A History of the College of Social Studies

by

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Class of 1991

A thesis submitted to the faculty of Wesleyan University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts with Departmental Honors from the College of Social Studies

Middletown, Connecticut  April, 1991
The flaws of this thesis, though they may be considerable, have been lessened due to the wisdom and caring of a number of people:

The Tutors who sanctioned and buoyed my little escapade. Bill Barber who, in the tradition of Adam Smith's "invisible hand," led me quietly yet constructively. The College of Social Studies and everybody in it (past and present)- without you this thesis would not have been possible. Literally. Hugh Jones whose absence has been sorely missed throughout this project. Jerome Copulsky who has been a good friend and companion. My family whom I so rarely appreciate and yet love very much. Finally, JoAnne whose love and compassion have taught me some extraordinary things in this past year. Thank You.
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PREFACE

My interest in the subject matter of this thesis is self-explanatory.

One of the most valuable rewards of my CSS education has been the acquisition of an enduring interest in education—not simply what we learn, but rather how we gain knowledge and ultimately wisdom. Presently, educational methods are standardized in American colleges and universities to the point that learning by lecture is now the unquestioned norm. The CSS is an important educational program if for no other reason than it claims to be different. It is different both in the setting in which students learn and in the knowledge which students address. Because of its claim to be distinctive, the CSS has at least made me aware of the importance of genuine and original thought, irrespective of my capacity to engage in such thought.

I am not a devotee of the College. Its efforts to ingrain the critical method in its students would have been wasted on me if I blindly lauded this institution. However, in September of 1990, I suspected that there might be an interesting story to tell about the CSS—even if it wasn't a tale of the College's triumphs. I must humbly admit that the original idea came from a good friend—also a CSSer. He suggested that I write my honors thesis on A History of the CSS. We both laughed, and had another beer. But I thought about it and then discussed the idea with Richard Adelstein. As usual, Richie's contagious enthusiasm helped me to take myself seriously. After three years in the College, I have come to learn that good ideas often come to fruition only as a result of the genuine interest of a mentor. This thesis topic was a good idea.

The implementation of that idea was another matter entirely. Regardless of CSS' implicit claims to foster interdisciplinary learning in its students, I am not a historian. I hoped that my interest in the subject matter would dilute my distaste for the discipline, and indeed I never tired of working on this project. However, the nature of my topic generated problems which would have been less troublesome for a disciplinary
specialist. The most serious flaw of this work is the lack of primary materials supporting the text. Obviously, A History of the CSS does not lend itself to the use of secondary sources, but applicable primary sources were also few and far between. The College's files were either non-existent or chaotic, and the Olin Archives were of limited help. My task would have been next to impossible were it not for the willingness of particular tutors to allow me access to their personal records. Even with this additional material, I often found myself lapsing into generalizations which, albeit, I had a very strong hunch about. But good history is not based on hunches.

In its most basic form, history is artful storytelling. I have attempted to tell the story of the CSS, leaving many parts of its history unexplored. If I had desired to broaden my topic into a PhD dissertation, then certain other issues could have been discussed. For instance, I could have written a history of the intellectual currents of the time and their effects on the CSS. I chose not to do this because of my limited knowledge of these movements. I could have written a history of the student experience in the CSS. I decided against this path due to a lack of broad-based, quantifiable data. Though I sent questionnaires to CSS alumni, the results were mildly disappointing. The 28% who responded were extremely important in shaping my images of what the CSS was like throughout its history. But my questionnaire was lacking. Granted, its original purpose was to gather anecdotal evidence rather than quantifiable information. Yet, I cannot help thinking that this project would be considerably improved if my assertions were supported by lots of "%" symbols and perhaps even a graph or two.

I have described what this project is not. What my thesis does describe is the development of an educational institution, its effects on the lives of students and professors, and its place in the context of Wesleyan University. In this sense, my thesis is more mutt than purebreed. Then again, all learning and scholarship is a muddy business; ideas and phenomena rarely confine themselves to ordered niches. My basic framework, though, imposes a fairly simplistic structure on the events related to the
College. In a word, there were internal factors and external factors affecting the College throughout its existence. Internal and external to what? The answer is unclear because of the interrelatedness of the university environment and the College itself. Often in the following pages, the story of these factors will be divided into categories: (1) the student experience as related to the pedagogy of the CSS and larger trends in the university and society (2) the faculty experience as determined in part by the relation of the College to university departments and (3) the chronicle of Wesleyan as a whole from the 1940s through the 80s.

Using these categories, distinct chapters separate the history of the CSS into three periods. Chapter One sets the stage for the inception of the College. Victor Butterfield is the key personality transforming the university in this period. Largely as a result of his efforts, the CSS came into existence as an experimental educational program. In some ways, the success or failure of the CSS had the potential to shape the face of Wesleyan at that time. The second chapter mainly serves to clarify the reader’s understanding of the distinctive pedagogy of the CSS. Chapter Three marks the first nine years, and then Chapter Four records the next fourteen years. Separating these two chapters is the year 1968. This year is not a mystical turning point in history, but it appears that a number of important developments coincided with this date. First, it was in 1968 that the Wesleyan faculty voted to abolish virtually all curriculum requirements. Though this event is not overtly stressed in the beginning of my thesis, the significant ramifications of the decision should be clear toward the end. Second, this year also marked the first time that student initiative in the CSS played a significant role in shaping College policy. In 1991, we are so (over)saturated with students' cries "to be heard" that it is difficult to envision student involvement in university affairs as a dramatic event. The fact is that it was a big deal back then. Which brings me to my third point: 1968 was the beginning of what Secretary of the University William Kerr termed "the dark years" of Wesleyan. Social and fiscal turmoil combined to generate a mood of
disappointment and frustration amongst the entire university community. 1968 was indeed an important year in the history of the CSS as well as for Wesleyan as a whole. Chapter Five examines the CSS after the reforms of 1982, and additionally provides a wider perspective on the changes discussed in previous chapters.

A Final Note About Biases. Along with the many helpful alumni responses that I received, one graduate chose to inform me of the inherent flaws of my project. It took him a few pages, but eventually he arrived at a particularly keen insight: I'm biased (!). How can I write a history of something in which I am so integrally involved? Rhetorical questions aside, I have always had difficulty understanding the notion of "bias". The term itself seems to have little or no meaning by virtue of the fact that everybody's biased. By the common definition of the word, we are all biased either due to our backgrounds, our socio-economic circumstances, or our particular brand of toothpaste. No one can escape this wretched disease. This type of argument, however, leaves little room for the exercise of individual will or the capacity for detached analysis. I happen to believe in both of these things. Therefore, my only bias, I would argue, is that I believe I have no bias.
To the Memory of Victor Lloyd Butterfield
-a man of morals
CHAPTER ONE
PHILOSOPHY AND ACTION

In practice exactness vanishes: the sole problem is: 'Does it Work?' But the aim of practice can only be defined by the use of theory...The vagueness of practice is energized by the clarity of ideal experience.

-Alfred North Whitehead
"Mathematics and the Good"

A history of the College of Social Studies begins with an individual rather than a date. More than any other person, Victor Lloyd Butterfield--the 11th president of Wesleyan--was responsible for the inception of the CSS. In fact, virtually every aspect of Wesleyan was transformed in some way by the personal philosophy of liberal education that Butterfield espoused.

Three particular developments during the phase of Butterfield's presidency from 1943-1959 were integrally tied to the history of the CSS. First of all, Butterfield helped to initiate a number of changes in Wesleyan's curriculum. These innovations paved the way, in part, for the CSS. Secondly, the composition of the faculty was substantially altered in the post-war period. Most of the new scholars who joined the community were personally recruited by Butterfield himself, and many became key actors in developments at Wesleyan during the fifties and sixties. Thirdly, beginning in the mid 1940s, the university experienced a remarkable influx of financial resources.

The combination of a high-powered faculty, burgeoning wealth, and an innovative president eventually resulted in the creation of two long-range plans for the university.
One was the notion of Wesleyan as a "Little University", vaguely outlined in the Burford Committee Report of 1955. The other was the 1959 College Plan, strongly supported by the president as an alternative to the present structure of the university.

I

The energy and passion of Victor Butterfield arose from a near-religious devotion to his philosophy of liberal education. For this reason, an understanding of his philosophy is an important first step in understanding both Butterfield and his place in the history of the CSS.

For Butterfield, his own education was an opportunity to search for a philosophy to guide his life's work. He received his B.A. and Master of Arts from Cornell in 1927 and 1928 respectively. After Cornell, Butterfield eventually went on to study at Harvard. Though an English major as an undergraduate, he did his doctorate work in philosophy-- a logical choice for a man in search of a life philosophy. He wrote his dissertation thesis on the educational philosopher William James, but he was also strongly influenced by John Dewey and Alfred North Whitehead.

