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ANNUAL
REPORT TO
THE FACULTY:

THE UNIVERSITY
OF CHICAGO IN
THE 1960s AND 1970s

JOHN W. BOYER

OCCASIONAL PAPERS
ON HIGHER
EDUCATION IV

THE COLLEGE
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO

A N N U A L R E P O R T T O

T H E F A C U L T Y :

The University of Chicago in the 1960s and 1970s

I N T R O D U C T I O N

A

warm welcome to the millennial year. As we begin this year, I believe that the College is in robust good health. Our incoming class is extraordinary, as I have heard from those of you who are teaching the newest members of our community. I will not list all their scores and rankings, but I will remind you that applications were up 25 percent last year over the previous year, and that our admissions rate for this year's first-years was 47.5 percent. That number was over 70 percent a few years ago. The College today has more applicants than ever before and they are high-quality applicants—the kind of students we want. Early indications are that we are in for another strong admissions cycle during the current academic year.

Last year students at the other end of their careers in the College—our seniors—won many distinguished and highly competitive awards—three Rhodes Scholarships, a Marshall Scholarship, three Goldwaters, two Medical Scientist Training Program Fellowships, four

This report was originally presented to the Faculty of the College on October 19, 1999. I dedicate it to the memory of Edward H. Levi (1911-2000), eighth President of the University of Chicago.

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Barbara Bernstein (AB'70) — Regenstein Library under construction — Spring 1970.

Mellons, a Fulbright, ten National Science Foundation Fellowships, and a Truman, to mention only a few.

Between admission and graduation our students benefit from what I believe to be the best liberal education in the nation—an education which takes its identity from our unique and irreplaceable combination of a strong collegiate tradition of general education set within the diversity and resources of a great research university. Our revised curriculum went into effect this fall, and I am confident that it will continue to prove itself in the quarters and years to come. There will be kinks to work out, but I can already report an intriguing new core course in the Biological Sciences and the beginnings of an innovative series of capstone courses for seniors under the title of Big Problems. Our colleagues in Biology are showing that new approaches to general education in the sciences are both possible and welcome, and our colleagues working on the Big Problems courses imagine an innovative higher level of general education, one that is both general and truly inter-disciplinary and that is also appropriate to the maturity of our seniors in the College.

Another gratifying feature of this very busy Autumn Quarter is the full sections not only of elementary language courses but intermediate and advanced language courses as well. This is consistent with the growing popularity of language study, both on our campus and in our many new overseas programs. This past spring we awarded nearly fifty Foreign Language Acquisition Grants for advanced training in foreign language institutes and programs all over the world. I expect that we will nearly double that number for the summer of 2000.

We have also begun developing a cluster of intermediate and advanced writing courses that build on the work of our existing program in expository writing, the Little Red Schoolhouse. We started last year with “Writing Styles” and “Writing Biography” and we intend to follow up

their success by repeating at least one of these courses this year and adding “Writing Description” and “Writing Criticism.” In addition, we plan to add a distinguished non-fiction writer-in-residence, and I am pleased to report that we already have a pledge of \$250,000 from Robert Vare, an alumnus of the College and a former editor at the *New Yorker*, to support this appointment over the next five years. Mr. Vare has also made a commitment to continue this visiting professorship after the initial five-year period. We will seek our non-fiction writer-in-residence by means of a national search. The search, beginning this fall, will bring our first appointee to Hyde Park during the Winter and Spring quarters of 2001.

Just as we will seek to obtain funding for other visiting professorships in key areas of the curriculum, I remain committed to continuing to raise money in support of our program of College Professorships. These professorships signal the University’s commitment to joint excellence in research and teaching. I continue to find that College alumni are eager to support this program because it acknowledges in a brilliant and powerful way the ideal of the scholar-teacher and because it encourages the unity of our academic enterprise.

Two new internal initiatives also mark our commitment to teaching. We have constituted the Harper and Schmidt Instructors in the College as the Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts. The Society of Fellows will provide a department-like community for the Instructors which they will govern in collaboration with a Board of Senior Fellows to be co-chaired by David Bevington and John Kelly. I am confident that the society will enrich the intellectual experience of its members while they are at Chicago and thus redound to the benefit of our students and all of our colleagues.

The College, in collaboration with the four divisions and the Council on Teaching, has also established the Center for Teaching and Learning

under the directorship of Elizabeth Chandler. The center will provide us with a permanent institutional home for our many new and existing efforts to encourage the development of new general-education and upper-level courses; to think carefully about the practice of teaching, both in general and in specific disciplines; to train graduate students; and to make more visible inside and outside the University what we contribute to the practice of collegiate pedagogy and curriculum design.

Finally, given the extensive attention that we devoted to our general-education curriculum over the past few years, I believe that it is time for us to move on to a more systematic review of the academic and research programs available to our third- and fourth-year students. Above all, this means a careful review of our concentration programs. The concentrations are a vital part of our curriculum, and I believe it would be useful for us to examine our current practices and to ask ourselves whether we are in fact giving our third- and fourth-year College students an array of resources and a sufficient level of direct personal support that reflects the extraordinary intellectual and scholarly talents of the faculty of this premier research university. Our third- and fourth-year students deserve our very best efforts on their behalf.

I also hope that the departments and the other interdisciplinary concentrations will think about the possibility of identifying clusters of courses on the concentration level or even on the beginning graduate level that might be of intellectual interest to third- and fourth-year College students who do not wish to major in a given disciplinary area, but who, using their free electives, might wish to take a set of interrelated courses in that area. Toward both of these ends I have asked the Collegiate Masters and the College Curriculum Committee to begin a process of reviewing the academic experiences of and the academic resources available to our third- and fourth-year students in the College.

The students of the College are *our* students. We are responsible for providing them with those programs and courses and with those opportunities for individual mentorship that enable them to fulfill the strong intellectual ambitions that brought them to Chicago in the first place.

MEMORY AND IDENTITY THIRTY YEARS AGO



Last year was peculiar. In some ways it was the best, in other ways the worst of years. Much of last year was again taken up with discussions about our collective and institutional identity. Debates about identity also involve debates about memory. And debates about the identity of this particular university have tended to be a dialogic process involving the interrogation of our history, because we carry a particularly heavy burden of history—factual, mythic, and otherwise. Yet, I will argue today that in many respects our past is not past, that it lives on, and that we cannot readily consign ourselves to the happy possession of a fixed, always-to-be-treasured identity, since, logically, if our past is not yet past, then our historically constructed identity must be somewhat fragile and perhaps even malleable, in ways that we may like and in ways that we may dislike.

In thinking about memory, it might be useful in this the fourth and what will be the last of the historical reports that I will deliver (because of the proximity to the present), to recall a broad moment in the history of the University in which rhetorics of identity and rhetorics of crisis also became intertwined.

I have chosen for my subject the situation of the University thirty years ago, in 1969. 1969 was a momentous year in and for the University, and the consequences of that year—and the powerful events and

processes that flowed into and out of that year—are in some respects still with us. It was also a year of some consequence in my own life, since 1968–69 was the first year I spent on campus as a young graduate student in the Department of History. My story today thus involves the University in crisis or, more accurately, the University in two crises. One crisis occurred in the late 1960s, the other in the early 1970s, but both found zero points in 1969, leading to that time which, in turn, Acting President John Wilson would recall as “a most difficult period in the University’s history.”¹ One, the cultural and political crisis of January and February 1969, is a moment that is still much alive in the memories and even the emotions of our alumni/ae and more senior faculty. The other, the financial crisis of the early 1970s, was first announced in November of 1969 and saw patterns of fiscal austerity established which still (quietly) effect how we seek to operate as an institution that is clearly not a business, but that at the same time must pay its bills.

Both have their origins in the strange and wonderful decade of the 1960s. The 1960s was a decade of fundamental change, in our country and in American higher education. It is a paradoxical, Janus-faced decade. On the one hand it is the decade of student revolution, war protest, challenges to hierarchy, and student activism impelled by moralism and a sense of truth, even if opponents saw such activism as also encompassing anti-intellectualism, drugs, and petty violence, plus sheer ignorance about institutions and history. This version of the 1960s makes them out to be a time of urgency about many causes. They were also the site of a profound shift in cultural values that continues to define the world in which we live. The 1960s were times of boundary

1. “The State of the University,” *The University of Chicago Record*, November 18, 1975, p. 149.

exploration and intense challenges to the established cultural hierarchies, and they ended with a series of conflicts and crises that rocked many American institutions of higher education.²

On the other hand, we should recall that the 1960s also had a very different visage, one that was much more positive, optimistic, and gratifying for American colleges and research universities. The 1960s were, after all, a decade of massive expansion of university faculties, student funding, faculty appointments, research facilities, student housing—you name it and we built it. Indeed, at the time and for long thereafter the 1960s were characterized as the Golden Years of American higher learning. Federal funding increased, numbers of faculty positions exploded. It was a good time to be a senior faculty member—job offers were plentiful, new career chances beckoned. In fact, some would argue that the modern, hyper-competitive American professoriate of the later twentieth century, fortified by the ever present quest for the outside offer, has its origins in these years.

Writing in 1973, Harold Howe and Earl Cheit of the Ford Foundation would observe of the decade that had just concluded that it had about it a “certain state of euphoria”:

2. A contemporary report by several colleagues urging changes in our own Sociology Department observed early in 1969 that “[s]tudents all over the world have proclaimed a desire to participate in further decision-making about their own education and careers. Unfortunately, faculty response to these demands in most universities has been a polarized reaction embodying an untenably strong dichotomy between faculty and students, ignoring levels of differentiation within the student body, and failing to make use of the capacities the students have for making a contribution to the university and enhancing their own professional and personal development.” Robert W. Hodge, David Street, and Gerald D. Suttles, “An Experiment in the Governance of University Departments,” February 3, 1969, p. 1.

It was a time of expansion of graduate and undergraduate enrollments, of astronomical growth in Federal support for research and fellowships, and of optimism about private contributions based on the Ford Foundation's largesse and the matching response. It is for good reason that this period of the early 1960s is today called the 'golden years'. The universities felt that all was right with the world. The Foundation's part in this heady mix affirmed its role as prophet and savior. In retrospect it would seem that in 1966 both the universities and the Foundation had reason to believe that God was in His heaven and that they were in touch with Him. That divine situation lasted about three years.³

**OUR CLAIM TO THE GOLDEN YEARS:
THE FORD PROFILE OF 1965**



Perhaps the most telling local example of this positive thinking—Golden Years thinking—came in the Ford Plan voted by our Board of Trustees in March 1965. Since much of my subsequent story this afternoon is predicated on the fate of this plan, it is worthwhile to pause and to review briefly its most salient features. In many respects it was one of the boldest documents in the history of our University, worthy of the ambitions of a Harper or a Hutchins and in a sense seeking to combine the best of those very different visions of higher education. It was also (as far as

3. Harold Howe II and Earl F. Cheit, "The Situation of the Major Research Universities in the United States with Special Emphasis on the University of Chicago," September 15, 1973, Nr. 012658, Ford Foundation Archives (hereafter FFA). My warmest thanks to Alan Divack, a College alumnus (B.A. 1978) and the Archivist at the Ford Foundation, for assistance in finding these materials.

I can tell) the last comprehensive academic master plan the University ever undertook, so it may be of special historical significance as we enter the next century of our institutional life.

During the course of the 1960s, the Ford Foundation made available a series of giant challenge grants to leading universities and colleges around the country. This program, created in 1959 and designated as the Special Program in Education initiative, was an attempt by the Ford Foundation "[t]hrough substantial assistance on a substantial scale . . . to make a significant contribution to the process by which a few universities and colleges can reach and sustain a wholly new level of academic excellence, administrative effectiveness, and financial support."⁴ Between 1960 and 1967, the foundation allocated huge sums of money to sixteen universities and sixty-one colleges. In total, until its termination in 1968, the program spent \$349 million which, in turn, generated an additional \$991.85 million in matching funds.⁵

The Special Program in Education was a splendid and even visionary poster child for the post-Sputnik élan, expansionism, optimism, and self-confidence of the early and mid 1960s. Along with Stanford, Columbia University, and NYU, the University of Chicago was the recipient of the largest of these matching grants, \$25 million in 1965.⁶ To secure such a grant, a university had to undergo a major long-term planning process, and it had to persuade the foundation that its goals were both serious and realistic.

4. "Discussion Paper. Special Program in Education," September 1963, Nr. 002221, FFA.

5. "Termination of the Special Program in Education. Information Paper and Recommended Action," November 1968, Nr. 001356, FFA.

6. In 1999 dollars this would amount to \$125 million. The grant was to be matched on a 3:1 basis.

Immediately upon taking office as Chancellor in 1961, George Beadle contacted Clarence Faust, former Dean of the College and then vice-president of the Ford Foundation, to explore the possibility of support from the Ford Foundation for the University of Chicago. Initially, the reaction of the foundation was noncommittal, since the original purpose of the Special Program in Education was to assist promising colleges and universities attain a stronger status, not to provide huge new resources to the elite research universities.⁷ It required various letters and visits by Beadle, soon supplemented by those of his newly appointed Provost, Edward Levi, to merit the University the chance to apply for a major challenge grant in the summer of 1964.⁸ Final approval for the University to submit

7. In February 1963, Beadle reported to the board that he had visited President Henry Heald of the foundation to ask for a \$25,000,000 grant: "The President [Beadle] indicated that it was difficult to appraise the prospects for this grant; that it appeared that the Foundation may be searching for a formula that would warrant and justify the making of a grant of this size, and for this purpose, to the University of Chicago rather than to some other University which may have similar problems and needs; that although he did not receive any great encouragement as a result of his discussions with the Foundation, on the other hand, the officials of the Foundation made no attempt to discourage him." Minutes of the Board of Trustees, February 14, 1963, Department of Special Collections.

