The Land-Grant Analogy and the American Urban University: An Historical Analysis

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Abstract

This article examines how the history of land-grant universities in America shaped the views of higher educators, public officials, and foundations on the role of urban universities in addressing the problems of American cities. Higher education leaders urged the federal government to provide funds that would enable urban universities to do for cities what they believed land-grant universities had done for agriculture and rural areas. The urban land-grant analogy shaped the Urban Observatories program, the movement for urban-grant universities, the establishment of the HUD Office of University Partnerships, and in a different way, the proposed Urban Universities Renaissance bill.

In November 1914, six years before the U.S. census reported for the first time that a majority of Americans lived in cities, the leaders of both public and private universities located in major cities gathered in Washington, D.C., to form the Association of Urban Universities. In a nation where the vast majority of colleges and universities were located in small towns and rural areas, the leaders of institutions located in cities and engaged with their urban communities felt the need to come together and share experiences. At that meeting, Charles William Dabney, president of the University of Cincinnati, stated that "America is fast becoming a republic of cities." Speaking more than a half-century after the Morrill Act of 1862 had provided funding for "land-grant" state universities, he described these institutions' embrace of university extension as "the beginning of a new era in the life of universities, developing in them a consciousness of their duty to the public." He called on universities in cities to develop "city-mindedness" and, in this spirit, "to organize the study of the city's problems" (Dabney 1916, 9).

Much has been written about the history of land-grant universities; their role in expanding access to college, in developing professional education and research in agriculture, engineering, home economics and other fields; and in extension activities bringing knowledge of these subjects to farmers and others. But the land-grant university also has inspired numerous proposals to extend its programs and accomplishments—real and imagined—to cities and urban universities. Dabney's address at the 1914 meeting anticipated a protracted discussion of extending the land-grant idea to America's cities—a discussion that continues to this day.

How did the land-grant legacy shape the way higher educators, foundation leaders, and public officials viewed the role of urban universities in addressing the growing

problems of America's cities? And what influence has it had on federal funding for universities in cities? This article will examine these questions.

Creating the Land-Grant Universities

Advocates for urban universities in the United States have always looked to the federal land-grant legislation and subsequent financial support as their model. The Morrill Act of 1862 provided funds to each state from an endowment of federal land for "at least one college where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific or classical studies, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanical arts . . . in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes . . ." (Ross 1942, 47). States responded in different ways. Some created new public institutions, some designated existing public institutions, and a few turned to private universities. Nor was the state response rapid or enthusiastic. Many states moved slowly to establish land-grant colleges and enrollment in the first three or four decades after the passage of the Morrill Act remained small, especially in agricultural programs.

The overwhelming majority of the land-grant institutions were located in small towns or rural areas. The Morrill Act became law at a time when most colleges in the United States were private and committed to classical education for elite gentlemen. In the twentieth century, many land-grant colleges became leading public research universities, making higher education available to large numbers of students at low cost. By 1980, eight of the ten largest undergraduate campuses were land-grants, enrolling more than one-seventh of all students at U.S. universities, including students in their extensive PhD programs (Johnson 1981, 333).

In the twentieth century, the land-grant universities also became major centers of research, including applied research on agriculture and engineering. Contrary to the popular image, they were not responsible for the great success of American agriculture in the late nineteenth century, which occurred largely while the land-grant institutions were just getting started. The Hatch Act of 1887 provided additional federal funds for the establishment of agricultural experiment stations designed to use scientific research to address specific problems faced by farmers. And by the twentieth century, the land-grants did provide significant research and technical assistance to the then already well-developed agricultural economy (Johnson 1981, 333–351).

The second land-grant act of 1890 provided additional funding for the existing land-grant institutions as well as funds for the establishment of new colleges. The law provided that no funding could go to institutions that denied admission on the basis of race. However, the law permitted states to set up separate institutions for blacks, and the southern states did exactly that. With this additional federal support, land-grants institutions undertook extension programs to bring knowledge to remote areas and constituents. In 1914, Congress passed the Smith-Lever Act providing further federal support for extension programs at land-grant universities.

