

# A Developing American Tragedy in Higher Education

*a CLIPS Guest Commentary*

By Frank G. Splitt, 04-16-13, Updated with Afterword 04-23-13

*Our guest author believes that America's deteriorating higher education system is a consequence of a dysfunctional government and a lack of strong leadership.*

*All your strength is in your union. All your danger is in discord.*  
— Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Song of Hiawatha*, 1855

**INTRODUCTION** – This commentary is based on material that was recently sent to Anne Neal, President of the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) – an organization committed to academic freedom, excellence and accountability at America's colleges and universities. My hope was that ACTA members would formulate a response as to what best might be done about the tragic situation described herein – the deterioration of America's system of higher education. My further hope is that reform-minded organizations can work together to help stem the tide of the debilitating forces that can potentially reduce America to a second-rate world power.

**THE SPORTS FACTOR** – Over the years, it has been a given that higher education in America is the envy of the world. However, Murray Sperber's 2000 book, *Beer and Circus: How Big-Time College Sports Is Crippling Undergraduate Education* provided deep insights into the debilitating impact of big-time collegiate athletics programs on the overall quality of education at the colleges and universities sponsoring such programs.<sup>1</sup>

*It is hard to read Sperber's book without having a sinking feeling about the future of American culture. He has managed to document one facet of our national decline in painstaking detail, and the result is an admirable, timely and profoundly disturbing work.* — *The New York Times Book Review*

For further insights see "Academically Adrift in a Sea of Sports and Mediocrity"<sup>2</sup> and "College Sports Reform: The Likely End Game."<sup>3</sup> Rick Telander, the lead sportswriter at the *Chicago Sun-Times* provides additional perspectives on the corruptive influence of money and the NCAA in Appendix 1, "A moral compass that's right on the money."<sup>4</sup>

**OTHER CONTRIBUTING FACTORS** – The sweep of this commentary encompasses other factors besides the near obsession of higher education officials with their college sports entertainment businesses. These factors contribute to what might be termed a national scandal. Some of these factors are illuminated in Fareed Zakaria's *Time* magazine story, "The Thin-Envelope Crisis," in Appendix 2 and by Warren Kozak's *Wall Street Journal* story, "Call Them Tiger Students, And Get to Work" in Appendix 3.

This is not a new story as can be seen from the following excerpts that focus on a significant effort of some eight years ago to raise awareness, if not dire warnings, about the decline of higher education in America.<sup>5</sup>

Murray Sperber, Frank Deford, Gene Maeroff, James Fallows, Jay Mathews, Vartan Gregorian, Carol G. Schneider, and others, contributed to a book, *Declining by Degrees: Higher Education at Risk*, edited by Richard Hersh and John Merrow that aimed to provide a look at the declining state of higher education in 2005. A related PBS documentary aired in 2005. The avowed purpose of the book

and documentary was to sound an alert and encourage a national conversation about higher education: "No longer can our colleges and universities be allowed to drift in a sea of mediocrity." The synopsis of the program began by saying, "At a time when a college education is vital to an individual's future and our nation's economic standing in the world, *Declining by Degrees: Higher Education at Risk* explores the simple yet significant question: What happens between admission and graduation? The answer: often not enough."

The PBS documentary is both revealing and depressing. It debunks commonly held notions about the so-called rite of passage known as the college experience as it not only exposes the disorientation and disappointment many students feel, but the mutual-survival "non-aggression pact" that exists between many faculty and students—we won't ask much of you so long as you won't ask much of us. One is left to question the quality and readiness of America's future workforce.

There follows several observations that were made in a 2005 commentary:<sup>6</sup>

In China, which educates approximately one-half of the world's engineers, engineering education is valued as a preparation for contributions in government, policy, innovation, intellectual property, broad engineering disciplines, and manufacturing. The study of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEMs) is considered to be a patriotic duty -- providing a robust pipeline of human resources for R&D.

This is in sharp contrast to the U.S., where, for all intents and purposes, government at all levels stands idle while many of its most prestigious schools prostitute themselves in a mostly futile quest for fame and fortune via their sports entertainment businesses. In December 2009, Darren Everson, Hannah Karp, and Mark Yost each published a college sports story in *The Wall Street Journal* that, taken together, offer chilling evidence that America's colleges and universities are helping to lead the way as the country slithers toward second-rate nationhood.

America's love affair with big-time college-sports entertainment in combination with excessive cynicism, apathy (if not purposeful ignorance), and gambling, has been a recipe for growing commercialization at America's institutions of higher learning.

