The Many Faces of Engagement

By Lee S. Shulman

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It is a delight to be here, associated again with the Lynton Award for Faculty Professional Service and Academic Outreach. The award recognizes my dear old friend, Ernest Lynton. I don't remember if it was the first or the second time the award was given when it was being presented by AAHE, but I spoke on that occasion and Ernie was a dear friend. I am glad to see his wife Carla here today.

I don't know how many of you realize that when my predecessor, Ernest Boyer, developed this notion of the four scholarships, this was not an independent invention. There really were, and if Ernie were alive I think he would agree, a set of co-inventors. If there'd been a Nobel Prize for this idea it would have been shared by Ernest Lynton, Russ Edgerton, Mary Huber, and Gene Rice along with Ernest Boyer. This is a set of ideas for which that wonderful physicist, Ernest Lynton, deserved some credit.

Today I want to talk with you about engagement, which is the topic of your entire meeting. I've looked over the program and almost all of your attention appears to be focused on what is clearly that aspect of engagement that has attracted our attention and our energy, our passion, our zeal—and that is our engagement with the communities and populations around us. But being someone who is an unreconstructed pedagogue and student of teaching and learning, I want to speak about a different dimension of engagement that we at the Foundation have been very deeply engaged in, especially under the leadership of my colleagues Tom Erlich, Ann Colby, and Bill Sullivan. Several years ago we published a book called *Educating Citizens*. In press and ready to come out any week now is *Educating for Democracy*, dealing with the political engagement of undergraduate students. The American Democracy Project, which we are doing jointly with American Association of State Colleges and Universities and with *The New York Times*, is an attempt to stimulate and animate across campuses in the United States a sense of the centrality of civic and political engagement to any undergraduate and, for that matter, graduate education.

What is all of our research and teaching for if not to create a better enduring society for ourselves, our neighbors and our children? To recognize institutional attention to these outcomes, Carnegie recently introduced what we call an elective classification around institutional engagement and outreach. You might wonder why it is elective. Why didn't we classify every institution in America vis-à-vis engagement the way we do on other categories? The answer is very simple. We can only classify institutions with respect to attributes for which there are existing data and to which institutions

voluntarily and across the board can respond. We cannot introduce a universal classification until the will of the leadership of American higher education says to the people who run IPEDS or others that data with respect to domains, degrees and directions of engagement has as much a need to be in our national higher education databases as information about what kind of degrees you offer and how much research you do, and other such matters. Until that time, we will not have anything other than an elective classification for those institutions that want to respond. When the next opportunity comes up to review these systems, let my successors at the Foundation know you want to stand up and be counted with regard to engagement.

Today I want to talk about the pedagogies of engagement. The good news is engagement and outreach and service-learning and all of their associated activities are absolutely wonderful. The bad news is that engagement alone doesn't teach. You cannot become wiser, more skilled, more humane just by being engaged. And if you think that our urban and metropolitan universities or even MIT can satisfy its responsibility to make a better world through service-learning while the bulk of the time that students spend is in kinds of pedagogy that are disengaged and non-engaging, that do not continue to model and sustain the values of engagement, reciprocity, mutual respect and regard that are at the heart of things like service-learning, then you're living in a dream world. You can't do it by just layering some service-learning onto a curriculum and adding a Vice President for Engagement and then leaving everything else the same. In universities, we try to leave as little unchanged as possible. We add a layer, we add an office and then we make sure to insulate it from the rest of the institution.

I began to think about the pedagogies of engagement fifteen years ago when I spoke to a Campus Compact group. I suggested that service-learning was the missing clinical component to undergraduate liberal education; that without something like service-learning, undergraduate liberal education was like having a medical school without clinical experiences, like having an engineering school with no opportunities to be in the design studios. It would be more like a law school which, in general, doesn't have a clinical component—which is the deepest flaw in American legal education. When I made this observation a couple of people said, "But clinical components belong to professional schools. We're not professional schools." In fact some of them said, "We hate professional schools. We are resisting that vocational infection in higher education. We believe in liberal education." My response was, "Properly understood, a liberal education must be professed." So, although over the last ten years we at the Foundation have been studying education across six professions—and I'll talk about them in a moment—in the back of my head I'm constantly asking: "What are the lessons to be learned from studying professional education, or how ought we to be doing our pedagogical work with undergraduates in nonprofessional fields or fields that don't think of themselves as preparing people to profess?" In one sense the continuing line of this talk is that to teach for civic engagement, for political engagement, or social responsibility is in the deepest sense education for profession. Remember the initial word was "professing our faith, professing our love, professing our duty." The notion of profession as connected to the guilds is much later.

