

# Neo-Segregation *at* Yale

*Part of Separate but Equal, Again:  
Neo-Segregation in American  
Higher Education*

*Dion J. Pierre*  
*Peter W. Wood*

# Neo- gation at

A report by the

NATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION  
*of* SCHOLARS

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This report is part of a larger project, titled *Separate but Equal, Again: Neo-segregation in American Higher Education*

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# **About the National Association of Scholars**



# Mission

The National Association of Scholars is an independent membership association of academics and others working to sustain the tradition of reasoned scholarship and civil debate in America's colleges and universities. We uphold the standards of a liberal arts education that fosters intellectual freedom, searches for the truth, and promotes virtuous citizenship.

# What We Do

We publish a quarterly journal, *Academic Questions*, which examines the intellectual controversies and the institutional challenges of contemporary higher education.

We publish studies of current higher education policy and practice with the aim of drawing attention to weaknesses and stimulating improvements.

Our website presents a stream of educated opinion and commentary on higher education, and archives our research reports for public access.

NAS engages in public advocacy to pass legislation to advance the cause of higher education reform. We file friend-of-the-court briefs in legal cases, defending freedom of speech and conscience, and the civil rights of educators and students. We give testimony before congressional and legislative committees and engage public support for worthy reforms.

NAS holds national and regional meetings that focus on important issues and public policy debates in higher education today.

# Membership

NAS membership is open to all who share a commitment to its core principles of fostering intellectual freedom and academic excellence in American higher education. A large majority of our members are current and former faculty members. We also welcome graduate and undergraduate students, teachers, college administrators, and independent scholars, as well as non-academic citizens who care about the future of higher education.

NAS members receive a subscription to our journal *Academic Questions* and access to a network of people who share a commitment to academic freedom and excellence. We offer opportunities to influence key aspects of contemporary higher education.

Visit our website, [www.nas.org](http://www.nas.org), to learn more about NAS and to become a member.

# Introduction and Acknowledgments

Peter W. Wood  
President

This study of racial segregation at Yale University is part of a larger project examining neo-segregation in American higher education in the period 1964-2019. During those fifty-five years, many American colleges and universities that initially sought to achieve racial integration found themselves inadvertently on a path to a new form of racial segregation. In the old form of segregation, colleges excluded black students or severely limited the number who were admitted. Similar policies were applied to other minority groups. By contrast, in the new form of segregation (neo-segregation), colleges eagerly recruit black and other minority students, but actively foster campus arrangements that encourage these students to form separate social groups on campus. Manifestations of this policy include racially separate student orientations, racially-identified student centers, racially-identified student counseling, racially-identified academic programs, racially separate student activities, racially-specific political agendas, racially-exclusive graduation ceremonies, and racially-organized alumni groups. In some cases, colleges also encourage racially exclusive student housing.

Our larger project is titled “Separate but Equal, Again: Neo-segregation in American Higher Education.” Our study of Yale is the first part of our published findings. Other parts include historical examinations of neo-segregation at Wesleyan University and Brown University; a national survey of neo-segregation at 173 colleges and universities across the country; and a substantial interpretative essay on our findings. We may have additional case

studies as well before the project is complete.

We are releasing the Yale report as a stand-alone document because it merits attention in its own right. Readers who are unfamiliar with National Association of Scholars research reports may be surprised by the density of detail and the emphasis on original sources. We have developed this approach in the last decade through a series of studies on controversial topics in higher education including *What Does Bowdoin Teach?; Sustainability; Inside Divestment; Making Citizens; and Outsourced to China*. The barriers to open debate on these topics are often high, and anything less than a finely detailed and scrupulously documented account is frequently dismissed as anecdotal, cherry-picked, speculative, or otherwise unworthy of further attention.

Our aim, therefore, is to provide studies that cannot be dismissed, and to that end we embrace thoroughness. But we also strive for readability. In the case of *Neo-Segregation at Yale*, we have a powerful story to tell, with a full range of vanity and folly alongside high aspirations. The reader will readily spot—and likely skip over—the passages where we fill in detail merely for the sake of completeness. Those passages, however, fulfill our commitment to telling the story whole.

We are grateful to the Arthur N. Rupe Foundation, James Callan, K. Thomas Noell, and our many Anonymous donors for the financial support that made this study possible.

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## Preface

# Separate But Equal, Again: Neo-Segregation in American Higher Education

Peter W. Wood

When I first heard of racially segregated graduation ceremonies at Ivy League colleges, I was astonished. That was in the Spring of 2016, and despite the recent spread of Black Lives Matter protests and numerous instances of black student groups issuing capital D “Demands,” I still assumed that the ultimate goal of the activists was a just and fair society. We might disagree about how to achieve justice and what exactly fairness might entail, I thought, but surely all Americans agree that racial division is unjust, unfair, and destructive.

I was born in late 1953, a few months before the U.S. Supreme Court issued its decision in *Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka*. In that case, the justices decided by a vote of nine to zero to overturn a previous ruling, *Plessy v. Ferguson*. In this 1896 case, the Supreme Court ruled that the Constitution permitted racial segregation laws in public facilities if the separate facilities were equal in quality. The shorthand for the *Plessy* decision was “separate but equal,” and under that rubric Jim Crow segregation reigned in the American

South for the next 58 years. The Supreme Court's decision in *Brown* demolished the "separate but equal" façade. The justices observed that the legalistic subterfuge of "racially separate" almost never resulted in "facilities" that were of equal quality. Especially in schools, racial segregation generally meant that black students were provided fewer resources, inferior opportunities, and a lesser education.

For many years, scholars picked over the Supreme Court's findings in *Brown*. There have been learned arguments that the Court gave too much weight to some kinds of evidence and not enough to other kinds. But experts and the public alike generally came to agree that the Court was right to overturn *Plessy*. The separate-but-equal doctrine was unworthy of America. It gave a legal pretext for what everyone knew was a lie: state-sponsored segregation was never meant to be an avenue towards racial equality. It was meant to be what it was: a form of racial oppression. A nation founded on the principle that "All men are created equal," and on the rule of law, should not have enshrined the idea that the citizens should be divided by race. Whatever the quibbles the experts might have had over how the Supreme Court reached its decision in *Brown*, Americans came to embrace the central finding that the government should not engage in racial segregation.

I belong to the generation of Americans who grew up believing that this was more than just a legal matter. It was—and is—a moral principle. Segregation is wrong, whether it is imposed by government fiat or by the policy of some private entity. Segregated lunch counters in privately-owned restaurants and segregated movie theatres in privately-owned cinemas were as bad as segregated government facilities.

The moral certitudes of youth often run into complications as we get older. At some point I began to wonder if my sense that segregation was always bad made sense in contexts such as black churches and black colleges, places where racial segregation was plainly the result of individuals making free choices about how they wished to live their lives. I began to make allowances for these, but I remained committed to the basic principle that racial segregation is wrong—except in certain instances.

My, and others, willingness to make allowances was anticipated by the Supreme Court. It had evolved the practice of "strict scrutiny." That meant that any time the government wanted to classify people by race, it had to come up with a compelling reason and sound evidence that it couldn't accomplish whatever public good it was seeking in another way.

Most Americans don't go around talking about "strict scrutiny," but I think we have taken the idea to heart. We think that, generally speaking, it is wrong to treat people differently based on their race, but we do make

exceptions. We practice private versions of strict scrutiny.

Yet when I heard of racially separate graduation ceremonies at elite colleges, my alarms went off. I could think of no compelling, morally competent reason why colleges would do such a thing. A year after I first heard of these ceremonies, Harvard University decided that it too would hold a racially segregated commencement—an endorsement of the concept that attracted considerable public attention and criticism.<sup>1</sup>

My personal alarm over this development is the origin of this collection of studies titled *Separate but Equal, Again: Neo-Segregation in American Higher Education*.

## Who We Are

As it happened, I was in a position in which I could translate my alarm into action. As president of the National Association of Scholars (NAS), I have some room to choose the issues in higher education we investigate. I thought that NAS should look into the decisions of elite colleges and universities to hold separate graduation ceremonies for black students. How many colleges were doing this? Why? How did the students feel about it? Did some students decline to participate?

This wasn't new territory for the NAS. The NAS was founded in 1987 by a network of college and university faculty members, who had begun a few years earlier to assemble as "The Campus Coalition for Democracy." The Campus Coalition drew together prominent scholars who were worried about the threat to liberal arts education posed by Marxists and by other opponents of the Western tradition. They worried that "relativism" was displacing the pursuit of truth as the core value of higher education. The Campus Coalition for Democracy published a newsletter titled *Academic Questions*. The flavor of the organization is apparent in the first issue, which featured an excerpt from an article by William Bennett, then Secretary of Education. Bennett championed Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s views of moral order, which he identified as at odds with the radical ideology spreading through education:

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<sup>1</sup> Anemona Hartocollis, "College Celebrate Diversity with Separate Commencement," *The New York Times*, 2 June 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/02/us/black-commencement-harvard.html>. And see Eryn Mathewson, "Don't Hate on Black Graduation Ceremony at Harvard University," *The Undeclared*, 23 May 2018, <https://theundefeated.com/whhw/dont-hate-on-black-graduation-ceremony-at-harvard-university/>: "The need and desire for culture-specific graduation ceremonies are not new or even unique to Harvard University. Syracuse University hosted its first black graduation ceremony in 2004, the University of Southern California initiated its in 1999 and Stanford established its black graduation ceremony more than 40 years ago. Columbia University, UC Berkeley and the University of Washington also host ceremonies."

Dr. King's teachings are an embarrassment and an offense to the posture of cultural relativism, which has come to dominate much of the teaching of social studies in our schools today.

The difficulty that Dr. King presents to many curriculum "experts" is that he was firmly committed to making "value judgments" and to insisting that some moral teachings are demonstrably superior to others. He taught, for example, that democracy is morally superior to totalitarianism.<sup>2</sup>

The Campus Coalition for Democracy's tough-minded support for moral and intellectual standards attracted broad attention in higher education. This led to its formal organization as the non-profit 501(c)(3) National Association of Scholars in 1987. NAS began as a network of academics determined to defend liberal arts education as a necessary part of preparing students for active citizenship. The motto of the new organization was, "For reasoned scholarship in a free society." Among other things, NAS set its sights on maintaining race-neutral standards in the academy.

A signal victory in that campaign was the passage in 1996 of a ballot referendum in California, Proposition 209, authored by NAS members Glynn Custred and Tom Wood. Proposition 209, also called the California Civil Rights Initiative, banned the use of racial preferences by state institutions, including public colleges and universities. Many of those colleges and universities have spent decades attempting to subvert the law, but it has withstood numerous legal challenges and become a model for other states.

Today, the NAS has nearly 3,000 members from across the country. We publish a quarterly journal that preserves the name of the Campus Coalition's newsletter, *Academic Questions*. We hold regional conferences. We intervene on behalf of scholars tangled in the machinery of political correctness. We advocate for public policies that will improve higher education. And we publish long, deeply researched reports on matters that the higher education establishment would prefer the public not pay attention to. Among our recent contributions are *What Does Bowdoin Teach? How a Contemporary Liberal Arts College Shapes Students*; *Making Citizens: How American Universities Teach Civics*; and *Outsourced to China*. The last of these prompted Congress to enact restrictions on the ability of the Chinese government to run programs on American college campuses.

2 William Bennett, "Martin Luther King Jr. as Teacher," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 15 January 1986, <https://www.csmonitor.com/1986/0115/eking.html>.

This isn't the place for a long history of the NAS, but it is important to underscore that our opposition to racial segregation in higher education goes way back and has involved numerous efforts. Most recently NAS was the first organization to sign on as a formal supporter of Students for Fair Admissions in its lawsuit against Harvard University for discriminating against Asian applicants on the basis of race.

Thus, when the black-only graduation ceremonies came to my attention, I had the tools to do something. First I wrote a grant application, because nothing can be done without financial support. The Arthur N. Rupe Foundation of Santa Barbara, California came forward with a generous grant to get us started. Then the challenge was to find a dedicated researcher to help us execute the project.

## Dion J. Pierre

Finding a qualified researcher to pursue this study proved to be a challenge. Anyone who chooses to pursue research that cuts against the grain of today's identity politics is likely to face recrimination. The tactics by which the academic left enforces conformity are not gentle and not always limited to harsh words. This prospect deterred many candidates until we came upon Mr. Dion J. Pierre. Dion is a recent graduate of Hofstra University who had spent a year in Washington, D.C. working for Walter Russell Mead at the Public Interest Fellowship. With eyes wide open, he was willing to venture where others had shied away.

Dion is an outgoing young man, a voracious reader who devours books on Western history and biographies of great leaders (Churchill, Grant, Reagan). From the start he was eager to prove himself and to improve himself by acquiring the hard discipline of an NAS researcher. He defines himself as a conservative—sometimes modified as “black conservative”—but I would define him as an intellectual who, at this point, has no sure identity. He is attracted by ideas and tries them on for size. Perhaps his proudest point is that he refused all the advantages that Hofstra University was willing to award him because of his race. That wasn't a cost-free decision. Because of it, he graduated with a mountain of debt. His NAS salary can remove only a few pebbles from that mountain.

I hope our neo-segregation project will change his situation for the better. What emerges from the pages of our reports on Yale, Wesleyan, and Brown is an unusually talented writer. The ideas in these reports are entirely Dion's and so too most of the writing. I am his editor and, as editors are wont to do,

I've rearranged text, cut out sections that dragged, reworded some sentences, and here and there added some paragraphs of my own. But the reports remain Dion's work from conception to final cut. It adds up to a powerfully original work of scholarship and a major contribution to understanding American race relations.

## A Thesis

I started this project believing that the black-only graduations were evidence of an unfortunate backward slip. I'm not naïve about these matters. My 2003 book, *Diversity: The Invention of a Concept*, tracked in detail how Americans had absorbed the dubious logic of racial division as a supposedly positive force in our national life. I noted that *diversity* succeeded in meaning opposite things to different groups of students. It was sold to white students mainly as the opportunity to mix freely with students from many dissimilar backgrounds. But at the same time it was sold to "students of color" as the opportunity to form enclaves of their own within majority white institutions. This dual-message marketing of diversity started in the late 1980s, and since then whole professions of diversity counselors and diversity deans have grown up with a vested interest in keeping these conceptions alive.

*Diversity*, as I said then, not only appealed with a different message to different demographics, it also mothered different emotions. On one side it encouraged a feeling of benevolence and pan-ethnic unity; on the other side, it fostered a sense of grievance, resentment, and simmering anger. I worried that the angry side of the *diversity* ideology was likely to play into a growing susceptibility of Americans for angry theatrics and showmanship—an emergent angri-culture—that I described in another book, *A Bee in the Mouth: Anger in America Now* (2007). I hereby claim my credentials as a prophet.

Be that as it may, the Obama presidency and the growing racial integration of American life suggested to me that the crude forms of segregation—even if voluntary—were starting to fade from everyday life. If so, the creation of black-only graduation ceremonies might be understood as a last ditch effort of the professional diversiphiles to sustain a separatist message even as the students themselves no longer felt much attraction to it.

Dion disagreed.

From the start he said that neo-segregation was nothing new. It had been going on for decades and was still gaining momentum. He was willing to trace its deep origins back to the black separatist movements of the early twentieth century and even earlier into the Reconstruction era. The black college

students in the 1960s who began to demand various forms of separation under the banner of Malcolm X could consciously look back to a long tradition of black separatism. That tradition had always been a marginal part of the black community. Oddly, at the moment of the greatest achievement of the Civil Rights Movement, when the prospects of racial integration had never seemed brighter, a new spirit of self-imposed racial segregation descended on some of the most successful and privileged members of the black community: students who had been admitted to elite colleges and universities.

This sounded unlikely to me, but I've learned in running research projects that it is best to give your lead researcher room to run. If Dion could not substantiate his thesis, he'd have to return to mine: that neo-segregation was a new, and probably temporary, misstep on the path to further racial integration.

Plainly, Dion made his case—at least with me. Readers will have to decide for themselves.

## Neo-Segregation, By the Numbers

Our study examined three universities in depth: Yale, Wesleyan, and Brown. Originally there were others and we may get back to them. But these three elite private universities in New England provide the granite floor for our conclusions. We know how neo-segregation was born and how it grew at Yale, Wesleyan, and Brown. Our study, however, also includes data on 173 other four-year colleges and universities across the country. These include public and private institutions, large and small, representing all fifty states.

What we found was that neo-segregation is widespread if not pervasive. About 46 percent (80 colleges out of 173 surveyed) segregate student orientation programs; 43 percent (75 colleges out of the total) offer segregated residential arrangements; and 72 percent (125 colleges out of the total) segregate graduation ceremonies. Though these arrangements are ostensibly voluntary, students can't easily opt out. We tracked numerous indicators of neo-segregation, from "Diversity Fly-Ins," (68 percent of the total) where colleges offer minority students an expense-paid segregated preview of the experience that awaits them should they enroll, to segregated alumni groups.

The heart of all this, no doubt, are the segregated ethnic and racial clubs—segregation having long ago spread to many minority groups besides blacks. Counting the number of ethnic and racial clubs has proved daunting. Is a "Spanish Club" an opportunity for students learning Spanish to practice their language skills or an enclave for students of Latin-American origin?



Uncertainties like that prevent us from offering an exact count of colleges in our sample that have segregated clubs of various types. But in our 173-college sample, we found only one college that had no segregated clubs. That is St. Louis Christian College. How long this tiny college (as of 2017-18, 82 students, 31 of whom are black) will maintain this distinction is unclear. In 2015, black students there organized and issued their own list, “The Demands,” outlining steps towards repairing “the institutionally racist nature of the College.”<sup>3</sup>

The segregated clubs are typically connected to ethnic “cultural centers,” which implies a dedicated physical space, a director, and professional and clerical staff. In our sample, 85 percent of the colleges and universities have “multicultural centers.” Black cultural centers exist at 34 percent of the institutions in our sample. In many cases, such as Stanford University, the institution hosts both a multicultural center and a black cultural center. Stanford also has a Latino Cultural Center; an Asian-American Cultural Center; and a Native American Cultural Center. The profusion of such centers correlates with the profusion of segregated ethnic and racial clubs.

To give a sense of what our survey data look like, here is the section on Swarthmore College, which ranks unusually low in neo-segregation programs:

## Neo-segregation at Swarthmore College in 2019:

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <p>Black Studies<br/>Curriculum</p> | <p><b>Black Studies:</b><br/> <a href="https://www.swarthmore.edu/black-studies-program">https://www.swarthmore.edu/black-studies-program</a><br/>         The purpose of the Black Studies Program is to introduce students to the history, culture and society, and political and economic conditions of Black people in Africa, the Americas, and elsewhere in the world; and to explore new approaches—in perspectives, analyses and interdisciplinary techniques—appropriate to the study of the Black experience.... The courses in the Black Studies Program at Swarthmore enhance the liberal arts tradition of the College, acknowledging positivist, comparative, progressive, modernist and post-modernist, post-colonial and Afrocentric approaches.</p> |
|-------------------------------------|--|

3 “The Demands.” <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/541e2ec8e4b042b085c464d9/t/566100dde4b0ae1476aa5d30/1449197789238/The+Demands+-+St.+Louis+Christian+College+%281%29.pdf>

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|---|--|
| <p>Diversity Pipeline Programs/Race Based Scholarship</p> | <p><b>Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program:</b><br/> <a href="https://canvas.dartmouth.edu/courses/7141/pages/mellon-mays-undergraduate-fellowship-program">https://canvas.dartmouth.edu/courses/7141/pages/mellon-mays-undergraduate-fellowship-program</a><br/> The fundamental objective of MMUF is to address, over time, the problem of underrepresentation in the academy at the level of college and university faculties. This goal can be achieved both by increasing the number of students from underrepresented minority groups (URM) who pursue Ph.Ds. and by supporting the pursuit of Ph.Ds. by students who may not come from traditional minority groups but have otherwise demonstrated a commitment to the goals of MMUF. The MMUF program is designed to encourage fellows to enter Ph.D. programs that prepare students for professional careers; it is not intended to support students who intend to go on to medical school, law school or other professional schools.</p> |
| <p>Black Cultural Center</p>                              | <p><b>Black Cultural Center:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.swarthmore.edu/black-cultural-center">http://www.swarthmore.edu/black-cultural-center</a><br/> The BCC, also known as "The House," is home to Swarthmore's storied and accomplished Black Community, a community that has received national accolades and is considered a model for many who are concerned about the development and well-being of Black students in the academy. Swarthmore College's Black Cultural Center (BCC) actualizes the College's commitment to "ethical intelligence" in every aspect of its co-curricular work.</p>  |
| <p>Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs</p>                 | <p><b>DESHI:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations">http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations</a><br/> DESHI hopes to raise awareness about South Asian identity and culture and hopes to promote events and discussions on campus about these topics.</p>   |
| <p>Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs</p>                 | <p><b>ENLACE:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations">http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations</a><br/> Latinx Student Affinity Group under the Intercultural Center, which serves to provide support and programming to the self-identifying Latinx students on campus. We host a variety of social events, community events, and academic events throughout the year as well as bi-weekly meetings or dinners that cover a variety of themes and topics.</p>   |
| <p>Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs</p>                 | <p><b>South Asian Students Society:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations">http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations</a><br/> A Support Group for Southeast Asian Students</p>   |

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs | <p><b>Swarthmore Hong Kong Student Association:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations">http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations</a><br/> Swarthmore Hong Kong Student Association, founded by Chun Hei Wong and Yenny Cheung, is a cultural group for students who identify with Hong Kong culture.</p>  |
| Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs | <p><b>Swarthmore Chinese Society:</b><br/> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/pg/SwarthmoreChineseSociety/about/?ref=page_internal">https://www.facebook.com/pg/SwarthmoreChineseSociety/about/?ref=page_internal</a><br/> Swarthmore Chinese Society (SCS) will be hosting various activities this year, including the Mid-Autumn Carnival, the Mafia Night, the Dumpling Feast, etc. Weekly dinner will also be held on every Thursday.</p>  |
| Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs | <p><b>Swarthmore Asian Organization:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations">http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations</a><br/> The Swarthmore Asian Organization (SAO), est. 1987, is a support, social, and political group open to any Swarthmore student who self-identifies as an Asian, Pacific Islander, Asian American, or Pacific Islander American.</p>  |
| Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs | <p><b>Swarthmore African Students Association (SASA):</b><br/> <a href="http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations">http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations</a><br/> SASA is an on-campus organization dedicated to serving Swarthmore's African population (both immigrant and first generation). A close-knit group, SASA provides academic, social, and cultural support for African students, and serves the greater purpose of spreading awareness about the continent across cultural lines.</p> |
| Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs | <p><b>PersuAsian:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations">http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations</a><br/> Support group for queer-asian pacific islander identifying individuals.</p>   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>Diversiphile Club</p>                  | <p><b>Multi:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations">http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations</a><br/>                 Multi is a community for people who self-identify as multiracial, multiethnic, multicultural, and/or multireligious. Multi supports the exploration and navigation of multiple identities that are unaddressed or marginalized in mainstream society. We aim to create a close-knit community in which intersectionality and the complexities of multi-ness are celebrated and explored; this space is necessary at Swarthmore and in the world.</p> |
| <p>Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs</p> | <p><b>Kizuna:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations">http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations</a><br/>                 Kizuna is Swarthmore College's Japanese culture club. Kizuna provides a place to build community around shared interest in Japanese culture for students of varied backgrounds. We promote diversity from within the group by talking about our own heritage and express this value through open and welcoming weekly dinners as well as campus-wide events.</p>  |
| <p>Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs</p> | <p><b>Hapa:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations">http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations</a><br/>                 Hapa seeks to build a community for students who identify as both part Asian and mixed race. We aim to create a space for hapa-identifying students to socialize and share their experiences with those sharing similar backgrounds, as well as to create awareness of the unique challenges and stories surrounding hapa identity.</p>   |
| <p>Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs</p> | <p><b>Swarthmore Korean Culture Group:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations">http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations</a></p>   |
| <p>Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs</p> | <p><b>ABBLE:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations">http://www.swarthmore.edu/living-swarthmore/swarthmores-student-organizations</a><br/>                 ABLLE is a student group for Black and Latino male students, which is dedicated towards brotherhood, excellence and civic responsibility.</p>  |

And here is the tabular data for Dartmouth, which ranks unusually high:

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Segregated Mentorship Programs       | <p><b>Dartmouth Advancing Blackness Fellowship:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/black/">http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/black/</a><br/> The DAB Fellowship is a development program for Black men on campus, with a focus on supporting the transition of first-year students into the campus climate, as well as supporting upperclassmen in leadership skill development and professional transitions.</p>  |
| Diversity Fly In                     | <p><b>Dartmouth Bound:</b><br/> <a href="https://admissions.dartmouth.edu/visits-programs/dartmouth-bound/summer-program">https://admissions.dartmouth.edu/visits-programs/dartmouth-bound/summer-program</a><br/> The Dartmouth Bound: Summer Program takes place in July and is designed to provide high school seniors from historically underrepresented backgrounds and communities with an opportunity to preview college by immersion in student life at Dartmouth.</p>  |
| Diversity Fly In                     | <p><b>Native American Community Program:</b><br/> <a href="https://admissions.dartmouth.edu/visits-programs/dartmouth-bound/native-american-community-program">https://admissions.dartmouth.edu/visits-programs/dartmouth-bound/native-american-community-program</a><br/> Native American Community Program (formerly Native Fly-In) participants visit classes, interact with faculty, connect with the Native community at Dartmouth, and attend workshops on the admissions and financial aid process. In 1970, John Kemeny, Dartmouth's 13th president, pledged to redress the historical lack of opportunities for Native Americans in higher education. This commitment not only held Dartmouth to a higher standard than its peers, but also established the Native American Program, laid the groundwork for the Native American Studies department, and directed the Admissions Office to actively recruit Native students.</p> |
| Exclusive POC / Identity Based Event | <p><b>The SupperTime:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/black/">http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/black/</a><br/> The SupperTime is a termly dinner that centers the Black Queer experience. Once a term a dinner guest who identifies is brought to campus and students have the opportunity for a group dinner with to celebrate, reflect, and simply just be with one another in a space of openness, support, and safety.</p>   |
| Segregated Mentorship Programs       | <p><b>Latinx Partnerships for Success:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/latino/">http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/latino/</a><br/> Latinx Partnership for Success brings together a cohort of new students to build community bonds, receive one-on-one mentoring, and grow as leaders in their community. A cohort is a group of people who have banded together to form a community of support and companionship.</p>   |

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| <p>Segregated Mentorship Programs</p>     | <p><b>Rising Mentoring Program:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/black/">http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/black/</a><br/>                 RISE is a four-year enrichment program for Black undergraduate women at Dartmouth that aims to build upon the Resilience, Integrity, and Strength of young Black women, Empowering them to be their best selves. This program will facilitate a smooth transition for first-year students on campus through its mentoring program, as well as support upperclasswomen with professional transitions and mentorship by Black women professionals in the northeast.</p>  |
| <p>Segregated Advisors</p>                | <p><b>Sexuality, Women, and Gender Advising:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/swag/index.html">www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/swag/index.html</a><br/>                 As part of the Office of Pluralism and Leadership (OPAL), under the Division of Student Affairs, the mission of Sexuality, Women, and Gender (SWAG) Advising is to foster student and community development, wellness, and academic success with a particular focus on issues that pertain to gender and sexuality diversity, equity, and inclusion. SWAG Advising fulfills this mission through programming, events, individual and student group advising, and individual engagement.</p>          |
| <p>Segregated Commencement Ceremonies</p> | <p><b>PRIDE Banquet and Lavender Graduation:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/programs/graduations/graduations.html">http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/programs/graduations/graduations.html</a><br/>                 The PRIDE Banquet and Lavender Graduation is the closing event for PRIDE week and serves as a celebration and recognition of the contributions of current students to the Dartmouth LGBTQIA+ community. Graduating students are honored with rainbow tassels and have their accomplishments celebrated.</p>   |
| <p>Segregated Commencement Ceremonies</p> | <p><b>Lorna C Hill, '73 Black Graduation and Awards Celebration:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/programs/graduations/graduations.html">http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/programs/graduations/graduations.html</a><br/>                 Formerly known as the Black Baccalaureate, The Lorna C Hill, '73 Graduation and Awards Celebration is a culminating recognition celebration for graduating seniors who identify as part of the Black community. During the Stole Ceremony, students are initiated into the Black Alumni of Dartmouth Association (BADA), and stoles are received by students to wear during the campus-wide official graduation ceremony.</p> |
| <p>Segregated Commencement Ceremonies</p> | <p><b>Si Si Puedo! Latinx Graduation Ceremony:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/programs/graduations/graduations.html">http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/programs/graduations/graduations.html</a><br/>                 During the ¡Si Se Pudo! Latinx Graduation Ceremony the community comes together to celebrate the contributions of graduating seniors. Seniors offer words of advice to fellow students and stoles are awarded to wear during graduation.</p>  |

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| <p>Segregated Commencement Ceremonies</p> | <p><b>Pan Asian Family Reception:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/programs/graduations/graduations.html">http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/programs/graduations/graduations.html</a><br/>         During the Pan Asian Family Reception, the Pan Asian community and their families come together to recognize the contributions of graduates and celebrate the completion of their undergraduate degree.</p>  |
| <p>Multicultural Center</p>               | <p><b>Office of Pluralism and Leadership:</b><br/> <a href="https://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/">https://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/</a><br/>         Dartmouth believes that a 21st century liberal arts education integrates respect for, and understanding of, the unique and essential benefits of living, learning, and engaging in an inclusive global community. OPAL's mission is to foster a Dartmouth where all students can thrive, value difference, and contribute to the creation of a socially just world.</p>  |
| <p>Segregated Advisors</p>                | <p><b>Assistant Dean &amp; Advisor to Pan Asian Students:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/panasian/">http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/panasian/</a><br/>         Dean Shiella Cervantes joined the OPAL team as the Assistant Dean and Advisor to Pan Asian Students in the summer of 2014. Previously, Shiella has worked at the University of Pennsylvania as Associate Director of the Pan-Asian American Community House.</p>   |
| <p>Segregated Advisors</p>                | <p><b>Acting Assistant Dean &amp; Advisor to Latinx Students:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/latino/">http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/latino/</a><br/>         Dean Renata Baptista (she, her, hers) joined the OPAL team in June 2015, hailing most recently from Columbus, Ohio. During her time at Dartmouth, Renata has worked across the communities in OPAL to support community-wide Heritage and History Month celebrations and directed the leadership for social change program, OPAL IMPACT.</p>   |
| <p>Segregated Advisors</p>                | <p><b>Black Student Advising:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/black/">http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/black/</a><br/>         Black Student Advising: OPAL Black Student Advising (OPAL BSA) is dedicated to enhancing the Dartmouth experience through supporting and challenging the community around issues pertinent to healthy identity development and the Black experience. OPAL offers personal and academic guidance, advice, and support, including, but not limited to, social adjustment concerns, academic and classroom issues, bias-related incidents, interpersonal relationships, leadership development opportunities, financial aid concerns, and community and cultural programming.</p> |

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| First Generation           | <p><b>First Generation Low Income Commencement Celebration:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/programs/graduations/graduations.html">http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/programs/graduations/graduations.html</a><br/> The First Generation Low Income Commencement Celebration celebrates First Generation students at the culmination of their Undergraduate career. A time for celebration with friends, family and community, students come together to applaud each other, look towards the future, and reflect on their First Gen experiences.</p>  |
| Segregated Facilities      | <p><b>Pan Asian Community Resource Room:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/panasian/">http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/panasian/</a><br/> The Pan Asian Community (PAC) Resource Room is located in 104 Robinson Hall. Dedicated to our student community in 2001, this space was redecorated and reopened in the fall of 2012. For studying, student organization meetings, mid-day naps, movie nights, karaoke fun, or whatever else – this space is your home away from home.</p>  |
| Segregated Alumni Groups   | <p><b>Black Alumni of Dartmouth:</b><br/> <a href="http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/programs/graduations/graduations.html">http://www.dartmouth.edu/~opal/programs/graduations/graduations.html</a></p>  |
| Segregated Residence Halls | <p><b>Latin American, Latino, &amp; Caribbean Studies House:</b><br/> <a href="https://students.dartmouth.edu/living-learning/communities/identity-based-communities/latin-american-latino-caribbean-studies-house">https://students.dartmouth.edu/living-learning/communities/identity-based-communities/latin-american-latino-caribbean-studies-house</a><br/> The Latin American, Latino, &amp; Caribbean Studies (LALACS) House is sponsored and coordinated by the OPAL Assistant Dean and Advisor to Latinx Students in collaboration with Residential Education. The space is used for a diverse array of programs and events. The community facilitates communication and interaction among various sectors of the Latinx community, students, staff, and faculty from across campus. The facility provides an apartment for the LALACS House Fellow who interacts regularly with the residents.</p> |
| Segregated Residence Halls | <p><b>Shabazz Center for Intellectual Inquiry:</b><br/> <a href="https://students.dartmouth.edu/living-learning/communities/identity-based-communities/shabazz-center-intellectual-inquiry">https://students.dartmouth.edu/living-learning/communities/identity-based-communities/shabazz-center-intellectual-inquiry</a><br/> The Shabazz Center aims to enhance the out-of-classroom experience by incorporating contemporary academic inquiries into student residential space. The Shabazz Center Fellow, Undergraduate Advisor and Staff Advisor organize programs and activities in conjunction with faculty and staff members of the African and African American Studies Program to ensure a vibrant public discourse. The community houses the offices of the Afro-American Society and is used for a wide variety of student-initiated and Center-sponsored programs and events.</p>               |



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| <p>Segregated<br/>Residence Halls</p>                             | <p><b>Hillel LLC:</b><br/> <a href="https://students.dartmouth.edu/living-learning/communities/identity-based-communities/hillel-llc">https://students.dartmouth.edu/living-learning/communities/identity-based-communities/hillel-llc</a><br/> The Hillel program provides a community where residents can discuss, learn, and explore the Jewish faith. Each of the two apartments has a kosher kitchen for those who want to be able to cook the occasional kosher meal for themselves or friends.</p>  |
| <p>Segregated<br/>Residence Halls</p>                             | <p><b>Asian and American LLC:</b><br/> <a href="https://students.dartmouth.edu/living-learning/communities/identity-based-communities/asian-and-asian-american-llc">https://students.dartmouth.edu/living-learning/communities/identity-based-communities/asian-and-asian-american-llc</a><br/> We serve as the center for academic conversations around Asian/Asian American issues and a space to host meetings and discussions related to Asian/Asian American identity, while also serving as a welcoming location for anyone interested in learning about these topics. Through film screenings, community potlucks, optional trips to nearby conferences and exhibitions, student-led discussions, dinners with professors, and intercommunity discussions, we will critically assess what it means to be Asian/Asian American as individuals and as a community at and outside of Dartmouth. We hope to foster a better understanding of Asian/Asian American identity and how it intersects with gender, sexuality, religion, nationality, and more.</p> |
| <p>Diversity Pipeline<br/>Programs/Race<br/>Based Scholarship</p> | <p><b>Mellon Mays Undergraduate</b><br/> Fellowship Program:<br/> <a href="https://canvas.dartmouth.edu/courses/7141/pages/mellon-mays-undergraduate-fellowship-program">canvas.dartmouth.edu/courses/7141/pages/mellon-mays-undergraduate-fellowship-program</a><br/> The fundamental objective of MMUF is to address the problem of underrepresentation in the academy at the level of college and university faculties. This goal can be achieved both by increasing the number of students from underrepresented minority groups who pursue PhDs and by supporting the pursuit of PhDs by students who may not come from traditional minority groups but have otherwise demonstrated a commitment to the goals of MMUF.</p>  |
| <p>Segregated Ethnic<br/>and Racial Clubs</p>                     | <p><b>Asian/American Students for Action:</b><br/> <a href="https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations">https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations</a><br/> This organization aims to prepare students for life-long advocacy on Asian and Asian-American issues, beginning with organizing for Asian and Asian-American resources on college campuses.</p>  |
| <p>Segregated Ethnic<br/>and Racial Clubs</p>                     | <p><b>MOSAIC:</b><br/> <a href="https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations">https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations</a><br/> A supportive forum and community for multi-racial/ethnic/cultural students which focuses on effecting change in a variety of social issues.</p>  |

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| Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs | <p><b>Women of Color Collective:</b><br/> <a href="https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations">https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations</a><br/>         WoCC is a discussion group consisting of both women of color and allies. Its members meet weekly to discuss current events, campus issues, and the politics of identity.</p>  |
| Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs | <p><b>Men of Color Alliance:</b><br/> <a href="https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations">https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations</a><br/>         The Men of Color Alliance is focused on addressing the issues and building a true community of men of color specifically, which deals with the goals and expectations faced by them. The Men of Color Alliance hopes to accept, support and uplift all men of color by bringing their worlds together and engaging a praxis of manhood. This can mean focusing on the social aspects and nuances of being a man of color, the academic burdens and pressure felt at certain times, aiding in professional development, helping to find definitions of manhood or discussing the issues that concern us more personally.</p> |
| Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs | <p><b>Latin American Student Association:</b><br/> <a href="https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations">https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations</a><br/>         The Latin American Student Association is an organization that advocates for the understanding and expression of Latin America and Latin American culture in the Dartmouth community and abroad. LASA seeks to promote the academic and social well-being of students of Latin American origin, self-identification, background, or heritage while building professional networks between students, faculty, and alumni.</p>   |
| Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs | <p><b>La Alianza @ Dartmouth:</b><br/> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/pg/LaAlianzaLatina/about/?ref=page_internal">https://www.facebook.com/pg/LaAlianzaLatina/about/?ref=page_internal</a><br/>         La Alianza Latina's guiding principle will be to foster, advance, and promote a strong Latin@ identity on Dartmouth College's campus. The Organization will strive to raise awareness of academic, educational, social, cultural, political, and institutional issues concerning the Latin@ community. La Alianza Latina will strive to create a comfortable space for Latin@ students. Ultimately, the Organization is to serve as a support network for the Latin@ community.</p>  |
| Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs | <p><b>Dartmouth African Students Association:</b><br/> <a href="https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations">https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations</a><br/>         Dartmouth African Students Association works to represent and be the face of the African continent at Dartmouth, as well as foster a stronger African community on campus.</p>   |

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| Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs | <p><b>Korean Students Association:</b><br/> <a href="https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations">https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations</a><br/>         Founded in 1989, the Korean Students Associations is a Dartmouth College organization to promote better understanding of Korean heritage, culture, language, and issue-related concerns to the Dartmouth community.</p>   |
| Segregated Ethnic and Racial Clubs | <p><b>Black Girls Are Magic:</b><br/> <a href="https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations">https://students.dartmouth.edu/coso/organizations/coso-recognized-organizations</a><br/>         Black Girls Are Magic is an organization dedicated to creating a safe and nurturing space for black women. Regardless of political differences, BGAM fosters community among black women in catering to gendered and racial need, including black hair care, culturally specific events, entrepreneurial support, fostering literary interests, and much more. Self-care is an essential principal of maintaining and caring for one's mental health. By creating a black women environment, BGAM hopes to strengthen the black women community. In doing so, BGAM addresses the physical and mental health of black women by seeking self-care in community, hair care, arts and crafts, dance, music, and mentorship. Hair politics play an important role in black women's lives. In order to address the hair care needs of black women, BGAM holds protein treatment sessions to increase the health of black women's hair, and teach healthy hair care habits for natural hair.</p> |

This data lend itself to many kinds of analysis beyond what we have already done. Is neo-segregation more common in private or public colleges? Does it reflect the size of the student body? Is it more common in some regions of the country than others? Does the kind of neo-segregation (diversity fly-ins, segregated orientation programs, segregated advisors, segregated residential facilities, etc.) correlate with other aspects of the institution? Do less prosperous colleges have more or less neo-segregation than more wealthy colleges?

## Seven Questions

Having established that neo-segregation exists in American higher education, we come to some crucial questions. Does it matter? Is it harmful or beneficial or some combination of the two? Should the public care? Should the students?

Behind these questions lie still more basic ones: How do we balance equality with freedom? To what extent is neo-segregation part and parcel of the multiculturalist agenda in American higher education? And what, if anything, should be done about neo-segregation?

Our answers are embedded in the reports, but it would be asking a lot

of the reader to say, “Go look.” The reports are necessarily long and detailed. What follows in this section are succinct answers. Context, however, contributes a great deal and we urge the reader of this short guide to venture up the mountain trail to see the bigger picture for himself.

## *1. Does neo-segregation matter?*

The division of students on campus into separate racial and ethnic groups is the primary social reality of most American college students today. It isn't incidental to the experience of college. It is central. Every student knows about and is frequently and forcefully reminded of it. Colleges and universities spend hundreds of millions of dollars every year to reinforce neo-segregation. So, yes, it matters.

## *2. Is neo-segregation harmful or beneficial, or some combination of the two?*

Segregation of racial and ethnic groups is intended to benefit the members of the minority groups who are thought by their college administrations to be vulnerable and in need of the life-enhancing benefits of group solidarity. The most readily apparent harm from such segregation is that it fosters a sense of insecurity. The members of the segregated group are taught to fear other groups, especially white students. They are encouraged to see themselves as victims or potential victims, and as heirs to past grievances. Training students to see themselves as vulnerable to the transgressions of a larger, intolerant or bigoted community is poor preparation for life in American society. Students who venture outside the segregated bubble may indeed encounter some hostile attitudes and racial stereotypes, but surely it is better to learn how to deal with these realities than to hide from them.

Segregation is harmful in another respect as well. It motivates an unending search for evidence that the larger community is hostile to the minority group. The concepts of “microaggressions” and “implicit bias” are the weaponized versions of this search. The music that accompanies segregation is a combination of anger and suspicion. Sentencing bright young people to four years of intensive isolation in a segregated community that plays this music on endless loop demoralizes students and undermines their education.

On balance, neo-segregation is harmful to those who are segregated. It is also harmful to the whole community of students.

### 3. *Should the public care about neo-segregation?*

At least superficially, neo-segregation is a personal choice. Colleges and universities are not forcing minority students to join segregated social groups, take segregated classes, or march in segregated graduations. But the voluntary character of neo-segregation is illusory. Colleges encourage minority students when they are still in high school to apply as minority students and to capitalize on their minority identities. Many colleges have “diversity fly-ins” where they invite minority students, usually at the college’s expense, to special segregated sessions that sell the college as an attractive destination. The students who attend as recognized minorities often receive benefits, sometimes in the form of extra financial aid: a practice that is illegal but still widespread. When these students arrive, they are often conscripted into a segregated orientation.

Those steps are “voluntary” in name only. It would take an unusually adroit and determined student to avoid them—and a very brave one. The segregated orientation programs are the gateway drug to many other forms of segregation because they mean that the first classmates the students meet and get to know belong to the same ethnic group. The typical vulnerability and social awkwardness of freshmen is channeled into reinforcing minority identity and preparing students for the security of a segregated support group. Those who resist are exposed to both isolation and ridicule.

The public should care because neo-segregation is the breeding ground of racial conflict in American society. Neo-segregation inculcates in young people the readiness to cling to a victim identity at the expense of becoming a positive member of the larger community. No doubt a large portion of the racial grievance politics we see in society at large these days is the carefully nurtured product of campus neo-segregation. We as a people are increasingly self-divided and well-supplied with stereotypes and invective to use against each other. Our descent into such polarization has many causes but neo-segregation is among the deepest.

### 4. *Should students care about neo-segregation?*

Yes. Neo-segregation is one of the forces that has fragmented the curriculum. This is a story told in most detail in our study of Yale, and it connects with another NAS study, *The Vanishing West*. The latter tracks the

disappearance of Western Civilization survey courses from the 1960s, when they were the mainstay of undergraduate liberal arts programs, to 2010, by which time they were nearly as rare as courses on Egyptian hieroglyphics. What happened? The answer we give in the Yale report is that the black students demanded—and Yale agreed—that Western Civilization requirements were racist and irrelevant.

This came to noticeable public attention in January 1987 when Jesse Jackson led some 500 student protesters at Stanford in a chant of “Hey hey, ho ho, Western culture’s got to go!” The Western culture he was referring to was Stanford’s Western Civilization survey course, which the Stanford administration soon abolished.<sup>4</sup>

No single course could take the place of the Western Civilization survey course, which served as an armature for the whole curriculum. Numerous other courses built on the Western Civilization survey. Without it, the curriculum dissolved into fragments, and faculty members could no longer proceed in confidence that all the students knew the basics. For students this fragmentation was a liberation, at first. What they weren’t learning was invisible to them. Suddenly the opportunities to study seemed endless. One of those opportunities was the newly created Afro-American Studies program.

The creation of Afro-American Studies at Yale, and soon after at many other colleges and universities, wasn’t the sole cause of the demise of the old curriculum, but it was a powerful contributing cause. And it remains part of the explanation of how neo-segregation hurts all students. It turned the college curriculum into a moonscape of courses whose only common thread is conveying a picture of myriad grievances against a civilization of which most of the students are largely ignorant.

This was a high price to pay to compensate for the discomfort black students felt in the mid-1960s and ensuring decades for having to learn something about the European past. Neo-segregation, of course, hurts students in other ways as well. It narrows their social experience; it gives them a false picture of life in contemporary America; and it fosters the racial animus that it supposedly aims to eradicate.

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4 Whether Jackson led the chant or was merely present as the students chanted has been disputed. Jon Reider, writing in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* thirty years later, claimed that “When [Jackson] heard the students chant, he objected to it. He said, ‘No, we don’t want to get rid of Western Culture. We want to expand it and bring in new voices.’” Reider cited a contemporary report in the Stanford News Service to substantiate his point. The “new voices” version of the story actually strengthens the point that identity politics aimed at a radical disestablishment of the old curriculum. Jon Reider, “Jesse Jackson Didn’t Lead Chant Against Western Culture,” Letter to the Editor, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 21 November 2016, <https://www.chronicle.com/blogs/letters/jesse-jackson-didnt-lead-chant-against-western-culture/>.

## 5. *How do we balance equality with freedom?*

Here we move to an important question of political theory. One of the lessons of American history is that racial division inevitably leads to injustice. Racial division is incompatible with justice, because justice demands that the same standards apply to all. Few if any Americans believe that division into racial groups is compatible with equal protection of the law, let alone equality in everyday life.

But Americans also believe in their right to choose their own friends and form their own communities. When we do that, forms of segregation often happen.

Thus our freedom to choose our friends, make our own families, and form our own associations can result in a form of racial segregation. There is a conflict between our search for equality and our enjoyment of personal freedom. We can't wish this conflict away. It is real and it is important. Segregation is the path of division, but at least in some circumstances it is also the result of free people making choices for themselves.

In American higher education this conflict has escalated to the point of overt racial antagonism. How do we balance the pursuit of equality with our freedom of association? We don't have an answer that will liberate us once and for all from the dilemma, but we do have a recommendation. An essential first step for managing the conflict between these two principles is to stop making the conflict worse. Let informal segregation take its course in the texture of everyday American life, but don't plot to create even more. Neo-segregation in American higher education isn't something that just happened. As we show in these reports, neo-segregation is the result of decisions made by college administrators (most of whom were white) who thought it would be expedient to allow blacks to create self-enclosed enclaves, and then further decided that *allowing* was not enough: they would *encourage* the formation of enclaves and nurture them with an ever-expanding abundance of resources.

## *6. To what extent is neo-segregation part and parcel of the multiculturalist agenda in American higher education?*

Neo-segregation is a term we have invented to describe a particular phenomenon in American higher education that has not received the attention it deserves. But neo-segregation is part of a larger set of developments that has a name of its own: multiculturalism. We don't want to expand our focus too far beyond our central topic, but it is important to recognize that neo-segregation is the main wrecking ball in the effort to demolish America's sense of itself as "one nation." Our national unity has never been all that secure a thing. After all, as a nation we are a composite of peoples of different ethnicities, historical experiences, regional subcultures, religions, and aspirations. Securing the blessings of liberty along with mutual toleration and a love of country has often demanded a great deal of ingenuity from both our leaders and from ordinary people.

Multiculturalism, though often presented in a spirit of joyful celebration of our differences, aims at something vastly different from love of country. It aims to elevate our differences above our commonalities. After the diversity quilt has been hung on display on the Kindergarten wall, it proceeds to excavate the grievances of each group against the whole. "Allies" are welcome, but the very word denotes a common enemy, and the enemy is the dominant culture of the past: our bygone sense of being one people, despite our differences.

Higher education is the font of multiculturalism in America. It is an anti-American doctrine in a new sense of that Cold War term: anti-American in that it embodies a basic aversion to America's common values. Perhaps it is more circumspect to call multiculturalism post-American or post-national in character. Those words apply too. Multiculturalism isn't limited to the United States. It is a cause that encompasses an elite attitude in many developed nations that the nation state itself is obsolescent and should be replaced by a new order in which we are all "global citizens." This would-be new order comprises post-states such as the European Union and various international entities. It also has its own cherished causes such as fighting climate change, promoting open borders, and ending post-colonial exploitation.

Our purpose in this report is not to sweep all these many pieces of the multicultural ethos into a basket that makes them the result of neo-segregation. Each of the various strands of multiculturalism has its own history. We have explored some of them in other reports, such as Sustainability:



American Higher Education's New Fundamentalism, and The Disappearing Continent. Our point here is simply that neo-segregation is one of the key forces driving the fragmentation of America's common identity. That makes it integral to the multiculturalist agenda.

Our larger project, "Separate but Equal, Again: Neo-Segregation in American Higher Education," connects with the initiative undertaken by the Claremont Institute, *Multiculturalism vs. America*.<sup>5</sup>

## *7. What, if anything, should be done about neo-segregation?*

Our aim is to bring to the surface a widespread phenomenon that has been under-reported and that has largely escaped the critical attention of parents, alumni, and institutional supporters. Of course, some of these are on the side of the multiculturalists and the neo-segregationists. If they read our reports, they can take satisfaction in how well the college administrators have advanced their cause. Others—we hope a substantial majority—will be alarmed by our findings, as I was alarmed when I first heard about those segregated commencement ceremonies.

If they are sufficiently alarmed, they will set about changing the institutions they care about. Neo-segregation will not bring itself to a close. It is a thriving business in higher education, supported by true-believers and a well-paid class of neo-segregation professionals who will not give an inch without a fight—and without calling their critics' character into question. The time has come to bring down the curtain on neo-segregation the way that the Supreme Court in *Brown* and the Civil Rights Movement brought down the curtain on the old forms of segregation. It won't happen without a struggle. Consider this a summons to a new civil rights movement—one that promises a truly post-racial America.

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5 Thomas D. Klingenstein. "[Our House Divided: Multiculturalism vs. America](#)." *The American Mind*. October 31, 2018.

# Race at Yale Today

## Race at Yale Today

Several incidents in the last few years have cemented the view among many Americans that Yale University is a hotbed of irrational racial antagonism. Millions have viewed the 25-minute video of Professor Nicholas Christakis surrounded on the quad by a mob of about 100 undergraduate students on November 5, 2015.<sup>1</sup> The students, mostly black, were confronting him over a memo his wife, Erika Christakis, had released a few days earlier. In that email, she had urged students to tolerate Halloween costumes that some might find irritating or offensive.<sup>2</sup> In the video, Nicholas Christakis tries in vain to explain the email and to respond constructively to the barrage of outrageous accusations. “You are disgusting,” shouts one of the students.

Another student, Jerelyn Luther ('16), commanded Christakis to “be quiet!” and asserted that Yale’s college masters were charged with fostering “a place of comfort and home for students that live in Silliman.” (Silliman is the residential college at which Christakis at the time served as “master.”) Erika Christakis’s email to students, she continued, went “against your position of master.” Christakis responded that he disagreed with Luther’s description of his role as master. At this, Luther shrieked, “Then why the fuck did you accept the position? Who the fuck hired you? You should step down! It is not about creating an intellectual space! Do you understand that?”<sup>3</sup> In fact, Luther had served on the search committee that selected Professor Christakis to be Master of Silliman College—an irony that went largely unreported.<sup>4</sup>

**“Then why the fuck did you accept the position? Who the fuck hired you? You should step down! It is not about creating an intellectual space! Do you understand that?”**

The filmed portion of the confrontation lasted about 25 minutes.<sup>5</sup>

The vitriol documented in the video was not isolated to this one incident. Earlier that day, a group of minority students had staged a “chalk-ing event”—drawing pictures on the sidewalks—to protest an alleged incident in which a fraternity had turned away some black women who tried to enter a party. Yale College Dean Jonathan Holloway came to the event, which turned into a three-hour emotional confrontation. Students said, “they were disappointed in [Holloway] both as a black administrator and as a black man.” The students, many in tears, urged Dean Holloway

1 “Yale University-Full Version-New Videos of the Halloween Email Protest,” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiMVx2C5\\_Wg&t=851s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiMVx2C5_Wg&t=851s)

2 Joey Ye. “Silliman Associate Master’s Halloween Email Draws Ire,” *Yale Daily News*. November 2, 2015.

3 “The Shrieking Girl: Yale Student Expresses Her Need to be ‘Safe’ from Halloween Costumes,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xK4MBzp5YwM>

4 “Nicholas Christakis to be Next Master of Silliman College,” *YaleNews*. February 26, 2015.”

