What I had Wrong OR
What a Professor Learned by Becoming a Student

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Students Today Have Changed
Community
The Mathematics of Community & Choice in the Contemporary University
And then there were...

A community of one
How community works-1

- The Vote
  - Low Participation
  - More planned activities
  - More choices
  - More Fragmentation
How community works-2

- The Superbowl
“Community” for most students amounted to small peer networks who maintained close, often closed, networks.
The new face of community

- 2-6 people, in informally organized networks with fluid connections to organized groups
- Met early in college career
- Often mediated by technology
  - “IM”ing, texting, cellphones, Facebook
- Not based on academic contacts/values
Which is the “real” freshman’s door and which is the RA?

An unexamined life is not worth living—Socrates

Reach for the stars.

Vote!

24 hours in a day.
What do you talk about late night with friends?

We talk about what everything means (if we’re drunk or stoned we try to be all deep)

Oh, religion and philosophy, and more dorky things

God and life—but only after we’re tired of talking about boyfriends, hot pros, peeing and what’s on Friends.
Small individualized networks
Formed early by “choice”
Mediated by technology
Not connected to academic life
Diversity
We now educate a much wider segment of American society.

Percentage of High School Grads Who Enroll in College
They are more likely to be more diverse:

- Women
- Underrepresented/minority
- Less elite and affluent
- First-generation college
- English not first language
- International
Are the academic purposes of diversity being accomplished?
Social Networks
The Dining Room
The Dining Room--Full
From whose viewpoint?
How We Break Bread

- 10% of white men, and 14% of white women ate at a table where there was anyone of a different color from themselves.
  - 68% of women of color, and 58% of men of color, ate in “mixed ethnic groups.”

- Only 2.6% of white men, and 3.5% of white women ate a table where they were the only white person.
  - People of color were ten times as likely as whites to eat in a group in which they were the only person of their race/ethnicity at the table.

- Less than 1% of white men ate with (only) males of a different ethnicity. Most inter-ethnic contact was with mixed gender groups.
  - Women of any ethnicity were more likely to have cross-ethnic contact with other women.
The Intellectual Price?
Questions asked of international students at AnyU

- Is Japan inside China?
- Is it North Korea or South Korea that has a dictator?
- Where exactly is India? Do you still ride elephants?
- Do they dub American TV into British?
Sequential statement of opinion
Life of the Mind
Are students today just plain lazy?
Today, students are busy and stressed.
Multiple demands push academic life into smaller and smaller time slots

Student Time Allocation

- Academics: 31%
- Social: 19%
- Interest: 14%
- Volunteer: 10%
- Professional: 10%
- Working: 5%
- Family: 10%
Remember Who College Students Are:

- 2 out of every 3 high school graduates
- Women
- Minority
- Less affluent
- First gen. college
- International
- More in debt
- Less prepared for college at home
- More practical in their educational goals
- Less familiar with the “cultural rules” of academe
From Time Management

College Management

- What schedule will give me the most control over my life?

- How can I (reasonably) limit the impact of coursework on my time?
When do students NOT do the reading? IF...

Will there be a quiz?

YES → DO THE READING

NO → Will I need the reading to do the (collected) homework?

YES → DO THE READING

NO → Will I have to perform, using the reading?

YES → DO THE READING

NO → DON'T DO THE READING
Do Students Today Come to College to Learn?

OR

=
Be honest. If the university would hand you a bachelor’s degree right now, provided you paid for your credits…would you take the degree and leave?

![Bar chart showing the distribution of responses to the question.](chart.png)

- **YES**: 21
- **NO**: 79
The majority of students agreed:

“I want the full college experience”

AND

“I came to college to learn”
Most of what they say they learn in college is outside the formal classroom
What is “OUTSIDE”?

- OUTSIDE=real “practical” world
- OUTSIDE= peer group

Favorite courses were often those that connected to OUTSIDE, where they believed 65% of the learning derived.
So... why are they so hard to engage?
The way we’re teaching is different from the way they learn

\[ 2 + 2 = \sqrt{27 + (\sin \Theta)^2 + (\cos \Theta)^2} \]

\[ \times \int_{\cos \Theta}^{2} d\Theta = \]
The contexts in which they DO learn are often off the professor's chart.
Thank You!

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