Having taught for a year at Lawrence College after finishing his studies at Harvard, Butterfield and his wife, Kay, were asked to come to Wesleyan in 1935 by President James L. McConaughy. Butterfield was appointed to be a philosophy instructor and the university's Director of Admissions. As Wesleyan's sole admissions officer, he transformed the haphazard admissions process into a more systematic search for students of academic promise and moral maturity. By emphasizing the role of personal interviews in selecting candidates and improving information resources through a more detailed application form, Butterfield strongly shaped the incoming classes of the late thirties. Just as he used admissions interviews to probe and challenge young minds, Butterfield encouraged his philosophy students to argue strenuously about the material
they were studying. In fact, his unorthodox methods caused considerable disquiet among the university's more conventional lecturers.1

Butterfield desired to make an impact on the Wesleyan community, but his contribution would not be as a scholar. He himself remarked: "...I am not a professional scholar and never made any pretense of being one. I pursued my graduate studies for quite personal intellectual and moral reasons and took my degree simply as an additional advantage."2 By 1938, Butterfield was named Dean of Freshmen. Then, in 1941 he became Associate Dean. Butterfield became Acting President in 1942 and was finally appointed President of Wesleyan by the Board of Trustees in September of 1943 upon McConaughy's retirement.

The new President that the board had chosen was not an ordinary administrator by any stretch of the imagination. In whatever capacity he filled at Wesleyan, Butterfield demonstrated a genuine concern for students and their educational development. From the start, Butterfield was extremely close to the students on the small campus. Even during his later years as president, he literally knew every student's name, and everyone around campus addressed him as "Vic".3 Upon his appointment, students reciprocated the warmth that Butterfield had shown them in past years:

Phillip L. Brown '44 described...how the new President returned to Middletown by train and bus and was greeted by a crowd of undergraduates who had already received the news of his appointment by telephone. They carried him up the hill to High Street and then stood in front of his house as he spoke to them about Wesleyan and its future. Such a scene my seem incredible to the cooler undergraduates of this day, but it was more than just old-fashioned high spirits that moved those students. They had known the President before, had heard him talk and seen him

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In part, Vic cared about students because he cared so deeply about his educational philosophy: "Vic believed in liberal education in a way that was virtually a religion...It guided everything he did in his life." By the time of his appointment to the presidency, he had already formulated the fundamental values, beliefs, and principles that comprised this philosophy. Commenting on Butterfield's inaugural speech, a faculty member reflected, "That was the last speech he wrote. All the rest have been adaptations of it."

According to Vic, liberal education should facilitate students' search for wisdom. In his own words, it was "...useful knowledge - digging out ideas and values that you apply to living and to making a living." Central to this process was an understanding of "such enduring values as justice, freedom, virtue, beauty, and truth." Butterfield was concerned that students did not leave Wesleyan having only gained a stock of information; students must also create for themselves standards of value in order to apply that information to their everyday lives: "...the growth of sound judgement is dependant upon an increased sensitization to basic standards and principles of social, moral, aesthetic, and religious experience." Butterfield hoped that a liberal education would lead students through a remarkable moral and intellectual transformation "as if they had found Jesus".

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4 "Within the Family 'Staying Power,'" Wesleyan University Alumnus, May 1967, p.2
5 Paton, John, former Director of Public Information. Interview by Author. January 8, 1991. Wesleyan University.
6 Interview with Kay Butterfield, 1/1991.
11 Paton, John. Interview by Author.
Butterfield himself had an extremely strict sense of social and academic values.\textsuperscript{12} Though he saw life from a moralistic perspective, he avoided overtly imposing his own morals on other people, especially students. According to Butterfield, wisdom could not be taught from a textbook, nor could morality be tested on an exam. Only students who were allowed autonomy in making their own decisions could acquire the values and the self-discipline that characterized a moral life. Vic thus resisted constructing institutions to enforce a particular set of values, no matter how strong his belief in those values. In the early years of his presidency, for instance, he urged that chapel requirements be abolished: "...compulsion in the area of worship and devotion seems to me a travesty on religion and on the dignity of men, even of young men, and it defeats the very ends it tries to achieve."\textsuperscript{13} And in later years when the debate over the racial integration of fraternities became heated, he "...pushed the ethical development of students by declining to impose institutional sanctions on fraternities with clauses restricting membership, by simultaneously urging the students to take the lead themselves in making the fraternities consistent with Wesleyan's ideals..."\textsuperscript{14}

According to Butterfield's philosophy, values could be genuinely internalized only after they had been questioned and scrutinized in a free and open environment: "We should make every effort to treat students as adults by permitting them to exercise an appreciable autonomy of judgement in the use of their time, and in deriving their own meanings and values from what they study."\textsuperscript{15}

Freedom and autonomy potentially implied change, and Butterfield wholeheartedly embraced any new ideas relating to humane liberal learning. Vic was known in educational circles as the "watering can president...He would walk around campus and

\textsuperscript{12} Kerr, William, Secretary of the University. Interview by Author. January 10, 1991. Wesleyan University.
\textsuperscript{14} Faculty Minutes. December 16, 1975. p.4-5.
give a drink to every idea he saw beginning to sprout." 16 Thus, even though his philosophy clearly outlined the goals of liberal education, he continually emphasized the importance of evaluating the methods used to achieve those ends: "The moment a college thinks it has the answers it dies... Most of its vitality arises from the perpetual quest for deeper insight into its purposes and for more effective methods for achieving them." 17

II

Vic's education prepared him for the translation of his educational philosophy into action, and he pursued this goal with an intense passion. 18 During his first decade and a half as president, Butterfield's actions transformed Wesleyan into a remarkably different educational institution from the one that existed upon his arrival.

As President, Butterfield was determined to effect real change in the educational methods of the university. In his inaugural address, he stated his intention to focus on questions of education:

A college president is usually thought of as an administrative convenience and an educational nuisance. That he must be an administrative convenience, there can be no question. I make bold to doubt, however, that he must be an educational nuisance. 19

Though Butterfield envisioned a major role for himself in evaluating the educational methods of the university, he realized that reforms must have the support of the faculty

16 Cohen, Tom. "Victor Butterfield and the College Plan" p.4.
18 Faculty Minutes. December 16, 1975. p.1
to be lasting and successful. Butterfield himself would later comment: "You can't plan for Wesleyan in isolation of the faculty. The administration can't impose reform." However, if professors resisted change, then Vic would not hesitate to prod them into action.

Throughout Butterfield's tenure, this kind of prodding was successful in initiating a number of curriculum changes. The first of these was the Freshman Humanities Program which Butterfield helped to implement while still Acting President. During this period, Wesleyan was undergoing unusual changes as a result of World War II. With enlistment and the draft reducing the student body to 13% of its pre-war size, Butterfield was forced to coordinate the liberal education of a small number of civilian students with the training of two naval units that the university acquired during the war years. With the help of Associate Professor of Classics Nathan Pusey, Professor of English Fred Millet, and Professor of Religion John Darr, Butterfield took advantage of this situation and implemented a controversial interdepartmental course for freshmen on the "Great Books" of history, philosophy, literature, religion, etc. This course was similar to a sophomore tutorial that Vic had inaugurated years earlier while teaching at Lawrence College.

Many Wesleyan faculty ardently opposed blurring the boundaries between academic disciplines. They argued that reading these Great Books would be meaningless without the supporting contextual knowledge that a normal departmental course provided. Nathan Pusey, however, responded that the course was designed "to foster an awareness of the unified nature of knowledge, to stimulate reflection about the nature of man and of society, and to introduce the student to the major aspects of human

21 Butterfield shrewdly instituted the program when the small size of the wartime freshman class allowed him to locate a core group of professors willing to teach in an interdisciplinary setting.
cultures." In the end, Pusey and others were successful in their struggle with Wesleyan's disciplinary specialists.

The Humanities Program was the first step in Butterfield's long term goal to shape Wesleyan to reflect his philosophy of liberal education. Compartmentalized knowledge was antithetical to the humane liberal learning in which Butterfield passionately believed. For Vic, it was both ludicrous and harmful to deny the interrelatedness of academic disciplines. Butterfield later reflected on the significance of this The Humanities Program in his struggle against specialization: "It was the first large breakthrough of departmental rigidity and the most effective method we have found of providing an intellectual community of discourse among teachers from many fields. It paved the way by spirit and example for further interdisciplinary enterprises."23

Other innovations were also instituted during the early Butterfield years. In 1950-51, plans were developed for a Public Affairs Center to encourage the integration of the disciplines of economics, government, and history. The plan to provide adjacent offices for the faculty of these departments was realized with the opening of the John E. Andrus Center for Public Affairs in 1955. Butterfield reflected on the importance of this development in encouraging interdisciplinary thinking: "The Public Affairs Center gave further impetus to interdepartmentalism..."24

Ideally, Butterfield wanted bold experiments like the Humanities Program and the Public Affairs Center to emanate from the faculty on a continuous basis. With a tremendous turnover in personnel during the war period, the young President was presented with an opportunity to alter the composition of the faculty to suit his enthusiasm for experimentation. In an unusual move for the head of a university,

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24 Ibid. p.5
Butterfield personally set out to find scholars of promising intellectual potential and bring them to Wesleyan. "He sought names from other educators who understood what he was looking for and flew around the country to interview candidates."25 He was looking for what he called "mustangs" as opposed to "dray horses", but he had no set formula for making his decisions: "For his part, Vic made his judgements on the basis of what must be called remarkable intuition...He shaped Wesleyan through that intuition."26

Butterfield's continuous search for scholarly talent produced remarkable effects by the end of his first decade as president. By 1953, approximately three-quarters of Wesleyan's faculty had been personally recruited by the president.27 A new generation of scholars thus arrived on the Wesleyan scene to add to the strength of the existing staff. Professor Emeritus of History Eugene Golob recalled these days: "It used to be said that, of the Little Three, Williams had the wealthiest students, Amherst the best students, and Wesleyan the best faculty. In short, Vic Butterfield was building on an established tradition when he carried out his famous recruitment in the post-war years. He brought a bright and lively group together, and this was a bright and lively place."28 New ideas were to be expected from this body of scholars, and this was exactly what Vic wanted.

