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Who Governed Yale?  
Kingman Brewster and Higher Education in the 1970s

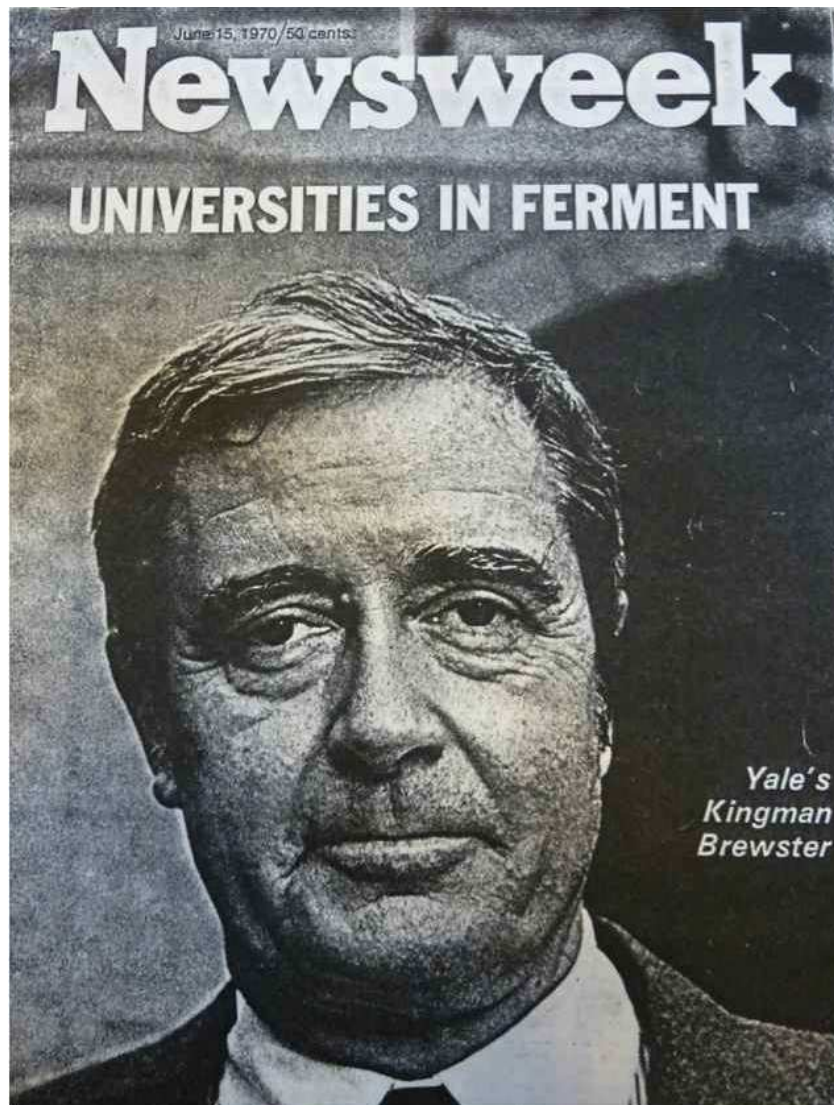


Image credit: *Newsweek*, June 15, 1970, Speeches and Articles by and about Presidents of Yale University (RU 65), Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, Box 3, Folder 72.

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A light drizzle fell on Thursday, April 23, 1970, as eight hundred protestors chanted outside Yale University's Sprague Hall. Their voices carried into the building, where Yale's faculty gathered for an unprecedented meeting. The question to be decided: Would the university shut down, "striking," to show solidarity with Bobby Seale, the national leader of the Black Panthers then on trial for conspiracy to commit murder a few blocks away in New Haven's court house? In the days before and after April 23, twelve thousand demonstrators flocked to the Elm City to participate in a rally supporting Seale on "May Day." The threat of violence loomed over the faculty's proceedings. Some vocal radicals vowed to "free Bobby" and "burn Yale." The more moderate simply demanded that the university strike.<sup>1</sup>

In this moment of tension, Yale president Kingman Brewster addressed the assembled faculty. Under no circumstances should the university itself close, though students should be free to not attend classes. Nor, according to Brewster, would the institution take an official position on the Seale trial. Then, in front of the assembled dons of Yale, he uttered a line that ignited a media firestorm — a line so famous the *New York Times* would highlight it in his obituary.<sup>2</sup> Though the university must remain neutral, Brewster himself was skeptical that a black

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*This essay was originally submitted in the spring of 2013. When I initially placed it online in 2014, I fixed a few typos present in that first version. In the fall of 2014, I wrote an article about the Woodward Report for the Yale Alumni Magazine's January/February 2015 issue. In the course of writing that article, I further corrected a few errors, which have all been noted with footnotes marked with asterisks instead of numbers. I owe a debt to Geoffrey Kabaservice for spotting what might have been the most egregious error: my misspelling of his name, in parts, for which I apologize.*

<sup>1</sup> On the faculty meeting, see: Michael Sherman, "Academic Requirements Left Up to Individual Discretion," *Yale Daily News*, April 24, 1970, 1. On the events surrounding May Day in general, see: Paul Bass and Douglas Rae, *Murder in the Model City* (New York: Basic Books, 2006). For a history-cum-memoir written immediately following the events, see: John Hersey, *Letter to the Alumni* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970). See also, Jon Taft, *Mayday at Yale: A Case Study in Student Radicalism* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1976). Also see, Geoffrey Kabaservice, *The Guardians: Kingman Brewster, His Circle, and The Rise of The Liberal Establishment* (New York: Henry and Holt, 2004), 402-457.

<sup>2</sup> Eric Pace, "Kingman Brewster J., 69, Ex-Yale President and U.S. Envoy, Dies," *The New York Times*, November 9, 1988, D29.

revolutionary could receive a “fair trial anywhere in the United States.”<sup>3</sup> A year later, in an interview, professor of classics Donald Kagan classified that speech as “classically Brewster.” Yale’s head of state simultaneously appealed to conservative and liberal wings of the faculty — the former with his vow to maintain academic functions in the midst of chaos, the latter with his condemnation of the American legal system.<sup>4</sup>

As Kagan suggested, occupying opposing ends of the ideological spectrum had become commonplace for Brewster throughout his tenure at Yale, which began in 1963. Born to a patrician New England family, Kingman Brewster had graduated from Yale College in 1941 and soon after joined the Navy at the onset of World War Two. When peace came, he earned his LL.B. and entered the world of academia as a Harvard law professor. Tapped as Yale’s provost in 1960, he became president three years later, just as Yale and the nation entered the turbulent waters of the 1960s — a cultural sea on which raged the storms of student unrest, civil rights, and Vietnam. In the coming decade, he would become a national figure, gracing the covers of

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<sup>3</sup> This account of Brewster’s speech relies on an oral history interview with Donald Kagan, conducted in 1971. Donald Kagan, interview by Brooke Manville, transcript, April 27, 1971, May Day Rally and Yale Collection (RU 86), Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, Accession 1983-A-108, Box 1, Folder 6. The full content of Brewster’s speech is a matter of historical debate. Most accounts, including those by Bass, Hersey and Kabaservice, only cite the portion of Brewster’s speech regarding the ability of a black man to receive a fair trial in the United States. These histories quote an edited statement released by the university to the press on April 24, which purported to be the entirety of Brewster’s speech to the faculty and was intended to clarify Brewster’s more controversial comments. However, that statement does not include Brewster’s commitment that the university remain open — a comment that has, until now, been overlooked. Hersey, for instance, prints the press release as if it were Brewster’s complete speech. Hersey, *Letter to the Alumni*, 87-8. For a copy of that press release, see: *Remarks of President Kingman Brewster at Yale College Faculty meeting, April 23, 1970*, May Day Rally and Yale Collection, Accession 1971-A-004, Box 2, Folder “Statements, Releases, etc. by Kingman Brewster.” A single copy of Brewster’s full speech survives today in his presidential archives. It differs slightly from Kagan’s account. In that version, Brewster ended, instead of began, his speech with a defense of the university remaining open. However, there is no indication that the archived document is the final draft of Brewster’s speech. See: *Statement by Kingman Brewster, Jr. at meeting of the Faculty of Yale College April 23, 1970*, Office of the President, Yale University, Records Concerning the May Day Rally (RU 16), Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, Accession 1983-A-108, Box 1, Folder 6. When interviewed, Brewster’s aide who helped write the speech, Henry “Sam” Chauncey, Jr., vaguely remembered Kagan’s version of events. Henry “Sam” Chauncey, Jr., interview by author, electronic recording, February 14, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Donald Kagan, interview by Brooke Manville, April 27, 1971. After extensive debate, the Yale College faculty did vote to “modify” normal academic expectations.

*Time* and *Newsweek*, serving on presidential commissions, and symbolizing the face of American academia.<sup>5</sup>

Yale's new president governed pragmatically, choosing to champion causes that served the political necessities of the moment.<sup>6</sup> A lifelong sailor, Brewster once compared academic administration to his maritime pastime.<sup>7</sup> In a way, as a president he resembled a captain who tacked to the right or to the left as needed in the face of heavy winds. According to one of his colleagues, Brewster "was not going to take any unbending positions, ideologically or philosophically... He managed Tuesday when Tuesday came, and he managed Wednesday when Wednesday came."<sup>8</sup>

Over the course of the 1960s, two issues in particular, the campaign to coeducate Yale and the university's response to student disruption, highlight Brewster's pragmatic approach to governance. Beginning in the mid-1960s, Yale began the process that would culminate with the admission of women in 1969. Mindful that some alumni opposed female students on campus and that he needed those alumni's support, Brewster approached a shift in gender policy with extreme reluctance. When others pressed for women in the classroom, he first advocated a partnership with Vassar, an all-women's college in upstate New York. When that plan failed, he proposed building a separate female-only institution in New Haven, rather than transform the all-boys-club that was Yale College. And when the possibility of coeducation became increasingly realistic, he developed a signature catch phrase to satisfy the more chauvinistic alumni:

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<sup>5</sup> On Brewster's life and prominence in American politics, see Geoffrey Kabaservice's *The Guardians*, the closest work that exists to a biography of Brewster.

<sup>6</sup> In seeing Brewster as a pragmatist, I am influenced by Kabaservice's *The Guardians*, and John Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 313.

<sup>7</sup> R. Thomas Herman, "The Inscrutable King of Yale," (draft article for *Harper's*, never published, August 9, 1968), Speeches and Articles by and about Presidents of Yale University (RU 65), Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, Accession 1988-A-056, Box 2, Folder 47.

<sup>8</sup> William Kessen, interview with Geoffrey Kabaservice, transcript, June 2, 1992, Griswold-Brewster History Project, Yale University (RU 217), Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, Box 6, Folder 82.

Regardless of the acceptance of women, Yale would always produce “one thousand male leaders a year.” Faced with pleasing those Yale graduates opposed to coeducation, Brewster tacked to the right, vowing to preserve a significant majority of men at Yale.

In contrast to his conservatism with regards to women in academia, Brewster often acquiesced to the confrontational tactics of the 1960s New Left. When the local black community threatened violence if Yale allowed Governor George Wallace, a controversial segregationist, to speak on its campus in 1963, Brewster pressured students to disinvite their guest. When undergraduates forcibly occupied administrative offices in 1969, officials acceded to their demands. These events —indicative of disruption on university and college campuses across America — threatened Yale’s safety. Brewster diffused the hazards of rebellion by pragmatically modifying commitments to civility, discipline and the values of free speech.

May Day 1970 represented the height of Brewster’s political realism, as his speech combined appeals to academic conservatism with progressive social justice to appease multiple factions within the Yale faculty. After May Day, the climactic storm of the 1960s slowly subsided; in the words of one Yale administrator, “the steam let out.”<sup>9</sup> The university and America found itself entering a decade of calmer waters. For Brewster, his pragmatism had led him to two simultaneous extremes on either end of the ideological spectrum. His earlier position against coeducation and his leniency towards student disruption, once politically expedient, had become embarrassing liabilities.

The peacefulness of the 1970s provided an opportunity for Brewster to moderate his stances on both issues, and, in doing so, reshape his university. Two carefully-designed Yale faculty committees became the vehicles for that change. Chaired by the eminent political scientist Robert Dahl, the first committee endorsed admitting an equal number of men and

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<sup>9</sup> Chauncey, interview by author, February 14, 2013.

women in 1972. In doing so, Dahl and his colleagues provided Brewster the opportunity to retreat from his vow of “one thousand male leaders a year.” The second committee, led by historian C. Vann Woodward in 1975, established a nationally renowned code of freedom of expression at Yale. Woodward’s report allowed Brewster to refurbish his commitments to student discipline and free speech, commitments often sacrificed to survive the 1960s.

In many ways, the story of pragmatism in the 1960s and moderation in the 1970s — Brewster’s story — is a lesson in the tactics of effective university governance, an under-examined historical topic. In that first decade, Yale’s president held together the many, often-warring factions within the university by deftly choosing stances that pleased the most quarrelsome groups in times of strife, typically the alumni and the students. And, in the subsequent quiet years, with the Dahl and Woodward committees, Brewster looked to his faculty to abrogate his promises to Old Blues and undergraduates.

But this story is more: It is the story of American universities, and the country more broadly, reaffirming its identity after the turmoil of the 1960s. Seen together, the controversies over coeducation and student disruption were one debate about the boundaries of the Yale community: who should be a part of the Yale community and how should that community’s members act? Far from parochial, what went on in New Haven was news around the nation; and the Woodward and Dahl committees were part of a larger conversation to determine the landscape of higher education. They reflected academia and American society reimagining itself, not in the peak of 1960s social tension, but in the aftermath of the 1970s.

This essay is divided thematically into two parts. The first examines the history of coeducation until 1972 and the proceedings of Robert Dahl’s committee. The second section tackles the legacy of student disruption at Yale and Woodward’s reaffirmation of discipline and

free speech in 1975. We should note that the past was not so neatly divided into concurrent timelines, but was instead an integrated milieu of events only divisible in retrospect into two separate narratives. Despite this drawback, a thematic approach simplifies the complex history of the twenty years spanning the 1960s and 1970s into a manageable format. However, for Kingman Brewster, his allies, and his enemies, the events did not sort into such distinct categories.

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In the fall of 1968, Yale's chapter of Students For a Democratic Society (SDS), a national New Left organization, met with Brewster to lobby for coeducation. In the course of the conversation, Kingman made a seemingly offhanded remark: Yale would continue to educate "one thousand male leaders" in every college class. SDS leader Mark Zanger recalled that "I had even then a suspicion that he was playing us, that he wanted us to disseminate that quote."<sup>10</sup> The intended audience was Yale's alumni. Brewster's colleague and fellow Yale administrator Henry "Sam" Chauncey, Jr. agreed: the catchphrase was "forty percent" reflective of Brewster's beliefs, but "sixty percent" an attempt to assuage traditionalist Yale graduates.<sup>11</sup>

The motto of "one thousand male leaders" came to embody Brewster's unwillingness to coeducate Yale, an unwillingness that extended both before and after that 1968 meeting with SDS leaders. But what led Kingman to so firmly oppose female undergraduates? And why did alumni opinion matter? It is to these questions that this essay turns. First, the essay draws upon existing scholarship to trace the history of coeducation at Yale from the beginning of Brewster's presidency in 1963 to the admission of women in 1968 to the formation of Robert Dahl's committee, which endorsed sex-blind admissions in 1972. Over those years, Kingman

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<sup>10</sup> Mark Zanger, interview with Geoffrey Kabaservice, transcript, April 7, 1992, Griswold-Brewster History Project, Box 12, Folder 155.