5 Gene Dattel, *Reckoning with Race: America’s Failure*, (New York: Encounter, 2017), 253.

to use his position to advance their racial agenda, though the reports are not clear as to what exactly this would have entailed.<sup>6</sup>

Holloway mounted a table and declared his determination, in the *Yale Daily News's* account, “to more fully embrace his responsibilities as a prominent black administrator and professor of African-American Studies.” This commitment did not last long. In November 2016, Holloway announced that he was resigning his Yale position to become provost of Northwestern University.<sup>7</sup>

On June 13, 2016, a 38-year old man employed by Yale as a dishwasher, Corey Menefee, took a broomstick and smashed a historic window in the dining hall of Yale’s Calhoun College.<sup>8</sup> The window depicted slaves picking cotton. Yale promptly fired Menefee or, more exactly, made him resign to avoid prosecution.<sup>9</sup> Menefee, however, was proud of his vandalism and gathered supporters. On July 12, according to the *Yale Daily News*, “dozens of supporters met him on the steps of the New Haven courthouse before his court date [on] July 12.”<sup>10</sup> Menefee suddenly became both a campus hero and a center of national attention. He was interviewed on National Public Radio and ran a successful GoFundMe campaign to assist “him and his family while he is unemployed.”<sup>11</sup> Menefee told NPR that, “I mean, you can only imagine the type of emotions that run through an African-American, if I can say that, seeing a picture of two slaves—two actual slaves picking cotton.”<sup>12</sup>

The Yale administration promptly caved. Yale asked the State Attorney to drop the charges against Menefee and he was rehired.<sup>13</sup> Soon after this, on February 11, 2017, Yale President Peter Salovey announced that Yale was changing the name of Calhoun College—which honored South Carolina Senator and slavery apologist John C. Calhoun—to “Grace Hopper College.” Dr. Hopper was a computer scientist and distinguished naval officer. Salovey was responding to the demands of Yale students who had made changing the name of Calhoun College a key part of their program for a “more racially inclusive Yale.”<sup>14</sup> The students had launched an online petition a few weeks after the Christakis incident demanding the name change. It eventually gained 9,000

6 Monica Wang and Victor Wang, “Students Confront Christakis About Halloween Email,” *Yale Daily News*, November 5, 2015.

7 David Yaffe-Bellany, “Yale College Dean Jonathan Holloway to Step Down,” *Yale Daily News*, November 21, 2016.

8 Menefee’s name is variously spelled in press accounts. Menafee also appears.

9 Michelle Liu and David Shimer, “Charges Likely to Drop against Worker Who Smashed Window,” *Yale Daily News*, July 12, 2016.

10 Michelle Lu, “After Smashing Calhoun Window Panel!”

11 Michelle Lu, “Police Report Surfaces in Menafee Incident,” *Yale Daily News*, July 13, 2016.

12 Weekend Edition Sunday, “Yale Dishwasher Broke Window Depicting Slaves: ‘No One Has To Be Exposed to that Anymore,’” National Public Radio, July 17, 2016.

13 Michelle Lu and David Shimer, “Yale Worker Who Broke Calhoun Window Accepts Offer for Reinstatement,” *Yale Daily News*, July 19, 2016.

14 Zainab Hamid, Rachel Treisman, and David Yaffe-Bellany, “Calhoun College to be Renamed for Grace Hopper GRD ‘34,” *Yale Daily News*, February 11, 2017.

signatures. The petition characterizes Calhoun's legacy as "one of racism and blood."<sup>15</sup> When Salovey finally conceded, one student, Dillon Miller, was elated: "A lot of [my suitemates last year] lost the majority of their sophomore year pushing for this change, and to see them out here dancing and smiling and knowing that their work is fruitful is the biggest blessing."<sup>16</sup>

Yale's Menefee-inspired purge of racially offensive names and imagery continued. On August 22, 2017, Yale announced it was removing a stone carving above a door to the Sterling Memorial Library. The 1929 carving depicted an American Indian with a bow and a Puritan settler with a musket. The new censors first put a patch over the musket to obscure the settler's violent intent. But the plan was to chisel out the ornament entirely and move it to an undisclosed location.

In the meantime, Yale was making sure that the contributions of the students who had mobbed Professor Christakis were properly recognized.

**"Nobody has ever been racist to you because they can't be racist to you."**

In May 2017 Yale awarded its Nakanishi Prize (bestowed on "two graduating seniors who, while maintaining high academic achievement, have provided exemplary leadership in enhancing race and/or ethnic relations at Yale College") to Abdul-Razak Mohammed Zachariah and Alexandra Zina Barlowe.<sup>17</sup> Zachariah and Barlowe participated in

the Christakis mobbing, with Zachariah at one point taking a leading part. Zachariah lectures the sociology professor about the chasm that separates blacks from whites. He explains, "Nobody has ever been racist to you because they can't be racist to you."<sup>18</sup>

In May 2018, another supposedly racial confrontation ensued. A white female student in one of the residence halls discovered a black female student sleeping in a lounge late at night. She "flipped on the lights, told her she had no right to sleep there, and called the campus police."<sup>19</sup> As it happened, the napping student lived in the same residence hall and the Yale campus police soon sorted things out. In the aftermath, however, Yale grievance activists took hold of the narrative. Heather Gerken, dean of the Yale Law School, emailed the law school community claiming that when the Yale police checked the identity of the napping student, they were acting as part of a "corrosive"

15 David Schimer, "Over 9,000 Sign Online Petition to Rename Calhoun College," *Yale Daily News*, December 17, 2015.

16 Jingyi Cui, Adelaide Feibel, and Ryan Gittler, "Student Activists Elated by Name Change," *Yale Daily News*, February 14, 2017.

17 "Abdul-Razak Mohammed Zachariah awarded Nakanishi Prize," *YaleNews*, May 21, 2017. <https://news.yale.edu/2017/05/21/abdul-razak-mohammed-zachariah-awarded-nakanishi-prize>; "Lex Barlowe awarded Nakanishi Prize," *YaleNews*, May 21, 2017, <https://news.yale.edu/2017/05/21/lex-barlowe-awarded-nakanishi-prize>

18 "Yale University-Full Version-New Videos of the Halloween Email Protest."

19 Christina Caron, "A Black Yale Student Was Napping, and a White Student Called the Police," *The New York Times*, May 9, 2018.

pattern of police treating black students unfairly. Black students climbed on board this bandwagon and the matter escalated all the way to President Salovey who, in Heather Mac Donald's account, "circulated a missive to the entire university declaring what was at stake in the incident: 'discrimination and racism at Yale.' He admonished Yale's faculty, staff, and students: 'We must neither condone nor excuse racism, prejudice, or discrimination at Yale.'"<sup>20</sup>

In November 2018, two masked people posted flyers on the Yale campus with the provocative label "@ white students' union of yale." One flyer declared "We Out Here. We Been Here. We Ain't leaving. We Are Loved." Another sported a quotation from John C. Calhoun. The culprits have not been identified and it is not clear whether this was the work of white nationalists or someone else attempting to foment the suspicion that white nationalists are lurking unidentified in the Yale community. In any case, the Yale administration responded with strenuous efforts to root out the perpetrators.<sup>21</sup>

These events at Yale in the last several years point to a university campus in the midst of racial hysteria. They are not, however, the complete picture, and they do little to illuminate the institutional ferment from which these events sprung. Understanding the genesis of the current racial animus can help answer a number of perplexing questions: How did it happen that Yale reached the point where a senior and well-respected professor could be subjected to public racial bullying without anyone in authority intervening? How did it happen that a senior black administrator was harangued by black students for failing to advance a "black" agenda? How did Yale become so timid as to countenance an employee smashing a window out of racial resentment? What moved President Salovey to accede to the demands that the university change the name of Calhoun College?

The racial dynamics at Yale today are the result of a particular history—a history of decisions made as long ago as the 1960s. It is a history of racial bargaining. Yale sought to bring racial integration to its campus but found, at each step of the way, that integration came at a steep price. Part of that price was to accede to what became, in fact, new forms of racial separation. Yale's attempts to integrate ironically became, over the course of decades, the entrenchment of segregation. In this part of our report, we trace that history.

20 Heather Mac Donald, "Rage and Race at Yale," *National Review*, May 24, 2018.

21 Jever Mariwala and Alice Park, "Racially Provocative Flyers Surface on Cross Campus," *Yale Daily News*, November 15, 2018.

Since the fall semester of 2015, racial tensions at Yale have increased, as evidenced by the mobbing of Professor Christakis, the demand that Dean Holloway place race loyalty above his professional responsibilities, the movement to excuse Corey Menefee after he vandalized a stained glass window, the escalation of criticism of the police after they checked the identity of a napping black student, and the renaming of Calhoun College.

## Sources and Procedure

Yale has been the subject of innumerable histories, memoirs, and specialized studies. We have drawn on previous work freely but have relied most extensively on the archives of the *Yale Daily News*. The student newspaper serves as an especially valuable witness to contemporary events because of its record of undergraduate student voices. Our study also relies on interviews with Yale students conducted on site in 2018.

Our report is divided into five major sections supplemented by several brief ones. The first major section deals with Yale's debates over the admission of black students, beginning in the early 1960s. These debates blended with the debate over the creation of Afro-American Studies in 1968. The admission of substantial numbers of black students was inextricably linked with the pressure to create the Afro-American Studies program. Our focus in this and the other sections is not just on what happened, but why, and how the events recorded bear on Yale today.

The second section, which flows from the first, deals with the Black Panther crisis and the trial of Bobby Seale in 1969 and 1970. This crisis was precipitated by the actions of the Black Student Alliance at Yale (BSAY), which was founded by the first cohort of black students that Yale recruited. The outcome of the Panther crisis, which played out under the watch of President Kingman Brewster, confirmed the power of BSAY and established Yale's pattern of resolving grievances framed by campus minority groups by sacrificing the common interests of the Yale community.

The third section deals with the creation of segregated student orientation programs. These programs began as an attempt to offer academic remediation to under-qualified minority students whom Yale had admitted. While a trace of the remedial goal remained, the orientation programs very quickly shifted focus to building ethnic solidarity among various groups. Yale learned how to shape minority students into grievance-minded activists largely through these orientation programs. The students in turn became fiercely loyal to the racial cohorts in which they had been placed.

The fourth section addresses Yale's practice of hiring fellow minorities to "counsel" members of ethnic and racial groups. For no very clear reason, Yale

called these staff members “Floating Counselors.” They were renamed “Peer Liaisons” in 2010. Like the ethnically separatist orientation programs, the

## **Yale engineered a system that encourages both ethnic separatism and inter-group rivalry.**

Floating Counselor program assumed that Yale students are best treated and most appropriately served by being grouped together under an ethnic rubric and assisted by someone of their “own kind.” The spirit of segregation embodied by the Floating Counselor program has occasionally been criticized by students.

It also became, for a time, an object of envy by organized gay and lesbian students. We trace these controversies and rivalries among the ethnic groups for larger shares of Floating Counselors. What emerges from the details is a vivid picture of how Yale engineered a system that encourages both ethnic separatism and inter-group rivalry.

The fifth section examines Yale’s “Cultural Houses,” which are the source of much aggressive separatist propaganda and agitation. The Cultural Houses are not residences. Students who identify with an ethnic minority group do not live in the designated Cultural House, but many use them as a primary place to socialize.

The remainder of our essay on Yale touches on the university’s hiring practices and its curriculum. Note that we have quoted all sources literally, including ethnic slurs and other vulgarities. We do so in the spirit of preserving the authentic voices of those we quote.





**Part I.**  
**The Rise of**  
**Black Admissions**  
**and Afro American**  
**Studies, 1960-1969**

## Part I. The Rise of Black Admissions and Afro American Studies, 1960-1969

### Too Great a Risk

In the spring of 1960, a black American student applied to Yale sporting straight As on his transcript “since the seventh grade.” Benjamin Williams—a pseudonym—was a varsity quarterback, first in his class of 500, the first African American to be elected president of his school’s student council, and the son of an “illiterate father and a mother who worked at a laundry.”<sup>22</sup>

Benjamin’s successes show that humble origins had not crushed his spirit nor his ethic. Such was his community’s faith in him that it offered to raise \$500 per year towards his expenses.<sup>23</sup> Like many successful black students who came from meaner streets, Williams symbolized his community’s highest hopes and aspirations.

But Williams’s SAT scores disqualified him for admission under Yale’s traditional criteria. His math and verbal SAT score of 488 was well below the average of Yale’s incoming freshmen, and although he exemplified traits that Yale admissions officers desired such as “character” and “leadership,” the school decided that Williams was “too great a risk to warrant acceptance.” Yale’s rejection of Williams aligned with the thinking of its Dean of Admissions, Arthur Howe Jr., who had been asked earlier that year whether Yale would consider increasing its acceptance rate of black students by adopting a more lenient admissions standard. Howe refused to change Yale’s “admission policy with respect to race” and maintained that Yale would “continue to expect [black students] to meet the same standards required of other applicants.”<sup>24</sup>

Howe’s position was consistent with the integrationist ethic of the post-war civil rights movement, and was reinforced by Yale’s Governing Board of the Committee on Admissions. On October 26, 1964 that Board announced that it had “no interest in suddenly opening the gates solely to increase the number of Negro and foreign students, unless they were qualified according to the same criteria used to judge all other candidates.”<sup>25</sup> Jerome Karabel in

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22 Jerome Karabel, “How Affirmative Action Took Hold at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton,” *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, no. 48 (Summer 2005): 58-77.

23 *Ibid.*

24 Letter to Connelly Edwards, March 30, 1960, Yale University Archives. Quoted in Jerome Karabel, *The Chosen: The Hidden History of Admission and Exclusion at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton* (Wilmington, MA: Mariner Books, 2006, 380.)

25 “Minutes of the Committee on Admissions and Freshman Scholarship,” October 26, 1964, Yale University Archives. Quoted in Karabel, 383.

his magisterial book, *The Chosen: The Hidden History of Admission and Exclusion at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton* (2005), tracks other Yale authorities who were determined to hold the line against a more relaxed admissions policy:

Just ten days earlier [than the Board’s announcement] the Committee on Admissions had itself decided against enrolling “Negro and other underprivileged candidates” by lowering admissions standards, with George May, the dean of Yale College, expressing “strong opposition” to using a double standard for admission.<sup>26</sup>

Yale had indeed admitted academically qualified black students for many years. Yale’s first black graduate, Courtlandt Van Rensselaer Creed, was awarded his degree from Yale’s School of Medicine in 1857.<sup>27</sup> The number of blacks who matriculated was low, but some were outstanding:

In 1870, Edward Alexander Bouchet became the first black person to enroll in Yale College. Also the son of a Yale employee, Bouchet was the valedictorian of the Hopkins School in New Haven. He was the first African American in the country elected to Phi Beta Kappa and ranked sixth in the Yale Class of 1874. When he received his doctorate in physics in 1876, he became the first African American to earn a Ph.D. from an American university.<sup>28</sup>

Yale did not by policy discriminate in admissions on the basis of race, though plainly this did not eliminate all the obstacles that American blacks or blacks from abroad faced if they sought to enroll at Yale.

The various declarations made by Yale officials in the five-year period from 1960 through 1964 against lowering admissions standards to increase

the number of black students are evidence that the topic was on the table. The end of this period, however, coincided with important changes in leadership at Yale. Kingman Brewster succeeded Alfred Whitney Griswold as

**Yale could serve both those of “highest intellectual capacity” and those of “moral capacity.”**

Yale’s new president in October 1963. Brewster presented himself as a strong supporter of merit-based admissions. He faced opposition from some in the Yale community who

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> “Talk Recounts Experience of Yale’s First Black Graduates,” Yale News, April 24, 2009, <https://news.yale.edu/2009/04/24/talk-recounts-experience-yale-s-first-black-graduates>. Accessed February 14, 2019.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

## Yale's Presidents, 1950-2019

Alfred Whitney Griswold 1950-1963

Kingman Brewster, Jr. 1963-1977

Hana Holborn Gray 1977-1978

Angelo Bartlett Giamatti 1978-1986

Benno C. Schmidt, Jr. 1986-1992

Howard R. Lamar 1992-1993

Richard C. Levin 1993-2013

Peter Salovey 2013-Present

were concerned over the loss of an “Old Yale” tradition of cultivating gentlemen of high character, who might not have been primarily focused on academic achievement.<sup>29</sup> “This near-sacred mission is hanging somewhat in the balance,” wrote one prominent alumnus. Brewster did his best to appease both the meritocrats and the old schoolers. He insisted that “trained intelligence will assume an even greater importance in the struggle for leadership,” but he told another audience that Yale could serve both those of “highest

**Brewster denied that Yale had such quotas, asserting “without qualification that Yale has no quotas for any minority or majority group,” and adding that to his knowledge, “Yale has at no time in its history had such restrictions.”**

intellectual capacity” and those of “moral capacity.”<sup>30</sup> Fence-sitting would become one of Brewster’s specialties. Few could ever predict where he would come out on a controversial issue, though he reliably told people what they wanted to hear.

Karabel quotes Brewster’s response to a correspondent, Leon Himmelfarb, who asked him if “Yale has definite quotas in operation against Jews, Negroes and other minority groups.” Brewster denied that

Yale had such quotas, asserting “without qualification that Yale has no quotas for any minority or majority group,” and adding that to his knowledge, “Yale has at no time in its history had such restrictions.”<sup>31</sup>

Brewster and Dean of Admissions Howe did not get along. Several months after Brewster’s appointment, Howe took a leave of absence and then resigned. Yale appointed a 68 year-old alumnus, Alton Rufus Hyatt, as

29 Karabel, *The Chosen*. 342. Yale alumnus Andrew Robinson '27 wrote, “that this near sacred mission of the University [‘developing men of character, leadership and accomplishment’] is hanging somewhat in the balance...”

30 *Ibid.* 342-343.

31 *Ibid.* 342.

acting dean, leaving the door open for Brewster to recruit someone of his own choosing. He settled on R. Inslee (“Inky”) Clark, who won Brewster’s favor by disdaining “the well-rounded, pleasant, jovial, athlete type” in favor of “the abrasive kid,” “the scientist,” “the egghead,” and “the oddball.” Clark, in other words, was ready to shake up and perhaps shake off “Old Yale.” Nonetheless, some of the proponents of the new meritocratic approach, including Sterling Professor of History C. Van Woodward and Chaplain at Yale University William Sloan Coffin, Jr., expressed reservations that Clark might be too much on the side of the old approach. The appetite for change was in the air.<sup>32</sup>

Clark assumed the deanship in July 1965, notably after the various official pronouncements about not “lowering standards” to admit more black students. Clark himself had been silent on the issue, but his views quickly

**The “effort to cure racial injustice” would require “institutional symbols of white privilege to let it be known that they share this cause.”**

solidified. Race riots had torn through several American cities in the summer of 1964. Malcolm X was assassinated in January 1965. President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act on August 6 of the same year, and the five-day Watts Riot ensued in less than a week.

Brewster was ahead of the curve, declaring in June 1964 that the “effort to cure racial injustice” would require “institutional symbols of white privilege to let it be known that they share this cause.”<sup>33</sup> Presumably Yale was one such symbol of “white privilege.”

In these circumstances, Clark decided that a new definition of “merit” was in order. In Karabel’s account:

The Admissions Office acknowledged that a candidate’s academic profile was profoundly influenced by the opportunities that had been available to him. By 1965-1966, the first year of the Clark era, the Admissions Committee made it standard procedure—at least for African Americans—to “seriously consider the possibility that SAT scores might reflect cultural deprivation rather than lack of intelligence.”

Coupled with this new recognition of the social context was a willingness to undertake “risks” that had been unacceptable a few years earlier.<sup>34</sup>

Clark had inherited a few preliminary efforts in this direction. Dean Howe had felt sufficient pressure in 1961 to increase black enrollment that he hired Charles McCarthy (Class of 1960) to forge relationships with several

32 Ibid. 351.

33 Quoted from the Yale Archives in Karabel, *The Chosen*, 382.

34 Ibid., 384.

inner-city high schools “known to enroll. . . academically talented black students.” This step did not pass unnoticed. Yale’s inner-city initiative had caught the attention of other Ivy League schools. According to Karabel, at a 1962 meeting of Ivy League officers, figures from the other schools asked Yale officials to share their contacts. These requests led to a joint initiative

**Tolbert said that Yale’s blacks planned “soul week” apprehensively for fear that it might “look like self-imposed segregation.”**

called the Cooperative Program for Educational Opportunity. All eight Ivy League schools and the Seven Sisters participated. But the first year of McCarthy’s recruitment program yielded only a small pool of black freshmen for Yale. Only six matriculated at the university in 1962.<sup>35</sup>

In principle, Yale sought to uphold academic standards while admitting black students who lacked the scholastic qualifications and perhaps also the intellectual merit to thrive in the university. This simply meant that black applicants were held to lower standards than other applicants, but the difference was covered over with rhetorical obfuscation. The tension between the elitist goal of maintaining high standards and the egalitarian goal of attempting to engineer racial equality played out in the form of high-minded declarations by the Admission Policy Advisory Board which saw no reason to exclude blacks from admission for failing to meet “the usual quantitative measures of academic achievement.”<sup>36</sup> The failure was put down exclusively to these students’ “inferior preparation,”<sup>37</sup> which was conceived as something that Yale could remedy once the students were enrolled.

Benjamin Williams had applied five years too soon.

## Black Power: The Emergence of Neo-Segregation at Yale

Not long after Yale implemented its new admissions standard, black students who had benefited from Inky Clark’s policy change began to gather among themselves. On November 8, 1964, Yale’s black students organized the Yale Discussion Group, an exclusively black social club. By 1967, that organization had evolved into the Black Student Alliance at Yale (BSAY).<sup>38</sup>

Founder Dick Tolbert ’66 told *Yale Daily News* writer Michael Rosenhouse in a 1967 interview that the idea emerged in the weeks after Yale hosted “Soul

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35 *Ibid.*,

36 *Ibid.*

37 *Ibid.*

38 Michael Rosenhouse, “Black Student Alliance at Yale,” *Yale Daily News*, May 4, 1967.

Week,” an event comprised of discussion sessions and a segregated dance. Tolbert said that Yale’s blacks planned “soul week” apprehensively for fear that it might “look like self-imposed segregation.” But the students, he added, enjoyed their newfound sense of solidarity. “It turned out,” said Tolbert, that “[black] people simply enjoyed being around other blacks.”<sup>39</sup>

BSAY, the Black Student Alliance at Yale, was founded in 1967 by Donald Ogilvie ('68), Armstead Robinson ('69), Glenn deChabert ('70), Woody Brittain ('70), Craig Foster ('69), and Ralph Dawson ('71).<sup>40</sup> Its origins go back to November 1964 when black students organized “Spook Weekend,” an event to which they invited hundreds of blacks from around the north-east.<sup>41</sup> A month later they formed the “Yale Discussion Group on Negro Affairs.”<sup>42</sup> BSAY played a key role in the rise of black separatism at Yale from the 1960s to the present. It is currently headed by co-presidents Kendall Easley and Alyssa Ince.

Shortly after Soul Week, Tolbert recruited black students to form a club in which “blacks could get together and exchange ideas.” In the past, he said, black students at Yale “would never walk across campus with each other” lest they offend their white peers. But in the late 1950s, black activists such as “James Baldwin and Malcolm X” broke with race-blind philosophy and extolled the virtues of racial pride. “Black is good,” they said, and for Yale’s black students this fostered “pride in [their] blackness” and the will to form intra-racial friendships without inhibition.<sup>43</sup>

Malcolm X’s black separatist ideology influenced BSAY’s formation. Like

## **“Now that we [separated], they’re against it,”**

Malcolm X, Tolbert rejected the idea of an American “melting pot” that encouraged assimilation by turning minorities into “hardcore white

Anglo-Saxon Protestants.” Blacks, he said, “don’t want a melting pot,” but rather a salad bowl. Tolbert wanted ethnic identity and pride similar to that enjoyed by the “Jewish, Irish, Italian and Polish sections of town.” The Black Student Alliance, he said, bestowed a sense of “rootedness” on its members that other ethnic groups took for granted. The BSAY, he continued, had the additional benefit of fulfilling white demands that blacks help themselves, but he resented that whites hypocritically now opposed separatism. “Now that we

39 *Ibid.*

40 “Black Student Alliance at Yale,” <http://bsayale.squarespace.com/about-me/#new-page-3>. Accessed February 14, 2019.

41 *Ibid.*

42 Rosenhouse.

43 *Ibid.*



[separated], they're against it," he told the *Yale Daily News*.<sup>44</sup>

Tolbert declared "black power" the sole means by which blacks would improve their material and spiritual condition. Black power meant "proportional representation," the freedom to "run [our] own retail shops," and equal access to housing, although "new militants would much sooner move in with their fellow Negroes than whites." Rosenhouse concluded the interview by extending an olive branch of support to the blacks' new militancy, Tolbert explained blacks' identitarian longings in a softer tone:

"You know," he said, "When we say 'whites get out,' we don't mean we can't work with you; we're saying you're blocking our path when we want to help blacks develop themselves and their pride."<sup>45</sup>

No sooner had Yale sought to achieve racial integration via vigorous efforts to recruit black students than the students themselves began to resist integration. In fact, black resistance towards and resentment of integration had a long history before Yale committed itself to Clark's new admissions policy. Black separatism and exclusivity had roots in the post-Civil War South and began to flourish in the form of mass movements beginning in the 1920s. This history of black separatism was not hidden or obscure, but it went entirely unnoticed and unremarked by the Ivy League advocates for increased black admissions. They saw themselves as answering the social injustices of black poverty, white racism, and inner city unrest by ushering in a new age of racial integration. The students they recruited to enact this vision of a new social order, however, very quickly took up a strand of black identitarian thought and group allegiance that ran directly against the integrationist ideals.

## Black Student Special Recruitment Begins

At the beginning of the fall 1968–1969 academic year, a mob of "militant blacks marched directly" to President Kingman Brewster Jr.'s house and demanded that "Yale increase the number of blacks to be admitted that year." Brewster met the protesters face to face and assured them that "their cause was his cause"; he agreed to another round of negotiations.<sup>46</sup>

On February 5, 1969, the *Yale Daily News* reported that representatives from the Black Student Alliance at Yale met with school officials to propose

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> Jerome Karabel, "How Affirmative Action Took Hold at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton," *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (Summer 2005): 65

that 12 percent of the next freshmen be black.<sup>47</sup> They also proposed a budget to pay for BSAY members to fan out across the country to recruit minority students. President Brewster allocated \$3,000 for the trips.<sup>48</sup> Inky Clark favored the 12 percent quota, but Brewster rejected it.<sup>49</sup>

In an open letter to Yale students, Brewster endorsed the university's "special efforts" to recruit black students but declined to "promise . . . achieving any target of admitting students who, in the eyes of the Admissions Committee, would not be likely to meet Yale's academic requirements."<sup>50</sup> The renewed efforts to recruit inner-city blacks yielded 130 applicants.<sup>51</sup> BSAY said success would depend on how many black students actually matriculated.<sup>52</sup> It was holding out for a quota.

BSAY also demanded the right to send application forms to black students of its own choosing, regardless of Yale's standards and despite that their "candidates had not themselves requested an application."<sup>53</sup> BSAY's idea, it seems, was to create a pool of black students whom BSAY could encourage, control, and lobby for. The administration vetoed this part of BSAY's proposal also. As a compromise, President Brewster offered to extend the normal New Year's application deadline into late February, thereby averting what Karabel called "the threat of disruption." Karabel characterized BSAY's actions as "disruptive," which is a mild way to describe BSAY's tactics, which included posting a mob outside a college president's home. BSAY's tactics worked. In the fall of 1969, 120 black men and 35 women were offered admission to the college. Ninety-six accepted admission. That was eight percent of the freshman class, up from two percent in 1965.<sup>54</sup>

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47 Jeffrey Gordon, "University Funds BSAY Urban Recruiting Trips," *Yale Daily News*, February 5, 1969.

48 *Ibid.*

49 Karabel, "How Affirmative Action . . ."

50 *Ibid.*

51 "BSAY Effort Nets 130," *Yale Daily News*, March 3, 1969.

52 *Ibid.*

53 *Ibid.*

54 *Ibid.*

Yale claims an extraordinarily high retention rate among its admitted students: 99 percent of Yale freshmen stay on for a second year, compared to the national second year retention rate of 72 percent. Moreover “96.2 percent of Yale undergrads finish within six years.”\*

Retention rates and graduation rates differ depending on race at almost all colleges and universities in the United States, and Yale, like most others, has struggled to improve black retention and graduation. “Of the blacks who entered Yale in 1966, 35 percent did not return after their freshman year; how many left in subsequent years is unknown.”\*\* The six-year graduation rate at Yale for students who began in 1989 was 97 percent for whites, but 89 percent for blacks.\*\*\* In 2013, Yale’s graduation rate was 98 percent for white students but 94 percent for black students.\*\*\* In 2017, Yale’s graduation rate was 97.4 percent for white students but 95.6 percent for black students.\*\*\*\* The percentage differences by race are very small and the overall likelihood of completion is very large for all races, but black completion rates at Yale are consistently the lowest among all races, lagging Native American, Asian, Hispanic, and Multiracial by two or more percentage points.

The differences in graduation rates among ethnic groups have shrunk to the level where most would consider those differences insignificant. Graduation rates, once an index of academic qualification, are now better understood as an index of Yale’s determination to ensure every enrolled student is carried as close as possible to the finish line.

\*<https://www.collegefactual.com/colleges/yale-university/academic-life/graduation-and-retention/>

\*\*Jerome Karabel, “How Affirmative Action Took Hold at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton,” *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* 48 ( Summer 2005): 66.

\*\*\* “Black Graduation Rates at the Nation’s Highest-Ranked Colleges and Universities.” *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, (Spring 1997): 54.

\*\*\*\* Black Student Graduation Rates at High-Ranking Colleges and Universities, “Degree Attainments on November 4, 2013,” *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, <https://www.jbhe.com/2013/11/black-student-graduation-rates-at-high-ranking-colleges-and-universities/>

\*\*\*\* “Graduation Rate at Yale,” Yale University, <https://www.collegetuitioncompare.com/edu/130794/yale-university/graduation/>

## The Urge to Do Something

The racial turmoil of the late 1960s penetrated Yale's campus and contributed to the college's pliability in the face of BSAY's demands. Between BSAY's 1968 meeting with Dean Clark and President Brewster's \$3,000 recruiting grant, on April 4, 1968, James Earl Ray Jr. assassinated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Riots ensued in the District of Columbia, Chicago, Baltimore, Kansas City, Detroit, New York, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Trenton, Wilmington, and Louisville.

By the time public order was restored, several major colleges and universities publicly pledged to enroll more black students. These pledges trailed the smoke of burning cities. Colleges imagined that they could calm racial animosity and cure the wrathful indignation of a whole generation by admitting more underqualified black students. The pledges themselves were typically framed, as a *New York Times* editorial put it, "to aid the education of Negroes in the slain civil rights leader's memory."<sup>55</sup>

Stanford pledged \$1 million to "double the enrollment of Negro students"; Harvard announced a \$50,000 initiative to train black college graduates for "teaching and administration"; New York University pledged to raise

Negro enrollment to 2,800—1,000 more than their then-current black enrollment—and to appropriate \$1 million in scholarships for poor black students. *The New York Times* article, however, warned against imposing "dangerous" ethnic quotas, which would be "a mixed blessing in the battle for true equality."<sup>56</sup>

Although Yale University rejected BSAY's demand for a twelve percent

ethnic quota, between 1965 and 1969 admissions officials increased blacks' portion of its freshmen class from two to eight percent.<sup>57</sup> To achieve this, Inky Clark admitted "high-risk" black students.

*The New York Times* prediction that ethnic quotas, or at the least, racial preferences would stymie racial equality came true. Yale's "reformed" admission standards led to poor academic performance among many of the students admitted under these standards, and poor performance led to high drop out rates.<sup>58</sup> Equality proved elusive.

**Yale's "reformed" admission standards led to poor academic performance among many of the students admitted under these standards, and poor performance led to high drop out rates.**

55 "Colleges Rushing Help for the Negro Student," *New York Times*, April 21, 1968.

56 *Ibid.*

57 Karabel, "How Affirmative Action . . .".

58 *Ibid.*

According to Karabel, “of the blacks who entered Yale in 1966, 35 percent did not return after their freshman year; though how many left in subsequent years is unknown.”<sup>59</sup> Karabel argues that, if Brewster and Clark aimed at the creation of black leadership, they had been successful. But a 35-percent attrition rate testified that Yale had failed to enroll students who could thrive in Yale’s rigorous liberal arts curriculum. This prompted racial preference advocates to revise their goals. Getting more black students enrolled at Yale meant little if many of those students proved incapable of the academic performance needed to succeed.

One possible answer was to lower the standards of performance needed to graduate for those students who were most “at risk.” To admit openly that standards would have to sink, however, would be to insult the student beneficiaries of the program; further, it would concede the criticism that the university had rushed into racial preferences without due attention to the likely consequences. What the proponents needed were ways to lower the standards that could be presented as something else. Their answer was to devise new academic tracks designed to accommodate students who found the existing tracks too difficult.

The pretense could be maintained that the new “studies” programs were as rigorous as the traditional programs, though they were plainly designed as options for students who could not handle the demands of traditional academic subjects. This view as was expressed by faculty members at several colleges where black studies took hold. According to *The New York Times*, those rushing to charter black studies programs ignored professors who feared that the track would be an “easy option for students more interested in diplomas than erudition.”<sup>60</sup>

## Organizing Discontent

The Black Student Alliance at Yale soon demanded control of Yale’s initiatives to recruit black students. In February 1968, BSAY representatives met with Yale administrators to express their “dismay at the inefficiency of Yale’s efforts to recruit African Americans.”<sup>61</sup> BSAY leaders alleged that, even under Yale’s reformed admissions criteria, the “process isn’t turning up or isn’t admitting qualified black students.”<sup>62</sup> The next month, BSAY boycotted Yale’s classes in a demonstration that reportedly included “ninety percent of Yale’s

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59 *Ibid.*

60 M. A. Farber, “Black Studies Take Hold, But Face Many Problems,” *New York Times*, December 27, 1970

61 Karabel, *The Chosen*, 387

62 *Ibid.*

Negro undergraduates.”<sup>63</sup> The students expressed their “alienation from Yale and anger at the treatment routinely meted out to black people in” New Haven. The boycott was BSAY’s first public articulation of grievances against Yale and its alleged complicity in the plight of the black poor. In a *New York Times* article, “Negro Group Boycotts Yale Classes,” Yale officials declined to comment on the boycott but assured readers that it had engaged in negotiations with BSAY. The students, a spokesman said, were “intelligent, articulate and reasonable.”<sup>64</sup>

Yale quelled BSAY’s frustration by approving an initiative under which Yale’s black students visited “approximately 1,200 schools in 1968,” a ven-

**The appointment of recent Yale graduate and BSAY member Paul B. Jones ('68) as assistant to the dean of undergraduate affairs that June was an additional attempt to pacify BSAY and illustrated the Ivy League trend of quelling identitarian anger by creating jobs for black alumni.**

ture that led to 43 new enrollees that fall.<sup>65</sup> The appointment of recent Yale graduate and BSAY member Paul B. Jones ('68) as assistant to the dean of undergraduate affairs that June was an additional attempt to pacify BSAY and illustrated the Ivy League trend of quelling identitarian anger by creating jobs for black alumni.<sup>66</sup> Jones intimat-

ed that his race was “a factor” in Yale’s decision to hire him. But his predecessor, John A. Wilkinson, denied that Jones’ race accorded special significance to his selection. “That [Jones] is

black,” said Wilkinson, “is just gratuitous.”<sup>67</sup> The 21-year-old earned the job because he was “a natural.”<sup>68</sup>

The claims about the number of schools visited and Jones’s qualifications sound inflated, but Yale was plainly attempting to placate its newly organized and grievance minded minority students.

Trouble emerged elsewhere on campus. In December 1968, six of the seven black students enrolled in Yale’s Drama School attempted to cancel a production of Sam Shepard’s play *Operation Sidewinder*.<sup>69</sup> The protesters refused to comment directly to *The New York Times*’ Sam Zolotow. Dr. John Clark, a Yale Medical School fellow, spoke on their behalf.<sup>70</sup> According to Clark, the students felt that *Operation Sidewinder* portrayed its black militant characters

63 Unsigned Byline. “Negro Group Boycotts Yale Classes,” *The New York Times*. March 14, 1968.

64 *Ibid.*

65 Karabel, *The Chosen*, 388.

66 Roger Luckmann. “Negro Assumes Dean’s Post,” *Yale Daily News*, June 1, 1968.

67 *Ibid.*

68 *Ibid.*

69 Sam Zolotow, “Black Students Block Yale Play,” *New York Times*, December 27, 1968.

70 *Ibid.*

as stereotypes. He claimed that Shepard depicted the militants as feckless and dependent on whites. The protesters also complained that Yale's Drama School neglected the "needs of black students"; that its slate of shows featured no black playwrights or directors; that blacks were not represented on the

script selection committee; and that the school had no black instructors.<sup>71</sup>

**The cancellation of the Operation Sidewinder is one of the first cases of censorship resulting from black student protest at an Ivy League school.**

Drama School Dean Robert Brustein reached out to *the New York Times* to break the news that Shepard had canceled the play "against the will and advice of the school administration." The Drama School's committee selected the play without anticipating controversy, and Shepard was disturbed by the air of contention that

surrounded the production. Shepard added that he resented the politicization of his work, which was caused by "bitterness between the black students and faculty."<sup>72</sup> The cancellation of the *Operation Sidewinder* is one of the first cases of censorship resulting from black student protest at an Ivy League school.

The controversy over Shepard's play reflected the growing struggle between black students and the university over its "lily-white" curriculum.<sup>73</sup>

## The Origins of Black Studies at Yale

In December 1968, the *Yale Daily News* reported that the school had approved a "new major in African American Studies" centered on the "experiences, conditions and origins of black Americans."<sup>74</sup>

The creation of this major came near the beginning of a crush of such programs around the country. San Francisco State University is generally—but wrongly—credited as the first to create a black studies program, in 1968. San Francisco State had, in fact, set up a non-accredited program that year, but the Yale College Faculty Committee in December 1968 unanimously approved the creation of the "Afro-American Studies Major," thus making Yale the first the college in the United States to accredit such a major.<sup>75</sup> Dozens soon followed. Bowdoin College, as recounted in NAS's study *What Does Bowdoin Teach?*, created such a program in 1969. The idea spread quickly. Between

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid.

73 Karabel, "How Affirmative Action..." Page 64.

74 "Approve Black Major, Seminars in Colleges; Faculty Okays 'Afro-American,'" *Yale Daily News*, December 13, 1968

75 James Sargent Jr., "Black Studies: Why and How," *Yale Daily News*. December 13, 1968.

1969 and 1973, around 600 such programs and departments were created at American colleges and universities.<sup>76</sup> Yale was an early adopter, but not an originator of the idea.

In November 1967 BSAY began campaigning for an Afro-American Studies major as part of its meetings with the Yale administration on how to recruit more black students.<sup>77</sup> In February 1968, President Brewster responded by establishing the African American Study Group to draft “a proposal for a divisional major in Afro-American studies.”<sup>78</sup> Provost Charles H. Taylor, three faculty members, and four black students—Donald Ogilvie ’68, Armistead Robinson ’68, Craig Foster ’69, and Ray Nunn ’69—were appointed.<sup>79</sup> Appointing students to a committee to consider a major curricular innovation appears to have been unprecedented in Yale’s history.<sup>80</sup>

The committee was chaired by political scientist Robert Dahl, who specialized in the theory of democratic pluralism. His academic writing emphasized the concept of “power” (as opposed to lawful authority) and the fragmentation of power in the United States among competing interest groups. His most noted work was a study of political power in New Haven, *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City* (1961). Brewster’s appointment of Dahl to lead the committee was a plain signal of Brewster’s intent to grant BSAY’s demand for an Afro-American Studies Program. Presumably Brewster did not create the program outright because of opposition among many in the Yale faculty and alumni who warned that the program would dilute Yale’s

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76 <https://munews.missouri.edu/news-releases/2009/02.03.09.brunsmablackstudiesanniversary.php>

77 Steve Hiller, “Black Studies the Best,” *Yale Daily News*, September 28, 1973.

78 Tom Linden, “Yale Considers Afro Studies, Holds Conference on Blacks; New Major Set for Fall 1969,” *Yale Daily News*. May 15, 1968.

79 *Ibid.*

80 The 1968 appointment of students to this committee was unprecedented, but the idea can be spotted in embryo two years earlier when Yale created “student advisory committees” to assist faculty members considering ways to improve the curriculum. These committees were intended as “channels of communication,” not decision-making bodies, but they planted the idea of giving students a voice in curricular matters: In February 1966 the Yale College Faculty, on motion of the Steering Committee, approved a proposal recommending the establishment in each major program of a student advisory committee consisting of majors and appropriate non-majors “to advise the faculty on the effectiveness of its curriculum and to assist the faculty in improving it.” Matters which the proposal suggested that such a committee might consider included “the scope and sequence of course offerings, the requirements of the standard and honors programs ... [the] usefulness and interest of specific courses to non-majors, the role of the Senior essay, the amount of choice on course selections available to students within the major, standards of expected student performance and of grading, etc.” A student advisory committee was not formally to be consulted concerning the teaching performance of individual instructors, nor was it to be asked to evaluate candidates for promotion. But it was expected that “the existence of a committee of students with regular channels of communication to the faculty should increase the amount and perhaps the quality of the informal and casual information on teaching performance on which departments already rely.” Finally, as the proposal said, “a committee would be expected to express its own views on subjects of its own choice as well as on questions suggested by the faculty. The committee should also serve as a channel through which solicited or unsolicited opinions of other students could be expressed.” Student Advisory Committees, <http://catalog.yale.edu/dus/dus-department/student-advisory-committees>, Accessed February 14, 2019.



academic standards. Brewster sought the cover of a committee that included several high-profile faculty members, albeit faculty members who could be relied on to deliver the “right answer.”

Dahl would serve this role again a few years later when Brewster sought to win support for Yale becoming co-ed. Yale admitted women in fall 1969, but in small numbers. In spring 1970, students and alumni staged a protest to demand that Yale drastically increase the number of women admitted. Brewster conceded in principle but then appointed a committee headed by Dahl, “the Study Group on Yale College,” which was charged with re-imagining “every aspect of Yale College.”<sup>81</sup> This second Dahl committee, however, became a target for criticism by blacks, who ironically ignored the 1968 Dahl committee’s focus on black grievance:

Director of African American Studies Roy S. Bryce-Laporte wrote to the president [Brewster] 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. 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.<sup>82</sup>

Other faculty members on the African American Study Group were Howard Lamar, William Kessen, and Charles H. Taylor. Lamar was a professor of American history who specialized in the history of the American frontier, Westward expansion and Native Americans. His books, including *Dakota Territory* and *The Far Southwest*, were notable for their emphasis on territorial politics. Years later he would serve as acting president of Yale (1992-1993).

Kessen, a professor of psychology, was a child psychologist who researched the behavior of infants before they could speak. He is noted for his relativistic view of child care, and his assertions that modern child-care in America emerged from the bourgeois division between work and family.

Taylor, Yale’s provost, was a scholar who specialized in the poetry of Percy Bysshe Shelley and had been briefly a professor of English, where he taught a single course on Shakespeare before becoming a full-time administrator at Yale in 1963. At “Black Studies in the University,” a symposium held at

81 Nathaniel Zelinsky, “Who Governed Yale? Kingman Brewster and Higher Education in the 1970s,” MSSA Kaplan Prize for Yale History, 2, 2013.

82 Ibid, 12.

Yale, May 11-12, 1968, and sponsored by the Ford Foundation, Taylor declared:

Our society, our education, suffer from white racism. This racism is both conscious and unconscious—much of it unconscious, but nevertheless real...What we are faced with then in our black students' protest is not simply, in some respects not even chiefly, their proper demand to know more about themselves, about their heritage and their tradition, but rather their consciousness of how important it is for American society, for us, the white majority, to know a lot more about them. We need this knowledge to attack not only conscious prejudice, which is easy to identify, but to overcome unconscious discrimination, that simple lack of awareness, the ignorance from which we all suffer in white America.<sup>83</sup>

In short, the committee chaired by Dahl comprised four black activist students, three faculty who appeared ideologically predisposed to favor the activists' demands, and the provost, who had gone on record at the May symposium, fulsomely supporting the creation of a black studies program. The committee seemed highly unlikely to provide a balanced consideration of the pros and cons of the issue. For that matter, Dahl had also spoken at the May symposium, and it could have surprised no one when the committee issued its recommendations in December 1968 that Yale establish a black studies program.<sup>84</sup> Brewster's appointment of the committee was plainly intended to give him political cover with faculty members and alumni who opposed the new order.

Surprised or not, Yale alumni were not universally pleased. A new organization, Lux et Veritas, Incorporated (LEVI) formed in May 1969, objecting to Brewster's wide-ranging concessions to black activists and calling for reform.

## The Amplification of Racial Discontent, 1969

The seemingly settled debate over the creation of a black studies program at Yale did not mollify BSAY or other activists who were engaged with the cause of black grievance. Student protests against the Vietnam War and in favor of admitting more women students raged in 1969. The Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) appears to have first become active at Yale that year,

83 Quoted in Armstead L. Robinson, Craig C. Foster, and Donald H. Ogilvie, eds., *Black Studies in the University: A Symposium* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960) 1-2.

84 *Ibid.*, 1-2.

and was initially focused only on protesting the Vietnam War. But they were not the only angry Yale students.

On May 19, 1969 Bobby Seale, the Chairman of the National Black Panther Party (NBPP), a violent revolutionary black identitarian organization,<sup>85</sup> addressed the Yale student body in an event sponsored by the Black Arts Theatre of New Haven and the Black Arts Students at Yale. Before an audience of 700, Seale espoused the Panthers' ten-point program for black liberation. Panthers did not read "textbooks about 'Yankee Doodle Socialism,'" he said; they "fight capitalism with socialism, racism with solidarity."<sup>86</sup>

The speech contained separate messages for whites and blacks. Seale accused Yale's white students of being "a bunch of jackass racists," and bid black audience members to "do something niggers, if you only spit: stop jiving yourselves, brothers."<sup>87</sup> His remarks concluded with an assertion that appeared to refer to events taking place a few miles away at the Panthers' New Haven headquarters. He said, "We don't care what color he is. If we catch him brutalizing any kind of people, we will kill him."<sup>88</sup>

As it happened, on May 18, the day before Seale's speech, Black Panthers in New Haven kidnapped one of their own, Alex Rackley, and staged a "trial"

in the basement of their New Haven headquarters. Over the next two days, they tortured and ultimately killed Rackley, and on May 21 dumped his body in the Coginchaug River near Middletown.

Police quickly identified eight New Haven Black Panthers as suspects and arrested them on May 23. Some other suspects escaped to other cities or Canada, and a nationwide manhunt ensued. Eventually Seale was implicated, arrested, and extradited from Chicago. But that was months later.

In the meantime, Yale was having other troubles. During the week of June 9, 1969, black and Hispanic students distributed flyers asking "Why has Yale not gone up in smoke? See the A and A [Art and Architecture] building."<sup>89</sup>

Yale did not have to wait long for the smoke. On June 14, campus officials awoke to a fire on the top two floors (the fourth and fifth) of the School of

**Declaring themselves an “experiment in participatory democracy,” the protesting students circumvented the school’s official admissions process by sending out letters of admission to twelve minority students whom the school itself had declined to admit.**

85 FBI Records: The Vault. Black Panther Party. <https://vault.fbi.gov/Black%20Panther%20Party%20>

86 Marvin Olasky, "Seale Roasts 'Pigs,' Farmer, Racism 'Hit Hogs,'" *Yale Daily News*, May 21, 1969

87 *Ibid.*

88 *Ibid.*

89 Joseph Lelyveld, "After Fire, Yale Smolders," *New York Times*, June 27, 1969.

Art and Architecture, which gutted the facility and caused an estimated \$500,000 in damage. Fire Chief Michael J Sweeney thought the cause was arson.<sup>90</sup> No one was arrested and Yale proceeded to bury the incident.

The flyers and the fire were the culmination of a months-long campaign by black students in which they attempted to hijack admissions to the City Planning program. Declaring themselves an “experiment in participatory democracy,” the protesting students circumvented the school’s official admissions process by sending out letters of admission to twelve minority students whom the school itself had declined to admit. They received aid from two faculty members, the chairman of City Planning, Christopher Tunnard, and Assistant Dean Louis S. DeLuca. When the dean of the School of Art and Architecture strongly objected, President Brewster intervened and fired Tunnard and DeLuca.<sup>91</sup>

Brewster wrote to all of the students who had been officially admitted—there were eight—telling them not to come. His stated reason was that the department “might not continue in its present form.” He presumably didn’t know of the coming fire. Brewster’s actions, far from mollifying the students, intensified their fury. Disgruntled Art and Architecture faculty members issued a statement protesting Brewster’s intervention and demanding that the school become “more relevant to the social concerns of the students.” The flyers asking, “Why has Yale not gone up in smoke?” and the fire that ripped through the top two floors of the Arts and Architecture building followed.<sup>92</sup>

Five Yale students were identified as having distributed the flyers. None of them were Arts and Architecture students. “One member of the group declared that their intentions were the opposite of inciting violence,” and explained that the fire was “an extremely unfortunate coincidence.”<sup>93</sup>

## Juice

In October, Yale dining hall manager John Lewis fired waitress Colia Williams after she threw a glass of juice in bursary captain John Meyers’ face. She said Meyers had jostled her and otherwise harassed her. Two of her co-workers, however, said Williams was a “crummy worker.” According to the *Yale Daily News*, “the principal issue in her case is apparently whether she was a ‘slow’ or uncooperative worker.”<sup>94</sup>

The incident soon became a cause célèbre for students. The Yale Students

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90 Ibid.

91 Ibid.

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid.

94 “Forty-Five Suspended After Wright Hall Occupation,” *Yale Daily News*, November 4, 1969.

for a Democratic Society printed a leaflet saying “she was fighting against ‘speed-up’ and racism in the Yale dining halls.”<sup>95</sup> The SDS staged a protest in the basement of Wright Hall, refusing to leave until Ms. Williams was rehired. President Brewster happened to be on vacation in the Caribbean at the moment, and it was left to Provost Taylor and Brewster’s aide Sam Chauncey

**Relevance pointed to a shift in priorities; it meant emphasizing contemporary social issues and diminishing academic attention to history, philosophy, and social theory except when these fields were directly concerned race, poverty, or injustice.**

to figure out how to handle the forty-five students occupying the basement. Taking a different track than Brewster might have, they suspended the students, who still refused to leave. The occupation finally dispersed after Yale agreed to rehire Williams.<sup>96</sup>

The dining hall occupation, though framed as an anti-racism protest, seemed to draw little if any attention from Yale’s black activists. That may have been because the Black Panther controversy was heating

up. Brewster himself was much more concerned with the delicate balances among Yale’s radicalized black students, their white allies, the Panthers, and the black community in New Haven. In the meantime, the efforts to organize the new Afro-American Studies Major proceeded.

## Black Studies at Yale: Anticipations

Prior to President Brewster’s February 1968 appointment of the African American Study Group, the Yale administration had shown no interest in creating an African American Studies major. The idea itself was novel in American higher education as a whole when BSAY students enunciated it as one of their goals in 1967. “The major,” said Craig Foster, one of the four BSAY students Brewster appointed to the African American Study Group, “mostly came from us.” He said that “most of the groundwork and drafting is our work.”<sup>97</sup> BSAY “wouldn’t be satisfied if we didn’t think it was good.”<sup>98</sup> The program that emerged from those discussions would be “interdisciplinary,” i.e., it would “intersect” with already established disciplines. A consortium of

95 *Ibid.*

96 Nathaniel Zelinsky, “Who Governed Yale? Kingman Brewster and Higher Education in the 1970s,” MSSA Kaplan Prize for Yale History, 2013, 34.

