This talk builds on themes I addressed in December 2013—that, although the world is tragic, full of injustices and things that make us angry, against which we have to fight and kick back, our weapons are to be love, kindness, and beauty. I also referred to Baumann (1995) and Lingis (1994) to theorize human kinship, arguing that difference is not merely unavoidable, but good, precious, and in need of protection and cultivation. Following Lingis, I suggested that entering into conversation with another is to lay down one’s arms and one’s defenses; to throw open the gates of one’s own positions; to expose oneself to the other, the outsider; and to lay oneself open to surprises and contestation. Human kinship, I argued, comes when we eschew speaking with a representative voice, to speak out of our materiality as an earthling. This presentation picks up these themes in the exercise of academic leadership in a manner that does not exclude the stranger but speaks out of one’s “materiality as an earthling.” Hence, the title, Getting Bruised, Hurting, and Dirty. My intent is to theorize about leadership with a sense of calling toward the public good, to address the question of how academic leaders in universities can engage in the kind of action that nurtures a culture that encourages professors to be responsibly accountable and students to engage in assiduous study. My premise is that careerists rarely take the time to understand the complexities of a symbolic and cultural approach to academic leadership and my claim is that we need to select academic leaders who understand how to infuse the work of research and teaching with value, meaning, passion, and purpose.

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