Thus, by the middle decades of the twentieth century, public officials and higher education leaders saw land-grant universities as the institutions that had democratized access to higher education, had undertaken scientific research relevant to agricultural production, and had helped working farmers take advantage of this knowledge to greatly enhance agricultural productivity. Although many public colleges and universities were not in the land-grant system, and although non-land grant state universities proliferated in the second half of the century, the land-grant university provided a unique example of America's commitment to educational democracy. It also exemplified the ways university research could be applied to the service of the country, counteracting the idea that a college should be an "ivory tower." A history of the land-grant college movement published in 1942 was titled *Democracy's College*. Another land-grant history, *Colleges for Our Land and Time* published in 1956, concluded that these institutions became "instruments of broad public service to every class and kind" (Eddy 1956). Renowned historian Allan Nevins published a series of lectures on the centennial of the Morrill Act in 1962 under the title *The State Universities and Democracy* (Nevins 1962). In his history of American colleges and universities, also published in 1962, historian Frederick Rudolph declared that "In the land-grant institutions the American people achieved popular higher education for the first time" (Rudolph 1962, 265). To this day, writings about American public higher education are replete with similar descriptions of the land-grant legacy. In his introduction to a collection of essays published to honor the 150th anniversary of the Morrill Act, Peter McPherson, president of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, wrote that "a founding concept of the land-grants was to open up higher education to non-elites." As the land-grant institutions developed they "saw their role as going beyond teaching to the creation of knowledge and its distribution and application beyond the campus" (McPherson 2012, xii).

The Land Grant Model and the Problems of Cities

As American cities experienced extensive migration of poor people, particularly blacks from the American south and Puerto Ricans in the years after World War II, and the simultaneous out-migration of white middle-class people to burgeoning suburbs, public officials and civic leaders expressed increasing concern about what by the 1960s would be called "the urban crisis." Some policy makers seeking solutions to growing urban problems looked to colleges and universities located in cities to participate in addressing these. Many leaders of urban universities agreed that their institutions had a role to play, although others expressed concern that too much engagement with the problems of their communities could distract them from their core mission of teaching and research. The one model of major federal investment in higher education both policy makers and higher educators could look to was the much touted land-grant college. Like the land-grants, urban universities could provide access to higher education degree programs to students currently unable to attend college, bring extension education to city neighborhoods, pursue research on urban problems, and apply that research to solve those problems.

A 1954 conference of university and civic leaders discussed how urban universities could identify and then address community needs, noting that precedent for such university engagement existed "in the most successful large scale effort that had ever been made to meet community needs: agricultural extension." The published summary of the conference asserted that "the scientific resources of the agricultural college, its sociology and economics departments, and departments which deal with the practical arts of design and dietetics, were mobilized and channeled educationally to meet the needs, often unexpressed, in the rural farm population" (Miller 1955, vi-vii). Four years later in a keynote speech to the Association of Urban Universities (AUU), Paul Ylvisaker of the Ford Foundation called upon urban universities "to help do for the people of the city what the land-grant colleges throughout the past century have done for the country's farm population." He also expressed approval of the suggestion that the Morrill act "be rewritten on its hundredth anniversary for what is now an urban rather than an agricultural age" (Association of Urban Universities Proceedings 1958, 54). Speakers at AUU meetings throughout the 1960s repeated this analogy between what the land-grants did for agriculture and what urban universities could do for cities.

In April, 1961, a House of Representatives committee held hearings on legislation expanding land-grant extension to the general population. Although the legislation was not directed specifically to cities, numerous speakers talked about the growth of urban areas and the need this created for new kinds of university extension. Wisconsin Governor Gaylord Nelson explained that his state was "attempting to develop for the people of our cities a set of broad educational services similar to those available to rural Wisconsin," seeking to "identify urban problems and urban needs and focus campus skills and resources upon them . . . ". A representative of the United Auto Workers union noted that "urban wage earners, for the most part, have benefited from the land-grant colleges . . . far less than any group in society" (*To Promote General University Extension Education*, 1961 49, 79). Congress did not enact this bill, but in the Higher Education Act of 1965 it provided land-grant institutions with support to undertake antipoverty urban extension programs.