97 James Sargent Jr., “Black Studies: Why and How,” *Yale Daily News*. December 13, 1968.

98 *Ibid.*

twenty-one courses would be taught throughout the university.<sup>99100</sup>

BSAY argued that the major would make Yale's curriculum more "relevant" to black students.<sup>101</sup> "Relevance" was a key word in the political vocabulary of campus radicals at the time. It was also used, for example, by the students who attempted to hijack the admissions to the Urban Planning program before someone set fire to the Arts and Architecture building. "Relevance" was a vague concept, but it was symbolic of a broader movement away from the traditional understanding of liberal arts as the font of essential wisdom toward a more relativistic view. In the highly politicized atmosphere of the 1960s, of what use, or "relevance," was the literature of the Greeks or the Renaissance if the civilization they helped create could result in a legacy of such injustice? Relevance pointed to a shift in priorities; it meant emphasizing contemporary social issues and diminishing academic attention to history, philosophy, and social theory except when these fields were directly concerned with race, poverty, or injustice.<sup>102</sup>

When Brewster accepted the recommendation of the African American Study Group to create the new major, he appointed anthropology professor Sidney W. Mintz to oversee the next steps, which included drawing in professors from various academic departments.<sup>103</sup>

Provost Charles Taylor said that BSAY's case for African American Studies was "especially persuasive" on account of their argument that "it is educationally essential for all Yale students to ... enlarge their understanding of the black experience." BSAY leaders insisted on the intellectual integrity of African American Studies and recommended that students couple the major with a "discipline such as history or economics."<sup>104</sup> In later years, student activists added East Asian, Latino, and

**Any programs, he said, structurally built to rehabilitate students by emphasizing identitarianism were "doomed inevitably to failure."**

South Asian-Americans to the list of American racial groups in need of their own stand-alone academic departments or programs.

Professor Dahl, who led the committee that launched the proposal, insisted that the new major wasn't designed exclusively for black students. He hoped that white students would also pursue the major, and said he would

99 "Approve Black Major, Seminars in Colleges," *Yale Daily News*, December 13, 1968.

100 "Afro Major, College Seminars to Go Before Faculty Today," *Yale Daily News*, December 12, 1968.

101 Tom Linden, "Yale Considers Afro Studies, Holds Conference on Blacks; New Major Set for Fall, 1969." *Yale Daily News*. May 15, 1968.

102 John Agresto, "The Liberal Education as Magic and as Paradox," *Academic Questions* 32, no. 2 (Summer 2019).

103 "Faculty Approve Black Major, Seminars in Colleges," *Yale Daily News*, December 13, 1968.

104 *Ibid.*

be “terribly disappointed if they didn’t.” Still, Nathaniel Hare, the special coordinator of the San Francisco State University’s black studies program, expressed his doubts to the *Yale Daily News* when a reporter asked him about the merits of the new curriculum. In his experience students had expected a “mere blackening up of white courses.” Any programs, he said, structurally built to rehabilitate students by emphasizing identitarianism were “doomed inevitably to failure.”<sup>105</sup>

The debate over African American Studies quickly gave birth to the conceit that any who opposed the novel field were reactionaries who deserved to be ignored. Afro-American Studies was treated by its proponents as beyond reproach. Craig Foster gave voice to this defense. When a *Yale Daily News* reporter asked him if the major was explicitly for black students, he took offense. “Is Latin American Studies for Latin Americans [when] Yale is 98 per cent white?” Without question, he declared, more whites than blacks would register for the program. Committee member William Kessen stated that African American studies would foster “personal contact with black culture,” the establishment of which offered our “only hope of solving racial problems.” White students too would benefit from the “lifting the veil of supreme naiveté with which they greeted most race problems.”<sup>106</sup>

Black students had their own reasons for supporting the program. BSAY founder Armstead Robinson ('69) said many of Yale’s black students are “disillusioned with courses here.”<sup>107</sup> A “black educator” quoted by the *Yale Daily News* explained that black students:

Read white literature, study white families, analyze white music, survey white civilizations, examine white cultures, probe white psychology. In a word, the college curriculum is white-culture based.<sup>108</sup>

Austin Clarke, a Barbadian novelist who was then a visiting professor at Yale, denied that “white culture is the only thing worth studying or imitating.”<sup>109</sup> He added that a time would come when “everything black will be powerful and therefore beautiful.”<sup>110</sup> Yale jumped at the chance to fulfill that wish and scheduled the program to start in the fall semester of 1969.<sup>111</sup>

Dahl predicted that “a great many [colleges] will imitate or be influenced by [the program].” Yale history Professor Robert Winks imagined that Yale would deemphasize its traditional curriculum in favor of more

105 James Sargent, Jr. “Black Studies Why and How.” *Yale Daily News*, December 13, 1968.

106 *Ibid.*

107 *Ibid.*

108 *Ibid.*

109 *Ibid.*

110 *Ibid.*

111 “Faculty Approve Black Major, Seminars in Colleges,” *Yale Daily News*, December 13, 1968.

“culturally-based courses in the future.” He also expressed his wish for Yale to replace “documented facts” with the “oral traditions of black Americans.”<sup>112</sup>

William Borders, the author of the first *New York Times* reports about “diversity” at Wesleyan University, broke the news of Yale’s new major on December 13, 1968. Borders interviewed Dahl, who responded to critics’ suspicion of the program’s intellectual rigor and ideological basis by insisting that the fledgling major was “educationally sound, and that’s all that counts.”<sup>113</sup> Addressing concerns that the involvement of activist students in the major’s development compromised its academic legitimacy, he asserted that he was “certainly not embarrassed that what [Yale] came up with is something people want.”<sup>114</sup>

Dahl asserted Yale’s commitment to augmenting the major with additional courses and intent to hire more experts in the field. As soon as Yale found someone qualified to teach “the sociology of the slums, the politics of poverty and a comparative history of slavery,” Dahl said, he would be hired.<sup>115</sup>

Among the other colleges and universities that weighed the addition of a Black Studies major in 1969 were Dartmouth, Williams, Bowdoin, and Cornell, each of which issued a report detailing black students’ grievances and demands. In June of 1968, Harvard University offered its first two-semester course in the subject, “The Afro-American Experience,” and pledged to ex-

plorate the addition of an Afro-American Studies concentration. Harvard’s course began with the “African background and the Negro experience in American History through 1945.” A lecture series hosted by the John F. Kennedy School of Government supplemented students’ in-class instruction with “a series of films and television tapes on the subject.”<sup>116</sup>

In a June article, *The New York Times* noted the dubious quality of black studies programs at less reputable schools,

**“We have suffered too many heartaches and shed too many tears and too much blood in fighting the evil of racial segregation to return in 1969 to the lonely and dispiriting confines of its demeaning prison,”**

but added that the idea had gained traction nevertheless. Though the *Times* conceded that black studies did not preclude “straight non-propagandistic, scholarly” instruction, black students often downplayed the scholarship and emphasized its “therapeutic” benefits instead.<sup>117</sup>

112 James Sargent Jr., “Black Studies: Why and How,” *Yale Daily News*, December 13, 1968.

113 William Borders. “Yale Plans Brand New Major in Culture of African Americans,” *New York Times*, December 13, 1968.

114 *Ibid.*

115 *Ibid.*

116 *Ibid.*

117 Fred M. Hechinger, “The Demand Grows for ‘Black Studies,’” *New York Times*, June 23, 1969.



*Yale Daily News* writer James Sargent Jr., '71, quoted historian Roger Butterfield saying blacks resented traditional history's ignorance of "[the black man's] presence" by "treating him as an appendage to American history rather than an integral part of it."<sup>118</sup> *The New York Times* argued that black studies risked having a curriculum that emphasized blacks' "heroic past," but that "[omitted] less glorious chapters."<sup>119</sup>

The rise of Black Studies was not greeted with enthusiasm by all black leaders. At a panel in January 1969, Executive Director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Roy Wilkins, described the Black Studies movement as a regrettable development in black politics. "We have suffered too many heartaches and shed too many tears and too much blood in fighting the evil of racial segregation to return in 1969 to the lonely and dispiriting confines of its demeaning prison," he said.<sup>120</sup> Wilkins targeted white administrators for his message, whom he charged with creating illegal "Jim Crow schools."<sup>121</sup> Dr. Nathaniel Hare, founder of San Francisco State's Department of Ethnic Studies, responded to Wilkins by dismissing him as a reactionary who "should be given a scroll and retired ... like old race horses and prizefighters."<sup>122</sup>

The diametrically opposed views of Wilkins and Hare on Black Studies capture the underlying divergence between the integrationist and separatist camps within the black community.

A letter to the editor in *The New York Times* two days after Wilkins's remarks indicated that integrationists of his mold were losing sway with the black public. The writer, Warner B. Wims, president of the Union Theological Seminary's Black Caucus, equated Wilkins's ideological camp with the "plantation system [that] violated the solidarity of African Americans," and noted that blacks' "most treacherous opponents have come from their own people." The letter is an early example of the denunciation of black integrationists as race traitors. Black separatists like Wims denied that "separation and discrimination" were "inherently evil." This position contradicted the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, which held that segregated institutions are pernicious because they deprive blacks of the opportunity to thrive in established institutions. Separate, according to the Supreme Court, is never equal. Chief Justice Earl Warren's opinion did not address the sentiment of blacks such as Wims who believed that separate could be equal if figures such as Wilkins had "faith in the black man's abilities."<sup>123</sup>

118 Sargent, Jr. "Black Studies."

119 Hechinger, "Demand Grows."

120 "New Challenges to the Value of Separatism and 'Black Studies,'" *New York Times*, January 19, 1969.

121 *Ibid.*

122 *Ibid.*

123 Warner B. Wims. "Roy Wilkins Scored." Letter to the Editor. *New York Times*, January 21, 1969.

## Other Discontents

BSAY's activism inspired other ethnic groups. Like black students, Asian-American students formed an ethnic social club to seek preferential treatment in undergraduate admissions. In November 1969, the newly founded Asian-American Students Association criticized Yale for not considering the economic disadvantages of Asian-American high schoolers, and that their secondary education was just as poor as that of lower-class blacks.<sup>124</sup> The Asian-American Students Association lobbied the administration successfully. By 1971, Yale announced the matriculation of thirty-one Asian-Americans. Other minority groups saw their numbers rise also. Two dozen Mexican Americans and six Puerto Ricans were accepted to the freshman class of 1971. One year later, the existing student groups were joined by *Despierta Boricuas* ("Wake Up Puerto Ricans"), a Puerto Rican student group.<sup>125</sup>

The records for exactly when *Despierta Boricuas* got started are unclear, but by 1972 it was demanding that Yale concede to it the right to recruit "mainland Puerto Ricans" (i.e. Puerto Ricans from the continental U.S.) without the administration's help.<sup>126</sup> The group wanted Yale to matriculate Puerto Rican students in numbers proportionate to their share of the national population.

*Despierta Boricua's* proposal was born out of the group's consternation that by the spring of 1972 under a dozen mainland Puerto Ricans were attending Yale.<sup>127</sup> It pinned this low figure on bureaucratic obstruction in the admissions office, which included a rule stipulating that *Despierta Boricua* submit its travel itinerary for student-led recruitment trips five weeks in advance. Moreover, it said, admissions officials rejected *Despierta Boricua's* input in molding the shape of Yale's recruitment strategy. The entire process, *Despierta Boricua* claimed, was "tailored to the needs of the admissions office."<sup>128</sup>

*Despierta Boricua* had more in mind than reforming Yale's system of minority recruitment. It also aimed to eliminate Yale's SAT requirements for admission. *Despierta Boricua* argued that Puerto Rican enrollment could have surged sooner if the mediocre test scores of many Puerto Rican students hadn't deterred them from applying to Yale.<sup>129</sup> Despite the SAT's power to predict the collegiate performance of the "average Yale applicant," *Despierta*

124 Karabel, *The Chosen*, 392.

125 *Ibid.*

126 Executive Committee of *Despierta Boricua*, Hector Medina '73, Gilbert Casellas '74, Eduardo Padro '75, Cruz Ramos '75, Manuel del Valley Colon '74, "Open Letter to President Brewster," *Yale Daily News*, February 9, 1972.

127 "Puerto Ricans Protest at N.Y.C. Yale Club," *Yale Daily News*, April 4, 1972.

128 "Open Letter to President Brewster," Executive Committee of *Despierta Boricua*, Hector Medina '73, Gilbert Casellas '74, Eduardo Padro '75, Cruz Ramos '75, Manuel del Valley Colon '74, "Open Letter to President Brewster," February 9, 1972, No. 82

129 *Ibid.*

Boricua asserted that when it came to minorities “SATs alone are an unreliable measure of a student’s actual potential.” The SATs were particularly pernicious to Puerto Ricans’ aspirations, it claimed, because many Puerto Ricans are bilingual and attended low-performing school districts disproportionately. Both factors, it concluded, singled Puerto Ricans out for SAT-based discrimination.<sup>130</sup>

Despierta Boricua offered a fix: it asked Yale to pack its admissions committee with Puerto Rican officers “as readers of folders or, as candidate interviewers.” What it sought ultimately was an “an ongoing comprehensive [recruitment] program as opposed to the current piecemeal program” Yale was subsidizing. Until Yale did things its way, Despierta Boricua would doubt Yale’s “commitment to the mainland Puerto Rican.” For Despierta Boricua, a commitment to the mainland Puerto Rican included: hiring Puerto Rican

**Despierta Boricua had more in mind than reforming Yale’s system of minority recruitment. It also aimed to eliminate Yale’s SAT requirements for admission.**

graduate students to assess the applications of Puerto Rican students; a Puerto Rican admissions dean; a policy mandating the referral of incoming Puerto Rican students to Despierta Boricua; and the elimination of a rule that disqualified students from receiving federal loans if they qualified for work study.<sup>131</sup>

Despierta Boricua eventually took its complaints to the streets. On April 4, 1972, it picketed the Yale Club of New York to protest Yale University’s “conscious or unconscious racism towards Puerto Ricans.” Yale’s allegiance to its admissions standards betrayed its “indifference” to the plight of poor minorities, the protestors charged.<sup>132</sup> Nearly two million Puerto Ricans lived in the United States at the time, and 150,000 Puerto Ricans resided in New Haven alone. And yet, under a dozen continent-born Puerto Rican students were enrolled at Yale. President Brewster, they continued, slighted them personally. In contrast to Brewster’s countenancing several rounds of negotiations with the BSAY, he would not negotiate with Despierta Boricua about admissions.<sup>133</sup>

Despierta Boricua’s protests paid off. On April 17, 1972 the *Yale Daily News* reported statistical data for Yale’s Class of 1976. From an applicant pool of 2,313 students, Yale selected 1,350 for admission to the college. The most important news was that the number of Puerto Rican students accepted to Yale had more than doubled.<sup>134</sup>

130 *Ibid.*

131 *Ibid.*

132 “Puerto Ricans Protest at N.Y.C. Yale Club,” *Yale Daily News*, April 4, 1972.

133 *Ibid.*

134 *Yale Daily News*, “Yale Admits New Freshman Class,” April 17, 1972, No. 117

In the 1971 admissions cycle, the article reported, Yale had accepted only thirteen Puerto Rican students.<sup>135</sup> In 1972, it increased that number to twenty-eight: twenty-two mainlanders and six islanders. The university supplemented its diversity windfall with an overhaul of its hiring practices. Two months after the *Yale Daily News* reported the demographics of the class of 1976, Yale announced a new associate provost position. The university filled it with linguistics professor Jacqueline Wei Mintz, who was to focus on female and minority recruitment.<sup>136</sup>

In October 1972, Yale's minority groups banded together to propose changes to Yale University's minority recruitment apparatus, which *Yale Daily News* reporter Wendy Jones called "haphazard and unstructured." The students, Jones reported, wanted Yale to use its bureaucratic capacities to impose a sanctioned minority recruitment program. Yale University assented to the changes, which according to Dean of Admissions Worth David would boost minority enrollment by increasing the pool of minority applicants. David added that the new initiative would prioritize quantity over quality. The process, he promised, would not be "a selective one." In other words, Yale University's desire to placate minority students led it to double down on "taking risks" with students who might not succeed at Yale.<sup>137</sup>

Racial integration at Yale University was underway, but Yale discovered that treating individuals differently depending on their presumed racial identity had unexpected costs. Racial tensions on campus did not disappear. Rather they worsened.

This became clear in the next decade when the academic "mismatch" between white and minority students prompted minority organizations to demand segregated pre-college programs. The initial idea was that these programs would offset deficiencies in minority students' academic preparation. Despierta Boricuas was Yale's first minority group to demand a special program.<sup>138</sup>

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135 *Ibid.*

136 Gay Miller, "Mintz Will Survey Hiring of Women As Yale's New Associate Provost," *Yale Daily News*, June 26, 1972.

137 Wendy Jones '75, "Recruitment Overhauled; Process Still Under Fire," *Yale Daily News*, October 17, 1972, No. 27

138 Dan Chow, "Support Services Help Minorities Cope," *Yale Daily News*, March 3, 1977.



Part II.  
The Black  
Panther  
Crisis

## Part II. The Black Panther Crisis

While the Yale community was struggling with issues of minority student recruitment and the creation of a black studies program, and dealing with the rise of student groups such as the SDS and other radicals opposed to the Vietnam War, a new crisis emerged. The torture and murder of Alex Rackley in May 1969 drew immediate national attention. The State of California granted Bobby Seale's extradition to Connecticut, January 1, 1970.<sup>139</sup> Seale's arrest and trial ensured that Yale's black community would play a major part in the events to follow.

The Black Panthers murdered Rackley because they suspected he was an FBI informant. Although the FBI did stage a successful espionage operation against the Panthers, no evidence has emerged that Rackley was part of it. Panther paranoia fueled by methamphetamines and marijuana sealed Rackley's fate.<sup>140</sup>

A few of the gruesome details are needed to give the story its proper weight in Yale's racial politics.

On May 18, 1969, Rackley was taken against his will to the Panthers' New Haven headquarters, which doubled as the home of Panther Warren Kimbro. The "trial" took place in the basement. After being interrogated, Rackley was tied to the bed of Kimbro's seven-year-old daughter to "lay [sic] in his own urine and feces."<sup>141</sup>

Over the course of two days, the Panthers assaulted and tortured Rackley by pouring boiling water on his torso, buttocks, and thighs and burning him with lit cigarettes.<sup>142</sup> After Rackley disclosed the names of several alleged spies, party members George Sams, Warren Kimbro and Lonnie McClucas drove him to Middletown, Connecticut, under orders to execute him.

On May 21, 1969, John Mrockza found Rackley's body submerged in Middletown's Coginchaug River. When the State Police arrived at the scene, they observed the damage to Rackley's body, which included bullet wounds through his chest and forehead, multiple stab wounds, and burns throughout his body. His wrists were tied and a wire-hanger noose was fastened around his neck. Rackley's autopsy later confirmed that he had been beaten about his face, groin, and lower back with a blunt object. According to a coroner examination, Rackley may have clung to life hours after Panther Lonnie McClucas followed up Warren Kimbro's headshot with an "insurance bullet" to his

139 "Seale's Extradition Is Backed by Reagan," *The New York Times*, January 1, 1970.

140 Paul Bass and Douglas W. Rae, *Murder in the Model City: The Black Panthers, Yale, and the Redemption of a Killer* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 4.

141 Bass and Rae, 4.

142 Edward Jay Epstein, "The Black Panthers and the Police: A Pattern of Genocide?" *New Yorker*, February 13, 1971; "Black Panther Chief Seized in Berkeley In Torture-Slaying," *The New York Times*, August 20, 1969.

chest.<sup>143</sup>

On May 23, 1969, *The New York Times*' John Darnton reported that police arrested eight Black Panthers suspected of the murder at the organization's New Haven headquarters.<sup>144</sup> The Panthers surrendered without resistance. Investigators recovered audio tapes of Rackley's interrogation, several rifles, and a stockpile of ammunition. Al (Bobo) Rogers, a Panther spokesman claimed that "The murder charge was completely trumped up."<sup>145</sup> National Black Panther Party attorney, Charles Garry, who defended Panther Huey Newton against charges that he murdered police officer John Frey, affirmed. He pinned the murder of Rackley on the "police or by agents of some armed agency of the government."<sup>146</sup> Garry added that he would prove his conspiracy theory in court.

A nationwide manhunt for the Panthers who weren't arrested at the Panther's lair followed the raid.<sup>147</sup> Police captured George Sams in Toronto, Canada, where he told them that Seale had given the "order to 'do away with'" Rackley.<sup>148</sup> Sam's statement was enough for law enforcement officials to arrest Seale in Berkeley California, from where he was eventually extradited to stand trial for masterminding—and supervising—Rackley's murder.<sup>149</sup> But contradictory accounts of Seale's involvement cast doubt over his exact role.<sup>150</sup> Sams and Kimbro turned state's evidence and the state proceeded to a trial, scheduled for May 1970. The proceedings were dubbed a "political trial" by Seale's supporters.<sup>151</sup>

## Heightening the Contradictions

BSAY initially invited Bobby Seale to Yale as a speaker on May 19, 1969, a move that was intended to provoke the Yale community. That Seale would use his speaking engagement as an alibi for the torture and execution of one of his associates surely never occurred to any member of BSAY, but they could not have been disappointed with the "obscenity-laden speech" Seale gave at

143 Epstein, "The Black Panthers"; Bass and Rae.

144 John Darnton, "8 Panthers Seized in Torture-Murder Case," *The New York Times*, May 23, 1969.

145 *Ibid.*

146 Epstein, "The Black Panthers."

147 Bass and Rae, 22.

148 John Darnton, "New Haven Is Looking With Foreboding to the Murder Trial of Bobby Seale, the Black Panther Leader," *New York Times*, March 22, 1970.

149 "Black Panther Chief Seized in Berkeley In Torture-Slaying," *The New York Times*, August 20, 1969; "Seale's Extradition Is Backed by Reagan," *The New York Times*, January 1, 1970.

150 Joseph Lelyveld. "Kimbro Describes Panther Slaying," *The New York Times*, July 24, 1970; Bruce Weber, "Warren Kimbro, Ex-Panther Who Turned to Life of Service After Killing, Dies at 74," *The New York Times*, February 5, 2009.

151 Richard H. Porter, "Defining a Political Trial," *Yale Daily News*, March 30, 1971.



Battell Chapel.<sup>152</sup> It gave BSAY cachet among Yale's increasingly radicalized students. Here was an "authentic" voice of black revolution and an unabashed promoter of the "by any means necessary" approach to achieving political ends, first enunciated by Jean-Paul Sartre and popularized in the U.S. by Malcolm X. BSAY did not apologize for or distance themselves from Seale's performance in any way.

Rather, BSAY initially adopted a strategy of heightening tensions. As matters played out with the murder, the arrests, and the impending trial, BSAY's members did everything they could to raise the sense of imminent danger to Yale from an explosion of black anger in New Haven. BSAY succeeded so well at this that its leaders appear to have frightened themselves and they repositioned BSAY as the mediator between

the violence-prone Panthers and the University. At one moment, BSAY played the role of provocateur, at the next moment peacemaker.

*In May Day at Yale, 1970:*

*Recollections, The Trial of Bobby Seale and the Black Panthers, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. '73 recalled that BSAY's leadership began to fear the Panthers' plans to "heighten the contradictions." These included inciting police violence*

**It gave BSAY cachet among Yale's increasingly radicalized students. Here was an "authentic" voice of black revolution and an unabashed promoter of the "by any means necessary" approach to achieving political ends,**

against white Yale students to show that "even white, privileged Yalies could be victims of police brutality too."<sup>153</sup> Gates, who travelled to New Haven to support the Panthers' cause, recalled that BSAY member Glenn deChabert '70 held an emergency meeting to announce that he was taking the Panthers seriously. DeChabert urged BSAY to work with Brewster to keep the Panthers under control before the May Day rally.<sup>154</sup>

Gates paints BSAY as Yale's potential savior from these dangers. If only the Yale community hearkened to BSAY's sober counsel, the danger could be allayed. Thus, said Gates, Glenn deChabert and Kurt Schmoke, who went on to become Baltimore, Maryland's first African American mayor, decided to "open a back channel to President Brewster even as" BSAY member Bill Farley

152 Marvin Olasky, "Seale Roasts 'Pigs,'" *Yale Daily News*, May 21, 1969.

153 Henry "Sam" Chauncey, *May Day at Yale, 1970: Recollections: The Trial of Bobby Seale and the Black Panthers* (Easton Studio Press, LLC. 2015).

154 *Ibid.*

'72 publicly declared his intention to help shut down the campus.<sup>155</sup>

## Prelude to May Day

Seale's imprisonment for his role in the murder of Alex Rackley triggered the indignation of Yale's radical white students and the BSAY. At least one student activist, Larry McSpadden, dropped out of the university. The *Yale Daily News* paraphrased McSpadden saying he refused to "study liberal arts 'when it looked like the world was falling apart around'" him. Others volunteered by "selling the Panthers' newspapers" and "driving them to speaking engagements." BSAY member Larry Thompson '72 later said that the trial marked "an extraordinarily exciting time." Some students allegedly withdrew because of "fear mongering"—by whom is unclear, though many students spoke of the danger of riots in New Haven. Other participated in "seminars ... to try to educate people as to what was going on."<sup>156</sup>

Theater professor Robert Brustein detailed his account of this chapter of Yale's history in his essay "When the Panther Came to Yale."<sup>157</sup> As he delivered a lecture on John Webster's play *The White Devil*, a student from Yale's Branford Liberation Front, "a radical cadre of students," entered his classroom through an open window and declared that Brustein should not be teaching. Brustein, he added, should "be talking and thinking about the Panthers and how to free Bobby Seale." There was "a reality happening out there," he said, and "[Brustein] should be dealing with it." The student's words to Brustein were a part of student efforts to close the university in resistance to what they viewed as Seale's political imprisonment.<sup>158</sup>

BSAY called for a campus "strike" after Judge Harold M. Mulvey jailed Black Panther Chief of Staff David Hilliard and Emory Douglas for contempt of court. The Yale College Student Senate agreed, in a resolution (33-26), to strike in support of the Panthers. The unrest unfolded alongside the announcement of a three day pro-Panther rally to be held on May 1, 1970. Reverend Ralph David Abernathy, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, promoted the rally in New York as Yale officials discussed precautions. Abernathy said that Hilliard and Douglas's internment marked the arrival of "Southern-style justice" in New Haven. The contempt of court charges, he insisted, amounted to "nothing more than a legal lynching."<sup>159</sup>

Mulvey dropped the contempt of court charges against the Panthers

155 *Ibid.*

156 Hillary August, "Elis Recall Activism of Black Panther Party," *Yale Daily News*, February 28, 2005.

157 Robert Brustein. "When the Panther Came to Yale." *New York Times*, June 21, 1970.

158 *Ibid.*

159 "Yale Strike Urged to Back Panthers," *New York Times*, April 21, 1970.

after they apologized to the court.<sup>160</sup> The apology freed them to participate in a pre-May 1 rally, scheduled for April 21, and organized by a “Moratorium Committee.” Panthers, black faculty, black students, and black New Havenites organized the event in Yale’s David S. Ingalls Rink the night following the Student Senate vote. By Brustein’s account, the gathering was “not up for discussion or vote.”<sup>161</sup>

**Black Panther officials encouraged an alternative method of closing the college when they challenged student activists to show their “revolutionary commitment by getting guns and occupying” Yale’s Beinecke Library, where the university stores its rare books and most valuable heirlooms of Western civilization.**

Days before the April 21 rally, Black Panther officials encouraged an alternative method of closing the college when they challenged student activists to show their “revolutionary commitment by getting guns and occupying” Yale’s Beinecke Library, where the university stores its rare books and most valuable heirlooms of Western civilization.<sup>162</sup>

About 4,500 students, faculty, and staff came to the rally. Black faculty members and students perched in a reserved bleacher section while other students and faculty filled the rest of the rink to capacity. Kenneth Mills, an assistant professor of philosophy and Trinidad native, delivered the opening remarks, followed by Yale Chaplain

Reverend William Sloane Coffin, who vowed to “submit himself to arrest on the steps of the [New Haven] courthouse.”<sup>163</sup> Coffin memorably echoed Panther lawyer Charles Garry’s conspiracy theory about the murder of Alex Rackley. Coffin insisted the trial was “Panther oppression.”

Brustein reported that Coffin’s appeals for nonviolent protests received a lukewarm response from the audience. After Coffin’s remarks the committee chairman, graduate student Gordon Rochon, turned the meeting over to “the people,” i.e. the Panthers’ black supporters. “The people” declined to commit to nonviolence, citing police brutality and the supposed political motivation of the Panther trial. If the state did not end its prosecution of the Panthers, they said, “Yale would have to suffer the flaming consequences.”<sup>164</sup>

Panther lawyer Charles Garry then introduced the party’s Chief of Staff, David Hilliard, who received a standing ovation. The students raised clenched

160 John Darnton, “Panthers’ Apologies Free Two Jailed for New Haven Contempt,” *The New York Times*, April 22, 1970. Reporting from New Haven on April 21, 1970.

161 Unsigned. “Yale Strike Urged to Back Panthers,” *New York Times*, April 21, 1970.

162 Darnton, “Panthers’ Apologies.”

163 Robert Brustein, “When The Panther Came to Yale.”

164 *Ibid.*

“black power” fists as chants of “Right on!” and “Power to the People!” rippled across the rink. “There is a very basic question facing racist America,” Hilliard began. Would “the people” permit the nation to slip into the hands of an “openly fascist” government or would they “wage revolutionary struggle to bring order to the disorder” in which it was enveloped?<sup>165</sup>

**“Go back on to your humanities classes, go back to your psychology classes, go back to your English 3 or whatever it is” he barked. “We’re dying in the streets!”**

Hilliard then talked up a “revolutionary brother” charged with attempting to murder four police officers. “I don’t think that’s wrong,” he said, “[because] everybody knows that pigs are depraved traducers ... and that there ain’t nothing wrong with taking

the life of a motherfucking pig.” A crowd of boos met Hilliard’s endorsement of cop killing, to which he responded, “I knew you motherfuckers were racists. I didn’t have any doubts.” For Hilliard, opposition to the murder of police officers bore the trappings of Jim Crow-style bigotry. “Go back on to your humanities classes, go back to your psychology classes, go back to your English 3 or whatever it is” he barked. “We’re dying in the streets!” Hilliard then doubled down on his defense of killing police officers:

[W]e’re facing the threat of torture in the electric chair. Yale has a long way to go if they don’t think we’re hostile and that we’re angered by the inactivity of a bunch of young stupid motherfuckers that boo me when I speak about killing pigs. I say fuck you!<sup>166</sup>

The audience’s boos grew louder, and Hilliard continued.

Boo Ho Chi Minh. Boo the Koreans. Boo the Latin Americans. Boo the Africans ... You’re a god damned fool if you think I’m going to stand up here and let a bunch of so-called pacifists, you violent motherfuckers, boo me without me getting violent with you!<sup>167</sup>

After scolding the students, Hilliard tempered his tone. “I understand that although you don’t agree with what I have to say to you, you should be intelligent enough to tolerate that than boo me.” This statement received applause from the black students and faculty gathered behind the podium. A minority of white students joined in. The unreal atmosphere of the rally was augmented by Hilliard’s invitation to any would-be assassins in the audience.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

He invited any such man to “supplant that booing by sticking a dagger in my back or shooting me in the head with a Magnum.” After a brief consultation with the posse encircled around the podium he said, “Now you got me talking to you like a crazy nigger.... I’ve called you everything but long-haired hippies.” He decided to “take it all back.” With this, he won over the audience, which resumed its chants of “Power to the People!”<sup>168</sup>

The rally was not without violence. From nowhere, a white student rushed the podium and struggled with Hilliard’s bodyguards, who kicked and stomped on him. Hilliard told the crowd that a “reactionary” infiltrated the event. The assault on the student continued until Kenneth Mills intervened and helped him to his feet. Hilliard declared:

I think that was a humane response to all those who try to block the legitimate struggle of black people in this country... Anybody who takes the opportunity to come up here and run me...off the platform deserves that kind of treatment—and if they don’t want that—then keep their motherfucking asses down... It’s lucky I wasn’t smoking pot or dropping LSD because I would have kicked his motherfucking ass too.<sup>169</sup>

Kenneth Mills took the microphone to remind the audience that the Moratorium Committee “did not schedule [the rally] as a debate.” The Moratorium Committee assembled for “what we are going to do about the defense of justice for the Panthers and to retain whatever humanity we still have left.” The violence inflicted on the white student could “befall any of us” in the current political climate. That Yale became a target made it all the more necessary to “[show] that you are serious, and the shutdown is now.” The students chanted “strike” in affirmation of Mills’s call for a campus shutdown and left the rally for their residential colleges. Later that night, nine of Yale’s twelve residential colleges voted for the cessation of its college’s academic functions. The resolution also turned over each facility to members of the black community and activists in New Haven for what later became known as the “May Day” rally.<sup>170</sup>

## Brewster Temporizes, the Faculty Submits

The students had served President Brewster a problem he could not ignore. When he called a faculty meeting to discuss the possibility of closing

168 *Ibid.*

169 *Ibid.*

170 *Ibid.*

down the school, he avoided his duty to preserve order. Brewster gave the floor to Professor Roy Bryce Laporte, Chairman of the fledgling Afro-American Studies program. The black faculty members had met before the official meeting and voted on their resolution. It called for “an indefinite suspension of normal academic functions in recognition of the oppression of Black Panthers and blacks throughout the land.” The group tabled the motion to open the floor for the consideration of alternative resolutions.<sup>171</sup>

Brewster followed the presentation of the “black resolution” with words that reverberated around the country. He told attendees that he was skeptical of “the ability of black revolutionaries to achieve a fair trial anywhere in the United States” on account of the “atmosphere ... created by police actions and prosecutions of the Panthers.” Brustein was surprised that media outlets interpreted Brewster’s “personal opinion” as official Yale policy.<sup>172</sup> But the words stuck. To many, they comported with Reverend Coffin’s pro-Panther statement on April 19 that “it might be legally right but morally wrong for [the] trial to go forward.” In the eyes of Judge Herbert S. MacDonald, who presided over the Panthers’ arraignment, Brewster’s remarks “were an ‘awful let down to the court, the police, and the community in which Yale is located.’” MacDonald additionally accused Brewster and Coffin of creating “the atmosphere of which they now complain.”<sup>173</sup>

Yale psychology professor Kenneth Keniston, comparative literature professor Peter Brooks, and English professor Charles Long proposed an alternative to the “black resolution” to shut Yale indefinitely. Instead of an “indefinite suspension,” Yale should redirect university activities until after the May Day rally. An additional provision called on the faculty to reaffirm its opposition to violence which “had no place on a university campus.” As the faculty deliberated, they heard the din of about 1,000 students gathered outside the building. Everyone knew that a decision needed to be reached promptly. The discussion was disrupted when Dean Georges May alerted the faculty that Kurt Schmoke, a member of BSAY and Secretary of the Class of 1971, requested permission to address them. Schmoke’s remarks stirred the faculty to action:

The students on campus are confused, they’re frightened. They don’t know what to think. You are older than we are, and more experienced. We want guidance from you, moral leadership. On behalf of

171 *Ibid.*

172 *Ibid.*

173 Joseph B. Treaster, “Judge Says Yale Perils Fair Trial,” *The New York Times*, April 26, 1970.

my fellow students, I beg you to give it to us.<sup>174</sup>

Schmoke's speech earned the faculty's esteem, who "expressed homage to the courtesy of his speech and the charm of his person." Leadership came in the form of a milder version of the black faculty's resolution:

The new wording directed that the normal academic expectations (not functions) of the university be modified (not suspended). This committed us to "redirection" and to this the black faculty cordially agreed. They also agreed to accept an amendment to their resolution from Kenneth Keniston, which included the clause from his resolution regarding non violence.<sup>175</sup>

All seemed settled until Professor Keniston proposed an amendment to reopen the university on May 4th, one day after the rally's scheduled conclusion. Kenneth Mills and several other black faculty members objected. If Keniston persisted, Mills said, "Black faculty would feel compelled to walk out of the meeting."

Brustein interjected. The "black resolution," he said, would have closed the school indefinitely and might unleash a free-for-all. Mills replied that the faculty "could always reconvene the university by meeting again after the weekend, and that the rules against the rules against violence and disruption would, of course, be expected to remain in effect." At this, the faculty approved the black faculty's amended resolution and effectively closed the college, though students and professors were permitted to continue business as usual.<sup>176</sup>

Brustein voted against the proposal. As he walked back to Art School Theater, he "wondered at the alacrity with which a majority of the faculty could, in effect, vote away its academic freedom, considering the difficulty with which this freedom was gained in the first place." He felt that the resolution forebode an age in which a college "could be shut down or 'redirected' on the basis of any political crisis." *The New York Times's* headline declaring that "Yale Faculty Rejects Proposal to Cancel All Classes to Support Panthers" was not entirely accurate. Though Yale had not voted for abeyance, professors were free to "devote their class period to discussions and lectures on racial and political issues."<sup>177</sup>

At Yale's Law School, a similar vote yielded two separate resolutions. The students declined to suspend classes, but "approved giving professors

174 Brustein, "When the Panther Came."

175 *Ibid.*

176 *Ibid.*

177 *Ibid.*

and students a choice of whether to continue academic work.” Dean Louis H. Pollack deemed the second vote unnecessary, but the students wished to display their “full sympathy” with the undergraduate student strike. Scattered complaints betrayed that activists had “intimidated the law school students into action.” Senior Lanny J. Davis was skeptical of the resolution to cancel classes because “it would have been a form of coercion on those who wanted to go to class.” Meanwhile, another suspected act of arson destroyed \$2,500 worth of books in the Law School library’s basement. Law school students attributed the episode to their belated expression of solidarity with the Panther cause. “Resentment [was] growing among undergraduates toward the Law School because, until today, its students had failed to voice their support for the strike,” they said.<sup>178</sup>

## Hillary Extinguishes

Among the students rushing to extinguish the blaze was Hillary Rodham, the future Mrs. Clinton, then a first-year law student. Her role in the larger story of racial unrest at Yale is limited but worth noting in light of the importance of identity politics in her subsequent political career. She may not have shaped events at Yale, but she may well have been shaped by them.

After the fire, Clinton joined a group of student volunteers who patrolled Yale’s campus to protect its “resources and property.” Clinton’s action might suggest her allegiance to the “establishment,” but she was an active participant in New Left circles at Yale. Though “the traditional route to student recognition” at Yale Law School was an appointment to the law review, Mrs. Clinton and her New Left friends founded the Yale Review of Law and Social Action with the goal of transcending “academic doctrine” and formulating “strategies for social change.” Clinton sat on the editorial board. The cover photo of its first issue, “timed to coincide” with the May Day protest, showed heavily armed “police [officers] wearing gasmasks,” and featured the article “Lawyers and Revolutionaries: Notes from the National Conference on Political Justice,” which “exhaustively reported” a speech by Panther lawyer Charles Garry and two other prominent lawyers aligned with the radical left.<sup>179</sup>

As a presidential candidate, Mrs. Clinton sidestepped questions about her involvement in the trial of Bobby Seale and the New Haven Nine, but in Carl Bernstein’s *A Woman in Charge*, Bernstein wrote that Mrs. Clinton’s portrayed her law school days dishonestly. Clinton was “among a group of student

178 Joseph B. Treaster, “Students Reject Yale Law Strike,” *The New York Times*, April 28, 1970.

179 Carl Bernstein, *A Woman in Charge: The Life of Hillary Rodham Clinton*, (New York: Vintage Books, 2007), 66-67.



observers” present at the trial on a daily basis “to report possible abuses by the government” he contended. And she organized “student monitors” tasked with a similar purpose.<sup>180</sup>

When Mrs. Clinton became associate editor of *Law and Social Action*, she oversaw its coverage on the Panther trial. One issue was rife with drawings of “police...depicted as pigs.”<sup>181</sup> After graduation, Mrs. Clinton interned at the Oakland, California law firm of Treuhaft, Walker, and Bernstein which had a reputation as a “so-called Movement Firm.” Robert Treuhaft, senior partner of the firm, later said that “no reason except politics” motivated Mrs. Clinton’s decision. Treuhaft, Walker, and Bernstein served as counsel for members of the Black Panther Party.<sup>182</sup> One of its partners, Doris Walker, a former member of the Communist party, defended Angela Davis, who was involved in the murder of Marin County, California judge, Harold Haley.<sup>183</sup>

## The Tinderbox

**Though “the nation’s history had been marked by devotion to justice... when blackness and revolution are combined in a criminal defendant in 1970 the prospect of his receiving objective treatment seems to me to warrant skepticism.”**

In the weeks leading up to the Panther trial, New Haven was on edge and Yale even more so. Criminals stole 400 rifles from nearby gun shops.<sup>184</sup> Police arrested “two youths on charges of possessing explosives.”<sup>185</sup> An unknown group stole 140 pounds of mercury that could be used in the manufacture of explosives.<sup>186</sup> Another group hijacked a truck transporting bayoneted riot guns.<sup>187</sup> The looming May Day demonstration also shut down

local commerce as business owners boarded up their shops in anticipation of the rally which was expected to attract 20,000 participants.<sup>188</sup>

In the interim, Yale’s law school students passed additional resolutions to hold “teach-ins” about the New Haven Nine’s impending trial. President

180 *Ibid.*, 66.

181 *Ibid.*

182 *Ibid.*, 83.

183 Douglas Martin, “Doris Walker, Leader of Angela Davis’s Defense, Is Dead at 90,” *The New York Times*, August 28, 2009.

184 Treaster, “Students Reject Yale Law Strike,”.

185 Homer Bigart, “Yale to Open Gates This Weekend to Protesters Assembling to Support Black Panthers,” *The New York Times*, April 30, 1970.

186 Treaster.

187 Bigart.

188 Treaster.

Brewster took the time to clarify his earlier statement that the political climate precluded a fair trial for the Panthers. Though “the nation’s history had been marked by devotion to justice... when blackness and revolution are combined in a criminal defendant in 1970 the prospect of his receiving objective treatment seems to me to warrant skepticism.” He said he misspoke when he said that a fair trial was “impossible.”<sup>189</sup>

Brewster did not misspeak when he announced at a meeting of Yale’s deans that he had decided to host out of town protestors at Yale’s facilities. In a letter to parents and alumni, Brewster explained his belief that closing the university to outsiders would render it a target of the protestors’ hostility. The beleaguered president feared that “any shutdown or barricade” would have incited a “violent test of strength.” Moderate students, he claimed, would have been “radicalized” by the appearance of censorship and Yale’s denial of free assembly.<sup>190</sup>

Brustein told Brewster that the decision “struck me as the height of folly.” He cited the mercury stolen from the chemistry department and explosives found in the apartment of a Yale dropout Weatherman as evidence of looming

danger. He urged Brewster to warn Yale’s students away from campus. To make his point, he invoked Max Frisch’s play *Beidermann* and the *Firebugs*, in which a German merchant accepts several arsonists “into his home, and hoping to placate them,

provides the match with which they burn the place down.” Brustein later recalled that in private he wondered why the Beinecke Library had “become an object of student wrath?” A colleague, Bill Lifton, implored him to consider the students’ perspective. The students, he said, couldn’t comprehend why “so much money had been spent on a building for rare books when so many problems in the community remained unsolved.” Brustein listened quietly as “the libraries and museums” of the world appeared in his mind. Was their time coming too?<sup>191</sup>

The May Day rally was set to be a clash between the forces of law and order and student radicalism. President Kingman Brewster’s pro-Panther remarks and choice to hand Yale over to New Left protestors showed which side the university was on. One campus official predicted that the May Day rally would be a stage for “sporadic violence, not necessarily on the campus”—hardly a comforting parenthetical.<sup>192</sup>

## **The May Day rally was set to be a clash between the forces of law and order and student radicalism.**

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189 *Ibid.*

190 Brustein.

191 *Ibid.*

192 Bigart.

Brewster balanced his openness to campus radicals with the cards he concealed. Having likely read reports that participants in a riot in Harvard Square the week before planned to attend the rally, he arranged a covert command post charged with protecting first, “human life, essential services second, [and] buildings third.” Former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Alfred B. Fitt, (Yale ’48) was placed at the helm of the operation, serving as Brewster’s special assistant for community and alumni affairs. Security officials directed custodians of the Yale Art Gallery to move high value pieces away from windows. Books from the Beinecke Library were “moved temporarily from public display” and placed in an undisclosed location. The threat to Yale University spurred moderate

**They weren’t resigned to accepting the system as is. With time and patience, they could mold it into their image.**

students, black and whites, to cooperate with security efforts. Hundreds of students volunteered to assist the National Guard in keeping the peace. Yale preserved the ethos of student participation when it invited several undergraduates to a “student-faculty

monitoring group.” The monitoring group was allowed to consult with officers on issues such as how it would handle “sleepers on the Green... provocations,” and “how the National Guard might be deployed.”<sup>193</sup>

On May 4, 1970, Yale students, officials, and faculty awoke to an intact, though not unscathed campus. An unknown person planted a bomb beneath the bleachers at Ingall’s Rink, which exploded only moments after a cohort of protesters had vacated the area. The blast resulted in “only minor injuries.” Another person set fire to a campus buttery and took an axe to it. The law school was subjected to another act of arson. Graffiti awaited campus custodial workers. Protestors assembled at the heart of the May Day rally, the New Haven Green, avoided confrontation with police officers for most of the rally. A brief skirmish between the National Guard and the demonstrators occurred when someone circulated a rumor that police officers had arrested Black Panthers. The rumor angered the protestors and caused them to march on the courthouse. Such an action by the protestors was explicitly forbidden. In response, officers of the National Guard unloaded tear gas on the mob. Despite this flare-up, no serious injuries were recorded throughout the weekend.<sup>194</sup>

## Brewster Vindicated

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<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>194</sup> Brustein.

One week after the protest, the fellows of the Yale Corporation unanimously handed President Brewster a vote of confidence. Although Vice President Spiro Agnew had called for Brewster's dismissal over his words and deeds leading up the May Day rally, the Corporation's vote reflected its desire to avoid student retaliation. Brewster had gained the trust and confidence of the student body for his pro-Panther rhetoric and his decision to open the campus to May Day protestors. Dispensing with him for someone who fit the Vice President's vision of a "mature and responsible person" was not an option. The students had already planned a rally "scheduled to coincide with [the Corporation's] meeting" and demanded access for local New Haven blacks in addition to a union representative for Yale employees. Under these circumstances, stemming the tide of campus disruption superseded wresting the helm of the university from Brewster and placing it in steadier hands. Before the Corporation adjourned, it "unanimously endorsed the actions of both Mr. Brewster and the student body."<sup>195</sup>

Brewster received the Corporation's vote as a mandate. In a baccalaureate address to Yale's "last all-male graduating class" he issued a radical manifesto. He bid students retire terms such as "liberal" and "moderate." To call someone a moderate, he said, is to conceal his zeal for justice and "outrage with injustice." The term "liberal" implies that he suffers from blind faith in "wishful gradualism." The times called for a new label—"due process radical." Students must accept "working for change through the system" without fear of compromising their authenticity. They weren't resigned to accepting the system as is. With time and patience, they could mold it into their image. Such a philosophy would simultaneously persuade their peers that "militant impatience does not require violence" and "help [their] elders understand that "forbearance to violence does not constitute complacency."<sup>196</sup>

At an alumni reunion days later, Brewster told guests that he refused to "remain 'personally neutral' on public issues of great importance to students." He claimed himself a "moral, as well as intellectual" leader to the student body. Though he "regretted" that his comments on the Bobby Seale trial had been conflated with official university policy, he insisted that only "unacceptable timidity" could have rendered him silent. He confessed to naiveté but avowed to never "retract [his] statement." Before a room filled with 1,000 alumni, he said, "I still believe it."<sup>197</sup>

Yale alumni appeared to believe it too. They applauded Brewster's declaration. Others acclaimed him with their wallets. During the question and answer portion of the reunion, he reported the arrival of "an unrestricted gift

195 Frank J. Prial, "Brewster Backed by Yale Fellows," *The New York Times*, May 11, 1970.

196 "Brewster Tells Yale Class of '70 Old Political Labels Are Useless," *The New York Times*, June 8, 1970.

197 M.A. Farber, "Brewster Tells Friendly but Questioning Yale Alumni He Cannot Be 'Personally Neutral' on Public Issues," *The New York Times*, June 14, 1970.

of \$1 million” from an unidentified alumnus.<sup>198</sup> Months later Panther Lonnie McClucas was acquitted of the charge of kidnapping Alex Rackley, but found guilty of the conspiracy to murder him.<sup>199</sup> *The New York Times* remembered Brewster’s public statement in April 1970 that he was skeptical of “the ability of black revolutionaries to achieve a fair trial anywhere in the United States.” Had Brewster changed his mind in light of the McClucas verdict? Brewster declined to answer *The New York Times*’s question—a non-response that the *Times* deemed worthy of a short article.<sup>200</sup>

By the time classes resumed in the fall, the climate at Yale had cooled. “There’s not going to be the mass thing it was last year,” said sophomore Larry Veselka ’73. “The kids have had their thing and now they want to go back to school.” Douglas L. Hallet, senior chairman of the *Yale Daily News*, based his prediction for calm on students’ “return from a summer in the real world.” They would pursue a “more moderate” course, he said. They were “prepared to work within the system.”<sup>201</sup>

Is Brewster to be understood on his own terms as a “due process radical” who had transcended terms such as liberal and moderate? Zelinsky characterizes Brewster as a “pragmatist” who did whatever he thought necessary to maintain his own “academic monarchy.”<sup>202</sup> He responded to emerging situations not with a set of clear principles but with an eye for minimizing threats: “Absent the challenges of radicalism, Brewster’s pragmatism seemed both weak and extreme.”<sup>203</sup> But because the radical challenge was so often present during his tenure, Brewster’s readiness to sacrifice principle to expediency ultimately convinced the Yale board, alumni, and faculty that he had governed with a wise head and a steady hand.

For the short-term, Yale emerged from the Black Panther crisis unscathed. No one on campus was injured or killed; property damage was minor; and the university’s reputation for liberal advocacy remained intact. For the longer term, however, Brewster’s legacy was one of profound fecklessness in the face of challenges to the basic mission of the university.

## The Rebirth of Separate but Equal

198 *Ibid.*

199 Joseph Lelyveld, “McLucas Guilty of Plotting In Panther Murder Case,” *The New York Times*, September 1, 1970.

200 “Yale President Declines Comment on McClucas,” *The New York Times*, September 2, 1970.

201 Joseph B. Treaster, “Students at Yale Expect Calm Year,” *The New York Times*, September 15, 1970.

202 Zelinsky, 52.

203 *Ibid.*

A recapitulation: *Yale's stringent academic standards in the 1960s and 1970s impeded racial integration. Yale officials early on recognized the problem but, under President Brewster and Admissions Dean Inky Clark, Yale nonetheless launched efforts to recruit and enroll minority students who did not meet the ordinary standards for admissions.*

*Many of the minority students who enrolled in these circumstances were not pleased with this program. They demanded still more racial preferences in admissions—steps they said would be needed to correct Yale's discriminatory past. Citing their alienation in the classroom and their discomfort in Yale's "country-club" atmosphere, the "Vanguard Class" formed the Black Student Alliance at Yale to pressure the university. At nearly every step, as BSAY issued new demands, President Kingman Brewster Jr. conceded ground.*

*BSAY's tactics set a pattern that other ethnic groups followed to the letter. In 1972, Despierta Boricua, a newly formed Puerto-Rican student organization accused Yale of "unconscious" racism and also demanded racial preferences to increase the enrollment of Puerto Rican students. Before them, the Asian-American Student Association argued that the plight of the Asian-American working class warranted similar accommodations.*

*BSAY helped to bring Yale to the brink of mayhem during the Black Panther crisis, but also played the role of helping the university avoid open confrontation with the extremists by proposing that Yale shut down "indefinitely." Playing both sides—the threat and the way to palliate the threat—advanced BSAY's standing. But even as BSAY gained political credibility, Yale was shifting attention to other challenges, especially the challenge of co-education. For a long time after this, racial grievance politics faded into the background.*

Faded, but by no means disappeared. The developments up to the creation of the Afro-American Studies Program expressed racial grievance but they did not necessarily point to racial separatism. That was the next step, and it took the form of a demand for remediation programs geared to racial minorities.

In the fall of 1972, Yale revamped its minority recruitment and hired an associate provost to pressure Yale to hire minority faculty members. It also created a segregated orientation program to help Puerto Rican students get ready for the challenges of Yale's curriculum. From this point on, neo-segregation wouldn't be just something students did on their own time or something admissions officers did in their data analysis. Instead it would be a fully institutionalized part of a Yale education: a way of teaching students that



# Part III. Yale's Segregated Orientation Programs



their ethnic identities are intrinsically important and more important than any commonalities that had defined undergraduate studies since Yale College was founded in 1701.