The mission of the Carnegie Foundation, begun 101 years ago by Andrew Carnegie, is to do and perform all things necessary to encourage, uphold and dignify the profession of the teacher and the cause of higher education. Because Andrew Carnegie thought that poverty was one of the greatest enemies of dignity, the first project of the Carnegie Foundation was the invention of what we now call TIAA-CREF. The second thing that the Foundation did was to begin a set of studies of the quality of medical education under the leadership of Abraham Flexner, who was not a physician. In fact, he didn't have a Ph.D. The Flexner Report is, however, probably the single most powerful critical examination of American higher education ever published. Within a little more than a decade of its publication half the medical schools in the United States closed, out of embarrassment, I think. Of course, the solution to today's problems frames tomorrow's problems and so, in many ways, the genius of the Flexner medical curriculum, which spread to other fields, is a great challenge for many of us now in fields like engineering, medicine, nursing and what have you, because the Flexner curriculum deferred engagement with the real world for several years until students were adequately educated in the basic sciences. In our day it's turned out to be a grievous flaw in traditional professional education.

One of my dreams, as a result of working for many years both in medical education but especially in teacher education, has been to conduct a series of systematic comparative studies of how people are educated to profess. How are they educated in fields where knowing is not enough? You have to be able to do, to act, to perform. Even that's not enough, because in addition to knowing and performing you've got to become the kind of human being whom the rest of us can trust to perform with integrity, responsibility, honesty, and—dare I use an old-fashioned word—virtue ? So this tri-partite responsibility is what made the professions so fascinating. And think now, as you imagine your goal for every single one of your students: is it limited to helping them think? God knows we need to help them think. The cognitive challenge of higher education is at the core of what we do, and we want them to perform. We want them to be skilled and practical, even and especially in the civic and political area. They are not politically educated if they now read *The New York Times* every day. What do they do with what they read and learn? We also want students to be formed into better human beings on a whole variety of dimensions. That's why we at Carnegie wanted to study the professions.

On the average for three years each, we've studied the education of lawyers, the education of engineers, the education of clergy. The first two books are out already, *Educating Clergy and Educating Lawyers*. Engineers are in the pipeline, as are nurses and physicians. We've been working continuously on educating teachers. Another book that's going to come out in the next month or so, *The Formation of Scholars*, is our five-year study of the future of the Ph.D. and we post-holed in six areas: English, mathematics, history, chemistry, neurosciences and education. The book is an attempt to lay out the needed future developments for Ph.D.s, many of which are developments that need to happen because the vast majority of Ph.D.s teach in our urban and metropolitan universities, not at Princeton. As we've been working on these, you can imagine my colleagues and I also are thinking about the Ph.D. as a kind of

professional degree. Scholarship is a profession. We talk about Ph.D.s as people who are prepared to live the lives as stewards of their discipline, both for the sake of the discipline and its integrity and for the ways in which the discipline gets used in the rest of the world.

This research involves lots of site visits, lots of surveys. You know, we do social science research. We have focus groups with students where we ask them, as they complete their professional education, "What is..." –and then it's their profession. I was sitting with a group of graduating seniors at a university with a very strong engineering school and I asked, "What's an engineer?" Here is the response I got, and I love this response. I wouldn't mind having this on my tombstone, except you'd say Lee Shulman instead of an engineer! "An engineer is someone who uses math and the sciences to mess with the world." Isn't that what engagement is about? We want our students to mess with the world by designing and making things that people will buy and use. Then they said, "Once you mess with the world you're responsible for the mess you've made." One of the striking things about engineering as a professional field of education is that their accrediting standards have changed; the curricula of more and more of the engineering schools now include social responsibility, environmental responsibility.

We asked the same question of a group of senior nursing students. They were much more succinct. "As a nurse I'm the patient's last line of defense." You unpack that and you've got something a lot like the engineering story. Of course, I asked against whom and they looked at the only M.D. in the room! So I ask you how would you want your students in one of your universities engaged actively in one of your signature programs of engagement to answer the question of who they are? Would it be something like: "I'm somebody who uses the great works and ideas or theories and stuff to mess with the world and can take responsibility for the mess that I've made?" How would you want people to think about themselves? Would you like your students to think of themselves as democracy's last line of defense, a notion that has become painfully more salient for some of us in recent years?