Books, articles, and speeches about higher education published in the 1960s and 1970s likewise were replete with urban land-grant analogies. Samuel Proctor, a distinguished professor and former president of two universities, declared that "the urban university is called upon to do for the commonwealth, in the humanizing of life, in the refinement of democracy and the establishment of peace and justice what the land-grant universities have done for cattle breeding, hybrid corn, synthetic fertilizers and butterfat" (Proctor 1970, 53). The chancellor of the University of Illinois–Chicago Circle declared in 1970 that "we have a new type of university in America—the urban university—a university that shows the same concern and commitment for city problems that the land-grant college of an earlier generation showed for rural problems" (Parker 1970, 74). Several writers went beyond the simple analogy to suggest what could be learned from the history of state university outreach to agriculture and the ways in which the needs of cities posed very different problems. In 1963, John Bebout, director of the Urban Studies Center at Rutgers University, published a lengthy analysis of how an "urban extension service" could be organized.

Unlike the farm family, "the typical city dweller cannot be reached by a general extension service motivated primarily by his needs as a producer or wage earner," he argued. "Research and education, including extension education, on [urban] problems is fully as worthy of support as research and education on rural problems," he concluded (Bebout 1963, 3, 77).

In his 1966 book, *The Urban University and the Future of Our Cities*, J. Martin Klotsche, chancellor of the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, urged caution in applying this analogy, noting that the "complexities of city life make diagnosis difficult," and warned that "for the university to establish an urban extension system, ignoring already existing community agencies, would be unnecessary and unwise." But Klotsche enthusiastically advocated the engagement of urban universities with the needs of their host cities (1966, 52). Stanley Jones, professor of history at the University of Illinois–Chicago Circle, argued that the great contributions of land-grant colleges to farm technology unintentionally "contributed and continues to contribute to the destruction of family farms," causing a massive rural migration to cities. Schools of agriculture, he argued, "developed new crops and new methods of cultivation, but they did not develop a rural sociology or a rural economics for understanding social change in a rural community." Dealing with the problems of urbanization, he asserted, "seems even greater than those in agriculture" (Jones 1968, 155). Similarly, Martin Meyerson, distinguished urbanist and President of SUNY–Buffalo argued that the land-grant analogy was "essentially a poor one" because university agricultural research had "favored the producer as against the worker and the consumer. But he urged that universities in cities increase knowledge of urban life and address policy issues confronting their communities ("Town and Gown" 1969, 8). UCLA Vice Chancellor Rosemary Park said that the task of solving urban problems is "immensely more complicated" than solving the problems of farmers "because the expectations of many urban dwellers is for instant relief." She called for establishment of university urban studies centers that would be "action-oriented" (Parks 1975, 26–27). Sociologist David Riesman expressed concern about the challenges of educating working class commuter students in new urban public institutions (which he called "Urban Grant Universities"), a hundred years after the Morrill Act (Reisman 1975, 149). But even those who had reservations about the land-grant analogy recognized that it provided the framework for current discussion of the role of universities in addressing urban problems.

While this issue was being discussed at conferences and in higher education publications, the Ford Foundation launched a program in 1959 funding experiments applying the resources of universities to the problems of American cities. Paul Ylvisaker, associate director of Ford's public affairs program, advocated expansion of the Morrill Act to include educational programs for urban areas. Ford funded $4.5 million in grants to eight land-grant state universities to "promote research on a wide range of urban problems by scholars from a variety of disciplines" and "to encourage closer contact between university scholars and city decision-makers in order that research results could be directly applied to the ills of the city." At the conclusion of the program in 1966, Ford's report on the program stated that "although the analogy with agricultural extension is far from perfect, the series of Foundation-assisted

experiments became known as Urban Extension" (*Urban Extension* 1966, 1; Pendelton 1974, 5). John Gardner, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, expressed very similar views in a speech to educators in California in 1965:

> "The city is the heart and brain of an industrial society. But our cities today are plagued with every conceivable ill: apathy, crime, poverty, racial conflict, slum housing, air and water pollution, inadequate schools and hospitals, and a breakdown in transportation. Coping with those problems is going to be very near the top of the national agenda for the next decade. There are no institutions better equipped to serve as a base for the struggle than the colleges and universities, but they have played a negligible role thus far. The strategic role played by the land-grant universities in developing American agriculture and the rural areas has no parallel in the cities" (Gardner 1968, 5).