Innovation, however, could be expensive. The implementation of the Public Affairs Center and other initiatives on a similarly large scale were possible because Wesleyan experienced one of the most rapid reversals of financial fortunes in collegiate history during the 1950s and 60s. In these days, Wesleyan could afford to experiment.

26 Faculty Minutes. December 16, 1975, p.3.
27 Ibid.
Butterfield accepted his appointment to the presidency having agreed with the Board of Trustees that his time and energy would be spent improving Wesleyan's educational methods, not raising its endowment. In 1943, the university's endowment amounted to less than $10 million, most of which was invested in stable ventures such as mortgages and fixed price assets. This type of investment portfolio was the norm among most educational institutions of this time. During the war years, the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees liquidated these investments and placed most of the endowment funds in common stocks, expecting to take advantage of post-war inflationary pressures. The results of this unconventional investment strategy were impressive. The endowment rose to $17,890,000 by 1950 and would continue to grow at an even more rapid pace in the coming years with the stock market booms of the 1950s.

The board initiated its most stunning financial coup with the purchase of American Education Publications (the Press) in 1949. The Press' mainstay products were secondary school publications such as My Weekly Reader and Current Events. Acquired for $8,245,000, the initial investment was a considerable risk for the college, but the Press soon proved itself well worth the gamble.29 Within nine years the university realized profits sufficient to pay off the cost of the initial investment. On average, Wesleyan was receiving approximately $1 million every year from the Press' operations, and because of the college's status as a non-profit organization, these funds were tax free.

How much money Wesleyan was actually earning from the Press was a well kept secret. The university treasurer kept the financial records pertaining to the college's income from the Press confidential, and the annual financial reports of these years

29 This amount represented approximately half of the university's total endowment at the time.
showed no signs of a monetary windfall. Though it was common knowledge that Wesleyan was earning significant investment returns, an absence of budget deficits was the only indication that Wesleyan was becoming financially stable, if not truly rich. With little information to separate fact from fantasy, outrageous speculations as to the real wealth of the university soon circulated.

For Butterfield, prosperity was a mixed blessing. The influx of resources could be used to transform Wesleyan into a premier liberal arts college. In pursuing this objective, Butterfield's wishlist for imaginative (and expensive) educational initiatives became an actual agenda for reforms. For instance, the Graduate Division of School and Teacher Services and the Master of Arts in Teaching program were inaugurated in 1952. Also during this period, Butterfield instituted one of the most generous salary scales of any college or university in the country in order to attract and retain the best available scholars. Contrary to Butterfield's puritan roots, an ethic of spending slowly entrenched itself as the financial creed of Wesleyan throughout the next two decades.

Yet, wealth was also the President's bane. It became an unruly variable profoundly affecting how Vic's philosophy was received in the context of the university in the 1950s and 60s. This philosophy of education was essentially unconcerned with resources and balance sheets. Wealth and even academic prestige were of secondary importance to the primary task at hand--liberal education. Vic's appetite for experimentation was thus limited to strengthening the quality of the students, the faculty, and the curriculum. Other projects, such as the extensive building program of the 1950s, were a distraction, irrelevant to the task of liberal learning. Eugene Golob expressed Vic's sentiments:

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30 The university restricted public access to the Press' financial records in order to protect its market share. As a private non-profit institution, Wesleyan had no legal obligation to disclose the sources of its income. By choosing to leave the income of the Press a mystery, fewer competitors were likely to be drawn into the market that the Press had so profitably explored.
I met Vic one day wandering around...the Davison Art Center. Vic looked at the wing being put on in back and said with a very rueful smile, "Well, that's the first brick and mortar I've been involved in since I was president." He was reluctant. That wasn't what he wanted. He wanted to concentrate on teaching and liberal arts...31

Wealth also challenged the conception of Wesleyan as a small learning community. Until 1959, Vic ardently insisted upon Wesleyan remaining a small liberal arts college. To accommodate the influx of veterans in the years following the war, the student body grew from 700 to 900, and America's college age population was continuing to grow at a rapid pace. The university's trend toward growth could conceivably have continued, but Butterfield considered the essence of Wesleyan to be its identity as a small community. From Vic's perspective, facilitating students' search for wisdom required personal interaction in an intimate setting. Thus, in 1949, Butterfield persuaded the board of trustees to reduce the enrollment to 700, though the actual size remained closer to 750. In the years that followed there would be constant pressures, especially from the faculty, to grow--pressures which Butterfield stubbornly resisted for another ten years.

Though Butterfield opposed increasing the size of the university, he was unable to morally justify spending grandiose amounts of money on Wesleyan's small student body. He was especially uncomfortable with Wesleyan's large per capita wealth during the 1950s when the so-called "silent generation" of students filled Wesleyan's classrooms. Vic described this period: "Those were the McCarthy days; there was timidity among students in expressing their political views."32 This lack of intellectual vibrancy was especially disconcerting since, only a short time ago, the veteran years were characterized as a "remarkably exciting and fruitful period for both teachers and

32 Jane Eisner, "I Was a Great Believer in Bull Sessions." p.3.
students." To add to this troubling picture, 30% of the students who had withdrawn from the university in recent years before completing their degree had been in the top quarter of their classes. Apparently, Wesleyan was not catering to the very students who could make the community more vibrant. The question was: what use of Wesleyan's new wealth would be both responsible and productive in addressing these problems?

III

The president was not content to accept the national malaise of silence during the 1950s, but simply throwing money at the problem was not a satisfactory solution. The uninspiring intellectual atmosphere coupled with Wesleyan's growing affluence was generating expectations for more ambitious directions toward which the university might strive. If there was to be a new long-range plan for Wesleyan, it would have to be quintessentially visionary. It was still uncertain at this time, however, whether such a vision might challenge or affirm Butterfield's conception of Wesleyan as a small liberal arts college.

A potential alternative to the President's perspective was the vague notion of Wesleyan as a "Little University" described by the Burford Committee in 1953-54. The committee, headed by Professor of Chemistry M. Gilbert Burford, sought to analyze a broad range of university policies. The wording of the committee's final report was ambiguous, neither endorsing nor condemning any definitive course of action but, the underlying perspective of the members of the committee was evident. This perspective

34 Reports of the Meetings of the Three Divisions with the Educational Policy Committee on the College Plan. January 28, 1959. p.5
cautiously suggested that "graduate work at a Little University should take advantage of and be developed in relation [to the undergraduate liberal arts experience]". In addition to graduate programs, Wesleyan as a Little University would place a new premium on scholarship. The report described at length the faculty's dissatisfaction with the current research focus of the college: "Forty per cent of the 66 respondents reported inadequate time for research, almost 50 per cent inadequate time for [keeping abreast of the current] literature." Though Wesleyan had inherited the title "university" from its Methodist founders, it had always been a small liberal arts college. The Little University idea thus represented a major break with the university's past.

Besides outlining the concept of a Little University, the report vaguely approved of the interdepartmental initiatives which the President strongly supported. Its approval was limited to noting that departmental autonomy had not been destroyed as a result of these experiments. According to the members of the committee, interdepartmentalism was a fine idea, but decisions as to when and how additional programs ought to be implemented should be left to each academic division.

This sentiment was echoed in the report's review of the "collegiate plan", an idea recently conceived by Butterfield. The President's plan challenged the assumption that liberal education necessitated the university's current system of enforced requirements: "Essentially, the collegiate plan is based on the premise that education should start with the student's own intellectual interests as the core of his experience at college and lead him through them to the wider areas with which they are naturally in contact." This plan represented the president's early attempt to formulate a coherent alternative to the conventional university curriculum.

36 Ibid. p.50.
37 Ibid. p.34.
Butterfield did not approve of the tentative ideas of the Burford report. In the President's Annual Report the following year, he commented: "The results of the Committee's work last year are not at first glance impressive, involving primarily a proposal to the Faculty that we are not giving sufficient attentions to problems of vitality and creativity in our intellectual life..."38 Vic was frustrated that no new initiatives were formulated after a year of deliberation. Based on the tone of the report, the main problem that he foresaw was how to direct the creative energy of the faculty toward bettering the liberal arts program of the university instead of churning out scholarship. For Vic, a Little University would divert the energies of the community away from the primary task of undergraduate liberal learning.

When the Burford Committee report was issued in May of 1955, few people paid attention to the ambiguous revisions suggested for the educational program of the university.39 However, it was in 1955 that Butterfield began the slow and difficult struggle to rechannel the energies of the Wesleyan community toward a major curricular change that corresponded to his vision of liberal education. In order to achieve this goal, the president utilized the Educational Policy Committee (EPC), created at Butterfield's urging in 1952 to continually re-evaluate the university's educational methods.40

For three hours every Monday afternoon, the President and the EPC gathered to discuss the educational philosophies of Whitehead, Dewey, James, and others. For most of the faculty members on the EPC, these were painfully soporific meetings, but Butterfield insisted on the importance of contemplating theory at length before proposing any course of action. The President's tactics were characteristic of his single-

39 The community expressed far greater interest in certain critical comments concerning fraternities and the diversity of the student body.
40 The Burford Committee was also an EPC committee. It simply acquired a distinctive name due to its chairman.
minded determination. Vic did not need to win every argument; if he lost a debate, he would simply wait awhile and then redouble his efforts on the same point. Butterfield was thus content to spend literally years guiding the EPC through the conceptual steps which he had already traced: "...Vic was getting them in a mood to be dissatisfied." The President was sure that, after careful consideration, the faculty would come to the same conclusions as he did.