Excessive commercialization has brought academic corruption, financial shenanigans, increasing expenditures on athletics, and money-focused presidents who view sports programs as an economic necessity and undergraduate education as an expensive nuisance.

Worse yet, greed, fanatic sports fans, an apathetic public and inconsistent government policies allow the commercially driven college-sports enterprise to grow unchecked, all but guaranteeing distracted, booster-beholden university administrators and an expanding set of fun-loving consumers for their entertainment business ... a business that has hijacked the academic mission of many universities.

If all of this is coupled with the rising costs of residential higher education (without corresponding improvements in academics) and improved technology-driven competitive education delivery systems, we are led to the conclusion that America's higher education enterprise is rapidly becoming untenable – unable to survive, just as predicted by Peter Drucker back in 1997.

The above is by no means all that can be said on the subject. So much more has been written to cast light on the deterioration of higher education in America...deterioration that is developing well beyond a national scandal into an American tragedy.

*As it is the commendation of a good huntsman to find game in the wild wood, so it is no imputation if he had not caught all.... We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light.* — Plato, 428 – 348 BC, the founder of the Academy in Athens, the first institution of higher learning in the Western world.

**WHAT'S THE POINT?** – In a nutshell, here's the point via an example that begins in the mid-1940s at a time when the might of nations was measured by steel production, and America was the mightiest of them all. Forty years later, steel industry statistics portrayed an image of national debilitation. According to John Strohmeyer, more than 250,000 jobs were lost forever, more than 30 million tons of capacity were wiped out as aging facilities were shut down, and one-fourth of the domestic market captured by aggressive foreign nations with newer plants and lower wage rates.<sup>7</sup> In the future, the might of nations will be measured not only by the quality of the education and readiness of its workforce, but also by the quality of its leadership and governance. By these measures, America is slipping from its world-leadership position. Worse yet, the situation is not bound to improve in the near term because of a serious pipeline problem—America's entertainment-saturated K-12 students rank scandalously low on academic tests compared to their international peers—an inconvenient truth avoided by Washington politicians.

**A MODEL FOR LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE** – Let me now call attention to Lee Kuan Yew, the first Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore who governed from 1959 to 1990. Mr. Lee is not only widely recognized as the founding father of modern Singapore, but also responsible for the transformation of a relatively underdeveloped colonial outpost with no natural resources into a "First World" Asian Tiger. He was the focus of the recent book titled *Lee Kuan Yew*<sup>8</sup> and many complimentary reviews.<sup>9, 10</sup>

The book focuses on the future and the specific challenges that the U.S. will face during the next quarter century. Readers that are fairly well acquainted with U.S. socio-economic politics should not be surprised to find that Lee believes that although the U.S. is not yet a "second rate power," ...the inability of its political leaders to make unpopular decisions does not bode well for its future. "...the American voter has shown a disinclination to listen to their political leaders when they debate the hard issues ...neither the Republican nor the Democratic Party has focused on the urgent need to cut down deficit spending, especially on welfare, to increase savings and investments, or, most crucial of all, to improve America's school system to produce workers who are able to compete internationally," says Lee.

**AMERICA'S DILEMMA** – Unfortunately, America does not have a political system that is amenable to stemming what currently appears to be an irreversible decline in the academic quality of its public colleges and universities. Nor does America have leadership of the caliber of a Lee Kuan Yew who held excellence in higher education as one of his highest priorities when driving the rise of Singapore. What to do?

*It is ironic that the government's subsidy of college sports via favorable tax policies is helping to fuel the destruction of what has been one of our nation's most precious resources.<sup>6</sup>*

**A PATH FORWARD** – In light of the epigraph from the *Song of Hiawatha*, perhaps the information contained in this commentary could be used to stimulate reason-based discussions on what can be done about America's dilemma....discussions that can be amplified by the media. The discussions could be initiated by the leaders of the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, The Drake Group (TDG), the College Sports Research Institute (CSRI), the National College Players Association (NCPA), the National Coalition Against Violent Athletes (NCAVA), and other reform-minded organizations at venues such as the annual *CSRI Conference on College Sport*.

I agree with Rick Telander who once said: "If we can't be goaded or reasoned into doing the right thing, maybe we can be shamed into it. Embarrassment may be as good a prod as logic. I hope it is."<sup>11</sup>

**AFTERWORD (04-23-13)** – Subsequent to the posting of the *CLIPS Guest Commentary*, I became aware of the five noteworthy items that are listed below.