A few months after giving this address, Gardner became U.S. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

President Lyndon B. Johnson himself embraced the land-grant analogy at a speech in 1964 on the opening of a new campus of the University of California at Irvine. "Just as our colleges and universities changed the future of our farms a century ago, so they can help change the future of our cities," he declared. "I foresee the day," he continued, "when an urban extension service, operated by universities across the country, will do for urban America what the Agricultural Extension Service has done for rural America" (Association of Urban Universities 1965). Therefore, it is not surprising that the Higher Education Act of 1965 included several provisions supporting university engagement with the problems of cities. In addition to substantial increases in financial aid for low income students, Title I of the act gave aid to land-grant universities to pursue antipoverty and urban extension programs. The Ford Foundation, in its report on its program funding universities to address city problems, took some credit for this provision, noting with pride that Title 1 provided more than twice as much government money annually for university urban extension than the Foundation had spent in six years (*Urban Extension* 1974, 4).

Urban Observatories

A more expansive version of the urban land-grant idea, Urban Observatories, soon won support from public officials. In 1962, Robert Wood, then a professor of political science at MIT, had spoken at a conference on urban life and form at Washington–University St. Louis. He suggested that social scientists who studied cities and urban issues were far behind natural scientists. Natural scientists, he argued, could use field stations, data centers, and observatories to collect systematic data. Wood proposed establishment of urban observatories that would undertake "a common series of investigations under a single research plan which for the first time would provide us with professionally reliable findings simultaneously in a number of areas." This would, in turn, provide a sound basis for the application of systematic knowledge about cities to public policy (Wood 1963, 99–127).

About two years later, Milwaukee Mayor Henry W. Maier read Wood's speech and embraced it as "a long-awaited dream of those of us on the municipal firing line." Maier, who served as president of the National League of Cities (NLC) in 1964/1965, called a meeting of twenty-three mayors and urban scholars from nineteen universities on June 3, 1965, in Milwaukee, to discuss Wood's idea. The mayors showed keen interest in applied research that could inform policy-making. The academicians generally expressed interest in data gathering and pure research. Nonetheless, the attendees unanimously adopted the "Milwaukee Resolve" requesting that the NLC "serve as an integrating and stimulating force" in the development of a network of urban observatories. Shortly thereafter, the NLC established a permanent standing committee on urban observatories with Wood and Maier as co-chairs. In calling for federal funding for the urban observatories, Maier noted that "the Organic Act of 1862 . . . established the Department of Agriculture and charged it from the beginning with conducting an agricultural research program." He urged similar federal support for urban research (Maier 1967, 216–219; Williams 1972, 6–7).

In January 1966, Robert Wood became undersecretary of the new U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. On July 1, 1968, HUD contracted with the NLC to begin an urban observatory program. The NLC invited applications from 115 central city mayors of whom fifty six expressed interest. In evaluating the applicants, NLC looked for places where university scholars and government officials were working together successfully and for universities that had a substantial track-record of urban research. Initially, NLC selected six cities—Atlanta, Albuquerque, Baltimore, Kansas City, Milwaukee, and Nashville. In 1970, it added four others—Boston, San Diego, Cleveland, and Denver. The program required close collaboration between the universities and city government. Funding came from both HUD and the Department of Education (Murphy 1971, 111–112; Bayton 1971, 11). The project received enthusiastic endorsement from the National Research Council. Noting that federal, state, and local governments have had a "relatively small body of relevant social and behavioral science knowledge" to draw upon in launching programs to combat the severe problems of cities, the council's report boldly asserted that "had the launching of urban programs been accompanied by the understanding that it is virtually as important to learn about the nation's cities as it is to do something for them, the cities might not be in their present plight" (National Research Council 1969, 1).

Urban Observatories in each city conducted a wide range of studies. The program required all observatories to study certain common issues in order to create a national database on matters of great importance to cities and to enable comparative research and deeper understanding of these problems. The common issues included a survey of citizen attitudes toward taxes and services, and studies of citizen participation, municipal revenue sources and expenditures, indicators of urban social conditions and change, and the cost of providing services for substandard housing. Most observatories conducted other studies of specifically local issues as well. The Albuquerque Observatory, for example, examined the city's emergency medical services, resulting in a new city ordinance on ambulances. The Boston Observatory looked at the municipality's "Little City Halls," a study that provided an impetus for the mayor of

Boston to strengthen this program. The San Diego, Denver, and Albuquerque observatories studied ways to revise their city charters. University researchers at the observatories established working partnerships with city government officials, but those relationships sometimes experienced strain, because government officials needed immediate answers and scholars viewed research and data-collection as a necessarily extended enterprise. Urban Observatories received considerable attention among academicians, some of whom saw them as a unique opportunity to connect social scientific research on cities to urban government decision-making. In 1974, HUD decided that "because the Observatories had been successful," continued funding for them should now be obtained from local sources. Most observatories were able to find local funding for a few years, but by the end of the decade the network of observatories had largely disappeared (Barnes 1974, 47–58).