The EPC eventually identified a number of shortcomings in Wesleyan's present educational system. To begin with, this system engendered authoritarian relationships between teachers and students which inhibited rather than encouraged students' maturity. Also, the current trend toward specialization among both students and faculty conflicted with Wesleyan's liberal arts foundations. In addition, students' educational development was segmented by the different classes they took; there existed no means to deal with the progress of the student's whole mind. Finally, the present educational methods misunderstood the proper incentives for learning; the sole motive for learning must be the intrinsic love of it. The grade-consciousness of typical American college students demonstrated that the present system failed to instill enduring intellectual curiosity in young minds.

Based on the premise that different systems of education produced different educational experiences, Butterfield's prodding and the EPC's own initiative produced a radical plan to restructure Wesleyan in 1958. The College Plan proposed a restructuring of the university's current departmental organization into a federation of interdisciplinary colleges, each offering their own core curriculum. A college would be composed of approximately 100 students and 10-15 faculty members. Under this new system, freshman year would be devoted to elective courses, the Humanities, and rigorous study of a foreign language and rhetoric. At the end of their first year, students

41 "Within the Family 'Staying Power.'" Wesleyan University Alumnus, May 1967, p.2.
would select one of the colleges for intensive study in a "Core Program". Breadth would be achieved in a "Supplementary Program" which incorporated fields immediately related to the Core. General education would also be required in this new system, but the specific nature of a student's generalization program was not to be imposed. Students would freely choose their generalization program based upon their individual interests. Lastly, students would be freed from the lockstep of the current academic routine by reducing the frequency of class meetings and quantitative examinations.

In the final analysis, the College Plan was essentially concerned with substituting independence for paternalism; the idea was to avoid "a rigorous routine" but nonetheless retain a "rigorous education". Fostering self-discipline and maturity in students was the ultimate objective of the Plan.

The College Plan proposed an even more crucial role for teachers than in the present educational system. A small group of scholars would take responsibility for a student's complete intellectual growth. The relationship between these scholars and the student should be as collegial as possible: "It [the Plan] does everything possible to remove the teacher from the role of a judge...by making the mingling of students and teachers both social and professional and by providing outside examiners." The success of the Plan depended upon the teachers whose careful personal guidance would insure that freedom was utilized constructively.

The College Plan addressed two related problems which Butterfield had been grappling with for years. First, the reorganization of Wesleyan into separate colleges promised to be an expensive venture which would require considerable time and effort to implement. The costs of the plan were not astronomical, but the proposed colleges would be more expensive than the current departments: "...A program which puts three

43 "Letter to the Editor of the Amherst Alumni News," 11 October 1964, p.2
44 "The President's Annual Report, 1959-60" Wesleyan University Bulletin, p.11
tutors in with 25 to 30 students will never look as [cost-efficient] as one where one lecturer can face a group of 60 or more."45 For the President, however, the College Plan's departure from the norm in American education was a morally justifiable expense precisely because it was so promising and so novel. In addition, if the Plan were instituted, there would be insufficient time and resources to consider the faculty-centered initiatives voiced by the Burford committee. Butterfield's College Plan purposefully preserved the fundamental image of Wesleyan that he cherished.

The new structure proposed in the College Plan also settled the President's moral dilemma concerning the size of the university. For a number of years, Butterfield, the Board of Trustees, and the faculty had felt anxious about turning away able applicants while spending considerable amounts of money on a relatively apathetic generation of Wesleyan students. Growth in the size of both the student body and the faculty would increase the chances of finding excellent learners and scholars. The College Plan allowed for this growth without sacrificing the intimacy of a small liberal arts college. Wesleyan could expand by simply adding new colleges whenever they were warranted and still retain its identity as an intimate learning community. Following this rationale, at the same time as the Plan was released, the President supported the Trustees' decision to increase enrollment from 750 to 1000 students by 1964.

IV

In an impassioned preface to his Annual Report of 1957-1958, Butterfield stated that "an institution has to change in order to remain the same."46 No sooner had the President's plan for change been released that it was both applauded and decried by

45 Wesleyan University Alumnus, May 1967, p.19 Note: The CSS in specific ranked in the middle of the various departments based on average cost per student.
people inside the university and out. David Riesman, an expert on American higher education, said the College Plan "was the most hopeful attack on the problems of higher education, and if implemented could give a tremendous lift to the American educational scene as a whole." Yet, many Wesleyan faculty issued harsher appraisals, calling it "amateurism", "elitism", "proto-graduate study", and "a marvelous opportunity to goof off". Debate on the merits of the College Plan quickly ensued.

There were a number of specific criticisms, but the essence of the faculty's concerns was the threat that the Plan posed to the integrity of accepted academic disciplines. If fully implemented, departments would no longer exist as organizational units at Wesleyan. Departments were entrenched power institutions in American colleges and universities because professional advancement depended upon affiliation with a discipline and the standards set by that discipline:

> The profession was responsible for the award of fellowships, prizes, and honorific offices; the acceptance or rejection of submissions by journals; the evaluation of books in those journals; and, most crucially, though as yet far from autonomously, employment opportunities, promotion, and salaries.  

Departmental loyalties were thus one of the main obstacles to the implementation of the College Plan.

Though many faculty members had reservations about Butterfield's ideas, the most severe criticism came from the faculty of Division Three (Mathematics and the Natural Sciences). Divisions One (Arts and Humanities) and Two (Social and Behavioral Sciences) at least agreed that the Plan's goals were sound. Most scientists, though, opposed the entire concept. They felt both neglected and threatened by a long-term

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47 Memo FROM: Unknown to Unknown RE: Assorted Comments on the College Plan
initiative which failed to consider the large amount of scientific material best taught in
the lecture classes that the Plan decried: "...Members of the Science Division seem to
feel that the College Plan responds to problems not notably present in the science
departments, that it contains dangers whose threat to established professional standards
outweighs the promised advantages."49

The entire faculty debated the advantages and disadvantages of the Plan for three
months and then approved two experimental Colleges on February 25, 1959. The
College of Letters (literature, history, and philosophy) and College of Social Studies
(economics, government, history, and philosophy) were to be autonomous units akin
to departments and would be reviewed after three years by a special EPC committee.

Why was the College Plan even partially approved as an experiment when
Wesleyan's educators found so much about it to criticize? Most importantly, a core
group of faculty expressed a strong interest in teaching in the Colleges. Many of these
people were scholars brought to Wesleyan by Vic's post-war recruitment. Professor of
Economics and chairman of the EPC Burton C. Hallowell, described this important
factor: "...We might not have been successful if we had not identified the people who
were willing to be the core of these programs."50

Secondly, Butterfield's support for the Plan was integral to its implementation:
"There were a number of people who were for the idea and who contributed to it, but
there is no doubt that it would not have gone anywhere if Vic had not been pushing it
vigorously."51 Jack Paton, former Director of Public Information, testified to
Butterfield's power in university politics: "Vic never wanted the appearance of power.

49 Reports of the meetings of the Three Divisions with the Educational Policy Committee on the College
Plan, February 3, 1959, p.11
50 "A Radical Proposal." p.2
51 Ibid, p.1
Vic eschewed all of that...He just wanted the power underneath. He had [that] power and knew how to use it."52

Thirdly, there were "reasonable assurances"53 that the experiment would garner external financial support. Two months after the faculty approved the two Colleges, the Carnegie Foundation granted Wesleyan $275,000 for the first three years of the Colleges' operations. Aside from the financial consequences, this grant also represented a psychological triumph for the supporters of the College Plan. The Carnegie Foundation called the Plan "one of the most imaginative plans in the last decade. It is one of the very few thoughtful attempts to solve the problem of expansion without loss of effectiveness and could be enormously influential."54 This enormously positive exposure cast Wesleyan into the national spotlight as an elite university on the cutting edge of American education.

Finally, even though there was strong resistance to the Plan's ultimate goal of replacing departments, the Wesleyan community was generally open to curricular experimentation. Almost twenty years of Butterfield's leadership had forged a university that was willing to try new ideas. One unidentified faculty member put it this way:

I have certain reservations about the College Plan, but I think it deserves a fair trial. I'm particularly happy that it has evolved the way it has. Had it been carefully blueprinted and presented to the faculty as a rigid formula it would not have worked at all. It has been presented as a series which deserved careful study and trial—with all final decisions held in abeyance.55

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52 Paton, John. Interview by Author.
53 "A Radical Proposal." p.2
Wesleyan was prepared to try Vic Butterfield's grand experiment, but its full and lasting implementation was far from assured. The president had put forth his best effort to rechannel the energies of the community toward his vision of liberal education. It was now left to the Colleges to validate Vic's ideas.
CHAPTER TWO
THE INITIAL STRUCTURE OF THE CSS

In the previous chapter, the philosophy and pedagogy of the College Plan were briefly described. However, even though the individual Colleges were firmly rooted in the philosophy of the Plan, their specific pedagogical structures varied significantly:

If there is a common rationale of the "College Plan" it is not in evidence in the practice of the...existing programs...Clearly, then, one consequence of the dissimilarities between Colleges is that any evaluation must proceed by considering each College on its own merits. "The College Plan" exists in theory only, and its faults or merits are not necessarily relevant to the performance of any given existing program.¹

Due to these structural differences, the history of the CSS must be examined separately. Once the CSS was inaugurated in the fall of 1959, it assumed an individual identity—an identity which will be explored in the following pages.