8. In an inter-office memorandum, Henry Heald reported on April 8, 1964, that "Mr. Faust and I had lunch with Chancellor Beadle and Provost Levi on April 1, 1964. They outlined the important progress which has been made at the University since Beadle came there and emphasized the need of the University for a large scale addition to resources. They still hope that the Ford Foundation will find some way to assist them in this endeavor by making a major grant in the pattern of the Special Program. . . . Our problem remains the question of whether we want to extend the Special Program to universities of this general quality, whether we could make a special exception for Chicago and what effect it would have on our relationships with the other half-dozen top universities were we to do so." FFA.

a proposal came in early July 1964, and Gladys Hardy, a Ford program assistant, visited campus later that month to assist our local administrators in planning the organization of the Profile.

When he assumed the Provostship in the late spring of 1962, Edward Levi had intended to launch such a comprehensive planning process in any event, so Ford's planning requirements and our own internal dynamics fit well together. Edward Levi recognized that even though Lawrence Kimpton had saved the neighborhood during the 1950s, the University had suffered severe losses in faculty and student enrollment, and that a major intellectual and academic recapitalization effort had to be initiated immediately. Working with the Deans and the Directors of all the units, Edward Levi pulled together an enormous body of data about the University's situation and its future needs, and between the fall of 1964 and early 1965 he almost single-handedly fashioned this material into an ambitious two-volume report, known as the Ford Profile.

The Ford Profile was debated extensively on February 11, 1965, by the Board of Trustees, and on March 15, 1965, the board voted unanimously to adopt the Ford plan as the University's basic strategy for the future. In presenting the plan to the board, George Beadle emphasized that this was in fact a plan and that Ford expected the Trustees to stand behind it: in voting for the plan, "[t]his implies agreement in general with the projected needs for the next 10 years and the plans for raising the funds needed to meet these needs. It is tremendously important that there be substantial consensus among all of us—Board, Officers, Faculty—for this will determine the future of the University."⁹ The

9. George Beadle, Handwritten Notes for Presentation to the Board of Trustees, March 15, 1965, Ford Profile files, Department of Special Collections, The University of Chicago Library.

enthusiasm of the board may be gauged by a private letter in June 1965 from Robert Guinness, an executive vice-president of Standard Oil and a member of the Chicago board to Julius Stratton, President of M.I.T. and a member of the Ford board of trustees, lobbying for Ford's approval of our application. Guinness wrote that "there exists at Chicago an Administration and a Board of Trustees who are prepared to undertake the task of providing the essential financial support required. Building on great strengths, existing and potential, a monumental educational achievement is bound to result."¹⁰

The brilliance of the plan was that it accommodated almost everything the University seemed to need, and we needed a great deal. Edward Levi would later comment to the board in October 1966 that Chicago was not a university created *ad seriatim*—if Harper had tried to do that, the University would never have come about—but this also meant that it was very difficult to repair or rehabilitate it *ad seriatim*.

The logic of the plan presented to Ford was simple. We would continue to expand the total number of faculty in the arts and sciences and the professional schools. Having gone from 596 faculty in 1960 to 692 in 1965, we would continue to expand to 974 in 1975. Thus, the Ford plan assumed that Chicago would continue to increase its non-clinical faculty ranks over and above the 96 new faculty positions that the University had *already* authorized from 1960 to 1965. Total faculty, including clinical ranks, would rise from 922 in 1965 to 1,227 in 1975.

Faculty compensation in the arts and sciences and professional schools would simultaneously rise from \$10.9 million in 1965 to \$26.1 million in 1975. We would also embark on major capital improvements

10. Robert C. Guinness to Julius A. Stratton, June 25, 1965, Ford Profile files, Department of Special Collections.

including a new research library for the humanities and social sciences, a new science library, a new chemistry building, a new geophysical sciences building, a new high energy physics building, new research and teaching facilities in the biological sciences, as well as new facilities for music and the arts. Also included were the remodeling of Cobb Hall and the transformation of Harper Library as an administrative center for the College. Equally important, we would invest \$21 million in new undergraduate residence halls, \$13.9 million in new and remodeled graduate student facilities, \$2 million in a new student theater, \$1 million in a new skating rink, and \$3.5 million for new gymnasiums and a new swimming pool.

This massive recapitalization of the University would be paid for by more than doubling the level of tuition income available to the University. This doubling would result from increasing the size of the College—which would rise from 2,150 students in 1965 to 4,000 students by 1975—and from rising graduate enrollments (another 1,100 arts and sciences graduate students would also be added, who would bring in additional tuition revenue, as well as 585 additional professional school students). In addition, a massive fund-raising effort that would focus on unrestricted giving as part of a \$300-million capital campaign would run from 1965 to 1975. Phase One of the Campaign for Chicago—with a goal of \$160 million over the next three years—was launched in the autumn of 1965, concurrent with the announcement of the Ford grant.

The gamble of the Ford Plan was that it presumed a series of years of planned budget deficits, after which the University would return to stable and balanced budgets through extraordinary success in generating new, unrestricted gift income and its very optimistic enrollment targets. But the real strength of the proposal lay in the way it combined detailed and thoughtful financial and programmatic analysis with a vision of

what Chicago once was and what it must continue to be as a whole and totally integrated university. Edward Levi was often wont to talk about Chicago as “one” university, and this principle was no more acutely present than in the Ford Plan. The core arguments of the plan were framed not in monetary terms, but in value-based, educational terms. For George Beadle and Edward Levi the stakes were high—merely to continue to survive, as we did in the 1950s, could not be enough. Indeed, merely surviving was a recipe for ultimate disaster. Rather, the bold aim of the plan was to make a great university still greater and still stronger, restoring that luster of distinction that had been so imperiled in the 1950s:

It is asked today whether the University can continue to serve as a leader, a teacher, a critic, and as a creative force exerting deep influence on other universities, on education in general, and on society as whole. In other words, there is a basic question of existence, because if Chicago cannot live on in a prominent position, then it has run its course and should fade away. The plans set down by faculty, administrators, and Trustees indicate a determination to thrive and grow.

Levi’s draft profile boldly asserted that “[t]he University of Chicago is confident it has enough associations and roots in the region to match a Ford grant of unprecedented magnitude, a grant that by its size and terms would demand the ultimate in effort and contribution.”¹¹

11. The Profile exists in two versions. The full Profile is a two-volume manuscript on file in the Ford Foundation Archives in New York City. The extensive back-up data for the Profile, including many drafts of planning statements on the future of the divisions, schools, and the College generated by Levi and

The officials at the Ford Foundation seemed to concur. In a fourteen-page docket memorandum that Clarence Faust submitted to the Ford Foundation’s president, Henry Heald, in August 1965, the staff of the Special Program in Education argued that even though the original initiative excluded “the half dozen or so international leaders among American universities, including the University of Chicago” in favor of the “second echelon of private universities in the country,”

[i]t has been clear from the beginning, however, that there are special circumstances at the University of Chicago that might justify its inclusion in SPE. As a relatively young institution, it does not have nearly the depth of financial support from wealthy alumni that characterizes some of the Eastern seaboard universities. Moreover, there has even been some question as to whether Chicago still belongs among the few American private universities of international renown. It is only now beginning to emerge from a series of academic and financial crises extending back over more than two decades.

The report then asserted that

[a]fter a thorough study of the institution, the staff is convinced that the University of Chicago should be included in the program and that a substantial Foundation grant would enable the

others, are in the Ford Profile files in the Department of Special Collections. In addition, the University also produced a detailed executive summary, “Summary of a Profile. The University of Chicago.” My quotes are taken from the “Summary,” p. 3.

University to regain and solidify the leading position it once held among international centers of academic excellence.

Among the many features of the plan that the Ford officials found fascinating was Levi's vision for the College:

After more than two years of planning and debate the University in the fall of 1965 will embark on still another phase of its thirty-five year experiment with undergraduate education. The new plan for the College is largely the work of Provost Edward Levi and will be administered by a new Dean of the College, Wayne Booth. The undergraduate student body will be grouped into five sub-colleges, four of which will mirror the four graduate divisions, while the fifth will be an inter-divisional multi-disciplinary unit. . . . The individual sub-colleges will have considerable autonomy in the development of curriculum, and it is hoped that they will ultimately be independently endowed. One of the key objects of the plan is to provide units of instruction and of residence which are small enough to allow the kind of intimate association and discussion which has been of such value in the small liberal arts college and which is often lost in the large university context. . . . The quality of the College faculty will be raised through selective salary increases and post-doctoral fellowships. An overriding goal of the new plan is to associate the faculty of the graduate divisions more directly and more continuously in the development of the undergraduate curriculum and in undergraduate teaching.

The resulting discussion among the members of the Ford board was summarized as follows:

The University of Chicago, through quiet but heroic efforts over the past decade, has extricated itself from a state of disarray which could have spelled ruin for a lesser institution with less capable leadership. The Ford Foundation's ability to make a very large grant to the University at the present time represents a rare opportunity to contribute decisively to the renaissance of what once was and may well again be one of the world's great universities.¹²

On October 15, 1965, the Ford Foundation officially notified the University that our proposal had met with approval. Five days later the University announced the Campaign for Chicago. The next several years were exciting, to say the least. Much of the Ford Plan was in fact realized. Faculty growth continued apace, so that by 1970–71 we had a total of 1,108 faculty at the University of Chicago, a figure that exceeded the number of faculty that the Ford Plan predicted for that year by twenty-seven positions.¹³ Indeed, as early as 1967 George Beadle proudly reported to the foundation that the increases in the faculty were running ahead of the totals predicted in the Ford Plan.¹⁴ The continued

12. Clarence Faust to Henry T. Heald, August 17, 1965, pp. 2–3, 10–11, 14, Grant File PA65-367, FFA.

13. The Profile projected 1,081 faculty in 1970–71, whereas we ended up with 1,108. See John T. Wilson, "Notes on the 1970–71 Academic Budget," *Presidents' Papers*, Addenda, Series 97-6, Box 20, Department of Special Collections.

14. George Beadle to Howard R. Dressner, October 9, 1967, Grant File 65-367, FFA.

success of the new University Professorships helped greatly, as did the flexibility and new resources that allowed incremental faculty numbers to increase impressively. Faculty salaries also increased apace—by 1966 Edward Levi would inform the board that we were third in the country, just slightly behind Harvard. Levi observed that “I think we can say that on balance the University is much stronger in terms of its faculty now than it was in 1960 and that if one looks at the new faculty appointed over the ones that left, we come out ahead, and then if one looks at the younger faculty who have come along and we have retained, we come out even more ahead.”¹⁵ Another and more sober way of viewing the implications of the 45 percent increase in faculty numbers that occurred between 1959 and 1969 was offered by Levi in 1969:

In 1959 total faculty compensation for professors and associate professors was \$6,761,000. Endowment income [in 1959] was \$6,939,000. This comforting proportion, if that is what it was, no longer exists. Total faculty compensation for professors and associate professors today is \$18,377,000, and endowment income is \$11,632,000.¹⁶

While the departments profited from the additional incremental appointments, they also profited from slow adoption of appointment lines formerly reserved for the College. Over time, this process of the assumption of College lines via the strategy of joint appointments not only resulted in the demise of the independent College faculty, but it

15. Transcribed Remarks in the Minutes of the Board of Trustees, October 15, 1966, p. 10. Department of Special Collections.

16. Edward H. Levi, *The State of the University*, November 4, 1969, p. 2.

had substantial implications for the numbers of faculty available to do general-education section teaching in the College. I will have more to say on this subject later in this report.

Long-standing research and capital needs were also to be met. On the facilities front the Joseph Regenstein Library was funded. If one building could symbolize the Golden Years at Chicago, it would be this magnificent edifice, the funding for which was secured in 1965, the cornerstone laid in 1968, and the official opening held in 1970. Regenstein Library was also a tribute to the efficacy of the Ford grant, for George Beadle happily reported to McGeorge Bundy in September 1966 that “the Ford challenge grant was a powerful factor in helping us get the ten million dollar pledge [from the Joseph Regenstein Foundation].”¹⁷

But many other new research buildings were authorized and completed in the later 1960s and early 1970s: Hinds Geophysical Sciences Laboratory, the Searle Chemistry Building, the new High Energy Physics Building, the new International Studies Building, Wyler Children’s Hospital, the A. J. Carlson Animal Research Facility, the Social Services Center, and the Cummings Life Science Center: altogether a necessary and impressive list.

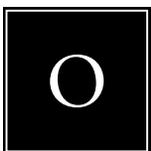
But the biggest challenge in the Ford Plan concerned student facilities, especially student housing. The original plan called for “[n]ew residence halls, a new gymnasium and other athletic facilities, additional student common rooms . . . all these items will be part of a sustained move toward a brighter, more rewarding campus for the College.” Levi admitted that “the University now faces the absolute necessity for substantial plant improvement Three fourths of the \$166,000,000 needed for plant

17. George Beadle to McGeorge Bundy, September 12, 1966, Grant File 65-367, FFA.

must be available within the next five years.”¹⁸ I will also return to the issue of student housing and student morale later in this report.

It was in this atmosphere of guarded optimism, but also cautious realism that the University entered the critical and decisive calendar year of 1969.

**CULTURAL CHALLENGES
TO THE GOLDEN YEARS:
THE SIT-IN OF FEBRUARY 1969**



On January 30, 1969, approximately four hundred students occupied the Administration Building. The story of the 1969 sit-in is relatively simple, but its meaning is not. Let me begin with what we know actually happened. The immediate cause of the sit-in was the decision by the Division of the Social Sciences, confirmed by the central administration, to deny renewal to Marlene Dixon, a first-term assistant professor in the Department of Sociology and in the Committee on Human Development.

The 1969 sit-in was the final in a series of public actions by students beginning in the 1965–66 academic year. The first sit-in at the University of Chicago had occurred in May 1966 and was directly related to the Vietnam War; some alums would argue that it was historically more influential and momentous than its younger cousin of 1969. Early in May 1966 George Beadle had announced that the University would provide class ranks along with other academic information to draft boards for students seeking deferments, but that each individual student would have the right to determine whether this information would be forwarded to

18. “Summary of a Profile,” pp. 6, 15.

his draft board or not. Students opposed to the University’s ranking of male students in accord with requirements of the Selective Service system quickly mobilized under the nominal leadership of Students Against the Rank (SAR). Unable to force a reversal of the University’s decision, they organized a sit-in in the Administration Building. The sit-in began on Wednesday, May 11 and ended on Monday, May 16. Initially approximately 400 students entered the building, but the number dwindled as time went on, with most students leaving within three days.