1. "America's level of postsecondary-education attainment—once the highest in the world—is not keeping pace with our global competitors and is not sufficient to meet the work-force demands of the coming decades," says William E. Kirwan, chancellor of the University System of Maryland.<sup>12</sup> He goes on to say "the nation's future well-being hinges on our ability to respond to what has rightly been called the "college completion imperative"—offering four strategies to enable higher education to make substantial progress toward meeting its obligations to social equity and the economic competitiveness of our nation. He asks, "Do we have the will and resolve to adopt the changes that the times require?"
2. Beverly Tatum, president of Spelman College, and the school's board of trustees, provide an example of getting a school's priorities right.<sup>13</sup> The officials' highly unusual move to disband NCAA Division III-level sports was spurred, in part, by the health problems of young alumni. Money will now be reallocated to establish a wellness program that could take advantage of the college's gym, courts and fields. The move came at a time when few institutions, especially those in Division I, seem to be unable to resist the lure of intercollegiate sports, even as one scandal after another has tarnished the reputations of well-known universities throughout the country.
3. In an open letter to Division I college presidents and governing boards Arne Duncan, secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, and C. Thomas McMillen, secretary of the University System of Maryland's Board of *Regents*, say there is an extreme imbalance between the athletic and the academic at many colleges and universities with revenue sports in the NCAA's Division I on an unsustainable path—and that college presidents and governing boards need to make changes to better align the athletics programs of their institutions with their academic mission.<sup>14</sup>
4. Matthew Goldstein, chancellor of the City University of New York since 1999, has announced that he will retire in June. During his tenure, he chose to fight a broken status quo and make a difference—providing lessons not only for public colleges and universities but for every K-12 public school in America as well.<sup>15</sup>
5. Outgoing UNC-Chapel Hill chancellor Holden Thorp convened a panel, headed by Association of American Universities president Hunter Rawlings, to study the role of big-time college athletics in the life of UNC -- and elsewhere.<sup>16</sup> Thorp told how big a toll athletics takes in the life of a chancellor -- who is, after all, supposed to run the rest of the university as well -- and how he thinks more responsibility needs to be shifted back to the athletic department. "A sports crisis reduces really smart people into people that appear inept and seem inarticulate. Because there's really nowhere to hide....We can't stop playing sports, doing it well and playing to win. But we've got to figure out how to make it more sustainable. These institutions are spending too much effort, capital and psychic capital on solving these problems. These institutions are too important to the country for that to happen." said Thorp.

The foregoing items either reinforce the arguments made in the commentary or contribute lessons and insights applicable to the path forward. Particularly relevant was the question asked by William Kirwan, quoted in the first listed item: "Do we have the will and resolve to adopt the changes that the times require?"

Though I long to be proven wrong, all indications point to a resounding no for the answer to Kirwan's question. For now, radically dysfunctional government and the bureaucracies at America's colleges and universities grind on as if all is well with higher education.

More telling than words and appeals will be intervention-oriented action as opposed to a continued lack of such action. At present, the only visible ray of hope for serious reform rests in the class-action antitrust lawsuits against the NCAA driven by Sonny Vaccaro.<sup>3, 17, 18</sup>

In my ten years at a seemingly Sisyphean task, I have come to the following sad conclusion: If the courts can't make a significant dent in America's deteriorating higher education system -- to the extent that academics and academic integrity as well merit-based admissions are valued above winning athletics teams and open admissions--then our grandchildren had better start learning Mandarin.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** – I am much indebted to Peg Mangan for her painstaking editing of my commentaries and to Mike Mangan for many helpful discussions as well as for his gift of John Strohmeyer's revelatory book, *Crisis in Bethlehem*.