I

Included in the 1958 College Plan was a proposal for "An Experimental Program In Social Studies and Philosophy" which outlined the structure of the CSS. The proposed structure was designed by the Public Affairs Center Curriculum Committee whose

¹ "A Junior Faculty Discussion of the 'College Plan'." December 9, 1960. p.1
members included Professor of Economics Gerald Meier, Professor of History Eugene Golob, Professor of Government Joseph Palamountain, and Associate Professor of Social Ethics and Public Affairs Kenneth Underwood. Though not a member of the PAC committee, Associate Professor of Philosophy Louis Mink was also one of the founding fathers of the CSS.

The structure outlined by these faculty members remained largely unchanged for the first decade of the program. Thus, the curriculum of 1959 is pertinent in understanding what educational tools the CSS initially embraced and how these tools changed and developed throughout its history.

Unlike the university's semester system, the academic calendar of the CSS was divided into trimesters, apportioning ten week slots for each of the core disciplines of the CSS--economics, government, and history. Under this format, approximately sixty percent of the student's time was to be devoted to a Core Program of group tutorials plus a Supplementary Program of larger seminar classes called colloquia. The remaining time was allotted for general education.²

Group tutorials of no more than nine students were the pedagogical foundation of the Core Program. Tutorials in each of the three core disciplines were required in the sophomore and junior years. Sophomores studied the fundamentals of economic analysis, political science, and early modern European history while juniors addressed more specific problems within the core disciplines. The only tutorial option came in the junior year when students could choose from American or Modern European History. Sophomore tutorials in the CSS were held once a week while juniors sometimes met as infrequently as once every two or three weeks, depending on the preference of the tutor. Fewer class meetings in the junior year gave students progressively larger chunks of free time and thus greater independence.

² By 1964, this proportion was amended to seventy-five percent for the Core and twenty-five percent for general education.
Students submitted a short paper on a set of assigned readings for every tutorial class. These papers were ungraded but not uncriticized. Students often presented their essay ideas in the tutorial and argued them with classmates and with the tutor. In addition, extensive written comments by the tutor critiqued both the substance and style of each paper. If a junior tutorial met once in a two or three week period, then a longer and more thoroughly researched paper was assigned.

The Supplementary Program consisted of colloquia which developed students' philosophical critical skills through a study of philosophy, sociology, and social ethics. CSSers took a colloquium each trimester of every year. These weekly colloquia included all the members of an individual CSS class. Their purpose was twofold. First, colloquia studied a broad range of social issues, thereby supplementing the knowledge gained in the tutorials:

The whole educational point is to use the Core Program and its concrete knowledge and understanding as a point of departure for the student's first step into breadth and enrichment of consideration. Oversimplified treatment of concrete materials breeds the danger of clear and disciplined minds, "so clear that they can often be clearly wrong."3

Second, the colloquia examined the similarities and differences between the analytical methods of the CSS disciplines. Thus, while tutorials were systematic within each discipline, colloquia were interdisciplinary in character. Ideally, a philosophically based understanding of the critical methods of each discipline would allow students to think across conventional disciplinary boundaries.

By 1965, three colloquia had established themselves as required courses for the first trimester of each year. "Marx and Marxism" was the required sophomore

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colloquium, and it was the only colloquium team-taught on a regular basis. Team-teaching entailed all three sophomore tutors conducting a class, thereby encouraging both tutors and students to discuss topics from different disciplinary perspectives. Mr. Golob described the evolution of the sophomore colloquium:

We started with an introduction to epistemology for our entering sophomores, given by a superb and popular teacher. Disaster. We tried social ethics. Worse disaster. Eventually, we turned to our sophomore Colloquium in Marx and Marxism, chosen because Marxism is the one secular intellectual system that claims to cover all areas of inquiry, because Marxism itself has a history, because it was a continuing force in modern affairs.4

The junior required colloquium was "Epistemology and Philosophical Analysis" which discussed the presuppositions of knowledge and inquiry in history and the social sciences. This colloquium stressed positivism and its critics (Hempel vs. Winch). Finally, seniors took "Theory of History" which outlined the nature of historical explanation and the relation between history and social science. R.G. Collingwood usually dominated the reading list for this course.

The core structure of the first two years of the program was fairly rigid, but the senior year was fairly unstructured. Seniors took a mix of disciplinary seminars and colloquia usually in the first and second trimesters, but the main focus of the senior year was an honors thesis. In theory, the intellectual independence which had been nurtured since sophomore year culminated in a work of independent scholarship that demonstrated both the mastery of a particular field and an awareness of the relatedness of this field to the other CSS disciplines.

One of the premises of the proposal of the PAC Curriculum Committee was a competent level of specialization in a definable field of knowledge. The program was

not to be a smorgasbord of different social studies disciplines. Rather, a student was expected to have achieved competence in a field at the end of the three year program. This, however, assumed a non-traditional definition of the word 'field': "...The field of competence for specialization in the Major Program should not be determined by the traditional catalog list of course."5 Thus, students would not specialize in government, for example, but rather in an *interdisciplinary* understanding of government, an understanding which could not be properly measured by traditional tests of technical knowledge.

In addition to the Core and Supplementary Programs, students were also required to fulfill an individually planned program of general education. Under the present system, general education required that students spend approximately one-third of their time taking specified courses in English, Humanities, foreign language, lab sciences, and physical education. The College Plan's philosophy of general education, however, abandoned the theory that there existed a specific body of knowledge that every student ought to know. Instead, CSSers could opt to pursue an independent study project in which they chose a general topic and constructed an individualized research program with the guidance of a faculty member. Students who chose not to do independent study took one course in the university curriculum each semester. Whichever option was chosen, students' generalization programs were approved and supervised by the tutorial committee.

The College Plan abolished the conventional array of quizzes, tests, and exams on the premise that, in the present system, the grade had become more important than the material itself. Though the College wanted to avoid judging miniscule segments of students' education, evaluation was still an important means to motivate students. We have already mentioned the extensive written comments by tutors and student assistants

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5 "An Experimental Program In Social Studies and Philosophy." November 22, 1958. p.1
called preceptors on the weekly tutorial papers. In addition, at the end of each trimester evaluation meetings were held in which students met with their tutorial committee. In these meetings, the student's work as a whole was critically analyzed.

The only official examinations were given at the end of the junior and senior years. The preliminary and comprehensive examinations each consisted of six three-hour parts in addition to an oral exam. In studying for these exams, students would ideally reflect on their cumulative accretion of knowledge.

Aside from freshman year grades, students' performance on these exams were the only 'marks' shown on their transcripts. The grading system was a simple three point scale: distinction, creditable, or fail.\(^6\) No other refinements were provided on the student's transcript and no letter grade equivalents were formulated to peg the standards of this system.

The examinations were set and judged by external examiners, academicians from colleges and universities across the country who were invited to become a part of the workings of the College for a brief period every spring. Different outside examiners corresponded to each of the CSS disciplines. In addition, end of year examinations in general education were conducted by Wesleyan faculty outside of the College. The use of external examiners was intended to alter the paternal relationship between tutor and student, encouraging a new degree of collegiality between them.

One of the most crucial elements of the CSS was the social environment that it fostered. The social features of the CSS were emphasized as key to the intellectual development of students:

Part of the argument for the College Plan hinges rather heavily on the motivational impact of man's social identity. To the extent that one feels socially a part of his education enterprise, the more likely that

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\(^6\) More detailed gradations were instituted in later years but the system remained simplistic relative to the quantitative marks of the conventional system.
he will respond to the values of his associates and peers in it. We should anticipate disappointing gains from the College Plan unless it is conceived in social as well as in educational terms...7

With this premise in mind, the CSS sponsored weekly luncheons and 2-3 banquets each year at which there was a talk by a speaker either from within or without the Wesleyan community. In addition, CSS students were given the opportunity to live together in the Harriman Hall dorms. These students used a CSS Common Room to congregate and discuss issues with classmates and/or faculty. The express purpose of the social elements of the College was to create a tightly knit intellectual community among students with a set of common academic interests.

II

When the College Plan was released, many people noted that the educational program of the CSS bore a resemblance to the Oxford tutorial program known as PPE (politics, philosophy, economics). Having visited Oxford in the fall of 1958, Vic Butterfield had knowledge of the PPE system. The College Plan, however, was an attempt "to meet particular problems and opportunities on a particular campus rather than an effort artificially to transplant an educational system from one scene to another."8 Though there were similarities, significant differences separated the two educational programs.

The common features of the Oxford system and the CSS were structural in nature. As in Oxford, the Core Program consisted of tutorial instruction with required weekly

papers. Further, both utilized outside examiners in order to separate the teaching process from examination procedures.

The differences, however, were extensive. The CSS program was divided into a Core Program of economics, government, and history and a Supplementary Program of colloquia. The PPE program, on the other hand, was exclusively comprised of tutorials covering a slightly different set of subjects: politics (similar to a study of political economy), philosophy, and economics. The addition of the Supplementary Program gave the CSS a greater emphasis on interdisciplinary thinking than in the English system. Also, the Oxford system was based on individual tutorials while the CSS' tutorials were actually small group seminars of 5-8 students. Finally, a CSS student's transcript had more grades to show for three years of work than a PPE student who received a single grade at the end of three years.

Though differences outweighed similarities, many people saw the CSS as an American PPE. A number of early tutors such as Gerald Meier had had first hand experience with the Oxford system, and some of the first staff additions to the program were educated at Oxford. Mr. Golob, in particular, perceived that scholars with this training were best suited to the CSS pedagogy. Assistant Professor of Economics William Barber joined the CSS in its second year of operation and Associate Professor of Public Affairs Jeffrey Butler arrived in 1965. Both Barber and Butler had received their undergraduate degrees from Oxford, and a number of other tutors with Oxford backgrounds were recruited later in the 1960s.

With an understanding of the structure and the philosophy underlying the College of Social Studies, we can proceed to examine how this new entity functioned in the context of Wesleyan in the 1960s.
CHAPTER THREE
1959-1968

FORSAN HAECE OLIM MEMINNISSE JUVABIT
Someday it will be pleasant to recall the trials they have undergone.

QUID SIGNIFICANT QUID SIGNIFICANT
What does it mean? What does it mean?

-CSS Motto [1966]

The College of Social Studies was inaugurated in the fall of 1959. In the previous chapter, the major curricular and social elements that distinguished the CSS from the university program were outlined. This chapter explores the experience of the students and tutors of the College during the period 1959-1968.

By the close of this period, the program remained in the same basic form as when it was initiated. However, though the structure may have been unaltered, the CSS was very much affected by changes in the larger university. This chapter also discusses how external forces influenced the CSS during the first nine years of the program's existence.

I

Vic Butterfield's grand experiment began under heady auspices. Understandably, the faculty's approval of the CSS for a three year experiment put pressure on the tutors of the College--and indirectly upon the students--to prove the worth of their experiment. Three years was a brief period of time in which to validate an educational
philosophy. There was a sense of adventure in these early years but also a sense that much was at stake for the future of both the College and Wesleyan.

Though the College Plan often emphasized liberating students from the restraints of the conventional system, the CSS relied upon a mixture of structure and freedom in order to develop students' critical and analytic abilities. The rigid and rigorous tutorial system was the core of the CSS' structured curriculum. Conversely, large blocks of free time, the absence of any grades until the end of the junior year, and individually designed general education programs represented the freedom given to College students.

The complaint of many College students was that the curriculum was too structured. The only tutorial choice came in the junior year when CSSers opted for either American or European History. Student opinions gathered in the 1962 College Body Curriculum Report voiced this dissatisfaction:

Too much of our thinking in the CSS, as far as picking a curriculum and relating it to ourselves and our world, is done for us. It should be possible in the CSS to major, so to speak, in Economics, History, or Philosophy. As it is, it is possible to emphasize one slightly, but there is very little choice in curriculum.¹

The tutorials were certainly the most challenging element of the curriculum. For the first two years of the program, formidable syllabi and continuous writing assignments led many students to wonder whether the freedom of the CSS was really a myth. Churning out thirty essays each of their first two years in the program, some students

felt like "paper writing machines". At the same time, however, many credited this weekly ritual with teaching them how to think critically and analytically.2

Though the tutorials were challenging, they provided students with a considerable amount of free time. Classes met once a week at most; students used the rest of their time in whatever way they wished. Use of this free time varied from extracurricular activities to intellectual interests, but oftentimes the large reading assignments precluded much leisure time outside of their core studies.

The main problem of the tutorial system was the alarming frequency of late papers in the mid-late sixties. Though the tutorials prescribed a tough workload, some students took advantage of the fact that papers were ungraded. Once a precedent had been set for this practice, the problem sometimes became enormous. At one point in the late sixties, there were over a hundred out-standing papers from the various classes.3 At times, this situation severely damaged the morale of the entire College. The lack of an official policy on late papers complicated the problem. This was only rectified in 1975-76 when Jeffrey Butler specifically outlined the consequences of late papers. After this explicit policy was instituted, the problem of late papers which had plagued the CSS throughout the sixties was largely alleviated. Until that time, the College continued to periodically suffer from crises of laxity.

The Supplementary Program was generally regarded as less popular and less successful than the tutorial system. Most students felt that the tutorials monopolized their time so that they were often forced to slight the colloquia assignments. Also, many students were unable to grasp the often complex interdisciplinary roots of these courses. "Too abstract, not relevant" was the sentiment of some students concerning

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2 "A Radical Proposal" p.9. Note: an overwhelming majority of alumni respondents regarded their disciplined writing skills as one of the lasting rewards of the tutorial method.

the philosophically-based colloquia. In general, the brightest students found them the most rewarding, while the less able students were often more dissatisfied.

Though the core program was highly structured, students pursued their general education according to a self-designed course of study. University coursework was an option, but students were encouraged to do independent projects. In theory general education was expected to account for forty percent of a student's time. Actually, this part of a CSSer's education was often neglected, a problem which the College Plan anticipated:

*We here wish to emphasize that the student's General Education is every bit as important as his Concentration Studies (Major plus Supplementary Programs), but that it may suffer both from the neglect of the student and from the pressure and prejudice of the faculty unless it is given protection and encouragement.*

One student indicated the general problem: "A case in point is the hoped for distribution of 60% time in the college and 40% time in general education. In reality the distribution is more like 80-20 unless the student chooses to slight an area of the college." The rigorous workload of the core program simply did not allow for time to pursue interests in this area. To add to the situation, generalization work was infrequently assessed in the oral evaluations while tutorial work was closely scrutinized by a tutor every week. In short, there was little time or incentive for work outside of the core program.

In addition, some students who opted to do independent generalization projects were unable to organize and follow through on a coherent course of study. It was expected

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4 "A Radical Proposal." p.7
5 Memo FROM: Eugene Golob TO: Unknown. 1975. Re: Colloquia of the CSS
7 Wesleyan University. p.10
that projects would suffer "false starts" wherein a student's exploration of a particular subject would not result in substantive knowledge that could be tested by an examiner. But a number of projects never moved beyond this unproductive stage. Even those students who chose to pursue their general education in the university curriculum—as opposed to independent projects—neglected these courses. In general, students' use of their newfound freedom made the College's generalization program a questionable alternative to the conventional system.

A limited number of CSS generalization projects, however, demonstrated that the College Plan's "gamble on maturity" was not in vain. One of the more notable generalization programs was designed by a member of the class of '67 who pursued an interest in photography, eventually writing his senior thesis on realism and symbolism in photography. He then went on to a career as a photographer for The National Geographic. Without the flexibility of the College's generalization program, this student's amateur interest in photography would have remained just that. A student from the class of '69 completed both the CSS and the university's pre-med program. Other students chose equally adventurous projects on authors such as William Faulkner, Thomas Mann, and Jean Paul Sartre. But such instances did not represent the norm. The experience of the CSS demonstrated that a minority of students were both mature and motivated enough to handle the freedom of the independent generalization program.

Though the tutors held no official power to sanction students before the preliminary examinations, the oral evaluations at the end of each trimester were sometimes effective means to avoid the problems discussed above. In these meetings, students met with the tutorial committee to discuss their work as well as their opinions of the College. Oral

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8 *A Radical Proposal* pps. 8-9
9 Alumni from the early sixties frequently commented that the lack of structure of a CSS education was both an attraction/strength of the program and a weakness. Most felt that they were unable to constructively use the freedom that the program offered.
evaluations were especially crucial in the sophomore year when students had a tendency to slack off because of the absence of any impending official evaluation. The CSS Annual Report of 1959-1960 discussed the unexpected importance of these sessions:

Despite the fact that there was no fate or even grade at stake in these meetings, the students entered them dressed for a serious and dignified occasion and with some apprehensiveness. For their part, the faculty found these meetings almost as wearing as a doctoral examination...The student's work was treated as a whole, by all his tutors as a group, rather than being fractioned into fifths, per course, by five discrete observers.10

In addition to critically examining students' progress in the CSS curriculum, oral evaluations were also used by tutors to probe students' progress in their generalization fields. Moral suasion was used by tutors in order to assure that independent study projects were proceeding according to some coherent plan. However, the fate of many of these projects attested to the temporary effects of such pressure.

The effects of oral evaluations were intangible and thus difficult to assess, but the external exams were a real and tangible focus of anxiety for CSSers. Though the senior exams supposedly evaluated the whole of a student's education, the junior examinations were effectively the most crucial event of a student's three years in the CSS. Because students often went directly to graduate school after college, the transcripts that CSS students sent to graduate schools showed only the results of their junior year examinations. Senior exams were consequently neither as intimidating nor as important, a fact which had an impact on the effectiveness of the senior year CSS curriculum as a whole.11

10 CSS Annual Report 1959-60, p.1
11 Poor results on the senior comprehensives led to their replacement by "Senior Challenge Essays" in 1967. The Senior Challenge Essays were not cumulative exams like the senior comprehensives. For the Essays, students were assigned a list of books; the exam consisted of questions about these books.
The junior comprehensives were the culmination of two years of intensive study and writing. It was as if the sophomore and junior years were an army boot camp and now a brutal war—lasting exactly one week—ensued. One member of the class of '63 commented on the considerable angst produced by the event:

In my second year I wrote thirty such tutorial essays and in year three another thirty capped off by the junior comprehensive, which, it was expected, we should take lightly—about as lightly, I think, as Oxford undergraduates may have been expected to have taken going off to war in 1914.

For the tutors, the examinations were both trying and rewarding. On the one hand, the yearly examinations were an exciting and gratifying experience. They exposed CSS tutors to distinguished scholars with new ideas and interesting perspectives. In addition, the exams were an opportunity to justify the College's methods and its philosophy. Many of the tutors invested considerable time and effort in this novel pedagogical mode. One 'objective' measure of the success of the CSS' educational methods was the examiners' evaluation of students' performance. And the results were at times quite impressive. A number of these early CSSers demonstrated competence in a range of CSS disciplines as well as an understanding of the relation between these disciplines.

On the other hand, the external exams could also be a difficult experience. Every year, the tutors spent considerable time organizing a suitable group of examiners. The tutorial committee sought scholars who were prominent in their field and looked favorably on interdisciplinary learning. The latter criterion was especially important for a successful exam. Problems frequently arose because the examiners had little experience with interdisciplinary programs. Though the CSS issued written and verbal instructions, the comprehensives had the potential of being a trying time. Examiners sometimes viewed students with the CSS' broad-based education as inferior to normal
majors because of the lack of technical knowledge displayed in the exams. For instance, on the first junior preliminary examination in 1961, the external examiners awarded only two students "honors", eleven "creditable", and three "fail". Though the College avoided any major disasters in the later exams of the 1960's, the examination process always presented potential problems.

Tutors and examiners met after the completion of each examination to discuss the results, the exam procedure, and the College itself. The criticisms of the examiners were consistent and sometimes harsh. The examiners were disturbed by the lack of interdisciplinary thought demonstrated in the examinations. The College's philosophy made explicit claims to interdisciplinary learning, but, according to many examiners, its students were not delivering on these claims. Also, examiners complained that the College's simplified grading system did not allow them to make accurate distinctions between levels of student achievement. They argued that the conventional system was considerably more precise.

Though their reviews were at times harsh, the external examiners generally embraced the idea of separating teaching from evaluation procedures.\(^{12}\) Theoretically, students and tutors would see themselves as colleagues as a result of this system. In reality, though, some students felt nothing had changed from the old system:

The idea of a 'fellowship' of teachers and students has also proven illusionary, too. No such phantasm exists...\(^ {13}\)

The hoped for elimination of the professor's ambiguous role--as instructor and examiner--has not been realized.\(^ {14}\)

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\(^{12}\) Memo FROM: Edward J. Nell TO: CSS Tutors. 1963
\(^{14}\) Ibid p.38
Regardless of the degree to which the external examinations fulfilled their theoretical purpose, the success of CSS students was best demonstrated by their extraordinary record of achievement upon graduation. By 1967, various graduates of the program had been awarded a Rhodes scholarship, a Danforth scholarship, two Fulbright and eleven Woodrow Wilson fellowships, and nineteen other fellowships and scholarships. In addition, CSSers had little difficulty gaining acceptance to graduate schools. Many went on to study at top schools such as Harvard, Princeton, Yale, and the University of Chicago.

One of the reasons for the success of CSS graduates was integrally related to the College's distinctive pedagogy. In addition to honing students' writing ability, CSSers acquired verbal skills through active exchanges in tutorials, luncheons, and informal conversations with professors and students. Defending an argument in a tutorial session, for instance, required a student to think quickly and then speak cogently. As a result of this training, CSSers did well in interview situations which often played a role in decisions regarding scholarships and fellowships.

Another reason for CSSers' success upon graduation was related, once again, to the pedagogy of the College. Because of the intensity of the tutorial system and the social facets of the College, tutors and students came to know each other at least on an intellectual level and often on a personal level. As a result, the tutors' recommendations sent to graduate schools were often penetrating personal appraisals. These detailed and incisive recommendations were important because CSSers lacked any semblance of a grade point average, having completed three years of study with only the results of the two comprehensive examinations to show for it.

Yet, these two grades were not all that appeared on students' transcripts. Besides the actual grade awards, the names of the external examiners were also recorded. This

15 "A Radical Proposal." p.6
practice was a distinct advantage for CSS graduates because the prominence of the external examiners lent credibility to CSSers' final grades. In part, the success of CSS students in winning scholarships and acceptance to graduate schools was based upon both their performance in the exams and who was judging this performance. 16

The fact that CSS graduates won a considerable number of academic honors was not entirely surprising considering the academic caliber of the students admitted to the program. Students applied to the College in the latter half of their freshman year; 21-27 students were selected. This selection process weeded out students with conspicuously poor academic records. Students from the remaining applicant pool were chosen based upon their breadth of interest in the CSS disciplines and their enthusiasm for interdisciplinary study. Though the CSS was not an honors program, the aptitude scores of first three CSS classes fell within the upper 25% of all Wesleyan students. 17

In addition to the College selection process, self-selection was also an important factor determining the makeup of CSS classes. Each year, the College drew from a relatively small applicant pool said to be a "self-selected elite". 18 As C. Hess Haagen, Director of Counseling and Placement, noted: "...it seems clear that they [the Colleges] have been able to serve only a small group of students who are extremely selected (self-selected as well as college-selected) in terms of personality, motivation, interest, academic involvement, and intellectual potential." 19

What types of students applied for admission to the CSS in its first decade? The students who comprised the earliest classes were risk-takers. They were enrolling in an unproven educational experiment, the success or failure of which was yet to be

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16 See Appendix I for a complete listing of the external examiners.
18 "A Radical Proposal." p.13
determined. Many alumni from these years noted that the experimental nature of the College was one of the important factors that led to their choice to enroll.

Other factors for students who applied throughout the sixties included: the substantive mix of disciplines, the opportunity for close interaction with faculty, the social aspects of the College, and the freedom in structuring their academic regimen. This last feature was a strong attraction to some applicants who wished to avoid the university's distribution requirements. By the mid-late sixties, applicants were also drawn by the track record of CSS graduates. Some students came to Wesleyan expressly for the purpose of attending the College.

Hess Haagen worked closely with the CSS throughout the sixties and seventies constructing personality profiles of College students, and he found that, in some ways, the students who chose to enter the College were an unusual breed. In the EPC's 1962 Evaluation of the College Plans, Haagen's data showed "fairly striking differences" between the predominant character traits of College Plan students and non-College Plan students. 34.5% of College Plan students (as opposed to only 23.1% of university students) were categorized as "Extraverted Intuitive Types". Such individuals were enthusiastic and innovative thinkers who hated routine and thrived on the continuous pursuit of one project after another in their major field of interest. On the other hand, no College Plan students (as opposed to 7.3% of university students and 7.5% of College Plan drop-outs) gave an "Introverted Sensing Type" profile. This type of person was "super-dependable" and possessed a complete, realistic, and practical respect for the facts.

Haagen eventually coined the phrase "tolerance for ambiguity" to describe two characteristics prevalent in successful CSSers. This trait referred to "the ability to find within oneself, rather than in the external structure, the standards of achievement;...the

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21 Ibid. p.40
ability to continue working for long periods with suspended judgment..." A "tolerance for ambiguity" also referred to students' capacity to think in different disciplinary modes at the same time. A degree of mental flexibility was thus required for a student both to cope with a freedom from grades and to exercise the freedom to think across conventional disciplinary boundaries.

Based upon Haagen's character profiles and the actual workings of the College, the CSS acquired an image as a program better suited to adventurous minds than rote learners. The College's image in the larger university, however, was a more complex than this. Among both students and faculty outside the CSS, there was a perception that College students were "too well-heeled". By this description, it was meant that students in the College were pampered by the excessive personal attention of their tutors and by the luxury of special living quarters. To add to this, it was unclear whether the amount of work done by College students warranted the CSS' claims of being a rigorous program. People outside the program were especially suspicious of the CSS sophomore year which had no grades at all. It appeared that the College's emphasis on breadth created dilettantes, not disciplined students.

For those students who were attracted to the College and its image, the processes of College selection and self-selection did not guarantee that all who entered as sophomores would remain satisfied with the program for the full three years. On average, a CSS class would lose between a quarter and a third of its students between sophomore year and graduation. This rate of attrition, however, was considered acceptable by the tutors. It was understood that some students would be unable to handle the writing requirements; others would find the freedom from external standards too difficult to adjust to; and still others would simply discover that they were interested in a field outside of the CSS disciplines.

22 "A Radical Proposal," p.13
In 1963-64, however, the CSS experienced its first--and only--retention crisis of the 1960s. Though the program was accustomed to drop-outs, seven out of nineteen sophomores withdrew by the end of the first semester. The class would eventually dwindle to a total of seven. This event was demoralizing because none of the tutors had ever witnessed this kind of mass attrition in the short history of the College. It seriously called into question the longevity of the program.