Still other students—Students for a Free Choice—rallied to the University’s position, with over 350 signing a petition in which they expressed their desire that the University be able to submit such information to the Selective Service system.

The 1966 sit-in was itself a historic event, since it was one of the first major sit-ins of a university administration building in the 1960s, and it set a pattern for other sit-ins to follow on other U.S. campuses. Interestingly, the University did not discipline the students who participated, but the Council of the Senate issued a recommendation in its aftermath that, in the future, such disruptions would be subject to “appropriate disciplinary action, not excluding expulsion.”

The late spring of 1967 brought a second and shorter sit-in (officially called a “study-in”) in the Administration Building, also over the issue of the draft and student ranking. This time the University acted to enforce disciplinary penalties, with an *ad hoc* faculty disciplinary committee chaired by Harry Kalven imposing one- or two-quarter suspensions on fifty-eight students in early June 1967.¹⁹ This second

19. Of the fifty-eight students, seventeen were first-year undergraduates, whose suspensions were immediately suspended, on the grounds that they were new to the school and thus had not been involved in the 1966 sit-in. Eleven graduate students were involved, the rest were undergraduates.

sit-in was to prove important, since it established the administrative, legal, and disciplinary precedents for how the administration would handle the big sit-in of 1969.

In the aftermath of the 1966 sit-in, the Council of the Senate urged that the University create a special committee on faculty-student relationships. The committee, chaired by Robert Page, finally reported in April 1967. The report itself was a compromise document, but more interesting were its two supplementary statements—one written by the committee’s student members, who argued that students should have substantial rights in all areas of University governance; the other by a long-serving member of the College faculty, Gerhard Meyer, who argued that in extracurricular affairs students should be given a wide range of rights, but that in academic affairs key decisions must continue to rest with the faculty.

Whereas the students asserted that “students must play a significant role in the decisions made in all academic units,” Meyer in contrast argued that

In general, faculty members as compared with students must be considered as so much more competent and committed to the exacting demands of the academic life, that is, the pursuit and effective communication of truth, that differences in degree must be taken as differences in kind. This forbids any simple notions of “equality”= as in general any simple applications of political terms to the academic community appear to be inappropriate. . . . There is little reason to fear that giving faculty members the major or even the sole responsibility for important academic decisions

would permit, or foster, arbitrary decisions unresponsive to the needs and rights of students as students and as human beings.²⁰

The gulf between Gerhard Meyer’s statement and the wishes of the students could not have been wider. As a conflict between faculty expertise *qua* faculty authority and student “rights,” this exchange focused on the core realm of power within the University, namely faculty prerogatives to determine academic policies.

Meyer’s comments, offered by one of the most devoted teachers from the old Hutchins College, are helpful in understanding the reactions of many senior faculty members to what was to happen in 1969. For Gerhard Meyer, there were key aspects of institutional self-governance in which faculty authority was not only supreme but singular and unilateral as well. The sit-in of 1969 would challenge Meyer’s values involving faculty expertise *qua* authority, just as it would challenge conventional norms about adherence to the rule of law and constituted procedures. It was not, in its majority sense, about the SDS or about Vietnam or about racism. For many of the students who occupied the Administration Building and a great many of their supporters, it was about student influence, student prerogatives, and student authority.

Beyond the two sit-ins of 1966 and 1967 and the events of early 1969, the campus saw a general radicalization of student opinion that assumed many forms and that seems to have escalated over time. This transformation took place within the crescendo of larger events on the scene of American higher education and American politics more

20. “Supplementary Statement by Gerhard E. O. Meyer,” p. 2, filed with the “Report of the Faculty-Student Committee on Faculty-Student Relationships,” April 18, 1967.

generally. Alan Brinkley has recently characterized 1968 as “the most traumatic year in the life of the nation since the end of World War II.”²¹ This was, after all, the year of the Tet Offensive in January, the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert F. Kennedy in April and June, and the riots surrounding the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in August 1968. During the spring of 1968 it has been estimated that, following the major SDS-led student uprising at Columbia University in April, over 200 student demonstrations occurred on at least 100 American college campuses.²² That the Columbia authorities opted to use the police to clear their occupied buildings eight days into the strike—an intervention which turned violent, with hundreds of arrests and many injured students followed by accusations of a police riot—confirmed an extremely unattractive tactical precedent that was certainly available elsewhere.

One way to characterize this escalation on our own campus might be to recall that in the fall of 1966, when the Department of History voted to terminate Jesse Lemisch, a radical first-term assistant professor who was also popular with students, there were minor protests in the form of two student petitions, letters to the *Maroon*, an *ad hoc* student committee, a public meeting of 200 students with the chairman of the department, William H. McNeill, and even handbills distributed by

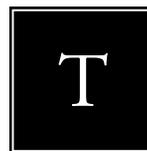
21. Alan Brinkley, “1968 and the Unraveling of Liberal America,” in Carole Fink, Philipp Gassert, and Detlef Junker, eds., 1968: *The World Transformed* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 220.

22. Kirkpatrick Sale, *SDS* (New York, 1973), p. 445; Stanley Rothman and S. Robert Lichter, *Roots of Radicalism. Jews, Christians, and the Left*. Revised edition (New Brunswick, N.J., 1996), p. 36; Irwin Unger, *The Movement. A History of the American New Left 1959–1972* (New York, 1974), p. 115.

local SDS organizers against a senior faculty member viewed as particularly opposed to Lemisch’s case.

Two years later, however, when the broadly similar Marlene Dixon case unfolded, 400 students occupied the Administration Building.

THE SIT-IN OF 1969



The fall of 1968 saw renewed incidents of political protest, including attempts by students from the local SDS to disrupt Edward Levi’s inaugural civic dinner in mid-November. However, aside from general unhappiness among students over the housing situation and in spite of the best efforts of the SDS and other groups to mobilize student opinion, the University might have made it through the rest of the academic year relatively unscathed. Then, as if a providential historical materialism had intervened, an issue emerged in December 1968 that allowed radical students to galvanize support among a broader group of graduate and undergraduate students.

The Department of Sociology had two radical junior faculty members. Richard Flacks had been hired in 1964 and renewed for a second term in 1966; Marlene Dixon came to the University on a joint appointment between Sociology and the Committee on Human Development in 1966 and was scheduled for a renewal decision in the autumn of 1968. Both became extremely popular with graduate students and undergraduates, and both became informal mentors to politically oriented students, some of whom were SDS activists or at least informally connected to SDS.

In mid-December 1968 the University informed Marlene Dixon that her contract would not be renewed, based on a unanimous negative

decision of the senior faculty of the Department of Sociology.²³ Student unhappiness with the results of the Sociology review was immediately apparent. On January 9, 1969, an *ad hoc* group of students calling themselves the Committee of 85 met and issued “demands” that the criteria for the decision be made public, that Marlene Dixon be rehired, and that students have equal control with faculty in all future decisions on hiring and rehiring of faculty. They set an initial deadline of January 13 for their demands to be met.

On January 12 Dean of the Social Sciences D. Gale Johnson announced a meeting to discuss in general terms the procedures for appointment and promotion in the division, but not the Dixon case in particular. Attended by several hundred students, this meeting took place in Judd Hall on January 17, but Johnson, as well as William Henry and Morris Janowitz, chairs of Human Development and Sociology, and various other faculty members walked out after the students demanded that the meeting focus specifically on Dixon’s case. The next day Dean Johnson requested that Dean of Faculties John Wilson appoint a special University-wide faculty committee to review the Dixon decision. This seven-person committee was chaired by Hanna H. Gray, at that time an associate professor in the Department of History and the College.

On Monday, January 27, approximately 150 students staged a two-hour sit-in in the office of D. Gale Johnson.²⁴ The students entered the office without permission and searched Johnson’s files, again without

23. The senior faculty of the Committee on Human Development had offered a contrasting recommendation, namely, renewal for a second three-year term. The University accepted Sociology’s recommendation.

24. Already on January 21 a rump meeting of thirty-three Sociology graduate students had voted eighteen in favor, fourteen against, and one abstention to pursue a demand for the rehiring of Marlene Dixon so that case could be

permission. A vote was taken to seize the files, but this was not actually done. Already on January 23 the “Committee of 85” had sent Edward Levi a letter renewing their demands and setting a new deadline of January 29. The deadline came and went, with Levi issuing a general letter rejecting the students’ demands for co-control of the hiring process and insisting that it was inappropriate for a President or Provost to appoint someone to a department against the wishes of that department.

The final step in the process of escalation occurred at a mass meeting on Wednesday afternoon, January 29, attended by approximately 1,200 people in Mandel Hall. After much maneuvering, and after some of the original attendees had left the hall, 444 students voted to undertake militant action, whereas 430 voted against such action, with 82 students abstaining. Later that evening a second meeting was held in Kent 107 at which a smaller number of students then voted to undertake a sit-in in the Administration Building, beginning the next day, Thursday, January 30.

The actual sit-in began around noon. By the late afternoon hundreds of students had entered and encamped in the Administration Building. Having occupied the building, a student “Negotiating Committee” then sent Edward Levi a four-point set of demands: the immediate rehiring of Marlene Dixon; the acceptance in principle of equal student-faculty power in the hiring and firing of professors; agreement that any pay loss suffered by employees as a result of the sit-in be recompensed by the University; and amnesty for all those participating in the sit-in, since “we consider our actions legitimate and not subject to discipline.”

reopened and reconsidered under a new process involving participation by the graduate students and with greater attention to Dixon’s teaching. They also voted that “we will implement these demands by any means necessary.” Memo of January 21, 1969, copied to the *Maroon*.

The response of the University was to work through the Committee of the Council of the Senate and the Office of the Dean of Students, Charles D. O’Connell. The committee issued a statement strongly supporting Edward Levi on February 1, 1969, and refusing to bargain or negotiate under the threat of coercion. More importantly, the committee immediately appointed a special nine-member University Disciplinary Committee on January 29, the day before the sit-in actually began, to be chaired by Dallin Oaks of the Law School.²⁵

At 7:30 a.m. on January 30, Charles O’Connell issued the first of many public warnings to the effect that “any student who takes part in such activities in any university building will be subject to disciplinary measures, not excluding expulsion.” University officials immediately activated procedures to distribute summonses to disciplinary hearings to students who refused to leave the building. In the first hours of the sit-in, faculty and staff handed out no less than sixty summonses to students who had entered and remained in the building. By the end of the first day a total of 115 summonses to disciplinary hearings had been issued (some of which were duplicates).

During these crucial days, Edward Levi was under intense pressure from some senior faculty members to call in the police or other external authorities. With the Committee of the Council’s support, however, he opted for a “wait-the-protesters-out” strategy designed to avoid the invocation of external civil authority. But this strategy was also premised, in Levi’s mind, on the University immediately and resolutely deploying strong internal disciplinary procedures against those occupying the building.

25. The Oaks Committee also had four student observers, three of whom subsequently resigned and were replaced.

Who were the student protesters and what did they want? We have specific information only on those students who were suspended and expelled, and they in turn constituted only a subset of the total number of students who participated. The latter fact was one of the causes of student unhappiness with the disciplinary process, since it is evident that many more students than the 165 summoned actually participated in the sit-in. As for the students who actually entered and stayed in the Administration Building, the purposes that carried them there were varied. Some students thought issues of political power were most urgent; others felt specific demands of student participation in academic affairs were most relevant. Although difficult to sort with precision, to outside observers like myself²⁶ the students in the Administration Building seemed to divide into three major categories: those for whom the occupation was about national or external issues—racism, the war, etc., as much or more than it was about local issues of student rights; those for whom the primary motives were student rights, quality of teaching, and the retention of Marlene Dixon, but who were less interested in national political issues; and finally those who were random observers, curiosity seekers, and excited and enthusiastic hangers-on who got caught up in the psychological melee and the atmosphere of carnivalesque excitement. Such diversity is not uncommon in revolutionary *journalées* of this sort—it will

26. In the interests of full disclosure, I was a first-year graduate student in January 1969 who did not participate in the sit-in, who was strongly opposed to the occupation of the Administration Building and to the radical demands professed by SDS, but who was very sympathetic with the concerns of the graduate and undergraduate students relating to the quality of teaching on campus. At the time, however, I would have been seen to be, and perhaps even felt myself to be, a supporter of Edward Levi’s strategy for dealing with the sit-in.

be quite familiar to scholars of the French Revolution.²⁷ Among the first group—the clearly political—were the majority of the local members of SDS, but even SDS had several factions within it which became more acutely divided as the sit-in wore on.

Ad hoc messages from within the Administration Building in early February glossed further demands, including creation of a “Suppressed Studies Division in the University to study the working class, black and third-world peoples, women, and radical movements.”²⁸ The sit-in also came to have a forceful feminist tinge, raising issues about the status of women at the University within the context of special meetings and press conferences.

The stalemate between the sit-iners and the administration lasted two weeks. By February 3, the number of students in the building was rumored to be down to about 175. To bolster their efforts, some students tried to engineer a strike against classes in the Social Science Building on Tuesday, February 11, which failed completely.

On February 12, the Gray Committee’s report on the Marlene Dixon case was released. The review committee found that the procedures used in the original evaluation had been fair and appropriate, but it also recommended a one-year extension of Dixon’s contract, but only in the Committee on Human Development. Later the same day, Marlene Dixon rejected the proposal out of hand and announced she no longer wished to teach at the University.

27. The plebiscitary pattern of taking votes to decide key issues “on the spot” is also reminiscent of *journée*-like behavior.

28. Undated memo, probably from February 2 or 3, 1969. I am grateful to my colleagues Lorna Straus and Philip Hoffmann for access to their collections of contemporary printed materials and broadsides relating to the 1969 sit-in which they assembled at the time.