The Urban Grant University

Even as the Urban Observatory program continued evolving, higher education leaders began advocating a broader federal program of "Urban-Grant Universities." Civil disturbances in poor black neighborhoods, including numerous instances of looting and arson following the assassination of Martin Luther King in 1968, created a national sense of urgency regarding the "urban crisis." The sit-ins and protests by students at numerous colleges and universities, often protesting their institution's treatment of its black neighbors, reinforced this. On October 18, 1967, Clark Kerr, director of the Carnegie Foundation's study of higher education and immediate past-president of the University of California, addressed an audience at City College of New York on the centennial meeting of the CCNY chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. The historic land-grant universities had made enormous contributions to American agriculture, he said, "by turning their backs on the then-established model of a college." He called for the creation of sixty-seven urban-grant universities, at least one for each city of over a quarter of a million and several for the very large cities,"—a number equal to the total number of land-grant universities. These institutions would "have an aggressive approach to the problems of the city, where the city itself and its problems would become the animating focus."

Kerr acknowledged that the problems of cities were much more complex than those of rural areas, but argued that "this very complexity makes the prospect of confronting them more important and more challenging." These institutions should provide vastly greater access to higher education for low-income inner-city black students, he argued, and could work to improve urban school systems through "school agents," counterparts to the land-grant county-agents. Urban grant universities also would address health and environmental problems, and could help revitalize depressed urban areas in which they were located. Kerr argued that urban grant universities should be substantially funded by the federal government. And he proposed that unlike the Morrill Act, which left the selection of land-grant institutions to the states, these urban-grant universities be selected directly by the federal government from applications of public, private, existing, or new colleges. Some five months later, Kerr elaborated on this plan at a major address in Massachusetts, printed and distributed soon thereafter by the U.S. Office of Education (Kerr, 1968a; Kerr, 1968b).

Although the U.S. Office of Education did not endorse Kerr's proposal, it commissioned a survey of urban universities, published in 1970. In the forward to the report of this survey, Preston Valien, Deputy Associate Commissioner for Higher Education, acknowledging the importance of the Morrill Act to American higher education, explained that colleges and universities "located in a large city, need help of another kind." The cities, he said, are turning to the universities "for help in solving what has come to be known as the 'urban crisis' but few if any universities find themselves prepared to respond to this request" (Organization for Social and Technical Innovation 1970, iii). In that same year, the Ombudsman Foundation of Los Angeles called for establishment of The Urban Grant College: A College Without Walls. It asserted that the historic "break with tradition on the part of the Land Grant College could apply equally well to the establishment of the Urban Grant College." One of its major purposes would be "to make the professors 'practical' and the farmer or urban dweller 'scientific'" (Gerth et al. 1970, 3–4).

Two years later, the much more prestigious Carnegie Commission on Higher Education issued an elaborate report on *The Campus and the City*. It acknowledged the analogy between land-grant universities and the needs of cities now so prevalent, but asserted that the land-grant model provided "no close parallel" to the needs of cities:

> "The universities did make enormous contributions to agricultural productivity and to the quality of rural life. But they were aided by great breakthroughs in the biological sciences, particularly in genetics. No similar breakthroughs have occurred in the area of the study of urban problems. The social sciences, in particular, are not now prepared to make the same contribution to the city as the biological sciences have made to the rural economy. . . . Also, in the case of agriculture, the land-grant universities dealt with a few interest groups; the city involves many. And the land grant institutions were usually new institutions performing new functions; while there will be some new urban universities, the new services to the city will mostly come from older institutions slowly taking on new duties. "

Yet despite these reservations, the report called for "urban-grant" allocations by HUD of $10 million annually to ten colleges and universities "to see what they can do with imaginative overall approaches to urban problems" (Carnegie Commission on Higher Education 1972, 4, 8, 118).

