1. SILENCE IS SUSPECT Page 18

A good education is not like that. A good education reduces our confidence, limits the certainty of self, pulls us out of the family, questions primary loyalties. Not arbitrarily, though. Something worth having is offered: not a substitute but something very different. Other ways of thinking, special means of seeing, other personal values, unfamiliar content, new persons. All this is really not acceptable at first or rarely later on the whole. Is study ever completely voluntary?

2. SILENCE IS SUSPECT Page 41:

Adulthood means having one's own opinion on one's own ground. Judgment taken seriously. For growth's sake, the student must be asked for reasons, premises, examples, consequences, solutions. He must be pushed for a clear statement, valid reasons, relevant distinctions. The statement of value is just the beginning. It must be tested, questioned, experimented with, poked at, compared, tackled, probably laughed over, perhaps even cried about. Certainly taken seriously, at least partly believed, certainly criticized. Accepted or rejected? Not necessarily. That may be too strong in either direction. Let it be for a while.

Munch on it. The first task is to get our opinions into some kind of shape. The young person moves toward adult standing at the point where he is listened to. The acceptance or rejection of opinion is on his own. But he must first be heard and then questioned. As seriously as possible. Rationally even.
3. Silence is Suspect Page 68:

Most discussions list opinions, one after the other. They add them up without touching. They never connect. Nothing is done to make them connect. Mind you, not agree but connect, even if only in opposition. What happens is education. A seeing of oneself and one's world through the means of disagreeing with others. Putting premise, method, significant action forward. What's important is the heard and seen differences. Listen, really listen, hear. It is not easy of course. We like to pretend that it is easy. Talking together freely in a rap session, we think it real talk. There has to be a willingness to waste talk. To talk too much. Most would agree the informed talk is what education is about. But we have no skills in talking. Discussion too often ends up with that list of opinions.

[Related; from a Thaler address on Gaudino] also made each person feel that he cared about what she thought. Gaudino took to heart, I believe, the observation made by Joseph Lyford in The Talk in Vandalia (a required reading for Williams-at-Home): "People are interested in what other people are up to, not in what they think." Gaudino demanded of his students, and himself, that they be very aware of and interested

4. Gaudino: "We return to Williams to affirm its methods of knowing, analyzing, distinguishing, taking distance. We return with a richer expanded content of experience. We return with revised purposes for the Williams education. It is not for profession or discipline or academic major that we study, talk, read, write, contest. It is for discovery of and personal orientation in the world. It is to see the world in its ambiguities, contrasts, dislocations, paradoxes, confusions, ideals, hypocrisies, and whatever else."
5. **From the Oral History:** “It was interesting how the group at certain times really turned against Indians and there was a time when a few of us got frustrated with Indians and there were real racist tendencies that came out, in me and others. People would start making derogatory jokes when we were by ourselves. It was amazing how that otherness would draw out the worst in some people, including myself. You find yourself getting angry, impatient and angry with Indians and we talked about that and that whole dimension of how people responded to India in ways that we really hadn’t anticipated. You know you study it and say, “Oh, this is wonderful and it’s interesting” and then you actually hit the reality of it and a lot of it you’re not comfortable with and in fact it repels you.” -- Wynne Carvill ‘71

6. **From the Oral History:** "The first page of the syllabus had rules about how we were going to behave, rules about the classroom. In order to learn we had to build spaces. They were artificial, man-made, they were not natural. Learning is an unnatural act, difficult, not easily done, so we had to be very careful about the space where we’re supposed to learn. And there were rules in order to construct it. The rules were about preserving the classroom both from us and internal-to-the-classroom [factors] and from the things outside of the classroom — our past, the TV, our concerns, our peer pressures and all the rest. So very fragile space and all of us had to be responsible for it. It was not his classroom, it was our classroom, and we were going to take care of it together. And he talked about how one of the first rules was “silence is suspect.” Don’t come here and be silent. You will have something to say, each of you. You will have something to offer. And if you don’t, we’ll find it.

He would talk about how much of your humanity you could bring into the classroom. Of course most of us are listening and not understanding half of this. The lessons of that first day, you know, they’ve been learned over a lifetime. He talked about being prepared and the courtesy of each student to the other. Lack of preparedness meant you were not respectful of the efforts made by others. So you had this kind of a sense of a genuine tenderness, affection for this thing we were going to do together. Grand adventure.” -- Don Dubendorf ‘75

7. **Gaudino** in the 1950s (a passage chosen by Jenny Tang’12 in her Board farewell essay):

“I cannot force myself into a decision between absolutes. ... By realizing the complexities of the problems involved, I seek a channel which recognizes moderacy in approach. I’m not looking for simplicity. I am looking for a solution. I am looking for men who have the perceptiveness to see inconsistencies in themselves first. I am looking for men who refuse to resolve a problem in terms of its extremes. I am looking for men who refuse to use economically and politically determined generalizations as the sources of their rational capabilities.”
The most versatile, the most durable, in an ultimate sense the most practical knowledge and intellectual resources which they can now be offered are those impractical arts and sciences around which the liberal arts education has long centered: the capacity to see and fee, to grasp, respond and act over a widening arc of experiences; the disposition and ability to think, to question, to use knowledge to order an ever-extending range of reality; the elasticity to grow, to perceive more widely and more deeply, and perhaps to create; the understanding to decide where to stand and the will and tenacity to do so; the wit and wisdom, the humanity and the humor to try to see oneself, one's society, and one's world with open eyes, to live a life usefully, to help thinks in which one believes on their way. This is not the whole of a liberal arts education, but as I understand it, this range of goals is close to its core.

9. Gaudino Reckoning on Williams-at-Home: "Our purpose is not just to have experience. It is to use it. It is to reflect upon it, to let it enhance or inhibit our sense of self... If experience is growth, then it is an uncomfortable, limiting, bumpy kind of growth... Practically, it connects with people and situations the student does not ordinarily meet at home or in college, and would not seek out on his own. It is not what he would set up for a profitable summer. It is not so pleasant, for it involves testing on grounds which the student is not originate or create.... The aim is education, and education which uses experience for its own ends... It is to use experience for reflection, reflection on persons, on their family situation, on their work, on their existence in a real world... Reflection requires, both as an approach to learning and as a method of living, not just a distance from self but some reduction in the sense of self.... The student reduces his own sense of self in the interest of understanding and responding to the particular person and situation before him... Williams-at-Home, then, is not an innocent or haphazard title. It suggests a contrast.... Williams is the place for reflection, putting a distance between self and subject matter in order to objectify reality. Home is the place for direct experience, the expression of the whole self, the reduction of reality to locality. It is with this basic distinction that Williams – at – Home begins.... Its purpose is wider personal observation. The aim is to prepare students to be both perceptive about and sensitive to meanings in life, to encourage them to look closely at people and situations...... It is the encounter with things outside of and antagonistic to one's own life and values that help one discover one's place and identity, one's loyalties and home."