With the issuance of the Gray Report and with Dixon’s response, the original justification for the sit-in had been eliminated. Sometime in the second week of February, a secret meeting occurred between two graduate student leaders of the sit-in and Julian Levi in a back office of the old Y.M.C.A. on 53rd Street to discuss the situation. According to the recollections of one of these students, Levi was calm and dispassionate, commenting that the sit-iners had raised some interesting issues, but also observing that they were going to lose and pointing out that the University’s most loyal financial supporters were likely to be completely unaffected by the kinds of issues raised by the sit-in. The students returned from the meeting, convinced that the University administration was immovable and ultimately not interested in the issues raised by the students. Soon thereafter, a vote was taken to abandon the building. The sit-in officially ended on Friday, February 14.

DISCIPLINARY OUTCOMES

Early in the sit-in, the students had issued a document arguing for amnesty, suggesting that the University’s administrative procedures were themselves prejudicial and discriminatory since they were controlled by a “small number of senior faculty, administrators, and powerful financial backers.” Disobedience to the University’s “regulations” was thus entirely proper. Moreover, discipline in this case would merely be “legalized violence” perpetrated against the protesting students.²⁹ This view met with scathing reactions on the part of many senior faculty—Milton Friedman

29. “Legalized Violence: Why We Ignore the Disciplinary Committee.” February 4, 1969. Other statements that were offered at the time included the argument that students had acted sincerely based on their “principles” and thus should not be punished, and that their larger goal was to provoke more fruitful and positive discussions on campus, and thus benefit the University in the longer term.

and Julian Goldsmith even held a news conference on February 5 arguing vehemently against amnesty. Five campus ministers, including E. Spencer Parsons, the Dean of Rockefeller Chapel, emphatically repudiated the idea of amnesty:

We wish to express our *opposition* to the grant of *amnesty* to those who have engaged in the tragic and disruptive demonstration in the Administration Building. Our religious convictions incline us to speak easily of compassion and forgiveness as these themes are fundamental to our traditions. But there is a crucial distinction to be made between that compassion which is exercised within the structures of justice and that pardon or amnesty which by circumventing due process contributes to the erosion and finally to the disintegration of a community constituted by the reasoned pursuit of truth and mutual trust.³⁰

With the collapse of the sit-in, attention shifted to the disciplinary process. The Oaks Committee had been meeting since January 31 at the Law School and at other sites. As the disciplinary proceedings unfolded, the political debate on campus shifted from the validity or legality of the sit-in *per se* to the issue of the fairness of the Disciplinary Committee and of the equity of the punishments that began to be handed out in early March.

During February and March, protesting students sought to disrupt the proceedings of the committee numerous times. Some of the tactics used to attack the process were in the genre of guerrilla theater and ranged from the merely humorous to the ludicrously farcical,

30. "On Mercy and Justice," February 7, 1969.

such as the antics of the so-called Chicken Shit Brigade that followed members of the Disciplinary Committee with kazoos, or those of "Rabbi" Jeff Mason, who on Friday, February 28, posing as a latter-day biblical patriarch, led a procession of students to the Quadrangle Club chanting "walls fall down." Unlike the Walls of Jericho, those of the Quad Club remained standing after the protesters had marched around them seven times.

But at other times, the protest tactics were less playful and more aggressive. When the Disciplinary Committee held a hearing on February 8 to determine the technical issue of whether the sit-in had been "disruptive" as defined by Charles O'Connell (the committee determined that it was indeed disruptive), fifty students crossed the Midway and entered the Law School, where they sought to disrupt the committee by engaging in pushing and shouting. This led two prominent law professors to characterize the event as the work of a "noisy, vulgar band of storm troopers."³¹

Demanding that the Disciplinary Committee sanction the strategy of a collective defense, approximately 100 students led by members of SDS gathered on Monday evening, February 24, in front of the President's House to present Edward Levi with a protest petition. Pushing and shoving ensued, Charles O'Connell was jeered and threatened with a rock, and the vestibule door of the house was kicked through. Once the crowd was dispersed by campus police, about seventy students then proceeded to enter the Quadrangle Club, where they disrupted the dinner service by taunting guests who were eating, taking food and wine from the tables, cursing various faculty members present in the room, and holding mock meetings. In the days that

31. Statement of Bernard D. Meltzer and Phil C. Neal, February 9, 1969.

followed, other incidents occurred in which a faculty member and a senior administrator were accosted on or near the campus and subjected to obscenities, spitting, and threats.

On February 26, on behalf of the Committee of the Council of the Senate, Spokesman Edward Rosenheim issued a memorandum warning that the University might be forced to summon “civil authority,” a course which, he argued, “is particularly suitable when, as has occurred, the University’s own disciplinary procedures are defied.” Serious debates followed at a meeting of the Council of the Senate on March 2 about the possibility of obtaining a civil injunction to protect faculty.³²

In response to the incidents at the President’s House and Quadrangle Club, the University then established a second disciplinary tribunal, chaired by Charles Shireman of the School of Social Service Administration, which met concurrently with the Oaks Committee.

Both Disciplinary Committees managed to conclude their deliberations by the end of March. In the end, forty-two students were expelled from the University, most as a result of the sit-in, but nine as a result of the incident at the President’s House. An additional eighty-one students were suspended for periods ranging from less than one to six quarters, although in some cases the suspensions were themselves suspended and the students were permitted to register on probationary status.³³ Seven of the forty-two expelled students were not enrolled at the University in February 1969. Of the thirty-five enrolled students who were expelled, five were graduate students and thirty were undergraduates, so

32. Rosenheim insisted on March 2 that the homes and persons of the members of the Disciplinary Committee had also been threatened.

33. Of the eighty-one suspended students, thirty-eight were suspended beyond March 31, 1969.

that College students constituted the overwhelming majority. Some of the expellees were students with radical external political agendas, for whom the University was, in their view, part of a larger system of repression and racism. Several ended up in Weathermen demonstrations later in 1969 and ran afoul of federal law. Other expellees were students with less overt political agendas, but who felt deeply about student rights on campus. Still others were students who were deeply unhappy at the University for personal reasons.

FACULTY REACTIONS

Faculty attitudes during the sit-in varied enormously, both as to how to deal with the initial event and how to manage the disciplinary process. As noted above, Edward Levi was under substantial pressure from some senior faculty to call in the police, and the fact that he resisted this pressure was, in my personal view, to Levi’s profound credit. Some faculty were willing to cooperate in the process of issuing summonses and organizing the disciplinary committees, but others, while disapproving of the sit-in, refused to cooperate in any aspect of the disciplinary proceedings.

Senior faculty reactions at the time can be monitored in the short position statements issued by many individual full professors. Few were sympathetic to the students’ demands, and the range of rhetoric moved from the critical to the heatedly denunciatory. Several senior faculty members invoked images of Nazi storm troopers. For example, H. Stanley Bennett in his public letter of February 8 asserted that “no one can force a department or division of this University to accept a faculty member judged to be unsuitable. The principle called for by this demand was used in Nazi Germany to compel the placement of fascist professors in universities. We cannot permit the same dangerous principle to become

established here.”³⁴ A more balanced, but no less determined voice was that of the historian John Hope Franklin, who argued that

I am very much disturbed by the fact that some members of the University have renounced the rational approach to the solution of the problems of the community and the University, however difficult. It is clear that in the resort to the seizure of a building, the ransacking of official files, and the effort to disrupt classes by noisome and juvenile antics, these members of the University community have rejected the very principles on which the University can have a healthy existence. In pursuing the present course of action, they have deliberately placed themselves beyond the pale of the University. And in seeking amnesty, under the circumstances, they have deliberately insisted that they enjoy an immunity to the higher learning that is the very hallmark of any seat of learning. In claiming exemption from the ordered existence of an institution of higher learning, they blaspheme their predecessors, in other areas, who struggled against unjust and illegal laws to which they had no recourse. And they insult the progeny of those early fighters for justice who have had the wisdom and grace, in our own time, to understand the difference between a great seat of learning and an ordinary public hustings.³⁵

34. Statement of H. Stanley Bennett, February 8, 1969. Similar statements were contained in a public letter of February 5 by Professor O. J. Kleppa, who compared the radical students to students under the Nazis who sought to destroy the German universities.

35. Statement of John Hope Franklin, February 7, 1969.

Several departments and other units—Economics, Chemistry, Education, SSA—issued collective statements of support for President Levi and the Committee of the Council. At the same time, for every faculty member who wrote a public letter denouncing the sit-in, there were many more who did not do so, and it was this silence on the part of many faculty that led Theodore Lowi of the Political Science Department on February 9 to attack faculty vacillation, arguing that such silence reflected the fact that many faculty were liberals, and liberals always have more difficulty in dealing with the left than with the right: “[i]f the demand for student and alumni power had come from even the respectable right, faculty reaction would have been easy to predict. Why is the same demand from the left so different?”³⁶

Many faculty found themselves caught in the middle, and during a revolution—cultural or otherwise—the middle is an awkward and even dangerous place to be. Wayne Booth, a colleague widely respected both by faculty and students who was on the verge of concluding his term as the Dean of the College in the spring of 1969, expressed something of this frustration of embattled “middlingness” at a meeting of the College Faculty on February 4 when he asserted that

[w]e meet at a moment of great crisis, and for many of us it is not the first time. It is a moment when it is hard to keep one’s head; accusations and false rumors spring up faster than anyone can answer them. I don’t know about you, but ever since a former student called me a liar in a public meeting more than two

36. “Departmental silence creates a presumption of negotiability that will make future actions appear to be two-faced.” Public statement of Theodore J. Lowi, February 9, 1969.

weeks ago, I've often felt that someone was deliberately dogging my steps and distorting my motives and words.³⁷

Still other faculty believed that it would be wrong for the University to mistake the symptoms of student rebellion for the deeper causes of student unrest, thus ignoring the sources that had motivated student unhappiness to begin with. A statement by forty-six faculty members on February 11 asserted that

[w]e consider many of the demands made by student demonstrators unreasonable and incompatible with the important functions of a university, but we believe that it would be foolish to dismiss their criticisms lightly and simply insist that the kind of university that was good enough for our academic grandfathers is good enough for us. Some of the criticisms the students make are justified, in our opinion. Other demands of theirs would harm the University and must be resisted, but failing to acknowledge the dissatisfaction with existing conditions underlying these unreasonable demands and refusing to institute needed improvements would also harm the University as a viable institution.³⁸

Still, when the faculty of the College met again on February 11 and considered motions by Assistant Professors Richard Flacks and Jerome McGann that were broadly sympathetic to the students, both motions

37. Minutes of the College Faculty, February 4, 1969.

38. "Statement of a Group of Concerned Faculty Members," February 11, 1969. A majority of signatories were members of the Social Sciences Division.

were solidly defeated, so it is probably correct to assert that the great majority of the faculty were in fact strongly opposed to the sit-in, both in its methods as well as its policy aims.³⁹

Once the sit-in itself was over, however, serious public divisions soon emerged over the question of disciplinary outcomes. A protest petition circulated in early April was signed by sixty-four faculty members urging adherence to A.A.U.P. guidelines which, they believed, mandated that students receive membership on disciplinary committees. This petition was then published in a half-page ad in the *Maroon* on April 18 and was signed by over 100 faculty and staff who urged a reconsideration of the disciplinary process by allowing students to join newly constituted panels. An interesting generational fault line was evident in the April 18 document, since it was signed by sixty-two assistant professors and fourteen instructors as opposed to twelve full and twenty-one associate professors.⁴⁰ Many of the same faculty, led by Gilbert White of Geography and others, also organized a silent daylight vigil on Monday afternoon, April 14, in front of the Administration Building in protest against the disciplinary processes. A leaflet passed out at the April 14 faculty demonstration asserted that "[w]e stand in silence to express our concern with the effects which recent disciplinary actions are having upon our students and upon the life of the University. We oppose the

39. Minutes of the College Faculty, February 11, 1969.

40. *Maroon*, April 18, 1969, p. 12. Was this hostility of the younger faculty also a more general reflection of the dissatisfaction that some of them felt toward the University in general or their senior colleagues in particular? The section on "Problems of the non-tenured faculty" in the Report of the Gray Committee on the Dixon case might be read as a general commentary on the unhappiness of many assistant professors in the later 1960s, who both envied and resented the Mandarin-like status of the senior faculty.

irregular procedures of the disciplinary committee and the harshness and inconsistency of the sentences imposed.”⁴¹ As early as late February, Milton Singer would comment to Morris Janowitz that “I have never questioned the university’s right to discipline any of its members, students or faculty, who attempt to obstruct its operations or to destroy. I do question, however, the wisdom and prudence of disciplinary procedures which do not have a reputation for equity and justice among the preponderant majority of students.”⁴²

The dissenting faculty thus viewed the disciplinary proceedings as an overreaction by angry senior administrators and apprehensive faculty colleagues. Many of them also thought that the very form of the disciplinary proceedings was questionable, since it seemed to them that students who were prepared to admit contrition were being less harshly punished than those who did not.⁴³ Other dissenting faculty felt that, in the context of what had happened at other universities, Chicago’s

41. *Maroon*, April 15, 1969, pp. 1, 3. Milton Singer reported the following sense of faculty opinion in the Department of Anthropology: “I cannot speak for the anthropology department. We are not all that monolithic in our opinions. There was one occasion, however when . . . the question of the sit-in and discipline was discussed and a straw vote taken of the members there at that time. Twelve (including myself) voted disapproval of the sit-in and only two failed to vote because they felt the question was stated without sufficient account being taken of context. In the discussion of discipline, about three members took a hard line on discipline and the remainder expressed a variety of reservations on disciplinary procedures.” Singer to Janowitz, February 28, 1969, *Presidents’ Papers*, Addenda, Series 93-28, Box 1.

42. *Ibid.*

43. Thus, according to this scenario, the punishment a student received did not reflect actions taken so much as it did the level of after-the-fact contriteness a

sit-in had been rather benign, since it had not really disrupted the educational operations of the University, and that the escalation of punishments over those levied in June 1967 bordered on the vengeful. As representatives of the dissenting faculty group, three faculty members—Gibson Winter, Paul Sally, and Leonard Radinsky—appeared before the Council of the Senate on April 15 urging the suspension of all penalties against the students, their reinstatement in the University, and the establishment of new disciplinary hearings that would conform to A.A.U.P. guidelines. The Council of the Senate rejected their appeals, and on April 29 it voted twenty-eight to two for a motion offered by several councilors to endorse the legitimacy and fairness of the current disciplinary proceedings.

