

Reflections of a New Outreach Journal Editor

Melvin B. Hill, Jr.

First, let me say that this is a wonderful conference, and I am delighted to be here. I want to thank the conveners for putting it together and also for inviting me to participate in an active way. This is important work that we are engaged in.

My title may be somewhat misleading, for a couple of reasons. First, I am not a newcomer to university public service and outreach (as you can see), but I am a new journal editor. And second, it is not really a new journal that I am editing. So let me begin with a modicum of background information about myself and about the *Journal*. I think you will find this interesting, if not relevant.

I am now in my twenty-eighth year in university public service and outreach at the University of Georgia. I have to admit that I stumbled into this career. And the credit (or blame) for it must go to some extent to my high school English teacher, Mrs. Marcia Buckno. After class one day in my senior year, Mrs. Buckno asked me if I might like to work as an intern in the Office of the Township Manager of South Whitehall Township, Pennsylvania, during the summer. She was friends with Mr. Bill Hansell, and he was looking for an intern. I have no idea why she asked me, but I had no summer job. I ended up working for Mr. Hansell for two summers, and it led me to want to become a city manager. Mr. Hansell ended up becoming the executive director of the International City-County Management Association in Washington, D.C. I ended up here.

After receiving a B.A. in economics from Bucknell University in 1970, I headed to Cornell to obtain a master of public administration degree so that I could pursue my career goal of becoming a city manager. When men make plans, God smiles.

Not long into my M.P.A. program I decided to apply to law school for admission into the combined M.P.A./J.D. degree program. I did this because it seemed like an efficient way to spend my time. The M.P.A. program was a two-year program; the J.D. program was a three-year program; the combined program was four years. So for an additional two years, I could get a law degree as well as an M.P.A. degree. So I applied to law school. When I received my acceptance letter, my reaction was matter-of-fact—okay, I'll go to law school. Why not?

So in 1974 I finished my joint program, but I wasn't sure what I would do with it. I still had a career interest in local government, but maybe not as a city manager. I wasn't sure.

In April of my last year at Cornell, I saw a notice on the bulletin board of the Cornell Law School about a job opening at the Institute of Government of the University of Georgia. I looked at it casually and rejected it initially. After all, I was a Yankee, and proud of it. Of course, the notice kept calling to me and I decided to read it. The job opening was for a position at the University of Georgia with faculty status, providing legal assistance and advice to state and local government officials in Georgia. I thought, well, I guess it won't hurt to apply. After all, I didn't have a job.

“Still, our outstanding universities and colleges remain, in my opinion, one of the greatest hopes for intellectual and civic progress in this country.”

Ernest Boyer

While in Boston over spring break interviewing for positions in New England, I called home, and my mother said that I had a long-distance phone call. I needed to call area code 404-542-2736. So from a phone booth in Boston, I called the director of the Institute of Government, and he said they wanted to fly me down to see them. Well, nobody was flying me to Boston, so I said, okay, I guess I'll go.

The director met me at the plane at 10:30 at night, and I thought the job interview went well. I liked the job and I liked the people. When it came time to leave, the director said that he wanted to make me an attractive offer—what would be attractive to me? I named a high price, and he about met it. I got no other job offers.

It has lasted longer than I thought it would. And it's because I found (if that's the proper term) a great place to work, with a great mission and a great purpose. That mission and purpose are to link the knowledge and skills of the academy with the needs and opportunities of the community. This is a high and noble calling, and all of us in this room are fortunate to have it as our *raison d'être*.

But it is not an easy job. Faculty who are committed to carrying out a service and outreach mission are often considered suspect by their colleagues at the university and are often perceived as “too academic” by the practitioners. In fact, at the risk of gross oversimplification, we might characterize this as a clash of cultures on

the public campus between the thinkers and the doers. The thinkers are caught up in the life of the mind, and all that that entails. They are drawn to the university because thinking is a high value and a high priority on the campus. And, heaven knows, we need more and better thinking, not less! Doers, on the other hand, are often impatient and want to get on with the job of solving problems. Unfortunately, if they don't get some good advice from the thinkers, they can march off in the wrong direction, and that has been known to happen.

So we need to discover better ways to link the thinkers and the doers. We can also try to promote more thinking on the part of the doers and more doing on the part of the thinkers. I'm not sure which is harder. But that is where the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* comes in. We would like to play a role in this effort.

As I mentioned earlier, the journal is not really new, although it does have a new name and a new editor. Established in 1994 by Dr. S. Eugene Younts, then vice-president for public service and outreach of the University of Georgia and a guest speaker at the last conference of this kind held in 1999, the *Journal of Public Service and Outreach* sought to provide "a forum to analyze and highlight trends, ideas, and innovative practices that would promote excellence in academic outreach in universities and colleges as they seek to be of service to their sponsoring societies." It arose in recognition of the fact that there were few, if any, outlets for articles devoted to the "third mission" of the university. As a point of pride, the first issue of this new journal carried the last article ever written by the late Ernest Boyer, former president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and the person who has been the guiding light for all of us engaged in this effort. The article was titled "The Scholarship of Engagement," and it is still the most requested article of all those published in the ensuing years. Boyer wrote:

Still, our outstanding universities and colleges remain, in my opinion, one of the greatest hopes for intellectual and civic progress in this country. I'm convinced that for this hope to be fulfilled, the academy must become a more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic, and moral problems, and must reaffirm its historic commitment to what I call the scholarship of engagement.