## ENDNOTES

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2. Splitt, Frank G., "Academically Adrift in a Sea of Sports and Mediocrity," *College Athletics Clips*, March 4, 2012, ([http://drakegroupblog.files.wordpress.com/2012/12/splitt\\_adrift.pdf](http://drakegroupblog.files.wordpress.com/2012/12/splitt_adrift.pdf))
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4. For more on the NCAA, see Aasif Mandvi's comedic test of the NCAA's image as a disinterested steward of amateur athletics protecting college sports from the corrosive influences of commercialism in the video "The NCAA's Perfectly Fair Rules" at (<http://www.thedailyshow.com/watch/thu-april-11-2013/the-ncaa-s-perfectly-fair-rules>).
5. These excerpts were taken from pages 14 and 15 of "College Athletics Reform: Signs Hope," ([http://drakegroupblog.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/splitt\\_signs.pdf](http://drakegroupblog.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/splitt_signs.pdf)).
6. These observations were taken from "Sports in America 2005: Facing Up to Global Realities" on page 5 of the set of three related commentaries titled "Sports in America: Facing Up to Global Realities," that can be accessed at ([http://drakegroupblog.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/splitt\\_sports\\_in\\_america\\_2009.pdf](http://drakegroupblog.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/splitt_sports_in_america_2009.pdf)).
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10. Splitt, Frank G, "Penetrating Insights from an Authentic Leader," *Amazon.com*, April 5, 2013, (<http://www.amazon.com/review/R1AC10LR6OEWB0>). Dr. William Schowalter, who is mentioned in the first endnote of the review, advised: "The review, which, along with the book, portrays correctly a person of unusual candor and insight. He's slowing down but remains a powerful force in Singapore. I think he will have to be dead for 20 years before he is discovered as one of the great minds and movers of the 20th century."

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**APPENDIX 1: Rick Telander on “A moral compass that’s right on the money”  
*Emmert can’t fix NCAA’s sleaze; he’s busy feeding it.***

Quoted from the April 5, 2013, issue of the *Chicago Sun-Times*

Some day the kettle’s going to blow.

Some day the intricate Rube Goldberg machine that is the NCAA will spring a leak and no amount of Band-Aids, glue, fingers in holes, rules, sleight of hand, PR, or gibberish will hold the mess together.

Oh, there’s tons of money rolling around in our nation’s sports coffers. Witness the multi-million dollar salaries given to all but the lamest men’s football and basketball coaches. Witness the billion-dollar TV contracts to broadcast college sports, the crazy advertising, the 100,000-seat cathedrals of entertainment where unpaid workers perform for the raging masses.

But that money—which leaps from our fascination with winning—comes at a price. For kicks, let’s call it morality.

And let’s call NCAA president Mark Emmert, in charge of the burgeoning fraudulence, Mr. Immorality. Is that too strong a word? I don’t think so.

Emmert is a career college sports administrator who has always been able to leave Dodge just before the sheriff arrives. His standard response to corruption under his watch has been to delay, deny, and hope it dies. And the hubbub usually has died, or been passed on to others who came after him or worked below him. Or else he fired scapegoats, as when he recently fired two high-

ranking NCAA officials because of their involvement in the over-zealous pursuit of a corrupt University of Miami football program.

That incident was spurred by Emmert's desire for tough ``enforcement'' of the crazy rules of amateurism that the NCAA and its member organizations—universities and colleges—have propped up for over a century.

At Montana State, Connecticut, LSU, and finally Washington, Emmert left ethical problems that always involved money or big-time sports or both. According to a damning *USA Today* story on Wednesday, Emmert made head coaches at LSU and Washington the highest paid coaches in the land.

At U-Conn he left a \$100-million construction scandal behind. Along the way he was paid more than any president at any public university anywhere. Thursday he was grilled by the media in Atlanta before the upcoming men's Final Four basketball tourney. It wasn't a pretty sight. But then neither was the way whistle-blowers were treated at LSU after Emmert built up a corrupt national champion team, declaring, ``success in LSU football is essential for the success of Louisiana State University.'' Not its reputation as a place where anybody learns anything, mind you, but as a financial success.

Emmert has said he will ``never'' pay athletes, because they are ``amateurs.'' And why are they amateurs? ``Because I said so.''

He also, like everybody in big-time sport, complains about the ``arms race'' of expenditures. But there is no salary cap for anybody but the athletes, so the era of the \$10 million coach can't be far off. And the TV/ad faucet is gushing more than ever.

The pressure to win at the D-1 level is so great that a maniac coach like Rutgers men's basketball coach Mike Rice can flourish for years. And a once-proud conference like the Big Ten will open its doors for a place like Rutgers. Why? The market. The exposure. The money.

I hope the Big Ten is happy with its 14 teams, including the middling Maryland and Joe Pa-tainted Penn State. And I hope it's happy with NCAA president Emmert, the money man all its member institutions helped elect.

There is cash everywhere on the horizon. It flows and flows. But no moral man has taken the NCAA lead to make fair, ethical, financial decisions for the athletes. For the students.

Emmert? Ha.