One of the most striking things about professional education is the settings in which it occurs. Today, I was sitting next to a couple of our sponsors who are in the business of constructing the buildings in our institutions, and I was glad I was because what is striking about professional education is that the settings in which professional education does its most important work don't look like 90 percent of the rooms we continue to build in our teaching buildings. Now we all know what a classroom looks like. There's a typical high school classroom. You can see the level of engagement. Well, I think the teacher's engaged, but you can't tell. If I asked you to draw a classroom on a piece of paper that's what you'd draw. Now, of course, a college classroom is dramatically different. I mean, look, college teachers are much better than high school teachers in many, many of our fields, especially the stem disciplines. Our teachers can teach like a psychoanalyst with their back to the patient. I call that dorsal pedagogy, although for those of you who like track and field I sometimes call it Fosbury pedagogy—if you remember Dick Fosbury, who developed a way of doing

the high jump backwards. I was in a classroom and I can assure you that every ten or fifteen minutes the teacher did look over his left shoulder because he had taken a workshop on checking for understanding, and he said, "Are you with me?" Two nods, a glance, and back he went. Now look, there are all kinds of circumstances in which it makes sense to do something in a highly systemized, didactic and also narrative manner. But this obsession with lecture is metastatic. This has gotten way out of control. The only parts of professional education that use this method are the parts that, I maintain, were part of the concessions that the professions made when they moved from the traditional apprenticeship to being accepted into the holy sanctuary of the university. They adopted and adapted many of the ritual and liturgical characteristics.

Now I don't think this is an irreparable situation, but if you design all your buildings and build them to deliver lectures, your degrees of freedom have just dropped to very close to zero and you become prisoners of your sites. This isn't only about the engagement of students. I was taken by a Stanford dean with great pride into a new building they had built at Stanford, a small one. We walked in and I looked around and my first question was, "Where do faculty and students get together? Where do they actually engage as a community with one another?" And the dean looked at me as if I were from Mars. It had never occurred to them that that was the first thing you want to think about when you look at academic spaces.

Law schools are in all kinds of ways very traditional, but you walk into even a large law school classroom for the first time and the first thing that strikes you is that it is circular, that students can see each other. They can hear each other, they can see each other's reactions to what's being said, and the teacher can see all of them and see them in interaction. Why? Because unlike that classroom, this classroom is based on the premise of engagement—engagement among the students around the ideas of cases. Now if legal education were perfect we would not have written a long book about it so I'm not going to [give] you my critique of legal education, but I just want you to think about that and think about the case dialogue method of teaching that characterizes the first year or year and a half of law school because we call it a signature pedagogy. It is a kind of teaching that simply characterizes legal education. You walk into a law class and within a minute you know you're in a law class.

The studio course in engineering is really the signature pedagogy in engineering. The students are organized around tables. They're kibbutzing each other's designs and artifacts. There are work stations where the students and faculty are gathered around them and rotate from table to table to see what other students are doing. Looking at other students' work and showing off your own isn't called cheating; it's called design. It's called engineering. Clinical rounds in medicine. Rounds and rotations—two circular words. You're around the bed. When there's stuff you can't say in the earshot of the patient you're around the records and you rotate, during a single rotation from patient to patient, and across the curriculum from pediatrics to internal medicine to obstetrics/gynecology, etc.

Some of the most effective new forms of pedagogy we know use that kind of teaching; for example, first grade reading groups. First grade reading groups are actually quite exquisite pieces of pedagogy. Students all can see each other, they're all working on the same text, they are responsible for accountable talk. [They have] to listen to what the other kid is reading and respond to questions about [whether they] agree with that interpretation of the text. There is a certain deep, deep principle here, and if you think about the distinctive settings for professional education—case dialogue in the law, clinical rounds and rotations in medicine, design studios in engineering and architecture, master classes and rehearsal settings in the performing arts—they are engaged in different kinds of physical spaces, the rules of engagement are different, and they are strikingly associated with each of these professions.

When we began our work on the professions we were looking for the unique signatures of each profession, the Socratic case dialogue in law, clinical rounds in medicine. We thought we were going to be learning mostly about how each profession develops its unique DNA, if you will, but as we moved from law to the clergy to engineering, medicine, and nursing, a second principle began to hammer at our cognitive doors: there was something very, very similar across all of these [learning environments]. On the surface they may all look different, but the underlying principles or structure of these signature pedagogies seems to be much more common and consistent across these otherwise different settings. We call these signature pedagogies, and let me just quickly describe a few of their characteristics.