In 1976, four years after the Carnegie report, leaders of twenty universities located in major cities across the country founded the Committee on Urban Public Universities to lobby for urban-grant legislation. It put out a call for a National Urban Grant Universities Program, stating that while public universities in cities were "originally established primarily from state and local investments, they are now in a position to provide a national service if complementary federal and private resources are added . . ." The committee engaged a full-time lobbyist in Washington. One of the group's leaders, President James Olson of the University of Missouri, wrote that "Federal

support enabled the land-grant colleges to develop their research and service activities without direct reference to enrollments," and that similar support was needed for the continued development of the research and service activities of the newer urban universities. The committee soon determined that could enhance its chances for success in Congress would be enhanced if it included private universities in large cities in the grant legislation. It, therefore, changed its name to the Committee for Urban Program Universities, significantly altering its vision as well as its name (Olson 1977, 22; Berube 1978, 176).

In 1978, the Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education of the House Committee on Education and Labor held a series of hearings in five different cities on an Urban Grant University Act, which would authorize up to $25 million a year to aid "urban universities to develop their capacity to help find answers to urban problems" and to "make their educational, research, and service capabilities more readily and effectively available to the urban communities in which they are located." The act defined urban universities as institutions located in urban areas with a substantial part of their enrollment coming from the area in which they were located. The legislation required that qualifying institutions must have programs "to make postsecondary educational opportunities more accessible to students living in the area." They also would have to offer a "wide range of professional or graduate programs," and have "demonstrated and sustained a sense of responsibility" to their urban area and its people. Numerous higher education leaders testified at these hearings, often spelling out in detail the current public service programs of their institutions.

The National League of Cities supported the legislation, noting that the Urban Observatories program "was beneficial for both the universities and the cities that participated" and that it laid a foundation for this program. However, reflecting the tensions that surfaced in the urban observatory program, it urged that the bill be amended to mandate that cities must play a major role in determining what problems would be addressed by the urban grant institutions (*Urban Grant University Act of 1977* 1979, 549–550). Congress enacted the bill and President Jimmy Carter signed it in October 1980. It passed again, with some changes, in 1986. But Congress never appropriated funds for this program.

The debate leading to the enactment of the Urban Grant University Act illustrates the power of the land-grant model as a justification for major federal investment in urban universities. The legislation was a far cry from what Clark Kerr had proposed in 1967—the establishment of federally supported urban land-grant institutions in every large city. But for three decades before the passage of this act, as the problems of America's cities became increasingly acute and as public policy focused on addressing those problems, the land-grant universities provided the conceptual foundation on which policymakers and higher education leaders envisioned a federal role for urban universities. The details of the land-grant institutions' history did not concern policymakers or urban university advocates. Rather, they looked to some key achievements widely attributed to the land-grants as the model for contemporary urban America —the application of knowledge to the improvement of society, the

democratization of higher education, and the extension of the university's resources to the external community.

While Congress, mayors, and higher education leaders debated the urban-land grant act, academicians published numerous books and journal articles analyzing the land-grant tradition and its implications for cities and urban universities. A 1978 book, *The Urban University in America*, stated that "the urban colleges should be able to develop something comparable to the agricultural experimentation idea" (Berube 1978, 15). In 1980, a writer on "The Evolution of the American Urban University" urged that "the analogy between the land-grant movement and the future development of urban-oriented universities deserves some careful attention lest we fail to profit from the lessons of the past" (Dillon 1980, 34; Bebout 1980, 5–19). Introducing another book, published in 1981 on *The Urban University: Present and Future*, a senior university administrator explained that "like the early land-grant colleges which reached into almost every aspect of rural life, the modern urban university is redirecting higher education in the cities" (Moore 1981, 2). In 1984, Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young wrote in a higher education journal that "there's a crying out" for universities in cities "to do for urban America what state universities did in the last century for rural America." But like so many other elected officials involved in discussions around the urban observatories and the urban grant universities, he added that "the universities can learn from the cities as much as the cities can learn from the universities" (Young 1985, 8).