STUDENT REACTIONS

Again, the data are imperfect, and it is certainly possible that the views of many students changed in the hectic weeks before and after January 30. Still, various opinion surveys and votes in various assemblies, large and small, seem to suggest that the majority of students were opposed to the sit-in as a tactic, but that large numbers of students were in sympathy with the campus governance issues that their fellow students

student was willing to muster. This was also a popular allegation put forward in student handbills. See the arguments in *Spartacus*, Nr. 2, May 1, 1969, p. 10. A group of Statistics graduate students thereupon published a trenchant rebuttal, *A Closer Look at Spartacus*, May 12, 1969, asserting that the first group’s data was flawed and their analyses questionable, being based on a “pervasive neglect of important underlying variables, and improper inferences” (p. 5).

were raising.⁴⁴ Contemporary reports on meetings of students and faculty around campus during the last week of January and first week of February suggest that graduate students were concerned with professional issues, including curriculum, faculty hiring, the quality and nature of faculty teaching, and student empowerment in their departments. The reports from the Collegiate divisional student committees concentrated on student rights, quality of core teaching, housing, social life, and a general sense of alienation. Both groups wanted more systematic attention given to the relations between faculty and students.⁴⁵ For many graduate students, even those who were not radically oriented, the

44. The *Maroon* commissioned a survey of student opinion undertaken by a group of graduate students familiar with survey research techniques who surveyed a random sample of 625 students via telephone interviews on February 5–8. They found a majority against the sit-in, but also a majority in favor of greater student rights in academic affairs and for amnesty for the protesters. See *Maroon*, February 10, 1969, p. 4. When “80–90” graduate students in Sociology met on February 5 to discuss the situation in their department, there was strong support for the issue of amnesty for the students in the sit-in (sixty-one in favor, three opposed, three abstentions), but a much more ambivalent reaction to the question of whether to support the “original four demands of the sit-in” (thirty-two in favor, twenty-two opposed, and twelve abstentions). “Resolution of Meeting of Graduate Students in the Department of Sociology,” February 5, 1969.

45. “Ad Hoc Committee of Concerned Students. Information Bulletin,” February 1, 1969. These are informal, broadside-like documents, authored anonymously. However, as a first-year graduate student in the History Department who attended similar meetings at the time, the tenor of the reports sounds reasonable to me. The reports on the Committee on Human Development and on the Department of Anthropology suggest real tensions between graduate students and faculty. See also *Maroon*, February 7, 1969, pp. 1, 3–4; *ibid.*, February 11, 1969, p. 3. In the Sociology Department, “80–90” graduate students met on the evening of February 5 and endorsed (by a vote of sixty-five in favor, six opposed, and two abstentions) a motion criticizing the “dominant intellectual orientation and ethos of the Department” and urging “a basic restructuring of the Department.”

sit-in became an occasion to interrogate the received cultural and pedagogical structures of their departments.⁴⁶

I think it is also fair to assume that a great many students—undergraduate as well as graduate—felt sympathy for the students who ended up being disciplined and that many believed the disciplinary process was itself illegitimate by virtue of having excluded student members. On February 27, three of the four non-voting student observers on the Oaks Committee—a graduate student, a law student, and a College student—resigned and issued a statement in which they argued that “[a] major procedural problem has been . . . the failure to establish any discernible and consistent basis for the severity of the discipline recommended. . . . The committee continues to arrogate to itself the privileges of paternalism.” They continued by asserting that “[t]he grave doubts about the fairness of the constitution of the disciplinary committee bring into question the propriety of the severity of the punishments at its disposal.”⁴⁷

At the same time there were many skeptical voices about the prudence, indeed even the realism, of the tactics of the protesting students.

46. The issues of professionalism and status relationships became inserted into critiques both of the kind of research sponsored by senior faculty members and their alleged imposition of inherited status hierarchies onto the students. For example, a radical critique of the faculty of the Department of History from late January asserted that “the History Department at this institution has chosen professionalism over education.” *Status Quo History*, p. 6. Similarly, a group of twenty Sociology graduate students insisted that “[t]he kind of department we now have is not based on the idea of an intellectual community, but on the model of the rulers and the ruled.” “Proposal to Restructure the Sociology Department,” February 3, 1969, p. 6.

47. Statement by Jonathan Dean, Michael Denny, and Mary Sue Leighton, *Maroon*, February 28, 1969, p. 9.

An anonymous broadside in late January questioned the wisdom of the sit-in, even while acknowledging the vitality of the issue of student rights:

There are no action[s], in our private opinion, which could do more both to hinder the reappointment of Marlene Dixon and to quiet the voice of students in future faculty appointments than those now being contemplated. . . . The faculty's resistance to change will only be hardened by the actions contemplated and the meaningful dialogues between faculty and students which have opened up in some departments will only be cut short by them.⁴⁸

The *Maroon*, which was generally sympathetic to the fate of the protesting students, was blunt about the utopian quality of one of the sit-in's central demands when it editorialized on February 3 that "[a]s for the demand for equal student power in faculty appointments, probably everyone realizes this demand was formulated in a colossal ignorance of the system."⁴⁹

Student memories of the sit-in are bound up in memories of the whole era, and these clusters of memories continue to define and shape the emotions and the evaluations of many alums from that period. Whereas many senior faculty believed at the time that Edward Levi's course was wise and justified, many alums remember it as cold, uncaring, and harsh. Some members of the Class of 1969 today continue to feel that the University was unresponsive and uncaring. Just a few weeks ago, I received copies of letters to President Sonnenschein from two

48. "Why Are Your Colleagues Militant?" undated, but most likely January 29 or 30, 1969, *Records of the Department of Sociology*, File 1, Box 1, 98–50, Department of Special Collections.

49. *Maroon*, February 3, 1969, p. 2.

alums from the Class of 1969 who had attended their Thirtieth Reunion. One alum remembered of his time in the College that

[t]he social and political life of the University we found to be in stark contrast to its intellectual life. As a classmate said, "We were expected to be able to discuss Thucydides like an expert in class, but out of class we were expected to remain silent about matters affecting our everyday lives." We thus found ourselves frustrated in any attempt to use our newly developed critical skills to discuss practical issues of importance to us. This frustration was for many a source of alienation from the University community.

A second alum from the Class of 1969 also wrote that

[t]oo few of us attended our thirtieth reunion, despite efforts many of us made to attract classmates back to campus. . . . Many of us called or wrote to friends, and often we received distressing responses. Classmates complained of bitter memories or unhappy times, and preferred distance to healing. No one thought the university had ever embraced them.

This alum then observed that

it is not simply the strike, the 1969 sit-in, and the expulsions and suspensions that defined our experience. Many of us did not participate directly in the turmoil. These events were certainly traumatic, and we heard during the reunion weekend no sympathy for the way the University handled these chal-

lenges then or has addressed them since. But we think these events, too, even as they were part of a wider world of war, civil strife, and protest, were more symptom than cause. They were major challenges we think the University failed, but there were many smaller challenges as well. We think there is perhaps a pattern, or a greater underlying cause.

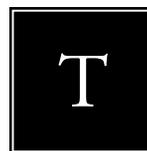
The sit-in was a collision over rules and procedures, but it was also a collision over values involving the constitution of authority on our campus. Moreover, the sit-in revealed serious fissures in the ethos of campus life and in student morale that went beyond the turmoil of what happened in the Administration Building or in the Oaks Committee. The most extreme student opinions and actions—such as those espoused by the most militant members of the SDS—are the easiest to dismiss and even to condemn. But thirty years later one is struck by the sincerity of other kinds of student sentiments that were in play—appeals for quality of teaching and for the rights of students to participate in the work of the departments and the University. Many of the students associated with or at least sympathetic to the sit-in were not political radicals or members of any of the various factions of SDS. These students were much more concerned about the climate of opinion, about the quality of teaching, about what they felt to be the University's indifference to their intellectual and personal needs.

The sit-in thus had a fundamentalist quality about it, made more acute since the triggering issue—the prerogative to appoint and reappoint faculty members—came as close to the academic nerve system of this particular university as one could possibly imagine. Yet in defending the received hierarchy of academic authority, professional expertise, and professional identity, which many senior faculty invoked as part of a defense

of their vision of the University as a venerable cultural institution, it was easy for them to be seen by the students as making themselves out to be the exclusive *owners* of the University and thus as being hostile to or at least unresponsive to a broad range of student concerns. Hence the accusation of “privileges of paternalism” in the above cited statement of protest by three moderate students.

In the spring of 1969, on the eve of the collapse of the Golden Years at our University, many students and many faculty were like ships passing in the night.

FINANCIAL CHALLENGES
TO THE GOLDEN YEARS:
THE REPORTS OF NOVEMBER 1969



he sit-in ended in a rather unsatisfactory manner for all concerned, but it did end. Although a few disturbances occurred the following October and November, the wave of formal, extra-legal protests subsided. The following fall the campus was thus put back together again, but in November of that year—eight months after the collapse of the sit-in—the faculty and students began to learn—gradually and gingerly at first—of a crisis of an entirely different kind, namely a serious financial crisis.

In November 1969, Ben Rothblatt, an official in the Provost's Office, published in the *Maroon* and then subsequently in the *Record* an unusually lengthy budget report, the main argument of which was that the University of Chicago was in fact not a wealthy institution and that its annual deficit was bound to increase unless significant new revenue streams could be identified. Rothblatt specifically reported about the Campaign for Chicago that had just concluded that

[i]n some respects, however, the Campaign fell short of its program goals. Less than half of the announced goal for building funds was attained; capital needs are therefore still enormous. A considerable portion of the Campaign funds pledged and received are for long range or other future programs and cannot immediately be put to use. Funds for immediate needs were in relatively short supply, and much of the underwriting of current operations has come from the unrestricted funds provided by the Ford challenge grant.

Rothblatt then remarked that “the last payment of the Ford grant will be made in the current academic year. The University, therefore, faces the problem for 1970–71 and beyond of finding other funds to provide budget support for current operations.”⁵⁰

Concurrently, President Levi issued his annual report to the University which, amid the confident rhetoric that is always appropriate to such documents, echoed Rothblatt’s document in alerting the faculty to a potential structural hole in the University’s academic budget that amounted to nearly \$6 million. Levi explained that the Ford challenge grant had been used to cover the serious budget deficits during the later 1960s, but that grant was now about to disappear and he gently alluded to the fact that it might not be possible to secure a sufficient increase in unrestricted funding to cover the margin. A “hole” in the budget of about \$5,690,000 was thus possible, accentuated by our failure to assemble unrestricted gifts anywhere near what was needed to balance the budget. To give you a sense of the magnitude of the problem, a \$5.7

50. “The University and its Budget,” *The University of Chicago Record*, December 1, 1969, pp. 10–11.

million deficit in 1970 would be a deficit of approximately \$25 million in 1999.⁵¹

Of course, the challenges we were about to face were not untypical. If the 1960s were the golden age of American research universities, the 1970s proved a very different environment indeed. Economic stagnation, rampant inflation, the image of disarray in the later 1960s that many universities projected to their external, gift-giving constituencies, the withdrawal of federal research and fellowship dollars—all these factors ushered in a climate of budgetary austerity if not crisis.

We too found ourselves faced with a looming fiscal crisis, but the specific nature of our crisis was directly affected by the events that occurred in the spring of 1969. The logic of the Ford Plan was predicated on the capacity of the University to increase unrestricted giving in support of current operations and to sustain increased enrollments, translating into incremental tuition revenues, with an estimated doubling of tuition dollars by 1975. The November 1969 reports were a signal that our earlier optimism about the sustainability of massive

51. *The State of the University*, November 4, 1969, pp. 5, 8. The situation that Edward Levi sought to describe in modulated, even reassuring words would be described in a different language by Trustee James Downs several months later. When Levi invited Downs to join an Economic Study Commission to investigate the University’s economic situation, Downs responded with a letter on the “fearsome financial situation” of the University in which he observed that “I am certain that you are much more aware than I that the ‘pursuit of excellence’ at the University has been the major element that has put us on a collision course with insolvency. From my specialized point of view (that of ‘sound’ business planning—a concept which may well be obsolete) I would only point out that our new building program alone is compounding our operational losses—a fact dramatically demonstrated by the new library, but duplicated in virtually every new construction project.” James C. Downs, Jr., to Edward H. Levi, March 4, 1970, *Presidents’ Papers*, Addenda, Series 97-6, Box 25.

increases in unrestricted giving to cover our now inflated current expenditures might have been exaggerated, but what these documents did not yet confront—and what their authors may not have even been fully aware of in the late summer of 1969—is that more severe challenges lay immediately ahead because of negative trends on the enrollment front.

At this point my narrative must return briefly to the Ford Profile. Remember the vision behind the Profile—more students and more wonderful facilities, not to mention more faculty, to (respectively) house and teach those students. Between 1965 and 1968 College enrollments began to grow steadily, as did faculty numbers, but housing resources did not follow suit. Indeed, the expansion of the College was predicated on the capacity of the University rapidly to assemble vast new resources of student housing. Although the University formulated an ambitious plan for new student facilities, the Ford campaign raised no funds toward that project, which remained stillborn.