In the professions, for better or for worse and often in the breach, there are three kinds of apprenticeships going on concurrently. First is apprenticeship of thought, and nowhere more than in the law school. When you ask law professors, "What's the goal of the first year of law school?" the answer is, "We've got to teach our students to think like a lawyer." And they do. Legal education has the most undifferentiated set of prerequisites, as in essentially none, of any profession. [Are there] any lawyers here? What was your undergraduate major? Economics? American studies? Law students can be from cinematography. They can be from the classics. By the end of the first semester of law school working on contracts, torts, and criminal, they go home for Christmas and they're all beginning to sound alike. Ask their mothers—by Easter they can't stand them. What a powerful pedagogy. Wouldn't you give your eye teeth to have a curriculum that by the end of one year you would find that all the students would be exemplifications of the goal of your curriculum?

The second kind of apprenticeship is an apprenticeship of practice. Practice is almost invisible in most law schools, and because there's no practice [in theory only] and you can't learn about ethics in theory only, they also blow the third apprenticeship, which is the apprenticeship of formation, of developing a set of values, commitments, identity. The seminaries do these well and in their own way, nursing even seems to sacrifice the cognitive for the sake of the practical and the ethical. Across all forms of professions one of the things we like to say, to sum it up, is that we're trying to teach habits of mind, habits of practice that we sometimes call habits of the hand and habits of the heart. Since Bill Sullivan is one of our key investigators in this work and is one

of the co-authors of *Habits of the Heart*, we feel permitted to use that phrase. That's what teaching for profession is all about.

Now how is it possible to do all of that? What are students doing? The first thing you see, by the way, is that these apprenticeships and signature pedagogies are pervasive pedagogies that shape a whole curriculum. One of our big curricular errors, both in K-12 and in higher education, is to think that if something's really important we'll build a special project around it and the students will do it once because it's a lot of work to do projects. Then we'll go back to the old methods that are so easy to regiment, but we somehow carry the illusion that if you have students do a special project once you'll change their lives. [It] doesn't happen that way. If you look at law schools, medical schools, nursing—those pedagogies are used not only consistently within a single course, but they are used in just about every course. So whether you're doing contracts or torts, whether you're doing obstetrics or internal medicine, the rules of engagement, the settings of engagement, the opportunity to practice these habits occur persistently and consistently. Very simple principle: If you want people to develop habits of mind, hand and heart that will be with them for all their lives, things that happen once are not habit forming; those things that form habits are those things that are done persistently.

I was a faculty member for thirty-five years in two superb institutions. Nobody valued academic freedom more than I, but academic freedom does not mean that every one of us can teach any damn way we please whenever we feel like it. That's academic irresponsibility. You would not want the people [who instruct at] the medical school that your doctor went to, to have had that kind of approach to the teaching of surgery. "Yeah, we didn't bother about the anatomy part of the surgery. We figure, you know, you cut. If there's a blood vessel there, big deal." Pedagogy matters.

Signature pedagogies are routines. They are habits. They are practices. And the wonderful, wonderful paradox is that they are also what I call pedagogies of uncertainty, whose purpose is to promote the development of judgment under unpredictable conditions, and yet one of the features of their pedagogies is routine. We could all spend a day thinking about why routine is such an important component of learning to be non-routine. The students can't become invisible even in a law school class with 120 students. Harry Potter's cloak of invisibility is worn in more of our college classrooms by more of our students every day than we care to admit. Invisibility on the part of students is the most significant enemy of learning because learning is performance. You perform your understandings and, even more important, you perform your misunderstandings so your colleagues and your teachers can help you recognize how you might understand something better. If you learn by being invisible and mute, you're not learning.

These signature pedagogies are pedagogies of public performance. Students perform, they speak, they act and they get feedback. Students are accountable not only for their own performance but also responsible for hearing, understanding and critiquing what their fellow students have said. Think about the varieties of meaning of engagement. Just for a moment think about what your universities would be like if your faculty

were visible and accountable. How often are we as faculty responsible to actively listen to what our fellow faculty members are saying and doing and be responsive to that so that we become a learning community and not a collection of independent contractors. Making judgments under uncertainty is at the heart of what's being done, critically analyzing your own and others' performances.

One of the troubling things to some people about these pedagogies is that students may feel they are at risk. If you're public—you're accountable and have to perform publicly—then there's something at stake. You know what? You don't learn much if nothing's at stake. I hate to say that. I know some of us feel very guilty over making students nervous, but that doesn't stop us from giving them speaking parts in plays, it doesn't stop us on the athletic field from tossing the ball to them knowing they might drop it in public. It doesn't stop us from asking them to sing out loud and not just move their lips in chorus. And yet in classrooms we get so guilty over putting them at risk, having something at stake. I think this is one of the most important reasons why professional education works—it's very hard to blow off class.

