutions as The Academy and The Lyceum.

The Jepson School of Leadership studies was founded at a time when a number of universities throughout the country were starting to incorporate some form of leadership development into academics or extracurricular activities, but there were no degree conferring

¹⁷³ Kiley, “Making the Case.”

programs. Amidst hesitations to allow leadership, as a new but growing field of study, to stand on its own, the University of Richmond set a new standard for leadership education in the founding of The Jepson School. This dedicated facility demonstrated that not only was leadership studies capable of supplying content for an independent curriculum, but that a discipline of such depth and value deserved far more than a handful of elective classes. In “bringing together students, faculty and distinguished visitors who believe that technical skills, managerial expertise and cultural literacy, however necessary, are not sufficient virtues for leaders whose lives are dedicated to public service,”¹⁷⁴ Jepson deviated from existing programs by suggesting that leadership studies should transcend professional education and practical training. To provide the vocabulary necessary to understand and communicate leadership beyond the narrow concept of management, Jepson would also need to reevaluate the content used by other programs. Through inclusion of texts from the humanities faculty and students alike would be able to “understand the context and the values that shape the relationship of leaders and followers and the phenomenon of leadership itself.”¹⁷⁵

On the most basic level, the liberal arts approach offers a diversity in academic topics that matches the multitude of ways that we can observe and interpret leadership. Leaders take many forms and the process of leadership does as well. Thus through the application of economics, history, literature, philosophy, politics, psychology, and religion students can impart new meaning on the leadership phenomenon. Recall, Cardinal John Henry Newman’s emphasis on theology as the most valuable discipline, capable of contextualizing and connecting all other subjects. In an age when theology was one of the main faculties in the universities and the

¹⁷⁴ Jepson Committee and Faculty, ed. "A Draft Proposal for the Jepson School Of Leadership Studies." University of Richmond, 1988. Abstract. 1-20. Print.

¹⁷⁵ Ciulla. “The Jepson School: Liberal Arts as Leadership Studies,” 23.

Church held significant social power, the liberal arts found relevance and purpose in their connection with religious studies. I see the emergence of a new discipline in which to consider the liberal arts from the perspective of the 21st century. Leadership studies, like Newman's approach to theology, is inherently multidisciplinary. A liberal education can help to enrich our understanding of the leadership phenomenon and in turn leadership studies can offer a new lens of analysis in which to consider well-covered topics like theology, history, and political science. Jepson's full-time faculty, yet another unique feature of the school, furthers the beneficial influence of diverse perspectives. Though they are expert scholars in their individual fields of expertise, their designated role as professors of leadership studies avoids the subjugation of leadership in favor of any of the topics listed above; instead, Jepson's Sandra Peart, speaks to how "they can use their disciplinary area, like economics, to develop a broad set of questions on the problems of leadership."¹⁷⁶

An important feature of the ideal leadership studies program, as I perceive it, is that avoidance of any claim that the study of leadership creates leaders. A degree or certificate from a formal program does not give someone the license or even the ability to lead others. A school of leadership studies offers just that, a series of courses and discussions that encourage and challenge students to study and think about leadership. In this regard, Cardinal Newman's explanation of the true purpose and limitations of a university are the perfect complement to the mission and methods of the Jepson School of Leadership Studies:

"a University is not a birthplace of poets or of immortal authors, of founders of schools, leaders of colonies, or conquerors of nations. It does not promise a generation of Aristotles or Newtons, of Napoleons or Washingtons, of Raphaels or Shakespeares, though such miracle of nature it has now before contained within its precincts. Nor is it content on the other hand with forming the critic or the experimentalist, the economist or

¹⁷⁶ "Leadership and Liberal Education: University of Richmond's Jepson School," *AAC&U Feature: Member Innovations*, August 2009.

the engineer, though such too it includes within its scope. But a university training is the great ordinary means to a great but ordinary end; it aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supplying true principles to popular aspiration, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power, and refining the intercourse of private life...¹⁷⁷

Jepson students are not selected for entry into the school based on their natural leadership abilities, nor are they measured on their success as a leader through their service in formal positions. Throughout the diverse course of study, they recognize and internalize that no one is a leader across all contexts in every situation; however, when the opportunity does arise for them to exercise their knowledge of leadership they will possess a “measure of skill, compassion, integrity, ability, and breadth of understanding that is sorely needed in our nation and world.”¹⁷⁸

A particularly novel concept that Jepson helps to illuminate is that practical training in the manners and methods of leadership may not actually be necessary to develop leaders. As Joanne Ciulla, a founding member of the Jepson school and current faculty member, pointed out “when students study a subject, they often want to practice it – art students want to be artists, psychology students want to be psychologists, chemistry students want to be chemists, and so on.”¹⁷⁹ The programs marketing executive development and education in leadership and political science may not be the most effective or the best prerequisite for serving as a leader.