Indeed, as early as October 1966 Edward Levi expressed pessimism to the board over the ability of the University to meet these expectations, in large part because of pressures to improve on so many fronts at the same time. He was particularly concerned with the need to invest heavily in research facilities and libraries on the one hand and facilities for the College on the other. He noted, “I want to say that I think that the student facility problem is in some ways the greatest problem among all the other greatest problems that the University has. We have a crisis on housing. I don’t quite know what we are doing about it frankly.” He further commented that

I think that it’s quite wrong to put the College at the bottom of the heap and to say, well, after we build the other buildings, we will have some buildings for the College. And I know it is

a terrible problem. . . . I think that the problem is this—that Harper didn’t create the University of Chicago *ad seriatim* and if he had tried to, he couldn’t, and I think that is our problem. I think that by trying to go after each of these projects as though we were going to take one and then when it was over, we would take the next one . . . you do not get the impact and by the time you get around to the area which is very important you have something rather sick on your hands. . . . I think that kind of shoving back and forth is not giving the University the kind of impetus that it ought to have.⁵²

Unfortunately, not only did the campaign fail to generate sufficient unrestricted gift funds to replace the Ford money, but it also failed to produce the huge sums needed for the originally ambitious program for improvements to student life. Warner Wick, the Dean of Students, was quoted by the *Maroon* in May 1966 to the effect that the costs of new housing were “staggering” and “[t]he difficulty with money for housing is that it usually comes from unrestricted grants, the same money that is the backbone of our academic program. Thus housing is in direct competition with our most serious academic needs.”⁵³

Attempts by University authorities like Warner Wick to invoke the larger budgetary scheme of things notwithstanding, student unhappiness over the housing situation was manifest throughout the later 1960s. In early April 1966, David Rosenberg, the chairman of the Student Government housing committee, publicly complained about a looming crisis

52. Transcribed Remarks in the Minutes of the Board of Trustees, October 15, 1966, pp. 11–12, 22–23. Department of Special Collections.

53. *Maroon*, May 3, 1966, p. 1.

in housing.⁵⁴ Soon thereafter (on April 29), hundreds of unhappy students organized a “sleep-in” on the lawn in front of the Administration Building. Among the “long-range” demands of the “ad hoc committee on student housing” were that “the University must build some dormitories on the Quadrangles themselves” and “the University must immediately commence building new dormitories and immediately begin construction on those buildings currently planned.”⁵⁵ The *Maroon* subsequently claimed this was “the largest student demonstration in at least five years.” More protests came two years later, for when enrollment levels surged in the fall of 1968, the University had to take emergency measures. A lead article in the *Maroon* in late September 1968 proclaimed that “[t]he housing shortage, always severe at the University, has now reached crisis proportions.”⁵⁶ Former single rooms in several dormitories were doubled, and over 100 students were placed in neighborhood hotels where (so the *Maroon* insisted) they found high rents and often roach-infested conditions. The next month, 200 students organized a housing tent-in in front of the Administration Building. Several of the organizers of the tent-in were prominent members of the local SDS group, who found the housing issue an attractive device to mobilize student opinion against the University.

All of this residential *Sturm und Drang* became supremely relevant when in mid-March 1969, less than a month after the end of the sit-in, Dean Wayne Booth announced at a meeting of the College Council a decision to reduce the size of the College’s entering class in the fall of

54. *Ibid.*, April 8, 1966, p. 2.

55. *Ibid.*, April 29, 1966, p. 3.

56. *Ibid.*, September 27, 1968, p. 1.

1969 from 730 to 500. Booth argued that “[t]oo many first-year students at Chicago have again this year been reported as miserable in their quarters, uninspired in their instruction, and unrenewed by their extracurricular life.”⁵⁷

In fact, Wayne Booth was not the only one proposing cuts in the College, for the Student Ombudsman John Moscow had sent University authorities a letter in early March also urging reductions in the size of the College. Moscow mentioned this intervention in his larger report on the sit-in published in the *University Record* in April 1969.⁵⁸ Observers then and now have pondered the allegation voiced at the time that the College was cutting its entering class to rid itself of protesting students. Those involved denied such imputations, attributing the reduction in the entering class primarily to housing shortages and the lack of necessary teachers for first-year students, but the very fact that such denials had to be proffered is significant in and of itself. Even if the allegations about a conspiracy to rid ourselves of radical students were fatuous (which I believe was the case), it is striking that the decision to reduce the entering class came so quickly on the heels of the student disruptions and in the middle of the disciplinary proceedings. Although this decision clearly resulted from the convergence of a number of legitimate concerns, it is difficult to imagine that the deeply unhappy events of January and February—if only in their role as contextual background noise—did not influence the shape and the timing of the final decision. The *Maroon* caught the general negative tenor of undergraduate life at the beginning of spring quarter when it observed that

57. Minutes of the College Council, March 18, 1965, p. 49.

58. “Report of the Student Ombudsman,” *The University of Chicago Record*, April 24, 1969, p. 10.

Perhaps the most compelling reason [for cutting the College], and the reason least discussed is something that makes the University of Chicago College unique: walk up to any College student at any time, ask him how he feels, and three times out of four the answer will be, “Miserable.”⁵⁹

The reduction in the entering class for the autumn of 1969 had immediate implications for the long-term size of the College. Whereas the Ford Plan called for continued gradual increases up to the level of 4,000 by 1975, the total size of the College by the fall of 1970 had fallen to 2,200, well below the enrollment level attained even in the fall of 1968. It is also noteworthy that of the top U.S. private universities and colleges, I believe that we were the only school to reduce its undergraduate enrollments in the late 1960s and early 1970s, just on the eve of what was to prove one of the most intractable decades—from a resource perspective—in the history of American higher education.

On top of the reduction in the size of the College, came two other enrollment-related issues. First, having cut the College, we soon learned that it would not be easy to undo the consequences, for the College’s applicant pool also began to decline. From 1968 to 1971 completed applications to the College dropped by almost 25 percent. Second, beginning in 1970 the University also saw a decline in numbers of applications to the divisions and a corresponding reduction of graduate student enrollments, this at a time when many graduate students (or the federal government on behalf of graduate students) still paid tuition fees. Between 1969 and 1979, applications to the divisions declined by 37 percent, whereas divisional enrollments sank by 27 percent. Federal

59. *Maroon*, April 1, 1969, p. 4.

support for graduate students also declined rapidly over the course of the 1970s in three of the four divisions. Those of us who received doctoral degrees in the 1970s—my cohort—know that the so-called “Ph.D. glut” of the mid and later 1970s turned out to be a harbinger of things to come in the later 1980s and 1990s.

This decline, in turn, raised serious cultural issues about the identity of the University as having historically a very large graduate program in the arts and sciences, even though that relative identity was itself of rather recent (and thus, slightly mythic) vintage, since from the founding of the University in 1892 until the collapse of College enrollments in the early 1950s the number of College students on campus had always been larger than the graduate arts and sciences student population.⁶⁰ Still, two major committees, one led by Martin Marty in 1972 and a second led by Keith Baker in 1982, grappled with the future identity of our graduate programs.⁶¹

These missing students—collegiate as well as graduate—not only meant that the financial goals articulated in the Ford Profile were never met, but they—by their absence—also caused havoc in the already strained budgets of the early and mid 1970s. Between 1968 and 1973,

60. For example, between 1892 and 1940 the University awarded 23,961 B.A.s in the disciplines represented in the four divisions, while during the same time period we awarded 7,881 M.A.s and 3,808 Ph.D.s—over twice as many undergraduate to graduate degrees. Local descriptions of ourselves as being a “primarily” graduate institution before the Second World War often forget that under the New Plan of the 1930s College juniors and seniors were registered in the divisions for degree purposes. Thus, divisional enrollments also included a very large population of College students.

61. “Report of the Committee on the Problems and Scope of Graduate Work,” *The University of Chicago Record*, January 15, 1973, pp. 1–10; “Report of the Commission on Graduate Education,” *ibid.*, May 3, 1982, pp. 67–180.

total University enrollments fell from 8,335 to 7,258 students. The decision to cut the College was not the only cause of the failure of the Ford Profile, but it certainly contributed to that failure. In 1973, Harold Bell, the University Comptroller, estimated that every additional 100 students generated an additional \$250,000 in revenue.⁶² Even discounting the sheer impossibility of reaching 4,000 undergraduate students by 1975 because of housing constraints, had we not reduced the size of the entering class of the College in 1969 and had we continued to increase entering classes even modestly between 1969 and 1974, we might have ended up (according to a revised enrollment projection estimate by Charles O’Connell in August 1967) with a College of about 3,300 students.⁶³ This would have meant an undergraduate College of approximately 900 students above the level actually attained in 1975. Using Bell’s multiplier, the absence of these students represented a loss in revenue to the University of \$2,250,000, or almost half of the structural deficit with which the University struggled by the middle of the decade.

Perhaps it was understandable that John Wilson would assert in October 1972 that “[t]welve hundred additional students, or even half that number, would do a great deal to alleviate the pressure on the general funds of the University.”⁶⁴ In the same vein, a report of the faculty Advisory Committee on Student Enrollment chaired by

62. Harold Bell to Edward H. Levi, June 4, 1973, *Presidents’ Papers*, Box 20, Department of Special Collections.

63. For O’Connell’s modified estimates, see his memorandum to James Lorie, August 31, 1967, *Presidents’ Papers*, Box 25.

64. “1972–73 University Budget,” *The University of Chicago Record*, October 31, 1972, p. 96.

former Dean of the College Roger Hildebrand in March 1974 stated bluntly that

[o]ur failure to meet past enrollment projections either in the long run or the short run has been a direct cause of our present deficits. The 1965 proposal to the Ford Foundation, on which funding and faculty growth were then based, projected a 1974–75 quadrangles enrollment 2,700 above the current actual figure (10,204 vs. 7,496). . . . Furthermore, the continuing decline in enrollment impedes the initiation of a campaign for outside funds. Donors more willingly support universities with growing lists of applicants. It is urgent and imperative that we reverse the downward trend of the last four years.⁶⁵

The committee called for a concerted effort to add 1,100 additional students to the Quadrangles by 1980 and a reduction in the faculty by approximately 75 faculty positions over the following three years. However, both goals soon proved unrealistic.

Beyond enrollment problems, the University faced other and equally serious financial problems that were analyzed in several remarkably detailed reports to the faculty on the University’s financial situation by then-Provost John Wilson between 1970 and 1975. Not only did the market value of the endowment fail to keep up with a growing pattern of inflation, but endowment payouts even in nominal dollars to the budget in 1979–80 (\$16,379,000) were *below* those allocated in 1971–72 (\$17,075,000). Coupled with the dreadful performance of

65. “Report of the Advisory Committee on Student Enrollment,” *The University of Chicago Record*, May 28, 1974, p. 97.

the stock market in the mid 1970s and our ongoing deficit spending, these trends ate into the income that could be derived from University investments.⁶⁶ Unrestricted gifts to the University also declined in the early 1970s, falling from \$4 million in 1970–71 to a low of \$3.1 million in 1974–75, and returning to healthier levels only later in the decade.⁶⁷ John Wilson remarked about the “gift estimate” in the 1970–71 budget that it gave him “the greatest cause for concern,” arguing that meeting the gift targets needed to balance the budget that year would require a “minor miracle.”⁶⁸ The miracle did not happen. Reduc-

66. “In the years 1972 to 1978 some \$28.5 million was withdrawn in pursuance of the TRIP formula. It was, of course, assumed here and at the many other non-profit institutions adopting the total return approach that these withdrawals would be made up for by capital gains on common stock holdings, but the great stock market collapse of the middle 1970s confounded that expectation. In addition to the withdrawals mandated by the TRIP formula, an additional \$10.0 million was withdrawn from funds functioning as endowment between 1971–72 and 1975–76 to meet current deficits and in 1979–80 another \$2.75 million was withdrawn for that purpose.” Kenneth W. Dam, “The University Budget, 1980–81,” *The University of Chicago Record*, December 31, 1980, pp. 220–21. Dam’s report offers a good survey of the University’s economy as a whole in the 1970s. I estimate that the total deficit underwriting of the academic budget between 1950 and 1975 and the extraordinary expenditures to shore up the neighborhood—both drawn from funds functioning as endowment—amounted to at least \$50 million. It is likely that the withdrawal of that level of capital from the University’s endowment between 1950 and 1975 cost us several hundred million dollars of current endowment in 1999 dollars.

67. Earl Cheit suggested in his study of the “academic depression” of the early 1970s that the decline in alumni and other external giving had to do (in part) with negative reactions to the student disturbances, like the 1969 sit-in. Earl F. Cheit, *The New Depression in Higher Education. A Study of Financial Conditions at 41 Colleges and Universities* (New York, 1971), pp. 11, 19.

68. “Memorandum to the Faculty,” July 31, 1970, p. 3, Presidents’ Papers, Box 20.

tions of federal aid to research and graduate education made the situation still more perilous.

Finally, on top of everything else, patterns of foundation giving also changed in ways that were unsympathetic to the deficit-oriented budgetary needs of the research universities. We learned this in a somewhat ironic instance of the other shoe dropping. As we struggled with the monotonous frustrations of budget austerity in the early 1970s, there was always the hope of one more outside intervention. Thus, it was not surprising that in the summer of 1973 Edward Levi would again journey to New York, this time in the company of two Trustees and a senior faculty member, to again ask for a major grant from senior officials at the Ford Foundation. The University followed their visit with a detailed memorandum which again, as in 1965, sought to state the University’s financial case, but which was less compelling because it was both far less optimistic and much more defensive. Unlike the buoyant atmosphere that obtained in 1964–65, this time Levi’s intervention was undertaken out of deep necessity and considerable frustration, and this time Ford’s response was quite different.

In a fascinating internal memo, to which I have already made reference, Ford officials Harold Howe and Earl Cheit analyzed shrewdly and sensibly the financial difficulties of the University in the early 1970s. They argued that

[t]he picture presented by the President and Trustees of the University in July, 1973 might be described in the phrase of the party-goer who had an extra drink, “I feel more like I do now than I did when I came.” In Dr. Cheit’s terms it was the same but more so. Chicago faces a \$6 million deficit, both this year and next, out of an operating budget (excluding the medical school)

of some \$75 million. The trustees have approved these deficits with the reservation that the University plan and mount a drive for \$300 million in new funds.⁶⁹

After acknowledging that Chicago's situation was made even more acute because of its small undergraduate enrollment and "because its alumni tend to be concentrated in employment that has rewards other than money," they concluded that "the University of Chicago has special problems in raising large-scale funds." They continued:

Chicago leaders have serious concerns about its future. While they defend its use of capital to maintain quality in recent years (quality they surely have), they recognize the need to discipline themselves for a difficult future. . . . They see only one way out of this dilemma: a \$20-30 million vote of confidence by the Ford Foundation.