This notion of the scholarship of engagement is a beautiful one, because it provides greater clarity to what we should be doing. Since Boyer's coining of the phrase and its adoption by the Kellogg Reports on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities, the term "engagement" has captured the attention of many of us, because it implies an interaction and a give-and-take with the public rather than just a "give." And that is the nature of a true partnership. Much of service and outreach in the past has been surrounded by a condescending air, by a belief that we know best, and you need to pay attention to what we have to say. In fact, we do know a lot, but so do the people we are working with, and we need to learn to listen to each other more carefully.

So we took on a new name. When I say "we," I'm including Dr. Art Dunning, the current vice president for public service and outreach and associate provost, whose office is serving as a joint sponsor of this publication along with the Institute of Higher Education. The "new" *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* seeks to continue the momentum of its predecessor and serve as a forum to continue the dialogue about the service and outreach mission of the university and its relationship to the teaching and research missions and to the needs of the sponsoring society. Published three times per year (fall, winter, and spring/summer), *JHEOE* is a national peer-reviewed journal that casts a wide net and welcomes submissions from a broad range of scholars, practitioners, and professionals who can identify and discuss ways in which the intellectual capital and work product of institutions of higher education can be better utilized to improve the quality of life of the citizens. The editorial board is composed of a host of respected national leaders in this field, and includes Jim Ryan, Penn State's first vice president for outreach and cooperative extension.

Our predecessor journal included a mixture of both solicited and refereed manuscripts, with the former being predominant. We are changing this approach and moving toward a more traditional format, with submitted manuscripts being subjected to a rigorous review process. The members of our editorial board can attest to this: we have been working them pretty hard in terms of manuscript review, and we will continue to do so.

We have published three issues to date, and I am pleased with them, but then I'm not a completely objective observer (see list of articles and authors in Appendix A). I want to pay tribute to our early contributors, since they were taking a leap of faith with us, to some degree.

Our standards of review are rather general, because we have such a wide range of interests represented. We are fortunate that we are not bound to anybody else's model—we can do what works best for us. We use generic guidelines for article review at the present time (see Appendix B). Let me add quickly, however, that we are open to suggestions on this, and we may need to ratchet up our standards of review. They are not discipline oriented, and that may be a problem for us. On the other hand, by our very nature we are multi- and inter-disciplinary. In fact, this could be the proverbial Catch-22, because without a discipline orientation, we may not be taken seriously back in our own home departments. But if we move to a discipline base, we will lose our distinctiveness and niche. So I seek your good counsel and advice on this one.

I want to alert you to two other initiatives that have been ongoing for several years and are directly related to the work we are doing here. One is the "Links" Conferences.

"JHEOE is a national peer-reviewed journal that casts a wide net and welcomes submissions from a broad range of scholars, practitioners, and professionals . . ."

In early 1993, while shaving, Donald R. Gerth, president of California State University, Sacramento, had a "capital" idea. He decided that there was a need for a conference to draw together academicians and practitioners from across the country to share experiences about state capital and public university collaborations. The first such conference was convened in April 1993 in Sacramento and attracted representatives from thirty-one states, seventy-one universities, and eighty-seven centers, institutes, and programs, including many institutions with nationwide reputations for government-oriented programs. Obviously, Don Gerth was on to something. The event was such a success that a decision was made to continue holding these conferences. At a meeting in July 1993, at the annual conference of the American Society for Public Administration in San Francisco, it was decided that the second annual conference would be held in Georgia. The Carl Vinson Institute of Government of the University of Georgia, of which I was then the director, agreed to take the lead in organizing this conference, in cooperation with Georgia State University, the Georgia Institute of Technology, and the John C. Stennis Center for Public Service.

The second annual conference was also a success, attracting 154 people from thirty-four states and one foreign country, representing seventy different institutions. The evaluations from the conference indicated that the momentum was continuing. The third annual conference was held in Denver, Colorado, sponsored by the University of Colorado. And others have been held since in various locales. The issue of the link between public universities and state capitals is a timely one, and is related to what we are about. The next “Links” Conference—“Links VIII,” I believe—will be held in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and the conference chair is your very own Bev Cigler at Penn State Harrisburg.

The second initiative that needs to be mentioned emanates from the New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE), and particularly their sponsorship of the annual Ernest A. Lynton Awards for Faculty Professional Service and Academic Outreach. With the support of the Center, we have decided to include an ongoing feature in the *Journal* titled “Ernest Lynton Remembered.” The late Ernest Lynton, former senior vice president for academic affairs at the University of Massachusetts, was a pioneer in the effort to elevate the work of public service and outreach to the status of legitimate academic contributions. He ended his career as a senior associate at NERCHE at the University of Massachusetts in Boston. We thank Deborah Hirsch, the current director of the Center, and her colleagues for their contributions to this cooperative endeavor. We are especially pleased with this new linkage with a sister institute in the Northeast.