<sup>11</sup> Chauncey, interview by author, February 14, 2013.



maintained a standoffish and traditionalist position on coeducation, backing himself into an increasingly isolated corner to maintain a friendly relationship with Yale alumni opposed to women at Yale. In this section, the essay examines the role of alumni in the context of university governance generally and Yale specifically. Second, the essay scrutinizes the inner workings of the Dahl Committee to argue that Brewster intended the committee to endorse full coeducation, providing him a shield behind which to moderate his extreme and public stance against an equal number of men and women at Yale without alienating his alumni base.

In many ways, the campaign to coeducate Yale's undergraduate body began with Kingman Brewster's tenure as president.<sup>12</sup> According to the leading historian of admissions in the Ivy League, Jerome Karabel, the university's institutional identity was the most masculine of all campuses across America at the start of the 1960s, with the possible exception of the military academy at West Point.<sup>13</sup> In the words of one woman at the time, Yale was a "totally male environment. Women just didn't count. Women were sort of ornaments to the men."<sup>14</sup> Indeed, when Yale finally admitted women in 1969, the university's press release announcing the change characterized the undergraduate college as "a male bastion."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> A definitive history of admissions policies at Yale, Harvard, and Princeton in the twentieth century, Jerome Karabel's *The Chosen* remains the best account of coeducation at Yale and a source on which this paper relies heavily. Jerome Karabel, *The Chosen* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005). Geoffrey Kabaservice examines the campaign for coeducation in the context of university governance in his *The Guardians*. For another account of coeducation at Yale, though not as detailed as Karabel's, see: Joseph Soares, *The Power of Privilege: Yale and America's Elite Colleges* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007). For a very brief chronology of coeducation, see also: "Coeducation at Yale College: A Brief Chronology" in *Different Voices: A Journal of Coeducation at Yale* ed. Rachel Donadio (New Haven: Different Voices, 1995). And, for a comparative analysis of coeducation at Yale and Princeton, see: Marcia Synnott, "A Friendly Rivalry: Yale and Princeton Pursue Parallel Paths to Coeducation," in *Going Coed: Women's Experiences in Formerly Men's Colleges and Universities, 1950-2000*, ed. Leslie Miller-Bernal and Susan L. Poulson (Nashville: Vanderbilt Press, 2004): 111-150.

<sup>13</sup> Karabel, *The Chosen*, 412.

<sup>14</sup> Elga Wasserman, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, transcript, May 7, 1992, Griswold-Brewster History Project, Box 4, Folder 54.

<sup>15</sup> Yale University Press Release, April 13, 1969, Office on the Education of Women, Yale University, Records (RU 821). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, Box 1, Folder 4.

In 1962, tasked with crafting a strategic vision for the university, a Yale faculty committee established some form of coeducation as an abstract goal for the long-term future. Brewster, then the provost, responded to the report by proclaiming that any future plan for coeducation would operate on a “coordinate” basis — Yale would either partner with another female institution, such as the all women’s Vassar College, or build its own parallel school for women in New Haven. The university would not sacrifice its male identity. This project, he warned, would be costly: If it wanted to coeducate, Yale would “be in the market for windfall money,” needing to raise fifty million dollars to build the second sex a home inside the university’s ivy walls.<sup>16</sup> From the outset, the issues of women at Yale and finances were intrinsically linked, and Brewster ruled out admitting female students because of the perceived cost.

At the time, Brewster’s position on coeducation conformed to that of the student body and Yale’s alumni as a whole. Close to three quarters of undergraduates opposed the admission of women.<sup>17</sup> A female presence on campus challenged the university’s masculine ethos. Many worried that women would eat at Mory’s, the all-male members-only restaurant that served as a faculty club. Worst of all, how could students concentrate with the ever-present “distraction” of the feminine form?<sup>18</sup>

Almost two years later, opinion began to shift. In October of 1963, students protested outside of Woodbridge Hall, Yale’s main administrative building, urging the inclusion of the fairer sex.<sup>19</sup> Had he been on campus that afternoon, Kingman Brewster would have occupied the

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<sup>16</sup> Jethro Lieberman and Alexander Sharp, “Women and Man at Yale,” *Yale Daily News*, May 9, 1962, 1. On the report, see also: Brooks Kelley, *Yale: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 450-5.

<sup>17</sup> Karabel, *The Chosen* 414. Kelly argues that the report’s suggestion for coeducation shocked the alumni. Kelly, *Yale: A History*, 455.

<sup>18</sup> Jethro Lieberman and Alexander Sharp, “The Radical Change,” *Yale Daily News*, May 11, 1962, 1.

<sup>19</sup> Karabel, *The Chosen*, 415.

building's corner office — after his predecessor's death from cancer in April, provost Brewster had become acting president of the university.

The pressure for coeducation would mount throughout the next six years, culminating in the admission of women at Yale in 1969. During that process, Brewster's opposition to women at Yale, which he continued to attribute to the financial cost of building a coordinate college, remained constant. The local and national culture, though, increasingly rejected the idea of all-male institutions. As a result, Brewster found himself occupying an originally moderate position that had grown increasingly conservative.

The drive for coeducation mirrored a larger campaign for inclusion, both in New Haven and around the country. At Yale, the 1960s saw a conscious effort to diversify the student body to include blacks, Jews, and public schools students, constituencies previously unwelcome in the university.<sup>20</sup> Nationally, the civil rights movement generated a moral impetus for the acceptance of African-Americans and other marginalized groups in higher education.<sup>21</sup> In many ways, Yale's quest to admit women reflected the nation's changing landscape in the 1960s, as America struggled to integrate minorities in general and especially into those institutions that provided pathways to positions of leadership.

In 1966, Kingman formally called for the formation of the coordinate college system with Vassar. One impetus for this new plan was that the children of Yale alumni were choosing schools like Harvard, with its sister school Radcliffe, over their fathers' unisex alma mater.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, Brewster feared displeasing conservative alumni.<sup>23</sup> Coeducation with Vassar

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 320-409.

<sup>21</sup> Christopher Loss, *Between Citizen's and the State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 166-197.

<sup>22</sup> Soares, *The Power of Privilege*, 103-5; Kavaservice, *The Guardians*, 296; Karabel, *The Chosen*, 416.

<sup>23</sup> Kavaservice, *The Guardians* 297.

provided the perfect pragmatic solution. It both satisfied students' desire for female compatriots and mollified those who wanted Yale to continue educating only men.<sup>24</sup>

Reflecting Brewster's compromise position, the Yale Corporation adopted a resolution in 1966 calling for coeducation via the coordinate system. The resolution also insisted that Yale "not reduce the number of male freshmen."<sup>25</sup> However, Vassar rebuffed Yale's offer of coordination a year later, choosing instead to admit men into its all-female student body.<sup>26</sup> This unexpected rejection left Brewster flatfooted. Shortly afterward, in early 1968, Princeton announced that it would accept women, and vocal support for admitting women continued to grow among Yale students.

Nevertheless, Brewster maintained his stated position: Yale should establish a separate women's college, either through a coordinate system or by building such a college in New Haven. He estimated the cost of either project at a prohibitive thirty to fifty-five million dollars, roughly the same figures he had quoted in 1962.<sup>27</sup> After his meeting with SDS leaders, Brewster insisted that Yale educate "a thousand male leaders" in every graduating class, a comment designed to placate traditionalist alumni. The number of male students would not decrease. Given that the admission of female students required either a large infusion of cash or the reduction in Brewster's one thousand male leaders, Kingman effectively ruled coeducation out. But, in a "rare display of reformist initiative," the Yale Corporation disagreed with its own president's public declarations.<sup>28</sup> Its members instructed him to admit five hundred women in the fall of 1969.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Soares, *The Power of Privilege*, 107.

<sup>25</sup> Synnott, "A Friendly Rivalry," 113; Karabel, *The Chosen*, 417.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid; Karabel, *The Chosen*, 418.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Soares, *The Power of Privilege*, 107.

<sup>29</sup> Synnott, "A Friendly Rivalry," 117. It is possible that the Yale Corporation was actually more reluctant than Brewster to endorse coeducation, and that Brewster wanted the Corporation to overturn his public stance for

Why did Kingman Brewster want to please those alumni who opposed coeducation? What tangible benefit did they provide Yale's president? In order to answer these two questions, we need to examine the nature of university governance more broadly, both at Yale and other American institutions of higher learning.<sup>30</sup>

Reflecting on academia during the 1960s, Clark Kerr once compared the modern university to monarchical France, where the king balanced the interests of a variety of different "estates." So too, for Kerr, the university president managed a comparable series of academic estates, juggling the wishes of faculty, students, and alumni, as well as state governments and corporations.<sup>31</sup> To govern effectively, the ideal president cajoled, conceded and mediated a series of compromises that pleased each of these constituencies.<sup>32</sup> And each estate possessed different types of power within the university: The faculty affected decisions within their departments. Students could protest or disrupt university functions. Governments could expand or contract the budgets of public institutions to exert pressure. For Kerr, a school's alumni represented a "minor estate" whose ability to influence its alma mater was often weak in many universities.<sup>33</sup>

A close friend of Kingman Brewster, Clark Kerr was well positioned to discuss higher education governance in the 1960s, having served first as chancellor of UC-Berkeley and then

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political reasons. According to one observer, in the meeting in which the Corporation affirmed its plans to admit women, Brewster authored the initial resolution. Prominent corporation members then revised Brewster's draft to remove sections implying the university would eventually educate an equal number of men and women. See: John Embersits, interview with Geoffrey Kabaservice, transcript, June 15, 1992, Griswold-Brewster History Project, Box 4, Folder 54.

<sup>30</sup> Scholarship on the history of university governance is deceptively broad but actually shallow. For the most part, the field remains the purview of social scientists, who tend to examine the topic from a highly technical vantage point. There are some exceptions to this rule. First published in 1960, Frederick Rudolph's *The American College and University* examines the origins of modern university governance in America in his larger survey of higher education history. It remains one of the best texts in the field. Frederick Rudolph, *The American College and University* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1960). For a more modern take on the same topic, see: Arthur Cohen, *The Shaping of American Higher Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998).

<sup>31</sup> Clark Kerr, *The Great Transformation in Higher Education, 1960-1980* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 200.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 201.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

later as the president of the University of California system, just as those institutions began experiencing intense student unrest.<sup>34</sup> Heralded by *Time* as the “master planner” of American education, Kerr occupied a national stage, much like Brewster did from his prominent perch in New Haven.<sup>35</sup>

At Yale, the alumni estate possessed considerably more sway than the graduates of the typical university that Kerr depicted. But the Yale alumni’s power was not the power of the purse, a mistaken conclusion drawn by some commentators.<sup>36</sup> Brewster did not oppose coeducation because he feared conservative donors would flee the university. The majority of Yale’s donations stemmed from the generosity of a few wealthy alumni, such as philanthropists Paul Mellon and John Hay Whitney, both of whom graduated from Yale College in the 1920s. Liberal on social issues such as coeducation, these men’s contributions far outweighed those of the average alumni.<sup>37</sup> What is more, internal studies at Yale during the early 1970s found that those alumni who threatened to withhold money from the university had not been active donors in the past.<sup>38</sup> Yale never stood to lose serious money if it adopted coeducation.

Instead, the alumni possessed a kind of “parliamentary” power, according to Brewster’s aide and confidant Sam Chauncey. Like Clark Kerr, Kingman often remarked that he reigned over three “constituencies” — the faculty, the students, and the university’s graduates — and he could not “lose a majority of all of them.”<sup>39</sup> While the Yale Corporation technically appointed

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<sup>34</sup> Chauncey, interview by author, February 14, 2013.

<sup>35</sup> “Master Planner,” *Time*, October 17, 1960.

<sup>36</sup> For an example of a modern commentator who saw alumni donations as a source of alumni authority, see Soares, *The Power of Privilege*, 107.

<sup>37</sup> On Whitney’s relationship to Yale, see: E. J. Kahn, Jr., *Jock: The Life and Times of John Hay Whitney* (New York: Doubleday, 1981), 297-319; on Paul Mellon, see: Paul Mellon, *Reflections in a Silver Spoon* (New York: Morrow, 1992).

<sup>38</sup> J. Richardson Dilworth, Memo to Endicott Davison, December 6, 1972, Vice-President for Development and Alumni Affairs, Yale University, Records (RU 537). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, Accession 1979-A-053, Box 1, Folder 1.

<sup>39</sup> Chauncey, interview by author, February 14, 2013.

and removed presidents from office, a public loss of confidence in any of these estates would have tipped the Corporation's hand and forced it to dethrone Kingman.

Coeducation was by no means the only issue that rankled conservative Yalies in the 1960s. The admission of minorities and fewer alumni children left many Old Blues feeling sour.<sup>40</sup> Nor were the alumni the only estate in danger of revolting. As this essay discusses in greater detail in the second section, Brewster simultaneously faced student protest. In this environment of heightened discord, maintaining a stance against women at Yale mollified some alumni by preserving the masculine nature of Yale College. In part, Brewster's personal views played into his pragmatic decision: Unlike African Americans or Jews, minorities he realized faced discrimination and who could contribute to society if given the opportunity, Brewster possessed traditional opinions about the opposite sex.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, as Chauncey suggested, Brewster's commitment to an all-male Yale largely stemmed from his desire to please traditionalists, an important segment of the alumni estate.

"Yale Officially Begins Era of Coeducation" blared the *Yale Daily News*, on September 3, 1969, as the first "coeds" stepped foot on campus.<sup>42</sup> While women found seats in the classroom, their male counterparts still outnumbered them by overwhelming margins. Pressure quickly mounted to equalize the gender balance; Brewster instead doubled down on his pledge to educate one thousand men a year, a promise that excluded gender equality on campus. The tension came to a head in the spring of 1970, when hundreds of alumni gathered for a luncheon in New Haven. In a protest covered by national news outlets, forty students stormed the room, took the microphone, and demanded that the university admit more women, explicitly decrying

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<sup>40</sup> On alumni resistance to new admissions policies, see Karabel, *The Chosen*, 351-377.

<sup>41</sup> Kabaservice, *The Guardians*, 294.

<sup>42</sup> Paul Taylor, "Yale Officially Begins Era of Coeducation," *Yale Daily News*, September 3, 1969, 1.

Kingman's catchphrase.<sup>43</sup> After the disruption, the president reclaimed the podium and offered a frank rejoinder that found its way into the next day's press. In his words: The alumni deserved "accountability." "One thousand male leaders" would remain the norm, for the sake of alumni "nostalgia." Only by building two new residential buildings and expanding the entire student body could Yale possibly accommodate more women — an unlikely scenario given fiscal constraints. The assembled alumni applauded Brewster enthusiastically.<sup>44</sup> According to Chauncey, Kingman thought the Old Blues would "skewer him if he [had] retreated from the principle of training a thousand men."<sup>45</sup>

Thus, to preserve a "parliamentary" majority of the alumni, Brewster maintained his commitment to a male-dominated college. But by 1971, he found himself at the extreme fringe of the ideological spectrum, committed to protecting "nostalgia." He faced a quandary: Should the university maintain the status quo? Or should the student body increase in size, to accommodate more women? Or, more drastic yet, should Yale abandon the pledge to the alumni and decrease the number of men? Brewster opted for the third choice. Ever skillful at balancing the various estates over which he governed, he formed a carefully designed faculty committee whose mission was to re-imagine every aspect of Yale College. That group, Brewster knew, would endorse sex-blind admissions as part of its proceedings, providing him a graceful opportunity in which to relinquish his vision of "one thousand male leaders." It is to that committee and its inner workings that we now turn.