The desired vote of confidence, and the desired huge sum of money, did not come. For Howe and Cheit made it clear that "there is little we can do in direct response to its [Chicago's] persuasive case." Moreover, in a subsequent letter to Edward Levi in November 1973, even this initial view of the University as having a "persuasive case" seemed to shift substantially. After undertaking an analysis of the University's financial situation, Howe and Cheit now argued that the University's plans for controlling expenditure growth were still "inadequately focused."

69. Harold Howe II and Earl F. Cheit, "The Situation of the Major Research Universities in the United States with Special Emphasis on the University of Chicago," September 15, 1973.

What was needed was a plan that would "be directed toward establishing better control of the internal processes of the institution and more generally of relating that plan to the larger aims of the Fund Drive and the funding of the University." Later in the same letter they returned to the issue of undergraduate enrollment targets, a point that must have been of some sensitivity given our extravagant but failed plans to Ford eight years earlier:

Your plans for graduate enrollment seem quite reasonable. We were, however, puzzled by the undergraduate enrollment situation. Given the rich mix offered by the University, we cannot understand why the University should have difficulty recruiting another thousand undergraduates. We believe that that issue bears some serious investigation.⁷⁰

Instead of another major grant, Levi thus received free advice along the lines that more expenditure controls, better planning, and larger undergraduate enrollments would surely be able to lead Chicago to the promised land of budgetary probity. In retrospect such a commentary was not only understandable, but also sensible from the perspective of the foundation. These were challenging times for all non-profit institutions, including the major foundations. Moreover, by the later 1960s some leaders of the foundation had begun to have doubts about the basic long-term feasibility of interventionist programs like the Special Education initiative. As F. Champion Ward, another former Dean of the College who also went on to a distinguished career as a senior official at

70. Harold Howe II and Earl F. Cheit to Edward H. Levi, November 6, 1973, copy filed in Ford Profile files, Department of Special Collections.

the Ford Foundation, would observe in an internal memo to McGeorge Bundy in 1968,

I believe strongly that the Foundation should and must be highly selective in its educational grants, but I believe, also, that selectivity and the high visibility of a Special Program are nearly incompatible. The conspicuousness and symbolic weight of major support from the Ford Foundation, as part of an announced program for which many institutions are theoretically eligible, makes it very unlikely that the Foundation would find it possible to confine the program to steady, recurrent general support of a very limited number of institutions over a substantial period of time. The record of diffusion during the Special Program period is not auspicious in this regard.⁷¹

Thus, we were forced to launch Phase Two of the Campaign for Chicago in the summer of 1974—a campaign that should have been

71. F. Champion Ward to McGeorge Bundy, August 30, 1968, Nr. 002379, FFA. Reuben Frodin, a Chicago alumnus (Ph.B. 1933, J.D. 1941), a former administrator at Chicago between 1941 and 1951, and the editor of the *Journal of General Education* who was a colleague of Clarence Faust and Champ Ward in the Hutchins College, undertook two survey reports in 1968 on the effectiveness of the Special Program in Education for the Ford Foundation on which Ward's conclusions were based. It might also be noted that in 1974, a year after Levi's visit asking for additional money, the foundation announced "a drastic reduction in its annual spending" amounting to cuts in its annual program budgets of approximately 50 percent. These actions were taken by the foundation to "conserve its long-term strength." See McGeorge Bundy, "The President's Review," in *Ford Foundation Annual Report, October 1, 1973 to September 30, 1974* (New York, 1975), p. v.

started in 1970 but was temporarily sidetracked because of the impact of the 1969 sit-in and the fall in enrollment—lacking a major challenge grant. This new campaign—scheduled to raise \$280 million from 1974 to 1977—immediately ran into trouble, and, with Edward Levi's resignation to become Attorney General in February 1975, it had to be quietly scaled back, with the final results by 1978 painfully below the originally stated goals.

The University's reaction to the convergence of all of these problems was renewed budget cutting, modest reductions in faculty size, and other austerities. The 1970–71 budget had been constructed on the assumption of a no-growth policy in faculty size and a total Quadrangles enrollment of 8,300 students, but the actual number of students who showed up was 600 lower. In turn, for the 1971–72 fiscal year the Deans' Budget Committee recommended an across-the-board reduction in academic unit budgets of 5 percent, but the final reduction was actually closer to 7 percent.⁷² In October 1972, Wilson informed the faculty that a serious deficit might still emerge in the 1972–73 budget, and highlighted the need for more attention to

a planned downward adjustment of total faculty size, to a level which is congruent with unrestricted funds available and with first-order intellectual standards. Meeting this requirement will be a more difficult exercise than any the University has faced in the budgets of the last three years. But to put off the confrontation for another year will not solve our fundamental budgetary problem. To do this will, through the effects of

72. "1971–72 University Budget," *The University of Chicago Record*, October 11, 1971, p. 109.

continued constraints, initiate a more serious erosion of the quality of the University.⁷³

During the 1972–73 cycle, it was also reported that the “condition of the stock market raises [the] question of [our] ability to meet the endowment estimate.”⁷⁴ The endowment problem was worsened by the fact that unrestricted giving to the University also dropped substantially, from an annual high point of \$6.8 million in 1966–67 to \$3.3 million in 1971–72. Total gifts sank from \$34.6 million in 1968–69 to \$24.1 million in 1971–72. During the 1972–73 fiscal year, the University had to budget the use of \$3 million drawn from the endowment to cover the operating deficit, even though such action reduced future income.

In March 1973, an always patient John Wilson wrote to the Deans warning them that “I have in past years been able to be a little helpful in adding pieces of money from here and there to each of your budgets. My ‘heres and theres’ have just about vanished at this point.” Austerity in turn brought with it more than the usual maneuvering, leading to more than the usual frustrations. To John Wilson, Edward Levi observed about the situation in one division where “the horse trading and play-acting is going to lead to all kinds of frustration and hurt feelings” and that “the result of approaching the problem in terms of two budgets—the University and the Divisional—leads to queer results and queer

73. “1972–73 University Budget,” *The University of Chicago Record*, October 31, 1972, p. 96.

74. “Preliminary General Budget, 1972–73, Notes,” in *Presidents’ Papers*, Box 20.

arguments. It takes on the aspect of collective bargaining, not realizing that ultimately there is only one budget.”⁷⁵

In 1973–74, the general situation was still quite serious. During the late spring of 1973, it became apparent that even the already austere budget for 1973–74 had overestimated enrollment by 200 students, leading to a “new” deficit within the “old” deficit of an additional \$500,000, shares of which each of the units had to cover. In December 1973, President Levi then released a summary of an unusually candid and tough-minded Deans’ Budget Report. This time the Deans asserted openly that the ongoing deficit was eroding the future viability of the University and recommended that the budget gap be closed within three years. Among other recommendations they also urged that “[a] rigorous examination should be made of academic units which might be eliminated *in toto*” and that “the size of the faculty, as of other segments of the University, will need to be trimmed.”

Levi indicated his agreement with the Deans’ recommendation that the deficit be closed within three years, concluding his own report with the observation that

[t]he University has attempted during the last three years to meet its economic problems without dramatic gestures which overemphasize the austerity required, and in such a way as not only to maintain but to improve the quality of our University. It may be that the absence of dramatic gestures has contributed to a failure to communicate to ourselves or the friends of the University the seriousness with which we must approach our problems, but I doubt this.⁷⁶

75. Edward H. Levi to John T. Wilson, October 1, 1973, *Presidents’ Papers*, Box 20.

76. *University of Chicago Bulletins*, January 7, 1974, pp. 1–2.

On the divisional level such news was hardly welcome. At a special meeting of the Social Sciences faculty in November 1973, Dean Robert McC. Adams reported to his colleagues that

[t]he deficit for the current year is projected to reach a figure near 6.5 million dollars, a figure which, because of its effect on endowment funds, has the potential of reducing future income by 3.6%. Deficits such as this make a campaign for funds enormously more difficult, since potential donors easily may infer that they are being asked to bail the University out of current difficulties rather than to help in promoting future growth.

Adams then continued that

[a]ll this means that in this Division, as in other Divisions and Professional Schools, we are faced with the need to make terrible choices and decisions. Within the University as a whole, it may be necessary to explore the possibility of cutting out whole academic units.

At the same time, in discussing the causes of the budgetary problem, attention immediately focused on enrollments and faculty size. The following exchange among Peter Novick, Bob Adams, and Gale Johnson is instructive:

Mr. Novick expressed concern about what was being said about financial difficulties and, especially, about the fact that no one seemed to see any light at the end of the tunnel. What was there, he asked, beyond pious hope? Mr. Adams replied that

there will be no light at the end of the tunnel unless we find ways to live within our means. In the long run, he suggested, our faculty may simply be too large. Mr. Johnson modified this with the comment that we are now too large given the present enrollment. Tuition income now represents 40% of our total budget, he continued, and about 60% of the academic budget. We must become smaller faculty-wise or larger student-wise.⁷⁷

Three years later, the problems were still apparent. Another report of the Deans' Budget Committee in December 1976 stated candidly that the University of Chicago was still facing budget problems "in especially severe terms" because

it has a long history of being an academic overachiever in relation to its financial base. It has engaged in adventuresome risk taking in budgeting. With the advantage of hindsight, one may note an overexpansion of the size of the faculty in the decade 1960–1970: the number of faculty members increased from 813 in 1960–61 to 1139 in 1970–71, without a corresponding increase in continuing financial resources.

77. Minutes of the Division of the Social Sciences, November 19, 1973, pp. 1, 3. The impact of declining federal support was apparent here. In 1969–70 about 32 percent of all SSD salary costs were being charged to grants, an increase from about 10 to 15 percent at the beginning of the 1960s. Yet, between 1969–70 and 1972–73, salary savings that could be charged to federal grants fell by approximately \$200,000 or about 6.5 percent of the total divisional budget. D. Gale Johnson to Edward H. Levi and John T. Wilson, April 12, 1974, *Presidents' Papers*, Addenda, Series 97-60, Box 6.

As a result, dangerous gaps developed between income and expenditures.⁷⁸

The Deans also concluded in 1976 that “[u]nder these conditions, it is difficult to see how increases in levels of salaries and wages can be made without attrition in the size of the faculty and staff.” The budget was finally brought into what Provost D. Gale Johnson called a “precarious” balance in 1976–77, but even then Johnson argued that “[i]t will not be possible for us to depart from our effort at gradual reduction of the size of the faculty nor our efforts to achieve a Quadrangles enrollment of more than 8,000. Nor can any of us relax our attempts to increase the flow of unrestricted and restricted funds.”⁷⁹

Precarious the balance was indeed, for less than two years later newly appointed President Hanna H. Gray presented another budget report to the Council of the University Senate in February 1979, announcing the recurrence of a budget deficit of \$2.8 million dollars, largely as a result of rapid inflation in library costs, the continued erosion of real value of the endowment, and from shortfalls in the estimated income from unrestricted expendable gifts and from indirect cost recovery from federal grants. Among the proposals she laid out was renewed attention to College enrollment levels:

78. “Report of the Deans’ Budget Committee for 1977–78,” *The University of Chicago Record*, March 16, 1977, p. 5.

79. “The University Budget, 1977–78,” *The University of Chicago Record*, November 8, 1977, p. 120. Harold Bell noted that this balance was only achieved by committing \$800,000 in “reserve funds” on a one-time basis that would not be available in the future. “Committee on Budget Planning, May 10, 1977,” p. 3.

To my mind, there are some major directions we should be examining. I think that the size of the College should probably be increased over the next three to five years. I believe that this course would be good in itself for the University and that it can be accomplished without in any sense lessening or attenuating our commitment to research and graduate training.

But she also added that

[a]ny increase in the size of the College would have to rest on enlarging the pool of applicants, on a careful assimilation of growth, on prudent planning in the areas of student aid and facilities and, above all, of faculty needs. It would also require—and this, too, I think is educationally right for us in any case—a still greater engagement of our University faculty in the College, including the Common Core.⁸⁰

The 1970s were a time of considerable self-reflection involving cogent attempts to explain the budgetary situation. The various reports of Edward Levi, John Wilson, and D. Gale Johnson to the faculty combined an honesty and surprising candor about the crisis with constant efforts to invoke the higher destiny of the University. And, as always, life went on. But the student crisis of the later 1960s and the financial crisis of the early 1970s have had long legs.

80. “Deficit in the Current Budget and Its Implications,” *The University of Chicago Record*, March 30, 1979, p. 4.

**THIRTY YEARS LATER:
SOME CONCLUDING REMARKS**

W

hat should we make of 1969, thirty years after the fact? For many members of our community, 1969 is still not over. The memories of the Class of 1969—shared in the letters I have quoted today—demonstrate this. The conflict between the values of democratic participation on the one hand and hierarchical authority on the other—these are still with us, not only in our still frustrated relationships with many of our alumni, but also, I would argue, in our willingness (or unwillingness) to trust our own students by allowing them—via the enhancement of free electives—some influence over the shape of their own educations.

Other features of the later 1960s and early 1970s are still with us. The beginnings of a slow, but certain cultural “divisionalization” of the faculty was a key feature of the years between 1960 and 1975, and it had many fascinating repercussions. This process was grounded in the substantial growth in the size of the graduate divisions between 1950 and 1980 as a result both of the new incremental appointments brought about by our capacity for deficit spending in the 1960s and 1970s and of the new joint appointment system between the College and the divisions.⁸¹ The Shils Report of December 1970, a report

81. The growth in the size of the divisions in the thirty-year period between 1950 and 1980 was remarkable: in 1950 the Division of the Humanities had 69 faculty members, but by 1980 it had 158. Social Sciences increased from 135 to 195, Physical Sciences from 103 to 149, and non-clinical Biological Sciences from 82 to 102. In 1959–60 the total arts and sciences faculty (the College and the four divisions, including only non-clinical BSD faculty) numbered 499. By 1980, even after the modest reductions experienced in the 1970s, it had increased to 635, for a net increase in arts and sciences faculty lines of 156 over this twenty-year period.