### Part III. Yale's Segregated Orientation Programs

## The Rise of Remediation for Under-Qualified Minority Students

Yale's Summer High School Program was a six-week program begun in 1964 with a grant from the National Science Foundation. Its purpose was "to provide special training for high school boys who possess talents not likely to be developed because of economic and environmental obstacles." In its first year it admitted 103 students, all high school sophomores, "half Negro, half white."<sup>204</sup> The grant was obtained under President Brewster and was Yale's first venture in recruiting black students, though not for undergraduate admission. The program continued in 1965, though the *Yale Daily News* account from that year fails to mention the racial make-up of the cohort.<sup>205</sup> We do know that by 1969 this remedial program came to be seen by Yale officials as primarily for black students.<sup>206</sup>

Yale's Summer High School Program was a six-week program which ran from 1964 to approximately 1970, supported by grants from the National Science Foundation. Its purpose was "to provide special training for high school boys who possess talents not likely to be developed because of economic and environmental obstacles." Students were high school sophomores.

The Summer High School Program sought out prospective college students. Elsewhere efforts were underway to repair the education for those applying for admission to college. By 1965 special programs aimed at helping under-qualified students to catch up were generally called "compensatory" programs.<sup>207</sup> City College in New York created a program called Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge (SEEK) in 1965, which the New York

204 "Fleishman Will Direct High School Students in Summer Program," *Yale Daily News*, February 5, 1965.

205 Michael Winger, "Plans Made for School Next Year," *Yale Daily News*, February 5, 1965.

206 "Singer Report: What it says: The Facts," *Yale Daily News*, January 29, 1969.

207 E. Gordon and D. Wilkerson, *Compensatory Education for the Disadvantaged*, ERIC document, 1966, <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED011274>. Accessed 2/15/2019.

legislature elevated in 1966 to a program for all of the CUNY senior colleges. SEEK was one of the early “compensatory” programs aimed at helping black and Puerto Rican students achieve a leg up in higher education.<sup>208</sup> The idea had clearly gained a following in minority communities.

SEEK began as a program for seniors in high school. Today, “only entering freshman [sic] are considered for this program.”<sup>209</sup>

In 1965, Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut began sending admitted black freshmen to prep schools and other colleges for compensatory education. Students complained that this procedure was “offensive and degrading” and Wesleyan ended it in 1967. In its place, Wesleyan instituted a new program, “Me, My Goals, and Wesleyan,” which aimed to introduce black students to the college without emphasizing remediation.<sup>210</sup> Cornell University took a similar step in 1964 when it created the Committee on Special Education Projects to train “culturally disadvantaged students,” whom they would later admit without regard for “any specific requirements for admission.”<sup>211</sup>

“Pre-college study programs” for black students became widespread in the mid-1960s. Tufts psychology professor Bernard W. Harleston, writing in *The Atlantic* in 1965, surveyed the field and noted programs at his own university, Oberlin, Princeton, and Dartmouth. The details varied but:

In general, the programs of summer study focus on all aspects of English and mathematics. In most instances the emphasis is on both remedial work and new explorations in these disciplines. In addition to the academic work, the students participate in cultural and athletic activities.<sup>212</sup>

In some cases these programs long preceded undergraduate admission. Starting in 1964, Princeton ran a “Summer Study Program” for students from eighth to twelfth grades from schools within 75 miles of the university. In the first year, 33 of the 40 enrolled students were black.<sup>213</sup> The Tufts University program ran for six weeks in the summer between the students’ junior and senior years of high school. Yale’s Summer High School Program was its version of this idea: “a six-week residential program for 100 high school students,

208 SEEK, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York, <https://www.jjay.cuny.edu/seek-department>. Accessed 2/15/2019.

209 SEEK, Financial Aid, City University of New York, <https://www.cuny.cuny.edu/financialaid/seek>. Accessed 2/15/2019.

210 Richard Margolis, “Two Nations at Wesleyan,” *New York Times*, January 18, 1970.

211 Anthony S. Chen and Lisa M. Stulberg, *Beyond Disruption: The Forgotten Origins of Affirmative Action in College and University Admissions, 1961-1969*, 86.

212 Bernard W. Harleston, “Higher Education for the Negro,” *The Atlantic*, November 1965, <https://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/unbound/flashbks/blacked/higher.htm>

213 *Ibid.*

mostly Negro.”<sup>214</sup>

The goals of these programs were strongly remedial, with a special focus on standard English and mathematics. Many of the historically black colleges and universities, including Howard, Texas Southern, Morehouse, Fisk, and Dillard, ran their own pre-college programs.<sup>215</sup>

## Yale Transitional Year Program

Remediation itself had a long history in American higher education, dating back to the first decades of many colleges and universities.<sup>216</sup> But remediation for students before they became candidates for admission is one thing; admitting under-qualified students and then trying to remediate them is something else. Yale became involved in 1965 in another form of remediation for black students. It joined with Harvard and Columbia to create the “Intensive Summer Studies Program”

ISSP, the Intensive Summer Studies Program, was for minority students already enrolled in Harvard, Columbia, or Yale. Running from 1965 to some point in the early 1970s, when the Ford and Carnegie Foundation money ran out, ISSP sought out promising students to prepare them to apply to graduate programs. The idea continues most prominently in the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship.

(ISSP), which initially aimed to prepare new black graduates of colleges for admission to graduate and professional programs. The programs consisted of eight weeks of intensive summer study. It was initially funded by the Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation. ISSP expanded in 1968 to include students who completed their sophomore years, as well as adding an eight-week program for black college professors.<sup>217</sup> But in the early 1970s, the grant funding at least for Yale ran out, and that branch of ISSP was discontinued.<sup>218</sup> It continued for a while with Mellon Foundation funding at Harvard and

214 Gene Currivan, “The Disadvantaged: New Programs Prepare Students for Advanced Schooling,” *New York Times*, August 16, 1964.

215 *Ibid.*

216 David R. Arendale, “Then and Now: The Early Years of Developmental Education,” *Research and Teaching in Developmental Education*, 18, no. 2 (Spring 2002):5-23; Mary Soliday, *Politics of Remediation* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2002).

217 Harold M. Stahmer, “The Harvard-Yale-Columbia Intensive Summer Studies Program. The Disadvantaged Student in Graduate School,” ERIC Document 026 020. Paper delivered at the Eighth Annual Meeting of The Council of Graduate Schools in the United States. December 5, 1968.

218 Mark Alden Branch, “A Firm Foundation,” *Yale Alumni Magazine*. October 2002, [http://archives.yalealumnimagazine.com/issues/02\\_10/grant.html](http://archives.yalealumnimagazine.com/issues/02_10/grant.html). Accessed 2/15/2019.

Columbia, and this iteration of the program was the predecessor of the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship.<sup>219</sup> That program continues to this day and includes Yale students.

Yale also tried its hand at remediating black students considered for undergraduate admission to Yale College and other top caliber schools in the fall of 1966. Charles McCarthy, who had been hired by President Brewster to forge relationships with predominantly black high schools, “secured a three-year Rockefeller grant of \$225,000” to kick-start the Yale Transitional Year Program (YTYP).

YTYP, the Yale Transitional Year Program, was for minority high school graduates not yet enrolled in college, but deemed likely prospects for admission to fairly good colleges if offered a full-year of remedial education. The YTYP students were resident at Yale for the year but were not enrolled as Yale students and were seldom admitted to Yale upon finishing the program.

The program brought in forty-three black students from across the country for a one-year five-day-a-week program offering “instruction in history, English, math, and a foreign language.” It trained students whose previous preparation was “second-rate” to “get into first-rate colleges.” And according to a November 15, 1966 *Yale Daily News* article by Strobe Talbott (‘68), YTYP students attended the program free of charge.

From the start, wrote Talbott, Yale’s relationship to the Yale Transitional Year Program was ambiguous. Although Yale reported an “unofficial connection” to YTYP, blacks participating in the program studied in a Yale library, exercised in a Yale gym, ate meals at Yale Commons, attended campus parties, and were taught at the Trinity Church Parish House. Additionally, Charles McCarthy was appointed to direct the program, and YTYP students lived at the periphery of the university. McCarthy heightened the ambiguity by using the Rockefeller Foundation grant to hire several Yale graduate students to teach the students and to purchase a Yale building. Despite these facts, Talbott said, Yale University insisted that it was only the “program’s fiscal agent” and that YTYP was “in no way under the University’s official aegis.”<sup>220</sup>

McCarthy told the *Yale Daily News* that YTYP emerged from his observation that many of the students in the Cooperative Program were “within inches of admission to good colleges with scholarship, but not quite there.” McCarthy felt that this problem called for “some kind of interim experience.”

219 “The Demands for Diversity Hiring Require a ‘Pipeline,’” The Mellon Foundation, <https://mellon.org/resources/shared-experiences-blog/demands-diversity-hiring-require-pipeline/>. Accessed 2/15/19.

220 *Ibid.*

In response, he proposed to President Brewster a program placing black students who were “still getting their bearings between high school and college” in a “model academic community” at Yale for one year to fill “gaps” in their education. Brewster, wrote Talbott, countenanced McCarthy’s idea but refused to make it an official University body. Brewster cited Yale’s ongoing “commitments in similar areas,” such as its Yale Summer High School Program, for his decision.<sup>221</sup>

Yale admitted black students to YTYP from predominantly black schools with which it had forged relationships under the Cooperative Program for Educational Opportunity. McCarthy, along with YTYP dean Jonathan Fanton (B.A. 1965, Ph.D. History 1978), tapped his connections to guidance counselors at these schools to recruit underprepared students to experience “high academic pressure unlike anything they had ever known.” Admission to YTYP came with strict rules. Students were forbidden to make excessive noise and ride in “private cars,” and they had to observe a curfew of midnight.<sup>222</sup>

Talbott reported that students of YTYP’s first class were “finding it rougher going academically than socially.” Fanton, who served as the program’s history teacher, told the *Yale Daily News* that the first eight weeks of the program showed him that it would “take a full year to bring these kids up to standard.” Despite this prospect, he was “very encouraged.” The students, he told Talbott, had shown interest in “Jacksonian democracy, geometry, and Homer.” Fanton attributed their early maladjustment to homesickness and the shock at the amount of work, though he believed that these problems could

be “moderated by careful supervision, plenty of constructive criticism, and personal attention.”<sup>223</sup> Talbott did not interview YTYP students for comment on their experience, but Fanton confessed that he offered to reduce their workload, which was “comparable to what Yale freshmen face in History

**The students rejected Fanton’s offer of a reduced workload. They wanted to see if they could “work as hard as the Yale guys.”**

22.” The students rejected Fanton’s offer of a reduced workload. They wanted to see if they could “work as hard as the Yale guys.”<sup>224</sup>

How Charles McCarthy and the Rockefeller Foundation evaluated the program’s effectiveness at remediating what Fanton called black students’ “12 years of miseducation” is unclear. When Talbott reported on the first YTYP class, the students had not yet received grades. Examinations, however, were set for the following week and students having difficulties would receive

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221 *Ibid.*

222 *Ibid.*

223 *Ibid.*

224 *Ibid.*

special help until their marks improved. By the end of year, all were expected to complete a “lengthy research project” under the supervision of the faculty and graduate students employed by the program. In addition to taking their

**Only a quarter of YTYT students, he insisted, would be admitted to “or ought to go to the Ivy League or the Seven Sisters.”**

college board exams again and applying to colleges again, YTYT students were expected to “read and write at a level of maturity and competence worthy of any college freshman program.” These new skills, said Talbott, would impel them to “aim higher than ever before.”<sup>225</sup>

Aiming higher than ever before, of course, didn’t ensure that YTYT students would reach the summit. Fanton told Talbott that YTYT was not “by any means a program preparing kids specifically for Yale, Smith, and other schools of that caliber.” Only a quarter of YTYT students, he insisted, would be admitted to “or ought to go to the Ivy League or the Seven Sisters.” A few, however, were admitted. Reverend Dr. Frank M. Reid III, for example, graduated from Yale College in 1974 after being admitted to YTYT in 1970.<sup>226</sup> Reid later became the head of BSAY and was appointed to serve on the Board of Trustees of Yale University’s Afro-American Cultural Center circa 1973.<sup>227 228</sup>

## A Rotten Deal

On May 10, 1968, *Yale Daily News* writer Ray Warman reported that a class boycott had illuminated YTYT’s “inadequacies.” One month before the program’s second year concluded, its black students received a crush of rejection letters from colleges to which they had applied, and many others were “extremely dissatisfied” with the colleges that did accept them.<sup>229</sup> Fordham University accepted YTYT student Preston Holmes, but Yale, Johns Hopkins, Brandeis, and Stanford rejected him. Vanderbilt accepted Barry Rorex, but he was turned away by Harvard, Yale, and Stanford. When their college decisions arrived on April 15, 1968, said Holmes, he met with Rorex to grouse that he and other YTYT students “had been dealt a rotten deal.”<sup>230</sup>

Later that night, Holmes and Rorex met with the male half of the YTYT program to consider their next move. The YTYT students unanimously

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225 *Ibid.*

226 “The Candidate,” Frank Madison Reid, <http://frankmreid4bishop2016.org/about-2/>

227 John Curley, “BSAY blasts apathy to Louisiana killings, *Yale Daily News*,” November 21 1972.

228 Martha Gerson, “Afro-Am,” *Yale Daily News*, September 28, 1973.

229 Ray Warman, “Sparked by College Rejections: Student Strike Spurs Transitional Year Changes,” *Yale Daily News*, May 10, 1968.

230 *Ibid.*

voted to boycott their courses and activities until their list of needs was addressed. Talbott wrote that the female students were notified of the proposed strike by the male students after the meeting and gave the plan their support. The controversy forced the resignation of Albert G. Clough, a YTYP administrator. Rorex said YTYP administrators believed falsely that Clough's resignation was enough and did not see that the YTYP students had more in mind than resignations. The students issued a list of complaints about YTYP. Per the *Yale Daily News*:

- Lack of adequate and qualified guidance and counseling
- Lack of necessary instructional materials
- Lack of organized recreation
- Overemphasis on grades
- Lack of motivational stimuli on the part of the program
- Lack of qualified teaching and administrative staff
- Lack of communication between board of directors, administration, and student body
- Lack of adequate housing facilities and host families
- The late closing date (June 9) of the program
- Lack of college atmosphere
- Lack of student involvement in planning activities
- Ineffectiveness of the year-long project
- Lack of assistance in visiting colleges
- High annual faculty turnover
- Limited nature of the curriculum

YTYP trustee and Yale assistant professor of biology Richard A. Goldsby said that he and the program's administrators were "struck by how extraordinarily sensible and reasonable their demands were." Goldsby added that the YTYP board thought the black students would have left Yale's campus if program administrators refused to overhaul the program. Holmes said that the two sides recognized "the breakdown in communications." He discovered later that YTYP's board of trustees was not aware of the situation.

The strike attracted the attention of Admissions Dean Inky Clark, who was committed, like President Brewster, to admitting "at risk" black students to Yale. Clark, reported Talbott, took "immediate corrective action" to reform the program, which included calling and writing to the colleges that had rejected YTYP students. Clark asked his colleagues at peer institutions to re-evaluate the applications from YTYP students. This was necessary, said Clark, because the admissions officers at universities such as Harvard and Stanford had "inadequate information" on the students. "I helped YTYP think through what they could say about these kids to help them get into college," he said,

“and to help them re-examine their college choices—some of which were too competitive, some not competitive enough.”<sup>231</sup>

Clark admitted that YTYT had not perfected an “appropriate way” to describe YTYT students to the first-tier institutions they were applying to. He

**“I helped YTYT think through what they could say about these kids to help them get into college,” he said, “and to help them re-examine their college choices—some of which were too competitive, some not competitive enough.”**

disagreed that class rank or numerical grades reflected their prospects. “Each one,” he concluded, “has to be described subjectively, it seems to me.” Clark’s intervention worked. After lobbying on students’ behalf, all of the YTYT students “were placed in colleges,” though Talbott did not report which colleges.

A committee appointed to evaluate YTYT’s curriculum found that its faculty “was just as dissatisfied with

the curriculum” as were the students. When the students returned to class after the strike they found a program that “intensified” instruction in “subject matters of difficulty,” but “most importantly,” said Talbott, students now had the option of taking their courses “on a voluntary basis.” Additionally, students were offered weekly forums featuring Inky Clark, leaders from black students’ associations at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, and Yale University Chaplain William Sloane Coffin Jr.<sup>232</sup>

Talbott concluded that the most pressing question to be addressed by the controversy was the status of YTYT’s relationship to Yale University. Students complained that they had compared their day-to-day life in the program to the lives of Yale students and felt “dissatisfied as a result.” Holmes said:

Everyone expected the work to be really challenging, exciting, and interesting; instead it was dull, routine, and in some cases elementary. The problem was the whole attitude of the administration; everything was mandatory. We’ve never been dissatisfied with the program. We thought it had great possibility. We just didn’t like the way it was handled.<sup>233</sup>

YTYT students felt “estranged” from Yale, said Talbott. Although Yale permitted them to attend events at its residential colleges for free, students who were unaware of YTYT “turned [them] away more often than not.” The

231 *Ibid.*

232 *Ibid.*

233 *Ibid.*



average Yale student, wrote Talbott, “just doesn’t know what YTYT is.” The students and trustees proposed to resolve this confusion by affiliating “individual students to particular residential colleges.” One unnamed trustee, however, noted that such a move would force an uncomfortable scenario in which Yale University might have to reckon with its decision to publicly disassociate itself from YTYT, despite already scheduling the students to “unofficially” take “Yale introductory courses” the coming fall. “Nevertheless,” Talbott concluded, the students were “satisfied to a greater extent than they have been thus far.” He claimed YTYT was in “sounder shape” than before, and the “college admissions picture this year will look better than last year’s.”<sup>234</sup>

## Elitist by Design

The Yale Transitional Year Program came under scrutiny again eight months later. The *Yale Daily News* reported that Yale University hired Arthur Singer, a private consultant, to “provide a bill of obligations for Yale University with respect to black America.” The Singer report cautioned Yale against affiliating YTYT with the university officially because it did not satisfy criteria necessary to sustain Yale’s reputation as an elite university. Yale, wrote Singer, was “elitist in its basic design,” and it needed to accommodate black students in a manner that conformed to “the pattern upon which its greatness depends.” Per the *Yale Daily News*:

1. A project should be important enough and interesting enough to command the active support and participation of Yale faculty members and students. It is not appropriate for Yale to operate a project, however noble its purpose and effective its mode of action, unless students and faculty members are associated with the project in significant ways.
2. Projects should be appropriate for a university such as Yale. They should involve exploration of new ideas and the development of new methods, or should contribute to an activity and better enable us to fulfill its own central mission.
3. Projects should be integrated with the university, connected to the mainstream of its life, and presided over by an active committee from the faculty and administration.<sup>235</sup>

According to Singer, YTYT failed to meet any of the criteria. Singer’s evaluation of the program concluded that its remedial component violated Yale University’s mission to nourish the “exploration of new ideas and the

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<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>235</sup> “Singer Report: What it says: The Facts,” *Yale Daily News*, January 29, 1969.

development of new methods.” Singer in effect validated Preston Holmes’s complaint that YTYP taught merely “elementary knowledge.”

YTYP’s unclear connection to Yale precluded it from attracting the “active support and participation of Yale faculty members and students.” And certain aspects of the program, such as its unofficial policy to allow its students to survey introductory courses, was evidence that it was not “connected to the mainstream of [Yale’s] life.” Most importantly, Strobe Talbott’s report that Yale faculty supervised YTYP students’ year-end projects was contradicted by Singer’s observation that Yale faculty members were not involved in the program.<sup>236</sup> In 1970, the *Yale Daily News* reported that “ninety percent of YTYP faculty members are paid Yale graduate students.”<sup>237</sup>

Singer did recommend that Yale “adopt, as a working principle, the goal of a black population at the University roughly commensurate with the black population of the country as a whole.” To achieve this, Singer proposed expanding Yale’s Summer High School program from one to two years. The first year would be a trial period for students. At the conclusion of the second year, he proposed, Yale should offer “full financial aid” to students who demonstrated “the capacity to do Yale work.” Additionally, he said that if Yale intended to continue YTYP, it should replace it with a program that promised ten black students admission to Yale on the condition that they attend “prep school for a preparatory year.”<sup>238</sup>

Ultimately, the Rockefeller Foundation pulled its support from YTYP. On May 14, 1970, Thomas Kent from the *Yale Daily News* reported that the 1969-1970 class of YTYP would “probably be its last.” In 1969, wrote Kent, YTYP’s funding was cut by half and its student body reduced commensurately. George H. Richmond ’66 told the *Yale Daily News* that “foundations have gone sour on compensatory education,” and were instead donating to “social action projects” such as making public school systems more responsive to the needs of their communities.” Although some support was still provided to similar programs around the country, he said, “You can’t learn how to write in seven weeks.” Nevertheless, Kent reported, all of the students in the 1969-1970 YTYP class had been “admitted to four-year colleges,” and a YTYP brochure reported that “over 95 percent of previous graduates have won admission and scholarships to college.”<sup>239</sup>

## The Folly of YTYP

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<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>237</sup> Thomas Kent, “Low Funds Menace Continuation of TYP,” *Yale Daily News*, May 14, 1970.

<sup>238</sup> Charles W. Sprague, “Singer Report Evaluates Programs for Blacks,” *Yale Daily News*, December 18, 1968.

<sup>239</sup> Thomas Kent, “Low Funds Menace Continuation of TYP,” *Yale Daily News*, May 14, 1970.

The Yale Transitional Year Program was a complex blunder by the University. It fostered ill-feeling on all sides. The Yale community regarded the YTYP students with indifference at best and often with condescension. The University emphatically regarded the program as a side venture not to be confused with Yale's real programs, but it also sought to extract a degree of moral self-approbation for its willingness to host the program at all. All the while, the YTYP students felt or were made to feel their second class status.

But most of all YTYP failed to achieve its primary purpose. Few students who had the disadvantage of twelve years of poor instruction in their public schools were likely to overcome that handicap in one year of intensive remediation. Acquiring the full range of intellectual skills expected of a college freshman in the late 1960s was less demanding than the preparation expected of some previous generations, but it was still a steep climb, and especially so at elite colleges and universities—at least for students who were not the children of alumni.

In other words, YTYP was founded on wishful thinking and a certain amount of hypocrisy. Yale was saying that it could train these students up to the point where they would be adequately prepared for some college, somewhere, but almost certainly not Yale. The university did not want to plant

**The university did not want to plant false expectations in the YTYP students' heads, but then proceeded to do exactly that.**

false expectations in the YTYP students' heads, but then proceeded to do exactly that. Embedding the students in the New Haven campus and giving them free access to all the amenities of undergraduate life could not help but foster the idea that they were already

coequal with Yale students. And presenting YTYP students with a demanding curriculum—albeit a curriculum that was far less intellectually rigorous than the curriculum faced by actual Yale freshmen—gave the YTYP students the false sense that they already had, somehow, risen to the challenge.

The colleges and universities that the YTYP students then applied to, however, read the situation correctly. Ill-prepared and under-qualified students had been given a veneer of education that still left them short of standard admissions requirements. Things would have ended there, except for the anger of the students and the eagerness of Yale officials to save face. Goldsby and others' assertion that the demands of the protesting students were "sensible and reasonable" and that the students' complaints were the result of a "breakdown in communications" illustrated the obsequiousness with which Yale routinely responded to minority student dissatisfaction. In truth, some of the complaints were justified, others definitely not. In many respects the program was exactly what was advertised: a kind of boot camp for academic under-performers who had a lot of catching up to do before they went to college.

To complain about an “overemphasis on grades” or the “limited nature of the curriculum,” for example, bespeaks a terrible naiveté on the part of the YTYT students.

Inky Clark then intervened in a way that may have been fateful for the whole future of American elite education. He got on the phone and persuaded his friends at other elite institutions to admit these “risky” students anyway, despite the manifest deficiencies in their skills and preparation. Clark’s success in placing all of the YTYT students in college, including a fair portion of them in elite colleges, was a major step in creating the dual-track admissions policies we have today in which minority students—especially black students—are admitted at lower standards than members of every other demographic group.

By 1969, when Yale commissioned the Singer report, the university was coming to terms with the folly of the Yale Transitional Year Program, and would soon walk away from it. The consequences, however, linger to this day.

## Instant Remediation c. 1972

The idea of remediation for under-qualified minority matriculants, however, did not die with the Yale Transitional Year Program. Yale’s Puerto Rican students picked up the baton in the early 1970s.

In 1972, Yale created its Pre-registration Orientation Program (PROP) to remediate incoming freshmen of Puerto Rican origin. PROP would eventually expand to serve a variety of other minority students, including blacks. In 1999 it was rebranded as “Cultural Connections.”

PROP and similar programs at other universities have attracted critical attention over the years. For example, Ramin Afshar-Mohajer, a Harvard undergraduate, and Evelyn Sung, a law student at New York University, published a 2002 study, *The Stigma of Inclusion: Racial Paternalism/Separatism in Higher Education*, in which they characterized PROP (along with a handful of other such programs):

The effect of these programs is to indoctrinate students of color even before they matriculate. They also encourage minority students to self-identify and segregate themselves by giving them a period of

| social interaction before the rest of the students arrive on campus.<sup>240</sup>

This was plainly not the intended purpose of PROP, which began instead as an effort to help culturally and socially disadvantaged students attain some key skills and background knowledge that would help them thrive in Yale's academic programs. That altruistic goal, however, soon capsized. This is how that happened.

## Support Services

The *Yale Daily News*, which reported extensively on race relations in the 1960s, did not report PROP's trial run in the summer of 1972. The first mention of PROP in the *Yale Daily News* appeared in a 1973 feature, "Puerto Ricans in

**PROP was to assuage the discomfort they felt when they in "a traditionally white male institution" at which they could not "feel right at home."**

Action,"<sup>241</sup> which ran one year after the first cohort of PROP students "met for a two week session before the fall semester."<sup>242</sup> The unsigned *Yale Daily News* article did not include details. It made a lone reference to President Brewster's approval of "funding for the orientation program [which had]

become a model for all such minority group programs."<sup>243</sup> Not until four years later did the *Yale Daily News* report additional information about the unnamed "orientation program."<sup>244</sup>

In 1977, News reporter Dan Chow published "Support Services Help Minority Students Cope."<sup>245</sup> Chow's article stands out for his early use of the euphemism "support services," which neo-segregationists still use to describe segregated programs. Calling programs such as PROP "support services" is an attempt to place them beyond reproach. According to Chow, PROP catered to both the emotional and academic adjustment of minority students.<sup>246</sup> PROP attempted to head off this problem by offering "writing courses" and two other unspecified courses.<sup>247</sup>

Isabelle Gunning '77 argued that one reason minority students needed PROP was to assuage the discomfort they felt when they were placed in "a

240 Ramin Afshar-Mohajer and Evelyn Sung, *The Stigma of Inclusion: racial Paternalism/Separatism in Higher Education*, New York Civil Rights Coalition, September 2002.

241 "A capsule history: Puerto Ricans inaction," *Yale Daily News*, October 4, 1973.

242 Dan Chow, "Support services help minorities cope," *Yale Daily News*, March 3, 1977.

243 "A capsule history: Puerto Ricans inaction."

244 Chow, "Support services help minorities cope."

245 *Ibid.*

246 *Ibid.*

247 *Ibid.*

traditionally white male institution” at which they could not “feel right at home.”<sup>248</sup> Other minority students extolled PROP’s ability to palliate their collective “culture shock,” which induced self-doubt and alienation. This “culture shock” set in after their first brush against Yale’s “overwhelmingly white traditional elitist institution,”<sup>249</sup> said Michael Jackson ’77.

One likely reason that Yale expanded PROP to include all of its minority students was the high attrition rate of black students.<sup>250</sup> This was the early emergence of the “mismatch effect.”<sup>251</sup> Mismatch is a phenomenon observed in students at the lower end of the academic scale when they are mixed with a higher-achieving cohort: The further below the group mean the students fall, the worse their academic performance will be. Instead of rising to the challenge, most students in this situation will be demoralized and perform worse than they otherwise would.<sup>252</sup> Presumably, Yale officials observed that the credentials of a large percentage of the minority students actually admitted to the University fell significantly below the mean for the matriculating class.<sup>253</sup>

Yale officials responded to inquiries into PROP circuitously. “The basic intention [of PROP],” said Director Bob Sezarba, “is to give the student some idea of what to expect from his courses.”<sup>254</sup> He added that “the academic part was only secondary; the most important part is adjustment to the institution.” Another official, Assistant Dean Marnesba Hill, said that PROP “[helped] stu-

dents learn how to build relationships with professors and faculty.” Students from private schools, she said, had already attained that skill. Yale’s director of minority recruitment, Evelyn Yamashita, seemed to speak to why Yale had implemented the program when she asked: “Are we encouraging our people to apply and then be destroyed?” She added, “For some students, coming to Yale is culture shock in the worst sense.”<sup>255</sup>

**Mary Anne Case, an undergraduate who served on the editorial board of the *Yale Daily News*, argued that “support” programs nourished a culture at Yale that was “all too often, separate but unequal.”**

Did Yamashita mean that Yale was too “white” and elitist for minority students? Students such as Gunning and Jackson implied that it was, though

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248 *Ibid.*

249 *Ibid.*

250 Karabel, “How Affirmative Action Took Hold at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton,” *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, No. 48, Summer 2005, Page 66.

251 Richard H. Sander and Stuart Taylor Jr., *Mismatch: How Affirmative Action Hurts Students It’s Intended to Help, and Why Universities Won’t Admit It*, (New York: Basic Books, 212).

252 *Ibid.*

253 *Ibid.*

254 Chow, “Support services help minorities cope.”

255 *Ibid.*

“whiteness” was not the bedrock of Yale’s culture it had been in the days when it accepted only a few highly qualified black students. It was, in the words of former President Alfred Whitney Griswold (1951-1963), a place where students acquired “a taste for knowledge ... philosophy, and a capacity to ... perceive relationships between knowledge and fields of experience.” It is possible

**“Efficacy,” said the ethnic counselors, would have fostered “individual rather than group orientation,” which defied their wish to “[nourish] a community of consciousness among Chicanos.”**

that minority students felt alienated because racial preferences excluded them from that aspect of the Yale experience.<sup>256</sup>

At some point after 1972 but before 1978, Yale segregated black students into PROP. The step didn’t please everyone. Mary Anne Case, an undergraduate who served on the editorial board of the *Yale Daily News*, argued that “support” programs nourished

a culture at Yale that was “all too often, separate but unequal.”<sup>257</sup> PROP, she argued, alienated white students from their minority peers in the first weeks of the semester when students forged their principal collegiate friendships.<sup>258</sup> Case did not deny that minority students “[needed] support when they first arrived,” but she reminded readers that the Supreme Court had “declared [segregated institutions] unconstitutional.”<sup>259</sup>

Student criticism of the segregated nature of PROP piled up, and by 1978, Yale planned to replace PROP with “Efficacy,” an integrated program set to take place during the semester in conjunction with the standard academic obligations of minority students.<sup>260</sup>

Yale’s Hispanic “Floating (Ethnic) Counselors” (covered in later sections of this report), a group of Yale graduate students hired to mentor minorities on a by-race basis, cried foul. Hispanic students, they argued in the *Yale Daily News*, already suffered from a “dearth of supportive programs, which were absolutely necessary to the well-being of Chicanos [who] continued to find adjustment to Yale a difficult process.”<sup>261</sup> The ethnic counselors blamed the adversity of minority students on Yale administrators who “[lacked] commitment” to minorities.<sup>262</sup>

From the ethnic counselors’ article emerged the first argument to keep

256 *Ibid.*

257 Mary Anne Case, “Diversity, not Disunity,” *Yale Daily News*, April 7, 1977.

258 *Ibid.*

259 *Ibid.*

260 *Ibid.*

261 Rebecca Aragon, Robert Cruz, and Maricela Oliva, “PROPPing up minority aid,” *Yale Daily News*, March 1, 1978.

262 *Ibid.*

PROP segregated, and the first signs that minority students were redirecting its purpose. “Efficacy,” said the ethnic counselors, would have fostered “individual rather than group orientation,” which defied their wish to “[nourish] a community of consciousness among Chicanos.”<sup>263</sup>

In 1980, Yale’s ethnic counselors defended PROP against another attempt to integrate it. In response to an editorial published by the *Yale Daily News*’ editorial board, which accused PROP of reinforcing suspicions that minority students were admitted to Yale without merit, the counselors published a letter to the editor defending PROP.<sup>264</sup> Academic excellence earned minorities their spots, they claimed, and those students were “equal in ability, intelligence, and potential.”<sup>265</sup> Hispanic students, however, suffered from “unequal preparation for Yale.”<sup>266</sup> “Every incoming freshmen [sic] has adjustment problems,” they concluded. “Minority students have additional ones.”<sup>267</sup>

## Yale’s First Failed Attempt to Reform PROP

Yale decided at the time not to replace PROP with a semester-length program for minority students, but in 1985 administrators again considered remediating its students interracialy. The idea was proposed by a 1984 committee headed by an English professor, Michael Cooke. After conducting a survey of students and faculty, Cooke determined that PROP required “material changes.” These included lengthening the duration of PROP to improve its focus on “academic orientation.” Cooke also proposed “changes in career counseling for minorities” and a “restructuring of the cultural centers.”<sup>268</sup> “Because minority students enter Yale with below average technical skills,” the report said, a new approach “would emphasize training in mathematics and writing English.” The report also took issue with PROP’s tendency to encourage self-segregation, which “diminished minority interest in the main orientation program.” Minority students, Cooke concluded, needed a “‘natural’ introduction” to Yale.<sup>269</sup>

The *Yale Daily News* coverage of the Cooke Report suggested that administrators had despaired at PROP’s failure to mitigate minority students’ lack of

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263 *Ibid.*

264 Yale University Ethnic Counselors: Doug Ahn ('82), Janet Amaro ('81), Margie T.C. Fa ('82), Karen Gee ('81), Liza M. Grant ('81), Gina Gregory ('81), Toni Perry ('82), Edgardo Ramos ('82), Wayne Riley ('81), Leonard Tavera ('81), Letter to the Editor, “Floating Counselors’ respond to PROP editorial,” *Yale Daily News*, October 9, 1980.

265 *Ibid.*

266 *Ibid.*

267 *Ibid.*

268 Lisa Pirozzolo, “Committee reviews minority orientation,” *Yale Daily News*. February 7, 1985.

269 *Ibid.*



academic preparation. Despite marginal improvements in their campus life, the report said, minorities were still “singled-out [sic] as ‘under-schooled,’ or suffering a gap between actual capacity to learn and formal development and training.” Of course, no student or faculty member was in a position to assess someone’s “actual capacity to learn,” but it was plain that substantial numbers of minority students were not doing well in their courses. The Cooke Report offered several explanations for this, ranging from “subtle discrimination” to minority “under-schooling.” The report gave no attention at all to the possibility that some minority students may have been mismatched to Yale by their lack of capacity, intellectual discipline, ambitions, or habits. Everything, according to the Cooke Report, was a matter of “training.”

“Even faculty members and administrators may fall into the error of confusing training with capacity, so that the students gets [sic], instead of the enhancing benefit of being at Yale, a wrenching denial,” the report states.<sup>270</sup>

The biggest change the Cooke Report proposed was scrapping PROP for the “Yale Summer Orientation Program” (YSOP), a summer long academic pro-

**Segregation, it said, provided minorities refuge to discuss “issues of cultural identity without fear or apprehension.”**

gram “open to all students.” The YSOP would have admitted 150 freshmen, both minorities and non-minorities. The news triggered another tempest among Yale’s minorities. Students from each of Yale’s segregated student clubs (Black Student Alliance, Asian-

American Student Alliance, Movimento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan, and Despierta Boricua) huddled to discuss the proposal, which resulted in their decision to hold a mass meeting.<sup>271</sup>

“PROP will be no more ... if the administration has its way!” read the promotional poster the minority coalition plastered on the grounds of the campus. Fearing that Yale’s white students would perceive the event as a “cultural group thing,” the coalition did not sign the poster. Their meeting, however, reinforced the impression that PROP was in fact a “cultural group thing” when the coalition unanimously opposed integrating the program.<sup>272</sup> In a statement provided to the *Yale Daily News*, the coalition released a statement declaring that “other” (i.e. white) students “have different needs,” and PROP could not address them.<sup>273</sup>

The coalition claimed that minorities needed a “minority environment” to develop “the sense of self necessary for their integration into the larger

270 *Ibid.*

271 Andrew Romanoff, “Dean’s Office Will Decide Soon on Changes in PROP,” *Yale Daily News*, March 25, 1986.

272 *Ibid.*

273 Andrew Romanoff, “PROP Proposal Stirs Student Controversy: Group Criticizes Dean’s Plans,” *Yale Daily News*, March 26, 1986.

community.” Segregation, it said, provided minorities refuge to discuss “issues of cultural identity without fear or apprehension.” The coalition did not object to the Cooke Report’s proposal for a longer summer session, but was adamant that integrating PROP would stymie “socio-cultural development.”<sup>274</sup>

## PROP’s Rationale Expands

Yale College Dean Sidney Altman took a different view. He dismissed grumblings that an integrated remedial summer program would diminish “minority students’ sense of unity.” The inclusion of white students also in need of remediation, he insisted, “would not be a drastic change.”<sup>275</sup> But the editorial board of the *Yale Daily News* objected that Yale administrators were again about to impose sweeping policy changes without consulting students. In their view, integrating PROP was an error that voided its “tangible benefits,” such as its nourishment of a “sense of community” that “prepared [minorities] for life at Yale.” Integrating PROP to include students both black and white, the editorial board concluded, “senselessly sacrificed” that “part of [the] experience.”<sup>276</sup>

The March 28, 1986, edition of the *Yale Daily News* included a report that Dean Altman met with PROP Director Donald Billingsley, Michael Cooke, and “nine minority students” representing the coalition. The students asked Altman to abandon Yale’s pretensions to racial integration and to keep PROP unchanged. PROP’s “ten days of classes, counseling and rap sessions,” they insisted, were crucial to “bonding between minority students.”<sup>277</sup>

A representative for Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA) commented that “nothing was resolved at the meeting.” Altman told the students that he would “get in touch with [them] later,”<sup>278</sup> but the students resolved not to wait. On March 31, 1986, the coalition, now organized as the “committee to preserve the Pre-Orientation Program for minority students” held a rally at Yale’s Beinecke Plaza. They protested Yale’s “attempt to legitimize homogeneity.” And they arrived with a petition supporting their cause.<sup>279</sup>

An estimated 1,000 students signed the coalition’s petition to keep PROP segregated. 350 signed in one day alone.<sup>280</sup> “There is a certain strength in numbers that we hope the administration will respect,” one organizer said.<sup>281</sup>

274 Andrew Romanoff, “Students, Dean Dispute Plan to Alter PROP,” *Yale Daily News*, March 27, 1986.

275 *Ibid.*

276 “Don’t Trash PROP,” *Yale Daily News*, March 27, 1986.

277 Andrew Romanoff, “Students Meet Deans to Share Concern over PROP,” *Yale Daily News*, March 28, 1986.

278 *Ibid.*

279 Andrew Romanoff, “Students Decry PROP Changes: Hold Rally for Minorities Orientation Program,” *Yale Daily News*, April 2, 1986.

280 Andrew Romanoff, “Committee Will Sponsor Rally to Maintain PROP,” *Yale Daily News*, March 31, 1986.

281 *Ibid.*

Altman attempted to defuse the unrest. If Yale adopted the Cooke Report's recommendations, he said, it would try Y SOP on an experimental basis.<sup>282</sup> Meanwhile, the *Yale Daily News's* masthead issued another call to keep "underschooled [sic]" whites out of PROP. The editorial board criticized Yale's "preemptive" advertisement of Y SOP counselorships.<sup>283</sup> Like the minority coalition, it insisted that the preservation of PROP as a segregated program provided important benefits to minorities regardless of its light academic content. Admitting whites would inevitably mean emphasizing its academic component at the expense of its identitarian emphasis. The *News* emphasized the need for "cultural counseling" for minorities, but did not define what "cultural counseling" consists of.<sup>284</sup>

A day later, the *Yale Daily News* endorsed the minority coalition's protest, "Stephanie Drawsablank," writing in the *News's* April Fools edition, announced that white students chartered a White Club (WC). Founder Bob Jones

told Drawsablank that "other cultures have centers on campus which serve to support and encourage" cultural identity. White students needed one also.<sup>285</sup>

The caricatures mirror the logic of "diversity" among the minority factions. "There are all types of whites," co-founder "John Smith" explained.

"Blondes, brunettes, [and] redheads...People with freckles" too. All had "different needs." Drawsablank reported that Dean of Student Affairs Lloyd Suttle applauded the "good idea" and pledged to attend the group's meetings and its "proposed golf tournament." White Club had larger aspirations than golf club, co-founder Jones continued. It had plans for a forum called "Your Summer in Europe" and considered a March on Washington to "express approval of Ronald Reagan's policies."<sup>286</sup> The humor was sophomoric, but the article illustrates the ease with which Yale students could deploy stereotypes as long as they were directed against whites.

But as an April 2, 1986 article in the *Yale Daily News* entitled "Students Decry PROP Changes" showed, efforts to promote racial separatism at Yale were not an April Fools prank. One hundred students attended the minority coalition's Beinecke Plaza protest. They chanted, "What do we want? Save PROP!" in a demonstration that *Yale Daily News* reporter Andrew Romanoff called "a strong and sometimes emotional show of support for the program."<sup>287</sup>

282 *Ibid.*

283 "Rally for PROP," *Yale Daily News*, March 31, 1986.

284 *Ibid.*

285 Stephanie Drawsablank, "White Club to Meet Majority's Needs," *Yale Daily News*, April 1, 1986.

286 *Ibid.*

287 Romanoff, "Students Decry PROP Changes."

## Admitting whites would inevitably mean emphasizing its academic component at the expense of its identitarian emphasis.

Millard Owens '86 claimed to speak for all when he said that minorities “have chosen to fight [integration] and preserve” PROP as it existed. “One punch has to be the knockout,” he said. Yale’s “Floating” (or sometimes “Ethnic”) Counselors joined in the coalition’s efforts. They wrote Dean Altman a letter claiming that they alone knew “the type of dialogue necessary for many minority students,” and that it must occur in ethnic enclaves where whites were forbidden.<sup>288</sup>

While minority students lobbied to keep PROP segregated, Liz Solomon '89 (a white student) lamented the program’s prolongation of racial separatism. “If you’ve already met so many people before school even starts,” she argued, “you can easily not make the effort to meet other people later.” She urged PROP officials to “discourage voluntary segregation at Yale.”<sup>289</sup>

The *Yale Daily News* published Solomon’s dissent against the supporting opinion of three PROP supporters. The *Yale Daily News*’s unbalanced representation of Yale students’ debate on neo-segregation is an early example of college students’ partiality to the opinion of supposed spokesmen for minority students and their tendency to discount whites who dared to weigh in on issues pertaining to “students of color.”

Opinions such as Rhys Deckle’s took precedence. A Japanese-American student of the class of '89, Deckle claimed that PROP had improved his social fluidity and that as many as half of the students he “greet[s] on the street” met him at the Pre-Orientation Program. Buddy Zachary '89 also had a PROP experience that was “extremely informative.” Without it, he would not have had the “chance to make a lot of friends before [he] got involved in classes and football.”<sup>290</sup>

Although vocal proponents of neo-segregation strongly outnumbered their pro-integration adversaries, in the mid-1980’s Yale’s culture had not yet encouraged viewpoint-censorship, which muffled opinions that criticized progressive ideas. And unlike later years in Yale’s history, students did not speak to the *Yale Daily News* anonymously for fear of reproach from activist mobs.

While the paper indulged pro-segregationists on its front page, one white student, Michael Schnack ('89) sent a letter to the editor on April 4, 1986, claiming to identify the “first strains of separatism at Yale.” Schnack described his first glimpse of Yale’s “racial clique system” at PROP, which contradicted minority students’ contention that PROP “facilitated integration.” To Schnack, Yale’s racial clique system meant that he arrived at Yale’s main orientation program laden with “typical freshmen jitters” while minority students were at ease, “gathered together in the center of the crowd, talking,

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288 *Ibid.*

289 Leila Hudson, “PROP Turmoil Stirs Varied Opinions,” *Yale Daily News*, April 4, 1986.

290 *Ibid.*

laughing—continuing friendships they had founded” at PROP.<sup>291</sup>

The staple attraction of PROP— ethnically exclusive friendships—did not disappear when fall classes began, Schnack added. Rather, segregation existed during “every meal at commons” and as “far as [he could] see, decreases only slightly in the three years that follow.” Schnack concluded that Yale needed a campus where students formed friendships that transcended racial lines. To that end, he urged Dean Altman to integrate the pre-summer program.<sup>292</sup>

On April 4, 1986, the *Yale Daily News* announced that Yale’s administration would decide the PROP question later that afternoon.<sup>293</sup> Three days later, on April 7, it published the administration’s answer: “PROP Remains Unchanged for Summer; Talks Tabled Until Fall.”<sup>294</sup> Following the trend set by Brewster twenty years earlier, Dean Sidney Altman conceded to student demands. The administration, said Altman, had postponed its decision on a proposal to integrate PROP, but a rebooted working group including “representatives from the cultural centers” and minority students would be reconvened in the fall semester.<sup>295</sup>

Dean Altman’s announcement implied that integrating PROP was still up for consideration, but to minority students, the university’s capitulation in the face of student protests was clear. Millard Owens ’87, a principal coalition figure, who was leading a protest at Yale’s newly constructed “shanty towns,”<sup>296</sup> broke the news to the gathered crowd. Altman’s decision “did not come as ‘a total surprise,’” he boasted. Nanci Jimenez ’89 said that Altman’s concession reflected the “unity and strength count” of the student body, though she celebrated the news cautiously. Perhaps the administration, she wondered, had only feigned concession. She warned that Altman “might just be appeasing [minorities] for the ... but they realize they’re playing with fire.”<sup>297</sup>

## Separatism Affirmed

Yale President A. Bartlett Giamatti, who had remained conspicuously absent from the campus debate on PROP’s integration, regretted that “there

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291 Michael Schnack, Letter to the Editor, “PROP creates first strains of separatism at Yale,” *Yale Daily News*, April 4, 1986.

292 *Ibid.*

293 Andrew Romanoff, “PROP Dispute Expands; Deans May Meet Today,” *Yale Daily News*, April 4, 1986.

294 Andrew Romanoff, “PROP Remains Unchanged for Summer; Talks Tabled Until Fall,” *Yale Daily News*, April 7, 1986.

295 *Ibid.*

296 During the anti-apartheid movement in the 70s, a favorite tactic was to construct shanties meant to reproduce the living conditions of oppressed South African blacks.

297 *Ibid.*

probably wasn't a great deal of communication on both sides," but added that keeping PROP segregated "was an excellent decision." Dean Altman dismissed any talk that the students forced his hand. "I'm not sure of who can make demands of whom on this campus," he told the *Yale Daily News*, without addressing that his decision came just when the (again renamed) Save PROP Coalition's ultimatum expired. "At no time," he said, "did we anticipate making a decision before this time." He claimed that he had "solicited student and faculty opinion all throughout the year."<sup>298</sup>

Despite the appeals of students like Michael Schnack, it was clear that Yale's integrationists were losing the battle of ideas. In the same issue in which the News published Schnack's objections to keeping PROP segregated, the paper featured coverage of a speech given by Melvin Washington Ph.D., a graduate of Yale's Divinity School. Washington directed black students to oppose "assimilation" and "color-blindness." And he accused proponents of integration of harboring the "slave owner's fears of 'slaves meeting and perhaps banding together.'" *Yale Daily News* reporter David Wyshner '89 reported that the black students in the audience signaled their approval of Washington's message with "spoken yes's," as was "a custom in many black churches." Greg Perry '79 praised the speech for countenancing minority-specific issues that were not often addressed.<sup>299</sup>

## Yale's Second Failed Attempt to Reform PROP

In the fall of 1986, the *Yale Daily News* reported that Yale followed through on its plan to increase PROP's academic rigor. This upset minority students. Minority students, the *Yale Daily News* reported, resented having to choose between remediation and participating in "cultural activities of the program." Remediation took time away from:

"...exploring cultural centers, viewing presentations of cultural dances, poetry, attending cultural dances, and a panel discussion on minority life at Yale."<sup>300</sup>

PROP Counselor Monique Ward '87 complained that Yale had added "a whole new teaching segment." The students, she said, "were worried about their homework" and were not receiving their due share of PROP's "socio-cultural development." Minority Counselor Tom Saenz '87 agreed that the updated features of the program (which included reading assignments, essays, and a course on computer science) distracted minority students formidably.

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>299</sup> David Wyshner, "Scholar Pushes Blacks to Unite Against Racism," *Yale Daily News*, April 4, 1986.

<sup>300</sup> Elaine Pofeldt, "PROP '86 Toughens Academics," *Yale Daily News*, September 23, 1986.

"People were really given too much work," he said.<sup>301</sup>

PROP director Dean Donald Billingsley, however, disagreed that PROP burdened minority students with too much homework. He told the *Yale Daily News* that the program hadn't changed substantively. "It was quite similar to past PROPs," he said.<sup>302</sup>

The freshmen entering in 1986 complained too. Ray Bonoan '90 said that the program's demands were prohibitively heavy. Ed Rame '90 disliked that he "was always pressed for time." But overall, the students reviewed the program positively, though not because of any new skills they learned. According to Minority Counselor Julio Benedicto '88, PROP excelled best at helping students find their "identity as a minority person." Rame liked most that at PROP, he "didn't just blend in with everyone else," and that PROP was a program where minorities were "living [their] culture."<sup>303</sup> None mentioned his desire to dispel the myth of the "underschooled [sic]" beneficiary of racial preferences.

Spring semester 1987 saw renewed calls by the students to reform PROP. They were joined by several faculty members on an ad hoc committee to propose a "de-emphasis of academics and an increase in cultural activities." Dean Sidney Altman agreed. He reversed Yale's former position that PROP existed primarily to prepare minority students for Yale's liberal arts curriculum and called for a "closer coordination of academics and culture."<sup>304</sup>

In addition to Irene Lu's '88 complaint that "students were so swamped with work that they weren't even able to enjoy PROP," one student complained that PROP did not give him enough time to learn how to use a computer. The solution, Lu said, was obvious: "familiarizing students with computers provided by the University, such as Macintosh or IBM-PC, might be more valuable." Ronald Chung-A-Fung '90, however, didn't mind the academic component of PROP. Without academics, he said, "the program would be too much of a vacation." Brian Williams, however, wanted it all. "There's no need to reduce anything," he told the *News*. "[Yale] can enhance the cultural [aspect] without reducing the academics."<sup>305</sup>

Yale did not see it that way. By April, Yale administrators had granted the PROP class of 1987 its predecessors' wish to reduce its academic rigor.

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301 *Ibid.*

302 *Ibid.*

303 *Ibid.*

304 Mark Gordon, "Changes in PROP Elicit Mixed Reaction," *Yale Daily News*, February 3, 1987.

305 *Ibid.*

Other changes were made. PROP now coincided with Yale's main orientation program, the "Freshperson Conference." The students complained about this too. Minority Counselor Tom Saenz claimed that "three-fourths" of minority freshmen attended Yale's integrated Freshperson Conference, which took place after PROP. But according to Dean Donald Billingsley minorities had "complained about being forced to attend" the integrated orientation. He told the *Yale Daily News* that he would have not altered the schedule without a nod from minority students.<sup>306</sup>

Were black students objecting to their required attendance at Yale's main orientation program with their white peers? According to Mike Ruiz '89, reducing PROP's academic requirements would have freed students to participate in both programs. But Despierta Boricua Co-Chair Carolee Montanez '89 said that Yale had given up on "getting minority and non-minority students together." She said that "some people take advantage of the opportunity [to attend Freshperson Conference, [but] some do not." Billingsley agreed with this. Freshperson Conference did not guarantee interracial mingling,<sup>307</sup> indeed, with minority students complaining about being "forced" to attend Freshperson Conference, how could it?

## Diversity

In just two years, minority students had successfully thwarted the integration of PROP and had gutted its academic component. The pedagogical difficulties that wrought "wrenching denial" on minorities in the classroom were never remedied.

It wasn't long before student proponents of PROP began attributing its advantages to "socio-cultural" benefits alone. But pro-integration students continued to assault the program's discriminatory effect. In "A New Perspective on Yale's Minority Houses," David Wyshner '89 wrote a fictional account imagining the moment when "White Yale" had first countenanced keeping minorities segregated from whites. "We'll trick blacks into separating from the mainstream," a fictional administrator said.

First, when they are all freshmen, we will have a program called PROP. This program will bring all the minorities to campus before anyone else. They will all meet each other first, and given their common heritage, they will soon become friends with one another.<sup>308</sup> White Yale's conspiracy included segregated "cultural" houses in which black students studied and socialized.

306 Aninne Schneider, "Summer Programs Overlap: Conference Scheduling Draws Mixed Reaction," *Yale Daily News*, April 22, 1987.