## **APPENDIX 2: Fareed Zakaria on ``The Thin-Envelope Crisis''**

Quoted from the April 15, 2013, issue of *TIME Magazine*

It's time for the fat and thin envelopes--the month when colleges across the U.S. send out admission and rejection notices to well over a million high school seniors. For all the problems with its elementary and secondary schools, American higher education remains the envy of the world. It has been the nation's greatest path to social and economic mobility, sorting and rewarding talented kids from any and all backgrounds. But there are broad changes taking place at U.S. universities that are moving them away from an emphasis on merit and achievement and toward offering a privileged experience for an already privileged group.

State universities--once the highways of advancement for the middle class--have been utterly transformed under the pressure of rising costs and falling government support. A new book, *Paying for the Party: How College Maintains Inequality*, shows how some state schools have established a "party pathway," admitting more and more rich out-of-state kids who can afford hefty tuition bills but are middling students. These cash cows are given special attention through easy majors, lax grading, social opportunities and luxurious dorms. That's bad for the bright low-income students, who are on what the book's authors, Elizabeth Armstrong and Laura Hamilton, call the mobility pathway. They are neglected and burdened by college debt and fail in significant numbers.

The country's best colleges and universities do admit lower-income students. But the competition has become so intense and the percentage admitted so small that the whole process seems arbitrary. When you throw in special preferences for various categories--legacies, underrepresented minorities and athletes--it also looks less merit-based than it pretends to be. In an essay in the *American Conservative*, Ron Unz uses a mountain of data to charge that America's top colleges and universities have over the past two decades maintained a quota--an upper limit--of about 16.5% for Asian Americans, despite their exploding applicant numbers and high achievements.

Some of Unz's data is bad. His numbers do not account for the many Asian mixed-race students and others who refuse to divulge their race (largely from fears that they will be rejected because of a quota). Two Ivy League admissions officers estimated to me that Asian Americans probably make up more than 20% of their entering classes. Even so, institutions that are highly selective but rely on more objective measures for admission have found that their Asian-American populations have risen much more sharply over the past two decades. Caltech and the University of California, Berkeley, are now about 40% Asian. New York City's Stuyvesant High School admits about 1,000 students out of the 30,000 who take a math and reading test (and thus is twice as selective as Harvard). It is now 72% Asian American. The U.S. math and science olympiad winners are more than 70% Asian American. In this context, for the U.S.'s top colleges and universities to be at 20% is, at the least, worth some reflection.

*Higher Standards* – A 2009 study reports that Asian Americans need SAT scores 140 points higher than those of white students to have the same chance at admission to elite private universities.

*Impact On the Field and Off* – Athletes make up 25% to 40% of the student body at Division III colleges and 20% to 30% of undergrads at Ivy League universities.

Test scores are only one measure of a student's achievement, and other qualities must be taken into account. But it's worth keeping in mind that the arguments for such subjective criteria are precisely those that were made in the 1930s to justify quotas for Jews. In fact, in his book *The Chosen: The Hidden History of Admission and Exclusion at Harvard, Yale and Princeton*, scholar Jerome Karabel exhaustively documented how nonobjective admissions criteria such as interviews and extracurriculars were put in place by Ivy League schools in large measure to keep Jewish admissions from rising.

Then there's the single largest deviation from merit in America's best colleges: their recruited-athletes programs. The problem has gotten dramatically worse in the past 20 years. Colleges now have to drop their standards much lower to build sports teams. These students, in turn, perform terribly in classrooms. A senior admissions officer at an Ivy League school told me, "I have to turn down hundreds of highly qualified applicants, including many truly talented amateur athletes,

because we must take so many recruited athletes who are narrowly focused and less accomplished otherwise. They are gladiators, really." William Bowen, a former president of Princeton University, has documented the damage this system does to American higher education--and yet no college president has the courage to change it.

The most troubling trend in America in recent years has been the decline in economic mobility. The institutions that have been the best at opening access in the U.S. have been its colleges and universities. If they are not working to reward merit, America will lose the dynamism that has long made it so distinctive.

### **APPENDIX 3: Warren Kozak on "Call Them Tiger Students. And Get to Work."**

***One reason why Asians dominate New York's top public high schools: high parental expectations.***

Quoted from the April 5, 2013, issue of *The Wall Street Journal*. Mr. Kozak is the author of *Presidential Courage: Three Speeches That Changed America*, an eBook published last year.

This is the season when college notifications go out, and a simple "yes" is seen as a ticket to success. Applicants, though, can never be quite sure why they were accepted or rejected -- subjective criteria, in addition to test scores, are used in the evaluations.

For many New York City teenagers, a similar academic turning point comes even earlier in life, but with one big difference: The judgment is purely objective, based solely on the numbers.