I'll bet in service-learning, when there's something at stake because the people who are being served are depending on you and you're part of a group that's working, I'll bet performances are much more reliable and consistent, too. These are the kinds of pedagogies where—because people have something at stake, because they're public, because they're persistent and routine—they are teaching practices that are much more likely to lead to students developing new kinds of values, new senses of who they are, and of commitment and internalizing those values for the long haul.

My colleague, Ann Colby, one of the great moral developmental psychologists of this generation, summarizes the features of those pedagogies in three simple ideas. One is enactment. Students don't just sit there; they do things—whether that enactment is the performance of a string quartet or a performance of an act of tutoring in a local school or of helping some elderly citizens deal with some of their limitations. The second is dailiness. It is not something we do three times a year and celebrate. And the third is embodiment. One of the things that becomes very clear in the signature pedagogies of the professions is that the students look to and at their teachers to embody the habits of mind, practice and heart that they are teaching—the faculty, if you will, as role model, for good or for ill, for better or for worse. You see that most vividly in seminaries, but you also see it in nursing and medicine. You see it a good deal less and often negatively in law, for a variety of reasons. These are very different kinds of settings.

I simply want to mention, as I come to an end of these remarks, some of my key ideas and thoughts. The first is to my friends the contractors. A good architect won't let a client dictate the design and building of a home that your experience tells you they'll hate to live in or will live badly in. You have to push back. I feel like doing a seminar for those who build educational buildings, a result of which is that they would push back on educators and say, "Are you sure you want to build all of these rooms where students will never see each other?" Think again of the spaces, think again of the good examples we do see in our various settings. We do have really good seminars where a

group of students and a faculty member sit together interrogating texts or artifacts, ideas or methods. In fact, you can even transform a traditional lecture hall into a concatenation of interactive responsive small group seminars, but you can't if the seats don't move at all. You can't if you haven't designed the instruction and trained your faculty exquisitely, but you can still do it.

My challenge to you is in the topical area that we're meeting about for the next few days—the pedagogies of engagement related to outreach and service. What are or should be the coordinated and integrated signature pedagogies of engagement? If you take seriously the values that you espouse with respect to engagement, how would you apply them—not just out there in communities but here in academia? You need to recognize, as in every clinical field, that what you're doing and what you're trying is inherently uncertain and unpredictable. This is no surprise for those who know me and Carnegie. You cannot do this kind of work responsibly without transforming your institution into a laboratory for engaged teaching and learning. You must build in the capacity to assess, to document, to evaluate, to design and redesign what you do because there's only one thing you can be absolutely certain of—none of us will get it right the first time. When we do get it right the fifth time we'll sigh, we'll sit back, and six months later circumstances will have changed and it won't be right anymore! Institutions like those in this room—committed to a scholarly approach to engagement, to connecting the life of the mind and the habits of engaged scholarship of our institutions—are institutions of higher education. We are not social service agencies—we are obligated to bring those ideas and practices into the curriculum. That's why Boyer talked about and Lynton talked about the scholarship of engagement—not engagement alone and not scholarship alone. So that's the last commitment I ask of you—an engagement by you in the core values of universities as learning communities.

Let me end with a story about the forming of my alma mater, the University of Chicago, which though not represented in this association, in many ways should be because it was formed under the leadership of William Rainey Harper to be an urban and metropolitan university. The Chicago School of Sociology created a notion of neighborhood studies, a sociology built around the real world of people living together in neighborhoods. He died very young. He was forty-eight or forty-nine when he died. He was a Bible scholar. One of his obituaries was written by Albion Small, the founding chair of [the School of] Sociology at Chicago, which by the way created a notion of neighborhood studies, a sociology built around the real world of people living together in neighborhoods. He said of Harper, "Harper's greatest fear was that people would misunderstand what it meant for universities to be places that were obligated to investigate the world around him. His greatest fear was that all of their attention would be directed at the world around them and they would lose sight of the fact that they, themselves, were living in the greatest experiment ever designed, the experiment of placing a university in a real world of human beings with needs and interests, passions and proclivities, and that the university was constantly a site for experimentation on how to use pedagogy to address those questions. My fear," he said, "was the university would forget that it, itself, was its most important experimental and research responsibility." Thank you for inviting me here. With that, I shall leave you.

Editorial Note: The original article was an edited version of a transcript derived from a recording of Dr. Shulman's keynote address. In translating the recording of the speech to journal text, some editorial changes were made to create a coherent narrative. In the original edited version, this may have led to unintended errors or deviation from the speaker's original intent, for which apologies are offered.

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