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<sup>43</sup> This was not, by any means, the only time that protestors attacked Brewster's pledge to educated one thousand men. A few days after the alumni luncheon, leaflets distributed at a rally for coeducation decried Brewster's "assumption...that Yale has a national commitment to produce 1000 leaders a year, and that only men can lead." *Unofficial Proposals for Equality*, May Day Rally and Yale Collection, Box 4, Folder titled "Women and co-education." On national press at the luncheon protest, see for instance: Thomas Linden, "Yale Coeds Pushing for More Change" *Los Angeles Times*, March 1, 1970, E1; "Yale Coeds Invade Alumni Fete To Protest Male Predominance," *The New York Times*, February 22, 1970, 1.

<sup>44</sup> Richard Fuchs, "Girls Demand Fewer Men, More Women," *Yale Daily News*, February 23, 1969, 1.

<sup>45</sup> Henry "Sam" Chauncey, Jr., interview by author, transcription, December 6, 2011.



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In October of 1971, the Study Group on Yale College met for the first time. Three of the five people in the room were among Yale's most accomplished professors. In the chairman's seat sat Robert Dahl, an eminent political scientist whose groundbreaking study of New Haven politics, *Who Governs?*, was the urtext on urban democracy.<sup>46</sup> One member, William Kessen, had pioneered the field of child developmental psychology.<sup>47</sup> Another, physicist and incoming dean of Yale College Horace Taft, had been lauded that August by the *New York Times* as a rare "humanistic scientist," who enjoyed playing Bach when not in the laboratory.<sup>48</sup> Not as nationally renowned but certainly a public face at Yale, Brewster's special assistant on matters of coeducation Elga Wasserman occupied the fourth place at the table. The final member of the Study Group, the much younger Jonathan Spence, remembered being "startled" to find himself alongside "the most respected and admired faculty" in the university.<sup>49</sup>

Appointed by Brewster, the five-person committee enjoyed an extremely broad mandate: Examine what "the task of undergraduate education at Yale ought to be for the next couple of decades."<sup>50</sup> No stone was to be unturned. Dahl and his colleagues were to concern themselves with finances, coeducation, the residential colleges, and every other aspect of undergraduate life.<sup>51</sup> For the next year, the group — colloquially known as the Dahl Committee — systematically researched for "unbelievable hours."<sup>52</sup> The members surveyed faculty, students,

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<sup>46</sup> On the impact of *Who Governs*, see one of Dahl's critics who documented the scholarly attention the book caused: Peter Morriss, "Power in New Haven: A Reassessment of 'Who Governs?,'" *British Journal of Political Science* vol. 2, no. 4 (October, 1972): 457-465.

<sup>47</sup> On Kessen's influence in his field, see: Marc Bornstein, Frank Kessel, and Arnold Sameroff eds., *Contemporary Constructions of the Child: Essays in Honor of William Kessen* (Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1991).

<sup>48</sup> "New Yale College Dean: Horace Dwight Taft," *New York Times*, February 6, 1971, A26.

<sup>49</sup> Jonathan Spence, interview by author, electronic recording, February 25, 2013.

<sup>50</sup> Kingman Brewster, letter to Robert Dahl, April 22, 1971, Office of the President, Yale University, Annual and Special Reports (RU 12). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, Box 30, Folder 2.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> Kessen, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, June 2, 1992.

and alumni to gather a wide swath of opinions; they examined the recommendations of past and current Yale committees; and they studied peer institutions in the hope of learning from other schools' best practices.

Finally, in 1972, this working group published a one hundred and seventeen page report calling for sweeping changes to Yale. Among Dahl's recommendations: A longer academic calendar, a three-year baccalaureate degree program, and a plan for faculty mentorship of students. The committee also endorsed complete coeducation, writing that undergraduate admissions should be "granted on the basis of qualifications without regard to sex."<sup>53</sup> After heated debate, the faculty rejected the more innovative academic suggestions. In contrast, the Yale Corporation adopted sex-neutral admissions.

Brewster tasked Dahl with the monumental mission of compiling a holistic vision for Yale College; determining the status of women on campus was a substantial, though by no means defining, aspect of that project. Two larger factors, student disaffection with the academic environment in the 1960s and the declining economy of the early 1970s, had led to the committee's sweeping assignment. Brewster meant the Dahl Committee to reinvent Yale for the modern age — to forge a new, financially secure institution that appealed to the most talented undergraduates. Because coeducation intersected both the fiscal and academic aspects of the university, the Study Group addressed that particular issue in this moment of institutional redefinition.

Nationally, the early 1960s saw students rebel against the traditional liberal arts education. At colleges across the country, undergraduates demanded a more relevant curriculum, calling for both novel ways of teaching that eschewed the impersonal lecture hall and new

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<sup>53</sup> *The Report of the Study Group on Yale College 1972*, (New Haven: Yale University, 1972), 49.

content that spoke to the immediate problems of American society.<sup>54</sup> Toward the end of the decade, universities established African American studies program and began forming women's studies departments, reflecting the desires of a more diverse student body that protested vigorously for change.<sup>55</sup>

Partially in response to the demand for different curricula, institutions of higher learning entered a period of self-reflection, best epitomized by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education. Led by Clark Kerr and funded by the Carnegie Foundation from 1967 until 1973, the Commission was seen as "the most extensive examination of America's universities and colleges to date," publishing over fifty books on topics ranging from university governance to curriculum.<sup>56</sup> The Study Group on Yale College mirrored this national trend in academic soul searching. When he formed the committee, Brewster publicly told the Dahl Committee its task was to re-think "the objectives and functions of college education," leading to "a comprehensive reappraisal."<sup>57</sup> Thus, in 1971, Yale and other schools found themselves in a moment of what appeared to be immense academic transition.

In addition, an increasingly depressed American economy threatened many universities' financial stability, as reductions in federal funding and falling endowment returns stripped

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<sup>54</sup> On this trend broadly, see: Terry Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 94-99; Thelin, *A History of Higher Education*, 306-316.

<sup>55</sup> Most scholars cite 1969 as the pivotal year in the creation of women's studies. See: Elaine Hedges, "Looking Back, Moving Forward," *Woman's Studies Quarterly* vol 25, no's 1&2 (Spring/Summer, 1997): 6-22. See also: Mikaila Lemonik Arthur, *Student Activism and Curricular Change in Higher Education* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2011) 22-4; Loss, *Between Citizen's and the State*, 166-197. For a comprehensive history of African American studies departments, see: Noliwe Rooks, *White Money Black Power* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006). See also, David Colburn and George Pozzetta, "Race Ethnicity and the Evolution of Political Legitimacy," in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 126-7.

<sup>56</sup> Gene Maeroff, "Carnegie Education Study Bids Universities Be Bold," *The New York Times*, October 10, 1973. On the significance of the Carnegie Commission, see: John Douglass, "The Carnegie Commission and Council on Higher Education: A Retrospective," *Center for Studies in Higher Education Research and Occasional Paper Series* (November, 2005). <http://cshe.berkeley.edu/publications/docs/ROP.Douglass.Carnegie.14.05.pdf>. Cohen, *The Shaping of American Higher Education*, 237-8.

<sup>57</sup> *The Report of the Study Group*, 5-6.

budgets.<sup>58</sup> At Yale, Brewster projected a four to five million dollar operating deficit for the 1971-2 academic year.<sup>59</sup> The university cut library hours and other essential services to try to fill the gap, but, despite these efforts, structural reform seemed necessary to stem the difference between revenue and expenses.<sup>60</sup> Consequently, Brewster ordered the Study Group to “especially” concentrate on the “financial feasibility” of its vision for Yale College.<sup>61</sup>

The issue of coeducation touched on both the academic and financial purviews of Robert Dahl’s mandate. Whom Yale admitted reflected who most deserved education — a contested question central to the “objective” of Yale College that Dahl was supposed to define. Moreover, since the inception of the coordinate plan for coeducation in 1962, Brewster had consistently quoted the cost of increasing the student body at approximately fifty million dollars. Admitting additional women, without reducing the number of men, would have required cash the university did not have. Even a promised “windfall” gift from the wealthy Corporation member and alum John Hay Whitney to build two new residential colleges would not have solved Brewster’s fiscal dilemma. If the university expanded its physical plant to accommodate more women, fixed costs for related expenses would have also increased.<sup>62</sup>

The Dahl Committee resolved this dilemma by calling for sex-blind admissions and an equal number of men and women on campus. Most scholars depict this recommendation as a blow to Kingman Brewster and his pledge to educate one thousand male leaders. That standard narrative, though, is incorrect.<sup>63</sup> A savvy university politician, Brewster likely wanted the

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<sup>58</sup> Cohen, *The Shaping of American Higher Education*, 259-273.

<sup>59</sup> Kingman Brewster, Statement to the Yale Faculty, April 13, 1972, Office of the President, Yale University, Annual and Special Reports, Box 30, Folder 1.

<sup>60</sup> Charles Cole, “Budget Crisis Forces Shorter Library Hours,” *Yale Daily News* September 17, 1971.

<sup>61</sup> *The Report of the Study Group*, 5

<sup>62</sup> Elga Wasserman, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, May 7, 1992.

<sup>63</sup> The literature surrounding the Dahl Committee and coeducation is admittedly limited. However, the secondary sources that do address the topic generally paint Brewster as disappointed with the results of the Study Group on Yale College. Most explicit is Jerome Karabel, who writes: “Whatever hopes Brewster may have harbored that

committee to overturn his previous opposition to women at Yale. He included his assistant on matters of coeducation, Elga Wasserman, on the Dahl Committee knowing that she would push the Study Group to endorse complete coeducation. Moreover, Wasserman's records and the committee's minutes suggest that she and her colleagues intentionally authored their report with Brewster's political machinations in mind. And, after its publication, Brewster touted Dahl's report in such a way as to convince Yale's alumni of the importance of coeducation. The Study Group championed the positions he could not advance without contradicting himself and thus provided Yale's president the cover he wanted and needed to retreat from his earlier positions regarding coeducation.

The composition of the Study Group was no accident. Brewster picked loyal senior faculty whom he trusted and who would engender the trust of students and alumni. Robert Dahl and William Kessen topped the list of people whose counsel Yale's president consistently sought.<sup>64</sup> Brewster particularly relied upon Dahl to handle delicate situations, previously tapping the author of *Who Governs?* to write a landmark report on tenure in 1966 and to pioneer the African American Studies department. Dahl initially abhorred these assignments, having once threatened to leave Yale unless Brewster wrote him a letter freeing him of these "administrative

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expansion would permit him to keep the same number of men were dashed by the Dahl Committee." Karabel further implies that Yale's president received the opposite of what he wanted from the report — a mandate to admit women without the means to keep his promises to the alumni. However, only if one takes Brewster's statements at face value is this a plausible analysis. See: Karabel, *The Chosen*, 425. Other commentators portray a similar picture, though not as explicitly as Karabel. For instance, in a Yale student journal commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of coeducation, a timeline juxtaposes the Dahl Committee's report with Kingman's vocal support of a quota system. The contrast carries an implicit message: The Study Group wanted full coeducation, but Brewster disagreed with the report's aims and really wanted "a thousand male leaders" at Yale. "Coeducation at Yale College: A Brief Chronology" in *Different Voices*. In a thoroughly researched article, Marcia Synnott echoes the student journal's timeline. She too notes Brewster's comments in apparent opposition to the Dahl Report's conclusions. Synnott, "A Friendly Rivalry," 123.

<sup>64</sup> "There were faculty members whose advice he would seek: people like Bob Dahl, Bill Kessen, a couple of people in the Law School, John Blum." John A Wilkinson, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, May 19, 1992, Griswold-Brewster History Project, Box 12 Folder 151.

responsibilities.” That assurance became something of a joke between the two men, as president Brewster repeatedly approached Dahl with various requests.<sup>65</sup>

Moreover, Dahl “was seen as one of the great mediators” of the university; he was fair, honest, and open-minded.<sup>66</sup> In April of 1969, four thousand Yale students and faculty gathered in Ingalls Hockey rink to debate the status of ROTC on campus. The meeting threatened to turn raucous when the students shouted down provost Charles Taylor, the moderator, who planned to accept only pre-selected speeches. Dahl was chosen by consensus to replace Taylor, a result that placated the unruly faculty and students. The meeting proceeded without a hitch, with orderly speeches from the floor.<sup>67</sup> Dahl’s reputation would lend the Study Group’s recommendations — including and exceeding complete coeducation — substantial credibility.

But did Brewster intend the Dahl Committee to endorse sex-blind admissions? It certainly seems so. By appointing Elga Wasserman to the committee, he knew that she would support an increased female population at Yale. In 1968, Brewster hired Wasserman, then an administrator and scientist in the Graduate School, to manage Yale College’s transition to a coeducated environment. The two developed a close relationship, as they together tackled the many dilemmas of integrating coeds into an all-male environment.<sup>68</sup>

While Wasserman faithfully executed Brewster’s directives as his assistant, she also played the part of the loyal opposition, consistently advocating for more female undergraduates. In the first year of coeducation, women often complained to her that they “just didn’t like the

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<sup>65</sup> Robert Dahl, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, May 19, 1992, Griswold-Brewster History Project, Box 4 Folder 45.

<sup>66</sup> Chauncey, interview by author, December 6, 2011.

<sup>67</sup> Kabaservice, *The Guardians*, 383-4.

<sup>68</sup> Housing the new female undergraduates proved one of trickier tasks Wasserman and Brewster faced. In a vignette that deserves its own footnote, the two together with Sam Chauncey toured Vanderbilt Hall to judge it fit for female habitation in 1968. They knocked on a door to see inside a typical room, only to find the male occupant “shacked up” with a girl inside. Ever wry, Brewster simply said, “Well, I guess this will do.” Wasserman, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, May 7, 1992.

[gender] ratio.” In particular, it was difficult to find “suitable roommates” with so few female peers on campus.<sup>69</sup> Elga took up their cause. Her initial report on the progress of coeducation advocated doubling the number of women at Yale.<sup>70</sup> She also abhorred Brewster’s commitment to one thousand male leaders. Dining at a Radcliffe alumnae luncheon in New York when the president first coined his catchphrase, Wasserman remembered that the comment “didn’t sit very well” with her.<sup>71</sup> As she pressured the president to fully embrace coeducation, she forced Kingman to remind her in writing of his “unambiguous statement” to “not reduce the admissions of men to Yale College.”<sup>72</sup> Nevertheless, in her position as the chief women’s advocate at Yale, Wasserman remained devoted to complete equality of the sexes on campus.