307 *Ibid.*

308 David Wyshner, "A New Perspective on Yale's Minority Houses," *Yale Daily News*, January 27, 1988.



Had not Yale administrators covertly “adopted the doctrine of ‘separate but equal?’” Wyshner ‘89 asked.<sup>309</sup>

Patrick S. Cheng ‘90 took Wyshner ‘89 to task in a February 1, 1988 Letter to the Editor. A contingent of several PROP supporters joined him in various publications. Cheng alleged that David Wyshner espoused a “standard assimilationist argument” which denied minority students their identity and cultural heritage. Wyshner erred again, charged Cheng, by painting minorities as “identical automatons,” a “morally repugnant” line of reasoning which ignored that minorities were “first, and foremost, individuals.” Cheng professed to believe that students should treat their peers equally without regard to “skin pigmentation,” but also said that “because many [white] people are still unable to treat individuals with equal respect” minority students must have their “support services.”<sup>310</sup>

Cheng then wondered if minority students would still segregate if Yale’s discriminatory culture vanished. Would minority students still clamor for PROP, cultural houses, and segregated clubs? Cheng answered in the affirmative. “Even if racism was eliminated completely” minorities would still seg-

**Yale nourished racial pride for “privileged white males exclusively” and it was high time that minorities enjoy a similar chance to cultivate that “integral part of [their] being.”**

regate. In the past, he concluded, Yale nourished racial pride for “privileged white males exclusively” and it was high time that minorities enjoy a similar chance to cultivate that “integral part of [their] being.”<sup>311</sup>

Gary Duaphin ‘90 asked whites to reconsider their attempts to “dismantle a long and rich legacy” of minority-exclusive programs until they understood the true reasons why “people of color avoid them.” Minorities avoided whites, he said, because they “know whites infinitely better than whites know” minorities. At Yale, which he called a “White Male Cultural Center,” minorities were “forced to live ... with” whites, and so long as that was the case minorities would resist being “swallowed whole by the majority.”<sup>312</sup>

Joe Smith ‘88 wrote an editorial for the *Yale Daily News* responding to Cheng’s critique of Wyshner ‘89. PROP had elicited opinions from across the spectrum of Yale’s student body, he wrote, and “deserved attention.” Smith compared Cheng’s call for “ethnic pride” to that of an unnamed black Yale professor who had declared himself a black supremacist. Some might not

309 *Ibid.*

310 Patrick Cheng, To the Editors, “Opinions against Minority Houses are Flawed,” *Yale Daily News*, February 1, 1988.

311 *Ibid.*

312 Gary Dauphin, To the Editors, *Yale Daily News*, February 1, 1988.

consider racial pride as racism, he argued, but rather as “race-consciousness.” But did so-called race-consciousness devolve into racism against whites?<sup>313</sup>

Smith did not claim to know the answer to that question, although he wondered whether Yale risked encouraging racism by allowing segregated programs to continue. Even if racial pride did not foster racism, he said, Yale had no business offering “academic counseling” along racial lines. Moreover, he argued that Yale’s student culture suffered from the racial clique system observed by Wyshner ’89. Furthermore, the administration appeared to be taking the neo-segregationist side when it resisted requests to make public the invitation letter that explained PROP’s rationale. For Smith, Yale’s secrecy smacked of “incessant advocacy of the status quo.”<sup>314</sup>

Pro-integration students critiqued neo-segregation to no avail, and neo-segregationists leveled a new line of attack against them.

“Mr. Wyshner’s article preaches the new style of racism,” which plans to “[assimilate] blacks to the ‘white side’ of Yale,” declared Steve Bumbaugh ’88. But PROP, he assured readers, averted assimilation by offering “a soft immersion approach to four years of lily whitedom at Yale.” Yale’s ethnic cultural houses, he continued, were equally indispensable for “cultural exchange.”<sup>315</sup> Steve Marchese ’88 echoed Bumbaugh’s warning against assimilation. If white students and minority students forged a common culture, he said, minorities risked “[giving] up what makes them unique and special.”<sup>316</sup> Other students dismissed Wyshner’s ideas as “some sort of joke.”<sup>317</sup>

On February 17, 1988, Rosanne Adderley ’89 chimed in that Joe Smith’s inability to see David Wyshner’s “racism and blatant errors” disqualified him

## **PROP always prioritized what Yale’s ethnic counselors in 1977 called “group consciousness” over academic preparation**

from assessing PROP objectively. She shared Gary Dauphin’s view that, if he wrote another article on minority issues, he should consult minorities first. Furthermore, Adderley disagreed that PROP existed to prepare minority students for Yale’s curriculum,

and that it did not exclude white students unfairly. PROP’s discrimination against whites, she continued, facilitated “the special exchange which occurs between people who share a common body of experiences relating to their ethnicity in a predominantly white environment.” Moreover, the anti-white attitudes of her peers honored PROP’s Puerto Rican founders, who established the program in 1972 to achieve “self-determination.” PROP always prioritized

313 Joe Smith, “PROP and Minority Issues Deserves Debate,” *Yale Daily News*, February 12, 1988.

314 *Ibid.*

315 Steve Bumbaugh, To the Editors, *Yale Daily News*, February 1, 1988.

316 Steve Marchese, To the Editors, *Yale Daily News*, February 1, 1988.

317 Reg Brown, To the Editors, *Yale Daily News*, February 1, 1988.

what Yale's ethnic counselors in 1977 called "group consciousness" over academic preparation, she asserted.<sup>318</sup>

The historical record suggests that Yale's officials were caught between acknowledging and concealing the "mismatch effect" PROP was meant to address. Whatever its true intentions were, the administration's equivocations allowed minority students to redefine PROP at will and forced pro-integration editorialists to hit a moving target. By 1988, Rosanne Adderley '89 had reduced PROP's objective to the promotion of diversity.<sup>319</sup>

## Aftermath

Yale's progressive wing had abandoned substantive debate for mockery, intellectual condescension, and character assassination. These tactics seemed to have played a role in settling the debate on its integration in the 1980s. After Adderley's articulation of PROP's contribution to diversity, the *Yale Daily News* records no further discussion beyond a lone letter to the Editor by Robert A. Crisell '93 on November 9, 1989.<sup>320</sup> Crisell's letter responded to a November 7, 1989 editorial by Chandak Godosh (never archived),<sup>321</sup> which criticized Yale's special treatment of minority students through the programs discussed above. Godosh, however, was a disciple of the strain of black separatism which came to Yale in the 1960s.

Godosh cautioned minorities against white culture, the assimilation into which was a "fruitless quest." Although he charged segregated programs with aggravating minorities' sense of alienation by "relentlessly driving the idea of minority status into one's head," he refused to join whites in the "peculiarly Western ritual" of "debauchery and 'getting high.'" Crisell responded, "I had no idea that intoxicants were invented by whites." He then went on to disagree that Yale's racial groups practiced "obviously distinct" habits and norms that precluded them from forging a common culture. "Racism thrives on hate," Crisell said. "Without love, it will be with us forever."<sup>322</sup>

## Trajectory

The decades-long controversy over the PROP program lacks the high drama of the strikes, sit-ins, arson, and calls to violence of the period up to

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318 Rosanne Adderley, To the Editors, "PROP Promotes Diversity of Cultures at Yale," February 17, 1988.

319 *Ibid.*

320 Robert A. Crisell, To the Editors, *Yale Daily News*, November 9, 1989.

321 Quotes attributed to Chandak Godosh were pulled from Robert Crisell's November 9, 1989 "To the Editor."

322 *Ibid.*

May 1970, or the high-stakes decisions to admit under-qualified minority students and to create academic programs designed for these students. But the PROP controversies do track a significant change in Yale's approach to racial integration. A program that began as a way to improve student performance on the path towards a racially integrated campus was gradually transformed into a program that segregated students and reinforced racial separatism. By the late 1980s, the rationale for PROP had slipped entirely into the conceptual vocabulary of "diversity," a concept that did not even exist in the early 1970s. The diversity doctrine, in the sense deployed by PROP's defenders in the late 1980s, emerged from Justice Lewis Powell's opinion in the 1978 Supreme Court decision in *Bakke v. the Regents of the University of California*.<sup>323</sup> By the late 1980s, "diversity" had become a catchword evoking the profound intellectual, moral, and existential separation of cultural groups within America.<sup>324</sup> Blacks in particular sat atop a hierarchy of victimhood, in which their right to separate accommodation could not be challenged without risking charges of racism and hatred. Concerns about the integrity of academic standards were now off the table.

## The Last PROP Cohort

On September 4, 1998, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reported the details of Yale's segregated orientation, PROP, and several others hosted at prestigious colleges and universities.<sup>325</sup>

Gose interviewed incoming Yale freshmen Deshante Reddick, who reported "feeling right at home" while "more than 90 percent of his first-year classmates were literally at home." Reddick, a talented high school runner, joined 94 other minority students for PROP, which by 1999 had been reduced to "five and a half days of sessions intended to help minority students make the transition to college." Reddick's activities at PROP included opening a bank account, attending a dance, and receiving a list of the "common sources of racial tension on [Yale's] predominantly white campus." Additionally, Reddick's ethnic counselors warned him to stay clear of courses in organic chemistry, but rather to take regular chemistry.<sup>326</sup>

Reddick reviewed PROP glowingly. He told the *Chronicle of Higher Education* that he was reveling in company with whom he could "shoot the breeze without holding anything back." "I don't think," he said, that "a lot of us

323 Peter Wood, *Diversity, The Invention of a Concept*, (New York: Encounter, 2003).

324 *Ibid.* 99-145.

325 Ben Gose, "Do Minority Orientations Encourage Segregation," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 4, 1998.

326 *Ibid.*

would have come to this if it had been a general orientation.” Gose interpreted Reddick’s statement to mean that he and others would have skipped orientation had it been racially integrated.<sup>327</sup>

The most significant detail about PROP that Gose reported was that Yale had moved past the days when PROP existed to meet the “additional,” presumably academic, needs of minority students. In 1998, “many participants [came] from comfortable suburban families,” and, in that light, “Yale administrators blanch at the word remediation.”<sup>328</sup>

Gose surveyed similar programs at elite colleges such as Williams College, Brown University, and Tufts University. “Segregated orientation programs,” Gose said, had “become fairly common.” But minority students at Yale were beginning to take umbrage at “the academic component of the orientation programs.” Although Yale administrators blanched at the word remediation in 1998, PROP administrators still required minority students to “spend eight hours working on their writing skills;” to “attend workshops on notetaking and “close reading;” and to participate in computer training.<sup>329</sup>

Victoria Lee disliked what the courses implied. “It’s hard to tell if they think we’re not up to the work, or if it’s just a time filler,” she said. She said the programs were “a little bit insulting,” but added that “I think [the administrators] mean well.” Richard H. Brodhead, dean of Yale College, critiqued the program similarly. He told Gose that later generations of minority students were better academically prepared than in earlier years. The academic impairments that had led to the creation of PROP were no longer relevant, he claimed, because “the motives for the first generation no longer exist.”<sup>330</sup>

The report detailed that in 1997, in the *Yale Daily News*, Yale’s Associate Dean Rick Chavolla rehashed the subject of integrating PROP.<sup>331</sup> Dean Brodhead, Chavolla’s superior, “silenced” such “speculation” however, when he told the paper that the reporter interviewing the newly-hired Chavolla had “misinterpreted his comments.”<sup>332</sup> Integration was thwarted again.

Brodhead explained to Gose the “tricky balance of providing support for minority students while avoiding the appearance of institutionally sanctioned segregation.” Yale had recently discarded its Bulldog Days Program, an early visit for minorities, because it sent the message that “we’ve admitted [them] as a minority student.” Brodhead said that PROP survived the cut because it did

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327 *Ibid.*

328 *Ibid.*

329 *ibid*

330 *Ibid.*

331 Issues of the *Yale Daily News* from that period have not yet been digitally archived.

332 *Ibid.*

“not [have] anything like the same symbolic level as” the Bulldog Days.<sup>333</sup>

But assistant Dean Mary Hsu contradicted Brodhead when she said that PROP remained “a special welcome for students who have been traditionally excluded.” Minority students, she argued, benefited from contact with “other

**Ultimately the “goal [of PROP] is integration but the first steps towards that must be—perhaps—segregation.”**

nerds of color.” Hsu’s “special welcome” clashed with Dean Brodhead’s denial that Yale supported “institutionally sanctioned segregation,” but Gose did not pursue questioning their mutually exclusive opinions. Hsu concluded her interview by saying that

ultimately the “goal [of PROP] is integration but the first steps towards that must be—perhaps—segregation.”<sup>334</sup> Although many of Yale’s contemporary blacks had suburban backgrounds, there were many from inner city regions who would be interacting with whites in an academic context for the first time. Segregation, she argued, helped these “students develop the confidence to speak up in Yale’s classes.”<sup>335</sup>

One of Yale’s PROP Minority Counselors interviewed by Gose, Ryan Jean-Baptiste, described how whites would derail “discussions about racial identity if they were admitted to PROP.” Per the *Chronicle of Higher Education*:

If you are a professor and you are discussing your research, it would be a hindrance if you had somebody who had never heard of your field trying to understand what you are saying. That’s what it would be like.<sup>336</sup>

Baptiste implied that white students at Yale had no knowledge of their black peers. The *Yale Daily News* archive, however, suggests otherwise, as we have seen. By all accounts, minority students had been on the minds of Yale’s students since Yale’s first “Vanguard Class” of black students arrived in 1965.

The historical record also contradicts Dean Brodhead’s claim that PROP lacked the “symbolic meaning” of other segregated programs, and Baptiste’s comments confirmed that contradiction. PROP had always existed to fulfill the promise of ethnically exclusive camaraderie for which earlier generations of minority students fought tooth and nail.

333 *Ibid.*

334 *Ibid.*

335 *Ibid.*

336 *Ibid.*

## Cultural Connections

In 1999, Yale replaced PROP with Cultural Connections, a “program designed to help assist in [students’] transition from high school to college.”<sup>337</sup> With the end of the twenty-seven-year-old Pre-Orientation Program also came the cessation of Yale’s attempts to bring incoming minority freshmen up to speed academically. Cultural Connections, as its name suggested, was created to foster community among minority students. Its mission did not and does not include academic or intellectual preparation for Yale’s traditional curriculum.

Cultural Connections program (CC) was designed to introduce first-years to Yale’s cultural resources as well as to explore the diversity of student experiences on the Yale campus, with emphasis on the experiences of traditionally underrepresented students and issues related to racial identity.<sup>338</sup>

Cultural Connections does hedge slightly on the issue of academic preparation. Though it includes no actual preparation for participating students, it does allow faculty members to speak about “academic expectations.”

Activities include discussions with faculty experts about ethnicity, nationality, and race; panels on academic expectations by faculty; presentations on campus life by students; and group visits to local points of interest such as the Yale College cultural centers, local and University museums and parks.<sup>339</sup>

Yale’s replacement of PROP resulted from the program’s unpopularity with minority students who resented its residual mission to improve their “writing and math skills.” Yale heeded their complaints. From 1999 to the present day, Cultural Connections has treated students to “events like the pow-wow, a poetry jam, and panels on cultural and racial issues at Yale.”<sup>340</sup>

337 Cultural Connections, Yale University, “About the Program,” <https://culturalconnections.yalecollege.yale.edu/about-program>. Accessed 2/19/19.

338 Cultural Connections (homepage), Yale University, <https://culturalconnections.yalecollege.yale.edu/>. Accessed 2/19/19.

339 *Ibid.*

340 Jacob Blecher, “Cultural Engineering,” *The New Journal at Yale*, September 1, 2002

## Demographic Change among Ivy League Blacks

The shift from PROP to Cultural Connections and the slide away from remediation reflected changes in Yale's demography. The university had quietly de-emphasized recruiting black and other minority students from poor neighborhoods in American cities. Instead it focused on recruiting high-achieving minority students from prep schools, affluent suburbs, and black students from the Caribbean and sub-Saharan Africa. Many observers noted the trend. In 2004, *The New York Times* reported that among black students at Harvard, "as many as two-thirds were West Indian and African immigrants or their children, or to a lesser extent, children of biracial couples."<sup>341</sup>

Exact figures for Yale are not readily available, but a study of black enrollment at Ivy League and other elite universities at that time found similarly high percentages:

Researchers at Princeton University and the University of Pennsylvania who have been studying the achievement of minority students at 28 selective colleges and universities (including theirs, as well as Yale, Columbia, Duke and the University of California at Berkeley), found that 41 percent of the black students identified themselves as immigrants, as children of immigrants or as mixed race.<sup>342</sup>

The researchers in question included Douglas S. Massey, who with his colleagues examined in fine detail the characteristics of African American and other minority students in top schools. Massey observed the dramatic increase in overall nonwhite enrollments among U.S. colleges and universities in the period 1976 to 1996, which jumped from 16 percent to 27 percent; and "Among African Americans aged 18-24, the share attending college went from 21 percent in 1972 to 30 percent in 2000."<sup>343</sup> The authors downplay the questions of immigration and mixed race, but they do touch on them in the summary of their findings. When they asked respondents their racial identification,

Roughly a quarter of all black freshmen had a foreign-born parent and 9 percent were themselves born abroad. Some 17 percent reported themselves as being of mixed race, and 2 percent said they were Latino. Since the rate of black-white intermarriage is currently around 5 percent, and nationwide only 3 percent of African

341 Sara Rimer and Karen W. Arenson, "Top Colleges Take More Blacks, but Which Ones?," *The New York Times*, June 24, 2004.

342 *Ibid.*

343 Douglas S. Massey, Camille Z. Charles, Garvey F. Lundy, and Mary J. Fischer, *The Source of the River: The Social Origins of Freshmen at America's Selective Colleges and Universities*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 1.



Americans are foreign born, both immigrant and racially mixed origins are substantially overrepresented among black freshmen at elite institutions.<sup>344</sup>

Another researcher, Andrew A. Beverage at Queens College, observed at the same time that about nine percent of American college students identified

**Yale and its counterparts were capturing the cognitive elite of blacks from around the world while masking the problem of the “achievement gap” between the descendants of black slaves in America and other Americans.**

as “African or West Indian.”<sup>345</sup> If those figures are accurate, it means that the elite institutions identified by Massey et al. as having “41 percent of the black students identified themselves as immigrants, as children of immigrants or as mixed race,” must have had a much greater share of total black enrollment than non-elite institutions. In other words, Yale and its counterparts were capturing the cognitive elite of blacks from around the world while masking

the problem of the “achievement gap” between the descendants of black slaves in America and other Americans.

African students at Yale formed their own group, the Yale African Students Association (YASA),<sup>346</sup> which since 2006 has held an annual “Africa Week.”

It symbolizes the intersection of the students’ African and Yale identities and highlights the ways in which the students function as a bridge between Yale and the continent, both individually and as a collective unit.<sup>347</sup>

African American black students are not always pleased with the broadened definitions of who counts as “black” in the Ivy League and elite colleges. A 2007 article in *The Guardian* quotes an alumna of Mount Holyoke College, Shirley Wilcher, who received “quite a shock” at a reunion: “The number of black graduates whose parents were born outside the US seemed to have grown dramatically compared with those whose families had been in America for generations—back to the times of slavery—like herself.”<sup>348</sup> The article said Wilcher was right:

344 *Ibid.*

345 Rimer and Arenson.

346 Facebook Page, Yale African Students, <https://www.facebook.com/YaleAfricanStudents/>

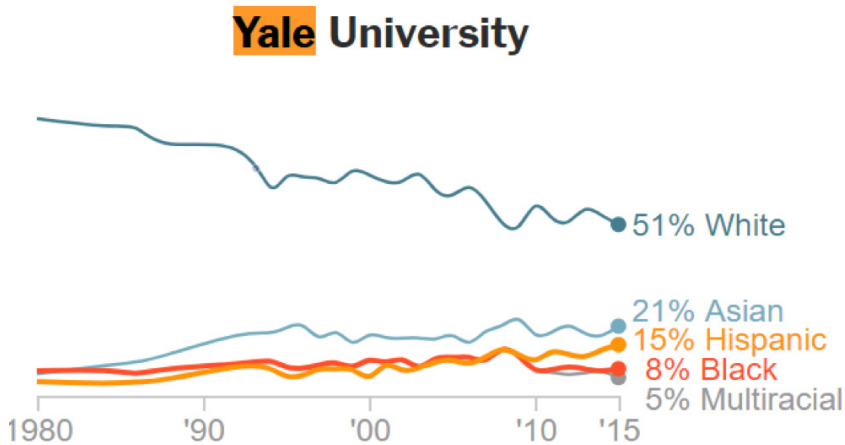
347 Sophia Catsambi, “YASA Presents...My Africa Is: Mine,” *Yale Daily News*, November 9, 2018.

348 Joanna Walters, “Any Black Student Will Do,” *The Guardian*, May 29, 2007, <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2007/may/29/internationaleducationnews.highereducation>. Accessed 2/19/19.

Student recruits from what is termed the native, or domestic, U.S. African American population had been dropping. Not only were blacks overall still under-represented, but within the black student population African Americans were being squeezed out.<sup>349</sup>

The controversy continues as African Americans recognize that, despite racial preferences in admissions, the share of African Americans admitted to elite colleges and universities has actually declined over the decades.<sup>350</sup>

*The New York Times* article provides a graph of the changing proportions of racial groups at Yale.<sup>351</sup>



Yale and other Ivy Leagues institutions claim much higher percentages of black students. Yale reported in 2016 that ten percent of its total enrollment was “black or African American.”<sup>352</sup> The discrepancy between those claims and *The New York Times* report may be in part explained by a footnote to the tables that explains, “Students whose race is unknown and international students are excluded from totals.”<sup>353</sup>

What the Stanford economist Caroline Hoxby calls the “immigrant crowding out” dates from the late 1980s.<sup>354</sup> Hoxby studied the displacement of native born black and Hispanic students by immigrants in the period 1989–1993 and found that in “the most selective schools” 17.3 percent of black

349 *Ibid.*

350 Jeremy Ashkenas, Haeyoun Park and Adam Pearce, “Even With Affirmative Action, Blacks and Hispanics Are More Underrepresented at Top Colleges Than 35 Years Ago,” *The New York Times*, August 24, 2017.

351 *Ibid.*

352 “Yale Facts and Statistics,” 2016, [https://oir.yale.edu/sites/default/files/factsheet\\_2016-17.pdf](https://oir.yale.edu/sites/default/files/factsheet_2016-17.pdf). Accessed 2/19/19.

353 *Ibid.*

354 Caroline Hoxby, “Do Immigrants Crowd Disadvantaged American Natives Out of Higher Education?” *Help or Hindrance? The Economic Implications of Immigration for African Americans*, eds. Daniel S. Hammermesh and Frank D. Bean, Russell Sage Foundation, 1998.

students were foreign-born, almost all of them noncitizens. By her calculations 37 native-born blacks are displaced “for every 100 black foreign-born students admitted.”<sup>355</sup>

Exact data for Yale in this period are not readily available, but academic developments suggest that the “immigrant crowding out” is an accurate model. If Yale was replacing poorly-performing native-born black students with better qualified students from elsewhere, it would explain why the need for remediation evaporated and the completion rates of black students soared.

## Dogs and Kimchi

As Ben Gose wrote for the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Yale had not given up on American descendants of slaves.<sup>356</sup> A substantial number of the black Americans whom Yale admits hail from the American elite, and many are the children of biracial intermarriages, which occur disproportionately among black and white elites.<sup>357</sup> A black Yale student of African origins told us that the most strident voices of black activism at Yale today are those of upper-middle-class Africans, as opposed to African Americans.

The need to include a high-achieving minority group, Asian-Americans, may have also led to the replacement of PROP with a purely non-academic program. Cultural Connections is popular among many Asian-American students, many of whom enter the Ivy League with credentials that surpass their

### **The creation of Cultural Connections meant that Yale’s minority students attended this segregated orientation program for “distinctly political” purposes.**

white peers. Moreover, it is possible that the “new generation” of minority students that Gose described—those reared in integrated preparatory schools in high-income zip codes—arrived at Yale carrying less intellectual baggage than the “Vanguard Class” of minorities, which Yale reportedly selected from lower socioeconomic

echelons.

In either case, the creation of Cultural Connections meant that Yale’s minority students attended this segregated orientation program for “distinctly political” purposes.<sup>358</sup> Writing for *The New Journal* at Yale in 2002,

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355 *Ibid.*

356 Ben Gose, “Do Minority Orientations Encourage Segregation?” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 4, 1998.

357 Kristen Bailik, “Kay Facts about Race and Marriage, 50 years after Loving v. Virginia,” Pew Research Center, June 12, 2017. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/06/12/key-facts-about-race-and-marriage-50-years-after-loving-v-virginia/>

358 *Ibid.*

Jacob Blecher '03, a Cultural Connections attendee, observed that Cultural Connections created “solidarity among disparate minority groups.” Cultural Connections aide Alexis Hoag '04 agreed. She told Blecher that Cultural Connections connected members of “minority groups” to friends that formed the basis of “coalitions” that addressed “[racial] situations at Yale.” Another Cultural Connections aide, Taiwo Stanback, believed that Cultural Connections was an “important tool for effecting change.” “Until the United States changes the racial problems,” Stanback said, “Cultural Connections is a way of dealing with those problems.”<sup>359</sup>

Black students were not the only ones who saw Cultural Connections as a useful means of handling “racial problems” at Yale. Asian-American students also used the connections forged at Cultural Connections to fight anti-Asian-American bias.

A year before Blecher’s article, the Asian-American Student Alliance targeted the *Yale Daily News* for “consciousness-raising” after managing editor Michael Horn published “Confessions of a Jewish Asian Worshipper” for the 2001 *Yale Daily News*’ April Fools edition.<sup>360</sup>

In response, the AASA “sent an email to members of the Asian-American community” scolding Horn for using Asian-American stereotypes in his satire. Cultural Dean Saveena Dhall joined them by writing her own “personal message.” Dhall urged Asian-American students to “respond, either on a personal level or by participating in one of our community efforts.” Dhall could not have wielded her “unique influence over [the] students” in this controversy without her visible presence at Cultural Connections.<sup>361</sup>

The “political purpose” of Cultural Connections included directing minority students to “cultural deans” who “were [all] involved to some degree in activist groups such as BSAY, and the AASA [Asian-American Student Alliance], or the Cultural Houses.” Blecher said cultural deans and ethnic counselors play “important roles in campus activism.”<sup>362</sup>

Blecher also attributed to Cultural Connections how Asian-American students responded to a dining hall manager’s awkward answer to a student who proposed a “Korean-themed dinner” at Morse College dining hall. According to Blecher, junior David Ahn asked the manager, Brian Frantz, to add Korean entrees to the dining menu. Frantz joked, “What would that be? Dogs and kimchi?” Ahn sent a letter to the Korean Students Association at Yale (KSAY) saying that he was “shocked” and “offended.” Ahn also reported the incident to Yale’s administration, to ensure that the incident “would go on Frantz’s

359 Jacob Blecher, “Cultural Engineering.” *The New Journal at Yale*. September 2002. pp. 10-14.

360 Michael Horn’s essay is not available in the *Yale Daily News* digital archives.

361 *Ibid.*

362 *Ibid.*

record.”<sup>363</sup>

The episode, said Blecher, catalyzed the AASA’s proposal to impose “cultural sensitivity workshops [on] incoming freshmen.” The resolution did not target the dining hall staff, but asked the Yale administration to redress “tension and resentment [that] clearly exist when it comes to cultural differences and problems that arise from it.”<sup>364</sup> Ahn’s actions highlighted Cultural Connection’s ability to bring Asian-Americans students into the fold of campus identitarianism.

## Wolf Skins and Wampum

Blecher’s article shows that Cultural Connections wove together Yale’s “intricate support system consisting of cultural houses, cultural deans, [and] ethnic counselors.” During the program, Yale’s cultural deans, who manage the school’s cultural houses (Afro-American, La Casa (i.e. Hispanic), Asian-American, and Native American) “[made] appearances to form close relationships with participants.” Additionally, minority students met their ethnic counselors to whom they were assigned based on race. Cultural Connections aides also advertised Yale’s minority-student organizations.

In 2002, Cultural Connections also treated minority students to a tour of Yale’s cultural houses, and a panel on “Diversity, Cultural Centers, and Being a Student of Color at Yale” pointed minority students to “resources that exist at Yale to provide for students of color.” Pamela George and Rosalinda Garcia, directors of the Afro-American and La Casa Cultural Houses, were joined by “three minority undergraduates” for the panel. The relationships forged between incoming students and activist-minded administrators, and upper-classmen, said Blecher, came full circle “when incidents such as the dogs and kimchi affair occur.”<sup>365</sup>

In addition to the events mentioned above, the Cultural Connections class of 2002 was bused to a “Schemitzun celebration” at which around 500 Native Americans groups gathered. Schemitzun, the “feast of green corn,” is an event staged by the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Council and held at that time at the Hartford Civic Center. The trip exposed students to “traditional dancing and singing first-hand.”<sup>366</sup>

At the event, small proprietors sold “Indian medicine bags ... wolf skins, wampum, jewelry, [and] moccasins.” T-shirts for sale displayed messages such as “NBA: Native by Ancestry” and “FBI: Full Blooded Indian.” During the

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363 *Ibid.*

364 *Ibid.*

365 Blecher.

366 *Ibid.*

performances by Native American dancers an emcee shouted, “Iroquois style in the house!” and “The true heartbeat of our people! What a beautiful sight!” Other events reinforced the program’s identitarian objectives. Following the Schemitzun celebration, the students attended a meet and greet with “students and administrators of color.”<sup>367</sup>

## Keeping Whites Out

In 2002, Yale University still denied that it supported racial separatism. When Blecher asked Dhall about allegations of Cultural Connections’ tendency to promote racial separatism she said that “such talk has no validity.” To prove her point, Dhall provided Blecher with “a clipping from the undergraduate race magazine.” Its authors were Johnathan Farmer and Ameer Kim El-Mallawany, students of African American and “half-Korean, half-Egyptian” origins respectively. Dhall remarked their friendship blossomed “against all odds” when the two minority students met at Cultural Connections. Blecher did not press Dhall on why the “political purpose” of Cultural Connections, defined by its emphasis on forging “solidarity among disparate minority groups,” made Farmer and El-Mallawany’s friendship more likely. Dhall did not provide examples of unlikely friendships between minority students and their white peers.

Some Yale students resented that Cultural Connections “puts a division between ethnicities.” On December 6, 2002, three months after Blecher published his Cultural Connections reflection in *The New Journal* at Yale, the *Yale Daily News* reported that Yale’s Freshman Class Council planned “to poll freshmen about all pre-orientation programs.” Steven Syverud ’06 said the Council “felt it was an issue of importance to the freshman class.” According to the *Yale Daily News*, some students supported granting “non-minority students” admission to Cultural Connections.<sup>368</sup>

Syverud urged students to respond to the news soberly. The Freshman Class Council, he cautioned, had not reached a consensus. Tiffany Clay ’06 explained that the proposal only reflected FCC’s refusal to shy “away from controversial issues.”<sup>369</sup>

Although the year had changed, Yale’s students responded to the possible integration of Cultural Connections exactly as their predecessors responded to the possible integration of PROP. Cole Carnesecca ’06 told the *Yale Daily News* that Cultural Connections “puts a division between” Yale’s racial groups. But Sherman Jones ’06 countered that allowing non-minorities—i.e. white

367 *Ibid.*

368 Chris Fortson, “FCC to Poll Freshmen on Pre-Orientations,” *Yale Daily News*, December 6, 2002.

369 *Ibid.*

students—to attend Cultural Connections would “defeat the purpose of the program,” which according to Jones, “eased the transition into college for minorities.” Jones added that “being a minority student, it helps to have a particular program.” Cultural Connections’ discriminatory policy, he concluded, “was not meant to be a rejection of other students,” it was meant to “bring minorities together.”<sup>370</sup>

A decision on the status of Cultural Connections came slowly. On February 23, 2004, the *Yale Daily News* reported that Yale College Dean Richard Brodhead planned to “open [Cultural Connections] to non-minority students.”<sup>371</sup> Brodhead credited Yale’s “commitment to fostering personal and cultural interaction across the whole spectrum of social difference for the decision.”<sup>372</sup> Moreover, he cited the Supreme Court’s 2003 decision to uphold affirmative action, which “reaffirmed” the “value that the experience of diversity supplies as a component of education.”<sup>373</sup>

The Supreme Court ruling undermined arguments for “programs that separate communities instead of building them into an interactive whole.”<sup>374</sup> Furthermore, he argued, integrating Cultural Connections comported with

a trend at Yale, which cut its Minority Student Weekend Program in 1995 and now accepted a “wider array of undergraduate applicants” to programs such as the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program, a program originally intended to provide minority students a fast track to graduate school.<sup>375</sup>

The news generated controversy. Alexis Hoag ’04, who also commented on Jacob Blecher’s *New Journal* article on Cultural Connections, told the *News* that the program as it was “[facilitated] strong cross-cultural bonds among its participants.” Hoag’s 2002 statement that Cultural Connections “connected” minority students suggest that the phrase “cross-cultural

bonds” actually means intra-minority bonds. “The presence of white students in Cultural Connections,” Hoag continued, “will change participant

**Many minority students presumably shared Hoag’s views of Yale’s proposal to integrate Cultural Connections; these concerns might have prompted a series of emails sent by cultural deans Saveena Dhall, Rosalinda Garcia, and Pamela George assuaging students’ anxiety that the pending proposal presaged the end of segregation at Yale.**

370 *Ibid.*

371 Bess Hinson, “Connections to Expand,” *Yale Daily News*, February 23, 2004.

372 *Ibid.*

373 *Ibid.*

374 *Ibid.*

375 *Ibid.*

socialization.”<sup>376</sup>

Many minority students presumably shared Hoag’s views of Yale’s proposal to integrate Cultural Connections; these concerns might have prompted a series of emails sent by cultural deans Saveena Dhall, Rosalinda Garcia, and Pamela George assuaging students’ anxiety that the pending proposal presaged the end of segregation at Yale. All three reiterated “their full commitment to the cultural house’s students, programs, and services for students of color.” The deans professed their faith in the “core value” of Cultural Connections and their full commitment to “preserving its core mission.”<sup>377</sup>

Alicia Washington ’05 was optimistic that “the inclusion of non-minority students will strengthen [Cultural Connections] rather than harm it.” She said that both minority students and white students contributed to “the discourse and celebration of diversity.” She hoped that integration could “bridge a gap between minority and non-minority students.” Nicky Nole ’06, however, kept to the separatist line. She wanted “an additional program on diversity” that left Cultural Connections unscathed. “You cannot open up a forum that was established to help minorities ... to others and still maintain the program’s initial goals,” she declared.<sup>378</sup>

One month after Brodhead’s announcement to integrate Cultural Connections, news of a racial controversy at Yale’s peer institution, Brown University, reached New Haven. *Yale Daily News* writer Violet Woodward Pu reported that the directors of Brown University’s Third World Transition Program (TWTP), a segregated orientation for minority students, “failed to publicize” that it was allowing white students to attend the program. According to the report, white students “did not receive invitations” to the Third World Transition Program.<sup>379</sup>

The director of the Third World Transition Program (TWTP) countered that white students would have known about desegregation at TWTP’s if they “requested to attend” and that they “would have been admitted.” Some of Brown’s Minority Peer Counselors (who serve a similar function as Yale’s Cultural Connections aides) declined to comment, although others claimed they didn’t know that TWTP had been desegregated. TWTP aide Manisha Mazur maintained that it needed to retain “a degree of exclusivity” despite the importance for white students to participate in conversations about race. Nevertheless, Mazur qualified that its importance didn’t trump “the need for students of color to have a space to build community.”<sup>380</sup>

The news sparked another debate over Yale’s decision to admit whites

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376 *Ibid.*

377 *Ibid.*

378 *Ibid.*

379 Violet Woodward Pu, “Brown Minority Program Faces New Criticism,” *Yale Daily News*, March 25, 2004.

380 *Ibid.*



to Cultural Connections. Alexis Hoag '04 reiterated her claims. Cultural Connections' purpose was to help "minorities become acclimated to their new environment" and to foster "a strong bond cross-culturally among participants." She believed that "white students who come from ethnically diverse backgrounds" would be a better match for the program. Matthew Houk '04, a "half-Native American and half-white" Cultural Connections aide, commented that whites would miss out on the "inclusive feeling" enjoyed by minorities attending Cultural Connections. Houk's experience was filtered through his appearance. "I look white," he said. "The students of color" interacted better when he wasn't around. "When I entered a room, people would get quieter and look at me funny."

On September 9, 2004 the *Yale Daily News* reported that Cultural Connections accepted 101 applicants to its summer 2004 class, "including one white student," Peter Nicewicz '08.<sup>381</sup> Although "changes made to accommodate non-minority students were slight," said the *Yale Daily News*, administrators altered the program in other ways. Yale increased "the fee for the program ... from just \$10 to \$100" and mailed invitations to Cultural Connections to students of all races.<sup>382</sup>

Assistant Yale College Dean Rosalind Garcia blamed the fee hike on a "review of other pre-orientation programs, which charged participants hundreds of dollars." Other reforms included an essay requirement for applicants, which would gauge applicants' interest.<sup>383</sup>

Cultural Connections aide Ryan Murguia '05 told the *Yale Daily News* that the biggest change to the 2004 edition of Cultural Connections, i.e. Nicewicz's attendance, went well. Nicewicz, she observed, "was very active" and received "a lot from the program." Murguia "welcomed the possibility of more non-minority [white] students participating in the program in future years."<sup>384</sup>

## You Have Your Country!

A 2006 *Yale Daily News* article revealed that time had not diminished minority students' sore feelings over accusations that Cultural Connections caused racial separatism.<sup>385</sup> Funmi Showole '08 recounted her high school years in a gifted program at the predominantly black Port Richmond High School in Staten Island. Her time in Staten Island marked "[the] first time [she was] immersed into a really heavily minority population" in which "people

381 Patrick Huguenin, "Color Blind," *Yale Daily News*, April 18, 2006. Peter Nicewicz's identity was not revealed until the publication of "Color Blind."

382 Julie Post, "Orientation Program Opens To All," *Yale Daily News*, September 9, 2004.

383 *Ibid.*

384 *Ibid.*

385 Huguenin.

were open with each other.” Her fellow minority students, she said, “wanted to make sure everyone was going to graduate.” After spending the early years of her life in a mostly white Canadian neighborhood, Showole’s experience at the Staten Island school prepared her for neo-segregation at Yale University.<sup>386</sup>

Showole recalled the days leading up to her arrival at Cultural Connections. She attended the program the same year that Cultural Connections admitted Nicewicz. She followed the “debates about why Cultural Connections shouldn’t be at Yale” leading up to her registration. To her, Cultural Connections “was such a positive thing, something that [she] needed.” She understood that white students felt that Cultural Connections “fosters exclusion because [they] show up and all the minority students are already friends with each other and they don’t want to necessarily meet all these new white students,” but this did not change her mind. Showole defended other symbols of neo-segregation at Yale such as the Afro-American Cultural Center (often called AfAm). Rhasaan Nichols ’08, who participated with Showole in the interview, cut in to say: “It was like, oh why do we have an AfAm house if we don’t have a white house? ... You have your university! And you have your country.”<sup>387</sup>

An anonymous black female student disagreed with Showole and Nichols. “I didn’t do Cultural Connections,” she said. This student concluded that Yale’s desire to “create diversity” contradicted the intentions of a program that was “a good way for people from different minorities to meet, but not a way to meet white people.” Jacob Frist ’07, a white student, couldn’t comprehend “why [Yale] feels the need to give minority kids a special label.” He blamed special labels” for “alienating ... the rest of the community” and causing minority students “to be more involved in that identity and less in campus life in general.”<sup>388</sup>

Niko Bowie ’09, the son of progressive author and Harvard Law professor Lani Guinier, entered the debate when he penned an op-ed in the winter of 2007 declaring that “self-segregation ... is a myth.” Bowie said he “put [his] biases up front.” At the time of his writing, he was employed by the Afro-American Cultural Center (AfACC) and had worked for the Cultural Connections program as an aide the previous summer. Although he admitted that “black people often eat lunch together;” “most of the people who” attend events at the AfACC “are black;” and “most of the attendees of Cultural Connections are students of color,” these weren’t “examples of self-segregation.” If black students had posted a “Blacks Only” sign at the entrance or designated an “alternate rear entrance for white students,” he would accept the “self-segregation” label that integrationists had slapped on “support

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386 *Ibid.*

387 *Ibid.*

388 *Ibid.*

services.”<sup>389</sup>

When it came to self-segregation at Yale, Bowie continued, it was white students who were the true culprits. Bowie equated participation in Yale’s minority student clubs and programs with membership in the Yale Political Union. He wondered why students hadn’t complained that the YPU self-segregates.

Bowie claimed to sympathize with white students who avoided Cultural Connections without being told. He supposed that “being in the minority can be awkward.” But he did not consider that the discomfort of white students at Cultural Connections likely resulted from their knowledge that a substantial number of minority students did not want them there. No “Blacks Only” sign was needed to alert all students that Cultural Connections was unwelcoming to non-minorities.

Bowie’s article appeared five days after the Independent Party of the Yale Political Union hosted a debate on “the issue of self-segregation on campus.” The resolution, Yale Policies Perpetuate Racism, “roused tempers among members of student cultural organizations.” After minority students received an email advertising the event, “their initial response was an attempt to block the debate from occurring.” Carmen Lee ’09, the author of the email, wrote that “the unsightly pimples of self-segregation and racial stereotypes are hidden under a thick veneer of cultural houses and Cultural Connections.” Although Lee explained that she made her remarks in jest, “several cultural groups circulated the email among their members urging them to stop the event from taking place. Minority students ultimately decided against censorship and agreed to “attend the debate as participants, not protestors.”<sup>390</sup>

All sides at the debate agreed that neo-segregation existed at Yale, but no one agreed on who was fostering it.<sup>391</sup> Pro-resolution proponents argued that programs specifically created for minority students bore responsibility for neo-segregation. Others insisted that “students themselves ... elect to shy away from those of different ethnicities.”<sup>392</sup>

The *Yale Daily News* editorial board endorsed the pro-side of the resolution, but took a nuanced position.<sup>393</sup> “Cultural groups [served] a need on campus,” it conceded, but “create a dilemma for both minority and non-minority students.” Exclusive programs for students of color limited the horizon of minority students who “make cultural activities their niche.” The absence of minority students from integrated campus organizations, the board added, made cultural groups increasingly “homogenous” and fractured the “campus

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389 Niko Bowie, “‘Self-segregation’ Myth Affects All Groups,” *Yale Daily News*, February 12, 2007.

390 Judy Wang, “IP Debate Addresses Race on Campus,” *Yale Daily News*, February 7, 2007.

391 *Ibid.*

392 *Ibid.*

393 The *Yale Daily News*, “Self-Segregation Thwarts Campus Unity,” *Yale Daily News*, February 9, 2007.

... along cultural lines.” Individuals working from and towards common principles sustained the life of a campus community, the editorial board said.<sup>394</sup>

**The absence of minority students from integrated campus organizations, the board added, made cultural groups increasingly “homogenous” and fractured the “campus ... along cultural lines.”**

forums on race” wouldn’t solve Yale’s problem of racial balkanization and called on Yale to “address the personal and structural” sources of Yale’s ethnic factions. “We are Yalies” bound by “our shared alma mater,” it declared. “[Yale] students need to focus on that, not split over our differences.”<sup>395</sup>

Moreover, racial controversies at Yale “[revealed] how much common ground had eroded among students” who frequented cultural organizations and those who participated in Yale’s “mainstream” culture. That minority students took offense at Carmen Lee’s email betrayed their ignorance of “one of Yale’s largest groups,” (i.e. the Yale Independent Party) which did not ascribe to a “unified position.” The editorial board concluded that “more

## Trick or Treat

In 2015, Yale professors Nicholas and Erika Christakis faced Yale’s identitarian inquisitors when they criticized Yale’s attempt to police students’ choice of Halloween costumes.<sup>396</sup> Their views, said minority students, “marginalized” the voices of students of color. From the controversy emerged Jerelyn Luther, the “Shrieking Girl” of the viral video. During the public mobbing of Nicholas Christakis on November 5, Luther ridiculed him for failing to concede that he was racist. The *Yale Daily News* observed that the “recent demonstrations” had spurred renewed interest in Cultural Connections, and President Salovey on November 17 had sent a university-wide email promising to “increase funding for cultural initiatives on campus.” This was widely understood as a promise to increase funding for Cultural Connections in particular.<sup>397</sup>

According to the *Yale Daily News*, Cultural Connections popularity increased even before the Christakis incident sparked campus wide protests. In 2015, 200 students from Yale’s Class of 2019 applied for 130 spots in the

394 *Ibid.*

395 *Ibid.*

396 Monica Wang and Victor Wang, “Students Confront Christakis About Halloween Email,” *Yale Daily News*, November 5, 2015.

397 Joey Ye, “Cultural Connections Sees High Demand,” *Yale Daily News*, December 05, 2015.

coveted program. As a result, the number of the students accepted to the Cultural Connections class of 2015 “was the highest it has ever been,” although Dustin Nguyen ‘18 remarked that Yale had failed to match Cultural Connections’ increased enrollment with sufficient funds and staff. Nguyen hoped for “more counselors, because [Cultural Connections] had to turn away more kids than ever before.” The *Yale Daily News* report stated that Yale administrators had already gathered to consider Nguyen’s suggestion. Discussions on “the ways in which the increasingly popular program could benefit from additional funding” were underway. These discussions were necessary because Cultural Connections isn’t funded like Yale’s other orientation programs.<sup>398</sup>

## Footing It

Two other orientation programs, “Harvest” and “Freshman Outdoor Orientation” (FOOT), received most of their revenues from the \$420 and \$430 fees students paid respectively. Cultural Connections was more modestly priced at \$200, and students eligible for financial aid attended the program for free. The low price and generous attendance policy meant that Cultural Connections brought in less revenue than, for example, the Freshman Outdoor Orientation (FOOT), and had to be subsidized by the university. Yale’s orientation for international students, “Orientation for Yale College International Students,” also cost \$200 and permitted “students on financial aid” to attend for free “with the exception of travel costs.”<sup>399</sup>

In 2017, FOOT came under scrutiny for its “diversity problems.” Yale administrators acted. As “part of a broader effort among FOOT management to increase minority representation,” student orientation leaders were required to attend a seminar in which “professional counselors [discussed] microaggressions and privilege.” FOOT not only lacked diversity, the administrators believed, it was also cost prohibitive.<sup>400</sup>

FOOT’s “self-funded” status forced program administrators to seek donations from alumni and current students “to expand its financial aid offerings.” Expensive hiking gear and other supplies required for FOOT’s outdoor activities presented “barriers” to cash-strapped students and were blamed for its “diversity problems.”<sup>401</sup>

The concerns about cost, however, were misleading. Students and staff involved in Yale’s orientation programs cited non-financial reasons

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398 *Ibid.*

399 *Ibid.*

400 Hailey Fuchs & Kiddest Sinke. “FOOT moves to address diversity problems,” *Yale Daily News*, April 12, 2017

401 *Ibid.*

why minority students preferred Cultural Connections to FOOT. Cultural Connections aide, Chelsey Clark '17 told the *Yale Daily News* that minority students preferred “Cultural Connections ... because they are interested in learning and talking about diversity.”<sup>402</sup>

Clark’s explanation did not satisfy FOOT Director Priscilla Kellert, who complained that while FOOT was abundant in other forms of diversity including “national origin, religion, and sexual orientation,” “one group that [FOOT did not have] is African American.”<sup>403</sup>

Why did minority students not attend FOOT in large numbers? Mallet Njonkem '18, a black student, answered that he did not register for FOOT because he “had never done anything like FOOT before.” He feared paying “to have a bad experience.”<sup>404</sup> It’s possible that hiking trips aren’t that popular among black Americans. A 1988 survey of Illinois’s residents supports this view. The survey found that 55 percent of whites use the parks for hiking, compared to 25% of blacks.<sup>405</sup> In 2017, a study by the Outdoor Industry Association found that just 4% of blacks nationwide went on hiking trips, compared to 17 percent of whites, 19 percent of Asian-Americans, and 13% of Hispanics.<sup>406</sup>

## Modeling Diversity

Cultural Connections eventually served as a model for similar programs elsewhere in the Ivy League. Princeton, for example, created a Cultural Connections–like program in 2017. The *Daily Princetonian* reported the university’s first “social justice” orientation, “Dialogue in Action.”<sup>407</sup> The program was a result of the efforts of LaTanya Buck, who Princeton hired in April 2016 as its first Dean for Diversity and Inclusion.<sup>408</sup> Buck had been at Washington University in St. Louis since July 2014, and previously served as director of the Cross Cultural Center at Saint Louis University for five years. She had a doctorate from Saint Louis University in “higher education administration,” a credential she earned for completing her thesis “The Cultural and Structural

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402 *Ibid.*

403 *Ibid.*

404 *Ibid.*

405 John F. Dwyer and Paul H. Gobster, “Black/White Outdoor Recreation Preferences and Participation: Illinois State Parks, Research Forester and Research Social Scientist, USDA Forest Service, North Central Forest Experiment Station, Chicago IL, [https://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/gtr/gtr\\_ne160/gtr\\_ne160\\_020.pdf](https://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/gtr/gtr_ne160/gtr_ne160_020.pdf)

406 The Outdoor Foundation, “Outdoor Participation Report 2017,” [https://outdoorindustry.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/2017-Outdoor-Recreation-Participation-Report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://outdoorindustry.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/2017-Outdoor-Recreation-Participation-Report_FINAL.pdf)

407 Claire Thorton, “New Pilot Pre-Orientation Program Around Social Justice to Begin in September,” *The Daily Princetonian*, August 24, 2017.

408 Karen Deinst, “LaTanya Buck named dean for diversity and inclusion,” Princeton University, April 5, 2016, <https://www.princeton.edu/news/2016/04/05/latanya-buck-named-dean-diversity-and-inclusion>. Accessed 2/19/19.

Shifts in Race-Conscious Access Programs.” Buck had also served in Maryville University’s admissions office to serve as an “assistant director and coordinator for minority student recruitment.” In short, she was a credentialed professional in the diversity sub-sector of contemporary American higher education.<sup>409</sup>

One of Yale’s assistant deans, Eileen Galvez, who is the director of the Cultural Connections orientation and of Yale’s La Casa Cultural House, has a similar résumé. As a graduate student at Texas State University in 2010, Galvez worked as a Multicultural Affairs Graduate Intern. Her duties included “[assisting] in the planning and execution” of Texas State’s Multicultural Graduation Celebration attended by “200 students and 300 of their guests.” In August of 2010 she accepted a position as a Graduate Research Assistant in the school’s Multicultural Affairs Office.<sup>410</sup>

There Galvez helped plan and run an event called “Mama’s Kitchen.” Twice a semester, Mama’s Kitchen hosted minority students, faculty, and staff to enjoy “ethnic foods,” “cultural information,” and entertainment. In her work on various retention efforts, she attended the campus African American Leadership Conference, Latino Empowerment Conference, MLK Week, and Native American Conference. After completing her master’s at Texas State University, Galvez accepted several positions outside of the diversity sphere at several small colleges until she was appointed the Assistant Director of Diversity and Inclusion at Illinois Wesleyan University. Galvez’s “key accomplishment” at Illinois Wesleyan was organizing its first “Lavender Graduation,” a segregated graduation ceremony for homosexual, bisexual, and transsexual students. Additionally, Galvez managed operations at Illinois

Wesleyan’s MALANA (Multi-Ethnic, African-American, Latino/a, Asian-American, and Native American) Center, including its segregated pre-orientation and graduation.<sup>411</sup>

As Assistant Dean of Yale College, Galvez’s duties “include academic advising and shaping the intellectual tone of the college.” Her 30-strong staff comprises full-time employees, graduate students, and undergraduate stu-

dents. She manages “inter-sectional programming, including race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, etc.”<sup>412</sup> Galvez is best known for co-signing the letter

**Galvez’s “key accomplishment” at Illinois Wesleyan was organizing its first “Lavender Graduation,” a segregated graduation ceremony for homosexual, bisexual, and transsexual students.**

409 *Ibid.*

410 LinkedIn post, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/eileen-galvez-09493734>. Accessed 2/19/19.

411 *Ibid.*

412 *Ibid.*

sent by Yale's Intercultural Affairs Committee advising students to avoid "culturally insensitive" Halloween costumes.<sup>413</sup> The protests that erupted after Erika Christakis's response to the Intercultural Affairs Council's letter occurred during the first year of Galvez's tenure.<sup>414</sup>

## Asian-Americans on Neo-Segregation

The views of neo-segregation held by Yale's Asian students seldom received the level of attention accorded to those of black and Latino students. This changed in 2017, when Yale's Asian-American students launched *Negative Space: An Asian & Asian-American Oral History Project*, which addressed race, Cultural Connections, and how some Asian-American students feel about their white peers.<sup>415</sup> Their accounts provide a window into the thoughts of a minority group often drowned out by louder voices, and shows that for many, Cultural Connections sets the tone of campus identitarianism.

Katherine Oh's '18 contribution to *Negative Space* detailed how she and other Asian-Americans at Yale respond to the atmosphere at Cultural Connections. Oh said that during group discussions she sensed a "disconnect between the Asian-American students and other participants."<sup>416</sup> She attributed that disconnect to Asian-American cultural norms which discourage the cultivation of one's "individual identity" and which induce pressure to "conform to societal norms."<sup>417</sup> These, she said, discouraged Asian-American students from "uncomfortable conversations that challenge the norm."<sup>418</sup> Asian-American students, she added, lacked "exposure to the vocabulary often used in discourse regarding racial identity." When "uncomfortable conversations" (including racial discussions) occur, she observed, Asian-American students tend to "slink back into the shadows" and seek refuge in friendships with other Asian students with whom they share a common culture and experience.<sup>419</sup>

Another source of their collective inhibition was the upbringing of many Asian-Americans in "anti-black Asian communities." Oh said most Asian-American students were unfamiliar with Black Lives Matter activists' vocabulary. Yet Katherine was optimistic: She observed that the "disconnect"

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413 Email posted on Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE), <https://www.thefire.org/email-from-intercultural-affairs/>

414 LinkedIn post, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/eileen-galvez-09493734>

415 Haewon Ma and Oriana Tang, *Negative Space: An Asian & Asian-American Oral History Project*, <https://www.negativepaceyale.org/about>

416 Interview with Katherine Oh, *Negative Space: An Asian & Asian-American Oral History Project*, Spring 2017, <https://www.negativepaceyale.org/spring-2017#/katherine-oh/>

417 *Ibid.*

418 *Ibid.*

419 *Ibid.*



between Asian-Americans and other minority groups dissipated in her time at Yale.<sup>420</sup>

Although Oh disagreed that the “discussion topics were necessarily catered to any one group,” she confessed that the presence of a “significant majority of black students” caused Cultural Connections aides to prioritize the “stories about black identity.” That black students were Cultural Connections’s honored guests was reflected in the absence of Native American counselors to lead a discussion for Native American students. Oh maintained that the topics of discussion did not start this way, but organically developed an “implicit focus on the black experience.”<sup>421</sup>

Oh’s experience at Cultural Connections inspired her to seek employment as a Cultural Connections aide, and she was hired. She sought that position “because [she] remembered how lost and confused [she] felt as a freshman.” After spending her life “surrounded by Asian-Americans,” coming to Yale stoked her realization that she was unable “to talk about [her] identity.” Oh found her personal discovery “very disconcerting.”<sup>422</sup> After forging a friendship with her so-called Cultural Connections “Mom” (a Cultural Connections aide assigned to mentor a specific set of students) of Chinese American origins with whom Oh “felt more comfortable ... [expressing her] feelings” she resolved to “equip” future Asian-American students with the language required to tell the “stories essential to understanding the Asian-American experience.” Presumably, Cultural Connections introduced Oh to the language required to think through the questions posed by identitarians.<sup>423</sup>

Oh’s description of a role as a “parent” in the Korean Student Association at Yale illuminates Yale’s trend towards ethnic balkanization, as well as the social relationships forged to sustain a particular identity. According to Oh her job as a “parent” required her to “advise [her] children more on self-care.”<sup>424</sup>

Oh’s reflections addressed other racially charged subjects in the Asian-American community. She singled out non-Asian men who hyper-sexualize and exoticize Asian-American women.<sup>425</sup> Hyper-sexualization subjected Asian-American women to boorish students who ignore traditional “rules imposed for approaching women,” she claimed. Vulgar flirtation caused Oh to “fear for [her] safety.” Other intrusive social norms, such as the interracial dating taboos not to date Asian-American men, also limited the autonomy of Asian-American women, she said. Oh alleged that Asian-American men resent Asian-American women who select white romantic partners because they feel

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420 *Ibid.*

421 *Ibid.*

422 *Ibid.*

423 *Ibid.*

424 *Ibid.*

425 *Ibid.*

that American culture emasculates Asian-American men, and elevates the manliness and attractiveness of white men. By their calculation, every Asian-American woman poached by a white man is one less potential partner for an Asian man.<sup>426</sup>

Comments such as these give a glimpse of the psychological dynamics that underlie the various impulses within ethnic groups that favor self-segregation.

An interview with South Asian student Sohum Pal '20 illuminated another side of campus identitarianism. Pal self-identified as “queer, disabled, and South Asian.” Cultural Connections’ objectives appealed to him. “I don’t think there was any doubt in my mind that I wanted to do Cultural Connections,” said Pal. “It was one of the first almost fully PoC (people of color) spaces I’ve ever been in and it felt very safe.” Pal, however, disliked the program’s “vehement ableism and its semi-erasure of Asian and Asian-American identities.”<sup>427</sup>

Cultural Connections was not the first place in which Pal perceived racism. He claimed that, while attending his predominantly white high school, white teachers and administrators subjected him to “microaggressions and actual aggressions.” These experiences “struck [him] as pretty fucked up.” Microaggressions were prevalent at Yale too, he claimed. Pal’s first week “was incredibly stressful because [he] received microaggressions and actual aggressions every day.” Luckily for Pal, Cultural Connections introduced him to “some amazing upperclassmen ... as well as an awesome group of friends.” Pal later joined identity-oriented organizations such as the Asian-American Student Alliance and Queer and Asian.<sup>428</sup>

But for Pal, identitarianism has not been a utopia. He failed to attain as many South Asian friends as he “would have wanted,” a problem he corrected by organizing a South Asian Identity Retreat in cooperation with the Asian-American Student Alliance and the South Asian Society. Pal hoped to “gather South Asian people” for a group to interrogate “what it means to be South Asian.”<sup>429</sup>

Despite his efforts to socialize along racial lines, Pal confessed that identity politics poses problems. “The difficulty of any identity politics is the simultaneous need to conglomerate to represent various interests and the necessity of keeping intact the individual identities of those persons who make up the conglomerate identity,” he said. Pal seems to mean that the construction of rigid group identities is in tension with the complexity of individual

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426 *Ibid.*

427 Sohum Pal, *Negative Space: An Asian & Asian-American Oral History Project*, Spring 2017. <https://www.negativepaceyale.org/sohum-pal/>

428 *Ibid.*

429 *Ibid.*

“identities.” This tension means that “somebody always gets screwed over.” Pal hoped, however, that he and other likeminded students will overcome the hurdles of identitarianism.<sup>430</sup>

Pal is an example of the reality hidden beneath the veneer of “fostering community between minorities.” Around the same time that he submitted his response to the Asian and Asian-American Oral History Project, he published an article in the *Yale Daily News*. In “White Students, Step Back,” Pal scorned the “rhetoric around diversity, both nationally and at Yale.”<sup>431</sup> Students of color did not seek affluence, he claimed, nor did they care to “possess the social legitimacy and cultural capital of our white counterparts on terms dictated by white stakeholders.” Any action by whites to redress racial inequality thwarts “a liberation politics that would decenter whiteness and abolish” assimilationists who “[assert] a hierarchy.” Even Yale’s cultural houses served diversity insufficiently, he alleged.<sup>432</sup>

“Large swaths of students, such as Middle Eastern or North African students,” according to Pal, are exempted from the solidarity the cultural houses purportedly forge. Moreover, minority students should despair of the cultural houses because they fail to counter Yale’s structures of “white sociocultural power.” He writes, “Diversity relies on tokenism”; this merely feigns respect for minorities with the goal of plastering “their faces to the glossy brochures.” White progressives don’t treat Pal’s true goal of “equity” with his preferred degree of importance and instead “[take] an exploitative stance, centered on providing opportunities to students of color.” Pal declared: “I may be in the minority, but I don’t want opportunity: I want power.”<sup>433</sup>

Pal resented that minorities in “white dominated spaces” existed on “the

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430 *Ibid.*

431 Sohum Pal, “PAL: White Students, Step Back,” *Yale Daily News*, November 10, 2017.

432 *Ibid.*

433 *Ibid.*

peripheries” of Yale, and he disliked his peers, professors, and administrators who “tell [minorities] we can’t complain because [they] have a seat at the table.” For Pal, a “seat at the table” lowballed his aspirations. He vowed not to settle for a “seat at the head of the table” only. “We must dictate our own terms of engagement with white power structures, not from within power structures,” he declared. “White students: take a few steps back.”<sup>434</sup>

Pal’s rejection of the diversity doctrine and his embrace instead of ethnic separatism and his demand for power seem extreme, but his position plainly reflects more than an idiosyncratic response to Yale’s identitarian politics. He has internalized the radical critique of Western liberalism, and his rhetoric draws on Marxism, feminism, and queer theory rather than the now ordinary norms of student alienation.

Emily Ge ’19, another participant in the Asian-American Oral History Project, confessed that when she socializes in “social situations” in which “there are no white people” she likes to “make fun of” whites. She would not have engaged in racial banter at her high school, which she describes as “so white” and where she had friends “who thought [she] liked them,” even though she “was a festering ball of resentment.”<sup>435</sup>

She stated her true feelings during those years in her interview: “I hate all of these people,” she said. Ge’s arrival at Yale precipitated a change in consciousness. “Wow! I can be at parties where there are no white people,” she said. With this change in social context, her modes of self-expression also changed fundamentally. Ge’s interviewer, Oriana (no last name given), expressed similar feelings. Oriana said she preferred “more friends who are not white than white friends.” She could not articulate why, though she said that she sometimes sensed “a power imbalance” which led her to “assume that [whites] are on a higher plane” than herself.<sup>436</sup>

The words of Oh, Pal, Ge, and Oriana contrast with Yale’s optimistic presentation of diversity. In its viewbooks, webpages, and other publications, Yale presents diversity as a joyful mixing of people from all races.

The spirit of the mixing is benign, and if the component minority groups also have their own “spaces,” celebrations, and separate events, those only add flavor to the larger whole. The Asian students who have spoken out on the matter, however, see diversity in a starkly different light. The view shared by Oh, Pal, Ge, and Oriana, though they differ in emphasis, is that “diversity” is an institutional imposition that disguises their loneliness and disconnection from their non-Asian peers.

Yale’s official student testimonials describing how students get to meet

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434 *Ibid.*

435 Interview with Emily Ge, Negative Space: An Asian & Asian-American Oral History Project, Spring 2017, <https://www.negativepaceyale.org/emily-ge/>

436 *Ibid.*

so many great friends through Cultural Connections and other such identity-based groups ring false.<sup>437</sup>

“I cannot imagine my Yale experience without Cultural Connections. CC introduced me to such a caring and supportive cultural community on campus and allowed me to appreciate sociocultural issues from multiple perspectives.”

–Jinchen, CC 2012

“By affirming the value of my cultural background and connecting me to people in the Yale arts community, CC gave me the confidence and the resources I needed to navigate my first few weeks at Yale. The friends I made and the people my friends introduced me to have since become my Yale family, and I never would have found them if not for CC bringing us together.”

–Morgan Baker, CC 2017

“Testimonials” from Yale College Cultural Connections, 2017.

Though friendships are no doubt forged, and networks emerge, these benefits conceal the resentment, latent racism, and insecurity harbored by many of Yale’s minority students.

## Conclusion

Cultural Connections and the panoply of Yale’s segregated organizations and buildings are hubs of tribalism, rhetorically reinforced by the University and subsidized with millions of dollars. Yale’s Pre-Orientation Program, PROP, began as an attempt to bring minority students from disadvantaged backgrounds up to speed academically. That purpose was overtaken by Yale’s success in recruiting more highly qualified minority students in the United States and from abroad. PROP’s successor, Cultural Connections, came into existence when the mood in higher education had shifted from the need to redress the inequities left by slavery and legal segregation to the pursuit of diversity as an intrinsic good.

The diversity doctrine presented many ambiguities of its own, as it

437 Cultural Connections, Yale University, “Testimonials,” <https://culturalconnections.yalecollege.yale.edu/testimonials>

sought simultaneously to “celebrate” ethnic, racial, and cultural differences, and to weaponize those differences by stoking intergroup resentments and

**At times, the primary purpose of Cultural Connections has been to align minority students into coalitions of mutual resentment against their white peers and Yale University itself.**

hostility. Cultural Connections has served both goals at once, but not without experiencing the pains of internal contradiction. Integration and segregation naturally move in opposite directions. At times, the primary purpose of Cultural Connections has been to align minority students into coalitions of mutual resentment against their white peers and Yale University itself. Such racialism is thrust on mi-

nority students from the moment they are taken into the Cultural Connections fold and groomed by Cultural Aides who shape the thoughts of impressionable freshmen.



Part IV.  
Segregated  
Mentorship  
Programs



## Part IV. Segregated Mentorship Programs

### “Floating” Counselors, Ethnic Counselors, and Peer Liaisons

Yale’s system of ethnically matched mentors and advisers is another component of neo-segregation. Yale’s “Floating Counselors” program was instituted in 1973. According to *Yale Daily News* writer E.N. Stuart ’75, the Floating Counselor program was a system “under which a special counselor is assigned to each minority group, working as [a] ... regular freshman advisor.” Stuart’s article provides an important historical snapshot of the program.<sup>438</sup>

A Floating Counselor was “usually a grad student who may not have even attended Yale College.” At the time of its inception, the program had seven counselors, distributed among Asians, blacks, and Chicanos. Yale assigned an extra black counselor because of the larger black student population.<sup>439</sup>

Part of what is notable about the Floating Counselor program is that it was from the start an initiative aimed at providing a service to all minority groups at Yale. Unlike the creation of Afro-American Studies, which resulted from lobbying by BSAY, and unlike PROP, which began as a service demanded by Puerto Rican students, Floating Counselors appear to have been instituted for all groups at once, and the idea appears to have originated in the Yale administration rather than in student pressure groups.

For the most part, Yale students received the Floating Counselors cheerfully, though it is possible to discern differing attitudes among the various ethnic groups. In time, the Yale administration became distinctly less enthusiastic about the program, but by then it had developed institutional roots and proved capable of defending itself against threatened cutbacks.

## Mentoring Minorities

Stuart attributed Yale’s creation of Floating Counselors to difficulties minority students faced upon their arrival at Yale. These difficulties included the social isolation of “the black who can’t relate with ... the cocktail formality of a master’s party; the Chicano who feels his background is looked down upon; or

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438 *Yale Daily News*, “Frosh Get Help,” February 19, 1973. Yale seems to have called these counselors “floating counselors” because they “live in various dorms on the Old Campus, eat many of their meals in Commons.”

439 *Ibid.*

the Asian who feels alienated.” Such problems, said Stuart, warranted ethnic counselors who had the necessary knowledge and context to mentor minority students. Each counselor resided in one of Yale’s campus residential colleges. This detail seems to suggest that if Yale did not sanction segregated residence halls, it likely assigned minority students to certain residential colleges strategically. By placing minority students in designated dorms, the Floating Counselors could have had an easier time locating their counselees.<sup>440</sup>

According to Stuart, Yale modeled the Floating Counselors program after a similar initiative Vanderbilt University undertook for minority freshmen women matriculating in 1971.” When Vanderbilt administrators saw “the great benefits of the experiment” enjoyed by the women, they opened the program to all minorities.<sup>441</sup>

In 1973, Yale’s Dean of Undergraduate Affairs Marnesba Hill oversaw the Floating Counselor program in addition to presiding over Yale’s “regular” freshman counseling operation. Hill lauded the program as a “very good positive step toward helping freshmen from minority backgrounds.”<sup>442</sup>

Fourteen years after the program was created, Petria May ’89 of the *Yale Daily News* detailed how Yale at that point was selecting its ethnic counselors. According to May, the cultural houses chose the floating counselors. Ethnic counselor candidates were “interviewed by current counselors and a member of the student organization that most completely represents his minority.” May added that, for example, a representative from the BSAY sat on the interviewing committee that matched black students with ethnic counselors. The Yale College Dean’s office reportedly made the final decision.<sup>443</sup>

“Once chosen,” May continued, the newly hired counselors “are assigned to three, four, or six colleges, depending on their race.” Henry Hayase ’73, an Asian Floating Counselor, advised students on “subjects varying from being a grind to ... gut seeking” (i.e. focusing too much on academics or seeking easy courses). A Hispanic student, Bertha Ontiveros ’75 credited her Hispanic counselor for providing advice for “roommate troubles and homesickness” at the beginning of her year. Minority students reviewed the program positively. They claimed that their Floating Counselors “helped them adapt more readily to life at Yale.”<sup>444</sup> Stuart cited the opinions of several minority students:

The Floating Counselors are younger than the regular counselors, they’re easier to talk to... more of a friend. They do a lot to help us fit in. They’re available for the little on the spot things when your

440 *Ibid.*

441 *Ibid.*

442 *Ibid.*

443 Petria May, “Counselors offer advice to minorities,” April 11, 1987.

444 *Ibid.*

regular freshmen counselor isn't. They were very helpful during a critical period. You can have more personal contact with them. They are easier to socialize with because they have gone through, and are still going through life as an (undergraduate) student. They're dynamite people!<sup>445</sup>

Chicano counselor Xavier Sandoval agreed. He considered the Floating Counselor system the most "tactful solution" to redress minority students' social alienation and anxiety.<sup>446</sup>

One Yale alumnus (who asked to remain anonymous) told us that, although he regretted the segregated nature of similar "adjustment" programs, they were justified in light of how uncomfortable minority students are when they encounter the reality of Yale as a country club for children of the rich. By this alumnus's account, minority students also self-segregate out of reaction to the "whiteness" of Yale. His views complement those of Evelyn Yamashita, a former director of minority recruitment, who alluded to the "culture shock" of minority students. In these assessments, race is a source of resentment and discord in the Ivy League, but not race alone. Race and class mutually reinforce the perception that all whites are "privileged." The alumnus's remarks comport with Stuart's example of the black student struggling to adapt to "the cocktail formality of a master's party."

Asian-American students were included in Yale's Floating Counselors from its inception, although one Asian-American Floating Counselor, Sue Mochizuki, explained in 1973 that Asian-Americans came to her not because of special Asian-American problems, but because they saw the opportunity to gather together a group that was otherwise dispersed across campus.<sup>447</sup>

Another reason Asian-Americans liked the program, said Associate Provost Jacqueline Mintz, was that it compensated for the few "role models" on Yale's campus.<sup>448</sup> The low number of minority faculty, staff, and leadership at Yale is a common reason cited in defense of segregated programs by non-Asian-American minority students today.

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445 *Ibid.*

446 *Ibid.*

447 Carol Lee, "Asian-Americans, Seeking a Group Identity," *Yale Daily News*, October 18, 1973.

448 *Ibid.*

### **\$50 Million for Diversity**

We don't have numbers accounting for the "diversity" of Yale's faculty in 1973, but in 2017 Yale University reported that the percentage of Yale's faculty that is Asian-American was 13.7%, second only to whites who comprise 68.9% of faculty at Yale University. The percentage of Yale faculty that are black, Latino, and Native American are 3.4%, 3.8%, and 0.1% respectively.<sup>449</sup>

On November 3, 2015, four days after Erika Christakis was criticized by minority students for "pushing back against the Intercultural Affairs Council email asking students" to avoid 'cultural appropriation' on Halloween,<sup>450</sup> Yale President Peter Salovey announced a \$50-million-dollar initiative to recruit and hire minority faculty.<sup>451</sup>

The initiative funded the hiring of "ten visiting faculty located across Yale each year."<sup>452</sup> As part of the initiative Yale University funded "up to half" of the visiting professor's salary, and the "host school supplied" the other half. According to Akinyi Ochieng '15, the initiative would redress Yale's predominantly white faculty's "lack of empathy and understanding" for minority students.

One likely reason Yale assigned ethnic counselors to Asian-Americans is that the socio-economic diversity of Asian-American students increased after affirmative action's "diversification" of Yale's demographics.<sup>453</sup>

Carol Lee claimed that Yale officials often grouped underprivileged and privileged Asian-American students together into what she characterized as "hard-core Asians," students characterized by "professional backgrounds [and] have attended good schools."<sup>454</sup>

The road to unifying Asian students however, had a few bumps. Vince Nafarrete, the Asian-American Student Association's president, told Lee that "it's hard to get together all the different groups who fit under the term Asian" because "there are so many splits and divisions."<sup>455</sup>

449 Faculty Development and Diversity, Yale University, <https://faculty.yale.edu/faculty-demographics>. Accessed 2/19/19.

450 David Shimer, "Salovey responds to student concerns," *Yale Daily News*, November 9, 2015.

451 *Ibid.*

452 Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Yale University, <https://fas.yale.edu/faculty-resources/diversity-and-faculty-development/presidential-visiting-fellows>

453 Lee, "Asian-Americans, Seeking a Group identity."

454 *Ibid.*

455 *Ibid.*

## Feeling Right at Home

The Floating Counselor program proved popular among minority students, so much so that Yale appropriated an additional ten thousand dollars to the program despite facing a \$5 million budget shortfall in the winter of 1972.<sup>456</sup> According to an editorial by Chet Cobb, Yale had considered slashing its entire counselor program as it searched for potential cuts. Cobb was happy that the cuts never went into effect. Using language that today's Yale students use to describe their view of the optimal Yale experience, Cobb said his counselor made his fellow students "feel right at home." Citing the case of two minority students who had "dropped out of Yale completely," Cobb argued that minority students especially needed to "feel right at home," a need that ethnic counselors met.<sup>457</sup>

For reasons Cobb called "sociological, psychological, and even economic," the attrition rate of minority students outstripped their white peers. He ruled out, however, the possibility that academic difficulties contributed to minorities' dropout rate and pinned the phenomenon on social maladjustment. "Yale College believes that no student is admitted unless he or she can make the academic and social adjustment," he said.<sup>458</sup>

Cobb believed that Yale's "minority counseling" group would help relieve Yale of its minority student attrition problem. Although, in the same skeptical spirit in which students normally assess diversity initiatives, Cobb doubted that "seven counselors ... amidst a freshman class numbering 1350" would have "much of an effect" in palliating minority students' academic and social maladjustment. He urged Yale to avoid becoming "complacent" and to increase its number of "both floating and regular" counselors. He also bid upperclassmen to move into freshman dorms to mentor free of charge. Cobb concluded by denouncing any future budgetary measures that balanced Yale's books by retiring the ethnic counselors system. Yale appeared to heed Cobb's advice. By 1977, it added two more students to the ethnic counselor team.<sup>459</sup>

## Floating Discontent

In "Support Services Help Minorities Cope," written four years later than Cobb's editorial, the *Yale Daily News* writer credited the program for "[of-fering] continued support to minority students." The article disclosed other

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456 Chet Cobb, "Better counseling for the money," *Yale Daily News*, February 23, 1973. The article actually says, "A projected deficit of over \$5 billion..." We have corrected that to \$5 million. Yale's total budget in FY 2019 is \$4.044 billion. <https://provost.yale.edu/budget>

457 *Ibid.*

458 *Ibid.*

459 Dan Chow, "Support services help minorities cope," *Yale Daily News*, March 3, 1977.

hurdles that limited the success of minority students. Michael Jackson '77 said that Yale's "overwhelmingly white traditional elitist institution" was at odds with mainstream society's preference for "cultural pluralism" which took for granted "that anyone can be successfully integrated." Despite the program's popularity, minority students were dissatisfied. "The number of minority students has grown," said Assistant Dean and Director of the Floating Counselor Program Yolanda Gonzalez, "while the number of counselors has not."<sup>460</sup>

Howard Jordan '77 accused Yale of supporting minority-exclusive initiatives halfheartedly. Jordan dismissed both the Pre-Orientation Program and Floating Counselor programs of his day as "stop gap measures," which fell short of a serious answer to minority student attrition. Johnson complained that Yale was not living up to "its commitment to minority students." Similar accusations ripple through this era at Yale. Assistant Dean Marnesba typified the proponents of racial preference when she told the *Yale Daily News* that minority students "have so little that if you take something away they will be left with nothing." It is not clear from the article whether Yale had plans to cut the Floating Counselors in 1977, or progressive students and administrators leveraged preemptively the possibility of losing the program to create campus support for its preservation.<sup>461</sup>

Yale's budget woes did eventually affect the Floating Counselor program. On March 6, 1979, the *Yale Daily News* announced that although the program had survived the "budgetary cutbacks," administrators removed Assistant Dean Ricardo Madrigal as its coordinator. Familiar worries of minority student programs "receiving less attention" reemerged. Madrigal feared that if Yale reassigned his duties to a full-time dean, the Floating Counselor program would be neglected. Ken Penn '79 told the *Yale Daily News* that the meal credit the counselors received in addition to their \$800 a year housing credit had decreased for two consecutive years.<sup>462</sup>

Mardigal's fears were reinforced on February 16, 1981, when the *Yale Daily News* reported a decision about which "minority counselors [were] not happy." Associate Dean Long announced that Yale's plan to trim the fat from its budget precipitated the elimination of one of the ten Floating Counselor positions. The measure would save the college \$1,800, reported the News. Then as now, Yale University was an immensely wealthy institution. It was not making decisions based on financial exigency, and not eliminating a position in search of three-figure saving. If Yale was cutting back on the Floating Counselor program, it was doing so because higher level administrators likely saw something amiss in the program itself. But we have no way of knowing what that

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460 *Ibid.*

461 *Ibid.*

462 *Ibid.*

was.<sup>463</sup>

Assistant Dean Georgia Nelson had initially proposed cutting two counselors until Assistant Dean Joe Mesquita called foul. He countered that Nelson's proposed "20 percent reduction in the Floating Counselor program would be unfair compared to corresponding cuts" to the regular counselor program. Yale had already eliminated a Floating Counselor position the prior year. At the time that the *Yale Daily News* published news of looming cuts to the Floating Counselor staff, Dean Nelson said that "the possibility of putting anything back seems very unlikely." Dean Long concurred. "I would have to find another \$1,800 in the budget," he said.<sup>464</sup>

The Floating Counselors pushed back. In hopes of reversing the decision, the student counselors sought a meeting with several members of the administration. Associate Dean Henson told the *Yale Daily News* that the administration was amenable to future discussion with the counselors. By the time Dean Henson made his statement, minority students had already begun their lobbying effort.<sup>465</sup>

On February 4, 1981, the Floating Counselors sent a letter to College Dean Howard Lamar asserting that the "the program needs more, not fewer, counselors." They said the program's employment of only ten—soon only nine—counselors burdened each with more than he could handle. According to the letter, "some minority counselors have to advise as many as 30 students." Three Asian-American and three black counselors advised a combined total of 163 students. Puerto Rican and Chicano counselors were each assigned 49 students. In addition to a high counselor-counselee ratio, they argued that "their duties exceeded those of regular freshman counselors."<sup>466</sup>

As the debate over Yale's Pre-Orientation Program shows, college programs for minority students are not easy to dismantle or reform. Exactly one week after the *Yale Daily News* covered the Floating Counselor program's pending demise, it reported that the Floating Counselors were victorious over the administration.<sup>467</sup> Their victory was not total: The \$1,800 cut to the program remained in effect, but Yale administrators agreed to preserve ten positions for the following year.<sup>468</sup> Dean Joe Mesquita endorsed the Floating Counselors' view that "anything less than ten positions would be less effective." To preserve the program's ten-counselor staff, Yale proposed "slightly [reducing] benefits each counselor now receives in order to provide money for the tenth slot," said Assistant Dean Joe Mesquita, though he preferred to

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463 Chris Cummings '69, "Deans to cut one Floating Counselor," *Yale Daily News*, February 16, 1981.

464 *Ibid.*

465 *Ibid.*

466 *Ibid.*

467 Chris Cummings, "Dean restructures minority program; Retains 10 counselors," *Yale Daily News*, February 23, 1981.

468 *Ibid.*

“avoid this” if possible. He said he did not believe that cutting the benefits of Floating Counselors would discourage applications, and noted that between 50 and 60 students had already applied to be counselors. Another proposal would have siphoned funds from the “regular” freshman counselor program to “minority counseling,” although the *Yale Daily News* never reported if administrators acted on this idea.<sup>469</sup>

We do know that the program continued as a fixed part of Yale’s system of neo-segregation. On March 8, 1985, Guy Maxtone-Graham ’88 of the *Yale Daily News* reported that an impromptu committee of freshmen and Floating Counselors was pushing for an expansion and improvement of the program. Their proposal included raising the number of counselors from ten to 12, increasing the role of “the 12 college [deans]” in the program’s administration, and an update of counselor training to include guidance on “the most troubling counseling issues.” In 1984, the Floating Counselors were still reportedly burdened with twice as many counselees as regular freshman counselors. In addition to decreasing the workload of each counselor, the students hoped that an additional Floating Counselor would be a liaison to the residential colleges.<sup>470</sup>

This part of their proposal sought to bring the counselor programs to the attention of Yale’s college deans. According to Sandy Guerra ’85, the Floating Counselors were often invisible. She alleged that residential deans often excluded the counselors from important meetings. Also high on their list was correcting the “mistaken impression” that “regular” freshmen counselors outstripped ethnic counselors in rank. Yale addressed this perceived slight. Peter Schmeisser ’87 wrote for the *Yale Daily News* in April 1985 that, starting in the fall term of 1986, the Floating Counselors would receive compensation equal to that of non-minority counselors.<sup>471</sup>

## Me Too

The debate over the proposed addition of Floating Counselors for gay students first took shape in 1985. According to Jonathan Zasloff ’87 in an April 4, 1985 editorial, Yale’s policy toward homosexuals could be described as “not-so-benign-neglect.” Zasloff did not accuse Yale of policing nor condemning the sexual behavior of gay students, nor did he claim that gay students were excluded from campus life. But Zasloff wondered if the school’s “laissez-faire attitude” was ideal. Treating gay students no differently from their heterosexual peers might seem appropriate “in the abstract sense,” Zasloff said, but

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469 *Ibid.*

470 Guy Maxtone-Graham, “Counselors propose revisions in system,” *Yale Daily News*, March 8, 1985.

471 Peter Schmeisser, “PROP Open Yale to Minorities,” *Yale Daily News*, April 12, 1985.



in reality gays required differential treatment. Yale's social culture, Zasloff alleged, was one in which bigotry against homosexuals remained the last acceptable form of discrimination.<sup>472</sup>

Whereas few Yale students would utter a racial slur in the presence of a racial minority, Zasloff complained that "closeted" homosexuals are "bar- raged with insults and cruelties by people who have no idea that they are being cruel." Zasloff listed additional problems that gay students confront, including stereotyping strengthened by the gay rights movement's "militant leadership" and the burden of coming out to friends and family. Considering such hardships, Zasloff argued that Yale needed to specially accommodate homosexual students. Gay Floating Counselors, according to Zasloff, were the best option for students weighing such decisions.

By 1987, gay students at Yale were clamoring for "at least two gay or lesbi- an counselors." Their request marked the first time that gay students at Yale claimed to have distinct "needs" for which "the induction of gay Freshperson counselors would help a great deal."<sup>473</sup> The idea gained traction. In 1988, *Yale Daily News* staff writer Gary Drevitch ('90) wrote that Yale's Gay/Lesbian Cooperative, a student club for gay students, "requested that the Yale College Dean's Office expand its Freshperson counseling program."<sup>474</sup> The Cooperative wished to "handle the specific concerns of homosexual freshpeople." The group proposed the addition of four new Floating Counselors to counsel gay students. Thomas Keane '89, Chris Kelley '89, Isabel Velez '91, and Kenneth

Wilson '88 signed the proposal, which they delivered to Yale President Benno Schmidt Jr. and Dean of Student Affairs Betty Trachtenberg. When the *Yale Daily News* sought comment from Dean Trachtenberg the night before the cooperative delivered the proposal, she said that Yale "[did] not plan to increase the present number of

counselors." Trachtenberg affirmed the administration's support for gay and lesbian issue-related student organizations. She attributed Yale's refusal to create a counseling program for gay students to budgetary constraints.<sup>475</sup>

The efforts of gay and lesbian students to win special status at Yale are peripheral to the history of neo-segregation at the university. Whatever discrimination homosexual students suffered at Yale, they were never segre- gated from the rest of the community nor did they seek to be. But gay rights

**Whatever discrimination homosexual students suffered at Yale, they were never segregated from the rest of the community nor did they seek to be.**

472 Jonathan Zasloff, "Gay Floating Counselor Could Help Freshmen," *Yale Daily News*, April 4 1985.

473 Petria May, "Counselors offer advice to minorities," *Yale Daily News*, April 8, 1987.

474 Gary Drevitch, "Gay, lesbian counselors, proposed," *Yale Daily News*, February 17, 1988.

475 *Ibid.*

activists did attempt to avail themselves of some of the privileges that minority groups had acquired. Those largely successful efforts bear some attention for the light they throw on how Yale constructed its compensatory institutions that became the infrastructure for neo-segregation.

According to Drevitch, the Gay/Lesbian Cooperative initially wanted gay students to be counseled under the (renamed) Freshman Ethnic Counselors Program. Representatives from the Cooperative met with then-current ethnic counselors to discuss the proposal, but the groups failed to come to an agreement. This failure forced the Cooperative to rework its proposal. Thomas Keane '89 blamed the negotiations' breakdown on the Cooperative's avoidance of "any debate over the issue of defining a minority in terms of the potential addition of new gay and lesbian counselors." Drevitch's article did not elaborate on that debate, but later developments suggest its substance. In the meantime, Keane affirmed the Cooperative's intent to "work on getting [their] counselors one way or the other."<sup>476</sup>

Drevitch's report noted several failed attempts by the Gay/Lesbian Cooperative to establish a counseling program for gay students. Dean Betty Trachtenberg had not responded to their proposal "in each of the last three years," Kelley said, but "we've finally given her a firm ultimatum." Kelley believed the Cooperative's latest tactic put Trachtenberg into a "more pressured position." Trachtenberg defended her non-response to the cooperative. She told the *Yale Daily News* that a plethora of counselorships would be detrimental to the freshman class's unity.<sup>477</sup>

Thomas Keane rejected Trachtenberg's assessment of the Cooperative's proposal. In his view, Trachtenberg's reasoning was a smokescreen behind which Yale shielded its true intention: creating a zero-sum game in which racial minorities lost if gay students won. He alleged that the university's budget concern was "an obvious threat to use minorities against other minorities." Keane said that gay students would never accept a compromise in which "the creation of the counselorships ... would mean the university would reduce the total number of floating ethnic counselors." He said that the Gay/Lesbian Cooperative had considered bringing an equal-opportunity suit against Yale.<sup>478</sup>

In the meantime, members of the Gay/Lesbian Cooperative vowed to push ahead with plans to a student-operated counseling program in the interim. Thomas Keane cited the importance of addressing sensitive questions about safe sex and living arrangements for roommates of different orientations. Keane was pessimistic about the viability of the program without University funding, and expressed frustration that students had to assume

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476 *Ibid.*

477 *Ibid.*

478 *Ibid.*

responsibility for such a program.<sup>479</sup>

When students reshaped the issue in 1988, University President Benno Schmidt Jr. “expressed serious reservations about [the Co-Op’s] proposal” for a gay counselor program. In a February 26, 1988 *Yale Daily News* article, President Schmidt told the *Yale Daily News* that a gay counselor program would be harmful. “It contributes to a discriminatory stereotype,” he said. Unfortunately for Yale’s administration, its addition of the words “sexual orientation” to its anti-discrimination statement provided student groups the ammunition to accuse school officials of neglecting to provide programs for gays that it did for minorities under the banner of “equal opportunity.” If programs such as PROP and the Freshman Ethnic Counselor Program leveled the field for racial minorities, the gay activists argued, denying gays access to similar programs had a discriminatory effect.<sup>480</sup>

President Schmidt disagreed. He praised the existing support services and cited the university’s official stance against anti-gay administration as evidence that Yale’s refusal to sanction special counselors did not amount to discrimination.<sup>481</sup> Chris Kelley ’89, one of the Gay and Lesbian Cooperative members working on the proposal, dismissed Schmidt’s comments and claimed his assurance of Yale’s anti-discrimination policy failed to address the many reported cases of anti-gay harassment. Schmidt and Trachtenberg’s refusals could be construed as discriminatory, Kelley asserted. Schmidt’s response to the gay activists mirror the critiques of those uttered by opponents of college programs offered to minority students exclusively: “I do not want the university to promote the view that this is a difference so basic that, with respect to health and support and counseling, that it’s a fundamental difference.”<sup>482</sup>

The *Yale Daily News* appeared to be in line with the administration. The Dean’s Office announced its rejection of the Gay/Lesbian Cooperative’s proposal on March 9, 1988, although the administration’s letter endorsed the view that “the gay community ... has specific concerns which must be addressed.”<sup>483</sup> Patrick Philbin ’89 told the *Yale Daily News* that he agreed with the decision. “If they [the administration] want to talk about a Yale community they should stop compartmentalizing student groups,” he said.<sup>484</sup>

But the debate over how to treat groups claiming a need for disparate treatment continued. Patrick Cheng ’90, a volunteer for the Dwight Hall public service organization, said Trachtenberg’s decision was “appalling” and an example of “how primitive the administration’s attitude towards gays and lesbians is.” Cheng didn’t rule out an intervention by Dwight Hall student

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479 *Ibid.*

480 David M. Halbfinger. “Schmidt opposes gay counselor program.” *Yale Daily News*. February 26, 1988.

481 *Ibid.*

482 *Ibid.*

483 Jack Wills, “Students respond to counseling decision,” *Yale Daily News*, March 11, 1988.

484 *Ibid.*

officers. “Under the right circumstances,” he said, “Dwight Hall might assist in establishing some kind of counseling service for gay and lesbian students.” On the other hand, Jeff Karp ’89 said he had been opposed to all specialized counseling because it fostered factionalism. Bridget Crawford ’91 saw a campus that had already succumbed to “factionalization for gay and lesbian freshpeople.” But Peter Levine ’89 noted that none could make a case against the proposal without employing arguments “which would not also apply to the minority counseling program.”<sup>485</sup>

The Gay/Lesbian Cooperative moved forward to create its own gay counselor program, later called Pathway.<sup>486</sup> On October 19, 1988, the *Yale Daily News* announced that the Gay/Lesbian Cooperative’s counselor program was near implementation. Under Pathway, prospective counselors underwent training on common problems among gay counselees. An updated proposal secured limited financial support from Yale University, which agreed to “finance expenses incurred by the counselor training program.” Pathway did not, however, compensate gay counselors.<sup>487</sup>

The compromise between gay students and the university quelled tensions between the two sides until a 1989 incident in which Yale University police officers arrested a gay activist lawyer, William Dobbs, for obscenity at a Lesbian and Gay Studies Center conference on October 27, 1989.<sup>488</sup> Gay students attempted to leverage Dobbs’s arrest by reviving their campaign for a university-sponsored gay counselor program. College Dean Donald Kagan restated the university’s opposition to the proposal unequivocally.<sup>489</sup>

In 1990, gay activists employed a new tactic to convince school officials to reconsider, which included interventions by gay alumni. As President Schmidt came under fire for his alleged failure to support gay students, student coordinators of Pathways complained that their student-run initiative were “sloppy seconds.” Gay students wanted a deal that included endorsement and compensation for counselors. “The administration has not been entirely supportive,” groused Melissa Rutherford ’92.<sup>490</sup>

## Who Is Victimized More?

Gay students failed to convince Yale to sponsor an official gay counselor program. The Floating Counselor program for advising racial minorities

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485 *Ibid.*

486 Jessica Herrera, “Pathway to Offer Counseling on Gay and Lesbian Issues,” *Yale Daily News*, November 14, 1989.

487 Brian Bauer, “Student co-op to offer gay counselors,” *Yale Daily News*, October 19, 1988.

488 “9 Arrested Outside Gay/Lesbian Conference, Sparking Protests,” *Yale Daily News*, October 28, 1989.

489 Jodi Wilgoren, “Students Alumni Still Want Gay Counselor,” *Yale Daily News*, January 31, 1990.

490 *Ibid.*

remained in place. During the spring semester of 1989, Yale students debated the purported benefits of that program. In “Ethnic Counselors Help Minority Students Adjust to Yale Life,” Meredith Hobbs quoted an African American student, Rufus Jones ’90, who told the *Yale Daily News* that he “opposes the ethnic counselor program because it singles out minority students.” Jones formed his opinion after attempting to apply for a counselor position in Yale’s integrated counseling program. Upon requesting an application “they” asked Jones “You mean an ethnic counselor application—right?” This encounter convinced Jones that “the dangers of being stigmatized or marginalized by the program outweigh any benefits” attained by minority students.<sup>491</sup>

Nicholas Agrait ’92, a Puerto Rican student, offered a nuanced departure from Jones’s view. Although he did not believe that the program “necessarily stigmatizes or isolates minority students,” he confessed his aversion to emphasizing “the question of minority ... too much.” Agrait gave one reason

**“The dangers of being stigmatized or marginalized by the program outweigh any benefits” attained by minority students.”**

minorities seek counsel from their Floating Counselors: “There are lots of things at Yale that shock you—views on, say, sex, are more liberal.” Anna Chavez ’89 said that the reasons that motivate minorities to take advantage of the Floating Counselor program “depend on the person.” For some

Hispanic students, she said, living at Yale induces a longing for “the language, the food, the culture one took for granted before.”<sup>492</sup>

Several students simply endorsed separatism. Victor Lee ’91 said, “I couldn’t see myself going to, say, a black counselor.” Emily Reeves ’91 liked that ethnic counselors’ were sensitive to the black student’s experiences in a given circumstance. She did not think that an African American ethnic counselor could be so helpful for a non-black student.<sup>493</sup>

Hobbs reported that some minority students did not experience any special “culture shock.” Their ease resulted from “their experience of living in the mainstream culture” i.e. they attended school with whites before they entered Yale. Such students, the ethnic counselors said, “needed counseling” too. Heo, a self-described assimilated Asian-American freshman, over time became “less afraid of being identified as Asian.” Consequently, she applied for an ethnic counselor position. She came to believe that her role as “an ethnic counselor” was “acknowledging that there are differences” between racial groups. Heo believed that “ethnic counselors can help students strike [a]

491 Meredith Hobbs, “Ethnic Counselors Help Minority Students Adjust to Yale Life,” *Yale Daily News*, February 23, 1989.

492 *Ibid.*

493 *Ibid.*

balance” between clinging to one’s “ethnicity and assimilation.”<sup>494</sup> The counselors interviewed by Hobbs denied that “they try ... to influence minority students to become more assimilated nor more involved in ethnic issues.”

Hobbs reported that overall, Yale’s minority students appreciated Yale’s ethnic counseling, but not every minority student thought all “ethnic-specific” matches fit. Another black student Hobbs interviewed, Keith Neeley ’90, said that although a non-black counselor would have difficulty understanding his circumstances, an upper middle-class black counselor might not be the best mentor to a black student from an inner-city community.<sup>495</sup> Additionally, at least one racial minority has hinted that the program (and other aspects of neo-segregation at Yale) favor some minority groups more than others.

In the winter of 1993, Yale’s Asian-American Coalition demanded more Asian-American ethnic counselors.<sup>496</sup> The students said this need was one item on a longer list of items Asian-American students had mistakenly “conceded” to their ultimate “detriment.” Asian-American students presumably had acquiesced to the hierarchy of victimhood at Yale University in which black and Latino students receive the most solicitous attention:

“The frustration among the Asian-American community has reached a critical level. Past administrations have shown a blatant disregard for the diverse needs of our dynamic, growing population. Previously we have conceded important decisions to the dean’s offices, often to our detriment, in the interest of maintaining amiable relations. We understand that Brodhead’s tenure as dean has only just begun, nevertheless, the callous attitudes and evasive strategies from previous administrations will no longer be accepted. From the way Brodhead decided to keep a coordinator of Chicano students’ affairs, we can see that he is able to speak to student concerns, which include those of the Asian-American.”<sup>497</sup>

The Asian-American Coalition’s demands included:

1. More Asian-American representation in the Yale administration. One assistant dean currently serves as liaison to 887 Asian-American students of various ethnicities. Never in the history of Yale College has a residential college dean or master of Asian descent been appointed. Since 1988, Asian-Americans have been the largest minority group at Yale.
2. The foundation of a permanent Asian-American Studies program.

<sup>494</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>495</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>496</sup> Asian-American Coalition, To The Editor, “Support Asian Students,” *Yale Daily News*, November 17, 1993.

<sup>497</sup> *Ibid.*

This program should establish a core curriculum that will be offered yearly. For the past several years, the one or two courses offered per semester have been supported by administrative discretionary funds. The current curriculum at Yale overlooks the integral role of Asians in the development of the United States. This lack of support threatens Yale's reputation as a diverse institution. Other universities in the northeast such as Cornell have already institutionalized an Asian-American studies program.

3. An active commitment to recruit and tenure Asian-American professors. Such a commitment would be a radical departure from the current practice of relying on Asian foreign nationals to fulfill affirmative action quotas. Based on the Rodin Report, out of the 701 tenured professors at Yale University only 21 are Asian.
4. An increase in the funding for the 16 groups affiliated with the Asian-American Cultural Center. Yale College currently allocates a disproportionately low amount for the Asian-American student population. Last year, of the 50-plus speakers invited by the 16 different groups affiliated with the Asian-American Cultural Center, the vast majority were not paid honorariums.
5. Increase the number of ethnic counselors for Asian-American students. Currently, each counselor advises more than 60 freshmen. Since many of the foreign national students are Asian, the counselors also get a disproportionately high number of international students. The ethnic counselors are not merely supplements to the residential college freshman counselor program; they serve a vital role for those who need guidance in finding their own identity within the Yale community and within their respective ethnicities.
6. The renovation or relocation of the Asian-American Cultural Center for an expanding community. The largest common space in the Cultural Center comfortably seats approximately 30 people. The majority of lectures and films, which usually have audiences in excess of 25, are held outside of the Cultural Center. Large organizations such as AASA (Asian-American Student Alliance) and KSAY (Korean Student Alliance at Yale) must hold meetings outside of the Cultural Center. The inadequate physical space limits the uses of the Cultural Center.

Yale granted the Asian-American Coalition's request for an additional ethnic counselor in 1994.<sup>498</sup> The *Yale Daily News*' account of how Asian-American students secured this concession from the administration provides a glimpse of how minority student organizations compete for university funds and resources.

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498 Rebecca Howland, "Asian-American chosen for twelfth position," *Yale Daily News*, March 24, 1994.

When the Yale College Dean's office announced the addition of another Floating Counselor on February 8, 1994, students speculated on the prospective counselor's race.<sup>499</sup> After the announcement, four ethnic counselors met with the Dean of Student Affairs Betty Trachtenberg to advise her on which racial minority should receive the position.<sup>500</sup> Two racial groups, African American and Asian-American, each jockeyed to secure the slot for their racial group.<sup>501</sup> The situation, said Huie Lin '95, presented "a very sensitive issue."<sup>502</sup>

When the advisory committee tentatively allocated the new counselor to Asian-Americans, African American students voiced displeasure. One African American Floating Counselor, Ash Muldro '97, argued that African Americans

## Two racial groups, African American and Asian-American, each jockeyed to secure the slot for their racial group.

were entitled to the additional counselor. Upon learning of the committee's decision, Muldro complained to the *Yale Daily News* that the African American counselors suffered from a skewed counselee-counselor ratio.<sup>503</sup>

Meetings between the ethnic counselors and the advisory committee

continued. Asian-American ethnic counselor Joseph Cyriac '94 described the negotiations as "cordial" and compared the talks to "arbitration in baseball." "You make a case for either side," he said, "and when it's said and done, you still have to play for the team." The two groups were saddened that resolving the controversy required a choice between groups. Michael Huang '97 called the pending decision "a hard call."<sup>504</sup>

On March 24, 1994, the *Yale Daily News*'s Rebecca Howland reported that the new position was to go to an Asian-American student. Yale College Dean Richard Brodhead made the announcement. The advisory committee recommended the request of the Asian-American student representatives over black students' objections. Black students did not protest the decision, although ethnic counselor Kim McIntosh '94 noted the need for another black counselor. Mary Lee Hsu, an assistant dean hired to oversee the Asian-American Cultural Center, extended an olive branch: "The decision to have the next ethnic counselor does not negate the needs of the African American community," she declared.<sup>505</sup>

499 Suerie Moon, "Deans office will add a counselor," *Yale Daily News*, February 8, 1994.

500 *Ibid.*

501 *Ibid.*

502 *Ibid.*

503 Noah Kotch, "12<sup>th</sup> counselor may be Asian-American," *Yale Daily News*, March 21, 1994.

504 *Ibid.*

505 Rebecca Howland, "Asian-American counselor chosen for twelfth position," *Yale Daily News*, March 24, 1994.



Minority student infighting over university resources died down for the remainder of 1994. But in January 1995, Dean Brodhead announced he was cutting one of the Asian counselor positions to restore the extra counselor position for African American students.<sup>506</sup> The total number of counselors had been fixed at twelve. While it would have been easy to add a thirteenth, Yale treated the distribution of counselors as a zero-sum game.

Brodhead's decision angered Asian-American students. About sixty flooded a meeting with Dean Brodhead to force him to "walk a mile in the shoes of an ethnic counselor" burdened with several dozen counselees. Jeffrey Chen '96 reportedly scolded Dean Brodhead: "You will see how difficult it is for one person to handle all these people." Representatives for the Asian-American students projected that if the reassignment of the twelfth position were finalized, each Asian-American ethnic counselor would have roughly 70 counselees.<sup>507</sup>

Asian-American students avoided framing the dispute in terms of Asian-black rivalry. They instead blamed the administration for creating a "competition ... over who is victimized more." Chen avoided attacking black students directly. "It's true that the extra counselors went to the black students," he told the *Yale Daily News*, "but we're not arguing about that." Instead of reinforcing the image of minority infighting, Chen emphasized the administration's responsibility to grow the program as a whole to meet all groups' needs.<sup>508</sup>

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ethnic counselors."**

Some students were less invested in the struggle. Tolan Dang '97 said he never met with his ethnic counselor after the beginning of the year; in fact the counselor "didn't even recognize [him] after a month." On the other hand, his regular freshman counselor

was a constant helpful presence.<sup>509</sup>

Dean Brodhead may have been aware of stories like Dang's. He "rejected" student proposals for more ethnic counselors because he envisioned "[phas-ing] out the ethnic counselor program" eventually. To Brodhead, "the program [was] a long-term temporary arrangement." He imagined a Yale where the "world of freshman counselors will be so integrated" it would negate "a need for ethnic counselors." Brodhead's other remarks showed his frustration with the price tag attached to Yale's system of racial spoils. "We're [financially] constrained by other things that even these students want to do in other parts

506 Stephane Clare, "AASA takes on Dean Brodhead," *Yale Daily News*, March 2, 1995.

507 *Ibid.*

508 *Ibid.*

509 *Ibid.*

of the day,” he complained. Minority students countered that the ethnic counselor program was “an invaluable resource.”<sup>510</sup>

The controversy resulted in an interminority coalition formed in opposition to the university’s decision to grant the last ethnic counselor slot to African American students without pledging to add more counselors for other racial groups. The *Yale Daily News* reported that BSAY’s signature was “conspicuously absent” from a letter the coalition sent to Dean Brodhead urging him to consider their proposed reform.<sup>511</sup>

The *Yale Daily News* did not mention the controversy again for the rest of spring term of 1995. We do not know if students raised the issue again the next school year because the *Yale Daily News* historical archive does not include articles from the years 1996–2001. But we do know that Dean Brodhead’s vision of an integrated counseling service never came to fruition. The program continued in its original form until it became the Peer Liaison Program in 2019.<sup>512</sup>

## Yale’s Attempt to Reform the Floating Counselor Program

During the Spring Semester of 2002, Yale College Dean Betty Trachtenberg proposed a “pilot program” under which the ethnic counselors would no longer “float” among the colleges, but would instead stay in their home colleges and counsel all the ethnic students in that college regardless of their ethnicity. The counselors would switch from being ethnic specialists to being multi-cultural generalists, and the students would in many cases be counseled by someone from an ethnic group other than their own. The number of ethnic counselors would remain the same—twelve for twelve colleges—but both counselors and students would have to get used to a less segregated system. Pamela George, Dean of the Afro-American Cultural Center, believed the new system would “create more visibility and cultural relevance for students of color within each residential college.”<sup>513</sup>

The proposal received a mixed response from students. Ezra Vazquez-D’Amico ’03, an ethnic counseling applicant, said the administration should have solicited student input. He argued that hiring one counselor to oversee all of Yale’s minority students “would [not] be as effective in helping students with their ethnicity and transition to Yale, as for example, having a counselor of your own ethnicity.” Vazquez-D’Amico believed George’s proposal would not be as effective as the old Ethnic Counselor system in which several

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510 *Ibid.*

511 *Ibid.*

512 Greta Stetson, “Peer Liaisons Still Tweaking Program,” *Yale Daily News*, February 26, 2010.

513 *Ibid.*

counselors representing black, Latino, and Asian students were matched with students by race. A single counselor, who Yale might have chosen without regard to race, did not satisfy D'Amico's vision of what an ethnic counselor was for.<sup>514</sup>

Yale heeded complaints like D'Amico's. The College Dean's Office postponed the pilot program's launch and appointed a committee charged with establishing focus groups and gathering student responses. Rosalinda Garcia, director of the Latino and Native American Cultural Houses, attributed the postponement to students' confusion. "When people heard that the pilot would be adopted next year, they were understandably confused," she said. Garcia also appeared to agree that minority students shouldn't be forced to accept a one-size-fits-all program: "Not being assigned to students of your same ethnicity might be more challenging or not as effective." Yale's ethnic deans, including Garcia and Saveena Dhall, called several meetings at the cultural houses to brief students on the proposed changes to the ethnic counselor program and the committee's evaluative process.<sup>515</sup>

On February 27, 2003, *Yale Daily News* reporter Katherine Stevens wrote that the committee's research was underway. The committee was originally planned to be composed of a residential counselor, an ethnic counselor, and two students. It was later expanded—presumably under pressure from minority students—to include "faculty and students from every major ethnic group." Yale Branford College Dean Nicole Parisier chaired the committee, which would report to College Dean Richard Brodhead.<sup>516</sup>

The updated committee included Afro American Cultural Center Director and Assistant Dean Pamela George, two unnamed professors, a residential counselor, and ethnic counselor Richard Nobles '03. Five students representing blacks, Asian-Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, and whites were assigned to the reform committee. Dean of Student Affairs Betty Trachtenberg collaborated with ethnic deans Pamela George, Saveena Dhall and Rosalinda Garcia to write a proposal that it planned to send to Yale's current ethnic counselors "for feedback."<sup>517</sup>

Dean Parisier downplayed the significance of Yale's review of the Ethnic Counselor program when she said that "all programs at Yale come under revision from time to time." It "just happened to be the time for the ethnic counselor program." Dean Trachtenberg, who had proposed to hire one ethnic counselor for all minority students the year before, said the ethnic counselors' own request for review caused the committee's appointment. A year after Yale tabled her proposal to assign one counselor to all minority students, the

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<sup>514</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>515</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>516</sup> Katherine Stevens, "The Ethnic Counselor System," *Yale Daily News*, February 27, 2003.

