

# *Faculty Center for Teaching Excellence*

Response to "Are We Moving From Shapes To Shadows?"

by Doug Reed, 4/1/93

In recent Forum issues we have speculated on what is illusion and on what might be reality. Kane and Kinnear tell us that an illusion of what we would be has been constructed for us and that we must beware that the gap between our reality and that illusion does not swallow us whole. Doug Reed suggests that perhaps we are merely engaged in a search for new ideals to guide our future growth and direction.

But perhaps all of this speculation on what we should call what we're doing is less important than how industriously we work, especially how we work at anything pertinent to the university as a whole. Perhaps we should consider that the only difference between an illusion and an ideal is our commitment to the work needed to achieve the suggested result.

We each have areas of our academic and professional lives about which we feel intense passion. For some it is the classroom, for some the research lab, and for some the primary interest has shifted toward service to the university or the community. It is easy to become fully absorbed in that about which we feel passionate, but as George Keller reminded us the university does not merely exist to make the faculty happy. The rest of the work must be done, too, and it must be done by us. We are burdened but also blessed to work in an institution in which we can influence so many of the directions we choose for ourselves. It is time now, as it has always been and always will be, for us to roll up our sleeves, loosen our ties, decide which pieces of the illusion we want to make our ideals, and then make them happen.

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