When he appointed the Dahl Committee in 1971, Brewster publicly told the Study Group that “no one of you is ‘representative’ of your rank, or field, or other ‘constituency.’ Indeed, you collectively have no constituency.”<sup>73</sup> In part, his comment preempted the inevitable criticism that the body lacked even the semblance of diversity. Four of the committee members were white men, three of whom were senior faculty; the most junior, Jonathan Spence, was English by birth, speaking with a lilted accent more patrician than plebian. At a time when African Americans asked for increased representation in university governance, the lack of a minority member on the panel was a sure source of contention. Had he only included Dahl and the other men on the panel, the president’s statement may have smoothed some of that friction.

However, Brewster’s assurance that no member of the panel was a “representative” of a “constituency” clashed with Wasserman’s place on the Study Group — her prime qualification

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Elga Wasserman, “Coeducation 1969-70: A progress report by Elga Wasserman,” December 14, 1970, Office on the Education of Women, Box 1, Folder 4.

<sup>71</sup> Wasserman, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, May 7, 1992.

<sup>72</sup> Kingman Brewster, letter to Elga Wasserman, December 14, 1970, Office on the Education of Women, Box 1, Folder 13.

<sup>73</sup> *Report of the Study Group*, 5.

was being the female assistant to the president for coeducation. In retrospect, Chauncey noted that Brewster “had to put Elga on, both because of her background and because [he had no other viable women].”<sup>74</sup> Brewster’s claim that Wasserman was anything but Yale’s female advocate was pure *ipse dixit*.

Yale’s black community quickly highlighted Brewster’s inattention to minorities on the Dahl Committee. Director of African American Studies Roy S. Bryce-Laporte wrote to the president that he was shocked by the “invisibility of Blacks ... whether as members of the Committee or as a crucial component for consideration.” For Bryce-Laporte, this perceived slight was especially galling, given that Brewster had directed the Study Group to focus on the plight of female students and had appointed his “Director of Coeducation” to Dahl’s committee.<sup>75</sup> Brewster uncharacteristically exposed himself to criticism in the arena of racial politics by explicitly focusing on the needs of women over other minorities. That he did so spoke to importance of the Study Group as a vehicle for resolving the issue of Yale’s gender ratio.

After having been assigned to Dahl’s team, Wasserman all but informed Brewster that she would use the committee to achieve an increased female presence on campus. In an August 1971 progress report on coeducation sent to the president, she noted that, if the Study Group “makes specific recommendations concerning the long range course of coeducation at Yale, it could have a major effect on the future course of the education of women at Yale and elsewhere.”<sup>76</sup> The report also expressed hope that the Dahl Committee could achieve “a better

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<sup>74</sup> Chauncey, interview by author, December 6, 2011.

<sup>75</sup> Roy S. Bryce-Laporte, letter to Kingman Brewster, circa. May, 1971, Office of the President, Yale University, Annual and Special Reports, Box 30, Folder 2.

<sup>76</sup> Elga Wasserman, *Coeducation 1970-1: A Progress Report, August 1971*, 1, Office of the President, Yale University, Annual and Special Reports. Box 22, Folder 409.



balance of men and women in Yale College.”<sup>77</sup> Wasserman’s vision for the Dahl Committee was no secret.

In fact, there is evidence that Wasserman and other faculty who desired complete coeducation pressured Brewster to make her part of the Study Group. The University Committee on Coeducation, a group that Wasserman chaired, met in February of 1972, only two months before the Dahl Committee released its final report that April. With Wasserman absent, the committee debated writing a letter urging Brewster to adopt sex-blind admissions. According to the minutes, one member noted that, “our Committee played a major part in the appointment of the Dahl Committee.” Why not wait for Elga and that body to make the decision for Kingman?<sup>78</sup> And she did just that, authoring the Dahl Report’s section on coeducation that January.<sup>79</sup>

Did Brewster and Wasserman privately conspire for the latter to endorse gender-neutral admissions at the former’s behest? Did Kingman discuss the matter with Dahl, his loyal faculty agent? We cannot know for sure. Jonathan Spence remembered receiving no firm directives, implied or explicit, from the president — as junior faculty, though, he may not have been privy to Brewster’s political maneuvering.<sup>80</sup> What is safe to infer: In appointing Wasserman to the Study Group, Brewster knew the committee would recommend an increase in female students, undermining the president’s pledge to a male-dominated university.

On the optimal size of Yale College, a matter closely related to coeducation, the Dahl Committee did consider the president’s wishes. The story plays out in the Study Group’s minutes. On October 14, 1971, Dahl retold to the committee a conversation between himself and

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>78</sup> University Committee on Coeducation Minutes, February 1, 1972, Office on the Education of Women, Accession 19ND-A-086, Box 21, Folder 821.

<sup>79</sup> Minutes of the Meeting of the Study Group, January 20, 1972, Office of the President, Yale University, Annual and Special Reports, Box 30, Folder 2.

<sup>80</sup> Spence, interview by author, February 25, 2013.

George Langdon, a deputy provost. According to Langdon, the provost and treasurer desired a larger student body to raise revenue. Brewster, though, disagreed, and wanted to preserve the existing size of Yale College. The president, Langdon implied, “might be better able to resist pressure for an increase if the Study Group comes down hard against an increase.”<sup>81</sup> The following day, the committee met again, and Dahl mused that the group should adopt a firm stance against an “increase [in] size.”<sup>82</sup> While other factors likely also influenced Dahl’s ultimate decision, this evidence suggests that the committee understood that it served Brewster’s interests.

Regardless of whether its members were conscious coconspirators, Kingman used the Study Group as a shield behind which he could endorse full coeducation. In February, the president announced that any adjustment in the ratio of women would await the recommendation of the Dahl Committee. In his words, to unilaterally reduce the number of men would violate his “commitment” to the alumni. If, on the other hand, he admitted more female undergraduates as part of an “overall reassessment of the future of Yale College,” Brewster would preserve the alumni’s “confidence.”<sup>83</sup> The president thus strived to incorporate coeducation into a larger narrative of academic change. A moment of institutional self-reflection became a modern-day Sabbatical year in which Kingman could break his past promises of “one thousand male leaders.”

In April, Dahl’s committee published *The Report of The Study Group on Yale College*, and Yale aggressively marketed its various recommendations, including full coeducation. The university printed ten thousand copies; every alumnus who donated more than five thousand

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<sup>81</sup> Minutes of the Study Group on Yale College, October 14, 1971, Study Group on Yale College (Dahl Committee) Records (RU 431). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, Box 2, Folder 7.

<sup>82</sup> Minutes of the Study Group on Yale College, October 15-7, 1971, Ibid., Box 2, Folder 7.

<sup>83</sup> “Brewster Vows Reassessment of Sex Ratio Next Fall,” *Yale Daily News*, February 14, 1972, 1.

dollars received one in the mail.<sup>84</sup> For the less generous, the *Yale Alumni Magazine* printed an abridged version of the report in a special issue that devoted substantial attention to the proposal for sex-blind admissions.<sup>85</sup> University officials personally lobbied reporters from leading outlets, such as *Time* and *Newsweek*, to write about the Dahl Committee.<sup>86</sup> And their efforts met with success. A few newspapers, including the *New York Times*, reported on the Study Group's report, analyzing the proposal for a three-year undergraduate degree and summer classes side-by-side the call for more women on campus.<sup>87</sup> Through this varied public relations campaign, Brewster successfully situated coeducation within the broader context of the holistic reexamination of both Yale College and the purposes of higher education.

Ironically, that holistic vision for Yale failed to materialize in almost every aspect—except for the admission of more women. At a meeting that May, the vast majority of professors rejected the Study Group's proposals, condemning year-round teaching as burdensome.<sup>88</sup> Dahl's report quickly became something of a joke in the Yale community. When a group of senior faculty met to play charades a few months later, one person mimed the Dahl Committee by yawning.<sup>89</sup> By contrast, coeducation's advocates touted Dahl. In October of 1972, six months after the Study Group had disbanded, the Committee on Coeducation publicly exhorted Brewster

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<sup>84</sup> Deane C. Laycock, memo to Kingman Brewster, March 17, 1972, Office of the President, Yale University, Annual and Special Reports, Box 30, Folder 1.

<sup>85</sup> Deane C. Laycock, memo to Jonathan Fanton, March 10, 1972, Ibid. The special issue devoted over twenty percent of its nineteen pages to Dahl's recommendations on female admissions, despite those recommendations only consisting of a fraction of the published report's total length. Proof of the Abridged Dahl Report in the *Yale Alumni Magazine*, April 7, 1972, Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Steve Kezerian, Letter to Jonathan Fanton, April 7, 1972, Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> M. A. Farber, "Yale Faculty Unit Asks Wide Reforms," *New York Times*, Apr 9, 1972, 67; "Yale Study Urges Degree In 3 Years, More Women," *Hartford Courant*, Apr 8, 1972, 10; William Henry, "Yale panel asks 3-year BA, abolition of majors, no sex quota," *Boston Globe*, Apr 9, 1972, 54.

<sup>88</sup> John Curley, "Faculty Meeting Discusses Dahl Committee Proposals," *Yale Daily News*, May 5, 1972, 1.

<sup>89</sup> Jonathan Fanton, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, July 18, 1992, Griswold-Brewster History Project, Box 12, Folder 155.

to adopt the report's policies on admissions.<sup>90</sup> In November, the president delayed any final decision on the number of female undergraduates until the Alumni Association could survey its members. Then, in December, the Yale Corporation formally eliminated quotas for women while simultaneously maintaining the size of the student body — though they also paradoxically established an “optimal” composition of Yale College as sixty percent male.<sup>91</sup> At that moment, Kingman's commitment to one thousand leaders was officially a promise of the past.

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In *Who Governs*, Robert Dahl examined New Haven as a case study of how various factions exerted influence in urban politics. Given Dahl's prominent place in this story, it is fitting to ask, “Who governed Yale?” Starting in 1962, the alumni estate (to use Clark Kerr's term) dictated the pace of coeducation. To please them, Brewster dragged his feet on admitting women, first advocating the Vassar merger, then touting the formation of a coordinate college, and finally vowing to preserve one thousand male leaders.

By 1971, this position had become untenable. So Kingman employed the powers of another estate, the faculty, to check alumni influence. Realizing he could not retreat from his stance unilaterally, he reframed the issue of coeducation as part of a larger, institutional reformation. If Yale College were to substantially transform its character, his promises to the old-guard would no longer apply. In Dahl and his colleagues, Brewster collected a loyal cadre. Without explicitly telling them to (as far as we can tell), the president knew they would endorse sex-blind

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<sup>90</sup> Mary Arnstein, *Coeducation Report 1972-1973*, July, 1973, Office of the President, Yale University, Annual and Special Reports, Box 22, Folder 409.

<sup>91</sup> Robert Sullwold, “Trustees Eliminate Sex Quota, Will Take More Women in Fall,” *Yale Daily News*, December 11, 1972, 1. Karabel argues that this announcement “still reflected the logic of a quota.” Karabel, *The Chosen*, 426. However, at the time, observers saw the corporation's announcement as a radical departure from the status quo. See the *News* article cited above and the following national articles: “Yale to Abandon Quotas For Admitting Women,” *The Washington Post*, Dec 11, 1972, A3; “New Policy Will Seek More Women as Yalies” *New York Times*, December 11, 1972, 43; “3-2 ratio favored: Yale ends rigid quota for women,” *Boston Globe*, December 11, 1972, 38.

admissions, particularly so given Wasserman's place on the Study Group. Brewster used them to moderate his extreme position.

Would the Corporation have abolished quotas without Dahl's Report? Would Brewster have been able to revise his commitment to one male thousand leaders by himself? While we can never definitively answer these counterfactuals, we can say how Brewster governed Yale: through forming coalitions, first with his alumni and then with his faculty. On the issue of coeducation, he tacked to an increasingly conservative position and then gracefully triangulated himself a new course.

America followed Brewster's story. From the Vassar plan, to the protest at the 1970 alumni luncheon, to the final decision to reject gender quotas, the struggle for women to become Elis received national attention. In the public limelight, Yale shed its older skin and redefined who deserved to be a part of the university community. We turn now to the intertwined issues of student disruption, discipline, and free speech where Kingman similarly and publicly bent to the pressures of the 1960s and then forged a more moderate path in the early 1970s. If the Study Group determined the composition of Yale's student body, then the Committee on Freedom of Expression chaired by C. Vann Woodward outlined how those new students should act. Just as Dahl's committee represented a moment of institutional reexamination, Woodward's represented a high-water-mark in Kingman's efforts to reshape the Yale community.

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"Disruption is not a valid part of the University... You are all subject to academic suspension." Yale's Secretary, Kingman Brewster's right hand man, and the second most powerful person on campus in 1974, Henry "Sam" Chauncey Jr. faced a crowd of jeering

students in the largest lecture hall at Yale. The noise of the protestors was deafening. They clapped, stomped, and chanted — and generally ignored Chauncey’s proclamation.

On the lecture hall’s stage sat William Shockley, the distinguished inventor of the transistor who, late in his life, had become an advocate for the sterilization of minorities he judged racially inferior. Alongside him was William Rusher, editor of the conservative magazine *National Review*. The two had intended to debate the morality of Shockley’s views in front of a student audience. The assembled crowd of two hundred and fifty had a different idea: Drown Shockley out, in violation of university rules, denying him an opportunity to voice his offensive ideas.<sup>92</sup> On the street outside, an even larger group protested behind roped picket lines, chanting “Shockley, Nazi. Shockley, Nazi.”<sup>93</sup> A few threw rocks, but, for the most part, they eschewed violence in favor of a civil demonstration. Inside, a different story prevailed. For seventy-five minutes, as Chauncey bit his lip and frowned, the raucous student disruptors prevented Shockley from speaking.<sup>94</sup> After an hour and fifteen minutes, Shockley and Rusher departed without debating, and the protestors disbanded victorious.

The Shockley incident, as it became known, was no anomaly in 1974, either at Yale or for the nation. Starting in the early 1960s, college-age protestors affiliated with the New Left had adopted increasingly confrontational tactics, many of which found their origin in the sit-ins of the civil rights movement. On campuses across the nation, students married these methods with a philosophy of direct action, occupying classrooms or heckling speakers to highlight issues ranging from the Vietnam War to the rights of workers. As a result, the normally distinct issues of freedom of expression at universities and student discipline became intertwined over the

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<sup>92</sup> Alan Astrow, Lloyd Grove, and Dan Rubock, “Chauncey Calls For Order, Fails To Quell Disruption,” *Yale Daily News*, April 16, 1972, 1.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.* On a minority of students throwing rocks, Gaddis Smith, interview by author, electronic recording, February 15, 2013.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

decade. Students disrupted lectures that they deemed offensive or immoral, and academic administrators punished (or failed to punish) demonstrators for violating academia's core principles. Yale proved a typical and highly visible setting for unrest, experiencing a wave of disruptions beginning in 1963. To prevent the university from erupting into flames, Kingman Brewster typically acceded to student demands, pragmatically sacrificing principles of discipline and free speech to satisfy protestors.