Welcome to one of America's last meritocracies: New York's specialized high schools, led by Stuyvesant, Bronx Science and Brooklyn Tech. These schools are nationally ranked, their alumni include Nobel laureates, and they are feeders to the nation's top colleges. The admissions test comes in two parts verbal and math and takes two-and-a-half hours. Roughly 28,000 eighth-graders took the test in the fall. As always, those with the highest scores earned the coveted slots.

Here is the ethnic breakdown of acceptances for next fall's Stuyvesant freshman class: 9 black students, 24 Latinos, 177 whites and 620 Asian-Americans. Although the numbers were slightly different at the other two high schools, the ethnic mix is roughly the same.

At a time when the affirmative-action debate has been rekindled in the Supreme Court, when the president calls for free preschool for all low- and moderate-income children, and when the debates over education reform reverberate across the country, the numbers 9-24-177-620 amount to a Rorschach test for an already polarized society.

For some, the specialized-high-school test itself is clearly racist. Repeated demands have been made to change the entrance requirements. The NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund filed a complaint with the Department of Education in September of 2012, calling the test a violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Perhaps in response to such challenges and the fact that some parents enroll their children in private prep courses hoping to improve scores, the New York Board of Education offers free summer test-prep programs for disadvantaged students. Not enough black and Hispanic students have taken advantage of the extra help.

The Stuyvesant story speaks to a larger matter: the national disparity in educational advancement according to race and ethnicity. Reading and vocabulary skills are cumulative, meaning that verbal skills are not based on what an eighth-grader can cram into his head in a few weeks before a test. They come from everything read and heard since infancy.

Yet some Asian children with high scores come from immigrant homes where English isn't the first language. This raises the question of the importance of culture and the strong emphasis on hard work and higher parental expectations at home that make it possible to thrive academically.

Several years ago, Angela Duckworth, a psychology professor at the University of Pennsylvania, studied the teens who were National Spelling Bee finalists. She wanted to find out what they did to get there.

Many people might assume that the spelling whizzes have a genetic advantage, but Ms. Duckworth found a more important trait: tenacity. The finalists are willing to forgo the immediate gratification of watching TV or texting friends so they can spend hours and do the tedious and merciless grunt work. They write out thousands of flashcards with words and definitions and memorize them.

It is an unusual child who can do this while being constantly bombarded by popular culture's seductive images. But it also takes strong parents willing to guide the child and demand hours of difficult work.

The recent national fascination with Dr. Benjamin Carson is timely. He grew up in an impoverished section of Detroit and could have headed into the dead-end life that awaited many others around him. He had one huge advantage, though. His mother, who had no more than a third-grade education, turned off the TV, demanded that he study and, most of all, accepted absolutely no excuses. Ben Carson went on to become a noted neurosurgeon and author.

It is vital for America's future that those Stuyvesant numbers even out. But that won't happen simply by pouring more money into schools, hiring a thousand new teachers or offering Head Start to every 4-year-old from Maine to California. A better and much less expensive way may be for parents to look at what is going on in Asian-American families, or what went on in Dr. Carson's home, and copy it.

## THE AUTHOR



**Frank G. Splitt** holds a Ph.D. in Electrical and Computer Engineering (1963) from Northwestern University where he served as the McCormick Faculty Fellow of Telecommunications at the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science (1993-2005). He is a member of The Drake Group, a member of the College Sport Research Institute's Advisory Committee, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and was the Vice President Emeritus of Educational and Environmental Initiatives for NTI, the U.S. subsidiary of Nortel Networks, formerly known as Northern Telecom Limited.

As a Director of the International Engineering Consortium, he chaired the Consortium's Committee on the Future and its Fellow Awards Committee. He was also a member of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) inaugural Industry Advisory Council, the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) Educational Activities Board, and the IEEE's Corporate Recognition's Committee.

His professional career covered research & development, marketing, administration, teaching, and public service. He has authored numerous technical papers, as well as articles on public affairs. He is a Fellow of the International Engineering Consortium, a Life Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, an Eminent Engineer of Tau Beta Pi, the recipient of The Drake Group's *2006 Robert Maynard Hutchins Award*, and has been recognized by the state of Wisconsin for Outstanding Lake Stewardship.

His interests involve research and planning for the future of engineering education, environmental protection and conservation, and college sports reform. He and his wife Judy reside in Mt. Prospect, Illinois, and in Star Lake, Wisconsin. A complete listing of links to his essays and commentaries on college sports reform can be found at (<http://thedrakegroup.org/authors/splitt/>).