<sup>517</sup> *Ibid.*

ethnic counselors discovered “things about the program [they] found deficient or weren’t comfortable with.” The ethnic counselors were “writing their own agenda.”<sup>518</sup>

Stevens reported that the major issue to be addressed by the committee was Native American counseling. Dean Brodhead refused to comment on this part of the committee’s work to avoid preempting “any of the recommendations of the committee.” He did nevertheless express a desire for the eventual

**When Yale first began the program in the 70s, he said, school officials thought that the program “could provide extra support to groups that we hope someday won’t need it.”**

phase-out of ethnic counseling. “Yale doesn’t think of any student first as an ethnic student,” he said. When Yale first began the program in the 70s, he said, school officials thought that the program “could provide extra support to groups that we hope someday won’t need it.”<sup>519</sup>

Yale did have a Native American “peer adviser,” wrote Stevens. Wizipan Garriot ’03 mentored Native American freshmen from inside Yale’s Native American Cultural Center, which paid him \$5,200 a year to do so. Garriot, however, earned “much less” than official ethnic counselors paid by Yale’s College Dean Office. Stevens’s reporting on Garriot’s compensation is the only readily available evidence that Yale had started paying ethnic counselors to mentor minorities; research did not yield more details. Wizipan’s compensation was provided via a federal work-study grant.<sup>520</sup>

Wizipan’s situation caused the Association of Native Americans at Yale (ANAAY) to lobby for Yale officials to reconsider the “unspoken 12 ethnic counselor rule” and to create a thirteenth position for a counselor of Native American origin. Matthew Nickson ’03, a representative of the Yale College Council, said his organization supported the ANAAY’s campaign over another proposal to eliminate a Latino ethnic counselor to open a space for a Native American counselor. But Dean Brodhead “was stuck on maintaining the current dozen,” said Stevens, which “no longer makes sense.”<sup>521</sup>

Stevens observed that matching students with ethnic counselors by race was tricky. “What constitutes ethnicity? Continental origin?” she asked. She argued that Yale might assign an “Asian” counselor to students of Pakistani, Chinese, and Vietnamese origins. Such students might have few commonalities except Yale’s “Asian” categorization. She also reported that Asian-American ethnic counselors had still not been relieved of their skewed

518 *Ibid.*

519 *Ibid.*

520 *Ibid.* Figures from 2003. We do not have the current salary scale.

521 *Ibid.*

counselor-counselee ratio, which they complained about in 1995 when several dozen Asian-American students scolded Dean Brodhead for giving one of their ethnic counselor slots to black students. Considering that this problem persisted, said Stevens, was it “completely unreasonable to ask for more counselors?”<sup>522</sup>

Stevens cited an analogous Princeton University program with sixteen minority peer advisers. But she acknowledged that some minorities resented the ethnic counselor program’s special focus on them. She quoted an anonymous Asian Australian student who said:

If you put down an ethnicity that isn’t Caucasian, you have to go to this meeting—that lasted for a few hours. It felt weird that it was mandatory. They talked about stereotypes [and] judging people—in that case, why were we the only ones who had to go? If they had made it optional to everybody, then fine. But it was mandatory for us.<sup>523</sup>

Yet Stevens remained convinced that the committee’s decision needed to reflect the special needs of Native American students.

Garriot, the Native American peer adviser, agreed. He argued that Native Americans coming to Yale might have difficulties pertaining to religion and poverty in their home communities. Despite Yale’s hope of a future in which “ethnic counselors are not needed,” the university needed to address Native Americans’ immediate problems, which included Yale’s inability to retain minority students at a rate similar to white students. He claimed that Yale’s below average retention rate of minorities, however, was not caused by “academic difficulties.” He pointed out that Yale’s legacy students scored worst on standardized tests but had a higher retention rate. Hence, social issues must be the cause of Native Americans’ disproportionate dropout rate. He added that if the committee considered these issues, they would hire an additional ethnic counselor for Native American students.<sup>524</sup>

On December 2, 2004 the *Yale Daily News*’ Easha Anand reported that Yale College Dean Peter Salovey (who became President in 2013) announced the creation of a recognized and compensated Native American ethnic counselor. Anand attributed Salovey’s decision to his consultation with “various student and faculty committees as well as by ethnic counselors themselves.” The article does not clarify whether the initial committee appointed in 2002 fractured into several groups. Presumably, the committee’s decision to add a Native American ethnic counselor to the Yale College Dean payroll also meant that its traditional structure would not change. Yale University

522 *Ibid.*

523 *Ibid.*

524 *Ibid.*

administrators knuckled under again.<sup>525</sup>

## Peer Liaisons

Yale did not again propose altering the ethnic counselor program until 2008. On January 17, 2008, Zachary Abrahamson of the *Yale Daily News* reported that Yale planned to merge “the role of the ethnic counselor into that of the freshman counselor” at the beginning of the 2009-2010 academic year.<sup>526</sup>

The new arrangement eliminated the ethnic counselor program by merging it with the freshman counselor program.<sup>527</sup> Yale preserved the freshman counselor program (called the First-Year Counselor Program), which employed and counseled students of all races, but now required prospective freshman counselors to register for training in “diversity education.”<sup>528</sup> On January 31, 2008, *Yale Daily News* writer Raymond Carlson reported that the new “Peer Mentors” would be “paid, non-freshman advisors assigned to students to help them with ethnic issues, as well as issues of sexuality, religion, disability status and nationality.”<sup>529</sup>

Taken at face value, the reform “transcend[ed] racial and ethnic lines” (gay students finally received a peer mentor under the reform). But the changes solidified campus identitarianism by making one’s affiliation with a Cultural Center and similar identitarian organizations the exclusive pathway to a peer mentor position. Furthermore, freshmen students in search of ethnically specific mentors would now be directed to the relevant cultural house—such as the Afro American Cultural Center or La Casa. The Ethnic Counselor program would now have a similar effect to that of Cultural Connections: Minority students would be siphoned to identitarian “spaces.” As with the selection process for Wesleyan University’s segregated dorm, the Malcolm X House, the “details governing the process of [mentor] selection would be left to each house, center or group.”<sup>530</sup>

Dean of Freshman Affairs, George Levesque, helped the university sell the program to students. “The peer mentor program will act as a complement to the freshman counselor,” he said via email. “They are not in competition.”<sup>531</sup>

By 2010, Yale University had officially named its proposed “Peer Mentor” program the “Peer Liaison Program.” Under the Peer Liaison program,

525 Easha Anand, “Native American Will Join Ethnic Counselors,” *Yale Daily News*, December 2, 2004.

526 Zachary Abrahamson, “Ethnic counseling to see reform,” *Yale Daily News*, January 17, 2008.

527 *Ibid.*

528 *Ibid.*

529 Raymond Carlson, “Despite Concerns, Freshmen Warm to Counseling Proposal,” *Yale Daily News*, January 31, 2008.

530 Abrahamson.

531 Carlson.

minority students request to be ethnically matched with an upperclassman hired by one of Yale's four cultural houses.<sup>532</sup> The new system improved on the old (under which minority students were automatically assigned an ethnic counselor) by making students' participation in the program voluntary. And the Asian-American Cultural Center, which represents Yale's largest minority group, employs more Peer Liaisons than any other cultural center. The Asian-American Cultural Center has fourteen Asian-American Peer Liaisons. The Afro-American Cultural Center and the La Casa Cultural Center employ twelve counselors each; and the Native American Cultural Center employs seven.<sup>533</sup>

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532 Greta Stetson, "Peer Liaisons Still Tweaking Program," *Yale Daily News*, February 26, 2010.

533 Peer Liaison Program, Yale University, <https://yalecollege.yale.edu/students/academic-planning/advising/advising-programs/peer-liaison-program>

Part V.

Safe

Spaces



## Part V. Safe Spaces

Yale University's four "cultural houses" embody the spirit of neo-segregation. These "houses" are not residence halls, but centers of activities organized to promote ethnic solidarity. They are primarily social and political meeting spaces for politically active minority students. Each building is staffed with a director, whom students refer to as an "ethnic dean."<sup>534</sup> Officially they are employed by Yale as Assistant Deans.

The cultural houses are home base for each ethnic student organization. For example, the Korean Student Association at Yale and the Asian-American Student Association at Yale each meet (at separate times) in the Asian-American Cultural House for their political gatherings and social events. Events range "from ice cream socials to letter writing [sic] campaigns to speeches by guests."<sup>535</sup> Saveena Dhall, a former director of the Asian-American Cultural House, told the *Yale Daily News* in 2001 that Yale's cultural houses serve as "a place where students feel comfortable and supported when exploring aspects of their identity." Minority students, she said, "are encouraged to create programs ... that help affirm their identity [and] explore their heritage."<sup>536</sup>

The first center, the Afro-American Center, was founded by the university in 1969 in response to the demands of students represented by the Black Student Alliance at Yale (BSAY).<sup>537</sup> La Casa Cultural Center started as the Puerto Rican cultural center until "all Latino students [were united] under one roof." Mexican students, referred to on campus at the time as "Chicanos," also had their own center until the merger. Native American students did not receive a cultural house until 2012, after years of increasing Native American enrollment at Yale created a base of support to lobby for granting Native Americans their own space.

### Afro-American Cultural Center

The Afro-American Cultural Center (AfAm) is the home of BSAY and other black student groups such as Black Church at Yale, Black Men's Union (BMU), and Black Solidarity Conference (BSC). It holds an annual conference "to discuss issues pertaining to the African Diaspora."<sup>538</sup> BSAY secured the

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534 Jodi Wilgoren, "Chicano Students Call for Fourth Ethnic Dean," *Yale Daily News*, October 25, 1989. "An ethnic dean's specific responsibilities include serving as a counselor and role model to students and including their cultural perspective in administrative decisions."

535 Swati Pandey, "Your cultural sphere is here," *Yale Daily News*, June 10, 2001.

536 *Ibid.*

537 *Ibid.*

538 About the Black Solidarity Conference, Yale University, <http://www.blacksolidarityconference.com/about>. Accessed 2/21/19.

space for the Afro-American Cultural Center in 1969. “The House,” as it is sometimes called, was established at 1195 Chapel Street, an old building west of Old Campus. Black students successfully lobbied for a new location, which was granted in 1970 with a relocation to 211 Crown Street. The Afro-American Cultural Center remains there today. BSAY conceived the center as a meeting space both for black students at Yale and for local blacks in the New Haven community.<sup>539</sup> Over the years, a collection of black-themed art and a library of works by black scholars have been added.

The Afro-American Cultural Center was one of several concessions Yale University made to BSAY during the campus upheavals of the 1960s. Yale’s use of racial preferences in the 60s admitted dozens of race-conscious black students eager to strike a blow at Yale’s “white establishment.” Self-segregation was one means to this end. The *Yale Daily News* reported in 1967 that black students had founded BSAY, which had planned and hosted “Spook Weekend.”<sup>540</sup> The event drew blacks from New Haven and elsewhere in New England to visit Yale. By 1969, black students at Yale University had convinced school officials to carve out ‘black spaces’ in the form of a segregated “cultural center.”

## Big Plans

“Chapel St. Site Set for ‘Afro America’” reported *Yale Daily News* writer Charles W. Sprague on May 9, 1969. The Afro-American Cultural Center approved by the Yale Corporation would be located at 1195 Chapel Street. Yale University leased the house with an option to buy from Clara Williams, a New Haven resident who rented vacant rooms to locals. BSAY member Glenn DeChabert ’70 hoped the current tenants would be relocated satisfactorily, because the group had big plans for the house.<sup>541</sup>

DeChabert and other BSAY members were planning to renovate the building over the summer so it would be suitable as a base for projects by the fall term. When asked if the Afro-American Cultural Center would encourage racial separatism, he dismissed the question as “irrelevant.” “Everybody knows,” he said, “that when you come to Yale you are going to make friends with the guys who are closest to you in their experiences.” Yale Provost Charles H. Taylor, who played a seminal role in establishing Yale’s Afro-American Studies program, agreed with DeChabert’s view. He said that the center would “help black students coming into the Yale community feel more at ease in the University.”<sup>542</sup>

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539 Charles W. Sprague, “Chapel St. Site Set for ‘Afro-America,” *Yale Daily News*, May 9, 1969.

540 Rosenhouse.

541 Sprague.

542 *Ibid.*

BSAY quickly cemented the Afro-American Cultural Center's role as the base of black identitarian politics and black social life at Yale. When the City of New Haven tried Bobby Seale and the New Haven Nine for Alex Rackley's murder in the spring semester of 1970, BSAY made the Afro-American Cultural Center "a national clearing house for information about the Panther trial." As part of that effort, the group requested donations to United Front for Panther Defense, which was based in the Afro-American Cultural Center.<sup>543</sup>

According to Yale University's history of the Afro-American Cultural Center, BSAY member Roger Collins '69 served as its first coordinator. The Center appears to have been managed entirely by BSAY students when the Yale Corporation approved its establishment in 1969.<sup>544</sup> Collins was a part of Yale's "Vanguard Class" of black students admitted under Inky Clark's admissions regime. Collins continued to direct the center as a graduate student.

After the center was relocated to 211 Park Street, Roger Nunn '69 took over as director of the house, and secured a two-year Cummins Foundation grant. This went to cover expenses for "travel, speakers, internships, and a student-run publication, *Renaissance II*."<sup>545</sup> Nunn secured the Cummins grant in 1970.<sup>546</sup>

According to "Afro-Am," by Martha Gerson in the September 28, 1973 issue of the *Yale Daily News*, Ra Powell "was hired by the [Afro-American Cultural Center's] Board of Trustees" to manage it, but she did not record when he was hired. She reported that Powell and AfAm's secretarial staff were on the university payroll.<sup>547</sup> Powell said AfAm was a place that might appeal to "any student" except that one can enjoy activities exclusively "with other blacks." Black students, he said, "leave white Yale behind" when they "[walk] through this door." But "not all blacks at Yale" frequented the center," said Frank Reid Jr., who sat on AfAm's Board of Trustees. Nevertheless, he continued, the Afro-American Center was "a place [for black students] to relax," where things "felt like home." And it had the benefit of neutralizing the "tensions that in a dorm [setting] make it difficult for blacks to relate even to blacks."<sup>548</sup>

The Afro-American Cultural Center shuffled directors for several years until Khalid Lum was appointed director in 1974. Yale University's website says Lum was a stabilizing force. The infrastructure he built supported "a student staff to be hired and for the Center to sponsor a variety of events ranging

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543 The Black Student Alliance at Yale, "Panther Trial Reactions; BSAY Statement," *Yale Daily News*, April 22, 1970.

544 Afro American Cultural Center, "History," <https://afam.yalecollege.yale.edu/about-house/history>. Accessed 2/21/19.

545 *Ibid.* Accessed 2/12/19

546 *Ibid.*

547 *Ibid.*

548 *Ibid.*

from Black community picnics to programs aimed at forging a strong link with the New Haven community.”<sup>549</sup>

Lum served for five years until Dr. Patricia Romney took over in 1979. She served for two years. Caroline Jackson assumed the role in 1981, a position she held for nine years. Jackson was in her first year at Yale when AfAm moved to its current location.

## Jackson’s New Standard

Caroline Jackson ’74 established the standard for what students expect of a director of Yale’s African American Cultural Center. She was an early proponent of the idea that black students needed to self-segregate to adjust to Yale’s environment, because blacks “have not traditionally owned the institution.” Blacks, argued Jackson, “have a particular way of socializing,” which included “a more relaxed atmosphere,” varied modes of (unspecified) expression, and “less alcohol.” These habits and norms, she claimed, divided black and white students at Yale.<sup>550</sup>

Speaking to the *Yale Daily News* on April 1, 1984, Jackson expressed annoyance with those who insisted that separatism amounted to little more than

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frivolity. Jackson countered that “networking and social contacts are important.” Willy Lovett ’85, president of Yale’s black Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, supported Jackson’s separatist line. To him, the Afro-American Cultural Center was “a place where if [blacks] need to be separate we can be.”<sup>551</sup>

Jackson might be considered Yale’s first “ethnic dean,” a term that Yale students first used to describe

cultural house directors in the late-80s. An “ethnic dean” is an administrator who acts as an intermediary between minority students and Yale’s administration.<sup>552</sup> Jackson claimed that she elevated the position from the periphery of Yale’s race-based administrative sub-system to an entrenched part of Yale’s bureaucracy.

By her fourth year on the job, Jackson was a go-to spokeswoman for the

549 *Ibid.*

550 Crocker Coulson, “Islands in the Mainstream,” *Yale Daily News*, April 1, 1984

551 *Ibid.*

552 Jodi Wilgoren, “Chicano Students Call for Fourth Ethnic Dean,” *Yale Daily News*, October 25, 1989. “An ethnic dean’s specific responsibilities include serving as a counselor and role model to students and including their cultural perspective in administrative decisions.”

black student body and a representative of the AfAm House in the New Haven community. As director, Jackson criticized what she saw as the university's poor treatment of minority students. In a 1985 *Yale Daily News* article, Jackson told the reporter that the slowness of Yale's diversity reforms was fomenting black resentment.<sup>553</sup> She expressed frustration that Yale failed to recruit and retain black faculty. A Yale culture in which she allegedly experienced "in-tentional and unintentional acts of racism every day" stirred additional impatience and resentment. She called on Yale to implement policies that would purge its institutional racism.<sup>554</sup>

Jackson's public statements are an early articulation of today's social justice ideology which denies that so-called "historically white institutions" can overcome their history of racial exclusivity short of "a massive institutional effort." Her tenure also saw the rise of administration-backed social justice bureaucrats. After the campus turmoil of the 1960s, Yale absorbed the black radicals of the New Left and licensed them to "fight the power" from within the system. Jackson typified the minority administrator whose unofficial job seemed to mostly consist of leveling accusations of racism against her employer, even as she collected prestigious titles and jobs in academia.

Superficially it seems odd that a university administration would authorize and pay for a bureaucratic position much of whose work consisted of berating that administration for racial insensitivity and lack of progress in achieving racial equity. The oddity is explained by the need for the Yale administration to embed itself in a mythology of white guilt. The moral vision of Yale administrators was that the university should now and forever atone for the centuries of black exclusion and general oppression of African Americans. After the actual exclusion had disappeared and the last traces of oppression had vanished, it was morally necessary to conjure a narrative in which the trans-generational effects of past oppression were continually re-emphasized. Jackson and her successors learned how to fulfill this need among Yale administrators by goading them with claims that Yale still somehow fell short of its full racial atonement.

These claims became more and more stretched as Yale devoted vast sums of money to racial appeasement, but the psychological dynamic of the relationship between guilt-ridden administrators and guilt-inducing black leaders proved isometric. Neither side budged, but they strengthened each other's resolve. The Yale administration forever seeks the elusive goal of achieving perfected "diversity" and racial justice. The administrators of the Cultural Houses forever seek new grievances for which to demand redress. A minority administrator who fails to stoke such grievances may be judged a failure and

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553 Paul Muenzen, "Yale blacks confront slow change," *Yale Daily News*, April 8, 1985.

554 *Ibid.*

sent on his way.

Jackson took credit for convincing Yale University to grant AfAm directors an additional position—Assistant Deans of Yale College. According to her, the first cultural house director to receive that distinction was Melvin Wade in 1989.<sup>555</sup> Yale hired Wade to succeed Jackson, who left for Oberlin College to work as “artist-in-residence.”<sup>556</sup> Jackson claimed that she negotiated Wade’s deanship during the final weeks of her tenure. An assistant deanship, she said, increased the prestige of cultural house directors. She claimed that past directors were ignored by Yale’s administration because they lacked the clout to attract immediate attention to their objectives. From 1989 on, Yale University reserved at least four administrative positions for minorities of black, Latino, Asian-American, and Native American descent exclusively. No white person has ever been hired as a dean of one of Yale’s Cultural Houses.

## Melvin Wade Out

Melvin Wade’s tenure as director of the Afro-American Cultural Center ended abruptly in 1992. After two years on the job, Yale declined to renew his contract. Students said he did not measure up to Jackson. When Wade arrived at Yale, he issued statements promising to refocus the Afro-American Cultural Center’s attention to academics and pledging to cooperate with Yale’s other racial groups. In contrast to Jackson, Wade seldom criticized the administration and refrained from commenting on racial controversies. But minority students complained that Wade’s temporizing made him an unworthy adversary of the administration. During his tenure, black student organizations reportedly “had difficulty getting house funds for projects.”<sup>557</sup>

Wade countered that his inability to replenish the Afro-American Cultural Center’s coffers was due to financial constraints, rather than racist administrators. As Wade’s contract neared expiration, black students were beginning to grumble that Yale’s administration was responsible for the Afro-American Cultural Center’s budget woes. This seems to have been enough for Yale to decline to renew Wade’s contract.

Student complaints suggest that Wade was ousted because he performed the part of an “ethnic dean” poorly. One responsibility of Yale’s ethnic deans is to keep minority students happy, which requires staking aggressive claims against the Yale administration for its failure to deliver still more race-based concessions. As more recent examples of resignations by deans of the Af-Am House and AACC reveal, a good ethnic dean reinforces the idea that each

555 Abby Young, “New Dean Starts Job at Afro-Am Center,” September 29, 1989.

556 *Ibid.*

557 Alexandra Lange, “Dean to Depart as Term Expires,” *Yale Daily News*, March 5, 1992.

concession by Yale to minority students is another victory in the fight against campus racism.<sup>558</sup>

Although Wade espoused standard separatist rhetoric, which included his view that America is a “Eurocentric, patriarchal, class-oriented kind of system,”<sup>559</sup> one student complained that he lacked administrative skill.<sup>560</sup> At the behest of students, Yale searched for a replacement who could inject “new life” into the center.

**As more recent examples of resignations by deans the Af-Am House and AACc reveal, a good ethnic dean reinforces the idea that each concession by Yale to minority students is another victory in the fight against campus racism.**

Yale’s search yielded Kimberly Goff-Crews, an ’83 college alumna and an ’86 law school alumna. Yale College Dean Donald Kagan announced the selection of Goff-Crews as the next AfAm director on May 4, 1992. Goff-Crews sported a “diversity”-rich résumé. She headed the Black Law Students’ Association as a student at Yale Law School and participated in “community outreach programs.” Professor

Curtis Patton, who chaired the search committee, said Goff-Crews’s familiarity with the university was a point in her favor.<sup>561</sup> Goff-Crews’s student presence at AfAm made her application stick out.<sup>562</sup>

After Yale announced Goff-Crews as Wade’s successor, she gave a statement to the *Yale Daily News* saying her “immediate goal” was to “map out a specific agenda for the cultural center.” Goff-Crews said she wanted “the House to be the place on the block” that attracts all comers, “sort of like the Kool-Aid house.” Jonah Edelman ’92, a student who had served on the search committee, had high hopes for Goff-Crews’s tenure. He wished for a “rebirth within the African-American community” at Yale and an improvement of town-gown relations.<sup>563</sup>

Goff-Crews’s appointment also excited the black New Haven community.<sup>564</sup> Shortly after she assumed office, New Haven locals attended an open house welcoming her to campus. A local African dance troupe performed a “traditional welcoming dance.” After the evening’s festivities, Goff-Crews told the audience that she intended to make the Afro-American Cultural

558 Masthead, “NEWS’ VIEW: To restore faith in the Af-Am House, Dean Cohen must resign,” *Yale Daily News* February 23, 2015; Zainab Hamid and David Yaffe-Bellany, “AACc interim director resigns under criticism,” *Yale Daily News*, April 18, 2017.

559 Beth Carney, “Legacy of Malcolm X Endures, Local Black Leaders Say,” *Yale Daily News*, February 20, 1990.

560 Lange, “Dean to Depart.”

561 *Ibid.*

562 Alexandra Lange, “Kagan Names Afro-Am Head; Administrators, Students Praise College, Law Alumna,” *Yale Daily News*, May 7, 1992.

563 *Ibid.*

564 *Ibid.*

Center “the focal point for the bridge between Yale and New Haven.” She articulated her commitment to New Haven’s black community and touted her qualifications for helping it. Of course, Yale University wasn’t going to solve the New Haven black community’s problems with cultural events, but black students and administrators at Yale have sometimes spoken of the university as if it could.<sup>565</sup>

## To the Root

Goff-Crews appears to have been responsible in part for making diversity education mandatory for incoming freshmen. On February 19, 1993, the *Yale Daily News* reported that “poor attendance forced organizers to cancel” the first day of a “two-day diversity program” called “To the Root: Discovering Community at Yale.”<sup>566</sup> Goff-Crews was a principal organizer of the event, which was sponsored by the Yale College Dean’s office. A slate of “cultural awareness” programs supplemented by performance pieces, open discussion sessions, and a moderated panel on “multicultural misunderstandings” were billed to foster “ethnic harmony.”<sup>567</sup> Goff-Crews and other organizers blamed low turnout on poor advertising.<sup>568</sup> The second day of the program proved equally unsuccessful when no students save two News reporters attended a “Diversity at Yale” panel.<sup>569</sup>

Goff-Crews’s desire to forge ethnic harmony through diversity programs was in tension with her views on racial separatism at Yale. She denied that “cultural houses promote a climate of ethnic separatism.”<sup>570</sup> Goff-Crews equated the functions of the AfAm Center with non-ethnic socialization at a forum on Yale’s cultural houses in the spring of 1993. “What about the kids that hang out with all of you?” she asked while gesturing to the audience. Other speakers at the forum claimed the cultural houses were open to all students. But these accounts contradicted student Rob Hahn’s ’93 vision of the cultural houses as “a refuge from Yale” for “people who are uncomfortable with white people.”<sup>571</sup>

Goff-Crews and her fellow panelists failed to consider that Yale’s white students complained about the cultural houses’ tendency towards ethnic

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565 Margaret Mooney, “Director Shares Afro-Am Center, Goff-Crews Hoopes to strengthen ties between city and university,” *Yale Daily News*, October 13, 1992.

566 Jennifer Sherinsky, “Diversity Events Putt Off; Low Turnout Causes Delay Until this April,” *Yale Daily News*, February 19, 1993.

567 *Ibid.*

568 *Ibid.*

569 David Karp, “Apathy Postpones Diversity Program,” *Yale Daily News*, February 22, 1993.

570 Sascha Segan, “Assistant Deans Discuss Houses: Cultural Centers Promote Support and Understanding, Speakers Say,” *Yale Daily News*, March 5, 1993.

571 *Ibid.*



exclusivity, because they likely understood the social dynamics of the campus. Some may also have read or heard comments such as Hahn's.<sup>572</sup>

**These accounts contradicted student Rob Hahn's '93 vision of the cultural houses as "a refuge from Yale" for "people who are uncomfortable with white people."**

Others blamed white students' refusal to learn about multiculturalism for AfAm's separatist reputation. If white students had attended programs at the Afro-American Cultural Center, they supposed, they would have taken the step towards inter-ethnic socialization. Goff-Crews said, "The burden is on whites to study other cultures."<sup>573</sup>

As with Yale administrators' public comments on segregated programs such as PROP, administrators' remarks on the purpose of the cultural centers are often contradictory. On the one hand, Yale officials say that cultural centers and minority programs exist to educate white students about "other cultures." On the other hand, they are defended vigorously as "safe spaces" in which minorities can avoid racial groups that make them "uncomfortable."

## Towards a More Captive Audience

By 1994, white students were no longer allowed to skip diversity forums. The *Yale Daily News* reported on February 8, 1994, that "diversity talks about multicultural issues" would be featured at Yale's main freshman orientation program.<sup>574</sup> The proposal sprang from Yale's "dean's offices hopes to create a more captive audience." Goff-Crews "[hoped] to keep the same ideas for Diversity Days in fall orientation."<sup>575</sup>

The proposal appears to have been spearheaded by Goff-Crews and Dean Betty Trachtenberg. Head ethnic counselor Lenwood Ross '94 lauded the decision. He told the *Yale Daily News* that the entire freshman orientation should be revised to address multicultural issues. Ross proposed that future Yale freshmen should engage in "the gingerbread man exercise" which "highlights racial and ethnic differences between different groups." The particular "gingerbread man exercise" that Ross had in mind is not recorded, but a variety of exercises of this name were featured in diversity training at that time. In general, they are attempts to make people focus on human differences rather than commonalities.<sup>576</sup>

Yale began Goff-Crews's diversity sessions for incoming freshmen in

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572 *Ibid.*

573 *Ibid.*

574 Duncan Levin. "Diversity discussions could be added to Camp Yale next year." *Yale Daily News*. February 8, 1994.

575 *Ibid.*

576 *Ibid.*

August of 1994. Some students found diversity orientation “clichéd and unnecessary.”<sup>577</sup> Others extolled the diversity-themed portion of freshmen orientation. “It was excellent, it was inspiring,” said Farnaz Yassear ’98.<sup>578</sup> Yassear continued, saying the events “picked out what we were feeling. I felt encouraged to explore the diversity.” Ezra Stiles College counselor Cale Jaffe ’94 said that the diversity session exposed her to “one of the franker discussions on race and gender that” she ever had at Yale, because it “helped get tensions into the open.” Steven Klein ’98 saw things differently. He reported “never [experiencing] anything but friendly people ... at Yale.” He said Dean Brodhead’s speech challenging Yale’s students to socialize with other kinds of people seemed unnecessary.

## Anti-Semitism at the Afro-American Cultural Center

While the AfAm Center has hosted uncounted speakers and programs on a variety of cultural topics, a troubling and long-term trend is its tolerance, even embrace, of anti-Semitic voices. Black anti-Semitism was a presence at Yale at least since BSAY invited Black Panther chairman Bobby Seale to speak on campus in 1969. Black anti-Semites had been invited to speak at Yale even earlier, as when Malcolm X spoke at Yale Law School on October 20, 1962.<sup>579</sup> Anti-Semitism emerged as a more prominent theme in black America in the 1980s. In January 1984, in a conversation with a Washington Post reporter, Jesse Jackson referred to Jews as “hymies” and characterized New York City as “Hymietown.”<sup>580</sup>

Jackson was at the time mounting a campaign for the Democratic nomination to run against President Ronald Reagan. His slurs were widely reported and incensed many American Jews. Louis Farrakhan, head of the Nation of Islam and a well-known anti-Semite<sup>581</sup> came to Jackson’s defense. Standing by Jackson’s side, Farrakhan warned Jews, “If you harm this brother, it will be the last one you harm.”<sup>582</sup> Farrakhan’s statements troubled some leaders of the Democratic Party. The Washington Post reported that, if Jackson failed to disavow Farrakhan’s remarks, some Democrats wanted to prevent him from

577 “Dean calls for diversity, speech and first-ever mandatory discussion groups strive for tolerance,” *Yale Daily News* August 31, 1994.

578 *Ibid.*

579 Sandeep S. Atwal, ed., Malcolm X: Collected Speeches, Debates, and Interviews (1960-1965, found in “Yale University Speech, October 20, 1962,” <http://malcolmxfiles.blogspot.com/2013/06/malcolm-x-at-yale-university-october-20.html>)

580 Ronald Smothers, “The Impact of Jesse Jackson,” *The New York Times Magazine*, March 4, 1984.

581 E.R. Shipp, “Tape Contradicts Disavowal of ‘Gutter Religion’ Attack,” *The New York Times*, June 29, 1984.

582 Larry J. Sabato, “Jesse Jackson’s ‘Hymietown’ Remark – 1984,” *Washington Post*, July 21, 1998, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/special/clinton/frenzy/jackson.htm>

speaking at the national convention.<sup>583</sup> Jackson's attitude towards Jews had been manifest in other contexts as well:

Jackson has also been accused of being anti-Semitic, partly as a result of his public embrace of Yasir Arafat, and partly because of comments he has made about Jews. One of his most-remembered comments came during his Middle East trip when he told Phil Blazer, editor and publisher of *Israel Today*, "I'm sick and tired of hearing about the Holocaust and having Americans being put in the position of a guilt trip. We have to get on with the issues of today and not talk about the Holocaust." Jackson is also reported to have said, "The Jews do not have a monopoly in suffering."<sup>584</sup>

Yale's black students were undeterred by the controversy. Jackson spoke at a breakfast at Yale on March 27, 1984, and also gave a speech at Woolsey Hall.<sup>585</sup> A month later, BSAY officer Willie Lovett wrote in the *Yale Daily News* that BSAY was organizing for the Jackson campaign. Lovett said this overtly political stand was of a piece with BSAY's other activities. BSAY, he said, had also taken an "active role in the planning and implementation of Yale's Minority Weekend for accepted freshmen."<sup>586</sup>

BSAY's involvement with the Jackson campaign serves mainly as a marker of the undercurrent of black-Jewish tension as it played out at Yale in the 1980s. In November 1985, BSAY member Millard Owens '87 spoke at a forum on black-Jewish relations. "Although Jews greatly aided the black cause in the 1960s, Jews turned their backs on blacks in the 1970s," he said. Owens described "the increasing polarization between Jews and blacks." "Jews are more opposed to racial integration," he claimed.

The main points of contention between blacks and Jews are relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization, affirmative action quotas, the politics of Jesse Jackson, Louis Farrakhan's controversial attitudes, government paternalism, and media manipulation of the tensions, Owens said.<sup>587</sup>

Owens' diatribe at the forum didn't go unanswered. Aaron Panner '86

583 Charlotte Sutton, "The Urban Fight," *The Washington Post*, June 29, 1984, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1984/06/29/the-urban-fight/c6417282-6d2f-4754-be02-ffc37019fdff/?utm\\_term=.42127acabfac](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1984/06/29/the-urban-fight/c6417282-6d2f-4754-be02-ffc37019fdff/?utm_term=.42127acabfac)

584 Smothers.

585 Christopher Beall, "Jackson Tells It Like It Is At Breakfast," *Yale Daily News*, March 27, 1984; John Garber and John Fuji. Photo Essay, "Campaign 84," *Yale Daily News*, March 27, 1984.

586 Willie Lovett, "BSAY Is Still Politically Active," *Yale Daily News*, April 24, 1984.

587 Ross Mansbach, "Students Discuss Tensions of Black, Jewish Groups," *Yale Daily News*, November 19, 1985.

wrote in the *Yale Daily News* a point by point and concluded, “Owens’ accusations against the Jewish community are not new—he is simply recycling many of the same anti-Semitic saws that black radicals have used since the ‘60s.”<sup>588</sup>

An undercurrent of Jewish complaint against Yale had emerged even before black anti-Semitism came into focus in the Jackson campaign. Rabbi Arnold J. Wolf had charged Yale with “insensitivity” and “callousness” toward Jews in a Yom Kippur service in 1980. His point was that Yale was leaning over backwards to serve other identity groups, but ignoring Jewish concerns.<sup>589</sup>

The tensions continued unresolved and became especially inflamed in February 1990, when the Yale Law School *Journal of Law and Liberation* invited Abdul Alim Muhammad, one of Farrakhan’s deputies, to speak at the Law School. Muhammad was supposed “to speak on the drug war in the black community.” He had, however, already acquired a reputation as an anti-Semite on the black-nationalist circuit, and the invitation “bitterly divided” the campus. In protest of the event, Yale Law School Dean Guido Calebresi resigned as an advisor for the *Journal* and said he would join student protestors of Muhammad’s speech.<sup>590</sup>

Negotiations between Yale Law School student group Committee Against Bigotry and the *Journal* to rescind Muhammad’s invitation went nowhere. As a result the Committee, which was composed of members of the Jewish Law Students’ Association, settled on “a silent, non-obstructionist protest during Muhammad’s speech.”

Muhammad spoke at the Law School February 14, 1990 to about 500 students, about 200 of them protesters. Tanya Schlam ’93, an eyewitness, said that one of Muhammad’s bodyguards confiscated a sign that read “Anti-Semitism doesn’t only hurt Jews.” After tearing the protester’s sign to shreds, said Schlam, the bodyguard threatened that “next time, [he would] break [the protester’s] neck.”<sup>591</sup> In his speech, Muhammad said he believed a conspiracy alleging that “Jewish doctors [injected] blacks with the AIDS virus,” and blamed the crack epidemic in the black community on “the people who conspired to develop the slave trade.” Muhammad did not say much about his anti-drug campaigning, but praised Farrakhan and accused the media of using charges of black anti-Semitism to sabotage Jesse Jackson’s presidential campaign.

BSAY apparently played no direct role in bringing Muhammad to campus, but did follow up almost immediately with an invitation to Farrakhan himself to speak at the Afro-American Cultural Center. The Yale Political Union agreed to co-sponsor the event. A vigorous controversy ensued, including a

588 Aaron Panner, “Jews Didn’t Cause Rift with Blacks,” *Yale Daily News*, December 5, 1985.

589 Mark Schmitt, “Yale Callous to Jews, Wolf Says in Sermon,” *Yale Daily News*, September 22, 1985.

590 Josh Lauring, “Nation of Islam Spokesman Brings Controversy to Yale,” *Yale Daily News*, February 9, 1990.

591 Josh Lauring, “200 Protest Speech by Nation of Islam Leader,” *Yale Daily News*, February 15, 1990.

complaint by two students, Dan S. Sokolov '90 and Sarah L. Perry '90 in the *Yale Daily News* on March 1, 1990, that “anti-Semitism is an essential tool in [the Nation of Islam’s efforts] to mobilize the African American community.”<sup>592</sup>

Farrakhan never did speak at Yale, but we have been unable to trace exactly why. BSAY, however, did not cease its courtship of the Nation of Islam. In 1991, the BSAY sponsored a speech by Ava Muhammad, one of Farrakhan’s assistants, during its annual Martin Luther King Jr. commemoration.<sup>593</sup> As reported in the *Yale Daily News*, she told the audience “What you’re learning is designed to enslave you further.”<sup>594</sup> “College,” she continued “instills students with arrogance, vanity [,] and pride.” She believed the university’s knowledge was underwritten by white supremacy.<sup>595</sup> Muhammad concluded her remarks by calling for a segregated “school system to bring equality into a system” which contains little.<sup>596</sup>

## **Muhammad concluded her remarks by calling for a segregated “school system [which would be] to bring equality into a system” which contains little.**

BSAY invited Amiri Baraka to speak at the Afro-American Cultural Center on February 24, 2003 in commemoration of Black History Month. Baraka (LeRoi Jones), a black nationalist poet and playwright, had long engaged in black-nationalist invective and poetry that “contained elements of unvarnished anti-Semitism.”<sup>597</sup> In

Baraka’s poem “For Tom Postell, Dead Black Poet,” he wrote:

Smile, Jew, Dance, Jew, Tell me you love me, Jew, I got the extermination blues, Jewboys, I got the Hitler syndrome figure.<sup>598</sup>

In another poem, “Somebody Blew Up America,” Baraka alleged that the Israeli government had advance knowledge of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. “Who know why Five Israelis was filming the explosion, and cracking they [sic] sides at the notion?” He then continued:

Who knew the World Trade Center was gonna get bombed [?]  
Who told 4,000 Israeli workers at the Twin Towers to stay home that day [?]  
Why did Sharon stay away?<sup>599</sup>

592 Dan S. Sokolov, Sarah L. Perry, *Yale Daily News*, March 1, 1990.

593 Savannah Neely, “Farrakhan Aide Decries Education,” *Yale Daily News*, January 16, 1991.

594 *Ibid.*

595 *Ibid.*

596 *Ibid.*

597 Margalit Fox, “Amiri Baraka, Polarizing Poet and Playwright, Dies at 79,” *The New York Times*, January 9, 2014.

598 Amiri Baraka, *Black Magic: Poetry, Sabotage, Target Study, Black Art, 1961-1967* (The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1969).

599 Amiri Baraka, *SOS: Poems 1961-2013*, (Grove Press, 2016).

The *Yale Daily News* called Baraka an “invective-spouting polemicist” whose reputation made him more than “just a controversial man.” Baraka disparaged whites, Jews, and gays, the paper alleged. It cited an anecdote in which a white woman asked Baraka how to help the black civil rights movement. Baraka told her, “You can help by dying.”<sup>600</sup>

Still, the *Yale Daily News* conceded, Baraka had a right to speak at Yale. The paper questioned only the wisdom of BSAY inviting him. It said there is a line “between being controversial and being hateful.” Baraka’s use of words such as “whitey, jewboy, and the eternal faggot,” crossed the line from controversy to pathological hate. He was not, it continued, “merely a talented poet or a significant black figure who ruffled feathers.” By inviting him to Yale, it concluded, BSAY and assistant dean of Yale College and Director of the Afro-American Center Pamela George, “[chose] to ignore [the] distinction” between controversy and hate.<sup>601</sup>

Assistant dean and AfAm director Pamela George responded to the *Yale Daily News* by denying that the AfAm endorsed Amiri Baraka’s extreme statements. AfAm was instead upholding viewpoint diversity. “We support an institution of higher education that is host to a diversity of views,” she wrote. To that end, AfAm and BSAY stood behind the invitation in observance of “the importance of free speech as a fundamental tenet of the university.” Other student groups previously welcomed speakers whose reputation rivaled Baraka’s, George said. Her examples were former Israeli general Yoni Figel and sociologist Charles Murray, co-author of *The Bell Curve*.<sup>602</sup>

After equating Figel, Murray, and Baraka, George insisted that the students who invited Baraka intended no harm. The event would encourage discussion of such questions as:

Can you learn from the overall achievements of a prominent figure such as this without supporting their personal views? What exactly makes Baraka so controversial? Can one be critical of the Israeli government and not anti-Semitic?<sup>603</sup>

George concluded by pointing out that Baraka had participated in several previous Yale events. The controversy brought comments from others who expressed hostile views of Jews, including Sahm Adrangi ’03. Adrangi attributed the uproar to the “special interests [that] manipulate the public discourse to advance their agendas.” Adrangi singled out the Anti-Defamation League. He claimed that Baraka had been singled out because of Israel-sympathizers

600 “Baraka’s Hate Speech Has No Place at Yale,” *Yale Daily News*, February 24, 2003.

601 *Ibid.*

602 Pamela George, “In Defense of Inviting Amiri Baraka,” *Yale Daily News*, February 23, 2005.”

603 *Ibid.*

in the media.<sup>604</sup> As evidence for this claim, Adrangi pointed to the *Yale Daily News*, where Jewish students “comprised a majority of management positions (namely, editor in chief and managing editor).”<sup>605</sup>

James Kirchick, a candidate for Yale University’s Board of Trustees in 2018, attended Baraka’s speech in 2003 at the Afro-American Cultural Center. He called the speech “one of the most disturbing events in my entire life.” He was “shocked” by the “response [Baraka] received from [his] fellow Yalies.” As Baraka doubled down on claims of “Jewish complicity in the World Trade Center attacks,” many “Yale students vigorously nodded their heads in approval and erupted into cheering.” Baraka “singled [Kirchick] out” when he noticed Kirchick’s “skeptical expression,” and told the audience that Kirchick suffered from “constipation of face and thus required a brain enema.” Baraka followed up his taunting of Kirchick by leading a chant of Mao Zedong’s saying, “‘No investigation, no right to speak,’ which the audience loudly joined.”<sup>606</sup>

In 2016, George organized a field trip during fall break. Under AfAm’s auspices, five undergraduate students and two graduate students visited the Black Panther exhibition at the Oakland Museum. The exhibition commemorated the Black Panther Party’s 50th anniversary.<sup>607</sup> Dean George resigned from Yale in 2017.

## Segregated Graduation Ceremonies

We have not been able to determine exactly when the practice began, but the Afro-American Cultural Center began to host segregated graduation ceremonies and celebrations in May 2000, calling it Black Graduates’ Celebration. The aim was to “formally recognize the achievements of our graduating black students and students who have deep connections to the House, in a culturally-affirming ceremony that marks the end of their time at Yale.”<sup>608</sup>

At this event “the best and brightest of Yale students of color” are awarded Kente Cloth stoles and ten awards are given to students who have excelled in various areas. These include:

Professor Robert Farris Thompson ’55 GRD ’65 Award for Outstanding Research in the Advanced Study of Africa

Professor John Blassingame GRD ’71 Award for Outstanding Research

604 Sahm Adrangi, “Not just another conspiracy theory: manipulating anger,” *Yale Daily News*, February 26, 2003.

605 *Ibid.*

606 James Kirchick, “Applauding Falsehoods at a University,” *Yale Daily News*, February 26, 2003.

607 David Yaffe-Bellany, “Students Honor Black Panther Anniversary,” *Yale Daily News*, October 31, 2016.

608 Calendar of Events, Yale University, <https://afam.yalecollege.yale.edu/calendarevents/calendar-events>

## in African American History & Culture

Arthur L Pulley '53 LLB & Bernice Cosey Pulley '55 DIV Research Award for the Advancement of Peace and Justice in the Americas and Africa

Students who attend these ceremonies can, of course, also attend Yale's regular graduation exercises. We do not know how many forgo the official graduation ceremony due to the availability of a segregated event. All other racial centers host a dinner or ceremony to commemorate their graduation festivities.<sup>609,610,611</sup>

Segregated graduation ceremonies may be the most eye-catching of segregated events put on by the Afro-American Cultural Center, but they are only one of the Center's "Signature Events and Traditions." During midterms and finals, the Center hosts a study break called "Black Coffee." Starting in March 2016, the Center began to host "Black Women's Retreat." The Center hosts an annual end-of-academic-year gala called the "Bouchet Ball & Awards Ceremony." (Edward A. Bouchet was "one of the earliest Black Americans to complete his bachelor's degree at Yale College in 1874.")<sup>612</sup>

Yale hosts segregated graduation ceremonies and celebrations for its minority student groups every year. These events receive little attention in the broader Yale community or in the public press.

## La Casa Cultural Center

The La Casa Cultural Center began as two separate houses. The Puerto Rican student organization, Despierta Boricua, had their own house cultural house and the Mexican (Chicano) organization shared a building with the Asian-American Student Alliance. Students of each insisted on this division. Although they shared a language, the groups prized different historical narratives. Their separation was put to the test in 1993 when the Chicano ethnic dean, Joseph Mesquita, stepped down. Yale considered combining the roles of

609 Asian-American Cultural Center, Events, "Asian Graduation." "The Asian Graduation Ceremony receptions brings together families and friends to recognize the achievements of our graduating students. This event is one of the few ceremonies where parents, families and friends are recognized for their contributions to the success of the graduate. Graduating students will be presented with a customized stole and alumni gift during this reception," <https://aacc.yalecollege.yale.edu/events/asian-graduation-ceremony>

610 La Casa Cultural: Latino Cultural Center, "Every year, La Casa hosts a dinner for the graduating class and their families t...," <https://lacasa.yalecollege.yale.edu/every-year-la-casa-hosts-dinner-graduating-class-and-their-families-t>

611 NACC Newsletter, [https://nacc.yalecollege.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/nacc%20newsletter\\_2017%20final%201\(1\).pdf](https://nacc.yalecollege.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/nacc%20newsletter_2017%20final%201(1).pdf)

612 *Ibid.*



the two deanships but a “minority coalition” cropped up to claim such consolidation posed an existential threat to all minority student programs. If Yale eliminated the Chicano dean position, the university might eliminate other parts of the neo-segregation regime. Yale conceded by hiring a replacement Chicano dean, but the two groups merged anyway in the late-1990s after an influx of Spanish-speaking Hispanic students. The La Casa Cultural House became the single center for Hispanic students.

## Origins

On October 2, 1973, the *Yale Daily News* reported that Despierta Boricua had written to President Brewster to demand its own cultural house. At the time, Despierta Boricua’s office was in the basement of Durfee Hall, which the organization found undesirable. The group had been particularly upset about the use of their toilets during Yale’s commencement celebrations. Chairman Eduardo Padro ‘75 demanded a response from the university “before a crisis situation is reached.” He declared that “the time for appeasement is over.” He demanded the university fulfill the “needs [of] conscientious students active in the Puerto Rican community.”<sup>613</sup> Despierta Boricua hoped the center would function as a meeting place for Puerto Rican students and the Yale Puerto Rican community.

Despierta Boricua’s demand for a center went unanswered until November 1976, when Yale agreed to create a Latino Cultural Center at 301 Crown Street. Despierta Boricua received particular credit for the center’s establishment.<sup>614</sup> Several other Latino organizations moved into the center with the Despierta Boricua, all of which had previously occupied offices scattered throughout Yale’s campus.

By February 1978, the center was up and running. The *Yale Daily News* reported that Despierta Boricua had realized its goal of developing programs for Puerto Rican locals in New Haven. Such initiatives included the creation of an adult literacy program that the center ultimately “discontinued ... due to a lack of funds.” Like the Black Student Alliance at Yale, Despierta Boricua claimed that cultural programming at the center would improve town-gown relations. Latino students also claimed the Center would relieve Yale’s minority student retention problem.<sup>615</sup>

In 1979, the *Yale Daily News* reported that Despierta Boricua had “realized its seven-year dream of founding a Latin American Center to unite the Yale

613 “Puerto Rican Group Demands its Own House,” *Yale Daily News*, October 2, 1973.

614 David Gonzalez. “Minorities in the Community,” *Yale Daily News*, February 23, 1978.

615 *Ibid.*

and New Haven Puerto Rican communities.”<sup>616</sup> When Schuster published his report, the center housed a “Puerto Rican folk dance group and a resident percussionist.” *Despierta Boricua* had other projects in the pipeline, including a “research program, a newsletter[,] and a literary magazine.” The group had also chartered bylaws and appointed a managing board.

A 1980 *Yale Daily News* article announced the hiring of Joseph Mesquita, a graduate student in sociology, as the new director and assistant dean to Yale College for the renamed Puerto Rican Cultural Center.<sup>617</sup> Although AfAm’s Caroline Jackson claimed credit for convincing Yale to offer program directors a deanship in 1989, the practice seems to have begun nearly a decade earlier.

Puerto Rican student leaders saw similarities between their own center and AfAm. They housed the principal student organizations that represented African American students and Puerto Rican students. AfAm hosted speakers and offered “tutoring and dance classes.” *Despierta Boricua* “sponsored events such as plays and Latin American art exhibitions.” Felix Martinez ’83, a member of the *Despierta Boricua* steering committee, told the *Yale Daily News* that “As BSAY is for black students, *Despierta Boricua* is the ‘watchdog’ for Puerto Rican interests.”<sup>618</sup>

Yale University played a leading role in underwriting the success of the center. In 1986, Yale President A. Bartlett Giamatti reportedly created a fund for each of Yale’s cultural houses before leaving office in July of that year. Giamatti appropriated a \$10,000 grant disbursed over four years to each minority student center. The stipulation was that funds “be used for educational purposes.” Minority student leaders praised Giamatti’s decision.<sup>619</sup>

When the grant expired in 1990, Giamatti’s successor, Benno Schmidt Jr., doled out another \$10,000 to each group, plus an additional \$10,000 to be used at Yale College Dean Donald Kagan’s discretion “for ‘similar undertakings.’” Schmidt’s appropriation revealed that not all minority cultural centers at Yale were funded equally. This wasn’t necessarily Yale’s fault. BSAY was out raising money on its own. AfAm’s \$32,000 per year budget was barely affected by the \$2,500 per year grant; the same amount almost doubled the Puerto Rican Cultural Center’s \$6,000 annual budget.<sup>620</sup>

Puerto Rican student leaders did not record any complaints about disproportionate funding of the AfAm Cultural Center in the *Yale Daily News*. Other problems occupied their attention, such as transcending divisions within the Yale Puerto Rican community. An April 10, 1985 report uncovered that

616 Mark Schuster, “Cultural Center Unites Puerto Rican Groups,” *Yale Daily News*, March 8, 1979.

617 Christopher Smart, “Five New Deans Join Yale’s Administration,” *Yale Daily News*, September 8, 1980.

618 Linda Schupack, “Minority Groups Provide Support,” *Yale Daily News*, June 1, 1980.

619 John Hechinger, “Student Minority Groups Will Receive \$50,000 from Giamatti’s Special Fund,” *Yale Daily News*, September 15, 1986.