While graduates of those programs may grasp the technical aspects of leadership, they will likely be woefully uninformed as to the motivational and behavioral nuances that are so important to not only being a leader in title, but a leader in practice as well. A graduate of the Jepson school of leadership is an individual who understands leadership and through that understanding is able

¹⁷⁷ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 125-126.

¹⁷⁸ Jepson Committee and Faculty, ed. "A Draft Proposal for the Jepson School Of Leadership Studies."

¹⁷⁹ Joanne B. Ciulla. “The Jepson School: Liberal Arts as Leadership Studies,” 26.

to affect change and participate in a society no matter what role they hold, be it leader or follower.

A liberal education is one that in all aspects of the curriculum prepares an individual for their role in society as a true citizen. We look to the Greeks for early examples of the importance of education in producing the ideal citizen, one who is capable, knowledgeable, and adaptable. Aristotle's concept of citizenship, though somewhat transient, explained "men are praised for knowing both how to rule and how to obey, and he is said to be a citizen of approved virtue who is able to do both."¹⁸⁰ An educated citizen is not characterized by mastery or expertise in a particular field, but instead the possession of a general knowledge which allows him to engage fully in the community. Isocrates designed his teaching methods with the intention of producing "men of culture, people with a good sense of judgment, able to take part quite naturally in any sort of discussion."¹⁸¹ These skills are of tremendous use for the average citizen allowing him to evaluate and form eloquent opinions about social issues, the behavior of leaders, and other civic responsibilities.

The Jepson School of Leadership Studies is explicit in its dedication to the cultivation of the values, knowledge, and skills that are required of citizens in today's complex and demanding world. The school's purpose is to "explore fundamental questions about who we are, how we live together and how we influence the course of history," through the study of leadership, and in doing so "help students realize their distinctive capacities and apply their learning for the good of society."¹⁸² In this lengthy study of the liberal arts tradition, I have come to realize that a liberal education is not simply a compilation of mathematics, science, language, and history in a diverse

¹⁸⁰ Aristotle "Politics: A Treatise on Government," Book III, Chapter IV

¹⁸¹ Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*. 122.

¹⁸² The Jepson School of Leadership Studies, "Mission, Purpose, and Goals."
<http://jepson.richmond.edu/about/mission.html>.

curriculum. Instead it should be appreciated, as a tradition of comprehensive intellectual and moral education aimed at the development of human potential. Currently the liberal arts are undervalued, misrepresented, and in need of a fresh perspective that will prove its social and scholarly merit. Leadership studies as a discipline, is perhaps then just as valuable to the liberal arts and as the liberal arts is to our understanding of leadership. By providing a much needed framework in which to consider the expansive range of the liberal arts, leadership studies helps to translate abstract knowledge into skills that are useful in the real world. Importantly, leadership studies and the liberal arts have remarkably similar aims regarding the abilities and qualities that they hope to nurture in students. First, there is the understanding that “to train for good citizenship,” a fundamental objective of the liberal education, “*is to train for leadership in a democratic society.*”¹⁸³ Both systems champion an understanding of basic human principles and interactions, a discerning perspective, and eloquent expression of one’s own knowledge. A student of the liberal arts has seemingly endless potential in their ability to continue to grow and develop while contributing to society. Cardinal Newman beautifully describes the type of person who emerges from the influence of a liberal education, a characterization that is equally applicable to a member of the Jepson School of Leadership studies. An ideal liberal education “teaches him to see things as they are, to go right to the point, to disentangle skeins of thought...It prepares him to fill any post with credit...shows him how to accommodate himself to others, how to throw himself into their state of mind, how to bring before them his own... He is at home in any society.”¹⁸⁴ A comprehensive exposure to the liberal arts with the addition of a fundamental understanding of the social importance and function of leadership is an invaluable

¹⁸³ J. Thomas Wren, Ronald E. Riggio, and Michael A. Genovese. 2009. *Leadership and the liberal arts: Achieving the promise of a liberal education*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), 23.

¹⁸⁴ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 125-126.

education for the development of competent, involved, and motivated citizens. Ultimately it is the union of the liberal arts tradition and leadership studies that has the power to deliver an education that is at once as beneficial to the individual student as it is to the society into which they graduate.

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