After Shockley, Brewster found himself increasingly criticized by moderates among his faculty and alumni who decried his failures to preserve order on campus. Just as he had with coeducation, Brewster found himself occupying an extreme position, this time lenient toward unrest. To repair his broken image and maintain a coalition of support within two disaffected academic estates of the university, Brewster again looked to a faculty committee. Led by C. Vann Woodward, that group authored a nationally renowned document that condemned disruption, upheld the values of free speech and tolerance, and provided Brewster an opportunity to remold his and Yale's reputation.<sup>95</sup>

This section of the essay is divided into two parts. The first traces the history of unrest at Yale in the national context and documents the growing dissatisfaction among some with Brewster's management of Yale's campus. The second section examines the results of the Woodward Committee and argues that, just as he had with the Study Group on Yale College,

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<sup>95</sup> There is relatively little existing scholarship on the Woodward Committee. In his polemical defense of free expression, journalist Nat Hentoff devotes a chapter to the history of free speech at Yale from 1963 to the mid-1990s. However, while he lauds the Woodward Report, Hentoff neither examines the university politics behind the document nor places the Woodward report within the larger context of Yale's search for an institutional image in the 1970s. Nat Hentoff, *Free Speech for Me — But Not for Thee: How the American Left and Right Relentlessly Censor Each Other*, 99-145. A number of other popular commentators and scholars of free speech have noted the importance of the Woodward Report without examining it in detail. See, for example: Gordon Moran, *Silencing Scientists and Scholars in Other Fields: Power, Paradigm Controls, Peer Review, and Scholarly Communication* (New York: Ablex, 1998), 26-7; Rodney Smolla, *Free Speech in an Open Society* (New York: Vintage, 1993), 158; Herbert Foerstel, *Free Expression and Censorship in America: An Encyclopedia* (Westport: Greenwood, 1997), 103.

Brewster designed this body to achieve a specific political result intended to rehabilitate his image.

Like coeducation, the issue of unrest and free speech first arose while Brewster was the acting president of Yale in 1963. On September 19, the *Yale Daily News* reported that the Political Union, a student group, had invited Alabama Governor George Wallace to speak on campus that November.<sup>96</sup> Four days earlier, a bomb had exploded in a black church in Birmingham, Alabama, killing four African-American children. Civil rights leaders, including Martin Luther King, Jr. and the head of the NAACP, Roy Wilkins, blamed Wallace for inspiring the bombing by voicing vocal segregationist opinions in the preceding years.<sup>97</sup> Convinced that hosting the governor at Yale might inflame tensions among New Haven's sizable black population, Brewster met privately with students in the days before September 19 to urge them to rescind the invitation.<sup>98</sup> Immediately after the *Yale Daily* publicized the invitation, Mayor Richard Lee publicly announced that Wallace was "officially unwelcome" in the Elm City.<sup>99</sup> The same day, the Political Union publicly announced that it had retracted its offer, and Brewster issued a press release that stated he was "grateful" for "this decision in the interest of law and order."<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> James Carter, "Gov. Wallace November Address to PU," *Yale Daily News*, September 19, 1963, 12.

<sup>97</sup> "4 Children Die: Birmingham Blast Injures 23 Negroes; 2 Others Shot Dead Church Bombing," *Los Angeles Times*, Sep 16, 1963, A1; "Wilkins Accuses Wallace Of Encouraging 'Murder,'" *New York Times*, Sep 16, 1963, 26. The Political Union had invited Wallace one day before the bombings.

<sup>98</sup> "University Tells Background," *Yale Daily News*, September 27, 1963, 1.

<sup>99</sup> Lee's biographer obliquely suggests that Lee was trying to court black votes for his upcoming reelection campaign that November. Allen Talbot, *The Mayors Game: Richard Lee of New Haven and the Politics of Change* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 191.

<sup>100</sup> "Provost's Statement," *Yale Daily News*, September 20, 1963, 1.



To most observers around the country, it seemed that Brewster had caved to both Lee's pressure and to the threat of violence from members of the New Haven black community.<sup>101</sup> For the president, pragmatic concerns of preventing bloodshed outweighed the principle of free expression. In an editorial, the *New York Times* decried the loss of free inquiry at Yale.<sup>102</sup> Seeking to rehabilitate the university's image as a bastion of free expression, a group of law students re-invited Wallace, who declined this second opportunity; Brewster offered his firm support for the Governor's right to speak on campus, backpedaling from his previous statements. But, despite these efforts at repair, Kingman's reputation suffered. Some trustees questioned his fitness as president given his failure to artfully navigate the incident.<sup>103</sup> Their reluctance was no doubt compounded by the memory of Brewster's predecessor, A. Whitney Griswold, who had been a national advocate for academic freedom during the McCarthyism of the 1950s. According to Sam Chauncey, the scandal deeply affected Brewster. In later years, when making a "major institutional decision," Kingman would often tell his assistant, "I've got to make sure I don't make the kind of mistake I made in the Wallace case."<sup>104</sup>

In the Wallace affair, the threat of disruption originated outside the university in New Haven's inner city. With the emergence of the Free Speech Movement, a year later, similar unrest found its way onto college campuses. The Movement began at Berkeley, when students led by Mario Savio occupied an administrative building to challenge rules prohibiting political

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<sup>101</sup> Most newspapers highlighted and exaggerated Brewster's role in disinviting Wallace. See, for example: "Yale Cancels Wallace Bid: Action Taken At Behest Of University's Acting Head," *The Baltimore Sun*, September 20, 1963, A1; "Yale Society Flubs Bid to Gov. Wallace," *Chicago Tribune*, September 20, 1963, 20.

<sup>102</sup> "Governors on Campus," *New York Times*, September 28, 1963, A18.

<sup>103</sup> Kabaservice, *The Guardians*, 177-8. The Wallace affair was also somewhat of a convenient excuse for Corporation members who did not want to appoint Brewster for other reasons. By the university's bylaws, Wilmarth "lefty" Lewis, the senior fellow of the Yale Corporation, presided over the Corporation's meetings in the absence of an appointed university president following Griswold's death. Lewis reportedly enjoyed the *ex-officio* position, and was reluctant to name then Provost and acting-President Brewster as a president because Brewster would take the chairmanship of the Corporation. Chauncey, interview by author, February 14, 2013.

<sup>104</sup> Chauncey, interview by author, February 14, 2013.

activism on university property. Active civil rights demonstrators, Savio and his compatriots had participated in sit-ins, both in California and the South. They applied those confrontational tactics to the university setting, refusing to leave the building until they achieved their demands.<sup>105</sup> University officials found themselves with few options: Either give-in to the occupiers wishes or spark an altercation by confronting the students. At Yale and schools around America, administrators watched the proceedings in Berkeley with rapt interest, little knowing that similar protests would shortly materialize in their own quads.<sup>106</sup>

After President Johnson announced an aggressive military commitment in Vietnam in 1965, student unrest became increasingly violent.<sup>107</sup> Ivy League campuses were often the sites of public disruptions. At Columbia, with somewhat mixed motivations, students protested the war and a proposed university construction project by occupying a series of buildings — only to be evicted forcibly by the New York Police Department. Cornell saw a particularly violent takeover of its classrooms by armed African-American undergraduates who called for the formation of an African American Studies department. That university agreed to their demands, in what became a national symbol of appeasement to student violence and a breakdown in the system of

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<sup>105</sup> On Savio's experience with sit-ins and their influence on him, see: Jo Freeman, "From Freedom Now! To Free Speech" in *The Free Speech Movement: Reflections on Berkeley in the 1960s* ed. Robert Cohen and Reginald Zelnik (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002): 73-82. See also, Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam, 1987), 164. Scholarship on the social unrest of 1960s is frustratingly vast, yet also somewhat limited. Written by former participants instead of detached observers, the best works in the field tend to either be written by non-academics or published by trade presses. Freeman's article, for instance, includes little to no citations. These works lie somewhere between primary sources in which participants record their memories, polemics, and academic treatises. Here, I am influenced by John McMillian and his recent analysis in *Smoking Typewriters*. John McMillian, *Smoking Typewriters* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1-12.

<sup>106</sup> Chauncey, interview by author, February 14, 2013.

<sup>107</sup> Willis Rudy, *The Campus and a Nation in Crisis: From the American Revolution to Vietnam* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1996), 158.

academic discipline.<sup>108</sup> Incidents of unrest peaked during the 1969-70 academic year, when campuses across the country experienced 9,400 separate disruptions.<sup>109</sup>

Brewster's Yale actually defied the trend of unrest until November of 1969, when the university saw a major student occupation. A classics professor at Cornell during its period of upheaval, Donald Kagan remembered that Yale seemed like "the one place in the country where things seemed to be in good control." When he accepted a faculty position in New Haven, his colleagues in Ithaca told him how lucky he was to be moving to a stable university.<sup>110</sup> They admired Kingman's firm and vocal stance against disruption, embodied in a document Brewster had published in the spring of 1969.<sup>111\*</sup> What became known as the "Brewster scenario" started as an "intellectual exercise" in how Yale would face an event similar to those at Columbia or Cornell.<sup>112</sup> The scenario mapped out a policy of "flexibility and firmness" in the face of disruption: The president would propose meeting with protesting students in another forum to address their requests. If students rejected the offer, they would be "subject to immediate suspension." And if, even after suspension, students continued to interfere with university personal and property, administrators would call the campus police.<sup>113</sup> On paper, the Brewster

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<sup>108</sup> Martha Biondi, *The Black Revolution on Campus* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 131.

<sup>109</sup> Rudy, *The Campus and a Nation in Crisis*, 190. In his memoir, Clark Kerr also highlights 1970 as the peak of student violence. Kerr, *The Great Transformation*, 135. As we will shortly see, unrest peaked then at Yale, too, with the May Day events of 1970.

<sup>110</sup> Donald Kagan, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, June 9, 1992, Griswold-Brewster History Project, Box 6, Folder 79.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., and Donald Kagan, interview by author, electronic recording, January 31, 2013.

\* I originally wrote 1968 instead of 1969. The mistake was caught and corrected while I was writing an article for the *Yale Alumni Magazine* in the fall of 2014.

<sup>112</sup> Chauncey, interview by author, February 14, 2013. Geoffrey Kabaservice suggests that the Brewster scenario was formed as a result of a contentious university gathering which saw the banishment of ROTC from campus. In all likelihood, Brewster was influenced both by the national context, including Columbia, and the growing student agitation at home in New Haven. Kabaservice, *The Guardians*, 384.

<sup>113</sup> Yale University News Bureau Release on Yale President's Annual Report, October 7, 1969, Speeches and Articles by and about Presidents of Yale University, Accession 1988-A-056, Box 2, Folder 62.

scenario advertised a “hard-line” yet pragmatic approach that combined a commitment to discipline and civility with a tone of respect for student radicals.<sup>114</sup>

Unfortunately, Brewster’s scenario for a disruption disintegrated in its first test case in 1969. When the university fired a black dining worker for rudeness, sixty students affiliated with SDS protested her abrupt dismissal by occupying her bosses’ offices in the dingy basement of Wright Hall. They refused to leave until the fired worker regained her job. With Brewster out of town on a Caribbean vacation, the job of defusing the situation fell to Sam Chauncey and Provost Charles Taylor. The two men were flummoxed — they had expected protests at major university buildings, not an obscure location like Wright Hall. In retrospect, Chauncey remembered, “we were kind of winging it.”<sup>115</sup> Per the Brewster scenario, they suspended forty-seven students who refused to leave. (The students only later left after officials agreed to rehire the dismissed employee.)<sup>116</sup>

A faculty-student coalition formed immediately to reinstate the suspended occupiers. One professor lauded sit-ins as a “defensible tactic.”<sup>117</sup> In an unexpected twist, the university executive committee responsible for student discipline commuted the sentences, citing a desire to show “mercy.”<sup>118</sup> Brewster’s famed scenario failed completely. William Kessen noted that his colleagues were “dramatically divided,” a sentiment which others echoed.<sup>119</sup> The president himself was livid that his normally loyal faculty had betrayed him.<sup>120</sup> But in an odd way, the disloyal professors seemed very Brewster-esque in retrospect. They pragmatically abandoned

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Chauncey, interview by author, February 14, 2013.

<sup>116</sup> “45 Suspended After Wright Hall Occupation,” *Yale Daily News*, November 4, 1969, 1.

<sup>117</sup> Stuart Rosow, “Group Votes To Circulate Petition; Demand Committee Reinstate ‘47,” *Yale Daily News*, November 7, 1969, 1.

<sup>118</sup> Scott Herhold, “Committee Readmits Suspended Students,” *Yale Daily News*, November 11, 1969, 1.

<sup>119</sup> Kessen, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, June 2, 1992. According to Kagan, “[t]here’s a real difference between the attitudes of the left faculty and the more... You can’t talk about a ‘conservative’ faculty, because there isn’t one, but a more traditional faculty.” Kagan, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, June 9, 1992.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

disciplinary principles — enshrined in the Brewster’s scenario — to mollify their angry peers and students.

Five months later, May Day rocked New Haven, and, as a nation watched, Brewster reassumed the mantle of the high priest of pragmatism. In the days before the Bobby Seale trial and mass protests, he eschewed any rigid ideals he might have held, telling Sam Chauncey that their objectives were simple: no deaths, no burnings, and no academic disruption — in that order. In Chauncey’s words, Kingman “[p]ragmatically developed [his principles] to fit what we thought the circumstances would be.”<sup>121</sup> Yale officials opened doors to the Black Panthers, Yippies, and assorted other demonstrators, even feeding them in the hope that, satiated, the mob would not attack the university.<sup>122</sup> When Brewster publicly doubted the ability of a black man to receive justice in America, commentators saw a former law professor sacrifice his faith in the legal system to placate radicals on the streets.<sup>123</sup> And he succeeded: no one died at Yale. Four days later, National Guardsmen shot and killed students at Kent State. There, but for pragmatism and the grace of God, went Kingman.

In the aftermath of May Day, Brewster found himself in a political maelstrom. He had effectively closed the university, worse bent his commitment to the American legal system, in the face of the threat of violence. The pushback was strong. That summer, a collection of conservative alumni formed *Lux et Veritas, Incorporated*, citing the president’s speech about the Seale trial as a chief grievance and calling for broad reform at Yale.<sup>124</sup> In a mailing to their

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<sup>121</sup> Chauncey, interview by author, February 14, 2013.

<sup>122</sup> For accounts of the events of May Day, see *supra* at note 1.

<sup>123</sup> According to Chauncey, Brewster was actually “quiet shaken” by the proceedings of the Bobby Seale trial, and the infamous speech before the faculty reflected his true beliefs. Nevertheless, even if true, this change of heart was not apparent to most observers, who only cynically saw a president trying to save his university by whatever means necessary. Chauncey, interview by author, February 14, 2013.

<sup>124</sup> William Stack, letter to Charles Gage, December 6, 1972, Vice-President for Development and Alumni Affairs, Accession 1979-A-053, Box 1, Folder 1.

fellow Yale graduates, the group worried their alma mater was turning into an institution that smothered “opposing viewpoints.”<sup>125</sup>

While LEVI, as the organization became known, never attracted much support, it implied a more widespread discontent among Yale graduates. Letters criticizing Kingman poured into the president’s office, some so harsh that an aide remarked they “should have been written on asbestos.”<sup>126</sup> Capping off an academic year that also saw the beginning of coeducation, May Day became a “lighting rod” for all the alumni “anxieties” at Yale.<sup>127</sup> Sensing that he could lose the alumni estate altogether, Brewster created a special committee to investigate bettering relations with Old Blues.<sup>128</sup> Worse than the alumni revolt, many in the faculty reacted negatively as well to Brewster’s comments about the American judiciary, though they praised his overall handling of May Day.<sup>129</sup> In the summer of 1970, Kingman was ironically branded a radical, just as he was about to begin the process of restoring his image via the Dahl Committee.

Nationally, student protests and occupations peaked and petered out after 1970, but the unlucky Brewster faced more moments of unrest that morphed into embarrassing incidents. The same day the Study Group released its report in April of 1972, General William Westmoreland, the former commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam, visited campus to deliver a speech at the Political Union. A large and pugnacious student crowd gathered to protest his talk; Westmoreland refused to speak publicly out of fear for his safety.<sup>130</sup> Brewster tried and failed to

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<sup>125</sup> “Lux et Veritas Mailing,” December 1, 1970, *Ibid.*

<sup>126</sup> Fanton, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, July 18, 1992.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> “LEVI Commends New Alumni Role,” *Yale Daily News*, December 9, 1971, 1.

<sup>129</sup> For instance, C. Vann Woodward, Alexander Bickel and a collection of other professors wrote to Brewster strongly criticizing his comments as unfounded. C. Vann Woodward, Letter to Kingman Brewster, April 25, 1970, C. Vann Woodward Papers (MS 1436). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, Series I, Box 62, Folder 749.

<sup>130</sup> According to Chauncey, the secretary of the university at the time and the person responsible for campus safety, Westmoreland had never planned to speak, but instead simply wanted to embarrass Yale by making it appear lawless. The army released a pre-typed press release immediately following Westmoreland’s announcement that he

appear moderate, paradoxically criticizing both the General for balking in front of an unruly crowd and the students for their “reprehensible” tactics.<sup>131</sup> Once again, Yale seemed lawless and Brewster weak in the eyes of the nation, his alumni, and his professorial peers.

The figurative straw that broke Brewster’s back came in the winter and spring of 1974. That January, the Political Union (ever the instigator of free speech crises on campus) invited William Shockley to debate Roy Innis, the chairman of the Congress on Racial Equality. A Stanford professor, Shockley made a name for himself touting racist genetic theories about the mental inferiority of blacks.<sup>132</sup> African-American and Hispanic student groups vowed to prevent the Union’s debate from proceeding, using whatever means necessary.<sup>133</sup> Their threats proved premature: In a scene reminiscent of Wallace’s visit, the Union’s leadership voted to disinvite both Innis and Shockley.

Shortly thereafter, a campus organ of the alumni society *Lux et Veritas, Inc.* reinvited both men to New Haven, ostensibly to test the principles of free expression on Yale’s campus. In an awkwardly hedged statement, Brewster defended the right of students to bring an offensive speaker to campus, while simultaneously condemning LEVI’s “lack of sensitivity.”<sup>134</sup> Claiming an “atmosphere of intimidation” created by the president, the alumni organization canceled the event. Yet another student group decided to host the debate in March, only to retract its plans after receiving “threats emanating from members of the Yale Community.”<sup>135</sup> Finally, that April,

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would not speak, suggesting that the general had planned a stunt. Nevertheless, to observers at the time, it seemed that Brewster could not maintain order on campus. Chauncey, interview by author, February 14, 2013. On a related note, Westmoreland’s visit and the attention it drew may explain the somewhat muted press surrounding the release of Dahl Report.

<sup>131</sup> “Protests Balk Westmoreland Talk at Yale,” *Los Angeles Times*, Apr 6, 1972, A11.

<sup>132</sup> Joel Shurkin, *Broken Genius* (London: Macmillan, 2006), 226-240.

<sup>133</sup> Debbie Cohen and Alan Astrow, “PU ponders proposed Shockley-Innis debate,” *Yale Daily News*, January 21, 1974, 1.

<sup>134</sup> “Brewster statement,” *Yale Daily News*, February 18, 1974, 1.

<sup>135</sup> Daniel Rubock, “Calliopeans retract invitation to debate,” *Yale Daily News*, March 8, 1974, 1.

Yale's Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) chapter successfully brought Shockley to New Haven, only for Shockley to be shouted down in the events described above.

Because of Shockley's national infamy, Brewster found himself under attack for failing to maintain a campus that respected the values of free speech. Conservative columnist and prominent Yale graduate William F. Buckley, Jr. criticized Kingman for failing to protect YAF's debate from disruption. (Buckley may have been particularly sensitive to the affair because Shockley's debating partner, William Rusher, was the publisher of Buckley's *National Review*.)<sup>136</sup> News outlets highlighted Yale's seeming incivility compared to peer institutions: Shockley had previously spoken, with no incident, at Princeton, Columbia, and Amherst.<sup>137</sup> Senior professors at Yale were mutinous: distinguished faculty, including some of Kingman's confidants, demanded his unambiguous support of free speech.<sup>138\*</sup> Those faculty's worst fears were confirmed when the university executive committee voted in May to allow twelve students suspended for participating in the Shockley affair to return to campus that coming fall. It seemed like the Wright Hall sit-in all over again — no serious penalties for disruption at Yale.

In the summer of 1974, Brewster was beleaguered. He faced dissent from alumni and professors alike; the pragmatic approach that had prevented violence, starting with Wallace and ending with May Day, made him appear unprincipled and weak. Jonathan Fanton, his special assistant, recalled sharing one morose evening with his boss at Kingman's summer home on

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<sup>136</sup> Buckley only obliquely defended free speech. He argued that Brewster had not protected Shockley because the Stanford scientist was a statist who exposed the dangerous *reductio ad absurdum* of liberal ideology. William F. Buckley Jr., "Shockley at Yale," *National Review*, May 10, 1974, 555. Netherless, there is a deep irony in Buckley joining hands with those in favor of free expression. His first book, *God and Man at Yale*, had attacked academic freedom at Yale as a "superstition." William F. Buckley, Jr., *God and Man at Yale* (Washington: Regnery, 1951).

<sup>137</sup> See, for example: "Shockley the clown," *Chicago Defender* Apr 22, 1974, 11; "Yale Group Shouts Down Shockley," *The Washington Post*, A3;

<sup>138</sup> Robert Triffin, Letter to Kingman Brewster, April 24, 1974, Kingman Brewster, Jr., President of Yale University, Records (RU 11). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, Box 435, Folder 6.

\* This sentence originally suggested that other faculty members had been co-authors of Triffin's letter (see the above footnote). In reality, prominent faculty members had been cc'd onto the letter by Triffin. The mistake was corrected in 2014 while I was writing an article for the *Yale Alumni Magazine*.



Martha's Vineyard. As the sun descended, Brewster smoked and mused about retiring — it seemed he had lost the parliamentary majority needed to govern Yale effectively. By the end of the conversation, night had fallen, and Fanton could only see a ghostly image of Kingman's face, outlined by the glowing tip of his cigar.<sup>139</sup> In his moment of melancholy, Brewster turned to a second faculty committee to reshape his image, one that crafted a renewed persona both for him and for Yale.

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Chaired by historian C. Vann Woodward and composed of thirteen faculty and students, the Committee on Freedom of Expression met in the fall term of 1974. Unlike Dahl's Study Group, which Brewster formed to address a variety of problems of which coeducation was but one, Woodward's committee possessed a single purpose: to reaffirm Yale's commitment to the intertwined issues of student discipline and free speech. And the group did just that, publishing its report in the early days of 1975. That document addressed disruption and freedom of expression in three sections. The first offered a philosophical defense of free speech and a refutation of those who sought to squelch offending viewpoints through sit-ins, shout-downs, and other disruptive tactics. In the eyes of the committee, the university should provide a space "to think the unthinkable, discuss the unmentionable, and challenge the unchallengeable."<sup>140</sup> The report summarily rejected those who "assert[ed] a right to prevent free expression," and called for "formal sanctions" against disrupters.<sup>141</sup> The second section offered an historical overview of disruption at Yale, from Governor Wallace through Shockley. The third proposed penalties for

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<sup>139</sup> Fanton, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, July 18, 1992.

<sup>140</sup> *The Report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression at Yale* (New Haven: Yale University, 1975), [http://yalecollege.yale.edu/sites/default/files/woodward\\_report.pdf](http://yalecollege.yale.edu/sites/default/files/woodward_report.pdf), 5.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9.

protestors who violated the rules: suspension or expulsion.<sup>142</sup> Twelve of the thirteen committee members signed the report; one student refused to join the majority and wrote a dissenting, rambling manifesto that argued only “responsible” speech should be permitted inside a university’s walls.<sup>143</sup> The report was not groundbreaking: its disciplinary recommendations conformed closely to the Brewster-scenario developed seven years before. However, Woodward’s committee offered a seemingly fresh articulation of Yale’s values.

As he had with the Dahl committee, Kingman constructed the Committee on Freedom of Expression with an intended result. He chose loyal faculty whom he knew would provide him with a resounding and respected denunciation of student disruption. Chairman C. Vann Woodward was a life-long advocate of free speech who openly despised the New Left’s coercive tactics. Moreover, Woodward’s background as a prominent civil rights activist and esteemed historian lent his committee’s report substantial legitimacy. Brewster also included among the group Lloyd Cutler, an alumnus and ad hoc adviser, who protected the president’s personal interests; Cutler forced the normally scrupulous Woodward to whitewash Brewster’s involvement in embarrassing events. Finally, when the Committee on Freedom of Expression produced its stirring defense of civility and order, Kingman advocated stricter penalties for student disrupters than the committee itself had recommended. As a result of Woodward’s report and his own political machinations, Brewster positioned himself to appear a firm disciplinarian, despite the prior failures of the Brewster-scenario to protect both discipline and speech at Yale.

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<sup>142</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 46.

In 1974, C. Vann Woodward was the most prominent scholar of southern history and one of the pre-eminent American historians of all time.<sup>144</sup> Colleagues at Yale saw him as “the most distinguished faculty member” of a quite distinguished body.<sup>145</sup> A quiet, aloof and often reserved man, Woodward was born in Arkansas in 1908 and became a historian during the Great Depression. He cut his teeth writing the history of the land below the Mason-Dixon line, focusing on race, politics and the legacy of reconstruction. These topics did not endear him to his fellow countrymen, who preferred to ignore their past and present injustices; Woodward would later claim that these early years provided him the first glimpse of the importance of freedom of speech.<sup>146</sup>

In the 1950s, while Woodward taught at Johns Hopkins, his close friend Owen Lattimore was accused of disloyalty by the communist-hunting Senator Joseph McCarthy. Lattimore’s persecution left a lasting mark on the southerner, who joined other Johns Hopkins faculty in defending his colleague.<sup>147</sup> In the student disrupters of the 1960s and early 1970s, C. Vann Woodward saw a striking parallel to the McCarthyites. Both groups “justified the means they

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<sup>144</sup> In an introduction to a forthcoming edited volume of Woodward’s letters, an editor ranks Woodward alongside such academic giants as Frederick Jackson Turner. C. Vann Woodward, *The Letters of C. Vann Woodward*, ed. by Michael O’Brien (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, forthcoming), iv. For an overview of Woodward’s life and his influence on Southern history, see also: John Roper, *C. Vann Woodward: Southerner* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987); and, John Roper, ed., *C. Vann Woodward: A Southern Historian and His Critics* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012).

<sup>145</sup> Smith, interview by author, February 15, 2013.

<sup>146</sup> In a speech sometime after the publication of the Woodward Report, he notes that, in the 1930s, there was “comparative freedom of speech—so long as one stayed off the subject of race in the South, as I did not.” C. Vann Woodward, “Cycles on Academic Freedom,” C. Vann Woodward Papers, Series II, Box 63, Folder 1. It is also likely that Woodward’s thesis adviser in graduate school, Howard Beale, influenced Woodward’s views on freedom of expression and civil liberties more broadly. In the interwar period when Woodward studied under him, Beale wrote extensively on academic freedom for pro-German secondary school teachers during and after World War I. During the second World War, Beale defended the rights of conscientious objectors, a topic he often wrote about to his former graduate student, then a professor. Howard Beale, *Are American Teachers Free? An Analysis of Restraints Upon the Freedom of Teaching in American Schools* (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1936); Howard Beale, *A History of Freedom of Teaching in American Schools*, (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1941); C. Vann Woodward Papers, Series I, Box 7, Folders 65-67.

<sup>147</sup> Roper 160-4; C Vann Woodward, Letter to the Editor of the *New Statesman and Nation*, November 14, 1954 in O’Brien, *The Letters*, 154-5. Note that Woodward’s letter to the *New Statesman and Nation* defending Owen Lattimore was not published by the magazine.

used by the ends they sought...The similarity lay in the curbing or denial of freedom of the opposition.”<sup>148</sup> Not shy about his views, Woodward was known among Yale’s faculty as a man of “principles that were traditional, liberal, [and] democratic.”<sup>149</sup> Yet it would be a mistake to view him solely as a traditionalist. A staunch advocate of civil rights, Woodward combined scholarship with activism, publishing books on the history of Jim Crow. When Woodward took the reigns of the Committee on Free Expression, he was a widely respected member of the Yale community with a reputation for defending tolerance in the academy.

But Brewster not only knew Woodward’s reputation; the president knew the historian would firmly defend free speech at Yale. In the summer of 1974, Kingman offered Vann the chairmanship of the committee. Woodward expressed reluctance. He was far from impartial. The president remarked that Woodward’s past pronouncements in favor of free expression were of no concern. The subtext: the university needed someone to reaffirm its most basic values after the embarrassing Shockley incident. Woodward happily replied: “If you invoke the principles of free speech, I will rise to the occasion and accept.”<sup>150</sup> From its inception, the purpose of the Woodward committee was clear: reassert the rules of Yale’s community against disruption.\*

In addition to the southerner, Brewster packed the committee with his usual trusted colleagues. Robert Dahl found a seat beside Woodward. Like Woodward, Dahl was not an impartial adjudicator on the matter of student disruption, having written in support of free speech

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<sup>148</sup> Woodward, “Cycles on Academic freedom.”

<sup>149</sup> Kagan, interview by author, January 31, 2013.

<sup>150</sup> C. Vann Woodward, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, transcript, November 6, 1991, Griswold-Brewster History Project, Box 12, Folder 154. Like Dahl, Woodward also possessed a standing assurance from Brewster that he did not need to engage in administrative responsibilities. This may have added to the historian’s initial reluctance to accept the chairmanship of the committee. Ibid.

\* The original text, as I wrote it in 2013, incorrectly suggested that Brewster explicitly told Woodward the committee should produce a result in favor of free expression. However, in the interview, the two only discussed whether Woodward’s known pro-free speech stance would preclude him from chairing the committee. The mistake was caught while I was writing an article for the *Yale Alumni Magazine* in the fall of 2014.

in *Yale Daily News* in the run-up to the Shockley affair.<sup>151</sup> Kingman also appointed Harry Wellington as a committee member. A prominent law professor, Wellington would be appointed the dean of the Yale Law School in the midst of the committee's proceedings. No one was more faithful to the president, though, than Lloyd Cutler, a prominent Washington lawyer and alumnus who was lecturing for a semester at his alma mater during the fall of 1974.<sup>152</sup> By the time Brewster appointed Cutler to the Woodward committee, the two men had developed an intimate relationship: When in New Haven to teach, Cutler would sleep at the Brewsters' official residence. He had advised the president on coeducation, providing legal counsel on the failed Vassar merger. Two years prior, in 1972, he wrote the centerpiece to a major fundraising campaign, a document ambitiously titled "The Case for Yale."<sup>153</sup> From his experiences as an informal aide and in his capacity as the alumni representative to the Woodward committee, Cutler knew that Brewster needed to please moderates among the alumni estate.