Two years later, *Time* magazine described the unique urban mission of the relatively new University of Massachusetts–Boston campus. It quoted Chancellor Robert Corrigan, who characterized his institution as taking "the land-grant concept of service, research, and teaching and bringing it to the urban area . . . to be a force in the community" (Bowen 1986, 56). In 1993, the University of Illinois at Chicago announced its Great Cities Initiative, committing itself to extensive engagement with its host city in teaching, research, and service programs, which it described as implementing the university's "urban land-grant mission" (Wievel 1999, 29–38). The following year, the author of a book on *The Urban Campus* concluded that "the land-grant institutions have provided an excellent role model" for urban universities. "Like their predecessors . . . the 'asphalt aggies' given half a chance, will lead the way to the 'good society' in the twenty-first century (Elliott 1994, 146). As recently as 2003, a history of IUPUI stated, "Many believe that urban universities in the twenty-first century, much like the land-grant colleges and universities of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, will dominate the higher education scene" (Gray 2003, xv).

Federal support for an urban land-grant initiative emerged again in the Clinton Administration under HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros. In July 1994, he established the Office of University Partnerships to support urban university involvement in local revitalization projects; to create a new generation of urban scholars; and to encourage teaching, research, and service partnerships between universities and other federal agencies. The office set up grant programs to 1) establish five-year demonstration Community Outreach Partnership Centers (COPC) "to facilitate partnerships between universities and communities to solve urban problems," 2) to enable historically black

colleges and universities to "address local housing, economic development, and neighborhood revitalization needs," 3) to assist consortia of several institutions to produce "large-scale community building activities," 4) to fund doctoral research fellowships for subjects "that can influence local and national policymaking," and 5) to provide work-study support for disadvantaged and minority students enrolled in professional programs in community and economic development . Cisneros explained that this initiative was "similar to that underlying one of America's more indigenous ideas in higher education: the land-grant college." In a pamphlet published by HUD in 1995 entitled "The University and the Urban Challenge," Cisneros asserted that "our nation's institutions of higher education are crucial to the fight to save our cities" (Cisneros 1995, 2, 14–17).

Conclusion

In recent years, urban universities have advocated ever more vigorously for engagement with their communities and for federal financial support to do so. In 2008, a group of public universities in major cities formed the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities to "create an agenda for the nation that recognizes and supports urban universities and their city partners" to improve K–12 public schools and urban health and to support neighborhood revitalization (*Urban Universities: Anchors Generating Prosperity for America's Cities*, 2010, preface). In June 2010, Congressman David Wu introduced the Urban University Renaissance Act of the 21st Century establishing or expanding a wide range of federally funded grant programs to urban universities working in collaboration with local governments, school systems, and civic groups. The coalition worked closely with Wu in developing the legislation and then in lobbying for it. In discussing this legislation among themselves and with legislators, higher education leaders routinely referred to it as an urban land-grant bill. However, formal statements and publications on its behalf generally have not drawn the historic land-grant analogy.

Why this change? The term "urban grant university" may have been left out of the legislation and the documents promoting it to avoid friction with the established non-urban land grant universities. But over the last decade or so, discussions of urban revitalization have increasingly pointed to universities (along with museums, cultural centers, and hospitals) as "anchor institutions" with the capacity of revitalizing urban neighborhoods and cities. Moreover, there is growing enthusiasm within higher education for incorporating experiential "community-based learning" into the undergraduate curriculum, for research that draws upon and engages local communities, and for inculcating in students a commitment to civic responsibility and community service. These are reflected in organizations like Campus Compact and the Corporation for National and Community Service. A 2001 report by the Kellogg Commission on the future of state- and land-grant universities called for public universities to "to go beyond outreach and service" to "community engagement," which it defined as redesigning "teaching, research, and extension and service functions to become even more sympathetically and productively involved with their communities" (Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant

Universities 2001, 13). We may now have reached a point where urban universities no longer need the land-grant analogy to justify their vision of what they believe they can do for America's cities. Nonetheless, advocates of this legislation definitely used the land-grant analogy in their informal discussions.

There is no question that the Morrill Act and the land-grant history have intrigued advocates and supporters of urban universities for more than a half-century. The land-grant analogy symbolized the extension of higher education to the working class and adult learners. It suggested that research applied to the problems of cities might have a real impact, as research on agriculture was thought to have done for farmers. And it provided a historic precedent for university engagement with practical issues. Many of those who used this analogy recognized that the circumstances confronting urban universities were radically different from those faced by land-grant universities in small towns and rural areas and by farmers. But the land-grant universities remained the one much revered example of how substantial federal support for higher education had addressed the needs of America when it was predominantly rural. Given this historical memory on the part of policymakers and university leaders, it seemed only natural that this great achievement be extended to universities in the nation's cities.

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