So we’re excited about all of the possibilities and opportunities that the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* presents to us. It is definitely a work in progress, and I expect it will be for some time to come. Suggestions, recommendations, and even criticisms—in the right spirit!—are welcome. Let me hear from you.

APPENDIX A

JHEOE: Volume 6, Number 1 (Fall 2000)

Engagement: A Defining Characteristic of the University of Tomorrow

John V. Byrne, *Former Executive Director of the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities*

The Formative Politics of Outreach Scholarship

Scott J. Peters, *Cornell University*

Public Service and Public Health: A University/Government Collaboration to Prevent Childhood Lead Poisoning

Joan Bothell, Maureen T. Mulroy, Mary-Margaret Gaudio
University of Connecticut

Service and Outreach: A Multicultural and International Dimension

Richard J. Kraft and Jerry F. Dwyer, *University of Colorado at Boulder*

Outreach as a Critical Link to State Support for Public Research Universities

David J. Weerts, *University of Wisconsin*

ERNEST LYNTON REMEMBERED

From Inreach to Outreach: Innovations in Higher Education

Hiram E. Fitzgerald, *Michigan State University*

A Tale of Two Disciplines: A Community College/Public School Writing Collaborative

Suzanne S. Austin and Eleanor Barton, *Miami-Dade Community College*

Mission-Driven Public Service and Outreach

Judith W. Meyer, *Fontbonne College*

APPENDIX A (continued)

JHEOE: Volume 6, Number 2 (Winter 2001)

From Maverick to Mainstream: The Scholarship of Engagement

Amy Driscoll, *California State University*

Lorilee R. Sandmann, *Cleveland State University*

Outreach as Scholarly Expression: A Faculty Perspective

Frank A. Fear, Cheryl L. Rosaen, Pennie Foster-Fishman and

Richard J. Bawden, *Michigan State University*

**Toward a Unified View of Scholarship: Eliminating Tensions
Between Traditional and Engaged Work**

Marcia A. Finkelstein, *University of South Florida*

Assessing and Improving Outreach through Objectives

KerryAnn O'Meara, *Harvard Graduate School of Education*

Public Service and Outreach to Faith-Based Organizations

Mark A. Small, *Clemson University*

**An Idealized Model for a Service-Learning Nonprofit
Management Course**

Mario I. Katsioloudes, Paul Arsenault, *West Chester University
of Pennsylvania*

ERNEST LYNTON REMEMBERED

**Innovative Pedagogy: A Partnership Model for Designing
Service-Learning Projects**

Barbara P. Reider, Steven V. Campbell, Robert C. Maloney
University of Alaska, Anchorage

JHEOE: Volume 6, Number 3 (Spring/Summer 2001)

**Engaging the Public Policy Agenda: A Conference
on Accountability and Financial Support of
Public Higher Education**

Edward G. Simpson, Jr., *University of Georgia*

**Universities as Institutions of Lifelong Learning:
Epistemological Dilemmas**

Peter Jarvis, *University of Surrey, England*

**An Advanced Forestry Continuing Education
Program for Area County Extension Agents**

Coleman W. Dangerfield, Jr., David J. Moorhead,
Kim D. Coder, *University of Georgia*

**University-Community Health Advancement
Partnerships That Work**

Linda Houtkooper, Linda Larkey, Robin Harris,
Sharon Hoelscher Day, Vickie Steinfelt, Joel Meister,
Ralph Renger, Linda Block, Marilyn Johnson,
Stuart J. Cohen, *University of Arizona*

**A Bridge to Healthier Families and Children: The Collaborative
Process of a University-Community Partnership**

Carol MacKinnon-Lewis, *University of South Florida*
James M. Frabutt, *University of North Carolina at Greensboro*

ERNEST LYNTON REMEMBERED

HIV: Opportunities for Faculty Engagement

Ralph Aloisi and Peter Kennedy, *University of Hartford*

APPENDIX B

JHEOE: Article Review and Edit Criteria

Title: _____

Manuscript Number: _____

Reviewer: _____

Recommendations:

☐ Publish ☐ Publish upon revision ☐ Do not publish

Please use the following guidelines to assess submitted articles to the journal.

1. Rate the author's knowledge and coverage of the topic.

1 (unacceptable) 2 3 4 5 (excellent)

2. Rate the readability of the article.

1 (unacceptable) 2 3 4 5 (excellent)

3. Rate the effectiveness of the argument in terms of clarity, persuasiveness, and style.

1 (unacceptable) 2 3 4 5 (excellent)

4. Rate the relevance of the article to the general audience of the journal.

1 (unacceptable) 2 3 4 5 (excellent)

5. Rate the ability of the article to add new understandings or perspectives to the topic.

1 (unacceptable) 2 3 4 5 (excellent)

6. Rate the overall quality of the article.

1 (unacceptable) 2 3 4 5 (excellent)

Comments: (For Editor Only - Use attached sheet for comments to be sent to author).