Students march to a rally at the Chicago Civic Center — May 9, 1970.

that I personally believe is also a “child” of the events of 1969–70, was but a modest signal of a sea change in the redistribution of cultural legitimacies between the College and the divisions. This redistribution was inevitable in the aftermath of the historic defeats suffered by the College between 1953 and 1958, but it put pressure on the special, undergraduate-oriented teaching culture that had been fostered in the 1950s.⁸²

1975 was not only the year that Edward Levi stepped down as President, but it was also the year the College found itself facing a serious “staffing crisis” in general education resulting from the difficulty of the Collegiate divisions in recruiting sufficient numbers of regular faculty to teach in core sequences.⁸³ Even though College enrollments were nowhere near the 4,000 students Edward Levi had projected to the Ford Foundation (in fact, they had barely returned to the levels attained before the great sit-in of 1969) and even though the University as a whole had increased the size of the arts and sciences faculty since 1960, the College found it necessary to create the Harper Fellows program. True, we had succeeded brilliantly in rebuilding our arts and sciences faculty after 1960, but that faculty was then well on its way toward adopting different expectations about teaching

82. The Shils Report (officially the Report of the Committee on the Criteria of Academic Appointment) has had a fascinating reception history. It was never officially voted on or otherwise accepted by the Council of the Senate, and its publication in late 1970 led to serious objections from several leading faculty members associated with the College at a Council of the Senate meeting in April 1971. Yet over the years, indeed over the decades, the Shils Report has come to have a kind of totemic status that has seemed to privilege research over teaching in the award of tenure at the University of Chicago.

83. In announcing the need for the new teaching program, Dean of the College Charles Oxnard also commented on the College’s relationship to the graduate divisions: “it is clear that a number of people who are not now teaching in the

loads and manifesting a very different and more varied range of teaching interests that was bound to have an impact on the system of the great general-education courses started by other people in the Hutchins College.

Indeed, if Chicago was founded in 1892, like most other research universities our University was reborn if not reinvented during the Golden Age of the 1960s. Although the divisions stood to gain more faculty, they were still able to assume that “the College” would continue to bear responsibility for entry-level undergraduate education, this even as that College was slowly being shorn of its own faculty.

Perhaps in consolation, a rhetoric gradually emerged about how the College should be happily and naturally “small.” The College’s enrollment disaster of the early 1950s, which led us to have an entering class by the fall of 1953 of only 275 first-year students and a total College enrollment of only 1,350 students, was the result of a series of unfortunate trends involving tremendous difficulties in student recruitment and negative perceptions about the neighborhood. The result—a “small” College—was an outcome that neither the University administration nor the Board of Trustees had ever sanctioned. Even so, the results of this disaster slowly became transformed into an almost predestined act of nature. As one prominent University report on graduate education

College will have to do so. The emergency is great. The Provost will help the College obtain more teachers from the Graduate Divisions. Faculty members will have to teach more. The situation cannot be met simply by increasing the loads of the assistant professors who are already doing a full job now.” Minutes of the College Faculty, February 4, 1975, p. 206. The idea of post-doctoral teaching fellowships actually dates at least to the mid-1960s. It was discussed in the Ford Profile of 1965 as one possible way to increase the number of teachers in the College: “As part of the new College program, a special fellowship program for young college teachers is projected in an effort to encourage the multi-disciplinary background which is essential for the General Education courses.” *Ford Profile*, Vol. 1, p. 56.

argued in 1982, since the days of Harper “the University of Chicago has been virtually unique in American higher education in combining a small liberal arts college with a much larger graduate school.”⁸⁴ That such assertions involved a serious misreading of the demographic history of the University between 1892 and 1945 was almost beside the point.⁸⁵ This paradox—larger divisional faculties, but a dualistic culture

84. “Report of the Commission on Graduate Education,” *The University of Chicago Record*, May 3, 1982, p. 76, as well as p. 81. Statements that appeared in the early 1980s about our “historically” larger graduate programs in the later 1930s are more policy-oriented rhetoric than they are realistic commentaries on the demographic history of the University. During the 1938–39 academic year, we had 2,830 College students enrolled in undergraduate programs in the arts and sciences, but only 1,599 graduate students in divisional degree programs, and the majority of the latter seem to have been working toward M.A., not Ph.D. degrees. Furthermore, as noted above (n. 60) during the period 1892 to 1940 the University awarded 23,961 B.A. degrees in the subjects represented by the divisions, in addition to 7,881 M.A.s and 3,808 Ph.D.s. Undergraduate degrees thus outnumbered graduate degrees by more than two to one. Had the unfortunate events of the early 1950s not occurred, there is no reason to think that something like this balanced ratio would not have flowed into the subsequent decades as well.

85. Divisionally oriented faculty members in the 1930s were aware of who was actually supporting their graduate programs. One of the staunchest opponents of the 1942 reforms sponsored by Robert M. Hutchins that transferred control of the B.A. degree from the divisions to the College and created the possibility of a grades eleven to fourteen collegiate program was Bernadotte E. Schmitt, a distinguished historian. In early 1942, Schmitt wrote to Laird Bell, a University Trustee, protesting the decision and predicting that the University would soon face an enrollment “disaster” because there would now be “two kinds of Bachelor’s degree: the conventional type, and that instituted at the University of Chicago. Since the latter will represent only half as much work as the ordinary Bachelor’s degree, our degree will not be recognized by other institutions as the equivalent of the Bachelor’s degree. . . . When this becomes generally known, my guess is that students will cease to come to the University of Chicago because they will have learned that the so-called Bachelor’s degree does not secure them

that associated beginning undergraduate teaching with something apart from the divisions—is one that many wise colleagues have worked assiduously to resolve over the last twenty years.⁸⁶

admission to professional schools.” Schmitt then revealed one of the primary reasons behind his concerns: “The result in a few years will be almost the complete disappearance of students below the rank of graduate. And inasmuch as the graduate school has always been carried by the undergraduates, the result is obvious.” Registrar’s statistics confirm Schmitt’s observation, for during the 1938–39 academic year the History Department awarded sixty B.A. degrees, nineteen M.A. degrees, and five Ph.D.s. The situation was similar for most of the other academic departments. Bernadotte E. Schmitt to Laird Bell, January 23, 1942, *Bernadotte E. Schmitt Papers*, Archive of the Division of the Social Sciences.

86. This view was perhaps most forcefully held in the Division of the Social Sciences, but it was also evident in the other divisions as well. Robert Streeter, who served as both Dean of the College and as Dean of the Division of the Humanities, offered some shrewd remarks on this subject in an interview with George Dell in 1977. When Dell asked him if the senior faculty in the divisions felt threatened by the existence of a semi-autonomous College, Streeter responded: “One of the things I would say is that generally speaking the Social Science Division was regarded as being less of a threat to the College than the other Divisions, the other three graduate Divisions. It seemed to me that one of the reasons for that was that by and large the Social Science Division had gotten really very research-minded, in such a way that by and large they really didn’t care much about [the College]. They were kind of pleased to have the College responsible for undergraduate education. . . . You get many people, particularly in the Social Sciences, but in some of the other Divisions, too, who were kind of glad not have to worry about things like the beginning courses in political science, or the beginning courses in sociology, or history. In [the] other Divisions, to some extent that happens in the Humanities Division, too: it was a great relief not to worry about freshmen composition, the College could take care of that with English A, B, and C; or the beginning language courses.” Interview with George W. Dell, November 1, 1977, Robert M. Hutchins and Associates, *George Dell Interviews*, Department of Special Collections.

On a different and perhaps more egregiously positive side—the events of 1969 led to serious reforms of the housing system. As noted above, shadowing the student dissent of the period was a profound unhappiness over our housing system. The creation of a more densely coordinated and better staffed system, including the creation of the Resident Masterhips, is also a consequence of the climate of negativism in which the 1969 sit-in was both cause and effect.

Over the past four years we have seen a significant debate which has sometimes assumed the form of a dialogue, at other times that of rival monologues, over the nature of this University. Yet we have had such debates before and, if it is any consolation, in more acute and extreme forms. Students and faculty, indeed faculty and faculty, in 1969 were at odds and passionately so over fundamental values. But the passions of each side, then as now, were derivative of their own vision of what the University is and what it should continue to be.

I believe that the ambitiousness of the Ford Profile and the resulting faculty overexpansion and budgetary crisis, the latter aggravated by our inability to meet College and graduate enrollment levels and by the general financial crisis of the 1970s, was not the result of guile or foolishness. Given the desperate situation of the University in the 1950s—remember the first enrollment crisis of 1953, the collapse of the neighborhood, the general gloominess of the University's situation—the intellectual rebuilding that George Beadle and Edward Levi undertook in the 1960s had to take place. The eloquence of the Ford docket report from August 1965 demonstrates this fact more than any internal Chicago rhetoric possibly could.

Still, these problems have haunted the University for the last quarter century. To read the history of the University between 1950 and 1980 is thus a fascinating exercise. Both of the crises from 1969 which

I have discussed today tested the capacity of the University to understand itself as a realm of values and as a community that—whatever its values—has to exist in the world. Both events also had unhappy or at least unresolved endings, which reminds us that crises can end well or they can end badly, or they can end with an indeterminate quality. As we say in the history business, it all depends.

Our debates in recent years have been sparked by serious and legitimate concerns about the financial underpinnings of the University. My report today suggests that our predecessors worried greatly about those things and often felt frustrated, perhaps even helpless, because they were so uncompromising about the character of the University to which they and we remain so passionately devoted.

But now, almost fifty years since the departure of Hutchins and the slow unraveling of the Hutchins College, and thirty years after the great sit-in that marked our baptism of fire in student rights, we now have a chance to return to that original, courageous vision of the Ford Profile: that as students and faculty, as members of the College, the divisions, and the schools, that all together we are one university; one university with a strong, mid-sized college, large enough to sustain itself and its students and to be of assistance to the graduate research and teaching programs; one university devoted to the mission of liberal education and scientific inquiry; and at the same time one university that has a reasonable, balanced economy that can sustain those brilliant virtues. The University tried magnificently in 1965 to imagine such a heroic and integrated future, and it did not quite succeed. History does not often give either individuals or institutions second chances, but, based on the extremely successful work of the last two decades, we have been given a second chance, and we must not waste it.

In February 1969, at the height of the crisis over the sit-in, Edward

Levi observed with simple elegance that “[t]his is our University, in hard times as well as good.” It is still our University, and we may confidently hope that the coming decade will have many more good times than bad. The history of the University between 1950 and 1980 was filled with both, but the gambles and risks taken in those days shaped and conditioned the strengths of the University today. Put bluntly, because of the courage of our predecessors, we still have a university to own and to seek to improve.

Much has changed since the 1970s and to my mind it has changed for the better. From a College of 2,115 in 1973, when I began teaching Western Civilization as an advanced graduate student lecturer, we now have almost 3,900 students, and the liberal and general education we provide is still unmatched among our peer research universities. Our attrition rates are way down, and our application pool is way up—we have in fact almost doubled the number of students applying to the College since 1992. This year’s first-year College class is probably the strongest—in sheer academic terms—in the history of the University of Chicago. The new master plan of the University, executed under the leadership of Provost Geoffrey Stone, will finally give to the College a superb set of residential, athletic, and student service facilities which we desperately needed in the mid-1960s and whose absence was a critical negative variable in much of the story I have told today.

Most important, by the difficult but quite successful efforts of Presidents Hanna H. Gray and Hugo F. Sonnenschein, together with the equally important work of several Provosts, Deans of the College and Deans of the Divisions, Collegiate Masters, and many other sung and unsung heroes over the last twenty years, we have also proved to our students and to alumni, as well as to ourselves, that this faculty has the capacity, the determination, and the ability to sustain a medium-sized

college and to do well by our students by continuing to offer them an impressive program of liberal and general education. We have also demonstrated that the College can be a responsible partner, with others, in helping to provide the resources necessary to ensure that the University as a whole remains one of the leading centers of inquiry in the world.

I believe that we are poised for a great era for the College, as well as for the University. Edward Levi was right—one cannot fix or sustain Chicago *ad seriatim*, because it is a whole thing. We should be proud, as faculty who teach in the College, to serve the unit that stands at the natural and deserved center of this whole university. The College cannot and must not stand apart from the University, for we represent the core values of the University. At the same time, the University must not stand apart from the College, above all in the provision of faculty teachers and faculty teaching to sustain the brilliant work of the College. To retain that intellectual rigor which we prize, while attaining that success which we need and deserve, will require a major rededication by the current generation of faculty to providing teaching of the highest quality in the College. This was true in Edward Levi’s time, and it will prove even more true in ours.

In the internal staff discussion surrounding the formulation of Ben Rothblatt’s November 1969 budget memorandum, some voices of skepticism emerged. William Cannon, then Vice-President for Programs and Projects, thought the piece too much a “lamentation.” But Edward Levi thought otherwise, and even insisted that Rothblatt account for the ambivalent outcome of the Ford grant. He wrote:

I do think we should say something special about the Ford challenge grant and how it is being used to support the budget, but that it runs out, that it has given the University the possibility of

new strength and horizons, but that we knew there would be a difficult period when it ran out. The hope that other donors would pick it up. The difficulties of the present period. The fact that the University might well have to cut back. Nevertheless, the strength of the University, not its weakness, has always been the reason for support. Gives you a chance to say what kind of a university this is.⁸⁷

A typical Edward Levi statement, combining hard-nosed realism with a sensitivity of talking always about the basic values of the University. In the years to come we too should keep in mind “what kind of university this is.” We have a promising future ahead of us, and I know that as members of the College faculty you are committed to working as hard as you can to keep the College a thriving place for ideas and debate, for innovation and experimentation in teaching and for the highest standards of research, one that is worthy of the great accomplishments which our predecessors—both students and faculty—achieved in the first century of our history.

As always, I thank you for your support and dedication to the work of the College, and I wish you a productive and fruitful year of intellectual discovery.

87. Edward H. Levi to John T. Wilson and Ben Rothblatt, August 29, 1969, *Presidents' Papers*, Box 20.

THE COLLEGE
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO