

THE YALE HISTORICAL REVIEW

AN UNDERGRADUATE PUBLICATION SPECIAL ISSUE



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THE YALE HISTORICAL REVIEW

AN UNDERGRADUATE PUBLICATION

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

In this unprecedented edition of *The Yale Historical Review*, we have partnered with Professor Jay Gitlin to produce an issue focused on the history of Yale University. As an institution that's founding predates that of the United States, Yale has played an important role in both shaping and witnessing the past. The six essays included in this issue were written for Professor Gitlin's popular history seminar "Yale and America," and we are grateful to him for all of his assistance throughout the editing process. We would also like to thank Bill Landis, Manuscripts & Archives for helping us acquire photographs. Although certainly not comprehensive, we hope that each piece gives readers a unique taste of Yale's rich history and inspires them to consider the institution, its traditions, and its students in a new light.

One of the most distinctive elements of Yale's campus culture is the residential college system, modeled on the Oxford-Cambridge system. As demonstrated by David McCullough III DC '17, the expansion and re-imagining of Yale through the college system in the midst of the Great Depression transformed the landscape of New Haven through intensive intervention, but also eroded relations with the city. Also examining the residential college system, Paul Styslinger ES '17 methodically chronicles the process of determining the twelve original residential colleges' nomenclature and explores the stories of the names not chosen.

As a global university, Yale's influence extends beyond New Haven. In addition to sending its students and alumni off to battle and offering its campus as a training base during the Second World War, Yale played a role in the evacuation and resettlement of children from wartime Britain. In her essay, Katharine Spooner TD '16 examines the Yale Faculty Committee's efforts to evacuate 126 children and wives of Oxford faculty and tempo-

rarily place them into American foster homes. Looking to the Middle East, Nicholas Stewart JE '18 reveals Yale's early attempt to expand beyond the borders of New Haven to create a satellite institution on Saadiyat Island. Despite sharing a similar sense of imagination, Yale and Abu Dhabi officials' antithetical goals prevented this joint venture from becoming a reality.

Our final two essays focus on the experiences of Yalies of the past and the present. While women were permitted to attend Yale as graduate students in full standing in 1892, they were only admitted as undergraduates in 1969. Drawing on a treasure trove of campus surveys from the era, Helen Price DC '18 examines the practical, institutional, and attitudinal barriers the first classes of Yale women faced on campus and their bold efforts to overcome them. Finally, Adam Williams SM '15 examines the influence Yalies had on Madison Avenue's most prominent advertising agencies and practices, shaping central elements of America's culture. Through both formal organizations and networking, Yalies rose through the ranks of advertising agencies and helped to develop timeless slogans and advertising practices.

We firmly believe that the study of the past infuses the present with meaning. By offering fascinating glimpses into Yale's 300-plus year history, the six essays of this issue each offer new considerations and insight for the present day. We hope that current students, faculty, alumni, and researchers alike enjoy learning from these essays as much as we have.

Sincerely,
Emily Yankowitz, Editor in Chief
Eva Landsberg, Managing Editor

THANKS

Many thanks to Sam Chauncey, Dr. Marvin Arons, Bill Landis, Ginny Bales, and Nathaniel Zelinsky for their contributions to “Yale in America.” I am also grateful to the Davenport College community for creating such a wonderful environment for the seminar – special thanks to Barbara Munck and Rhonda Vegliante. All the students who have been in the class have made it special – thank you all for your enthusiasm, your ideas, and your responsiveness at all hours! I’d like to give a big shout out to my own classmates and roommates – you all have played the most important role in my Yale education. Above all, thanks to Basie Bales Gitlin, who has contributed to this class in various important ways from the beginning and provided the reason for doing it in the first place.

I’d like to dedicate this to the memory of our friend and classmate, Will “Pepper” Shelton.

I also want to thank the following for making this special issue of the *Yale Historical Review* possible:

Emily Yankowitz ’17, Eva Landsberg ’17, and David Shimer ’18
Weili Cheng ’77 and the Association of Yale Alumni
Drew Ruben ’11
Jeremy Kinney ’68 and Holly Arnold Kinney

- *Professor Jay Gitlin*

REFLECTION

Jay Gitlin's "Yale and America"

Nowhere is Yale more a “company of scholars” and “society of friends” than in Jay Gitlin’s “Yale and America.” Many of my happiest experiences as an undergraduate took place in that Davenport seminar room, where my friends and I met weekly to study the ways in which Yale shaped, and was shaped by, American culture and thought. We sang Cole Porter songs, laughed at Garry Trudeau comics, and dined on Baker’s Soup at Mory’s. In the final days of the semester, I visited Manuscripts & Archives to parse the hilarious prose of the *Harkness Hoot*, a student publication in the 1930s that decried the decline of intellectual life on campus.

As with the *Harkness Hoot*, Jay’s class deployed humor to induce introspection – about what was wrong and right with Yale, about what it means to be a Yalie, and about what our lives could look like after Yale. He asked us to consider, in his words, whether “there are now – or have ever been – core Yale values.” We talked about community, inclusiveness, humility, and wit. We talked about public-spiritedness.

Jay once told me that students should bring history to life by “never writing a line of history without a person in it.” I believe that the history of Yale would be incomplete without Jay in it. This issue will help the reader understand why generations of Yalies feel the same way.

- Drew Rubin '11

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TOWN, GOWN, AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION: YALE AND NEW HAVEN DURING THE CONSTRUCTION OF YALE'S ORIGINAL RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES

In 1930, New Haven had nearly all the hallmarks of a city devastated by the Great Depression: thousands of hungry young children, unemployed parents wandering the streets looking for work, businesses shuttered. Meanwhile, the slice of the city that was Yale seemed impervious to the effects of the economic crisis. Throughout the Great Depression, the University hungrily bought up land and erected massive new buildings, including the eight which would come to serve as its first residential colleges. In the following pages, David McCullough III '17 explores this historical juxtaposition, tracing the simmering tensions which erupted between town and gown in this fraught time.

By David McCullough III, DC '17
Edited by Eva Landsberg and Emily Yankowitz

TOWN, GOWN, AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION

A TUESDAY IN OCTOBER

October 29, 1929, New Haven: On the corner of College and Chapel Streets, the prominent Hotel Taft, with its whitewashed Gregorian columns and twelve-story red brick façade, towered over the quiet Green. Next door, a string of Ford Model As sat along the curb beneath the grandiose sign and overhang of the Schubert Theater. Behind locked doors, the theater began to bustle in preparation for the evening's performance. The steeples of the Trinity Episcopal, Center, and United Churches poked above the tree line, three abreast along Temple Street. And throughout the bustling Green, rows of elms took on their autumnal yellows and reds.

Through Church, Elm, and Chapel Streets, trolleys glided by whirring automobiles and rattling carts full of every good imaginable. The lunchtime rush of businessmen poured in and out of the Union League, while white storefront awnings shaded the sidewalk. Mom-and-pop shops, offering everything from cuts of beef, to shoe repairs, lined Church and Chapel Streets. Meanwhile, in the harbor, barges rolled in from Boston and New York, and made their way past Lighthouse Point Park and Oyster Point, toward the City Dock. Trains rumbled out of Union Station toward Hartford and Boston and New York. Across the harbor from the rail yard, the factories of Sargent & Co. and Benedict & Co. churned out lumber and coal. Several miles uptown, the Winchester Repeating Arms Co., another of the city's largest employers and manufacturers, still reaping profits from the First World War, roared along.

Meanwhile, across the Green and Chapel Street, New Haven's oldest tenant, Yale University, emulated the city's bustling energy. Students strolled along the walkways of the Old Campus, trudged in and out of the Chittenden Library, and sat along the famous Yale fence. The brick facades of Welch, Lawrence, and Farnam Halls walled the campus from the abutting Chapel Street, while the towering Phelps Hall, in the middle of the row of dormitories, acted much like a gate to the looming castle. Adorned in sport coats, lettermen sweaters, and sharp haircuts, upperclassmen strode out of the fraternity houses and dormitories along High Street, past the ongoing construction of the new colossus of a library at the center of campus – a library shaping up to be perhaps the grandest building on the campus, if not in the city.

Nearly a block away, the gold lettering on the new cenotaph memorializing Yale men in World War I glittered beneath the prominent columns along the side of University Hall – later Commons – and the giant windows and stone façade of Woolsey Hall. The two halls sat conjoined by the newly refurbished Memorial Hall, capped with its steel dome. Another block toward the center of campus stood the palatial Memorial Quadrangle, a square block of gothic revival dormitories. Constructed only a decade earlier, the white stone of the buildings still held its blanched radiance. The spectacular Quadrangle culminated in the 216-foot Harkness Tower, which rocketed above the New Haven skyline, pronouncing

in gothic magnificence the University's presence and all its splendor.

Much like the elms along the green, the city seemed in every way, on that fall Tuesday, to glow. In fact, it glowed so much one might easily forget at that very moment, some eighty miles away at the New York Stock Exchange, the Dow Jones Industrial was falling to -12%, throwing the country, and then the world, into the greatest depression in history. By 1931, about 10,000 New Haveners, an unprecedented number in a city of only 162,000, were out of work; many more faced reduced hours and wages. As researcher Margaret Hogg reports, "About 3,400 families had all their earners idle, and these contained about 10,900 persons of whom 3,100 were children under fourteen years of age. In addition, about 17,850 families had some work shortage."¹ Unlike many areas of the country, while the Depression slammed the city, it did not cripple it, particularly in the early years. Furthermore, while the Depression also affected the Yale, between 1929 and 1934 the University expanded both physically and culturally, and in doing so, provided respite for New Haven. With this expansion, however, a litany of town and gown issues arose. During the Depression, the construction of Yale's original eight residential colleges and many academic buildings accentuated many token issues between universities and their host cities, as the project provided brief economic relief for some, but not nearly enough to sustain the city through the Depression. As this rapid development pushed Yale onto the world stage, the city struggled and grew more resentful of the university that seemed to take little interest in its host city.

ORIGINS

In the spring of 1920, Yale President Arthur Twining Hadley, at the age of sixty-five, announced he would retire from his post on June 21 of the following year. Hadley had graduated from Yale College, and studied political science at Yale after graduation. He had been a tutor, instructor, and professor at the University, all while maintaining a career as a distinguished economist. In over two decades as Yale's president, he led the University into a period of unparalleled growth. Under his tenure the endowment grew from \$4.5 million to over \$25.5 million. He began to shift administrative and financial control away from isolated parts of the University, particularly the college, and toward the university as a whole. Furthermore, he had expanded the campus. During his presidency, over forty buildings had been purchased or erected. He initiated the construction of new laboratories, classrooms, power plants, University Hall, Woolsey Hall, Yale Bowl, and his last and crowning achievement, the Memorial Quadrangle. Hadley's tenure set Yale on pace to become the major international university it strove to be, and the announcement of his retirement set off one of the most intense searches for a successor in Yale history.²

After months of deliberation over a number of candidates, the Corporation settled

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on the then-president of the Carnegie Foundation, James Rowland Angell. He was “a brisk middle-sized man with a generous nose, shrewd reticent grey eyes, hair bordering on the carrot, and a quizzical way of talking out of the side of his mouth.”³ He also boasted an impressive resume, although not one grounded at Yale. The son of a renowned University of Michigan president, Angell had been a professor of psychology and dean of the Faculty of Arts, Literature, and Science. He served as the acting president of the University of Chicago, and the chairman of the National Research Council.⁴ Furthermore, Angell advocated all things intellectual and strove to create an environment that catered to such beliefs. As he stated in his inaugural address at Yale, “It will always be true that where the great investigators and scholars are gathered, thither will come the intellectual elite from all the world.”⁵ Upon arriving at Yale, though, Angell faced a number of problems.

Angell took charge of a Yale rife with financial, social, and logistical issues. Over the last decade the University had grown reliant on alumni funds to meet its costs, a financial practice which Angell deemed unnecessary and unsafe. In addition, the post-war rush of students put great strain on the limited housing provided by the University, as well as overflowed in many classrooms. Furthermore, the lack of campus loyalty and the revelry of the 1920s had lured Yale students away from the academic culture Angell and the administration emphasized. Finally, in the fall of 1928, as the \$38,970,068 Sterling gift built nine major campus buildings, news broke that Edward S. Harkness, the Yale the administration looked to for the donation to help further the ongoing expansion, had donated \$3 million to Harvard for a housing plan. It came to the fore that Harkness was displeased by how a number of his friends had been treated at the college and disapproved of many of their social mainstays, like the societies and fraternities. Therefore, while Yale needed better housing and financial plans, Harvard received donations from Yale alumni – another strike against the new, alien, Yale president and the shifting culture of the University.

Yale did, however, have new housing to help accommodate the increase in enrollment after the First World War, courtesy of the Harkness family: the Memorial Quadrangle. Yet even this extra dormitory space proved insufficient for the swell in student population. As a result, the University erected new dormitories that professor and historian George Pierson characterized as “mere city barracks,” and the food was not much better.⁶ As a result, many students opted to live in fraternity houses, which, to the dismay of the administration and the alumni, inhibited campus unity and spirit. As Charles Seymour, University provost and eventual master of Berkeley College, wrote in a special edition of the *Yale Alumni Weekly* entitled “The Yale Residential Colleges,”

Yale was founded upon the principle of the small college, with its vivid esprit de corps, drawing its inspiration from the example of the English

colleges. It was a family the members of which, Faculty as well as students, were intensely conscious of the bond that held them together [...] But as the Classes continued to grow in size, as the semi-monastic life of the student was invaded by the pleasant but disturbing influence of the automobile and the weekend party, as the increasing freedom of choice in studies threw Freshman with Juniors, Sophomores with Seniors, the integrity of the Class as a unit broke down.⁷

This spirit of the English small college, coupled with the success and elegance of the Memorial Quadrangle, led Angell to believe some derivative of the Oxford-Cambridge college system would suit Yale. After some deliberation, the Corporation agreed. During the summer of 1926, Samuel H. Fisher, a member of the Yale Corporation, encouraged the president to write his ideas and a request for \$10-12 million to Harkness in a letter. Fisher personally delivered the letter, and after several hours of hard thinking, Harkness said, "Alright, Sam, I'll do it."⁸ Several years later, they broke ground.

CONSTRUCTION

After a few small disagreements and poor communications between Angell and Harkness, the benefactor held true to his word and, in 1930, gave to the University \$15,725,884.96 to build, equip, and endow eight new quadrangles.⁹ The University hired James Gamble Rogers as the principal architect and the projects commenced. Over the course of the next five years Yale not only rebuilt itself, but also employed over 1,000 New Haveners a day and pumped millions of dollars into the local economy. By the start of the school year in 1933, gothic granite fortresses, gleaming in the late summer sun, stood prominently along York and High Streets, in the place of old academic buildings, "city barrack" dormitories, and gymnasiums.¹⁰ So opened the gates of Branford, Calhoun, Davenport, Jonathan Edwards, Pierson, Saybrook, and Trumbull Colleges (Saybrook and Branford were merely the repurposed Memorial Quadrangle). Berkeley College followed in 1934, and finally, a year later, Timothy Dwight.

The new colleges brought about an entirely new university culture. As Seymour's essay states, "On the social side it will wipe out distinction between Yale College and the Sheffield Scientific School; all undergraduates are given equal opportunity for membership in the Colleges."¹¹ The administration hoped to slash the fissures in the student body created by both the different schools, namely Sheffield Scientific and Yale College, and the fraternities, and focus life on a group of abutting quadrangles called residential colleges. The new colleges would provide students with intimate settings within the wider university, and still establish a common Yale identity. Within these intimate settings, the administration established academic amenities yet unheard of at the University. As President Angell stated

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in his 1933 Alumni Day Address, “Each college is under a Master [...] He will associate with himself a body of Fellows, some of whom will be resident in the college [...] Ultimately we wish all undergraduates not living at home to reside in the Colleges.”¹² And Seymour continues in his report,

The Master and Fellows assume responsibility for the educational welfare of the student group in the college. They are expected to guide the undergraduate in his choice of courses, in his supplementary reading in his preparation for final examinations. Opportunities are thus opened for personal contact between Faculty and undergraduates. The basis of such contacts is not the tyrannical schoolmaster and unwilling school boy relationship, but the principle of co-partnership for the conquest of learning. Opportunities are also opened for the undergraduates to develop social relationships with men of their own age, intimacies which Yale believes to an invaluable part of education.¹³

Such a plan came entirely new to the University, and laid the foundation for the social familiarity between students and faculty that the University both boasts of and enjoys today.

Furthermore, the colleges brought about new academic and extracurricular plans. Academically, the administration sought to reduce class sizes and course loads. They sought to establish a “Reading Period” before final examinations, and to strengthen the honors courses. They sought, in short, to give students more freedom. The administration also changed the intramural sports programs, and deemed it a positive influence to allow the colleges to function like athletic units as a means to enhance social interactions. They established an Inter-College Athletic Council, rule books, and a trophy and award system. It became a huge success and in the first year “over 1,000 cards were returned by students wanting to take part in at least three different branches of athletics during the year.”¹⁴ From their opening, the colleges became an immense success among students. And while Yale was building, redeveloping, and establishing Inter-College Athletics Leagues, New Haven bore the weight of the Great Depression.

THE DEPRESSION

At Yale, the Depression manifested itself in a number of ways. While the University expanded its campus and changed its social and academic culture, other aspects suffered. Ordinary income at the University took a hit, income from the endowment declined by 21%, and gifts from the alumni fund dropped by 85%. From 1931-1935, the University cut expenditures by freezing promotions and salary increases, squeezing hourly employees,

and not renewing single-year faculty appointments. The Yale College faculty dropped from 107 in 1931 to 90 in 1932, and the enrollment fell from 6,190 in 1929-30 to 5,362 in 1934.¹⁵

Nevertheless, the University still enjoyed immense success during the Depression. In a speech on Alumni Day in 1933, Angell proclaimed Yale a place where men bedraggled by the Depression could, “Breath for a little the purer, kindlier air of this ancient seat of learning, where the things of the spirit still reign supreme and bid defiance to the transient ills, and youth still faces life joyously and compounds with adversity as being nine-tenths sheer adventure.”¹⁶ And despite the University’s financial setbacks, Angell’s assertion, though embellished, was not far from the truth. For many undergraduates, particularly for those from wealthy backgrounds, life at Yale resembled a Fred Astaire movie. Between classes and homework, students traipsed off to weekend football games, crew races, dances, and fraternity gatherings. And when the residential colleges opened in September of 1933, undergraduates lived in swanky suites, exercised in the college’s new squash courts, and ordered from printed menus meals served by uniformed waitresses.¹⁷

Meanwhile, in the city streets, “Morale was so low that people would just shuffle along, with their heads down, afraid of running into someone who might recognize them in their miserable condition.”¹⁸ In 1931, as the construction of the colleges began, more than 11,000 of the city’s 68,000 working people were idle and 18,000 city families had no full time wage earner.¹⁹ That year John W. Murphy of Fairhaven had been elected mayor. The son of Irish immigrants, Murphy grew up poor and for most of his adult life had little. He had always been frugal, and as mayor, not much changed. In some senses, a fiscal conservative like Murphy was the perfect Depression-era mayor because the city had no money to spend. However, he did believe governments—particularly city governments—had the potential to inspire social change. Therefore, while his administration attempted to balance the budget, they also sought to find innovative means of bringing in money without raising taxes, which were already high.

In the winter of 1932, when he took office, Murphy inherited a government deeply in debt, and a city crippled by unemployment and poverty. Moreover, a year earlier, the Board of Alderman endowed the Department of Charities and Corrections with only \$40,000 to administer direct relief to the poor. With no hope of receiving state or federal relief, Murphy sought alternate ways of redistributing what little wealth the city had. He forced a review of all departments and cut ten city employees. Murphy worked with the Citizens Committee to help employ 1,300 men a day through the Department of Parks and Public Works, although the jobs paid \$3.50 a day, and generally lasted only three days. Then he donated ten percent of his salary, \$7,500, to the city treasury, and called all city employees, many of whom were making less than \$1,000 per year, to do

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the same. After lots of persuasion, they did. As the winter of 1932 pushed on, though, unemployment grew, 10,850 in January, 11,800 in February. And as unemployment worsened, the city's resources, particularly its financial resources, dwindled.²⁰

Across the Green from City Hall, however, sat one of the nation's wealthiest universities, which, to outsiders, seemed to enjoy nearly annual multi-million dollar donations. Furthermore, Yale was expanding, buying up blocks of cheap city property and planning to erect, in the place of the old houses and businesses, massive, tax-exempt buildings. With the new president's mission to turn Yale into a world-famous research university, it appeared the school would wall itself off from the city yet again. Under these circumstances, the debate over taxation began.

TAXATION

Mayor Murphy, who never hesitated to stick it to the powerful Yale, claimed the University's new policy of buying property and thus removing it from the city's tax roll was "eating into the vitals of the city and adding to our tax burden by reducing the taxable property in the city."²¹ Because the University was tax exempt, every property it bought during its time of robust expansion not only displaced local families and businesses, but also removed massive chunks of the city's tax base. At a time when New Haven needed money, this further crippled the economy. Moreover, although the residential colleges, both in their building and operation, employed thousands of New Haveners, they also inhibited the local economy by eating up land that would otherwise be taxed by the city government. Therefore, among people of New Haven, John W. Murphy included, the thought of taxing the University became all too popular.

In 1937, Arnold Guyot Dana '83 published an intricate financial analysis of the city. His report delved into the issue of tax exemption, and reflected many of the popular opinions of the period regarding Yale's tax exemption. In 1934, Yale's land held a tax value of \$12.3 billion, over a third of the tax value of all the tax-exempt land in New Haven, which had increased 25.5% from 1930-1934.²² In 1934, Yale's buildings were valued at \$55 million, "in other words, Yale's buildings absorb 5/8 of the city's total tax-exempt valuation of buildings."²³ Given the imminent economic hardship in the city, New Haveners called for a tax on the University properties.

To this growing sentiment, Angell responded. In his Alumni Day address in 1933, he confronted the matter:

The legendary antipathy between town and gown has rarely reached serious crises. In the relations of Yale and New Haven and, in general, each has been proud of the other in the end of their common heritage [...] There is occasionally a disposition to stress the disadvantages which the presence

of the University brings to the City, forgetting the innumerable benefits, including huge financial considerations, which would be lost to New Haven were the University not present. We are in the midst of one these periodic upheavals in which the financial distress of the City leads many to turn complainingly upon the University as an intolerable burden which can only be adequately lightened by the taxation of University properties now by charter and statute exempt.²⁴

He likened the city to a whining child going through a difficult time, and reminded his Ivy League audience that Yale not only benefited New Haven in multifarious ways, but also had no obligation to the city according to its charter. Angell even stated that New Haven recruited Yale to the city from Saybrook, and should therefore be thankful for its presence and reminded of its importance to the city, explaining that “The bitter struggle of the lower Connecticut Valley towns to prevent the removal of Yale from Saybrook to New Haven, with its ensuing and unhappy destruction of books in process of transfer is but one episode in a long line testifying to the value of a college to a town.”²⁵ He then set several shallowly expressed legal precedents about how a tax would violate both the charter and the nature of how universities were intended to run. Angell called the notion to tax a university the product of a “fire of ignorance, jealousy, and the natural desire to cut one’s own tax rates by acquiring the right to tax large masses of visible property which are now exempt.”²⁶ He then went on to list the many benefits the University brought to the city.

As he stated, “The University expended last year in New Haven for materials or services over \$1,300,000—this is in addition to very large expenditures for building operations—over eight and a half millions involving the services of one hundred New Haven business concerns employing on the average more than a thousand men a day.”²⁷ In 1932, with a payroll of \$4.3 billion, Yale was one of the city’s largest employers. Furthermore, according to Angell, Yale brought about 175,000 visitors yearly to the city, who expended some \$875,000. Angell added that according to a “conservative estimate” Yale students spent \$3.5 billion in New Haven annually.²⁸ In the previous year, Yale provided \$50,000 in scholarships to New Haven boys. Angell also referenced that New Haven citizens could use the New Haven Hospital with no cost to the city thanks to generous Yale benefactors. He reminded the audience that Yale’s lectures, orchestra, book collection, Gallery of Fine Arts, and renowned Peabody Museum all lay open to New Haven locals. According to Angell, for a university whose mindset and charter held no obligation to the city, Yale was doing pretty well. Furthermore, to respond to the growing controversy regarding taxation, the University published detailed accounts, in book and pamphlet form, outlining many of the same statistics and opinions as Angell expressed in his Alumni Day speech.

Locals had rebuttals, however, and Dana documented many of them in his book.

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He began by addressing the charter, “Some question remains [...] whether a Connecticut court of equity would decide that all the rights conferred by Charter on the College of 1792, when its entire real estate embraced less than 100,000 square feet or a little more than two acres, should be construed to cover [...] the huge group of institutions comprising Yale,” especially in a time when the city was “crowded and overloaded with financial burdens and responsibilities.”²⁹ Furthermore, Yale also held tracts of unused city land, when the city needed to build. Finally, Dana listed a set of demands to Yale from New Haven published in the *New Haven Journal Courier*. They were:

1. That Yale contribute a substantial sum annually to the city to aid it in meeting costs of maintaining the municipality whose benefits Yale shares.
2. That Yale shall refrain from withdrawing taxable property from the grand list for a period of at least ten years.
3. That Yale restore to the taxable grand list all unoccupied or unused land that it now holds.
4. That Yale encourage visitors to Yale to use city hotels, restaurants or other places to accommodate them, instead of providing for them in college buildings.
5. That permission be accorded to New High School teams to use Yale athletic fields, whenever this arrangement may be made without interfering with the field activities of Yale athletes or their associations.³⁰

The authors supported their demands on a number of claims, namely that while Yale offers many cultural amenities to the city, most New Haveners have neither the time nor the money to indulge in them. They asserted the new college system hurt the local hotels and restaurants that once profited from undergraduate business. The authors accused the University of keeping the city in the dark as to its grand plans for development. And they stated that because the University had expanded into a major research institution of worldwide reputation, the charter for the little local college of 1792 had become antiquated. But the demands went largely ignored. In the thick of these debates, Mayor Murphy proposed that Yale drop the financial aid set aside for Yale students, and instead give it to the city. However outlandish Murphy’s proposal, the Corporation’s response summarizes nicely their general position toward the city: “Yale was not chartered to contribute money to help the City of New Haven to fulfill the various governmental duties and obligations imposed upon it.”³¹ And thus, New Haven floundered through the Depression while the University, behind its newly constructed gothic barriers, continued to thrive and expand.

CONCLUSIONS

So, where to stand? Does a wealthy university's presence in a city obligate it to assist the wellbeing of that city, especially in times of hardship? The Yale administration and corporation of the Depression years certainly did not think so. They understood well that coexistence meant inevitable cooperation—if University activities could benefit the city, great, if not, oh well. Overall, the city's wellbeing remained an afterthought. Yale faced its own unique problems during the Depression and had ambitions independent of the city. In fact, in most cases the city acted more as the anchor than the engine. The University needed vast alumni donations to help fuel its expansion into a research university of unparalleled excellence. Administrators needed to reverse an unhealthy undergraduate social culture. They hoped to rebuild the campus while not inhibiting their receding finances, particularly those parts, like the alumni fund, that the Depression hit hardest. The wellbeing of New Haven appeared nowhere in these plans.

On the outside, however, it appeared Yale gobbled up the city and then changed the cityscape into non-taxable buildings of exorbitant grandeur. As the gothic cathedrals rose, the multi-million dollar donations flowed in. While professors and researchers moved in from around the world, and elegantly dressed undergrads jaunted off to weekend crew races and society dances, thousands of New Haveners sat idle, and thousands of local families remained without a stable income. While wealthy alumni gave eight-figure gifts to build new dormitories and dining halls that took away from city business, every public servant in the city, the Mayor included, took pay cuts. Yale did indeed have no legal or financial obligation to help the city alleviate the hardships of the Depression, and Yale buildings were legally tax exempt; however, the University did buy up taxable city property, and did overtly display its wealth while the city suffered. Beyond hiring locally for the construction and maintenance of the new buildings, the University did not go out of its way to ease that suffering.

Regardless of perspective, the fact remains that featured nowhere in Yale's grand strategy was the thought that a healthy New Haven meant a healthy Yale. While the University employed local labor during its expansion, it remained aloof from and evasive of city politics. As a result, the building of the residential colleges and the expansion of Yale's campus at the outset of the Great Depression both forever improved Yale culture and enhanced its international reputation, and further grounded a grand university in a struggling city that, for the most part, resented its presence.

TOWN, GOWN, AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION

NOTES

1. From Margaret Hogg and Ralph Hurlin's *The Incidence of Work Shortage in New Haven, CT*, as seen in Douglas Rae, *City: Urbanism and Its End* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 239.
2. Brooks Mather Kelley, *Yale: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 366-7.
3. *Ibid.*, 370.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*, 371.
6. *Ibid.*, 373.
7. Charles Seymour, "The Yale Residential Colleges," *Yale Alumni Weekly*, Vol. XLIII (New Haven: The Yale Publishing Association, December 22, 1933), 2.
8. Kelley, *Yale: A History*, 373.
9. *Ibid.*, 376.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Seymour, "The Yale Residential Colleges," 2.
12. James Rowland Angell, "President Angell's 1933 Alumni Day Address," 1933, Box 29, Folder 325, James Rowland Angell, President of Yale University, Records (RU 24), Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library.
13. Seymour, "The Yale Residential Colleges," 2.
14. *Ibid.*, 6.
15. Gaddis Smith, "Life at Yale During the Great Depression," *Yale Alumni Magazine*, Nov/Dec 2009. <https://yalealumnimagazine.com/articles/2644-life-at-yale-during-the-%20great-depression.html>.
16. Angell, "Alumni Day Address," 1933, Angell Papers.
17. Smith, "Life at Yale During the Great Depression."
18. Mark Mininberg, *Saving New Haven: John W. Murphy Meets the Great Depression*, (New Haven: Fine Arts Publications, 1981), 32.
19. *Ibid.*, 56.
20. *Ibid.*, 57-9.
21. Rae, *City: Urbanism and Its End*, 250.
22. Arnold Guyot Dana, *New Haven's Problems*, (New Haven: Tuttle, Morehouse, & Taylor, Co., 1937), 55.
23. *Ibid.*
24. Angell, "Alumni Day Address," 1933, Angell Papers.
25. *Ibid.*
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*
28. *Ibid.*
29. Dana, *New Haven's Problems*, 56.
30. *Ibid.*, 58c.
31. Smith, "Life at Yale During the Great Depression."

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TITLE IMAGE

Photographs of Berkeley College, Yale University, 1933-1997 (inclusive). Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University. <http://images.library.yale.edu/madid/oneItem.aspx?id=1770053&q=berkeley%20construction&q1=&q2=&q3=&q4=&q5=&q6=&q7=&q8=&q9=&q10=&q11=&q12=&q13=&q14=&q15=&q16=&q17=&q18=&q19=&q20=&q21=&q22=&q23=&q24=&q25=&q26=&q27=&q28=&q29=&q30=&q31=&q32=&q33=&q34=&q35=&q36=&q37=&q38=&q39=&q40=&q41=&q42=&q43=&q44=&q45=&q46=&q47=&q48=&q49=&q50=&q51=&q52=&q53=&q54=&q55=&q56=&q57=&q58=&q59=&q60=&q61=&q62=&q63=&q64=&q65=&q66=&q67=&q68=&q69=&q70=&q71=&q72=&q73=&q74=&q75=&q76=&q77=&q78=&q79=&q80=&q81=&q82=&q83=&q84=&q85=&q86=&q87=&q88=&q89=&q90=&q91=&q92=&q93=&q94=&q95=&q96=&q97=&q98=&q99=&q100=>



PRECEDENT, PREFERENCE, AND PROPER NOUNS: THE FOUNDING AND NAMING OF YALE'S RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES

Modeled after the Oxford-Cambridge system, the residential college housing system is a distinctive element of Yale's identity. Taking us back in time, Paul Styslinger '17 methodically chronicles the process of determining the original nomenclature of the 12 colleges. Examining correspondence and detailing alternative names considered, Styslinger suggests that a tight circle of top Yale administrators played a key role in this process and that Yale used naming to honor history and tradition in the brand new college system.

By Paul Styslinger, ES '17
Edited by Maxwell Ulin and Emily Yankowitz

When Yale decided to transition to the residential college system, its administration immediately set about forming its preferred instrument for effecting change: the committee. The Yale Corporation selected Provost Charles Seymour to chair a committee overseeing the development of the residential college system, the Committee on Quadrangles. Seymour attended Cambridge as an undergraduate, making him a particularly suitable choice to head Yale's selective importation of Oxbridge life. The Committee on Quadrangles was central in researching all aspects of the new system and formed recommendations to advance to the Yale Corporation for final review. Along with questions of architecture, dining halls, and leadership of the residential colleges, one topic garnered considerable attention from this committee: nomenclature. The first substantial discussions surrounding the naming of colleges began in 1929 when President James Rowland Angell assigned Secretary Carl Lohmann and Dean Clarence Mendell to chair a subcommittee dedicated to college nomenclature, deeming the process "an extremely important matter" that involved many "delicate problems."¹

Ultimately, however, nomenclature proved secondary in importance to the logistical questions surrounding the funding, operation, and social impact of the new residential colleges. This is unsurprising, considering the extent to which Yale and Harvard's House plans proved an overall untested experiment in American higher education; the naming of colleges, while important, would become insignificant if the system itself did not function.² Instead, the first priority was ensuring that the new system would revitalize, not undermine, the "Yale democracy" that, in college lore, allowed students from all walks of life to succeed within the most prestigious academic, athletic, and social groups on campus. Some administrators and faculty members voiced legitimate concerns that students would avoid resurrecting the "Yale Spirit" by selecting themselves into certain colleges based upon academic or extracurricular interests.³ Architecture, number of students per class, financial independence, payment for meals, and even the sizes of sidewalks were all seen as important issues as well – nomenclature was just one of many considerations in the development of Yale's new system.

With this in mind, two major themes emerge from the decisions behind the naming of the residential colleges. First, the vast majority of the influential recommendations and discussions surrounding college nomenclature came only from within a tight circle of top Yale administrators that included President Angell, Dean Mendell, Secretary Lohmann, Provost Seymour, and members of the Yale Corporation. Second, Yale used naming as a means of infusing the perception of history and tradition into a system that had none at the time.

President Angell's influence over the naming process appears early in a letter to Frederick Vanderbilt, a major donor. Angell writes that the Corporation had "gone back two or three generations in order to forego the possible embarrassment which might at-

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tach to the use of the names of persons recently associated with the University.”⁴ Angell also states that “so far as possible eighteenth century names [would] be used” to adorn the colleges, confirming a prioritization of demonstrating Yale’s lengthy history in these naming choices.⁵ The Corporation also rejected the terms “Quadrangle” (associated with Princeton) and “House” (associated with Harvard) to agree upon the term “College” as the proper designation for each unit of student life.⁶ Aside from distinguishing its system from that of Yale’s rivals, the word “College” brought to mind the names of Durfee College and Farnam College from previous decades while also recalling the even older North and South Colleges of the university’s earliest days.⁷ This decision marked the beginning of a pattern in which Yale opted for the most historically distant name available, likely with the intention of infusing a sense of longevity and tradition in a newly-formed entity on its campus.

While the nomenclature committee remained open to the recommendations of faculty and alumni, they understandably rejected many of the proposals. Political Science Professor Milton Conover recommended the name Jeremiah Atwater, Jr., a Yale graduate who became the first President of Middlebury College and the third President of Conover’s own alma mater Dickinson College.⁸ Yale’s eminent architect James Gamble Rogers, designer of eight of the ten original colleges, wrote Angell suggesting “South Yale College” and “North Yale College” (after two of Yale’s earliest buildings) for the converted spaces that would reside in Harkness Memorial Quadrangle.⁹ One of the more unusual proposals involved naming a college after Julian Wheeler Curtiss, a Yale graduate who was president of the Spalding sports equipment company and would later become known for spreading the game of golf in the United States.¹⁰ The names discussed below, however, were ultimately the ones presented to and decided upon by the Yale Corporation.¹¹

PIERSON & DAVENPORT

The name “Pierson College” was not a difficult first selection for the Corporation. Reverend Abraham Pierson served as Yale’s first Rector, and the name brought to mind the earliest days of Yale history. Additionally, Harvard had already named one of its two existing houses after its own first president, Henry Dunster. Given Yale’s close tracking of Harvard’s House system in its early days, it is not unlikely that the Committee on Quadrangles drew inspiration from Harvard in naming the college after Abraham Pierson.¹²

The name “Davenport,” on the other hand, distinguished Yale’s system from Harvard’s by avoiding contemporary names. The Corporation initially considered naming the college after President Angell’s predecessor Arthur Twining Hadley, a move that would have mirrored the honoree of Harvard’s Lowell House (named after the family of Harvard’s president at the time).¹³ Following President Angell’s distaste for contemporary names, however, John Davenport was selected for his being “one of the founders of the New Haven Colony” and “among the first to propose the establishment of a college in the colony.”¹⁴ In

addition, Davenport was educated at Oxford, providing a link to the system from which Yale's new plan drew inspiration. Thus, when the Corporation decided to name a college after John Davenport, the Corporation affirmed the precedent of avoiding contemporary figures.

BERKELEY

Berkeley College was purportedly named after “Reverend George Berkeley, Dean of Derry and later Bishop of Cloyne” and to recognize “the assistance in land and books which he gave to Yale in the 18th century.”¹⁵ Berkeley arrived in America – although never in New Haven – with the purpose of creating a college in Bermuda for Native Americans and the uneducated. A friend in Connecticut, Samuel Johnson, convinced Berkeley to donate his plantation “Whitehall” to Yale in 1733 before setting sail for home.¹⁶ However, the name “Berkeley” appears to have evolved as an option without the explicit recommendation of any one person.

The use of Berkeley's name was, at least in part, an accident of evolution in edifice identity. Standing in contrast to the publicly announced reasoning behind the decision, the Corporation meeting minutes only claim to name the college after Berkeley “in honor of Yale's early benefactor whose name has long been associated with the group of buildings on this site.”¹⁷ The location upon which Berkeley College is built previously contained a set of dormitories nicknamed the “Berkeley Oval” by students for two reasons: first, the set of buildings happened to contain a dormitory named Berkeley Hall, and second, the circular pathway surrounding the area's courtyard resembled a running track called the Berkeley Oval where the track team would compete in New York.¹⁸ Perhaps due to the organic nature of the name's development and its acceptance among the student body, “Berkeley” never seems to have been reconsidered or opposed. Additionally, the English heritage of the “Dean of Derry” and “Bishop of Cloyne” must have been appealing to a university attempting to emulate both the structure and history of the Oxbridge system.

BRANFORD & SAYBROOK

The Harkness Memorial Quadrangle was the gift of Mrs. Stephen V. Harkness given in memory of her son, Charles Harkness, and was completed in 1921. Because dormitories had already been constructed when the residential college system was announced, Angell called upon James Gamble Rogers to implement the difficult conversion of the structure into autonomous units. The resulting colleges were, rather unusually, named after locations rather than people. Branford was the town in Connecticut where, according to Yale legend, ten Connecticut Congregational ministers founded the Collegiate School with a donation of books. Similarly, Saybrook College honored the location of “Saybrook, Connecticut, where the College was situated until 1716.”¹⁹ The choice to name two of the

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colleges after places rather than people was likely a result of the Corporation's desire to absorb the connotations of Oxbridge tradition without the inconvenience of waiting several centuries. The town of Branford was itself English, named after Brentford, England, while the town of Saybrook was named after two men who oversaw the land at the mouth of the Connecticut River, "Lord Saye and Sele" and "Lord Brook."²⁰ Again, a preference for English history on the part of the Yale administration appears to have motivated the naming of residential colleges.

JONATHAN EDWARDS, CALHOUN, & SAYBROOK

Jonathan Edwards College was named "to honor the theologian, philosopher, and naturalist, who graduated from Yale in 1720."²¹ While the Corporation confirmed the name in February of 1931, it was not released to the larger Yale community (along with those of Trumbull and Calhoun) until October that year. While the reasons behind this delay remain unclear, it is possible that Angell wished to pair religious connotations of Jonathan Edwards with one of the more politically focused names still under consideration at the time including James Kent, Noah Webster, Jonathan Trumbull, and John Calhoun.²² Ultimately, the only difficult choice regarding the name of Jonathan Edwards College was whether to call it "Jonathan Edwards" or simply "Edwards."

Calhoun College was named, according to the official Yale release, "in honor of an illustrious alumnus, John Caldwell Calhoun," the political figure who "influenced the political history of the United States more deeply than any other graduate."²³ While the Corporation minutes on the decision simply named the college "in honor of John Caldwell Calhoun, Yale 1804, statesman," his lengthy list of political titles (Vice President, Secretary of War, Secretary of State, Senator, and Congressman) along with his status as a graduate of Yale College made his selection as uncontroversial as Jonathan Edward's.²⁴ As with the majority of college name proposals, the Corporation minutes surrounding the choice Calhoun remain frustratingly terse, and no archive suggests there was controversy surrounding the name, at least in response to its official announcement.²⁵ Interestingly, William Howard Taft, the only Yale graduate at the time to surpass Calhoun's list of political accomplishments by serving as both President of the United States and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, had just died in 1930, the year prior to the naming of the college. However, the Corporation maintained its commitment to honoring only the oldest Yale figures – the name "Taft" would not appear among the lists of candidates considered until the building of new residential colleges in subsequent decades.

Trumbull College was named for Jonathan Trumbull, "governor of the Colony and later of the State of Connecticut."²⁶ Trumbull's closest direct link to Yale was receiving an honorary degree in 1779, but his name nonetheless beat out those of Yale graduates James Kent and Noah Webster.²⁷ While he possessed only a tangential relationship to

Yale, Trumbull was similar to Davenport in providing a significant link to the past of New Haven and Connecticut, again demonstrating the Corporation's prioritization of history over direct connection to the university. Because the building was part of the Sterling bequest, there seems to have been some desire to use the name "Sterling College" for a time. Ultimately, however, the official release proclaimed the naming of the college in honor of "Jonathan Trumbull, Governor of Connecticut, Revolutionary Patriot, the 'Brother Jonathan' of tradition."²⁸

SILLIMAN

Of the residential college names, "Silliman" was the most vigorously debated. The building upon which the college was to be located, the Vanderbilt-Sheffield ("Van-Sheff") dormitories, honored the names of two Yale benefactors. For some members of the nomenclature committee, it was assumed that one of these two names would be used. Of course, Angell's insistence upon naming the building after past Yalies kept a "Vanderbilt College" largely out of the picture. However, the additional complication of potentially removing the name "Sheffield" put Angell in the awkward position of trying to satisfy both Yale College and Sheffield School alumni.

Understandably, some alumni believed that a "Sheffield College" might be confused with the Sheffield Scientific School, but others worried that Scientific School alumni would feel spurned if the Sheffield name were removed from a building. President Angell felt strongly that Sheffield was the best name for a college, arguing that objections to the idea "apply only to the present and will disappear when the present generation passes from the scene."²⁹ Fortunately for the rest of the committee, Angell's second choice was Silliman College "despite the ease with which [the name] lends itself to adolescent punning."³⁰ Over the course of several letters, Professor Charles Warren attempted to convince Angell that Silliman was in fact the best choice, arguing that it had both great significance in the history of Yale and "the advantage of sounding well."³¹

The majority of the Board of Trustees of the Sheffield Scientific School preferred the name Silliman, but several wanted Hillhouse (honoring James Hillhouse) as the first choice. Josiah Willard Gibbs was perhaps the only name rejected because it was deemed too qualified for the occasion. Warren wrote that "there is no more distinguished name at Yale than Gibbs," and that the name would be "more appropriate for some use in connection with the Graduate School than for an undergraduate college."³² The debate over Gibbs would return in later months over the naming of the tenth residential college. Another interesting choice, James Dana College, was rejected because a "Dana Hall" already existed. Other names under consideration included that of mineralogist George Brush — a name rejected because it was "not euphonious" and might "lend itself to undesirable nicknames" — as well as Noah Webster.³³ Ultimately, however, the college was named for "Benjamin Silli-

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man, a member of the faculty from 1802 to 1853,” the first professor of chemistry at Yale and “the father of American scientific education.”³⁴

TIMOTHY DWIGHT

Mystery surrounds the discussions that resulted in the naming of the tenth residential college, Timothy Dwight, which honors two Yale presidents from the same family. Angell, still believing that the name “Sheffield” should adorn a college, seems to have changed his mind to support Timothy Dwight because just one President of Yale – Abraham Pierson – had been honored at that time.³⁵ Although members of the nomenclature committee raised concerns that a “Dwight Hall” already existed and that might it be difficult to distinguish between the two buildings, Angell rejected this logic, arguing that Cambridge had two Trinity Colleges that were not often confused. Names such as Cooper (after author James Fenimore Cooper), Sumner (after Yale professor and sociologist Charles Graham Sumner), Killingworth (after the location of Abraham Pierson’s congregation), and Webster (of Webster’s Dictionary fame) did not make the Corporation’s short list. Timothy Dwight was ultimately chosen over Samuel F.B. Morse and Josiah Willard Gibbs despite several informal votes that demonstrated a preference for Morse or Gibbs over Dwight.³⁶ In fact, the Committee on Educational Policy – yet another subcommittee that contained the nomenclature committee – forwarded their recommendation of “Gibbs College” to the Corporation. Upon reaching the Corporation, however, the decision was tabled because the vote was too close to call. The reasons behind the ultimate decision remain unknown, but likely spurn from President Angell’s personal preference for the Dwight name.

The presence of a transcript of Dwight’s advice in the Provost’s Office records offers another potential – if only partial – explanation for the decision. This transcript records a conversation between Thomas Jefferson and Timothy Dwight IV – the elder of the two namesakes – in which Jefferson purportedly requested the advice of Dwight on establishing a system of smaller colleges the University of Virginia. On this occasion, Dwight is believed to have praised the advantages of the Oxbridge college system, offering a link between the name of the college and the inspiration for the residential college system.³⁷ Outside of this tenuous piece of evidence, however, little is known about the final decision to name the tenth college after both Timothy Dwights.

MORSE & STILES

In 1956, Yale was again in need of expanding its housing offerings to undergraduates. The gift of art collector Paul Mellon enabled the construction of two additional residential colleges, which were much needed after the rapid increase in student population after the GI Bill. Ezra Stiles College appears to have been an uncontested and uncontroversial choice, honoring “the memory of the theologian, lawyer, scientist, and philosopher who

graduated from Yale in 1746 and served as her seventh President.”³⁸ For the other college, President Alfred Whitney Griswold appears to have requested a list of famous literary figures to consider, including James Fenimore Cooper, Sinclair Lewis, and Thornton Wilder.³⁹ Proposals for Noah Webster College and two Taft Colleges – after William Howard and his lesser-known son Robert – also emerged, but received little actual consideration.

Theodore Sizer, a History of Art professor who would later design the college crests of both Morse and Stiles, seems to have influenced the ultimate decision to name the college after Samuel F.B. Morse. Sizer’s correspondence with Griswold demonstrates a close friendship that consisted of sharing art history articles, congratulating each other on academic accomplishments, and using the nicknames “Ted” and “Whit” to address one another. Griswold received several letters from Sizer outlining Morse’s accomplishments as an artist, inventor, New Haven resident, and Yale undergraduate.⁴⁰ At one point, Sizer drove the point home by sending Griswold a newspaper article with an attached note: “At the risk of belaboring the point let me ask this question: what other Yale man has there been whose name has become a noun?”⁴¹ Griswold later responded to Sizer confirming his commitment to naming a college after Morse, and the Corporation later agreed with Griswold’s recommendation. In addition, it seems possible that Yale’s desire to honor a donor may have influenced the corporation’s decision; Susan Morse, a descendant of Morse, endowed around twelve assistant professorships in humanities fields, a factor that Professor Gaddis Smith believed motivated the naming of Morse College.⁴² In the end, Morse College was named in honor of the “eminent American artist and inventor of the telegraph, Samuel F.B. Morse, of the Yale Class of 1810.”⁴³

CONCLUSION: THE NEW COLLEGES

The history of residential college nomenclature demonstrates that these types of decisions have long been a function of administrative power and respect for tradition – often in differing proportions with every round. With the 2016 announcement of Benjamin Franklin and Pauli Murray as the names for the newest residential colleges, and the 2017 renaming of Calhoun College as Grace Hopper College, the trend persists. While both the Corporation and President Peter Salovey requested far more feedback from students, alumni, and faculty than any previous iteration of the naming process, the Corporation’s final decision aligned with historical precedent in its apparent rejection of outside recommendations. However, it remains too soon to write a modern history of the new residential college naming process due to one important reason: for the first time in Yale history, student reaction will continue to play an important part in the acceptance of college names, both new and old. In this light, the naming of the new residential colleges is certainly unprecedented.

NOTES

1. “James R. Angell to Clarence W. Mendell,” January 14, 1930, Box 7, Folder 103, Guide to the Provost’s Office, Yale University, Records Concerning the Establishment of the Residential College System (RU 38), Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library. For information on the establishment of the colleges see: Charles Seymour, “The Residential-Hall Plan for Yale College: Digest of an Address Before an Open Meeting Held in the Alpha Chi Rho House,” *Yale Alumni Weekly*, March 15, 1929; Charles Seymour, “Notes on Undergraduate Organization,” November 30, 1927, 3, Box 187, Folder 2028, James Rowland Angell, President of Yale University, Records, (RU 24), Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library; “Copy of Yale Corporation Minutes,” February 7, 1931, Box 7, Folder 103, Guide to the Provost’s Office, Yale University, Records Concerning the Establishment of the Residential College System (RU 38), Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library.

2. Yale and Harvard’s new system was covered by both domestic and national publications, including *The New York Times* and *Manchester Guardian Weekly*. In addition, President Angell remained in touch with the presidents of other American universities building their own versions of the residential college system, including Swarthmore and the University of Chicago. At least one Yale alumni was so concerned with the potential social effects of the new system that he proposed a “test run” of the system with a faculty advisor and twenty hand-picked sophomores, who were supposedly a “representative cross section of the class.” (See “Proposing a Small Scale, Anticipatory Unit of the Quadrangle System,” William Henry van Benschoten, May 23, 1930, Box 184, Folder 1992, James Rowland Angell, President of Yale University, Records, Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library.)

3. Thomas Goddard Bergin and A. Bartlett Giamatti, *Yale’s Residential Colleges: The First Fifty Years* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University, 1983), 35.

4. Richard Mooney, email to Paul Styslinger, May 4, 2016.

5. Ibid.

6. “Report of the Committee on Undergraduate Housing Part II,” March 22, 1929, Box 183, Folder 1987, James Rowland Angell, President of Yale University, Records, (RU 24), Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library.

7. In a somewhat related choice, the decision between “Master” and “Head” proved far less explicit or important to Yale, with use of both titles being used interchangeably through the first few years of the residential college system’s planning.

8. “Milton Conover to James R. Angell,” December 6, 1930, Box 7, Folder 103, Guide to the Provost’s Office, Yale University, Records Concerning the Establishment of the Residential College System (RU 38), Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library.

9. “James Gamble Rogers to Charles Seymour,” February 17, 1930, Box 7, Folder 103, Guide to the Provost’s Office, Yale University, Records Concerning the Establishment of the Residential College System (RU 38), Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library.

10. “Newell H. Hargrave to James R. Angell,” February 24, 1930, Box 184, Folder 1989, James Rowland Angell, President of Yale University, Records, (RU 24), Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library.

11. James Gamble Rogers referred to one college of undetermined identity – perhaps Davenport or Silliman prior to their naming – as “Unit X.” Alas, this label was never offered as a potential name for a residential college.

12. While the establishment of the residential college system at Yale claims its roots in the storied history of the English higher education system, the ultimate decisions surrounding its implementation seem to deal more closely with tracking Harvard’s house system. Yale administrators followed the development of Harvard’s new plan – funded by a Harkness gift of its own from a few years prior – as a means of improving upon their rival’s test run. Yale gathered information regarding almost every aspect of Harvard’s house system, including student diversity within Harvard houses, student dissatisfaction with a Cambridge-style “high table” in dining halls, architectural plans, and the advantages of creating a separate campus for freshmen. By keeping track of their rival’s developing system, Yale was able to avoid some of the logistical and social issues Harvard’s houses faced in their early years.

13. The proposal for Hadley College, after Yale’s former president, was probably due to the fact

that an “Angell College” could not at all be considered – Angell was responsible for almost bungling the Harkness donation altogether in a series of poorly managed communications with the donor, and the president was hardly in the good graces of the alumni at this time. George Wilson Pierson, *Yale: The University College 1921-1937*, His Yale: College and University, 1871-1937, v. 2 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), 408.

14. Bergin and Giamatti, *Yale's Residential Colleges*, 132.
15. So much for not naming colleges after donors! Bergin and Giamatti, *Yale's Residential Colleges*, 126.
16. Richard Mooney, email to Paul Styslinger, May 4, 2016.
17. “Copy of Yale Corporation Minutes,” February 7, 1931, Box 7, Folder 103, Guide to the Provost’s Office, Yale University, Records Concerning the Establishment of the Residential College System (RU 38), Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library.
18. Bergin and Giamatti, *Yale's Residential Colleges*, 126.
19. “Copy of Yale Corporation Minutes.”
20. Bergin and Giamatti, *Yale's Residential Colleges*, 143.
21. *Ibid.*, 136.
22. George Pierson’s Yale history adopts its wording of Jonathan Edwards and Calhoun as the most “eminent of Yale’s former graduates in Church and Civil State” (p. 408) from the Committee on Educational Policy records. It is possible that this Committee, responsible for forwarding name recommendations to the Corporation, enjoyed the sonorous nature of this phrasing, and thus waited until the more “political” name had been decided to announce its decision.
23. Bergin and Giamatti, *Yale's Residential Colleges*, 130.
24. “Yale University News Statement: Yale Names Three College Quadrangles and Assigns Masters,” October 16, 1931, Box 7, Folder 102, Guide to the Provost’s Office, Yale University, Records Concerning the Establishment of the Residential College System (RU 38). Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library.
25. While I have not been able to track down this archive as of yet, Professor Jay Gitlin at one point found a copy of a poem read at an early ceremony in Calhoun College that makes a jest about Calhoun’s unlikable character. In this way, it is likely that Calhoun was recognized as a controversial figure at the time, but not to the extent that it garnered written opposition at the time of its naming (based upon the absence of archival information on the subject).
26. Bergin and Giamatti, *Yale's Residential Colleges*, 148.
27. Pierson, *Yale*, 408.
28. “Yale University News Statement: Yale Names Three College Quadrangles and Assigns Masters.” October 16, 1931, Box 7, Folder 102, Guide to the Provost’s Office, Yale University, Records Concerning the Establishment of the Residential College System (RU 38). Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library.
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30. “James R. Angell to Charles H. Warren,” October 20, 1931, Box 7, Folder 103, Guide to the Provost’s Office, Yale University, Records Concerning the Establishment of the Residential College System (RU 38), Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library.
31. “Charles H. Warren to James R. Angell,” October 10, 1931, Box 7, Folder 103, Guide to the Provost’s Office, Yale University, Records Concerning the Establishment of the Residential College System (RU 38), Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library.
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Ibid.*
34. Bergin and Giamatti, *Yale's Residential Colleges*, 144.
35. “Committee on Educational Policy Minutes,” May 11, 1934, Box 70, Folder 715, James Rowland Angell, President of Yale University, Records, (RU 24), Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library.
36. *Ibid.*
37. Provost’s Office, Yale University, Records Concerning the Establishment of the Residential

PRECEDENT, PREFERENCE, AND PROPER NOUNS

College System, Box 3, Folder 29, (RU 38), Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library.

38. Bergin and Giamatti, *Yale's Residential Colleges*, 146.

39. The same list has a postscript that states: "Noah Webster' wouldn't be a bad idea!"

40. Paul Mellon's affinity for fine art may also have contributed to naming a college after one of Yale's most well-known artists, although there is little written evidence to support this possibility.

41. "Theodore Sizer to Alfred Whitney Griswold," September 17, 1958, Box 213, Folder 1963, Alfred Whitney Griswold, President of Yale University, Records (RU 22), Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library.

42. Richard Mooney, email to Paul Styslinger, May 4, 2016.

43. Bergin and Giamatti, *Yale's Residential Colleges*, 138

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TITLE IMAGE

Yankowitz, Emily, Photograph of Yale College Shields, August 25, 2016.



1. To rescue more children from war and Nazi oppression.
2. To give them safe refuge in the United States.
3. To provide for the children already here under our protection.

These children are refugees from various Nazi-dominated countries who fled to unoccupied France. They have memories no child should have.

But they can smile again, now. Life holds something more for them than the misery and despair of a concentration camp . . . and slavery in a Nazi labor battalion later.

A few weeks ago they arrived in free America, under the sponsorship of the United States Committee for the Care of European Children.

But many more, just like these youngsters, are waiting for the miracle of rescue. The way for their escape is still open, via Lisbon, *if we act quickly.*

How You Can Help

- \$1.50 a week—(or \$75) will see a refugee child from Marseilles to Lisbon.
- \$3.00 a week—(or \$150) will put two such children on the dock at Lisbon, bound for America.
- \$6.00 a week—(or \$300) will pay for the ocean passage of a child.
- \$10.00 a week—(or \$500) will meet the full cost of bringing a child to a new home somewhere in free America.
- \$15.00 a week—(or \$750) will bring a brother and sister from Marseilles to New York.
- \$20.00 a week—(or \$1,000) will pay all the expenses of a brother and sister from France to Freedom; or will help us to assure proper care for ten children already here during the coming year.

YALE AND THE OXFORD CHILDREN A PIONEERING EVACUATION PROGRAM

Yale's involvement in American wars is well-memorialized on campus — few Yalies forget the haunting beauty of the names carved into the Woolsey Rotunda. However, in this essay, Katharine Spooner '16 explores a war effort by the University that receives far less commemoration: the Yale-Oxford children's evacuation program. Operated in the height of World War II, the program fostered Oxford-affiliated mothers and children in Connecticut, offering them safety yet garnering criticism for its perceived elitism. Spooner's analysis reveals that neither the praise nor reproach of the program is without merit, and her careful research sheds light on this controversial operation.

By Katharine Spooner, TD '16
Edited by Katie Shy and Eva Landsberg

YALE AND THE OXFORD CHILDREN

“About commencement time, June 1940, an idea was born,” wrote the 1940-1941 *Yale Alumni Magazine*: the settlement of children and their mothers from Britain’s two leading universities, Oxford and Cambridge.¹ Following some discussion over that summer, the latter institution rejected Yale’s offer, leaving Reverend Sid Lovett, then chaplain of Yale College and future Master of Pierson College, responsible for “the settlement of seventeen mothers with thirty-seven children belonging to them and thirty-three unattached youngsters.”² Shortly after, the Yale Faculty Committee for Receiving Oxford and Cambridge Children was created.

Of course, the idea of evacuating children from wartime Britain and resettling them in the United States was not unique to Yale. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt chaired the United States Committee for the Care of European Children (USCOM), which brought six thousand children across the Atlantic in the early months of the war and at the beginning of the Blitz from 1940 to 1941.³ While significantly smaller than the national British evacuation plan that saw over a million children from inner city areas removed to the countryside, the Committee took responsibility for its charges, in most cases, throughout the Second World War.⁴

However, Yale’s program was distinguished by having a great deal of autonomy over placing the children in foster homes and establishing a specific exchange system with a partner university. Even today, the decision to cater to only Oxford dons and professors’ children has led to much speculation. British newspapers have run pieces on what they have portrayed as “a grand eugenic scheme,” and just two years ago, the author of the novel *Pantheon* claimed his research showed “ideas that we would now recoil from and regard as horribly close to Nazi-ism mainstream among British and American intellectuals in the pre-War period.”⁵ This paper aims to debunk much of the sensationalism, and, indeed, inaccuracy of these statements.⁶

Nonetheless the claims surrounding the Oxford evacuation program only emphasize the distinctiveness of the evacuation program, and I would argue that they are tokens of its success. It was a program that garnered praise from people including Eleanor Roosevelt and Queen Elizabeth; a complex plan that rescued children from danger and introduced them to everything that American life offered.⁷ The Yale Committee, nonetheless, faced challenges, particularly during the early stages of the program, and I hope to give a balanced and candid perspective on Yale and “the Oxford Children.”

METICULOUS PREPARATION, JUNE 1940-1941

The Yale Faculty took an independent approach from the start, both by initiating the evacuation program and by setting up the Yale Faculty Committee, which included a broad range of faculty members from Reverend Lovett (“Uncle Sid” as he was affectionately known) to Professor Samuel Hemingway, Master of Berkeley College, and John Fulton,

Sterling Professor of Physiology.⁸ Under the auspices of this Board, complete with its own private offices at 12 Hillhouse Avenue, Lovett wrote to the dons of Oxford and Cambridge in June 1940.⁹ Recognizing the urgency of the situation, Lovett sent a letter addressed “To the members and wives of the Faculty of the University.”¹⁰ Though the United States was not yet part of the war, Lovett emphasized the fear that Great Britain would be invaded: “Even if this invitation is not accepted at the present it is well worthwhile to make the offer. With the probability that the attack on England will start within a few weeks it is necessary, if we are to accomplish anything, that this action be immediate.”¹¹ If there was any opposition from Yale faculty to the evacuation plans, then the official documentation does not catalogue it, and, in any case, all but prompt objections would have come too late, as the first batch of children and their mothers sailed on board the *SS Antonia* from Liverpool the following month, in July 1940.¹² This gave little time – just a span of three weeks – to the Yale Faculty Committee to sufficiently prepare, but they diligently took to the logistical tasks and immediately sought financial donors.

Before progressing further, one might ask how such quick agreement was reached across either side of the Atlantic. How, for example, could one of the fellows at Balliol College so easily decide to contribute to the program, let alone allow his four children to leave England indefinitely?¹³ The answer lies in the trust between Anglo-American faculty and the friendships that existed – and still exist – between the two countries. Looking at the correspondence between professors, the familiarity between them is clear, and several letters begin “I hope you are keeping well.”¹⁴ One of the Yale Faculty Committee members, Professor Fulton, had particularly strong links with Oxford, having taught at Magdalene College in the 1920s, where he developed his theories on neurophysiology, and would later return to pick up a D.Sc.¹⁵ In my interview with Judith Schiff, Yale’s Chief Research Archivist, she raised, unprompted, these connections between academics, noting that Yale faculty may have chosen Oxford as it was “easier for academics to make connections than try to figure it out cold.”¹⁶ Nevertheless, the English academics placed a tremendous amount of trust in Lovett’s Committee, especially considering that such a large group of children made the initial crossing.

The depth and breadth of donations and enquiries about the program shows American confidence in the Yale Faculty Committee, as well as, on a wider scale, their sympathy for the plight of British children, who faced such an uncertain future in the early years of the war. At a national level, the US Committee for the Care of European Children received most of its funds from the government, as would be expected from a program run out of the Children’s Bureau. Large corporations, such as Kodak Film and Motion Exchanges, also financed their own exchange programs, but worked in close conjunction with the National Committee, who monitored the casework and visa requirements.¹⁷ The Yale program, however, sought to exert nearly complete autonomy, as Lovett asked for sponsorship and

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soon built a \$25,000 fund, not only to see out the war but also its aftermath: “to enable us to do a better job in some future emergency.”¹⁸ The ominous hint of future wars emphasizes how seriously Lovett took the evacuation plans. Keen to establish the foundations of an emergency fund, he set up a partnership with the National Savings Bank, situated on Orange Street, which handled all financial transactions during the war, and whose statements were carefully kept and catalogued by the Committee.¹⁹ By separating their evacuation program financially from the National Program, Lovett and his team had much greater control over the logistics of the program, from the choice of foster parents to the schooling that the children received.

It was this desire for autonomy that truly differentiated the Yale evacuation project from the national program. Lovett took the first steps of liaising with the Oxford professors, and he later set out his reasoning in a formal letter to the National War Fund: “The primary purpose, obviously, was and still is to provide the threatened families of England with a safe haven where their children, out of the earshot of guns, beyond the reach of starvation and the horrors of invasion, could live and thrive and grow up to be good citizens of the commonwealth of nations.”²⁰ This impassioned statement tugged at American heartstrings as an appeal to bring children to the “safe haven” of New Haven. The Yale Committee emphasized the close Anglo-American ties in an internal memorandum, which stated that “these children were sent, not into the blue to be ticketed and moved about like little checkers on a checker board, but as friends and the friends of friends; as neighbors.”²¹ While perhaps grandiose in its aims, the program was extremely dedicated in its execution and set two goals: on a practical level to prepare for the children’s arrival, and, in a broader sense, to foster close US-UK relations. Given that the United States remained uninvolved in the conflict during the summer of 1940, and was watching from afar as Britain retreated the bulk of its land army from Dunkirk, it is interesting that the Committee’s goal was so plainly set out in the program’s founding aims.

The project’s uniqueness did not go unnoticed, as one member of the US Committee for the Care of European Children archly commented on “the peculiar nature of the Oxford Cambridge children evacuation program.”²² Over the summer of 1940, exchanges between the National and Yale Committees documented the unwillingness of the US Committee to cede complete control to its junior counterpart. One letter from the US Committee suggested that, “in addition to a member of the board of directors of the children community center, the Executive Director (of the National Committee) also serve on the Yale Faculty Committee either as a member or as an advisory member.”²³ Although the Yale Committee worked against the odds to obtain the initial visas, it triumphantly told the US Committee in 1943 that “after nearly three years of trial and error, effort and accomplishment, a third and developing purpose has become to carry on the project in such a way as to make its experiments meaningful and its findings significant in the development of the

whole field of care of evacuated children.”²⁴ Even at this mature stage of the evacuation program, the Committee still sought to give the project a more meaningful purpose. This motivation was clear from the outset – in fact, even in the month of preparation before the children arrived.

THE DIVINITY SCHOOL RECEPTION: A PATH TOWARDS FOSTER HOMES

Very quick planning ensured that when the group of children reached New Haven (after the eight-hour train trip from Montreal) they would be warmly welcomed at a reception.²⁵ Their arrival, on the afternoon of July 17, 1940, was celebrated across campus, with journalists flocking to interview the evacuees. The University issued an official statement: “Less than a month ago the Yale Faculty [Committee] was formed and offers were sent to Oxford and Cambridge to take one hundred children and mothers from each for the duration of the war.”²⁶ The journalists of the *New Haven Courant* wanted a punchier news story and set about interviewing the children on what they thought of the United States, and, as one reporter noted, “experience of Hollywood enabled them to give what the boys assumed were perfectly satisfactory accounts.”²⁷ The opening reception took place on the Sterling Divinity Quadrangle, where a broad welcome banner proclaimed, “To our English friends, we heartily welcome you to the Sterling Divinity Quadrangle of Yale and we hope that your stay with us will be a pleasant experience for you.”²⁸

The Yale Faculty Committee had planned more than just celebrations and had already assigned each child to one of the four divinity school dormitories. The Yale Faculty Committee memorandum notes solemnly that all the children would live in “Hopkins, Bushwell, Bacon [or] Brainerd.” Their stay would be temporary until foster homes were finalized.²⁹ One can only imagine what the children, raised in the quadrangles of medieval Oxford colleges, would have made of the sturdy red brick of the federal-inspired Divinity School. They were probably kept busy by the highly structured daily schedule they had to follow during their stay. The little details of their course of stay had been meticulously planned, perhaps to the point of inanity. The schedule did not leave a minute unaccounted for during each evacuee’s day, as boys and girls were occupied with activities, meals and “reflection time” from their “7:00 am rising” to “8:30 pm lights out for boys and girls.”³⁰ While veering towards the obsessive, the details were thoughtful and reflected the sincerity of the Committee’s aims; for example, mothers who were observed to be on friendly terms in the opening afternoon reception were subsequently grouped together.³¹

Although, as Ann Spokes Symonds recounted, “hardly any of us children were aware of the fact that Mr. Byron Hacker, the Director of the Children’s Center, and his staff of assistants were undertaking their investigations during this time, matching up children with the most suitable hosts and deciding on allocations,” the Yale Faculty Committee was

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acutely mindful of the immediate task at hand: finding the children foster homes.³² After their arrival, the “children were observed and sensitively interviewed” during the first two weeks of their stay at the Divinity School. The Children’s Center staff also took detailed notes about the children’s temperament and health.³³

Lovett ensured that the children were placed under the care of two Yale doctors, whose names and credentials were proudly included in the Yale University official statement: “Dr. Grover Powers, Professor of Pediatrics, and Dr. Edward Wakeman, Assistant Clinical Professor of Pediatrics, in the Yale Medical School.”³⁴ It was these two men who brought up the need for the group to be covered by some kind of basic insurance, both for practical reasons – three mothers were heavily pregnant – and on the simple grounds that the war could last indefinitely. Unfortunately, several insurers, including the esteemed Connecticut Hospital, flatly rejected coverage applications.³⁵ Acquiring insurance became the first logistical hurdle that the team faced, and Lovett later recalled his frustrations after meeting with yet another prospective insurer: “Dr. Grover Powers and some of us sat down with an insurance man [...] as I remember the interview, he said it was both impossible and not financially feasible to make any such arrangements in this site.”³⁶ The Committee, nonetheless, quickly found a solution by breaking the group of mothers and children into three sections: “mothers alone, attached children, and unattached children.”³⁷ The Committee’s correspondence with insurers from across the state of Connecticut demonstrates its persistence in solving the first true test for the Oxford Children project.

What ultimately proved a greater difficulty and required detailed assessment was sifting through the applications of hundreds of couples who had written to the Committee asking to foster one or more children. Some wrote from as far away as Boulder, Colorado. Others wrote with insistent demands: “My husband and I,” specified Eleanor Brockway, “are very interested in adopting a British child; preferably a boy under six years of age.”³⁸ In total, I counted no fewer than two hundred letters of this kind, excluding the patient replies from the secretary of the Committee, Ms. Marjorie Dawes, and returned questionnaires.³⁹ Americans from across the country were clearly struck by the need to look after what the newspapers advertised as the “little refugees.”⁴⁰ I also suspect, however, that some childless couples thought Britain would lose the war, and therefore perceived the program as an informal adoption project, as suggested from the letter of one applicant, stipulating that that “the youngster must be of English or Scotch descent and must be a Protestant.”⁴¹ Lovett was aware of the challenges that came with picking foster parents, not least when the mother was accompanying the child, and anxiously wrote in an internal note: “the problem of placement presented psychological as well as numerical considerations [...] the wisdom of keeping our group somewhat geographically centered precluded our use of many homes at some distance from New Haven.”⁴²

Distant placements were ruled out so that a process of close examination and super-

vision could commence. Lovett stipulated, “All prospective homes and foster parents were subject to interview by child placement workers.”⁴³ In addition, the Committee conformed to the National Children’s Bureau practice and kept detailed notes on the particulars of prospective parents’ lives, including their occupations, religion, education backgrounds, salaries, employers, and even character recommendations from neighbors.⁴⁴ The questionnaires seem similar to what one might expect today for a foster family assessment, although leaving a blank space for one’s “mental state” to be described seems a slightly outdated, blunt means of questioning, as does the space under “how many servants, if any?”⁴⁵ The resulting pairings between children and foster parents undoubtedly formed one of the greatest successes of the program, and one can credit this careful preparation.

The problem of allocating children to foster parents was made easier than there being fewer children than anticipated. In late June, Lovett received a letter from Fulton’s primary contact at Cambridge “indicating that no Cambridge contingent is to be expected in the future.”⁴⁶ Although the Yale Faculty Committee had originally been told that “Cambridge planned to send a group in the near future,” it was relatively unperturbed by the end of the Cambridge plans, and still chose to retain the Committee’s full title: “The Yale Faculty Committee for receiving Oxford and Cambridge children.” This perhaps reflected their continuing openness to Cambridge should the British university have changed its stance on the project.⁴⁷

People found different explanations for why Cambridge did not put its children through the evacuation program. Sir Montague Butler, then the Master of Pembroke College, supposedly remarked, “this (the evacuation) might be interpreted as a privilege for a special class.”⁴⁸ I shall touch further upon his answer, which has been explored by other historians, when I examine whether there was an ulterior motive behind the program; however, Cambridge’s rejection does not appear particularly surprising given the origins of the program. The bulk of Professor Fulton’s contacts were at Oxford, as it was the university at which he had taught in the prewar years; indeed, the meetings involving parents were conducted at Oxford’s Rhodes House and news of the program frequently filtered “word by mouth” around the Oxford Colleges.⁴⁹ Ultimately, the program originated at Oxford, and depended on the close ties between three Rhodes scholars: Professor Fulton of Yale, and Professors Hugh Cairns and Howard Florey of Oxford.⁵⁰

IMPRESSIONS OF NEW ENGLAND

Amid “a heat wave of unprecedented torridness,” the children had a splendid and exciting start to life in America. Nothing, reported *The Yale Alumni Magazine*, “could break the morale of our overseas friends.” The article went on to praise “the fine courtesy and patience of our English guests.”⁵¹ The reports on how they adjusted to American life include some fascinating eyewitness accounts, as the “English guests” observed everyday life in the

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United States with an outsider's perspective. Felicity Hugh-Jones wrote in a letter home to her parents: "We have plenty of things to do [...] sunbathing, playing, swimming, reading, eating (meals mostly consist of fruit, milk and ice-cream) and sleeping [...] If it weren't for the fact that you both aren't here it would be heaven."⁵² In their first month in the United States, the children were pampered, if not a little spoiled. For the first time, they tasted and drunk "varieties of ice-cream and Coca-Cola," as well as vanilla birthday cake.⁵³ Some of the earliest memories of the evacuees included being driven in an "open-topped car" on expeditions to the nearby Madison Beach, going on trips to Hollywood movies, and learning to play the quintessential American sports of baseball and basketball.⁵⁴ Their immersion into American life was not just a matter of interacting with the adults and staff, but also becoming young American consumers, intrigued by the rich assortment of goods and food. The young British citizens were among the first outsiders to see thriving 1940s America, as the nation climbed out of the Great Depression and its economy rapidly expanded.

The work of Lovett's team continued once their charges were settled into their new homes and experiencing new foods and hobbies; in some ways, the Committee took even more responsibility, as its members wrote tireless letters not only to get children into local schools, but often to request scholarships so the children could enroll at some of the nation's most prestigious prep schools. Children won places at schools as far away as St. Albans in Washington D.C. and as familiar and close as Hotchkiss, the high school of many Yalies, in Lakeville, Connecticut.⁵⁵ A Mrs. Dayton also dealt with the frictions and complaints that arose from some querulous evacuees. Her notes on the young Jean Cooke, for example, who "refused to bathe, is dirty and untidy, and is far from cooperative," show her trying to resolve the issue, offering several suggestions to help remedy Jean's behavior.⁵⁶ A more alarming case was that of Virginia and Stephen Cooke, who, under the care of Mrs. Sutton, became increasingly withdrawn as their foster mother experienced severe depression and mood changes.⁵⁷ The Committee made several reports on whether the siblings should be withdrawn from the household and sent social workers into the home in order to assess the children's mental state (as well as that of the foster mother).⁵⁸ The intervention resulted in the children's earlier-than-planned return home to Oxford in November 1944.⁵⁹ Yet this case marks a rare instance of concern with a foster family and shows the Committee was aware of problems within foster families and methodically documented the children's welfare in their annual health reports.

The bulk of the letters to Mrs. Dayton actually reveal individual success stories. Many letters, from either foster parents or British children, share happy memories. One child, Josephine Burn, cheerfully wrote to her parents back in blitzed England: "This is all like a holiday, really, an awfully holly holiday."⁶⁰ Though her British, upper-middle class colloquialisms were still present in her writing, her formal education would have been

Americanized, as she attended a New England elementary and middle school. The majority of the evacuees attended private schools and frequently went on to great success in university. In her 2010 article commemorating the seventieth anniversary of the Yale-Oxford program, Schiff writes about the evacuees' experience of tertiary education after they had spent a few years stateside, towards the end of the war or slightly later. Two students, she notes, "entered Oxford, two entered Mount Holyoke, and two – Stephen Handfield-Jones and John Marchant – entered Yale as part of the Class of 1945."⁶¹ Astonishingly, several students retained close connections with Yale in high school, as "one boy played on the soccer team captained by George H.W. Bush '48 at Andover," and another "roomed with William F. Buckley Jr. '50" at Millbrook School.⁶² Even under certain duress, such as the time when Bobby Franklin's class was "studying the American Revolution, (and) we Brits felt somewhat *personae non gratae*," the children did not seem to suffer, despite their sudden uprooting from British schools, and there is evidence that they thrived on their scholarships in their new schools.⁶³

The mothers of the group, encouraged by the Yale Faculty Committee, also integrated into American life and often found rewarding work. Some became volunteers at local charities, others worked directly for the Red Cross in the war effort, and one, Mrs. Levens, even qualified as a high school freshman English Literature teacher.⁶⁴ Their cases were all documented by the Faculty Committee, who treated the mothers to the same annual medical examination and interview as the children. That said, many mothers bade an early farewell to their American families and returned to England, often leaving their children behind.⁶⁵ Their return was not prompted by a mismatch in foster families or other negative factors, but usually to play a role in the British war effort, which they perhaps felt some guilt for abandoning. Mrs. Cooke, for example, returned to help European refugees settle in Oxford, while Mrs. Hull assisted her husband in a physics lab.⁶⁶ Her move back to Britain highlights the academic background of the group and illustrates why so many of the children later attended renowned universities on both sides of the Atlantic.

The Yale Faculty Committee oversaw the children's health, and it was fortunate that Lovett had insisted on an insurance plan, which was finally secured for the entire group in July 1940. Several children contracted measles the following month and were quarantined and forced to prolong their stay at the Divinity School.⁶⁷ There remains a detailed catalogue of medical bills – at least thirty were issued in the first year of the children's residence, including the princely charge of \$20 for one child's chest X-ray.⁶⁸ The annual medical examinations detailed everything, from vaccination history to psychiatric state; these reports also depict the thoroughness of the care that the children received.⁶⁹ The system of monitoring remained in place throughout the war, as the Committee kept detailed lists of everything from passport applications for the children to financial reimbursements to foster families.

“TIES THAT BIND”: THE RETURN HOME AND AFTERMATH

In the spring of 1944, one memorandum, circulated among Committee members, mentioned “the general assumption that by the end of September next year, the war in Europe will have ended.”⁷⁰ The Committee was, of course, right, and now that the Allies looked set to win, returning the children, many of whom had reached adolescence, became a question of when rather than if. Some children and mothers, as the Committee also noted, had already travelled back, making the perilous journey across the U-Boat ridden Atlantic.⁷¹ Although the majority of children remained, they and their parents realized the war was ending as reports filtered back of Mussolini’s defeat.⁷² While the journey home, simple and convenient through New York to Liverpool or Southampton, was easy for the Committee to organize, dealing with the psychological family ties proved harder. The *Yale Alumni Magazine* and other news sources had taken to affectionately calling the children “our pilgrims,” and many foster parents found it difficult to liaise with the children’s real parents about final travel arrangements.⁷³ Some parents in Oxford requested that their children at least finish the school year, so as not to disrupt their education, while others, eager to be reunited, wanted their offspring back immediately after Victory in Europe Day, May 1945.⁷⁴

The Committee’s responsibilities formally ended once the children disembarked from the ship at the English port. Yet close ties were to last for decades after the program with both members of the Yale Committee and foster parents, as evidenced by reunions held in Oxford and continued correspondence between foster parents and children.⁷⁵ The psychological impact of their return home, however, produced many challenges, including that of reuniting with a natural family of whom they had little or no recollection. While some parents were impressed by their children’s transformation, the stark differences between America and the postwar England of ration books and bombsites caused problems of readjustment. One evacuee, Ann Macbeth, later recalled this feeling of dislocation: “English winter, rationing, school uniforms, 1066 and all that, Latin, French, a new baby sister. Home.”⁷⁶ Her perception of England as a duller, less exciting place must surely have irked her parents, and many parents themselves were quick to realize the differences; Mrs. Symes wrote to her daughter’s foster parents, noting that “young people in America have such a gay time that the quiet dullness of a home in Bath, for instance, would not at all be satisfying.”⁷⁷ There is little evidence of the parents offering direct praise for the foster families, and when they did the comments were often backhanded. For example, Lady Ethel Florey wrote, “I do congratulate you on keeping the children so fresh and simple,” but added that “Paq’s appearance is a bit of a shock with rings, necklaces, high heels etc.,” before expressing her hope that “no doubt it will disappear altogether when she goes back to school.”⁷⁸

In contrast to the Yale Faculty Committee’s role in all preceding stages in the program, the group played no part once the children were home in England, and one wonders

how Lovett, having so successfully bridged the transition for the children in 1943, could have eased their return home a few years later. Given the ongoing contact between foster parents and parents, the American generosity did not evaporate once the war had finished; rather, it is clear that the Committee considered their work done once the children had returned, to the extent of closing their savings account at the National Bank.⁷⁹ Ambitions to bridge future conflicts were clearly over, although whether from optimism about the course of world events or weariness after five years of hard work remains unclear.

Once the Committee's logistical responsibilities had abated, ties were primarily maintained through foster parents and the group of British parents, and this perhaps proved the most significant challenge on the children's return, whose concept of home had changed. One mother, confiding to a foster parent, wrote: "at the moment he talks about 'at home' referring to this house and yours equally [...] he calls us both mother impartially and sometimes calls me by your name. So that it seems as if he is finding it possible to slide from one background to another without being conscious of any violent change."⁸⁰ Her comment might strike the reader as wistful and sad, but it also proves how children and their foster parents had become throughout the war, and is therefore a testament to the strength of the Yale-Oxford program, including Dr. Fulton's encouragement of communication between parents and foster families.⁸¹

The letters continued after the war. Correspondence from both sides of the Atlantic was sophisticated and perceptive, as one would expect given the academic underpinning of the program. One parent eloquently summarized their child's return to English life: "they miss everything in America, their friends, schools, and their sports, but they realize that they have come back to their own, where they belong."⁸² This mother's remark suggests that American homesickness was a passing phase.

And how did the children themselves, the objects of the "development of the whole field of care of the evacuated child" feel?⁸³ Had they become the "ambassadors of goodwill" as Lovett had intended?⁸⁴ The answer is yes and no. Many of the children developed an appreciation for the United States that lasted throughout their lifetimes. Aside from the handful that remained in the States to complete university or naval academy, the children had to change and assimilate back into British life when they went home, and this in itself was deeply disconcerting. The children had grown, and the appearance of urban England had vastly altered due to the relentless bombing of the Blitz, followed by the V-1 and V-2 rockets in 1944. England was, as Helen Somerset, one evacuee, candidly put it, "looking shabby and the people dull and tired."⁸⁵ Families and communities that had seen out the war at home must have had difficulty accepting these American adolescents with their "fashionable plaid coats" and even ridiculous "painted toenails."⁸⁶ These differences must have seemed even more glaring at their new schools.

In the United States, the Committee took much credit for the educational progress

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of the children; they would have been less impressed by the children's view of school in England. One parent reported to a foster parent that the children "were 'down' in Latin and mathematics," adding ungraciously that "they came up rapidly and took the places in their forms that they would have had, had they not gone to America."⁸⁷ The children, however, described the English system of education disdainfully and appeared to defend their American experience. Katherine Johnston commented, "they don't know how to run schools in England [...] the United States is the only place where they do it properly."⁸⁸ In the playground, the boys were forced to "answer to Yank or America," an insult that only changed once they readopted English accents.⁸⁹

Children who had been evacuated within England were forced to adapt on their return, but the few thousand sent to the States had a much greater challenge. Bobby Burn recalled that "the taunt of 'Yank! Yank! Yank!' at the Dragon School made me adopt an Oxford accent pretty quickly."⁹⁰ A prestigious American prep school education was not enough to prevent a wary reception, contrasting strongly with the reception they had received as foreigners in the States. When it began its work, the Committee could not have anticipated that the greatest challenge the children would face was a difficult return to their English families and schools. Many seemed to experience a kind of survivor's guilt. One evacuee, Elizabeth Symon, later recounted, "My contemporaries wondered why I had gone to the States. But the choice had not been mine to make."⁹¹ Although the bullying from their peers was triggered by the children's American-sounding accents, it may have had deeper underpinnings. The UK and the US had swapped their roles as global superpowers, with the war leaving Britain near destitute and dependent on rationing for basic foodstuffs, clothing and petrol well into the 1950s. By contrast, the United States, with its booming postwar economy, had already entered the unprecedented era of consumer goods, such as the refrigerator and the television. Many in Britain had caught glimpses of the America's newfound wealth from watching Hollywood reels at the flicks, and three million G.I.s had passed through with their "candy, coca-cola, cigarettes, and nylon."⁹² The G.I.s had impressed English children, but less so some of their parents, who regarded them as "overpaid, oversexed, and over here." While adults were more tolerant of the returning children, the cruelty of the playground put pressure on them to assimilate quickly.⁹³ These issues were inherent to the situation, however, and there was nothing the Committee could have done to prevent them.

Others remained grateful for the generosity of the Committee and the foster parents. Queen Elizabeth (the late Queen Mother) personally wrote to many of the host families, with her letter beginning, "I wish to mark, by this personal message, my gratitude for the help and kindness you have shown to the children who crossed the sea from the United Kingdom many months ago."⁹⁴ It seems fitting that the US hosts received some recognition – from a monarch no less – having opened "their doors and hearts" to the eighty-eight

young strangers.⁹⁵ With the outbreak of war, the children's physical safety was paramount. Although much attention has focused on the Committee's role in addressing the children's psychological needs and preparing them for their return, not enough has been paid to the host families themselves. At a reunion several decades after the evacuation, Helen Macbeth commented that: "despite loving us as their own children, they nevertheless built up, even in me who did not remember Oxford, an excitement to go home [...] I don't recollect that it ever occurred to me it might be a sad thing to say goodbye. Only as an adult was I to learn what it meant to my American foster-parents."⁹⁶ This selflessness on the part of Macbeth's hosts went beyond the anything that the Committee could prescribe.

THE "REAL" REASON BEHIND THE OXFORD CHILDREN

The Yale-Oxford program achieved Lovett's initial goals, and in doing so showed the Committee to be diligent and thoughtful. In reaction to this success, or what might be termed today as a "feel good" story, some historians have looked for other, more veiled motives for the project. The Yale-Oxford program has been dubbed an experiment in eugenics: taking children from academic parents, and isolating them in the United States, potentially for the long-term if the war extended long enough. These critics, many of whom have written newspaper articles and even books on the topic of eugenics at the turn of the twentieth century, point to circumstantial evidence. While known for his theories on monetary values, a Yale Professor, Irving Fisher, had founded the national American Eugenics Association in 1922, whose offices at 12 Hillhouse Avenue (now demolished) were just a few doors down from the Yale-Oxford Program headquarters. Other Yale professors and alumni had intimate connections to the eugenics cause: Professor Charles Davenport assembled pedigree charts of families, while Yale psychologist, Robert Yerkes compiled a census study that recorded traits such as feeble-mindedness. Others known to favor eugenics at Yale included the president of the university, James Angell, the football coach, Walter Camp, and the dean of the Medical School, Milton Winternitz.⁹⁷

Although Yale faculty were linked to the eugenics movement, none appears to have been directly involved with the Yale Oxford program. More questionable is why the offer to evacuate children was only extended to the families of Oxford and Cambridge professors, when many other children in the university towns would have benefitted. Following Cambridge's rejection of the invitation, there was a possibility for the program to take a wider cohort of children. The rejection itself has also sparked debate. It seems that the Master of Pembroke College, who turned down the offer, sensed something untoward about the program, with his hint that Yale wanted a "special class."⁹⁸ In recent years, after the publication of *Pantheon*, Sam Bourne's bestseller fictional account of the Oxford children, British newspapers have pondered such ulterior motives. In 2012, the *Telegraph* excitedly asked, "Was Yale hoping to save the offspring of the British academic elite, protecting those 125

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children because it saw them as a future leadership class especially deserving of preservation?” Although it adopts a sensationalist tone, the *Telegraph* traces the links between the known eugenicists at Yale, highlighting Fisher’s role in founding the American Eugenics Association.⁹⁹

Perhaps the most damaging aspect of the article is the claim by Professor Gaddis Smith, Larned Emeritus Professor of History, that Yale documents “show there was some discomfort at the discovery that one of the Oxford mothers was ‘a Jewess.’”¹⁰⁰ This may explain why I was banned from inspecting the contents of three files in the Manuscripts and Archives Library. If these files contain evidence of anti-Semitic attitudes within the Yale community, and specifically, the Yale-Oxford program, this would be highly embarrassing. It would not show that the Yale Oxford program had eugenic aspirations, but would nevertheless tarnish its reputation. By allowing the program to be equated with the hatred that has come to define the Nazis, its moral purpose would be put in doubt, even though anti-Semitism was depressingly commonplace in the United States. For the same reason, the *Telegraph*’s implication that anti-Semitism is evidence for eugenics is unjustified.

It would do this paper a disservice to overlook the fact that certain files in the Yale-Oxford collection are closed. This obstruction encourages the notion that the Yale-Oxford program has something to hide. In November 2014, I emailed Professor Smith to ask what he had seen in the archive. I also contacted one surviving evacuee, Ann Spokes Symonds, and Sam Bourne, the author of *Pantheon*. I hope to hear back from at least one of them, but without their input, I can only note that while anti-Semitism was widespread, if the Yale-Oxford program was actually an organized exercise in eugenics, one might suppose that evidence would have been found in the remaining seventeen boxes at the Manuscripts Library. On the evidence available, the project was true to the goals set out in Lovett’s first public announcement on the Yale-Oxford project.

FINAL REFLECTIONS: THE SUCCESS OF A WARTIME TRANS-ATLANTIC RELATIONSHIP

The Yale-Oxford program was, in many ways, ahead of its time. The structure and organization of the program, from its rapid start in June 1940 to the final child’s return home, is impressive, particularly when considering that the bulk of communication was limited to letters that took several days to cross the ocean. The program also showed the best of American values. At one of the darkest moments in twentieth century history, the evacuees would never forget the generosity and kindness of their carefully chosen foster parents. If some children had bad experiences, no accounts of these experiences exist, and the complaints registered in private letters and recollections seem quite minor, usually relating to homesickness. They pale in comparison to the complaints of British children

evacuated from urban slums to countryside farms in the same period.¹⁰¹

It is likely the program's success that makes it a target for criticism. Certainly, allegations of a eugenic plot make for dramatic newspaper stories: an Ivy League university hypocritically submerged in anti-Semitic practices during the War. Yet these claims are unsubstantiated, and we are left speculating about why Yale has forbidden part of the archives to be accessed.

Helping a group of children, however, involved a selection process. Although it was both natural and practical for the children of Oxford professors to be participants – the group of former Rhodes scholars at Yale had existing friendships that they could call upon within a critical period of time – this excluded children from other backgrounds and geographic areas who could otherwise have participated. Perhaps a parallel can be drawn with the restricted places for Yale admission today, where selection is not questioned. The applicants with Yale connections and who are only a few years older than some of the Oxford evacuees have better odds of admission compared to those without legacy. While this does not make them any less deserving of a place than, for example, an applicant who has never set foot in New Haven, it does show an inherent selection bias. In a similar way, the thousands of British children evacuated to the countryside in the United Kingdom were no less deserving than the few thousand who crossed the Atlantic and, more specifically, the eighty-eight who made it to Yale. Forms of academic criteria were and are essential before one can fall under the protective wings of Mother Yale: the University helped the children of academics in the Second World War, and, through its complicated admission process today, continues to help young people with ability. The Yale-Oxford program, with its financial aid, unwavering support for the parents in Britain, and its extensive vetting of host families can be viewed as an early precursor of today's admission program. While it took the shadow of global war to prompt the evacuation program, if Yale ever witnessed the “future emergency” that Lovett anxiously predicted, I am confident that the University would do its part to help the young people of the future.¹⁰²

NOTES

1. “News and Events.” *The Yale Alumni Magazine*, New Haven CT, (1940-41).

2. Ibid.

3. “Administrative and Financial Files,” 1940-1948, Box 1, Faculty Committee on Receiving Oxford and Cambridge Children, Yale University, Records (RU 195). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library. [hereafter cited as Faculty Committee.]

4. Kjersti Ericsson and Eva Simonsen, eds., *Children of World War II: The Hidden Enemy Legacy*, (Oxford, UK: Berg, 2005).

5. Sam Bourne. “Interview: Sam Bourne Talks About Pantheon.” *Crime Fiction Lover*, 2012. <http://www.crimefictionlover.com/2012/02/interview-sam-bourne-talks-about-pantheon/>.

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6. Reflecting the controversial nature of this topic, access to several records in the Faculty Committee on Receiving Oxford and Cambridge Children, Yale University, Records, (RU 195) Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library, remains restricted. Although I sought to obtain permission to access these files, particularly those containing correspondence between members of Yale faculty, my request was denied. Katharine Spooner, email, November 19, 2014.

7. "Files on Sponsors, non-sponsors and English Guests," 1940-1945, Box 16, Faculty Committee.
8. "Affidavits," 1945 Box 1, Folder 1, Faculty Committee.
9. "Financial and legal papers," 1941-1952, Box 2, Folders 22-23, Faculty Committee.
10. "Reports," 1940-1944, Box 5, Folder 42, Faculty Committee.
11. "Affidavits."
12. "Cunnard White Star Limited: Correspondence," 1945, Box 2, Folder 16, Faculty Committee.
13. "Oxford University Evacuation," Box 3, Faculty Committee.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Judith Schiff, in discussion with the author, November 8, 2014.
17. "Children's Bureau: Correspondence and Memoranda re: Department of Labor Standards," 1940-1942, Box 2, Folder 11, Faculty Committee.
18. "National War Fund," Box 3 Folder 30, Faculty Committee.
19. Ibid.
20. "Initial Reception," 1940, Box 3, Folder 26, Faculty Committee.
21. "Correspondence," Box 1, Faculty Committee.
22. "Children's Bureau."
23. Ibid.
24. "Statistics," 1940-1945, Box 11, Folder 38, Faculty Committee.
25. Anne Spoke Symonds, *Havens Across the Sea, A Wartime Journey from Oxford* (New York: Mulberry Books, 1990), 47.
26. "News and Events." *The Yale Alumni Magazine*, New Haven, CT (1940-41).
27. Symonds, *Havens Across the Sea*, 27.
28. Ibid., 48
29. "Initial Reception," 1940, Box 3, Folder 26, Faculty Committee.
30. Ibid., Perhaps their days were deliberately so busy as to prevent homesickness.
31. Ibid.
32. Symonds, *Havens Across the Sea*, 27.
33. "Files on Sponsors, non-sponsors and English Guests," Faculty Committee.
34. "Reports and Disbursements," Box 4, Faculty Committee.
35. "Insurance," 1941-1943, Box 3, Folder 24, Faculty Committee.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. "Adoption Home Study," Box 4, Folder 38, n.d., Faculty Committee. Library.
39. Ibid.
40. Symonds, *Havens Across the Sea*, 47.
41. "Possible Sponsors," Box 14, Folders 9-10, Faculty Committee.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. "Sponsors Registration Forms and Correspondence," 1940, Box 16, Folder 31, Faculty Committee.
45. Ibid.
46. "Cambridge Correspondence and Memoranda," 1940-1941, Box 2, Folder 6, Faculty Committee.
47. Ibid.
48. Jonathan Freedland, "The Plot to Create Britain's Super Race," *The Telegraph*, February 12,

2012. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/history/world-war-two/9076693/The-plot-to-create-Britains-super-race.html>.

49. "Baliol College," Box 1, Folder 4, Faculty Committee.
50. Ibid.
51. "News and Events." *The Yale Alumni Magazine*, New Haven, CT (1940-41).
52. Symonds, *Havens Across the Sea*, 51.
53. Ibid. 52.
54. Ibid. 51.
55. "Files on Sponsors, non-sponsors and English Guests."
56. "Summaries of Children," Box 28, n.d., Faculty Committee.
57. Ibid.
58. "Quarterly Reports on Children," 1940-1945, Box 11, Folders 33-35, Faculty Committee.
59. Ibid.
60. Symonds, *Havens Across the Sea*, xx.
61. Judith Schiff, "Yale's Foster Children." July/August 2010, *Yale Alumni Magazine*. <https://www.yalealumnimagazine.com/articles/2909/yale-s-foster-children>
62. Ibid.
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64. Ibid.
65. "Letters from British mothers who have returned to England," 1942-1943, Box 10, Folder 25, Faculty Committee.
66. Ibid.
67. "Insurance."
68. "Medical Bills: receipts," 1942-1945, Box 3, Folder 29, Faculty Committee.
69. "Lovett, Sidney: personal file," 1940-1942, Box 10, Folder 26, Faculty Committee.
70. "Oxford Parents," 1944-1946, Box 10, Folders 28-32, Faculty Committee.
71. "News of Children Who Have Returned to England," 1944-1945, Box 3, Folder 31, Faculty Committee.
72. "Summaries: children and sponsors," 1945-1946, Box 16, Folder 33, Faculty Committee.
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TITLE IMAGE

“Committee for the Care of European Children, fundraising pamphlet.” Photograph.
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“MAGNIFICENT CIT[IES]” NEW HAVEN, SAADIYAT ISLAND, AND YALE’S GLOBAL EXPANSION

Preceding the development of Yale-NUS, Yale attempted to partner with Abu Dhabi officials to establish a satellite art institution on Saadiyat Island, or “Happiness Island” as it translates from Arabic. In his essay examining this early internationalization effort, Nicholas Stewart ’18 suggests that the satellite offered Yale and Abu Dhabi the opportunity to forge an identity beyond their own physical borders. However, in 2008, negotiations broke down as a result of disagreements over whether the institute would offer full-fledged Yale degrees. Although the institution never came to fruition, Stewart argues that it served as a precedent for the Yale’s later globalization efforts and represented a mutual partnership based on similar but misaligned aspirations.

By Nicholas Stewart, JE ’18
Edited by Jacob Wasserman and Bernard Stanford

In May 1987, Yale University President Benno C. Schmidt announced the latest initiative to reshape the city beyond Phelps Gate. “New Haven is our home,” he reported. “We exist in the center of this magnificent city. Yale has a tremendous amount to gain through a more active and systematic role in New Haven.”¹ Schmidt’s plan, comprising \$50 million of investments in residential, commercial, and industrial properties in the city, was neither Yale’s first nor last intervention in the built environment of its post-industrial hometown. Years of Yale-supported urban renewal initiatives like the Oak Street Connector, Science Park, and the Broadway Shopping District attested the university’s longstanding aspiration to play an “active and systematic role” in its surrounding city.²

Yet time and again, these interventions failed to realize Schmidt’s hopes for a “magnificent city.” Yale’s fantastical vision of neo-Gothic spires and manicured triangles abruptly stopped at the borders of its campus. To the *New York Times*, New Haven in 1991 represented a “battleground” for “armed youths” that made the “Wild West lifestyle of the drug and gang culture...readily available.”³ Of all American cities with more than one hundred thousand residents, early-nineties New Haven had the sixth-highest rate of violent crime per capita.⁴ Even more disconcerting to members of the Yale Corporation, 1,439 major crimes occurred on-campus in 1990 alone.⁵ The realities of New Haven had made their way onto Yale’s campus.

For this reason, university administrators soon took an interest in the world beyond New Haven. A framework for globalization—one that intended to extract Yale from the city’s decay—emerged from a 1997 Corporation retreat.⁶ One decade later, this reimagined conception of the University had taken root in the desert sands of the United Arab Emirates, halfway around the world. There, in Abu Dhabi, Yale proposed a satellite arts institute on Saadiyat Island: a \$27 billion real estate development plan that’s contents read like menu items at Union League Cafe. Handsome Dan would roam unleashed among museum outposts like the Louvre and Guggenheim; hotels like the Park Hyatt and St. Regis; and shops like Louis Vuitton and Dior. The “world class cultural district,” as promotional material for the Saadiyat Island development touted in 2008, offered visitors a fantasy not unlike that of the Yale campus.⁷ Finally, the University had found an intersection of town and gown where Schmidt’s “magnificent city” might at last come into existence.

But Abu Dhabi wanted more than fantasy. Ironically, local officials sought to wield the glitz of Saadiyat Island as a means to producing a sustainable reality. In the minds of Emirati leaders, Louis Vuitton and the Louvre would undergird an identity for Abu Dhabi meant to outlive its decades-old oil boom. And so when Emirati officials insisted in 2008 that Yale grant degrees at Saadiyat Island—demanding, that is, that the outpost be a real institution—they arrived at an impasse. University administrators declined, explaining that they “[were] not interested in a campus with Yale degrees.”⁸ Despite the undertaking’s consequent demise, both Yale and Abu Dhabi subscribed to the same underlying premise

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in their pursuit of a joint venture: the built world, they believed, could be an instrument of propaganda with which to construct identities and promote their brands. The project met with failure as the University and city-state employed similar logic to oppositional ends. In other words, Saadiyat Island presented a site on which Yale and Abu Dhabi alike could project idealized versions of themselves; but these representations – of fantasy and reality, respectively – proved irreconcilable.

Long before Yale envisioned expanding beyond New Haven’s borders, the University manipulated its surroundings in accordance with the logic it later resurrected on Saadiyat Island. Two foundational assumptions implicitly supported these recurrent cycles of renewal: that New Haven was an improper backyard for Yale and that intervention in the physical landscape was the sole means to cure this urban ill. A kind of environmental determinism therefore underpinned New Haven’s development, as an early-twentieth-century municipal report demonstrates: “It is the duty of the city to...control its development [such that] the man-made conditions of living and working...shall make possible the greatest productive power along with the greatest satisfaction in the work and life.”⁹ According to city officials, “man-made conditions of living and working” were responsible for “productive power” and the “general satisfaction” of local residents. For this reason, Yale administrators and city planners collaborated to reform New Haven through alterations to its infrastructure and architecture.

Repeatedly, administrators and planners conceived of the Elm City in utopian terms. New Haven represented a paradigm of progress, where American ideals could not only manifest themselves in the built environment but also redress the structural, systemic wrongdoings of society. For instance, a 1910 recommendation from prominent architects Cass Gilbert and Yale-graduate Frederick Law Olmsted laid out a “well-defined programme” of “dignified” public spaces and axial boulevards reminiscent of Pierre L’Enfant’s civic-minded plan for Washington, D.C.¹⁰ Through twentieth-century renewal efforts like this, New Haven became the subject of imaginative fantasies.

Only during the postwar years did Yale finally realize its ambitious agenda of city-as-propaganda. The words of a 1965 special to the *New York Times* attested to New Haven’s urban revitalization: “The American dream of a slumless city may be fulfilled here. About a third of this city – six square miles – is being renewed at a cost that will exceed \$500 million in public and private investments.”¹¹ Here, reporter Samuel Kaplan conflated the “American dream” with the erasure of slums and the disappearance of their residents. He also illustrated the vast extent of this erasure: renewal was to consume “a third of this city.” In fact, midcentury New Haven received more federal funding per capita than any other city in the United States: on average, \$458 for each resident, which was nearly fifteen

times more than New Yorkers received during the same period.¹² With these funds at hand, planners set about replacing tenements and decrepit brownstones with immense stadiums, housing projects, and highways.

Though these transformations occurred at the behest of local officials, they reflected in many ways Yale's own hopes and dreams for its hometown. Often, officials represented the interests of the University. As political economist Gordon Lafer summarizes, "Mayor Richard Lee came to City Hall directly from serving as Yale's Director of Public Relations; his chief development administrator was the son-in-law of the Yale College Dean;...and Yale President Griswold served as vice-chair of the Citizens Action Commission that oversaw the terms of development."¹³ Lee served as New Haven's mayor from 1954 to 1970 and spearheaded much of the city's urban renewal.¹⁴

The university intervened in less explicit ways, too. Historian Brian Goldstein writes, "Behind the scenes, the university helped attract federal monies to New Haven, both by its prominence and by its political connections, building a university-city alliance."¹⁵ The vision for New Haven that Mayor Lee put forward during his sixteen-year tenure—one of "restoring elegance and grace to this city," in his words—thus emerged from the ivory tower within the Elm City's nine squares.¹⁶

By the eighties, it seemed urban renewal had reached a dead end. Near the Yale-New Haven Hospital, the Oak Street Connector's eight lanes of asphalt sputtered to an abrupt and seemingly arbitrary stop in a soot-covered, utilitarian parking structure generically named the "Air Rights Garage." Mounting uproar over the replacement of city blocks with a superhighway prevented the Connector's completion. The New Haven Veterans Memorial Coliseum, with its eleven thousand seats and raucous WWE wrestling matches, had become a "white elephant" by the mid-1980s, in the words of then-Mayor Biagio DiLieto.¹⁷ Anchor tenants like Macy's and Conran's abandoned over one hundred thousand square feet of retail space in the Chapel Square Mall, whose visitors increasingly patronized suburban shopping centers instead.¹⁸ Although Yale had sculpted New Haven according to the rhetoric of midcentury modernist planning, this reshaping had assumed a very different appearance in practice than in the plans and elevations of its architects.

Most problematically, this style of planning failed to produce the "slumless city" it had once promised. The state of late-twentieth-century New Haven undermined the operating principle of urban renewal—that the construction of highways, arenas and malls could rid the city of blight and conflict. Writing of New Haven's violence and crime for the *Atlantic* in 1995, Adam Walinsky reported, "In 1960, for example, six murders, four rapes, and sixteen robberies were reported in New Haven.... In 1990 that city, with a population 14 percent smaller, had thirty-one murders, 168 rapes, and 1,784 robberies: robberies

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increased more than 100 times, or 10,000 percent, over thirty years.”¹⁹ Most disturbingly, Walinsky’s statistics demonstrated that crime soared in the wake of Yale’s redevelopment of New Haven. According to the environmental determinist logic of University administrators and city officials themselves, this redevelopment actively perpetuated the maladies it sought to eliminate.

More than crime alone, New Haven experienced a broader economic and social downturn. Between 1990 and 1995, the city lost eleven percent of its population (around 15,000 people) as longtime residents fled to the suburbs.²⁰ It thus became home to those who could not afford to leave: during this same period, one fifth of residents lived in poverty—a rate that had increased by fifty percent in the prior twenty years.²¹ Other than the continued crumbling of the Coliseum and Oak Street Connector, New Haven’s cityscape sat largely untouched; in the early-1990s, the number of city-issued building permits fell by twenty-five percent.²² Speaking to the *New York Times* in 1991, Mayor John C. Daniels presented the city’s desperate reality in more accessible terms: “It’s getting to the point where I’m afraid to open the morning newspaper.”²³

Against this backdrop of blight and decline, Yale shifted its focus away from New Haven altogether. Once again, the university aimed to reimagine its surroundings in hopes of affirming its prestige; this time, however, these surroundings lay far beyond the Metro-North corridor. To this end, members of the Yale Corporation dedicated their 1997 fall retreat to reframing their brand in a context broader than that of New Haven.²⁴ They therefore sought to “position Yale as a global university of consequence”—to export the university abroad.²⁵ Blight and decline next door mattered little, these Corporation members reasoned, if Yale could transcend the limitations that New Haven posed.

In some ways, it already had: Yale engaged actively with the globalizing economy of the late-twentieth century. Yale’s spatial expansion beyond New Haven followed from an analogous economic one: between 1980 and 2007, the value of the world’s transnational flow of goods, services, and finance ballooned from \$2.6 trillion to \$29.3 trillion.²⁶ In this same period, cross-border flow came to account for more than half of the global economy.²⁷ The University implicated itself in this economy from which the rest of New Haven was barred, as Lafer highlights: “Yale generates the majority of its wealth from investment across the globe in everything from oil exploration to resort development to junk bonds.... The University effectively operates in an economy, which, though physically located within the city, is almost wholly isolated from its economic realities.”²⁸ This kind of isolation—an economic one—thus enabled Yale’s departure from New Haven.

In aspiring to the status of global university, though, Yale was not alone. Simultaneously, universities across the United States concocted plans to integrate themselves eco-

nomically and spatially into an increasingly global world. Once, “colleges and universities [were] viewed as anchor institutions...tightly linked to their local communities,” write education experts Jason Lane and Kevin Kinser.²⁹ But many universities rejected the implicit assumption that they were somehow bound to the towns and cities in which they had long resided. In dismissing this longstanding logic, these universities embraced an alternative mode of existence: a proliferation of the global branch campus, which produced a Georgia Institute of Technology in western France, a Johns Hopkins in northern Italy, and a Carnegie Mellon in Rwanda.³⁰ That these outposts surfaced in such diverse corners of the globe attested to their increasing ubiquity—the three-year period between 2010 and 2013 saw a twenty-three percent increase in the number of international branch campuses.³¹ Yale’s dreams of establishing itself as “a global university of consequence” were part of a widespread internationalization of American academic institutions.

At the same time, Yale’s efforts were exceptional: no other university contended with a legacy of such intensive intervention in the landscape of its hometown. Yale looked to expand abroad not only to participate in the global economy, but also in hopes of restructuring the built world in order to match the reality beyond campus gates to the fantasy within them. When University President Richard Levin proclaimed in 2007 that Yale had had “been widely acknowledged as the most active and visible [academic institution] on the international front,” he spoke in dialogue with President Schmidt’s late-twentieth century advocacy for an “active and systematic role” in urban revitalization. In this sense, Saadiyat Island proved an extension of New Haven’s nine squares.

Here lay neither an Oak Street Connector nor a Chapel Square Mall; instead there were championship golf courses and gold-bar-dispensing ATMs. Over several decades, the United Arab Emirates evolved from a series of impoverished British colonies (the Trucial States, as they were known) to an oligarchic powerhouse whose economy yielded the eighth-highest gross domestic product per capita in the world.³² As both the capital of the emirates and the site of the country’s oil reserves, Abu Dhabi quickly came to reflect its newfound status of boomtown-cum-parliamentary-hub. Dunes disappeared beneath a realm of superlatives. There was the world’s largest carpet (in the Sheikh Zayed Mosque), the world’s biggest dome (at the \$3 billion Emirates Palace Hotel), and the world’s fastest roller coaster (Ferrari World’s Formula Rossa, which reaches 150 miles per hour in five seconds).³³ Abu Dhabi treated its desert sands much like Yale approached the city streets of New Haven: as a setting whose reimaging might one day yield a utopia worthy of its creators.

Saadiyat Island epitomized this logic. From its very name, the development served as propaganda: “Happiness Island,” as it translates from Arabic, evoked the beaches, five-

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star hotels, and world-class museums that were to occupy its ten square miles in the years to come. One executive at Abu Dhabi’s Tourism & Culture Authority deemed the project “a bridge to the future, to connect knowledge and civilization.” Another claimed that it was an “experience...rich in discovery and grounded in acceptance, understanding, and empathy.”³⁴ Platitudes like these crystallized the intent of government officials: to forge from the physical landscape of Saadiyat Island something wholly non-physical – an identity for the city-state and for the other emirates beyond its borders.

Thus, officials deferred to brands and institutions older than their own country, like the Louvre, Guggenheim, Park Hyatt, and St. Regis. (Incidentally, both museums were paid over one billion dollars as part of their respective partnership deals.) To similar ends, the Al Nahyan ruling family of Abu Dhabi provided New York University (NYU) with an unrestricted \$50 million gift and showered its president, John Sexton, with oriental rugs and fanciful paintings, affirming the university’s choice to open in 2010 a branch campus on Saadiyat Island.³⁵ Side by side sat a curated assortment of even more superlatives: the world’s best museums, hotels, and universities, which previously had had little more in common with one another than their participation in the same global economy that had long benefited Yale. This was a smorgasbord of sorts of all the planet had to offer – and alongside white-sand beaches and beneath palm trees, at that.

These symbolic and propagandist ambitions underlay Abu Dhabi’s selection of Yale to anchor its educational program on Saadiyat Island. Like with NYU several years earlier, this collaboration emerged from a delicate courtship of sorts. In the first years of the twenty-first century, officials from both Yale and Abu Dhabi flirted with the prospect of partnership. First, a twenty-member delegation of Emirati administrators came to New Haven, meandering through residential colleges, perusing libraries, and sampling local pizza.³⁶ Soon after, Vice President and University Secretary Linda Lorimer visited Abu Dhabi in hopes of “building Yale ties in the Middle East.”³⁷ There, she addressed the graduating class of Abu Dhabi’s Zayed University. A gaggle of deans and professors later voyaged to the United Arab Emirates for nine days of negotiations with the country’s leaders.³⁸ This slow, often-secretive process culminated with the 2007 announcement of the Saadiyat Island Cultural District’s crown jewel: Yale Abu Dhabi. This campus was not only to be a boon to the local Tourism & Culture Authority; reciprocally, the university had finally found its fantasy.

Abu Dhabi, however, already had a fantasy. It had unending carpets, soaring domes, and ostensibly supersonic roller coasters. Saadiyat Island therefore complicated conventional conceptions of the city-state as a vapid playground for rogue sheikhs and businessmen. The new development rejected the indoor ski slopes and palm tree-shaped artificial

islands of neighboring Dubai in favor of chef d'oeuvres by Henri Matisse and Édouard Manet and courses from renowned professors.³⁹ In this way, Abu Dhabi used the reshaping of its landscape to antithetical ends to those of Yale in New Haven – to produce superlatives that were, in fact, of substance. As prominent urban planner Brigitte Dumortier notes, Saadiyat Island was “a tool for planning, public policy, and community development.”⁴⁰

Officials aimed to use this tool to invest in a reality beyond the ski slopes and man-made islands that oil wealth had produced. Ironically, the appeal to Western notions of culture – an appeal that joint ventures with museums and universities achieved – was intended to underlie the construction of a uniquely Emirati identity (for this reason, the billion-dollar branding agreements with the Louvre and Guggenheim are set to expire after thirty years, at which point local organizations will run the institutions). Diplomat Cynthia Schneider dubs this process “Emiratization”: the “gradual [...] weaning [of] the cultural institutions and agencies from foreign managers and workforce and replacing them with Emiratis.”⁴¹

Subversively, this appropriation of Western culture was meant to create an Abu Dhabi that might outlast carpets, domes, and roller coasters. Saadiyat Island’s designers conceived of a landscape as visionary as that of midcentury New Haven, but in hopes of reimagining the city-state as something real. As journalist John Hockenberry writes, “In my Middle East... towers and glassy spires in... Abu Dhabi were not rides in an oil-themed amusement park, they were monuments to the anticipated restoration of an Islamic empire.”⁴² Even if the Louvre and NYU Abu Dhabi achieved propagandist ends, they served a more elementary purpose, too: to provide locals with access to a world that was more than fantasy.

Yale and Emirati officials dreamed of sculpting the very same desert sands into a landscape that reflected their respective aspirations. Problematically, these aspirations did not align. The university envisioned “the couture line in New Haven and then the Canal Street fake version somewhere in the Middle East,” the *Yale Daily News* reported.⁴³ Of course, Abu Dhabi wanted that same “couture line” for itself. When negotiations turned to the crux of the potential partnership – whether degrees would bear Yale’s name – prospects of an outpost on Saadiyat Island receded back into the desert sands from which they had once emerged. Yale Abu Dhabi was no more.

Soon, the undertaking was all but forgotten. Abu Dhabi began construction on the museums, golf courses, and luxury hotels it had long advertised. Yale quickly announced alternative initiatives: the Yale Center Beijing and Yale-NUS in Singapore. But Yale Abu Dhabi served as precedent for these since-realized projects, and the same logics and aspirations that framed the failed undertaking presented themselves again. Yale-NUS, for example, grants only degrees from the National University of Singapore. It boasts several residential colleges (named Saga, Elm, and Cendana) as well as an acceptance rate of three

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percent.⁴⁴ And so Saadiyat Island did not become Benno Schmidt’s “magnificent city” – just as New Haven had failed to fit this vision before it. But as Yale’s internationalization efforts demonstrate, this city need not exist in the real world – rather, it sits in the plans of Olmsted, the minutes of Corporation meetings, and the renderings of Saadiyat Island.

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588 SUPERWOMEN

THE INTRODUCTION OF COEDUCATION AT YALE, 1969-1973

In the fall of 1969, Yale — one of the last all-male holdouts of the Ivy League — accepted women as undergraduates for the first time. Numerous challenges, from the institutional to the attitudinal, awaited these earliest female Yalies as they carved new space for themselves on a centuries-old campus. Helen Price '17 explores the obstacles these trailblazing women faced, while highlighting their remarkable successes in improving the University for generations of students to come.

By Helen Price, DC '18
Edited by Eva Landsberg and Katie Shy

A cartoon published in the *New Yorker* in October 1969 depicted two young women, apparently at a cocktail party, with the caption “Princeton, did you say? How interesting. I’m a Yale man myself.” The image emphasizes the women’s long hair and short dresses, the joke clearly arising from the contrast between the attractive and self-assured coeds, and the gentlemanly and aristocratic “Yale man” ingrained in the collective American psyche. What the cartoon reflects, however, is that there was no way to define oneself as a “Yale woman.” When the first female undergraduates arrived on Yale’s campus in the fall of 1969, they became part of an institution that had no established place for them. They had few role models and few female peers, and they were faced with both daunting characterizations as “superwomen” and the pressure of being expected to overcome almost 300 years of institutional male domination without difficulty or complaint. That so many of these women thrived in spite of the practical, institutional, and attitudinal obstacles they faced, thereby paving the way for generations of “Yale women,” speaks to their resilience; indeed, the admissions committee “preselected for survivors.”¹ In the first four years of coeducation — the time it took for the first class of freshmen women to graduate — Yale changed tremendously, in large part due to the presence and efforts of these women. This transformation heralded a new, more inclusive era at Yale, the benefits of which we still reap today.

While women had been able to attend Yale as graduate students since the late 19th century, by the 1960s, Yale was one of only three Ivy League colleges that still did not educate undergraduate women in any capacity.² The idea of coeducation at Yale was first raised in an informal capacity in 1953, by Dean of Admissions Arthur Howe, but it did not become a serious proposition until 1962, when the Yale College faculty agreed with the report of the President’s Committee on the Freshman Year that Yale “had a national duty to provide the rigorous training for women that we supply for men.”³ Recognizing that Yale was late to a national trend — 75 percent of U.S. colleges were coeducational by 1965 — and therefore potentially losing talented applicants to rival schools, the administration began to explore the idea of a merger with the all-female Vassar College. Vassar, however, declined Yale’s proposal in favor of admitting its own men in 1967.⁴

Yet enthusiasm for coeducation at Yale did not die down after this setback. To show their support, the Yale Student Advisory Board’s Committee sponsored a Coeducation Week in early November of 1968, which brought 750 women from 22 different colleges to Yale, where they lived in Yale dormitories and attended classes.⁵ The week was a huge success. One student, Paul Taylor, wrote in the *Yale Daily News* that the presence of women on campus had caused the men to realize they had “existed here abnormally for so long.”⁶ The day after Coeducation Week ended, 1,000 students demonstrated on Cross Campus in support of coeducation, and the day after, Yale University President Kingman Brewster announced that women would be admitted to Yale as undergraduates in the fall of 1969.⁷

The response from women nationwide was resounding. Yale received 2,847 applications for the 230 places for women in the Class of 1973, making the acceptance rate less than 10 percent, half that of the men's. In a separate application process, 358 women enrolled as sophomore and junior transfer students. The 230 first-year women were joined by 1,029 men, making the freshman class only 18.3 percent female. The women who had transferred to the Classes of 1972 and 1971 were even more outnumbered.⁸

The expectations of Yale's first women were unrealistically high. Jonathan Lear '70 labeled them "the female versions of Nietzsche's *Übermensch*" in the April 1969 edition of the *New York Times Magazine*.⁹ Upon arrival, they were treated as novelties. Media reports published exaggerated photos of male students eyeing the coeds, although many women did experience a great deal of attention. Floy Brown Kaminski '73 found that "the male residents of Pierson College had clearly delved into the 'Facebook' of the time," thereby discovering her status as "Little Rock's Junior Miss 1969," and writing a song to serenade her in the dining hall.¹⁰ Barbara Wagner '73 reported that in a large lecture that took place in a room with wooden seats, the entire room creaked whenever a woman asked a question, as everyone turned to look at her.¹¹ In a questionnaire distributed to the first female transfer students at the end of their first semester, one woman simply wrote, "We are a curiosity."¹² Over time, this phenomenon would cease – but not before these earliest female students braved and overcame significant practical, attitudinal, and institutional challenges over their years at Yale.

PRACTICAL CHALLENGES

Many of the women's challenges arose from practical difficulties involving facilities and housing. Yale had received a grant of \$500,000 from the Ford Foundation to help pay the initial expenses of admitting women. Of that, \$150,000 was earmarked for the renovation of Vanderbilt Hall, the largest dorm on Old Campus – and the only one with bathtubs – where the freshman women would live. The transfer women, it was decided, would be allocated all-female entryways in each residential college.¹³ The Committee on Coeducation recommended that better street lighting be installed, more police officers made present on campus, that "wiring should be checked for the additional load of hairdryers, and each entryway should have ironing boards, full length mirrors, doors on the shower, and stoppers for the lavatory."¹⁴ A guard was stationed at the gate of Vanderbilt to screen visitors and prevent men entering after visiting hours, although in practice he encouraged the activity he was supposed to prevent by informing the women that they could secretly take their dates through the basement to gain access to any entryway.¹⁵

However, lack of practical provisions for women reminded them daily that they were in a space not designed to accommodate them. Women's bathrooms were "few and far between, often just one, on the top floor."¹⁶ Until the new University Health Center

was opened in 1971, two years after women arrived at Yale, the only time women could see a gynecologist was when one visited for a few hours each week.¹⁷ The mental health service was also inadequately equipped to deal with undergraduate women's problems, particularly the "seemingly epidemic level of eating disorders amongst the women." The only response was to "padlock the restroom outside the residential college dining hall to thwart the binge-purge behavior."¹⁸

The organization of housing, however, was the practical issue that caused the most distress to female students. While the freshman women living in Vanderbilt Hall had the opportunity to form a close-knit community, the female transfer students, who were divided and placed directly into the residential colleges, experienced difficulty forming close bonds with both women and men. Women were placed into a single all-female entryway in each college, a system which prevented them from naturally meeting male students except in the dining hall and common room and made them feel "isolated," preventing "casual friendships resulting from living near each other."¹⁹ Male students felt unsure of the acceptability of visiting the female entryway, with one remarking, "I feel as if I'm entering some sanctum sanctorum."²⁰ Additionally, the small number of women in each residential college made it difficult to form groups of close female friends. Millicent Marcus, one of the freshman counselors for the first class of freshman women, remembers "lots of lonely upperclassman women hanging around in the freshman dorm," desperate for female company.²¹ The 1969-70 end-of-year report by the Committee of Coeducation acknowledged, "Women find too little opportunity to associate with each other."²² Problems also arose from the necessity of fitting thirty women into one entryway: In questionnaires distributed to the first female transfer students, one woman in Timothy Dwight College wrote: "Please, please, please reconsider before adding more people to each college. I feel claustrophobic, we all do. We've all been in tears about it at some point or other this year."²³ The housing arrangements managed to make upperclassman women feel both isolated and confined.

The difficulties of finding a community of women on campus were compounded for undergraduate women of color. Out of the 230 women in the Class of 1973, 26 were black; they were joined by just 16 black female transfer students from among the 358 who enrolled.²⁴ Yale had no female faculty of color, and, given that black students had only begun to be recruited a few years before co-education, some women of color felt isolated "both as black people and as women."²⁵ Similarly, Alice Young '71 felt that as an Asian-American woman, she was treated as "some exotic species."²⁶ Many women, however, formed close-knit communities, and "banded together to pursue course subjects and activities that would be responsive to specific needs." Rosemary Bray '76 described the black community at Yale as being "like a group of really smart, really raucous cousins I had never met."²⁷ Vera Wells '71, upon finding black women virtually unrepresented in the Yale Bluebook, helped develop the curriculum for a residential college seminar

titled “The Black Woman,” in which “just about every senior and junior black female was registered.” Sylvia Boone was hired to teach the class, and eventually became the first woman of color to earn tenure at Yale in 1988. The success of the seminar was such that Wells and Boone proposed a conference highlighting black women, for which they secured Chubb Fellowship funding. The 1970 conference, which featured a speaker list boasting both Maya Angelou and Shirley Graham DuBois, was overwhelmingly popular, attracting several hundred attendees, despite the fact that there were fewer than ninety black women in the entire Yale community.²⁸ Though an overwhelming minority in an institution that was established to exclude them on double grounds, the first undergraduate women of color forged their own path at Yale and worked to ensure that their identities were represented in the learning imparted there.

ATTITUDINAL CHALLENGES

At the conclusion of the third year of coeducation at Yale, the 1971-72 Report on Coeducation found that many members of the Yale community “value the presence of women as adjuncts to men, as they believe that women make Yale a pleasanter place for men.”²⁹ Indeed, there appears to have been little thought given to the effect that the heavily skewed gender ratio would have on male-female interactions. After the men’s initial curiosity about their new classmates wore off, it became clear that many of them had never had significant experience with women other than their mothers, sisters, and girlfriends. Shortly after the beginning of her first semester, Barbara Wagner ’73 was approached by a male peer in the Jonathan Edwards common room, who informed her that he was unable to concentrate on his reading because the presence of a woman was distracting him.³⁰ Awkwardness was a lesser evil, however; some men were openly hostile to female students. In the 1970 questionnaires on coeducation issued to freshmen, one male Morse College student wrote: “Coeducation has, so far, been a pain. What have we actually gotten from coeducation? The girls I know are generally plain, obnoxious, over (ostensibly) intelligent, terribly ‘concerned’ and ‘involved,’ and generally just boring.”³¹

Contrary to what one might have expected from an environment in which men so greatly outnumbered women, the dating scene was a major source of frustration for female students. For several years after Yale became coeducational, busloads of “well coiffed and made-up” women from other colleges continued to arrive each weekend for mixers.³² A September 1969 *Yale Daily News* article found that 26 percent of freshman women had been on no dates the previous weekend.³³ In exasperation, Yale women hung a banner on Phelps Gate in November 1972, reading, “Happiness is not importable.”³⁴ The male students at Yale quickly came to view their female classmates largely as friends or sisters, rather than as potential dates. There could, however, be less charitable interpretations of such attitudes; one man reported that he did not want the “hassle of being involved with

some girl at Yale, who [he] might have to see all the time.”³⁵ Despite appreciating their close friendships with men, female students often felt frustrated by their lack of dating options. One female transfer student, in her end-of-year questionnaire, bluntly wrote: “Friends are fine. I got more guy friends than I know what to do with. But if someone doesn’t start asking me out, I shall be forced to go back to Cambridge.”³⁶

One important source of bonding and solidarity for men and women, and an avenue for women to assert their presence on campus, was the active political scene of the time.³⁷ The early years of coeducation saw widespread student organizing against the Vietnam War and in support of Bobby Seale during the Black Panther trials of 1970, as well as general feminist and leftist activism. Leftist groups, however, were not immune from sexism; J. Berton Fisher ’73 recalled that his friend, Mary, “a political firebrand,” had attended a radical political meeting on campus in the run-up to May Day 1970, only to be asked, as the only woman present, to make the coffee.³⁸ Many female undergraduates found a more supportive atmosphere within the Yale Women’s Center, which was founded in 1970. It served as the umbrella organization for eighteen different women’s groups, including reproductive rights groups, black women’s groups, and several sororities of color.³⁹ Much of their early activism was focused on bettering coeducation at Yale; for instance, in 1970, a group of women interrupted a large alumni weekend luncheon in Commons to demand that Yale adopt a sex-blind admissions policy.⁴⁰

INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES

It was often difficult for female undergraduates to establish themselves and take leadership positions in long-established extracurricular activities at Yale. In the first year of coeducation, only one woman was offered a place in the Yale Debate Association. While a woman would serve as the President of the Yale Political Union (YPU) in 1978, fairly soon after the advent of coeducation, many sectors of the YPU could hardly be characterized as welcoming to women: In September 1969, the Federalist Party invited a stripper to their first meeting of the semester (and the first after women arrived at Yale), causing the two women present to walk out in disgust.⁴¹ A woman would not serve as Editor-in-Chief of the Yale Daily News until 1981, and would not be elected President of the Yale College Council (YCC) until 1990.⁴²

The barriers to women’s participation in sports were even higher. Prior to the first undergraduate women enrolling at Yale, the administration commissioned a report to determine which sports were “safe for girls.”⁴³ Women in Trumbull College were barred from competing in intercollegiate soccer matches, due to the risk of “dislocating a girl’s pelvis.”⁴⁴ During the first years of coeducation, some facilities in the Payne Whitney Gymnasium remained closed to women, and initially its only accommodations for women were the appointment of a “girls” athletic director and the introduction of dance, figure skating,

synchronized swimming, and ballet classes.⁴⁵ Women's sports were woefully underfunded and under-resourced: In a particularly egregious example, the women's soccer team members were forced to pay for their own coach. The women's tennis team was funded by alumni until 1971, and struggled to be accepted as a club sport, while other sports were supported through "women's funds."⁴⁶ The Yale Athletic Board (YAB) "frowned upon" female managers; when Nancy Kaplan '72 became the first female manager of a varsity sport after being named manager of the wrestling team in 1971, the YAB insisted that she be titled "statistician" and watch matches from a balcony to avoid injury – a practice Kaplan quickly abandoned.⁴⁷ Shortly thereafter, Congress passed Title IX in March 1972, which denied federal funds – which comprised a full quarter of Yale's budget – to educational institutions that discriminated against women, including in sports resourcing and funding. Schools were given seven years to comply with the legislation, but Elga Wasserman, Kingman Brewster's Special Assistant on Coeducation, doubted that Yale's policies would have met the necessary standards if judged immediately.⁴⁸

Perhaps the staunchest bastion of male resistance to women at Yale was Mory's. The club announced that female students would not be admitted as members, as they hoped "to keep it a men's club for as long as is possible."⁴⁹ In protest, women's groups on campus requested that meetings using University funds not be held at Mory's, and in February, 1970, Sam Chauncey, the Special Assistant to the President, wrote to Elga Wasserman agreeing that he would no longer schedule the president's meetings at Mory's and would circulate a list of alternative dining options among the faculty.⁵⁰ Mory's finally admitted women as members in 1974, after an inventive group of female students petitioned for its liquor license to be revoked.⁵¹ The significance of this decision was tremendous: Mory's, as a tradition, is so strongly associated with Yale that the denial of membership to women had for years sent a clear message that they did not belong at Yale.

The progressiveness of another Yale tradition, secret societies, varied with regards to coeducation. While several groups did not begin to tap women until the 1990s, many others were quick to include them. In 1969, St. Anthony's Hall donated \$100,000 for the provision of scholarships to women, and gave membership offers to women two years later.⁵² In 1971, four of Yale's landed (and therefore most prestigious) societies – Book and Snake, Manuscript, Berzelius, and Elihu – voted to accept women as members. Nonetheless, many women felt excluded from such campus organizations in the early years of coeducation, and worked to create their own substitutes. Although these were exclusively female and registered with the National Panhellenic Conference, these groups were called "fraternities."⁵³

Just as women were excluded from many Yale organizations, they also felt that the undergraduate curriculum erased women, a challenge that was compounded by the discrimination they often faced in the classroom. There was no doubt that the first

women admitted to Yale were academically exceptional; in the first year of coeducation, women achieved higher grades than men and were awarded more departmental honors.⁵⁴ They initially found, however, that the courses on offer were overwhelmingly about, and taught by, men. In a November 1969, questionnaire of freshman women, one wrote: “I’d like a few courses on women. I would also like a shelf of books in the library and the Co-op.”⁵⁵ Similarly, Mary Arnstein, Acting Special Assistant to the President on Coeducation, found that so many women approached her to enquire how they could “explore topics pertaining to the past, present, and future of women in our society,” as there were so few appropriate courses, that she created a small library of relevant books, papers, and articles in her office.⁵⁶

Recognizing this deficiency, early female students became advocates for, and were successful in instituting, a Women’s Studies Program. Women’s Studies courses were initially taught as residential college seminars, but grew in number from one to ten between 1970 and 1972. The first core course of the Women’s Studies curriculum, “Feminism and Humanism: An Introduction to Women’s Studies,” was taught in 1977 by Catherine McKinnon, at the time one of the most influential feminist scholars in the country.⁵⁷

Initially, however, Yale’s first female undergraduates faced a tremendous shortage of female role models or professors, which in many cases contributed to an unwelcoming classroom atmosphere – something that was acknowledged as a major problem in the Coeducation Report of 1969-70. In 1969, Yale had only 43 women faculty members out of 839 total, accounting for about 5 percent. Only two of these were tenured professors.⁵⁸ The scarcity of senior female academics inevitably contributed to an often male-dominated and unwelcoming atmosphere for female students. Leslie Bernal writes that the classroom climate was “chilly, with women students being less likely to be called on to answer provocative questions, more likely to be interrupted, and in other ways be treated as less important than men students.”⁵⁹

The first female undergraduates at Yale entered an institution that had excluded them for almost three hundred years, with the knowledge that they were still deemed unwelcome by many sectors of it. They faced practical, institutional, and attitudinal barriers to their assimilation and success. Yale’s preparation for their arrival did not extend far beyond the installation of occasional women’s bathrooms, and certainly did not address the deep reorientation of values and practices necessary to welcome women; one female transfer student said: “There was, in fact, nothing that Yale had done to prepare itself for the reality of coeducation. It had simply, rather bravely and brazenly, declared its doors open to women.”⁶⁰ Nonetheless, Yale’s first female undergraduates displayed tremendous ingenuity and resilience in forging a path for themselves, and acting as pioneers for future generations of Yale women.

NOTES

1. Sharon Tejani, "An Interview with Elga Wasserman," in *Celebrating Women: Twenty Years of Coeducation at Yale College: The Commemorative Journal*, ed. Alison Butterheim (North Adams, Massachusetts: Lamb Printing Company, 1990), 69.
2. Leslie Miller-Bernal and Susan L. Poulson, eds., *Going Coed Women's Experiences in Formerly Men's Colleges and Universities, 1950-2000* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2004), 111.
3. *Ibid.*, 112.
4. *Ibid.*, 10, 113.
5. James Kaplan, "Yale Before Coeducation," in *Reflections on Coeducation: A Critical History of Women at Yale*, eds. Emily Hoffman and Isabel Polon (New Haven: Yale University Library, 2010), 11-12.
6. Paul Taylor, "Coeds Leave Town; Yale Sad For Loss." *Yale Daily News*, November 11, 1968.
7. Kaplan, "Yale Before Coeducation, 11-12.
8. Miller-Bernal, *Going Coed*, 120.
9. *Ibid.*, 121.
10. Floy Brown Kaminski, "A Song for Coeducation," in *Reflections on Coeducation*, 10.
11. Barbara Wagner, "Living Through Coeducation," in *Reflections on Coeducation*, 21-25.
12. Questionnaire of First Class of Female Transfer Students, March 1970, Box 22, Office on the Education of Women, Yale University, Records (RU 821), Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library (hereafter cited as Coeducation Records, Yale).
13. Miller-Bernal, *Going Coed*, 119.
14. Report on the Roundtable Discussion on Coeducation, December 1968, Box 20, Coeducation Records, Yale.
15. Wagner, "Living Through Coeducation," 21-25.
16. Celia Wagner, "Not Your Father's Yale," in *Reflections on Coeducation*, 13.
17. Miller-Bernal, *Going Coed*, 119.
18. Lisa Neary "Like Father, Like Daughter," in *Reflections on Coeducation*, 43-47.
19. Completed student questionnaires on coeducation, 1970. Coeducation Records, Yale.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Millicent Marcus, in discussion with the author, December 2014.
22. Preliminary report by the Committee on Coeducation, 1970, Coeducation Records, Yale.
23. Completed student questionnaires on coeducation, 1970, Coeducation Records, Yale.
24. Miller-Bernal, *Going Coed*, 120
25. Vera Wells, "Black and Female at Yale 1969-1971," in *Reflections on Coeducation*, 31-35.
26. Alice Young, *Reflections on Coeducation*, 17.
27. Rosemary L. Bray, "A Young Black Woman Lives Her Dream at Yale University." *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, no. 19 (1998): 125-29.
28. Vera Wells, "Black and Female at Yale 1969-1971," in *Reflections on Coeducation*, 31-35.
29. Report on Coeducation 1971-72, Coeducation Records, Yale.
30. Barbara Wagner, "Living Through Coeducation," in *Reflections on Coeducation*, 21-25.
31. Completed student questionnaires on coeducation, 1970, Coeducation Records, Yale.
32. Wagner, "Living Through Coeducation," 21-25.
33. "Coeds Still Untouched?" *Yale Daily News*, September 30, 1969.
34. Alison Buttenheim, ed., *Celebrating Women: Twenty Years of Coeducation at Yale College*, 68.
35. *Ibid.*, 16.
36. Questionnaire of first female transfer students, 1970. Coeducation records, Yale.
37. Miller-Bernal, *Going Coed*, 121.
38. Fischer J. Berton, in *Reflections on Coeducation*, 17.
39. *Ibid.*, 132.
40. Maggie Coon, "Our Call for True Coeducation," in *Reflections on Coeducation*, 26.
41. Butterheim, *Celebrating Women*, 10.

42. Miller-Bernal, *Going Coed*, 128.
43. *Ibid.*, 129.
44. *Ibid.*, 33.
45. Butterheim, *Celebrating Women*, 9.
46. Miller-Bernal, *Going Coed*, 129.
47. Butterheim, *Celebrating Women*, 29.
48. *Ibid.*, 34.
49. *Ibid.*, 10.
50. Henry "Sam" Chauncey to Elga Wasserman, September 16, 1970, Coeducation Records, Yale.
51. Miller-Bernal, *Going Coed*, 131.
52. *Ibid.*, 129.
53. *Ibid.*, 130.
54. *Ibid.*, 120.
55. Questionnaire of freshman women, November 1969. Coeducation Records, Yale.
56. Mary Arnstein to Yale Faculty, 1972. Coeducation Records, Yale.
57. Miller-Bernal, *Going Coed*, 126.
58. *Ibid.*, 120.
59. *Ibid.*, 15.
60. Cynthia Brill, "Keys to the Kingdom," in *Reflections on Coeducation*, 8.

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TITLE IMAGE

Yale Events and Activities Photographs (RU 690). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

This 1969 photograph is of Amy Soloman, the first woman to register at Yale.



A New Profession

Large-scale production opens new field for university men in advertising agencies

IN 1869 the volume of business in watches was \$2,800,000; in 1914 it was five times as great—over \$14,000,000. But in this period, the number of firms making watches decreased from 37 to 15.

And to-day 11 makers of watches are advertising in the national magazines.

Tremendous growth in volume—sharp decrease in the number of manufacturers

how the new product gave longer wear, looked better and saved money. Through carefully selected magazines and newspapers, the manufacturer's story was taken direct to the American people.



But this study and the actual building of advertisements, is only one phase of the profession of large-scale selling, as it is practiced by the J. Walter Thomson Company.

Solving the problems of large-scale selling,

Which of our 103,000,000 Americans

YALE MAD MEN THE ROLE OF THE ELI IN THE CURATION OF AMERICAN CONSUMERISM

Besides being deeply embedded in American culture, what do Kellogg's "Snap, Crackle and Pop," the Oscar Meyer jingle, and "I'd like to buy the world a Coke" all have in common? Adam Williams '15 answers this question, among numerous others, in his examination of the role Yalies played in shaping the advertizing industry. Williams posits that through organizations such as the Association of Yale Men in Advertising, geographical proximity to New York City, and networking, Yalies came to be at the forefront of determining how a variety of notable products – ranging from Old Spice to Wrigley – would be marketed to consumers.

By Adam Williams, SM '15
Edited by Emily Yankowitz and Maxwell Ulin

If one visits the Wikipedia page of “The History of Advertising” and conducts a page search for the word “Yale,” only a single hit is produced — a citation of a book published at the Yale University Press. Yet, as should be universally understood, Wikipedia rarely tells the full story. From the smoky back rooms of J. Walter Thompson in the early 20th century to the transparent glass front rooms of today’s digital media providers, Yalies have always been at the forefront of creating and distributing culture. Advertising, at least as it is conventionally understood today, is a development that changed the way people judge and measure themselves and others — for better or worse. Some might argue that motivating people to dress presentably constitutes a positive good; others perhaps contend that a preoccupation with appearances inspires vanity and shallowness. Comparing one’s car to his or her neighbors’ can be seen as either stimulating the economy and promoting friendly rivalry, or fostering a negative culture of consumerism. No matter what side of the fence one comes down on, it is perilously high, and difficult to straddle. By tracing the development of Madison Avenue’s most prominent agencies and practices, it becomes clear that Yale and its alumni were inextricably linked with the establishment of an industry that propagated collective American values and identity.

Since even the most primitive barter economies, man has been consistently trying to peddle his goods as widely and profitably as possible. Modern conceptions of advertising, however, appear to be exactly that: modern. Ancient Egyptian and Roman shopkeepers used wall posters and engraved signs to indicate the wares available inside their stores, but it was not until the Industrial Revolution that something resembling the ad world of today emerged.¹ As economies transitioned from rural and agrarian to centralized and industrial, a higher concentration of consumers and sellers placed a premium on product differentiation. Still, most efforts by the middle of the 19th century — both in Europe and, more pertinently, in the blossoming United States — were locally aimed. The vision of marketing individual products to national or global audiences did not yet exist.

Over the course of the next fifty years, New York would become the undeniable epicenter of a transition towards this idea. In particular, one North-South street in Manhattan would become metonymous for an entire industry in the same way Hollywood and film are inseparable today. Madison Avenue, named after the fourth president, was not a part of the Commissioners’ Plan of 1811 for the city layout of Manhattan.² It was squeezed in between Fourth (now Park Avenue) and Fifth Avenues, resulting in the renaming of the former. This served as a precursor of things to come, as the commercials and slogans created by the ad firms on Madison would forcibly embed themselves into American and eventually global culture. In 1861, there were 20 advertising agencies in New York primarily spread across the eastern half of Manhattan but without any particular pattern of geographical distribution.³ As firms got larger towards the end of the 19th century, there was a natural magnetism towards a central locale. The corporate headquarters of the na-

tion's largest companies were almost exclusively in New York at the turn of the century, and in an age before Skype and conference calls, firms sought to situate themselves as close as possible to existing and prospective clients. As urban studies scholar Paul Knox wrote in 1995, global cities are "able to generate and disseminate discourses and collective beliefs, develop, test, and track innovations, and offer sociable settings for the gathering of high level information."⁴ As with other contemporary industries like automobiles in Detroit, advertising responded to limitations on travel and convenience of discourse by coalescing around Madison Avenue in New York.

Having offices in the center of the action drew both the highest quality clients and highest quality talent - much of which was coming from Yale. Plenty has been written about the relationship between Yale and New York.⁵ Of all the explanations for their symbiotic relationship, perhaps the most obvious stems from simple geography. Indeed, the proximity of New Haven to New York City cannot be understated when assessing the frequency of Yalies to populate the upper echelons of "The City's" elite professions. Since the connection of Grand Central Terminal to the New Haven Railroad in 1871, Yale students have regularly taken the Metro North train to Manhattan to attend concerts, parties, and, for some, even family dinner. In a certain sense, New York's accessibility by rail makes the city an effective extension of Yale's campus.

Advertising is also unique with respect to university recruitment. Unlike finance or law, the industry does not necessarily have any prerequisites for entry. Hustle and creativity are as valued as math skills or pure intellect. Conveniently, the Metro North lines run both ways. In the early 20th century, recruiters from New York's top advertising firms visited Yale to convince the best and brightest Humanities students to embark on a career they might not have previously considered. President Madison might have been a Princeton man, but the men that bustled about the street that bore his name were Yalies above all else.

To be sure, the leading agencies sent men to scout out talent at many elite universities, but there were also significant efforts made within the Yale community itself to field men for these positions. One aspect of Yale alumni that made them unique was their direct involvement in the affairs of undergraduate students. Again, Madison Avenue's proximity to New Haven enabled Yale to connect with its New York alumni network more thoroughly than either Harvard or Dartmouth could. In 1916, 52 alumni at a dinner in New York founded the Association of Yale Men in Advertising (AYMA).⁶ The goals of the Association were simple: educate the undergraduate population on the particulars of a career in the field, and find them placement at the top firms in New York. According to one issue of the *Yale Alumni Weekly*, the group put together a book entitled, "Advertising as a Business Career," which outlined the branches of advertising and its operations. It was a manual for life on Madison Avenue, describing, "each branch of the business - its object, its operation, the day's work, the pay that can be expected at the start."⁷ This served the dual purpose of

YALE MAD MEN

attracting top men to the field and weeding out those who might not be qualified.

An issue of *Printers' Ink*, a trade journal for advertisers, published on March 23, 1916, preceded the information in the *Yale Alumni Weekly*—a reflection of how quickly word of the new organization spread. In its section on groups and clubs, *Printer's Ink* noted that while the AYMA had been formed in New York, it intended to have a nation-wide impact. Significantly, *Printer's Ink* noted that the newly created organization's "objects are primarily not to further the interests of its members, but decidedly altruistic."⁸ The tone of genuine surprise that the Association could have such noble intentions is an indicator that it was one of the first of its kind. It is at this moment that the system of favoritism and the "old boys club" mentality truly took root in the advertising industry, with Yale establishing itself as one of the early practitioners. An economy of convenience and conservatism took root with respect to recruitment, as firms became willing to accept average candidates and ignore perhaps more promising talents from lesser schools out of a desire for the status quo. Such recruiting practices, particularly in a period before they were widely implemented at other universities, were enough to give Yale the advantage it needed operating behind the scenes. Tellingly, *Printers' Ink* appeared to be caught off guard by the extent to which Yale had permeated the industry, acknowledging that, "there is a far larger body of Yale men prominent in advertising circles than is generally known," at more than 200 recorded alumni.⁹

A few years later, at the end of World War I, the Association would take on a far more serious role. According to Judith Ann Schiff, the chief research archivist at the Yale University Library, more than 10,000 Yale men served during the war in some capacity, 225 of whom ultimately lost their lives during the conflict.¹⁰ While the tragedy of those who perished was commemorated at the memorial in Woolsey Hall in 1920, a report from the office of President Arthur Hadley the year prior indicates that efforts to aid the thousands of Yalies fortunate enough to return were well underway at that point.¹¹ Under University President Arthur Hadley, a Department of Demobilization Employment was established, which attempted to find placement for graduates who no longer had jobs waiting for them back on native soil. AYMA president Robert Cory — class of 1902 — was thanked individually in the report for working to explore opportunities on Madison Avenue for these veterans, indicating the organization's involvement in the process¹² Of the 122 men that found employment through the program, 12 of them entered advertising.¹³ While objectively not an overwhelming percentage, this trailed only finance, engineering, and manufacturing by number, exceeding fields that had historically been more popular among graduates like accounting, sales, publishing and social service. The overtures made by AYMA helped bring about this dramatic shift.

Though the Yale men placed by AYMA and Department of Demobilization Em-

ployment found work at a number of the preeminent New York agencies, no firm was more heavily influenced by Yalies in the early 20th century than J. Walter Thompson (JWT). James Walter Thompson began his advertising career in 1868 as a bookkeeper for Carlton & Smith, a small advertising agency founded just four years earlier, and quickly rose as one of the most talented and profitable salesmen at the young firm.¹⁴ In 1877, he decided to buy out his partner and founder William Carlton for \$500. At this time, advertising agencies served a singular purpose; they took existing creative work from a company and “placed” it in a newspaper, magazine, or other publication. They simply acted as the middlemen between small businesses and the media sources in which they sought to advertise. Yet Thompson had a much grander vision of what an advertising agency could become; after eponymously renaming the firm, Thompson converted it to a unique, full-service agency. Not only did JWT place advertisements, they created them in-house themselves. Armed with this new leverage, he convinced popular contemporary magazines like *The Century Illustrated* and *Scribner’s* to include advertisements in their pages and attracted some of America’s largest companies as clients.¹⁵ One of the firm’s most celebrated early efforts was the use the Rock of Gibraltar as a branding logo for Prudential Insurance, an image still used to this day.¹⁶ JWT’s rise was meteoric, to the point where an 1889 internal publication of the firm claimed that an astounding 80% of the advertising in the United States was placed through the agency.¹⁷

If James Walter Thompson can be considered the father of modern advertising, Stanley B. Resor is the son who picked up the mantle and raised it to new heights. Born in 1879, Resor hailed from Cincinnati and graduated from Yale in 1901 with a degree in classics. During an era still predominately dominated by young men from Northeast prep schools, Resor would have stood out as a Midwesterner, cutting a similar figure to Tom Regan in Owen Johnson’s *Stover at Yale*. In 1904 he began working at the in-house advertising branch of Procter & Gamble, demonstrating a talent for both creative and administrative work.¹⁸ At the ripe age of 29, Resor was contracted by J. Walter Thompson to open a Cincinnati branch. Such was his success that he was brought to the main offices in New York and made Vice President in 1912, all before the age of 33.¹⁹

JWT was not the first advertising firm in the U.S., but it was the first one with a truly global vision and reach. Before the turn of the 20th century, fewer than thirty years after Thompson purchased the firm outright, offices were open in Chicago, Boston, and London.²⁰ By 1916, however, the firm’s growth had begun to stagnate, and with Thompson reaching old age, Resor bought the firm with a group of fellow investors. He was made president and was understood to be the first major agency leader to boast a college degree. Advertising thus transitioned from a game run by hustlers and scrappy businessmen to some of the greatest intellectual minds of the 20th century. It was at this juncture that the

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relationship between Yale and JWT truly flourished.

It did not take long after the acquisition for Resor to mold JWT into the structure that became an industry standard in the ensuing decades. In 1917, Resor married Helen Lansdowne, a brilliant copywriter with whom he had worked in JWT's Cincinnati office. Considered one of the greatest creative advertisers of the twentieth century, Lansdowne moved to New York and became JWT's Creative Director, allowing Resor to focus on the administrative side of the firm. He consolidated the client list and kept only the most profitable ones, one key respect in which he differed from Thompson, who obsessed over bringing in as many accounts as possible. Resor was more interested in picking winning companies and keeping them happy. As large companies leveraged their industrial might and became more global, they became disproportionately important in an ad firm's portfolio - a trend that Resor recognized.²¹ One Coca-Cola was worth a hundred smaller retailers, even if they had profitable ventures of their own.

With a Yale man at the head, JWT became the most successful firm in the industry by billings, a title it would retain for more than fifty years. The beginning of Resor's tenure coincided with the formation of AYMA, and an increasing number of Yale men were drawn to the glamour of Madison Avenue. On May 26, 1919, JWT paid for a full-page advertisement in the *Yale Daily News*, outlining the benefits of a career in the industry and what made their firm unique. The posting reads:

To study the laws of human action and to create advertisements that will guide the decisions of millions of people, is one function of the advertising agency. In the J. Walter Thompson Company, a large staff of college-trained men have made it their profession to study the laws of decision.²²

JWT prudently appealed to the intellectual side of the Yale student body, emphasizing the "study" of human behavior rather than the sales aspect of the job. The article goes on to stress relevant ties to economics, history, social conditions, English composition, and literature.²³ By casting a wide net, JWT recruiters attracted creative and account-side talent to the firm. In the bottom right corner of the page is a box listing the Yale men currently working at the firm, and their respective positions. It paints a picture of an agency run almost exclusively - at least at the top level - by Yalies. The list is obviously headlined by Stanley Resor '01 who had been named president three years earlier. Walter G. Resor '97 - Stanley's brother - and Gilbert Kinney '05 - who replaced Robert Cory '02 as the President of AYMA - served as the vice presidents; three other men who graduated from 1910-1918 joined them. Stewart L. Mims '04 even turned down a history professorship at Yale to work at JWT, such was the allure of the growing community.²⁴

Thompson reportedly trumpeted that, “skilled work, when published, costs no more than the work without skill: so that the best work, such as I give, is the cheapest because it brings better results.”²⁵ In the first few decades of the 20th century, no men proved to be more skilled than those coming out of New Haven. During this period, JWT secured some of their most important accounts, including Nestlé, Kraft, and Unilever. The unrivalled success continued throughout the Resor Era, ending with his retirement in 1955. For all his individual accolades on Madison Avenue, Resor remained committed to fostering the advertising community at Yale itself. In 1928, he was the headline speaker at an event held at the Yale Club of New York, hosted by none other than AYMA.²⁶ “Snap, Crackle and Pop” of Kellogg’s, “Miracle Whip”, and the Oscar Meyer jingle are deeply embedded in the fabric of American culture, and Resor and the creatives at J. Walter Thompson were responsible for all of them.²⁷

While JWT is the appropriate centerpiece for the narrative of Yale men in advertising, there are a number of other influential firms that benefitted from either founding or leadership from Yalies over the course of the 20th century. Wilbur Ruthrauff – a rent collector – and Fritz Ryan – a real estate salesman - met in Cape Cod in the summer of 1910.²⁸ Both Yale alumni of 1909 and 1904 respectively, but lacking any advertising expertise, they decided to open a firm – Ruthrauff and Ryan – offering primarily direct-mail services.²⁹ R&R sputtered through the latter stages of the 1910s, but when the Great Depression hit, their economical and un-idealistic style of copy became increasingly popular. More traditional agencies like JWT built on flowing prose and catchy taglines saw R&R as a minor nuisance until they started attracting big-name clients such as B.F. Goodrich and Wrigley. Their bold and straightforward campaigns for Dodge in the early thirties occasioned a dramatic rise in sales, and the firm’s work largely helped to bring back Gillette razors from the brink of extinction.³⁰ As the economy recovered in the late 1940s, however, R&R’s style fell out of favor as consumers wanted to feel more sophistication from their products rather than just value and efficiency. Ruthrauff and Ryan had left the firm in the hands of their sons, who lacked their grit and determination, allowing the firm to fall apart by the late 1950s.³¹

Another pair of young alumni took a more traditional path to the major leagues of advertising. William Benton ’21 was working as a copywriter at the New York firm BBDO when he hired Chester Bowles ’24 to serve as his junior associate. The two worked together for a brief period – Benton emerging as a pioneer in the field of consumer research and Bowles establishing himself as one of the top copywriters at the firm – before breaking away to start their own practice in 1929. Their new agency burned brightly in the ensuing years and was behind a number of memorable slogans like Crest toothpaste’s, “look ma’ no cavities!” and Budweiser’s, “This Bud’s for you.”³² Both Benton and Bowles had aspirations

outside of the advertising industry, however, and sold their stakes in what had become the sixth largest firm in America in 1936 and 1941 respectively. Benton would go on to serve as vice president of the University of Chicago. He became the chairman and owner of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and eventually a US Senator.³³ Bowles – born in Massachusetts but never straying too far from his Yale roots – was elected governor of Connecticut in 1948, serving for two years before leaving the post to become the U.S. Ambassador to India. To top it all off, he returned to the states and served as a foreign policy advisor to President John F. Kennedy.³⁴ These two men are quintessential examples of mid-century Yalies who held talents in a number of fields, reached positions of significance in each of these disciplines, and most importantly, got their start in advertising.

Around the same time Resor was collecting his diploma from his college master, another soon-to-be ad man was born in New Haven: Ted Bates. Unlike Resor, Bates was very much a member of the northeastern elite. He attended Andover and graduated from Yale in 1924 in the same class as Chester Bowles. Like so many Yalies before him, Bates moved to New York City to work in finance at Chase Bank. A few years later, thoroughly disenchanted with his work, he met a man named William Johnson at the Yale Club of New York who worked at none other than Bates' old classmate's firm: Batten.³⁵ He considered his options and eventually took an enormous pay cut to switch careers and become a clerk at the firm. Bates worked alongside Chester Bowles until the latter left to form his own agency with William Benton.³⁶ Bates eventually followed him there and became one of the lead men on the enormous Colgate-Palmolive account. As Benton and Bowles stepped away from the firm in the late 1930s, the consumer goods conglomerate became dissatisfied with B&B's work. However, they offered Bates the opportunity of a lifetime – to open his own firm with Colgate-Palmolive as the lead account. Bates leapt at the offer, and Ted Bates Inc. was born in 1940. The agency became a major player in the emerging TV advertising trade of the 1950s, gaining clients like Mars candy and Dwight D. Eisenhower's successful 1952 presidential campaign.³⁷ Bates' accomplishments are indicative of just how interconnected the industry was in the mid-century, particularly for Yale alums.

Yale, like all universities, serves multiple functions. The research arm of the school was – and still is – arguably just as important as the preparation of young undergrads. As Yale men were running Madison Avenue, Yale professors were hard at work in New Haven exploring the psychology that made their work popular. Research on so-called “Message Learning Theory” began at Yale in the 1940s. Carl I. Hovland, who had received his Ph.D from Yale in 1936, was at the cutting edge of studies regarding the effectiveness of social communication.³⁸ He posited and proved that “the more people learn and remember from an advertisement, the more persuasive it will be.”³⁹ His findings contributed to a shift in the nature of advertising from a focus on evocation of emotion to simply being memorable.

As one might imagine, this had a significant influence on the advertising industry, with consumer research guru William Benton '21 particularly fascinated with his work. Modern advertisements from brands like Old Spice — a Unilever branch still serviced by JWT — are more outlandish than thoughtful, yet have still resulted in enormous sales boosts.⁴⁰ He also identified two principle criteria that determine how well an advertisement would be received: how much of an expert the spokesperson is considered on the issue, and the trustworthiness of said spokesperson.⁴¹ This finding provided empirical evidence to support Resor's introduction of the testimonial-style print advertisement in the early 1920s.

Following Hovland's work, creative directors across the board have altered their methods, and Yale advertisers in the second half of the century were no exceptions. Bill Backer '50, represents the transition from "old Yale" to "new Yale" in the world of advertising in the sense that his work still resonates today. From Charleston, South Carolina, Backer was a leader of *The Record* while in New Haven and was inspired by the countless Yalies before him that had made names for themselves in advertising.⁴² He began working as a copywriter at McCann-Erickson in 1953, and quickly rose to the rank of Creative Director at the firm. He had a supreme talent for capturing the essence of the American psyche and placing himself in the shoes of the hardworking "everyman." He wrote the jingle, "I'd like to buy the world a Coke," a commercial that has been revisited recently by its use in the finale of AMC's hit show *Mad Men* and still resonates with a large swath of the population today. Backer claims that the serial Emmy-winning program glamorized the era on Madison Avenue in some ways, and that "most of the creative directors had a little more ink stain on their hands" than the suave Don Draper played by Jon Hamm.⁴³ Backer resuscitated a flailing Campbell's soup line with the "soup is good" campaign. Perhaps his most lasting work is the creation of an entire segment of the day catering to the blue-collar American — "Millertime." Miller High Life had fallen precipitously behind Budweiser in popularity, but Backer's vision of his product as a reward for a good days work carried the brand for the next few decades, and the beer company still uses his "Great Taste, Less Filling," tagline to this day.⁴⁴

Throughout this chronicle, Yale University has been presented as a unifying force. It prepared men for a career in intellectual stimulation of the masses, and provided them with the network and structure to realize their potential on the largest stages. From a chance meeting between Ted Bates and William Johnson at the Yale Club to Stanley Resor filling his JWT staff with Bulldogs, Yale University operated as a catalyst for the production of culture. From a cynical perspective, the whole affair smacks of the boys-club mentality of Old Yale, and frankly that is an entirely legitimate viewpoint. Nepotism of the sort visible in the breakdown of R&R in the late 1950s has been tagged with a sort of odious condemnation of immorality, but the situation is not quite so black and white. Though the main-

tenance of elite New England business networks seems discriminatory by today's measure, the university and its established alumni of the early twentieth century were much more heavily invested in the futures of recent graduates than appears to be the case today. This is not necessarily a bad thing. Suggesting someone for a similar task who comes from a similar background, and helping those who one knows to have a shared past with, is part and parcel of society. There is no reason that people should refrain from helping one another within kin groups – a university alumnus being one of them.

Though there were significant female copywriters in the early 20th century, like Stanley Resor's wife Helen Lansdowne, there were far fewer women serving as account executives and agency leaders. Yale – by way of its contemptible exclusion of women until 1969 – contributed heavily to this problem. Modern advertising, like almost all professions, is at least somewhat more meritocratic today than in the period covered here. This has seen a disproportionate number of Yale men – and now women – in the industry fall over the last few decades.

Recent trends aside, the extent to which Yale influenced the growth of an industry – and in turn the way a population interacted with their products – cannot be stressed enough. Without Yalies' work in advertising, American fascination with and participation in brand culture might well not have developed as it did. And so although today's digitally focused advertising landscape would be unrecognizable to men like Robert Cory '02 and William Benton '21, the principles of creativity and ingenuity they learned at Yale and put to work on Madison Avenue remain at the heart of the advertising industry.

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AN INTERVIEW WITH JAY GITLIN

It is hard to think of someone who exudes more “Yale Spirit” than Professor Jay Gitlin. He received his BA, MM, and PhD at Yale before becoming a Lecturer in History and Associate Director of Yale’s Howard R. Lamar Center for the Study of Frontiers and Borders. His own research focuses on the history of the French in the Mississippi Valley and Great Lakes region and his work *The Bourgeois Frontier* was awarded the 2010 Alf Andrew Heggoy Prize for the best book in French colonial history. Most relevant to this issue’s theme, Prof. Gitlin teaches a wildly popular history seminar on “Yale and America.” The *Yale Historical Review* Associate Editor David Shimer ’18 sat down with Prof. Gitlin to learn more about his experience at Yale and the history department.

Interview by Associate Editor David Shimer, DC ’18
Photo by Vincent Oneppo

YHR: How did you enter Yale?

JG: I should say that while I've always liked history, I came in here thinking I was going to major in city planning. My sophomore year I took City Planning 10a, which was taught by Christopher Tunnard. I worked for two summers during my undergraduate years in the planning department of Suffolk County on Long Island. But at the end of my sophomore year, they cut the major, so I switched to history. Junior year I took a two-semester course with Howard Lamar on the History of the American West, and that class really shaped my future direction.

YHR: What was your experience in the history major?

JG: The most famous professors in the History Department at that time were the Americanists. The three core people were Howard Lamar, who was the department chair when I was an undergraduate and taught Western history; Edmund Morgan, who taught colonial history and the American Revolution; and John Morton Blum, who taught twentieth-century American political history. Howard is still with us. Morgan was famous for *The Puritan Dilemma*, his biographies of Benjamin Franklin and Ezra Stiles, and also for a book called *American Slavery, American Freedom* about colonial Virginia. He was very well-known. These three professors all had great personalities and were pied pipers for the major. Even to this day, when I go to 211 HGS for a history meeting, I just feel like I'm standing on the shoulders of giants. These professors were my heroes. C. Vann Woodward taught southern history and had written a very influential book, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*. At the time there were southern politicians who said you can't move too fast with civil rights because segregation was so deeply ingrained in southern history. Woodward used history to show that this was not the case. We didn't know Woodward. He didn't teach undergraduates.

Although I was more interested in American history, my advisers in Calhoun College [Editor's Note: every college had a departmental adviser] were two medievalists. One was Roberto Lopez, who was very respected and did medieval economic history. I took a wonderful class with him that resonated with my interests in urban history. In one essay we read, he described the city as a crossroads within the wall, an "x" within a circle. The wall or the circle represented the idea of the city as a home, a community. That enclosure also allowed people to be free. You didn't have to pay homage to a local religious or secular lord, as the city in the course of the Middle Ages [might have] paid for the privilege of freedom. (The old German phrase was "*stadtluft macht frei*" or "city air makes you free.") That is why "citizenship" derives from the word for people who live in the city. The other defining aspect of a city was the crossroads, the "x." The "x" stood for the roads into and out of the city that brought in strangers, visitors, and goods – commerce, culture, and innovation. Lopez signed my schedule. Paul Freedman, our current medievalist, has written about Roberto Lopez. The other person who was also in Calhoun was Jeremy duQuesnay

Adams, a younger medievalist who had just recently died. He was a fountain of knowledge. We would just sit there and listen. He was immortalized by being written into the script of the Beatles' animated movie *Yellow Submarine* by a Yale Classics professor named Erich Segal [one of the screenwriters]. We all kind of knew this. Most of the classes at the time were lecture classes, but they were usually smaller. Many met in WLH. There weren't as many seminars. Some of the lecture classes attracted a lot of people. The two professors who really packed them in then were Wolfgang Leonhard, who had been an insider in the political scene of East Germany. He taught a class on the history of communism. A younger professor at that time was Cambridge-trained Jonathan Spence, who gave a big lecture class on the history of China.

The department was different in a number of ways. It was by far the most popular major at Yale. Political Science and Econ were distant cousins. Most history majors, and I was one of them, thought we would go to law school. History was good training for the law, given the emphasis on research, writing, and precedents. And we all just thought history was the kind of thing you major in. You were required to take an introductory class and had to choose between an introduction to American history, European history, or English history. There were very few classes on African history, Asian history, or Latin American history. Most classes were in European and American history. Another thing that was different was that junior seminars, which you were required to take, were for the most part year-long. The first semester focused on reading, the second on research and writing. It was assumed that one might discover and pursue an interest that carried into your senior essay. And the senior essay was relatively new when I was an undergraduate. Before that you had to take comprehensive exams (comps), oral exams, and you would be examined by people in the history department. We were all very glad to have a senior essay instead.

YHR: Who were some of your most influential professors?

JG: Howard Lamar and Ed Morgan were important to me as an undergrad and also wound up being on my dissertation committee in graduate school at Yale. For my orals, I focused on the American West and frontier history, and my related minor was American colonial history. My unrelated minor was colonial Latin America. I passed my orals with distinction. The first thing that happened was Howard Lamar, Dean of Yale College at the time, took out a bottle of bourbon and we all had a drink. And Morgan asked me a question I could talk about for an hour. And I realized I was having a conversation with these people as if they were my peers. That was a wonderful experience. These were the two most influential professors, especially at that time, for me. There are things my students see me do that I got from Howard Lamar: writing key words on the board, handouts. Howard was and still is the most genial professor you could ever have. He had no ego. I would occasionally go to his history office as an undergraduate and graduate student, thinking what are we go-

ing to talk about, I know nothing, and I'd walk in and we'd have a great conversation. And I would walk out thinking I did have something to say. And then I'd realize an hour later that all the ideas had come from him and he had made me think they were mine. What a gift. He always said he learned from his students. I loved his attitude. I have wanted to be like him. I took Ed Morgan's class as a first-year graduate student. We'd meet in his office. He would give you great comments and was genuinely funny and unassuming. I learned in his class how to read seventeenth-century English script. He wanted to make sure you had specificity, a solidly grounded knowledge of the past. He would give us little problems like, "How much did a minister make in colonial New England?" Finding the answer was not an easy task – it required a real knowledge of the sources.

The first really popular class I taught was "The Suburbanization of America," which was a follow-through of my interest in urban history. I taught it for fifteen years. (I have always been more interested in social and cultural history than political history.) Following Ed Morgan's emphasis on specificity, I used to talk about gas stations. I would ask why do they call it a gas pump? (Answer: in the beginning, it was an actual pump.) At first, gas stations put their pumps alongside the curb. Why was this a problem? People trying to pump gas would line up and block the flow of traffic, so one guy had the bright idea (a man named C.H. Laessig in St. Louis in 1905 though others say it was a Gulf station in Pittsburgh in 1913) of breaking the curb and having cars pull in off the road. That innovation led ultimately to shopping centers and malls.

YHR: How was the history major changed?

JG: I think Yale students have always been interested in history – they're curious, they're intellectual, they want to work, they want to learn. But they also are thinking about the future – what is my career track. One thing that has changed is so many then were not science majors or pre-med, but rather were pre-law. History then, as it is now, was the major that made the most sense for people thinking about law school (in my opinion). You do research, you document, you learn how to think about actions in context. You need to know how to be a good writer and a good speaker on your feet. History also seemed like one of those solid things that any truly educated, wise person would want to know. If you were interested in foreign countries and the cultures of different places, you studied their history. Nowadays I think more people are interested in economics because they feel like that's something they need to do to get a leg up, which we didn't think or care about, and poli sci because the perception is that it is a better path for people interested in government service. But it wasn't true back then. So many people in government had been history majors. That seemed to be the more appropriate pathway. We felt it was the perspective of history that gives you a deeper understanding – for example, knowing how the British shaped Iraq into a country helps us to understand the situation in that region today.

YHR: Why are students so drawn to Yale and America?

JG: The class seems to have a pretty decent reputation. But I think a lot of it has to do with Yale which is, after all, a four-letter word with a kind of magic about it. You get here and you have old wonderful buildings, but what is it? People are intensely curious. Who are famous alumni? Many students want to attach themselves to that history and hook onto the legends, the traditions. I think there is still a hungering not just to know about the past, but to be part of a broader tradition. I think that's part of it. I think it's enhanced for this generation because people have to do so much – there's so much self-promotion out there. How do I get into Yale, do this, do that? I think there is a real deep longing to be connected to something with a past. What is this place? It isn't simply demographically diverse, it's also multigenerational and stretches back in time. There's something comforting about that – like the words of The Whiffenpoof Song – “we'll pass and be forgotten with the rest.” I get a lot of students whose parents or grandparents went here, but I also get so many foreign students and first-generation college students. Students don't necessarily want to be the way old Yale was, but they are curious to know what it was like and how it has changed. And honestly, I've been here for such a long time, I've seen a lot of those changes, so it's fun to teach. I get to hear great stories from people like Howard Lamar and Sam Chauncey and pass them on – with a few of my own – to a new generation of Yalies.



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