Cutler played a crucial role in shaping the committee's final report to reflect positively on Yale's president. C. Vann Woodward wrote the report's second section, which traced the history of disruption at Yale from 1963 to 1974.<sup>154</sup> According to Philip Sirlin, then a student member of the committee, Woodward presented a draft history to the group early in their proceedings. He concluded that, for the past decade, Yale's administration had not protected free speech nor imposed discipline on unruly students. Upon reading the draft, Cutler confronted Woodward

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<sup>151</sup> Robert Dahl, "Shockley-Innis," *Yale Daily News*, April 2, 1974, 2.

<sup>152</sup> Cutler had previously served as the executive director on the National Commission on Violence, a federal investigatory body that bridged the end of the Johnson administration and the start of Nixon's tenure as president. In arguably the first study to examine the 1960s as a phenomenon, the Commission examined the causes of violence and social upheaval in America over the past decade. James Henry Shields, *A Guide to the Microfilm Edition of Records of the National Commission on Violence* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2004), v-viii.

<sup>153</sup> Lloyd Cutler, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, transcript, April 10, 1991, Griswold-Brewster History Project, Box 4, Folder 54.

<sup>154</sup> "Committee of the Freedom of Expression at Yale, Sub-Committees for drafting of final report," November 24, 1974, C. Vann Woodward Papers, Series III, Box 85, Folder 5. Dahl drafted the first section, while Cutler and Wellington drafted the third.

saying, “You can’t write this. If you write this, Kingman Brewster will have to resign.” Then, in Sirlin’s words, the Washington lawyer “bullied Woodward” into rewriting the history.<sup>155</sup> The nation’s most accomplished living historian caved to the pressure and agreed to massage the past.<sup>156</sup>

Woodward’s final product reflected Cutler’s influence.<sup>157</sup> His account of the Wallace affair ignored Mayor Lee’s statement that the governor was unwelcome in New Haven. He praised Brewster’s pragmatic approach for providing “stability” during periods of unrest.<sup>158</sup> Although the committee privately discussed the Wright Hall fiasco as a milestone in the university’s disciplinary policies (or lack thereof), Woodward failed to mention the incident in his final draft.<sup>159</sup> The historian cast May Day as an illustrious example of freedom of speech —

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<sup>155</sup> Philip Sirlin, interview by author, electronic recording, February 14, 2013.

<sup>156</sup> The minutes of the Woodward Committee do not record the incident Sirlin described; nor does James Comer, another member of the Woodward Committee, remember this incident. However, I believe Sirlin’s account, despite the lack of corroboratory evidence. Sirlin claims that Cutler forced the committee to throw out their copies of the draft. It is possible the lawyer also redacted the minutes. Woodward himself may also have chosen to alter the committee’s record so that future historians would not know he had caved to pressure. Moreover, Comer’s memory of the committee is hazy in general, so his inability to corroborate Sirlin is likely indicative of Comer’s poor memory, not bad faith on Sirlin’s part. Finally, I can find no plausible motive for Sirlin to lie. James, Comer, interview by author, electronic recording, March 28, 2013.

<sup>157</sup> Ironically, most observers faulted Woodward for producing a document that was too harsh on the president. Tom Cavanagh, the head of political union in 1974, published an article arguing that the union had not disinvited Wallace in 1963, but postponed the event. Tom Cavanagh, “George Wallace in ’63: Disinvited or Postponed?,” *Yale Daily News*, February 5, 1975, 2-3. Similarly, when conducting oral history with Woodward, Brewster biographer Geoffrey Kabaservice confronted Woodward for having blamed the president for events outside of his control. Woodward, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, November 6, 1991.

<sup>158</sup> *The Report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression at Yale*, 10.

<sup>159</sup> “Minutes of the Committee on Freedom of Expression,” October 24, 1974, C. Vann Woodward Papers, Series III, Box 85, Folder 5. Dahl drafted the first section, while Cutler and Wellington drafted the third.

despite Brewster having essentially canceled classes under the threat of violence.<sup>160</sup> While the report explored Kingman's faults, Woodward pulled his punches.<sup>161</sup>

In the beginning of 1975, Woodward and the president submitted the first and third sections of the report to the university faculty for ratification.<sup>162</sup> Brewster added two addenda to the report's final recommendations: First, where the committee recommended that Yale's president might discourage (but not prohibit) a contentious speaker from coming to campus, Kingman argued that such discouragement would be improper — despite having done just that when he encouraged the Political Union to disinvite Wallace in 1963. Second, where the Woodward committee proposed that disruptive students be subject to a disciplinary hearing, Brewster advocated for automatic suspension, removing disciplinary decisions from the faculty's hands.<sup>163</sup>

In part, both of these modifications to Woodward's report reflected Brewster's past experiences. Twice disappointed by faculty who refused to sanction disruptors in both the Wright Hall and Shockley affairs, the president was no doubt reluctant to relive those experiences in the future. And haunted by his actions with Wallace, he hoped to avoid further fallout from a similar

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<sup>160</sup> *The Report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression at Yale*, 14.

<sup>161</sup> Woodward's charity toward the president is especially apparent when the southerner's report is compared with a competing account of free speech at Yale compiled by the alumni group Lux et Veritas, Incorporated. Released concurrently with the Woodward report in January of 1975 but never widely circulated, LEVI's document detailed both those events in the Woodward report and other incidents, such as two occasions when black students had disrupted public movie screenings of *1984* and *Tarzan* because they found the films racially offensive. "A Report on Free Speech and Disruption at Yale: 1963-1974," May Day Rally and Yale Collection, Accession 1971-A-004, Box 4. Happily for Woodward's portrayal of history, LEVI's more critical version of events was never widely circulated. The document was prematurely released by the undergraduate chapter of the alumni organization, unbeknownst to and against the wishes of the alumni members of the group. The incident led to LEVI's dissolution. The older, somewhat loyal (and clearly conflicted) alumni saw their younger members' act as overly pugnacious at a time when Yale was in the midst of a capital campaign. Ashamed at their undergraduate chapter's behavior, LEVI's board consequently voted to disband and donate its remaining assets to Yale. William Stack, Letter to Kingman Brewster, January 31, 1975, Vice-President for Development and Alumni Affairs, Accession 1979-A-053, Box 1, Folder 1.

<sup>162</sup> Woodward did not offer the second section to his colleagues, claiming that would create an "official history." It is also possible that Woodward was embarrassed for having produced a less-than-fully-honest history due to Cutler's pressure. Woodward, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, November 6, 1991.

<sup>163</sup> Kingman Brewster, Letter to the Yale College Faculty, January 8, 1975, Kingman Brewster, Jr., President of Yale University, Records (RU 11). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library, Box 435, Folder 7.

situation. However, it is equally possible that Yale's president offered these two measures to appear "tough" on student misbehavior. By seeming even stricter than the stern Woodward, Brewster repositioned himself as a model of a robust disciplinarian, firmly committed to resisting lawlessness on campus.

The Woodward report was not revolutionary in its substance. The committee advocated suspension or expulsion for student disrupters, the penalties already prescribed by the university's existing regulations.<sup>164</sup> But, despite its lack of originality, the report seemed groundbreaking. According to Woodward's recollections, it "was certainly regarded as new." More importantly, though, "it was a forceful description of what was going to be policy, what the purpose of the policy was, and what the purpose of the university was."<sup>165</sup> The report offered an eloquent and appealing reaffirmation of how students should act that attracted schools around the country. In a preface, Woodward framed his document in a national context: the university's problems "are shared by sister institutions at home and abroad;" he hoped that his report might "inspire" other schools to similarly reaffirm their principles as citadels of free expression.<sup>166</sup>

Over the next few months, national press covered the report with enthusiasm, often quoting the line that civil societies must be able to "think the unthinkable, discuss the unmentionable, and challenge the unchallengeable." The *New York Times* published two articles describing the Woodward committee in detail and printed a long excerpt from the philosophical first section.<sup>167</sup> When Richard Nixon's former press secretary Ronald Ziegler was disinvented from Boston University that February, the paper quoted C. Vann Woodward in its editorials

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<sup>164</sup> This observation was not lost on some professors during the faculty's meeting. Minutes of the General Faculty of Yale College, 16 January 1975, *Ibid.*

<sup>165</sup> Woodward, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, November 6, 1991.

<sup>166</sup> *The Report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression at Yale*, 2-3.

<sup>167</sup> Anthony Lewis, "A Report on The Dangers To the Right Of Free Speech," *New York Times*, January 26, 1975, E18; Edward Hudson, "Yale Takes Stand on Free Speech," *New York Times*, March 9, 1975, 32.



supporting Ziegler's right to speak.<sup>168</sup> The *Chicago Tribune*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and others heralded the report as a must-read for all academics.<sup>169</sup> Even the committee's detractors admitted that its product was "lofty."<sup>170</sup> Through Woodward, Brewster presented Yale to the public as a seeming bastion of civility and free speech.<sup>171</sup>

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Historians have a difficult time categorizing the 1970s, often compressing it into either the end of the prior decade or the start of the succeeding one. Many speak of the long Sixties, with a capital "S," a "decade" that culminates in 1974 with the Watergate scandal and Richard Nixon's resignation. In this narrative, the Sixties were a period of radicalism in politics and culture, on both the left and the right of the ideological spectrum.<sup>172</sup> Lately, scholars have investigated the transnational aspect of that social upheaval, placing America's trials in a global framework.<sup>173</sup> And there is an equally clear understanding, though less thoroughly researched, of the 1980s — a time of conservative revival, Ronald Reagan, and the end of the Cold War.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> "The New Censors," *The New York Times*, February 2, 1975, E14.

<sup>169</sup> "Free speech at Yale," *Chicago Tribune*, March 22, 1975, N12; "A Lesson for Academe," *Los Angeles Times*, January 29, 1975, D4; "Free Speech Returns to Yale," *The Hartford Courant*, March 16, 1975, 34.

<sup>170</sup> "Free and Freer Speech," *National Review*, March 14, 1975, 263-4.

<sup>171</sup> The transformation of Yale's image was complete in April of 1975, when William Shockley and William Rusher returned to Yale and debated, without any disruption, in a heavily guarded auditorium. Brewster's administration followed the guidelines offered in the Woodward report by protecting the proceedings with armed security and administrators. Outside the auditorium, six hundred protested peacefully. Inside, the two men exchanged their respective viewpoints in front of a silent audience. The university emerged unscathed, a sharp contrast to the shout-down that had occurred just a year before. Mindy Beck, "Shockley Protest Draws 600," *Yale Daily News*, April 18, 1975, 1.

<sup>172</sup> On radicalism on the left, see for example: Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage*; David Farber, *The Sixties*; Allen Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984); John Greene, *America in the Sixties* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2010); Wini Brienes, *The Great Refusal: Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962-1968* (New York: Praeger, 1982). For my critique of much of this scholarship, see above at note 105. On radicalism on the right see: Geoff Andrews, et al., eds., *New Left, New Right and Beyond* (London: Macmillan, 1999); Gregory Schneider, *Cadres for Conservatism: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of the Contemporary Right* (New York: New York University Press, 1999); and Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

<sup>173</sup> For the groundbreaking work on transnationalism and the 1960s, see: Jeremy Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Detente* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).

<sup>174</sup> I believe that Laura Kalman's *Right Star Rising* falls into this camp. While it does treat the 1970s as a phenomenon, it peddles the thesis of the "short Seventies" (from 1974-1980), a time period wholly unique for it's

From this vantage point, the last years of the 1970s were nothing more than the doldrums of popular discontent from which the Reagan Revolution sprang.

Recently, scholars have begun to reevaluate the 1970s as a decade in and of its own right, more than merely the death throes of the long Sixties or the birth pangs of 1980s. In a typical overview of the decade, an aptly titled *Something Happened*, Edward Berkowitz argues that indeed something distinct did happen in the 1970s: the post-war consensus finally collapsed as increasingly divisive debates, such as those over women's rights and gay rights, embroiled the nation.<sup>175</sup> To him and other historians, the decade embodied a rejection of existing norms and authorities and a search for a replacement of the status quo.<sup>176</sup> Daniel Rodgers builds on this conclusion in *Age of Fracture*. For Rodgers, the 1970s was a moment in which "Americans tried to reimagine themselves and their society" through intellectual and ideological wars across a "half-dozen fronts."<sup>177</sup> The result was a society that emphasized individuals over institutions, the personal over the communal.

An understudied discipline, the study of higher education lags behind its peer sub-fields within history in analyzing the 1970s.<sup>178</sup> For the few historians who do tackle the decade in the context of universities, most interpretations focus on the effects of a macro-economy troubled by oil shocks on institutions of learning. Shrinking endowments, declining enrollments, and fiscal

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production of populist conservatism and the rise of Ronald Reagan. Laura Kalman, *Right Star Rising: A New Politics, 1974-1980* (New York: Norton, 2010). Accounts of the 1980s tend to appear as memoirs or biographies of Ronald Reagan. See, for example: Peggy Noonan, *What I Saw At The Revolution* (New York: Random House, 1990).

<sup>175</sup> Edward Berkowitz, *Something Happened* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).

<sup>176</sup> See, for example: Peter Carroll, *It Seemed Like Nothing Happened* (1982; repr., New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000), ix-xxi; Daniel Berger, ed., *Hidden 1970s: Histories of Radicalism* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 1-20.

<sup>177</sup> Daniel T. Rodgers, *Age of Fracture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 10. Admittedly Rodger's frame of reference extends into the 1980s and 1990s, but the bulk of his research is on the 1970s.

<sup>178</sup> For an overview of the sources on higher education, as well as an analysis of the field, see *supra*, at note 30.

shortfalls preoccupied administrators' time.<sup>179</sup> This analysis conforms to what participants themselves remembered. Kingman Brewster remarked that as the 1970s began, his focus shifted “from law and order to balancing the budget.”<sup>180</sup> Others had difficulty categorizing the decade at Yale. For Jonathan Fanton, after the early 1970s, Brewster and Yale lacked a “clear...agenda.”<sup>181</sup>

But in hindsight, a different picture emerges of Yale and America's campuses more broadly in the 1970s. The Dahl and Woodward committees reveal a period of redefinition and reaffirmation in higher education — a conclusion at odds with the one Rodgers describes in *Age of Fracture*. The unruly 1960s led Brewster to adopt pragmatism to govern effectively. A cautious approach toward coeducation mollified cantankerous alumni whose support he needed. And often ceding to the threat of violence and disruption — or at least seeming to cave to these pressures — Brewster preserved the university from erupting into a conflagration of unrest. Yale survived the 1960s virtually unscathed because of his pragmatism.

At the onset of the 1970s the twin stresses of unruly alumni and student estates subsided. Absent the challenges of radicalism, Brewster's pragmatism seemed both weak and extreme: His vow for “one thousand male leaders a year” committed him to preserving a male dominated Yale. And, in failing to quell disruptive students, he appeared unable to maintain order on campus. With the two committees, Brewster found a way to redefine himself and his university. In the Study Group on Yale College, he shed his promises to the alumni and expanded the definition of who could become part of the Yale community. With the Committee on Freedom of

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<sup>179</sup> One notable exception to this trend is Loss' *Between Citizen and The State*. In his concluding chapter, he convincingly (but briefly) shows how the national debates over feminism spilled onto college campuses in the 1970s. Loss, *Between Citizen's and the State*, 166-197.