620 Jodi Wilgoren, “Schmidt Renews Minority Funding,” *Yale Daily News*, March 5, 1990.

Despierta Boricua fractured into “Islander” and “Mainlander” camps. “What causes most of the problems are [sic] the islander-mainlander differences,” said Despierta Boricua member Isa Rivera ’85. Mayra Melendez ’87, who came to the continental United States as a teenager, claimed “in between” status. Class differences caused the split between the two groups said Edna Torres ’85.<sup>621</sup>

Assistant Dean Martha Chavez said that “In the years that I’ve been here I have noticed that the individuals coming from the island might be more affluent.” Some Puerto Rican students found “mainlanders ... harsh, aggressive, and tough.” Torres attributed the ‘mainlanders’ attitude to surviving “circumstances we had no control over.” But things were better at Yale than at most schools, Lourdes Rivera countered: “[At] some other schools mainlanders and islanders don’t mix at all.” Puerto Rican students set aside their Islander/Mainlander disputes when Despierta Boricua hosted “dances and dinners” that brought both sides together, said Lourdes Rivera. The “very spicy” dishes served at PRCC events puts the “very bland” food of Yale’s dining hall to shame. “Attendance is high at dinner, where rice, beans, and pork induce much laughter and conversation in Spanish.”<sup>622</sup>

Tensions within Despierta Boricua did not diminish the stability of the PRCC. In 1994, PRCC students painted a “long-delayed” mural on their building. Yale University reportedly spent “a year ... stalling” on whether to grant the students permission to paint a mural in commemoration of Julia de Burgos (1914-1953), a Puerto Rican poet and member of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party.<sup>623</sup> Yale “officials said they needed to come up with a policy regarding the creation of public artwork,” wrote *Yale Daily News* Staff Reporter Nora Davis. The university worried that the PRCC mural would have a domino effect. If every other center then demanded a right to paint a mural, Yale would have trouble selling the altered properties.<sup>624</sup> Perhaps Yale still had doubts about keeping its ethnic centers long-term.

As the century ended, Yale experienced an influx of students from the Dominican Republic. “A period of increasing immigration from” the island caused the windfall.<sup>625</sup> Latino students from outside of the predominant Puerto Rican and Chicano communities complained that the existence of two separate, established student groups and centers for students of Puerto Rican and Mexican origins left them without an ethnic organization. Assistant Dean and La Casa Cultural Director Rosalinda Garcia, said that “students realized that a number of Latino students did not identify with the Puerto Rican or

621 Lan Samantha Chang, “Yale Puerto Ricans stay few,” *Yale Daily News*, April 10, 1985.

622 *Ibid.*

623 Nora Davis, “Puerto Rican house to get long-delayed mural,” *Yale Daily News*, March 31, 1994.

624 *Ibid.*

625 Judy Wang, “Puerto Rican Elis: A 35-year history,” *Yale Daily News*, April 19, 2007.

Chicano communities.”

The exclusionary group identities “marginalized” Latinos who “did not feel comfortable entering either cultural center.” Yale’s other cultural center, the Chicano Cultural Center, had been founded soon after the creation of Latino Cultural Center. Yale granted the Chicano student organization a space in 1980, but the primary Chicano student group MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán) had to share their center with the Asian-American Student Alliance (AASA). The space, located at 295 Crown Street, is now the Asian-American Cultural Center exclusively. Both the Chicano and Puerto Rican centers “operated independently of one another, each with its own cultural center and director,” until enrollment of additional Latino students convinced Yale to place all Latinos in one cultural center.<sup>626</sup>

In the fall of 1999, Despierta Boricua and MEChA delivered a nine-page proposal which outlined and sought recognition for their newfound union. Dean Richard Brodhead received the coalition’s document “requesting that the University ... implement the necessary administrative changes” required for the merger. The merger of Despierta Boricua and MEChA marked the beginning of a new chapter in Yale identitarianism.<sup>627</sup> From then on, all Latinos were considered one racial group with a unified historical narrative defined presumably by each group’s oppression by whites. When our researcher spoke to an aide of the La Casa Cultural Center, she told him that the similarities between Spanish speakers of Mexico, Central America, Latin America, and the Caribbean trumped the differences between each. The music, feel, and “vibe” flattened the nuances between distinct Latino cultures and formed the basis of a pan-ethnic identification.<sup>628</sup>

Dean Brodhead approved the proposal, and the MEChA joined Despierta Boricua at their headquarters at 301 Crown Street. He also announced that the groups’ respective deanships would be merged. Richard Chavolla became the first director of the unified center,<sup>629</sup> which assumed the name of the La Casa Cultural Center. This name had been used interchangeably with “Puerto Rican Cultural Center” since its 1976 founding.

The change did not occur without dissent. Some students reportedly “voiced concern” that the merger would lead to “a loss of identity within the Latino community,” although Latino students eventually “agreed that they should acknowledge and celebrate their shared Latin American Heritage.”<sup>630</sup> Jorge Torres ’97, one of Despierta Boricua’s former chairmen, said that the change “was a little disarming back then.” Latino students at Yale today

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<sup>626</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>627</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>628</sup> Personal communication.

<sup>629</sup> Najah Farley. “Dean, Head of Latino Center to Leave Yale,” *Yale Daily News*, March 21, 2001.

<sup>630</sup> Judy Wang, “Puerto Rican Elis: A 35-year History,” *Yale Daily News*, April 19, 2007.

however, “probably can’t conceive of a time when there were two separate communities.”<sup>631</sup> Constructing a new racial category didn’t eclipse “unresolved tensions” which separated ‘mainland’ and ‘islander’ Puerto Rican students.

So-called Islander Puerto Rican students “came as elites from a separate place” whereas ‘mainlanders’ “came [to Yale] as American minorities.” Wealth wasn’t the only point of difference between mainland and islander Puerto Rican students. Islanders were reportedly reared in elite private schools. American Puerto Ricans were educated in the inner cities. The divide between the two factions showed up in Miltz Pagan’s ’09 reported “difficulty in persuading her Islander friends” to attend events held by *Despierta Boricua*. At a panel called “Unresolved: Puerto Rico’s Political Status” students debated Puerto Rican Independence, with mainlanders arguing for Puerto Rican self-determination whereas islanders “were either pro-statehood or pro-commonwealth.” Still, *Despierta Boricua* President Alberto Media ’07 saw improvement. Tensions between the two sides cooled, he said, as Islanders became more “Americanized.”<sup>632</sup>

## Am I Latinx Enough?

At the beginning of the fall of 2017 semester the La Casa Cultural House hosted “Am I Latinx Enough?” Latinx is the newly coined gender non-specific term adopted in progressive circles in place of Latino. “Am I Latinx Enough?” appeared under La Casa’s annual “Cafecito” series, “a safe space for discussion led by peer liaisons and deans.” Before students answered the question of the hour, they “raised a key question: what exactly is Latinx?” Jaden Morales offered an answer: “[Latinx] is more inclusive for those who do not identify as either male or female.” Morales “identifies as Latino.” Some students said the term Latinx has “power,” and is a refuge “from male dominance in often patriarchal Latin-American culture.” Neither the Director nor the assistant director of La Casa Cultural House remembered when the change in terminology occurred.<sup>633</sup>

Moreover, wrote Conde, Latinos also had not “reached a consensus as to how to pronounce the term.” Whereas “some [opted] for la-TEEN-x, others IA-tin-x, and still others, la-TEENX.” Some students complained Latinx popularity in academic circles imposed Western ideas about gender equality on traditional Latin American norms. Center director, Eileen Galvez, said that “The [Spanish] language is inherently gendered, so this change would actually

<sup>631</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>632</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>633</sup> Elena Conde, “Unpacking Latinx,” *Yale Daily News*, September 19, 2017.

require changing Spanish, which many see as a loss of culture.” Ideology and linguistics bumped heads again when students observed that: “Revisions to the word can’t be isolated; changing its gendered ending would also change the gendered articles, adjectives and nouns that surround it.” When applying the logic of the de-gendered term to Spanish, Leo Sanchez-Noya ’18 asked, would a gendered word like “las estudiantes” become “lxs estudiantxs?”<sup>634</sup>

This observation led to another: the segment of the Latino population most likely to use the term Latinx are those “in a privileged space like Yale.” Galvez conceded that “Latinx is often used by those with a higher education, which has led to criticism that these changes are inaccessible to the general population.” Nicole Chavez ’19 agreed. Latinx “seems like it’s coming from an Ivory Tower,” she told the *Yale Daily News*. Sanchez-Noya, a South Florida native, said he would avoid using the term with his Spanish-speaking Latino relatives and friends back home. He said, “For me to go home and tell them how to use the Spanish language? I would get laughed out of Miami.”<sup>635</sup>

Some students disassociated the “x” with gender politics. Nicole Chavez ’19 believed the term “serves as a way to recognize indigenous roots that were destroyed by Spanish colonists.” Morales argued that a culture of “people in Mexico with an understanding of additional genders” pre-dated the Spanish conquest of Latin America. The “x in Latinx,” she said, “simultaneously acknowledges that gender is more than a simple binary while also rebelling against the influence of colonialism.” Jaden Morales ’19 had a different view. He considered the term an explicit “Western imposition to the Spanish language.” Gomez Juarez ’18 cautioned students against overthinking. “Rather than heavily policing the language of others,” he said, “we should aim to have fruitful conversations that help build a political conscience founded on respect for others, regardless of gender identity.” “Many students” ultimately believed the unclear meaning of Latinx required “constant conversations,” but one male student reminded the *Yale Daily News* that the opinions of “a cis queer Latino male” may be out of place in such conversations.<sup>636</sup>

## Asian-American Cultural House

The Asian-American Cultural Center opened in 1981, after the \$27,000 renovation of a vacated Psychology Department building at 295 Crown Street. Two ethnic student organizations, the Asian-American Student Association (AASA) and MEChA (the Chicano group) initially shared the center. The house was a major upgrade from AASA’s former headquarters in a basement room in

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<sup>634</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>635</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>636</sup> *Ibid.*

Bingham Hall.<sup>637</sup>

From its beginning, the AASA lived on the periphery of campus identitarian politics. The group was also an afterthought in budgetary appropriations. On November 7, 1978, the *Yale Daily News* reported that the AASA felt neglected by the university.<sup>638</sup> Although the Afro-American Cultural Center and Puerto Rican Cultural center had received adequate financial support from Yale, AASA took in a meager \$1,000 per year. When students probed Dean of Yale College Horace Dwight Taft about the possibility of additional funds, he told them that he could not increase its allocation because all of Yale's minority exclusive programs were under review.

Despite financial stringencies, AASA never quit considering itself a refuge for Asian-American students. Asian-Americans too claimed to "experience 'a culture shock' upon coming to Yale." In addition to facilitating the "socialization" of Asian-American students, Joseph Kim, formerly the group's chairman, believed AASA helped Asian-American students who "are not from a predominantly Asian background ... rediscover their ethnic heritage."<sup>639</sup> With the creation of a student center, AASA moved closer to fulfilling Kim's vision. In 1981, AASA and MEChA held a joint open house to kick off the center's establishment. "Members of both groups conducted tours" while others "sampled 'ethnic munchies,' such as tortilla chips, bean cakes, and tequila."

## **AASA helped Asian-American students who "are not from a predominantly Asian background ... rediscover their ethnic heritage."**

Students who attended the tour would have seen that MEChA and AASA shared office space on each floor. AASA co-chairperson Beverly Ma lauded the group's new home. At its old location, 300 AASA members held their meetings and other activities in the cramped basement of Bingham Hall.

Naomi White hoped the center would "be a 'little oasis' of Asian and Chicano cultures, open to all members of the Yale community."<sup>640</sup>

In 1993, the center hosted the first Asian-American Awareness Week, which focused "on cultural, political, and social issues which affect those who have Asian Pacific backgrounds." On the first evening, students were treated to a reception with a variety of Asian-Pacific foods and a dinner at the House. Mary Li Hsu '80, Director of the Asian-American Cultural Center, said that center administrators and student groups planned the festivities to help the "Yale community ... understand what some of the issues confronting

637 Gabriella Stern, "AASA. MeCha, get new building," *Yale Daily News*, September 19, 1980.

638 Mark Schuster, "AASA requests increased funding," *Yale Daily News*, November 7, 1978.

639 Linda Schupack, "Minority Groups Provide Support," *Yale Daily News*, June 1, 1980.

640 Katherine Hadow, "MEChA host open house at renovated Crown Street building," *Yale Daily News*, October 12, 1981.

Asian-Americans are.” The week also promised to “fill a void for Asian-Americans at Yale” who had yet “to learn about their own culture.” Asian-American students “believed the week [would] also allow them to explore their heritage.”<sup>641</sup>

Today, the AASA faction of the center doesn’t make as much political noise as the other centers, but it is now the home of forty ethnic/cultural student organizations such as Korean American Students at Yale, Alliance for Southeast Students, and the Arab Student Association.<sup>642</sup> The addition of Middle Eastern student groups to the center shows how the term “Asian” has been broadened to include ethnic and racial categories west and south of the east-Asian world. The Arab Student Association is one organization from outside of the east-Asian sphere that operates in the center. In 2003, it stirred controversy when its co-president Tammer Riad asked the club “Yalies for Israel” to withdraw “its support for their recently-concluded conference on Arab development.” Riad’s belief that “all problems in the Middle East are a direct result of Israel’s existence” fueled his demand. He did not want pro-Israeli cooperation, he said, because the conference was meant to “undermine Israel.”<sup>643</sup>

Not every student was content to leave the inclusion of non-East-Asian-cultural groups unquestioned. In 2017, Katherine Roberts argued in an op-ed that the “Asian-American” term “is a false identifier” and a “convenient grouping ... only convenient for people who are not part of it.” The term was inconvenient for those who recognized the ethnic, religious, and linguistic differences between India and East Asia. Roberts concluded that “it does not make sense to put Asian-Americans together into one cultural house.” Roberts also rejected the umbrella organization because Americans allegedly are disposed to “labeling Indians and East Asians as one group.” American culture stereotyped Asians, she said, as individuals with “unpronounceable names,” mathematical prowess, and poor English. One way that Yale could absolve itself of its mistake was by remaking the Asian-American Cultural Center “as a multicultural house, without the allusion of a single Asian identity.”<sup>644</sup>

## Native American Cultural House

Native American students at Yale had no club until 1989, when John Bathke ’93 started the Association of Native Americans at Yale (ANAAAY).<sup>645</sup>

641 Rebecca Howland, “Awareness Week Begins With Meal,” *Yale Daily News*, April 5, 1993.

642 Asian-American Cultural Center, Yale University, “Affiliate Organizations,” <https://aacc.yalecollege.yale.edu/affiliate-organizations>.

643 Nelson Moussazadeh, “ASA Stance Is Counterproductive to Dialogue,” *Yale Daily News*, October 28, 2003.

644 Kathan Roberts, “ROBERTS: Decoupling Asian-American Identity,” *Yale Daily News*, September 5, 2017.

645 Native American Cultural Center, Yale University, “History,” <https://nacc.yalecollege.yale.edu/house/history>



Early reports suggest that Native American students initially sought “minority representation” under the Chicano students’ organization. On October 27, 1989, it was announced that Native American students had formed their own group “because they feel they are not being heard in Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan.” The Native American students’ sister minorities supported their course of action. Elise Boddie ’90, then current President of the Black Student Alliance, gave the move her endorsement for reasons that readers will find familiar. Boddie “stressed the need for a support network, and a forum where members of a minority can discuss their particular problems.” Bathke agreed.<sup>646</sup>

By his account, “all [the Native American students] get [under MEChA] are leftovers.” Bathke had larger ambitions than leftovers. He also hoped the group would attract Native American researchers and faculty to the university. The fledgling group also wanted Native American studies courses added to Yale’s course catalog. One of Bathke’s more radical proposals was that Yale University require self-identifying Native American students to verify their affiliation. “A lot of people check the box [because] their great-grandmother was a Native American, and they don’t identify with the culture.”<sup>647</sup>

Bathke’s efforts bore fruit. In Fall 1989 immediately after the group’s founding, Yale University gave ANAAY space in the Chicano house. The creation of the organization and their rise to “center” recognition might indicate an increased number of Native Americans admitted to the university. ANAAY doesn’t supply historical data but claims:

The number of Native students has grown tremendously; the Yale Class of 2015 includes 40 Native American students, the largest class of Native students attending any Ivy League institution.<sup>648</sup>

Regardless, the opening of the center made Native American students the last “racial” group to receive cultural center recognition from Yale. According to Yale’s official account of the center’s origins, the NACC relocated to the Asian-American Cultural Center, located at 295 Crown Street, shortly after its official recognition in 1993.<sup>649</sup>

Native American students gained their own house in the fall of 2013.<sup>650</sup> According to the *Yale Daily News*, Yale’s class of 2015 marked its largest “Native American population in [the school’s] history.” The bigger space was, as Yale College Dean Mary Miller said, “a matter of equity” which relieved the former

646 Todd Sinai, “Native American Students Plan Support Organization,” *Yale Daily News*, October 27, 1989.

647 *Ibid.*

648 Native American Cultural Center, “History,” <https://nacc.yalecollege.yale.edu/house/history>

649 *Ibid.*

650 *Ibid.*

NACC of its status as “the only cultural center without its distinct space.” She added that the new space granted Native American students “autonomy.”<sup>651</sup>

## Cultural Centers—Conclusion

The cultural centers at Yale are mainly instruments of the various student-run ethnic associations. Over time, each center gained a professional director, but these center directors took their lead from the agendas set by the student organizations. When the student organizations pursued aggressive or sometimes radical proposals, the center directors served as their intermediaries to the Yale administration.

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651 Caroline Tan, “Native American Center Acquires House,” *Yale Daily News*, November 10, 2011.



Part IV.  
Remaining  
Considerations

## Part VI. Remaining Considerations

# Race in Faculty Hiring

Black students who matriculated to Yale in the 1960s early on complained about the scarcity of black faculty members. Black faculty members were indeed scarce and remain so.

A 12-person Yale faculty committee chaired by psychology professor Judith Rodin issued a report in May 1989 on minority faculty member recruitment and retention. The so-called Rodin Report found that “Yale’s enforcement of affirmative action procedures was lagging behind comparable institutions.”<sup>652</sup>

In 1991, another Yale committee, chaired by Economics professor Gerald Jaynes, released the First Report of the President’s Committee to Monitor the Recruitment and Retention of Disabled, Minority, and Women Faculty. The Jaynes Report observed, “Yale’s position and its national image in this area remains precariously close to the backwaters of academic progress, not in the position of national leadership we proudly seek and claim in other important areas.”<sup>653</sup>

Yet another Yale committee chaired by Classics professor Emily Greenwood issued a study, May 16, 2016, Report on Faculty Diversity and Inclusivity in FAS (Faculty of Arts and Sciences). It observed, “At the dawn of the 21st century, in short, black faculty made up just 2 percent of Yale’s tenured ranks.”<sup>654</sup>

These reports are mileposts in Yale’s continuing discussion of the extreme difficulty it has had in recruiting and retaining black faculty members. All three reports extend beyond the topic of black faculty recruitment to deal with other categories of “underrepresented” faculty, so much so that black faculty members get submerged in the category of “URMs” in Greenwood’s report. URMs are Underrepresented Minorities, as distinct from International, Asian, White, and Unknown faculty members. The report used the term 138 times without saying who exactly is covered by the term, but it is safe to assume it lumps together black, Hispanic, Native-American, and Pacific Islanders.

While the story of efforts to increase black representation on the Yale faculty recounts mostly disappointment, it celebrates Yale’s successes in

652 Stephanie Plasse, “After Rodin Report, Minority Hiring Still Slow,” *Yale Daily News*, November 26, 1990.

653 Gerald Jaynes, et al. First Report of the President’s Committee to Monitor the Recruitment and retention of Disabled, Minority, and Women Faculty, Spring 1991, 3-4.

654 Emily Greenwood, et al. Report on Faculty Diversity and Inclusivity in FAS, May 19, 2016, 16.

recruiting women to the faculty. These efforts are copiously documented by way of a 25-page appendix of tables and graphs that track in fine detail faculty hiring by race, sex, academic area, tenure status, and more. Because the Greenwood report is easily accessible, it is recommended for those seeking a robustly detailed picture of what came out of nearly a half-century effort to increase black representation on the Yale faculty. A few data points:

In the Humanities by 2015, 9% of the tenured faculty were URMs

In the Humanities by 2015, 11% of the “term faculty” were URMs

In the Social Sciences by 2015, 8% of the tenured faculty were URMs

In the Social Sciences by 2015, 5% of the “term faculty” were URMs

In the Biological Sciences by 2015, 5% of the tenured faculty were URMs

In the Biological Sciences by 2015, 0% of the “term faculty” were URMs

In the Physical Sciences by 2015, 4% of the tenured faculty were URMs

In the Physical Sciences by 2015, 3% of the “term faculty” were URMs

In Engineering by 2015, 3% of the tenured faculty were URMs

In Engineering by 2015, 22% of the “term faculty” were URMs<sup>655</sup>

The number of black faculty members within these URM cohorts is not stated in the Greenwood report.

The Greenwood report makes reference to the Rodin and Jayne reports as part of a ten page “History of Effort to Increase Diversity & Inclusivity at Yale” going back to 1968. This section includes other important observations on black faculty recruitment. Excerpts:

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<sup>655</sup> *Ibid.* Figures 7A and 7C.

1971: Yale appoints its first black college master: Richard Goldsby, associate professor of biology.

In 1972, Yale President Kingman Brewster introduced Yale's first Affirmative Action Program to recruit faculty members from traditionally excluded groups.

In 1982–83, Yale employed 10 tenured African American professors, all of them men. In 1999–2000, almost two decades later, Yale employed 17 tenured African American men and one tenured African American woman. At the dawn of the 21st century, in short, black faculty made up just 2 percent of Yale's tenured ranks.

April 1989: Professor John Blassingame resigns from Afro-American Studies program in protest against lack of administration support.

May 1989: The Rodin Committee Report calls for "targeted goals" to improve faculty diversity, to increase minority representation on the Yale faculty from 5.7 percent to 8 percent by 1999.

1989: Yale introduces the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, intended to encourage minority undergraduates to enter academic careers.

1991: Jaynes Committee Report declares, "By our count, this is the eighteenth Yale Committee, since 1968, to report on the recruitment of minority or women faculty."

It calls for "cluster hiring of a 'critical mass' of minority faculty to counter isolation and tokenism, and clarification of resources and procedures in diversity hiring."

1999: Yale succeeds in meeting the faculty diversity goals set out in the 1989 Rodin Report. In 1999–2000, "minority" professors make up 8.2 percent of the tenured ranks and 16.1 percent of term faculty.<sup>656</sup>

The Greenwood report singles out the period 1999–2007 as "Years of

<sup>656</sup> *Ibid.* 15-1.

Progress,” brought about because of President Richard Levin’s focus on “faculty diversity as a central administrative priority.” This period “reached its peak with the president’s 2006 commitment to hire 30 additional women faculty in the sciences, and 30 faculty of color within the university overall.”

Excerpts:

1999: President Richard Levin announces new faculty diversity plan. Commits that sufficient financial resources will be available for hires at all ranks that promote diversity.

Fall 1999: African American Studies receives departmental status and hiring autonomy after chair Hazel Carby resigns in protest of university inattention.

Spring 2000: *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* [JBHE] reports black faculty comprise 2.3 percent of Yale’s total non-medical-school faculty, and 1.9 percent of Yale’s ladder<sup>657</sup> nonmedical faculty. The report notes that in the previous three decades ‘Yale lost to other institutions a number of distinguished black faculty members, including Henry Louis Gates Jr., Toni Morrison, Cornel West, and K. Anthony Appiah.’ It concludes that ‘Yale’s performance is poor compared to most of its peers,’ including Columbia, Brown, and ‘even Dartmouth.’ The report suggests that, based on ‘past performance,’ ‘it appears that Yale will never achieve parity with nationwide percentages’ of black faculty in higher education. (‘Black Faculty at Yale: Progress Stopped a Quarter of a Century Ago,’ JBHE, Spring 2000)

2004: Between 1999 and 2004, the size of the Yale faculty expands by 10 percent. Minority faculty in FAS grows by 30 percent.

2005–2006: President Levin and Provost Andrew Hamilton allocate additional resources to faculty diversity. [Commit to] adding at least 30 additional minority faculty by

2012. [...] The plan includes a goal of increasing the number of minority faculty members by 34 percent in seven years.<sup>658</sup>

According to the Greenwood report, these “years of progress” were followed by “The ‘Lost Decade’ 2007–2016,” when the gains of the preceding

657 “Ladder” faculty members are those hired into a faculty position in which promotion in rank and tenure are possible.

658 *Ibid.* 19-21.



period were swallowed by attrition. “By 2012 just 22 of the 56 recently hired faculty of color” remained on the faculty. Yale was complacent about these losses:

In fall 2015, President Peter Salovey and Provost Benjamin Polak introduced a \$25-million university-wide Faculty Diversity Initiative to provide matching funds for departments seeking to increase diversity through hiring, retention, and other strategies.<sup>659</sup>

Yale in short tried and tried and tried again to increase the number of blacks holding faculty positions, yet it never succeeded in making and holding substantial gains.

The Greenwood report contemplates this failure and suggests four “factors”:

- Inconsistent university leadership on diversity questions
- Lack of accountability mechanisms and monitoring of diversity initiatives
- Insufficient financial resources for the hiring and retention of faculty of color
- Lack of training for chairs and search committees tasked with hiring at the departmental level

What is most striking about this list of factors is the absence of any recognition of market realities. University administrators cannot conjure qualified candidates out of thin air. In many fields the supply of minority candidates falls far short of the demand. Elite universities engage in a bidding war for the best minority candidates, and often these individuals get “priced”

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<sup>659</sup> *Ibid.* 21-22.

far beyond their actual value as teachers and scholars.<sup>660</sup> That Yale repeatedly lost out in these bidding wars could be seen—at least from a budgetary and human resources perspective—as prudent.

In the end, Yale embraced the idea of racial preferences in faculty hiring but found the application of these preferences to be elusive. Why? One explanation according to Alex Zhang '18 in a 2015 *Yale Daily News* feature “In and Out: A Revolving Door for Yale’s Professors of Color?” is that newly hired minority professors get caught in a “mentoring” trap. When a black professor comes to campus, Zhang added, he prioritizes forging relationships with black students over writing and research. Black professors often come to their

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660 “The reason why there are not proportional numbers of blacks and Hispanics in fields other than ethnic studies and some very soft social sciences is that they are not graduating in the numbers that would make it reasonable to expect proportional representation. So, the few that are out there are the targets of a non-stop bidding war on the part of universities who can afford it.” Heather Mac Donald interviewed in Erich J. Prince. “The Victim Culture Produces No Winners: Heather Mac Donald’s Take,” *Merion West*, May 31, 2018. <https://merionwest.com/2018/05/31/the-victim-culture-produces-no-winners-interview-with-heather-mac-donald/>

Denise K. Magner, “The Courting of Black and Ethnic Faculty Members,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 37, no. 5 (1990), A19-21. Magner took note of the head of the English Department at the University of Wisconsin at Madison explaining that the department offered “6 or 7 percent more money for a new Ph.D. who was a member of a minority group than one who is white.” Magner also quoted Herman Beavers, a black 1988 Ph.D. in English from Yale who found that he received multiple offers that “were as much as \$8,000 higher than what some of his white colleagues were being offered.” Magner’s article set off a cascade of denunciations and refutations.

The idea that there is a “bidding war” for highly qualified minority candidates for faculty positions continues to be strenuously disputed by advocates of diversity hiring. See “Common Fallacies about Hiring for Diversity,” Saint Mary’s College of California, March 16, 2016, <https://www.stmarys-ca.edu/common-fallacies-about-hiring-for-diversity>. Evidence for the bidding war is masked by broader evidence of salary gaps between ethnic-identified and other faculty members in higher education.

Diyi Li and Cory Koedel, “Representation and Salary Gaps by Race-Ethnicity and Gender at Selective Public Universities,” *Educational Researcher* 46, no. 7 (October 2017), 343-354. Li and Koedel examined faculty salaries for 4,047 individuals in six fields at 40 selective public universities during the 2015-2016 academic year. They found, “Black and Hispanic faculty earned lower salaries, on average, compared to white faculty—approximately \$10,000 to \$15,000 less per year.” (Quoted Denise-Marie Ordway.) “White, male faculty earn higher salaries than women, minorities at public universities,” *Journalist’s Resource*, September 18, 2017, <https://journalistsresource.org/studies/society/education/faculty-college-salaries-demographics-minorities-research/> ) But this gap has to be normalized against the fields in which the minority candidates work: “Black and Hispanic faculty were most likely to work in education departments and much less likely to work in science and math fields. More than 15 percent of faculty in the education leadership and policy department were black, compared to 0.7 percent of biology faculty. Hispanics comprised almost 8 percent of faculty working in education leadership and policy compared to 2.5 percent in chemistry.” (Ordway.) A major reason why there are so few black candidates in the higher paying academic fields is the scarcity of blacks who have earned doctorates in these fields. Until 2006, the statistics on earned doctorates in STEM fields were reported annually by the National Science Foundation. The numbers were so small that the NSF decided, beginning in 2006, to suppress them. Pre-1996 figures in mathematics, for example, can be found here: <http://www.math.buffalo.edu/mad/stats/index.html>. The NSF decision was reported by Scott Jaschik, “Data on Minority Doctorates Suppressed,” *Inside Higher Ed*, April 24, 2008. The Survey of Earned Doctorates continues to report aggregate data. In 2016, 2,868 Ph.D.s were awarded to “Black or African American” candidates in American universities, 28,786 were awarded to white candidates. One of the Survey’s charts, however, gives a glimpse of the continuing disparities in “Median Years to Doctorate” (Table 32). For 2,304 “Black or African American” Ph.D.s granted in 2016, it shows 27 percent in education (630), which is nearly twice the percentage of white Ph.D.s (13.8 percent) in that field. By contrast 4 percent of black Ph.D.s earned their degrees in the Physical Sciences and Earth Sciences, while more than 11 percent of white Ph.D.s do. The ratios are similarly skewed in other categories. In higher education jargon, this is called the “pipeline problem.” The relatively few black and other minority Ph.D.s in the fields in which minorities are underrepresented tend to command higher salaries, and the most dramatic race-adjusted salary disparities emerge in the competition for star candidates in these fields.

tenure application only to realize that they have not published enough. Zhang dismissed research and writing as “inconsistent standards for promotion.”<sup>661</sup>

Yale’s appointments of its cultural deans represent another form of race-conscious hiring. Each cultural center, the Afro-American, Native American, La Casa (Latino), and Asian-American student centers are staffed by a dean who represents the racial category of the center to which they are assigned. The Cultural Directors’ co-assignment as Assistant Deans of Yale College increase the prestige of the position.

## Revisiting the Black Studies Curriculum

Earlier in this report we examined the origins of Afro American Studies at Yale. Now called the Department of African American Studies, it has twenty-two members currently listed. Most, but not all, appear to be black. Eighteen of the twenty-two hold the rank of associate professor or full professor, and thus are probably tenured. Twenty of the twenty-two hold joint appointments with other academic departments. From the departmental listing it is impossible to tell whether those who are tenured earned that status in the Department of African American Studies or in another department in which they hold a joint appointment. The fields in which the faculty of the Department of African American Studies hold other titles are:

|                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| American Studies | French             |
| Anthropology     | History            |
| Art History      | History of Science |
| Classics         | Music              |
| Economics        | Poetry             |
| English          | Sociology          |
| Film             | Theatre            |

Seven of the twenty-two hold named professorships, indicating the highest rank of faculty member in the university. The following descriptions of individual faculty members are found on the faculty pages of Yale’s African American Studies Department’s website.

Rizvana Bradley, Assistant Professor of Film and Media Studies and African American Studies:

She studies African American cultural production...in relation to global and transnational artistic and cinematic practices... [and is working on] a critical examination of the black body across a range of

<sup>661</sup> Alex Zhang, “In And Out: A Revolving Door for Yale’s Professors of Color?” *Yale Daily News*, November 17, 2015.

experimental artistic practices that integrate film and other media.

Elijah Anderson, the William K Lanman Jr. Professor of Sociology, Director, Urban Ethnography Project; Professor of African American Studies:

Anderson is an “urban ethnographer” whose publications include *Code of the Street: Decency, Violence, and The Moral Life of the Inner City* (1999).

David Blight, the Class of 1954 Professor of American History, Director of the Gilder Lehrman Center, Professor of African American and American Studies:

Blight specializes in the history of American slavery and currently serves as Director of the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at Yale.

Daphne Brooks, Professor of African American Studies and Theater Studies:

Brooks is currently working on a three-volume study of black women and popular music culture...

Simone A. Browne, Visiting Associate Professor:

Browne conducts research on electronic waste and effective microorganisms to ask questions about the ecology of surveillance technologies...

Hazel Carby, the Charles C. & Dorathea S. Dilley Professor African American Studies & American Studies:

Professor Carby teaches courses on issues of race, gender and sexuality through the culture and literature of the Caribbean and its diaspora...

Aimee Meredith Cox, Associate Professor of Anthropology and African American Studies:

Cox is currently working on a project that explores the creative protest strategies individuals and communities enact to reclaim Black life in the urban United States.

Crystal Feimster, Associate Professor of African American Studies, History, and American Studies:

Feimster's academic focus is racial and sexual violence; currently, she is completing a project on rape during the American Civil War.

Jacqueline Goldsby, Chair, African American Studies Department; Professor of English, African American Studies and American Studies:

Goldsby studies the ways that authors and texts articulate un-archived, 'secret' and so, unspeakable developments that shaped American life during the long century of Jim Crow segregation's reign, from 1865 to 1965.

Emily Greenwood, Professor Classics:

Greenwood's research focuses on ancient Greek historiography, Greek prose literature of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, {and}... Classics and Post-colonialism.

Thomas Allen Harris, Senior Lecturer:

Allen is a filmmaker who uses media as a tool for social change. His most recent film is *Through a Lens Darkly: Black Photographers and the Emergence of a People* (2014).

Matthew Jacobson, the William Robertson Coe Professor of American Studies & History, Professor of African American Studies:

He focuses on race in U.S. political culture 1790–present, including U.S. imperialism, immigration and migration, popular culture, and the juridical structures of U.S. citizenship.

Gerald Jaynes, Professor of Economics & African American Studies; Acting Chair:

He is recognized as an expert on race relations and the economic conditions of African Americans, and has lectured and spoken on these topics at many universities and forums around the world.

Kobena Mercer, Director of Graduate Studies African American Studies and Professor of History of Art and African American Studies; African

### American Studies:

Mercer examines African American, Caribbean and Black British artists, including James VanDer Zee, Romare Bearden and Adrian Piper, Isaac Julien and Rotimi Fani-Kayode.

Christopher Miller, the Frederick Clifford Ford Professor of French & African American Studies; Director of Graduate Studies in French:

Miller regularly teaches courses on African and Caribbean literatures in French; postcolonial theory; French literature; film, literary and anthropological theory; and comparative African literatures.

Tavia Nyong'o, Professor of African American Studies, American Studies and Theatre Studies:

Nyong'o's studies contemporary aesthetic and critical theory with a particular attention to the visual, musical, and performative dimensions of blackness, as well as to the affective and techno-cultural dimensions of modern regimes of race.

Claudia Rankine, the Frederick Iseman Professor of Poetry:

Professor Rankine is the Frederick Iseman Professor of Poetry at Yale University. She currently teaches the course 'Contemporary Black American Women Poets: Experiments in the Lyric' with her colleague Maryam Parhizkar.<sup>662</sup>

Anthony Reed, Director of Undergrad Studies—African American Studies, and Associate Professor English & African American Studies:

Reed's research examines poetics and 20th/21st century African American and African diaspora literature and culture, especially poetry and music [and the] intersections of aesthetics and politics in literature, film and other media.

Carolyn Roberts, Assistant Professor, History of Science & History of Medicine; African American Studies:

<sup>662</sup> Course Catalogue, Yale University, <http://catalog.yale.edu/ycps/subjects-of-instruction/african-american-studies/#courseinventory>

Professor Roberts' research interests concern early modern medicine where she explores themes of race and slavery, natural history and botany, and African indigenous knowledge in the Atlantic world.

Edward Rugemer, Associate Professor American Studies and African American Studies, Associate Professor of History:

Rugemer teaches courses on African American history, on slavery and abolition in the Atlantic World, and on race, politics, and abolitionism in the antebellum United States.

Robert Stepto, the John M. Schiff Professor of English; Professor of African American Studies, Professor American Studies:

Stepto's principal fields are American and African American autobiography, fiction, poetry and visual arts since 1840.

Michael Veal, Professor of Music, African American Studies, and American Studies:

Veal's work has typically addressed the themes of aesthetics, technology and politics within the cultural sphere of Africa and the African diaspora.

The Yale College Programs of Study lists fifty-one courses in African American Studies.<sup>663</sup> These range from "South African Writing after Apartheid" to "An Introduction to Surveillance Studies."<sup>664</sup> Usually the connection to Africa American Studies is self-evident—"Dance and Black Popular Culture," "Race and Capitalism," "Ethnography of Policing and Race," "The Harlem Renaissance"—but sometimes not.

In 2002, the *Yale Daily News* reported that "AfAm studies emerges from controversy."<sup>665</sup> The "controversy" from which AfAm Studies emerged began in 2000, when the department's chairwoman, Hazel Carby, resigned in protest

663 Bulletin of Yale University, Yale University, "Yale College Programs of Study 2018–2019," <http://catalog.yale.edu/ycps/subjects-of-instruction/african-american-studies/#courseinventory>

664 From the course description: "The questions that shape the study of surveillance center on the management of everyday and exceptional life: personal data, privacy, race, gender, security, and terrorism, for example. This course will provide students with an overview of theories and concepts in this emerging field. Importantly, students will explore the history of surveillance and the origins of key technologies (CCTV, drones, whistleblowing, resistance). Through short stories, films, visual media and scholarly texts, students will be encouraged to develop critical reading and analytical skills as they explore the social consequences of surveillance in modern life." <https://hshm.yale.edu/undergraduate-major/undergraduate-courses>

665 Rebecca Dana, "Af-Am Studies Emerges from Controversy," *Yale Daily News*, January 17, 2002. The article reviewed the history of the department since 2000.

of comments by Yale President Richard Levin. In a ceremony honoring Henry Louis Gates, Levin praised Gates as a great scholar, and acknowledged his respect for Harvard's program:

We have watched with interest and admiration and a little jealousy as you built the Harvard program.

Carby took this as a slap in the face, and on February 9, resigned her position, writing:

To be jealous of Harvard's department is to invite a comparison that can only be interpreted to mean that we do not reach a standard of which you can be proud. If you are jealous of the Afro-American Studies Department at Harvard, why do you not support us with resources that are commensurate with our collective achievements and equal to theirs?<sup>666</sup>

Carby claimed that Levin's innocuous dinner comments were "evidence of the University's lack of commitment to the program" at Yale. Carby's resignation must have troubled Yale's trustees. On February 22, the Yale Corporation voted to rescind African American Studies' interdisciplinary status and elevate it to the status of a regular academic department.<sup>667</sup> With the vote, the Afro-American Studies Department opened a new chapter. It received a number of privileges, foremost being the right to grant tenure, a power long coveted by Afro-American studies departments at schools such as Wesleyan University. Carby promptly rescinded her resignation. The episode suggests that she staged yet another confrontation with the Yale administration in order to win additional concessions for Yale's black interest group.

The article that announced the program's new status as an official Department alluded to other issues that have plagued such programs at other colleges. Stephani Webb, a junior African American Studies major, expressed a desire for more classes. Because "there are always more Black issues," she said, Yale should offer courses that allow students to "explore" them in depth. Yale Professor William Foltz believed the department performed and educated students appropriately even if it did not do "a flashy job." But Foltz also revealed that Yale's African American Studies program had few courses in the social sciences. At the time, the department was "largely but not exclusively

<sup>666</sup> Unsigned article, "Black Faculty at Yale: Progress Stopped a Quarter of a Century Ago," *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, 27 (Spring 2000): 22.

<sup>667</sup> Denise K. Magner, "Yale Raises the Status of Its African-American Studies Program, and a Wounded Ego Heals," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 23, 2000.



literary.”<sup>668</sup>

The African American Studies Department’s new title came a few years before an interesting moment in “Black Academia.” In 2002, Harvard University saw the departure of several renowned black academics such as Cornel West and Anthony Appiah. Henry Louis Gates Jr. considered leaving Harvard but remained. Yale stayed out of the bidding war. “Recruitment isn’t a publicity game,” said Graduate School Dean Jon Butler when in 2005 he addressed another rumored mass exodus of black professors at Harvard.<sup>669</sup> Considering the low supply of star black professors in academe, it’s curious that Yale stood down while Princeton University took Cornel West and Anthony Appiah from Harvard. Yale’s Department of African American Studies did recruit two lower profile junior professors from Harvard University and New York University in 2002, Naomi Pabst and Alondra Nelson.<sup>670</sup> The episode is a glimpse of the market for black professors in academe. The low supply of black professors gives stars like Dr. Cornel West the flexibility to depart from institutions confident they will secure more prestigious titles and higher salaries elsewhere. Hazel Carby likely had the same idea in mind before the Corporation upgraded her program’s status.

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668 Dana.

669 Julie Post, “Yale Forges Battle for Harvard Profs,” *Yale Daily News*, February 21, 2005.

670 Brian Lee, “Af-Am Studies Snags 2 Junior Professors,” *Yale Daily News*, January 31, 2002.

# Conclusion

## Conclusion

At the beginning of the 1960s, Yale's administration felt pressure to admit more black students. Initially it resisted. Yale at the time was not opposed in principle to admitting more black students, but it was determined not to compromise its academic standards. It believed, rightly or wrongly, that to admit greater numbers of black students would mean admitting students who could not keep up with Yale's curriculum and Yale's other students.

In the aftermath of the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), the doctrine of racially "separate but equal schools" had been legally discredited, but education for the majority of black Americans remained distinctly lower in quality than for most whites. In these circumstances, what could an elite private university do to advance the cause of equality?

That question had no clear answer but universities such as Yale felt they couldn't shirk it. Yale's leaders believed they had a moral duty to do something, even if the path ahead was unclear. Their first steps, sensibly, were to try to prepare black students who were then in their sophomore year of high school for a more rigorous intellectual training. This took the form of Yale's six-week Summer High School Program, which began in 1964. The Summer High School, conducted on Yale's campus, was supplemented in 1966 by the Yale Transitional Year Program. The latter was a whole year of intensive instruction on the Yale campus for minority high school graduates whom Yale deemed intellectually promising, but who it also saw as unlikely to get into a selective college without more preparation.

Neither program lasted much beyond 1970. The initial funding ran out, but even before that, the ideas on which the Summer High School and the Yale Transitional Program had been based lost their credibility. Remedial education may have been what the students needed, but it was not what they wanted.

What happened at Yale during the 1960s, of course, reflected larger cultural shifts in the United States. The Civil Rights Movement gave way to the Black Power Movement. The rise of "expressive individualism" and the counterculture fueled the idea of people inventing novel identities in opposition to traditions or prevailing norms. An aggressive form of dissent became widespread, much of it centered on campus protest. The growing unpopularity of the Vietnam War fused with an anti-establishment ethos, and both found a hard edge in violent splinter groups. The cultural discontents of the era frequently focused on the claims of young people seeking "liberation" from the ways of the past. A new form of Marxism—cultural Marxism—gained ground with a rejection of the goal of a proletarian revolution. The aim of the new Marxists was to capture the sources of institutional authority. Colleges

and universities—especially elite universities—became a particular target of these efforts to confront and redefine the sources of social authority.

Neo-segregation at Yale was one of many odd, unplanned, and unexpected consequences of these momentous shifts. Yale set out in the early 1960s to integrate more black students into its student body. It hoped that this would be a significant step towards dismantling racial barriers in America at large. Yale's microcosm of racial integration would be a step in its own right to creating educated black leaders for America, but it would also inspire other colleges and universities to open their doors to young black students thirsty for higher education.

Yale's efforts at racial integration turned into a program that inspired and reinforced racial separatism and ultimately racial neo-segregation.

This did not happen all at once, but through a series of steps that involved a constantly changing cast of characters, institutional arrangements, and initiatives. In this report we have tried to reconstruct how one development led to the next: how temporary expedients became settled ways of doing things, how concessions at one turn fed escalations at another, and how what was once unthinkable eventually became unquestionable.

The unthinkable is now often on display at Yale. Recently a Yale student, Isis Davis-Marks '19, published an article in *The Yale Daily News* which began:

Everyone knows a white boy with shiny brown hair and a saccharine smile that conceals his great ambitions. He could be in Grand Strategy or the Yale Political Union. Maybe he's the editor-in-chief of the *News*. *He takes his classes. He networks. And, when it comes time for graduation, he wins all the awards.*<sup>671</sup>

Davis-Marks elaborates. This "white boy" is a racist who makes crude remarks about women, but he skates through life with a "saccharine smile" on his face and is awarded high positions. Davis-Marks faults herself only because she has failed to do enough to stop the advance of this abomination: "And, when I'm watching him smile that smile, I'll think that I could have stopped it." She ends, ominously, "I'm watching you, white boy. And this time, I'm taking the screenshot."<sup>672</sup>

Davis-Marks's essay is a straightforward exercise in racial invective. Hatred of this sort could be directed at any imagined enemy, but it matters in this case that the imagined enemy is white and male. It matters because Davis-Marks' indictment of him focuses on the privileges she imagines he will enjoy. She compares him explicitly to Brett Kavanaugh and Dick Cheney,

671 Isis Davis-Marks, "Evil Is Banal," *Yale Daily News*, February 7, 2019. <https://yaledailynews.com/blog/2019/02/07/davis-marks-evil-is-banal/>

672 *Ibid.*

and she grinds her teeth that she cannot do more to solve “the problem.” That “problem” is that Yale allows people like the “white boy” to thrive, despite their sexism, racism, and “assaults toward women.” She would like to see these “boys” ruined by their classmates, who she thinks should seize the opportunity to spread allegations far and wide.<sup>673</sup>

One recent male graduate of Yale answered Davis-Marks in an essay in which he notes her racism but focuses especially on her willingness to engage in self-righteous destruction of classmates based on her not-so-pent-up hatred of a whole category of human beings.<sup>674</sup>

**Davis-Marks faults herself only because she has failed to do enough to stop the advance of this abomination: “And, when I’m watching him smile that smile, I’ll think that I could have stopped it.”**

The *Yale Daily News* publication of Davis-Marks’s essay (and others like it) underscores how anti-white racial animus has been normalized at Yale. The stigmatization of white males has become widespread in American higher education. Yale is not exceptional in that regard, but Yale is exceptional because it is Yale. Views such as Davis-Marks’s must be understood as part of the currency of elite universities and

therefore a formative part of mainstream American culture.

And those views are, at root, an expression of racial exclusivity and separatism. They are the result of Yale’s five-decade trek from remedial education for underprivileged black high school students to triumphalist victimology and identitarianism.

This path began when some of the black students in 1967 formed the Black Students Alliance at Yale (BSAY). BSAY’s founders felt—perhaps understandably—that Yale was an unfriendly place for them. They found camaraderie in gathering together, but they also tapped into a tradition in the larger black community. That was the tradition of black groups that embraced and celebrated their own insularity. Such groups found in racial separateness an appealing answer to the pervasive racism in mainstream society. These self-segregating factions often insisted that white America could never be redeemed from its racist attitudes and practices. Reformation was, in this view, an illusory goal. The better answer to a racist society was black autonomy.

From its beginning, BSAY indulged in rhetorical forays into this anti-integrationist tradition. Its founders insisted that for Yale to make serious progress in attracting and retaining black students, the university would have to make more room for exclusively black programs and activities. Yale

<sup>673</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>674</sup> Karl Notturmo, “Yale Made Me Racist,” *American Greatness*, February 12, 2019. <https://amgreatness.com/2019/02/12/yale-made-me-racist/>

conceded—not in the spirit that it was giving up on its integrationist ideal, but because it was persuaded that black exclusivity would be a temporary step. At some point, this ladder would be kicked away, and Yale would at that point be fully and tranquilly integrated.

That never happened. Rather, BSAY and Yale became locked in a pattern of escalating demands met with increasing concessions. We have traced these through the creation of the African American Studies Program, the Black Panthers debacle, the creation of racially separate orientation programs, separate ethnic counselors, the “House” system of Cultural Centers, and the vigorous programming of the Cultural Centers. BSAY and the African American Cultural Center promoted not only racial separatism but also anti-Semitism and a general attitude of resentment towards other minorities and whites.

By 2015, when Professor Christakis was mobbed by a group of some 100 students, most of whom were black, accusing him of racism, Yale had become a place where the old ideal of racial integration was derided as itself a form of white racial oppression. This had been a long time coming. In 2005, Woody Brittain, Yale class of 1970 and one of the founders of BSAY, said in the Yale Alumni Magazine:

We want to counteract the natural tendency toward too much balkanization. People like to retreat to their comfort zone—but one of the great values of a place like Yale is to get people outside their comfort zones, forming friendships and working together. The Afro-American Cultural Center should be a leader in this effort. African Americans are the group that is most often accused of self-segregation. It is very powerful for this group to take the lead in reaching out. And more than that, the House has always been a place where issues of diversity are freely raised and freely discussed. We have the experience of what it means to be diverse.<sup>675</sup>

Brittain went on to extol the “the debates of several decades ago between William F. Buckley, Jr. and William Sloane Coffin” as part of the Yale he would like to see restored. “We want to bring some of that magic back.”<sup>676</sup>

Brittain, as a one-time organizer and promoter of the racially separatist BSAY, reimagines the group’s history and wishes for something better than what actually came of it. His good intentions are unmistakable but his expressions are temporizing. What is “too much” balkanization? Is there a level of balkanization that is just right? Since when did BSAY stand for getting people of diverse backgrounds to form friendships and work together? Some

<sup>675</sup> “Interview with Woody Brittain,” Yale Alumni Magazine, January/February 2005, 41.

<sup>676</sup> *Ibid.*

African Americans do practice “self-segregation,” but the Yale community is hardly a place where that is an “accusation.” More often it is extolled as a matter of pride.

But Brittain’s statement, even if hedged, was a welcome call for BSAY and Yale to rise above ethnic division. It went unheeded. Yale today is more segregated than at any point in the last half century. Just as the university’s leaders saw in the early 1960s, racial segregation is a blight on a Yale education and a detriment to America. Yale’s efforts to escape that situation have, in far too many cases, only made it worse.

The Supreme Court's 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* and the reinvigorated Civil rights Movement spurred American colleges and universities by the early 1960s to a good-faith effort to achieve racial integration. To overcome the shortage of black students who were prepared for elite academic programs, universities such as Yale began to admit substantial numbers of under-qualified black students. Disaster ensued. More than a third of these students dropped out in the first year and those who remained were often embittered by the experience. They turned to each other for support and found inspiration in black nationalism. What emerged by the late sixties were radical and sometimes militant black groups on campus, rejecting the ideal of racial integration and voicing a new separatist ethic.

On campus after campus, black separatists won concessions from administrators who were afraid of further alienating blacks. The pattern of college administrators rolling over to black separatists' demands came to dominate much of American higher education. The old integrationist ideal has been sacrificed almost entirely. Instead of offering opportunities for students to mix freely with students of dissimilar backgrounds, colleges promote ethnic enclaves, stoke racial resentment, and build organizational structures on the basis of group grievance.

Neo-segregation is the voluntary racial segregation of students, aided by college institutions, into racially exclusive housing and common spaces, orientation and commencement ceremonies, student associations, scholarships, and classes. This case study of Yale University is part of a larger project from the National Association of Scholars, *Separate but Equal, Again: Neo-Segregation in American Higher Education*.

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