<sup>180</sup> Kingman Brewster, interview by Kirby Simon, no date, Griswold-Brewster History Project, Box 2, Folder 16.

<sup>181</sup> Fanton, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, July 18, 1992. Fanton's portrayal of Brewster's administration as aimless conforms to both others' recollections and Kabaservice's conclusion. See: Kabaservice, *The Guardians*, 429-31. In an interview, Sam Chauncey echoed Fanton's conclusions. Chauncey, interview by author, February 14, 2013. However, what many saw as aimless may have reflected the fact, which Fanton noted, that Brewster disliked governing in the 1970s. Fundraising, Brewster's least favorite activity, became a larger part of the president's daily schedule in the 1970s. Instead of having been ineffective, as some suggest, Brewster may be simply been unhappy.

Expression, he successfully recast his reputation as a soft disciplinarian and established firm standards for how students should behave.

In these two cases, Yale's president sought to codify who should be a part of the Yale community and how those community members should act. For some, like Elga Wasserman, there was a clear relationship between the first codification of Yale's admissions and the second codification of its norms. The need to articulate rules was an unintended consequence of the demographically changing student body: The new women on campus did not "buy into all of the established norms" because they felt rejected by the existing "Yale tradition."<sup>182</sup> Brewster thus first invited new types of undergraduates onto the university playground and then told them the rules of the game. Far from being an age of a fracturing society as Rodgers might have us think, the 1970s at Yale were more aptly titled the age of codification, when Brewster reformulated the boundaries of the university community.<sup>183</sup>

The Dahl Committee and the Woodward Committee were born in a moment of self-reflection at Yale. Yet far from parochial, they were part of larger national conversations about the role of the university in society — an academic conversation in turn based in a nation's search for itself. The Study Group echoed the Carnegie Commission and others who sought to redefine the landscape of higher education for a modern era. The Committee on Freedom of

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<sup>182</sup> Elga Wasserman, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, May 7, 1992. Remember that coeducation also coincided with the inclusion of more African-Americans and public school students. See, supra at page 13.

<sup>183</sup> This is not to say that Yale did not exhibit any of the cultural debates of the 1970s, particularly the women's rights debate on college campuses that Christopher Loss identifies in *Between Citizen and The State*, in turn part of a larger debate Rodgers identifies in *Age of Fracture*. Most notably, female students sued Yale in 1980 for failing to prevent incidents of sexual harassment and thus violating its obligation to uphold Title IX, a federal law that guaranteed both sexes equal access to resources in institutions of higher education. The case, *Alexander v. Yale*, was the first to apply Title IX to issues of sexual misconduct on college campuses. Similarly, in another indicative example, female athletes stripped in front of the athletic director to protest the lack of athletic resources for women in 1976. However, while indicative of fracture, these incidents should not overshadow the process of codification Brewster and his administration successfully carried out. On *Alexander v. Yale*, see: Carrie Baker, *The Women's Movement Against Sexual Harassment* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 58-64. On the strip, see: "Yale Women Strip to Protest a Lack of Crew's Showers," *New York Times*, March 4, 1976, 65.

Expression was a national conversation in its own right, analyzed and cited by popular commentators as a watershed moment in academia.

The results of Brewster's committees have proved durable: Today's Yale undergraduates are evenly split between men and women.<sup>184</sup> Woodward's report remains the university's official policy on freedom of expression.<sup>185</sup> With the final score tallied, Yale's president successfully rehabilitated his reputation and created new rules for the university. But the question remains: What did Brewster truly believe? Were the policies of gender inclusivity and free expression that Brewster championed with the Woodward and Dahl committees his true beliefs? Or were these committees simply pragmatic ways to extricate himself from two politically untenable stances? One of Brewster's colleagues once remarked that the president "could live gracefully with ambiguity. He understood ambiguity. He understood the complexity of things."<sup>186</sup> Today, it remains ambiguous what exact combination of realism and idealism motivated Brewster. In many ways, this conclusion echoes F. Scott Fitzgerald's dictum that "the sign of a first rate intellect is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time and still function." Brewster was that type of intellect.<sup>187</sup>

In part, though, Brewster only articulated his vision for Yale — in the precise way that he did and at the time that he did — because he was forced to. Without the twin stimuli of alumni unrest and student disruption, along with the resulting backlash of staid faculty and Yale

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<sup>184</sup> "Yale Factsheet," last modified 2013, <http://oir.yale.edu/yale-factsheet>.

<sup>185</sup> "Undergraduate Regulations," last modified 2013, <http://yalecollege.yale.edu/content/undergraduate-regulations>. Admittedly, Yale did not always adhere to the ideals of the Woodward Report. In 1986, a Yale student named Wayne Dick was disciplined for posting an anonymous flyer mocking gay and lesbian students. The executive committee that admonished him paradoxically cited the Woodward Report in its ruling. The following semester, C. Vann Woodward heard about Dick's case and acted as the student's faculty advocate at a hearing which overturned the previous sanction. The incident created a national stir — Woodward himself wrote an op-ed on the importance of free speech in the *New York Times*. For a basic account of the Wayne Dick affair, see Hentoff, *Free Speech*, 118-131.

<sup>186</sup> Wilkinson, interview by Geoffrey Kabaservice, May 19, 1992.

<sup>187</sup> F. Scott Fitzgerald, *My Lost City: Personal Essays, 1920-1940* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 139.

graduates, Kingman Brewster may never have so coherently reformulated the university. From this vantage point, the crucible of the 1960s had an unintended consequence in the 1970s. Unrest caused leaders in the field of higher education, such as Brewster, to define the boundaries and norms of their academic monarchies. In challenging the university administration, students and alumni seem to have ironically bolstered it.

The particular crises that Brewster confronted are unlikely to reoccur. Even at the height of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, college campuses were mostly calm and peaceful — a far cry from the 9,400 separate protests at universities in the 1969-1970 academic year. It is similarly improbable that unhappy alumni will form well-funded groups, like Lux et Veritas, Inc, to protest policies at their *almae matres*. But future challenges in higher education will certainly arise, and modern administrators can look to Brewster's example — an example of how to navigate movements of upheaval and regain course after the storm passes.

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## **Bibliographic Essay**

Writing the essay I had in mind necessitated delving into three different subjects: The histories of Yale, university governance generally, and the 1970s broadly. Each of those sub-fields presented unique challenges: At the moment, scholarship on the 1970s is in transition, with a burgeoning body of new work appearing. Few historians have written about the history of higher education, and even fewer have focused on this time period. And almost no one has examined Yale University in the 1970s.

Because Yale is at the heart of the story I wanted to tell, I first tackled the existing literature on the university and its president. Geoffrey Kabaservice's *The Guardians* is the only study that covers Kingman Brewster's administration — and even he tells Brewster's story alongside those of fellow liberal elites, including such greats as McGeorge Bundy, John Lindsay, and Cyrus Vance. In his portrayal of how these wealthy Yale graduates governed the country, Kabaservice led me to see Brewster as a pragmatist, someone willing to simultaneously champion old and new ideas in order to survive the 1960s. But I also found Kabaservice's thesis wrapped up in a declensionist narrative that idealizes the liberal elite and their moment in power. He mourns the tragic fall of the eastern Republicans with the election of Richard Nixon. This narrative forces him to mold Brewster's life into a downfall shortly after 1968 — because just as McGeorge Bundy left the White House, Brewster needed to face similar failures to fit into Kabaservice's narrative arc. *The Guardians* thus ends with the events of May Day 1970 and concludes that, after 1971, Brewster was an ineffective president.

To fill in the ensuing seven years of Brewster's presidency that Kabaservice largely ignores, I turned to three types of primary sources: living participants, past oral history, and various university records in the Sterling Library.

I was lucky to have repeated access to Henry “Sam” Chauncey, Jr., who provided me with an invaluable perspective on Yale in the Brewster years. From his time as the president’s special assistant and later the university’s secretary, Chauncey was at the center of this story. Numerous conversations with Chauncey helped me narrow my topic to the Dahl and Woodward committees specifically, identifying the intricate problems that Kingman faced in the 1960s and 1970s. (I had previously written a short paper on the Dahl committee in Jay Gitlin’s Yale and America seminar, in which Chauncey’s recollections proved useful.) Later in my research process, I benefited from speaking with professors Donald Kagan and Gaddis Smith, both of whom were involved in issues of free speech, Kagan as a conservative provocateur in the faculty and Smith as an administrator. I also was fortunate to speak with three surviving members of the two committees. Of those, Philip Sirlin offered the most unexpected bombshell: that C. Vann Woodward had redacted his history of free expression at Yale at the behest of Lloyd Cutler. While I could not verify Sirlin’s account with independent evidence, I am fairly confident in his sincerity.

The transcripts of interviews conducted in the Griswold-Brewster Oral History Project supplied access to those I could not meet today. Geoffrey Kabaservice conducted these interviews in 1991 and 1992, and the project provided the material for much of his book. Because of my interest in the 1970s, I was not simply retreading ground covered in *The Guardians*, but was instead focusing on previously unpublished material. A phone conversation with Kabaservice helped identify some transcripts of unexpected importance that I would not have otherwise seen. In two cases, with Chauncey and Kagan, the transcripts allowed me to refine the focus of my own interviews with each man. In the unfortunate case of Robert Dahl, the interview included nothing about the Dahl Committee — Kabaservice had intended to conduct a

follow-up interview, but never did. Typically, most of the Griswold-Brewster Oral History Project stayed at the surface level; the various participants in Brewster's Yale painted the university and its culture in broad strokes.

Eight separate collections of university records provided the specificity that the oral history lacked. The voluminous minutes of the Dahl Committee provided a moment-by-moment account of each meeting. The Woodward Committee's records proved similarly detailed, if slightly less lengthy. For my purposes, the internal deliberations of the committees were only important when they intersected Brewster's campus politics, and I tended not to cite them in my final product. Instead, I relied on other collections, including the papers of Wasserman's office and the extensive records of the office of the president. In one case, the internal records pertaining to Lux et Veritas, Inc., I successfully petitioned the university to unseal the documents, which were otherwise restricted. In the process of my research, I stumbled across a number of anecdotes that corrected the existing historical record — for instance, that Brewster's speech at May Day contained a passionate exhortation for the university to remain open in addition to his comments about the Seale trial.

Despite my wealth of sources, what I most lacked at the end of the day was Kingman Brewster in his own words, be they personal letters or diaries. An introverted and somewhat shy man, Brewster fittingly left behind few windows into his innermost private thoughts. Parts of this paper, particularly the section on the Dahl Committee, rely on inference to deduce his intentions.

Happily, I could peer into another closed mind, that of C. Vann Woodward. John Roper's biography of the southern historian provided the basic outlines of Woodward's life and scholarship, though Roper offered surprisingly little information about Woodward's commitment to free expression. Woodward's personal papers at Yale led me to examine his relationship with

civil-libertarian Howard Beale, his unpublished writings on free speech, and his friendship with Donald Kagan. Later in the process, I was also fortunate enough to receive an advanced copy of Michael O'Brien's forthcoming edited collection of Woodward's letters, which led me to correspondence that I would not have otherwise seen. While much of this material did not find its way directly into my paper, I hope that my analysis of Woodward's principles and how he may have airbrushed history to protect Brewster adds to the growing attention that surrounds one of America's greatest historians.

The next challenge to my paper was the lack of historians studying higher education. Because most universities possess dedicated education departments, studies of American universities are typically written by social scientists interested in the present landscape of higher education or non-academic polemicists who lack the pretense of objectivity. Additionally, the history of higher education is best written through the lens of a single institution. However, in the current academic climate, scholars view institutional histories as hobbies, not serious accomplishments. In the 1950s, Yale professor George Pierson wrote a definitive two-volume history of the university and numerous similar books, feats that earned him distinction within his scholarly community. Today, Pierson's professional path is inconceivable. As a result, cultural and political historians generally avoid higher education — both because they lack a home in most schools' departments and their scholarship may not lead to career advancement.

There are three broad exceptions to this trend: First, some historians have traced how the Cold War led to an alliance between the American government, which needed to maintain a technological edge over the Soviets, and research universities happy to accept government monies. Second, some aspects of higher education can be found in other sub-fields, such as the general scholarship surrounding social unrest of the 1960s. Martha Biondi's *The Black*



*Revolution on Campus* is a good such example. Third, a few scholars have defied the trend and have written accomplished overviews of higher education. While slightly out of date, *The American College and University* by Frederick Rudolph traces the evolution of post-secondary education from colonial times to the 1960s. Rudolph led me to consider the growing role of alumni in university governance after the Civil War, the birth of the modern academic bureaucracy at the turn of the century, and the relationship between the larger American culture and its universities. I also hugely benefited from Jerome Karabel's tour-de-force study of admissions policies at Harvard, Yale and Princeton. While I disagree with Karabel's portrayal of the Dahl Committee as at-odds with Brewster's wishes, *The Chosen* provided a well-researched back-story of coeducation at Yale situated within the context of American culture. More recently, Christopher Loss' *Between Citizens and the State* traces the relationship between institutions of higher learning and government in the twentieth century. In examining the role of universities as political battlegrounds, he shows how campuses in the 1970s were at the center of the culture-wars.

In many ways, Loss suffers from a symptom of scholarship on the 1970s more broadly: He elides that decade with the 1960s, choosing to view American culture through the lens of the "long Sixties." Extending the incredibly tumultuous 1960s into the 1970s leads him to overestimate the extent of strife on campuses in the second period. This led to my final challenge: how to view the 1970s? In eschewing the concept of the long Sixties, I am not attempting to re-write the mountain of scholarship that employs this frame of analysis. Instead, I wanted to illustrate how a different perspective on the decade leads to a different understanding of the 1970s and universities at the time. As Loss, Karabel, Rudolph and others have admirably

demonstrated, college campuses provide a window into American culture. If we use that window but abandon the long Sixties, what do we see about America?

In asking this question, I was aided by Daniel Rodgers' *Age of Fracture*. Unlike Edward Berkowitz's *Something Happened*, Rodgers focuses heavily on ideas, not events. In doing so, he studies America's search for identity through the intersection of the cultural and the political — a similar intersection of people and their thoughts that make university campuses a dynamic slice of society to analyze. What I found at Yale complicates Rodgers' conclusion of fractured individualism, though admittedly Rodgers' frame of reference often extends into the 1980s and 1990s. Through Dahl and Woodward, Brewster codified norms and boundaries for his community that the campus and the broader country respected. Does this overturn Rodgers thesis? No. But it adds a dimension to the 1970s as a time of consensus building on college campuses that both he and Loss miss for different reasons.

I am grateful to a number of people for their help this past year. Thank you to my adviser, Professor Jay Gitlin, for allowing me to kibitz in his office far too much. To Sam Chauncey, for providing a backboard off of which to bounce many thoughts. To Professor Michael O'Brien, who graciously offered me a copy of his book, despite the fact that I could not yet articulate my thesis. I also owe a debt to the people who lent me their time and allowed me to interview them. Finally, thank you to those who read my drafts, especially the staunch few who looked for typos.