The problems of this sophomore class were indicative of the problems that every class faced due to the distinctive pedagogy of the College. The CSS was an intensely personal learning environment, relying upon a number of fragile elements in order to make the system work. Unlike a seminar or lecture class, the personal chemistry between students and tutors in each class was crucial to the success or failure of their experience. Small group tutorials that encouraged argumentative discourse virtually made this personal chemistry a precondition for the functioning of the College.

Thus, the program could not survive long without personable and approachable tutors who were enthusiastic about the philosophy of the CSS. The overzealousness of a particular tutor seemed to have caused much of the deterioration of this particular sophomore class. Factors such as this had the potential to wreak havoc on a sophomore class just beginning to adjust to the new educational system that the College offered.

The 1963-64 exodus was a cause of concern for the entire CSS community. Front page articles in the Argus heralded the College's problems, and it was expected that this publicity would only worsen the situation. Though responses were being considered, few of the tutors considered changing the curriculum or structure of the program in response to these sudden and hopefully anomalous problems. The program simply needed to find the right students for the kind of education that the CSS offered.

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23 This assessment is based on the comments of alumni respondents from the class of 1966.
24 Wesleyan Argus, February 14, 1964. p.1
The immediate response to the situation was a collective effort by both tutors and students to actively recruit freshmen to fill the next year's sophomore class. These efforts were notably successful, resulting in a record number of applications—thirty-eight—for the next year's class.

One of the reasons that the attrition problems of 1963-64 were not repeated in the first decade of the CSS was the successful integration of students' academic and social lives. The CSS Annual Report of 1961-62 emphasized the importance of this aspect of the College: "As we knew from the beginning, our program had to rely upon the intangibles of atmosphere and spirit as well as upon system and labor, upon informal instruction through conversation and discussion of a far-ranging variety of topics." The founders of the program attempted to create an esprit de corps among students in the program. At the core of this esprit and many of the College's social institutions was an attitude of elitism. It was hoped that CSS students would form a cohesive intellectual community based upon their sense of being an elite group undergoing a common educational experience.

The Monday luncheon program was one of the most successful features of the social life of the College. This institution possessed a number of distinctive elements. To begin with, the menu at these weekly functions was both unusual and expensive. Private caterers were hired to serve an unusual selection of foods from different cultures around the world. These international meals were but a small part of the College's effort to create a sense of an elite among its students.

26 Because this term is used in relation to the CSS' intellectual community it is worth discussing the meaning which the founders of the CSS ascribed to it. In the present day, the word "elitism" has acquired strong pejorative connotations. "Elitism" and "equality" have become polarized terms viciously battling one another in politicized debates, with the former usually emerging bludgeoned and soiled. According the founders of the College, however, elitism is a process of recognizing and judging achievement. Excellence must be acknowledged if we are to have any conception of what this word means. It is this meaning that is inferred by our use of the term elitism in the following pages.
More importantly, the lunches encouraged interaction between students and tutors and served as a forum for formal intellectual discussion. These discussions were in the form of a talk after each meal given by speakers from within and without Wesleyan. The topics ranged from "Jazz: Yesterday & Today" to "Current Economic Conditions" to "Radical Innocence in American Literature". This broad array of subjects was intended to reinforce the College's generalization program by exposing students to issues removed from the core CSS disciplines.

Though subject matter was not a unifying theme of these talks, all of the luncheon speakers were, in some sense, supposed to reflect the innovative nature of the College itself: "What we want are men who are ready to try out fresh ideas, to give some suggestions of the 'chase' for new truth, to reveal the kind of unresolved dilemmas they face in their work, and not men who are repeating some hashed-over area of past research or public achievement."27

Students introduced and were expected to interact with these visitors. A member of the class of '62 described his experience with the program: "Senior year I was elected Speaker for the Program, which office allowed me the privilege of introducing luncheon speakers (I remember Martin Luther King and C.P. Snow among others) and joining them at table. This was enormous fun for me, and gave me the lasting sense that everyone can be spoken to with an equality of respect and interest..."

Though some of these people were truly renowned thinkers, students were encouraged to rigorously question and probe the ideas of the luncheon speakers just as they would critically engage their academic work. Mr. Golob elaborated on this aspect of the lunch discussions: "We used it [the lunch program] as a training place for the students to ask sharp questions. They were taught to ask sharp question on their feet to

27 CSS Annual Report 1960-61, p.5
challenge big shots. And some of them were genuine big shots...It was a custom for the faculty just to shut up and observe...This was a student show."28

In addition to the luncheon program, shared living quarters were another means to create an intellectual community among students. Until 1965, the third and fourth floor of Harriman Hall were reserved for CSS classrooms, dorm rooms, a Common Room, and a small library. Though not all CSSers chose to be housed in Harriman, many did, and this social arrangement helped to develop a residential community, not unlike a fraternity.

Though the CSS was a residential college, it was not considered to be a substitute nor a challenge to the fraternity system which dominated the Wesleyan's social arena at this time. In some ways the CSS was a fraternity. However, even though the College had many of the same social aspects found in fraternities, the purpose of the CSS was distinctly academic. The social facets of the College were intended to integrate the social and academic lives of students, not splinter them as social fraternities often did.

In Harriman Hall, the Common Room was to be the central forum for discourse among students and tutors. With sumptuous Victorian furniture and other creature comforts, students and professors used this comfortable space to discuss current events and intellectual issues or to simply banter. A graduate from the class of '62 remarked: "...We often napped in our rooms until 8PM, stayed up all night in the Common Room working and eating and talking, then had breakfast at dawn in a downtown diner."

Also, end of the week student-tutor gatherings called "Beer & Bull" were held in the Common Room.

The involvement of tutors was crucial in fulfilling the academic role of the Common Room. It was an informal but real obligation for tutors to make an effort to engage students in this setting. The CSS Annual Report of 1961-62 outlined the importance of

faculty involvement: "A Common Room can function properly only if there are a number of faculty who can devote to it a great deal of time, helping to establish both the simple habit of gathering there for worthwhile talk or to meet in semi-formal groups for such purposes as discussing a book or a play, listening to records, conversing in a foreign language."29 Louis Mink, among others, was integral in making this social institution function successfully by his morning visits to the Common Room. Conversations between him and students would often last for hours, leading one tutor to wonder aloud "how he ever got any work done".30 Though Mink's participation was noteworthy, there was seldom a nucleus of full-time faculty available to devote considerable time to such activities. As a result, the Common Room was considered by some faculty to be only a partial success.31

While the CSS was housed in Harriman Hall for its first six years, the College moved to the newly constructed Lawn Avenue dormitory complex in 1965. The complex was built to absorb the growing student population of the university, and President Butterfield encouraged both the CSS and COL to move their quarters to this new location.

For the CSS, there were advantages and disadvantages to relocating to Lawn Avenue. On the one hand, Lawn Avenue offered a dining room, a kitchen, and more living space- all of which would make the College a rather luxurious and self-contained unit. But there were also dangers in moving. First, there was a concern that the fragile social traditions created over the past six years would be lost in the shuffle. Mr. Golob was especially adamant about the importance of tradition and continuity. His staunch views were illustrated in a memo from Howard Matthews, the university's supervisor of the Lawn Avenue project, to Joseph Palamountain, Provost:

30 Butler, Jeffrey, Professor of History. Interview by Author. March 26, 1991. Wesleyan University.
As I intimated a couple of weeks ago, we are having difficulty with Gene Golob over the furnishings for the C.S.S. portion of the Lawn Avenue dormitories. The difficulty continues and is now at the point where our architects say they will take no responsibility for that portion of the job if Mr. Golob's ideas are to prevail.

In brief, Gene wants the new quarters to look like the old ones in Harriman. The architects say the latter are not in keeping with the spirit of the new buildings. Apparently, Gene feels so strongly about this that he would give up C.S.S. rather than give up his ideas about furnishings. The architects feel Gene's mind is closed and it is futile for them to make further suggestions. What he wants are horrible commercial reproductions of Louis this or that and Queen Ann, 1920 hotel lobby or boudoir furniture.

The architects wonder whether whether Gene really represents the C.S.S. group. Do you have an opinion on this?

Regardless of the humorous nature of this memo, Mr. Golob's worries were not groundless. The College was a fragile community which depended on many seemingly trivial elements. Whether it was the "Green Chair" in which Monday luncheon speakers always sat, or the potent "Never on Sunday" Christmas party punch concocted by Anne Crescimanno, the CSS' administrative assistant, or the "Nine O'clock Club" of dedicated Beer & Bull socializers--these traditions gave the College its distinctive atmosphere.

Though the move did not significantly harm this atmosphere, the College did change in some ways. One alumni who had the advantage of witnessing the College as it existed in Harriman and Lawn Avenue commented:

"With more space, I think some of the vitality was lost. With dorm halls replaced by sterile stairwells, there were fewer opportunities for being drawn into..."
impromptu bull sessions in someone's room. To fill
the added dorm space, non-CSS students were
allowed in, many of whom had no interest in the
college, but were primarily interested in living in
what were then...the most luxurious and private
dorms on campus. - Class of '68

On the other hand, many students who were far enough removed from the
College's days in Harriman Hall enjoyed this isolation. Lawn Avenue was a "place to
hide", as one alumni from the class of '69 put it. Thus, after 1965, the CSS was
separated from most of the university. The ramifications of this separation were not
wholly apparent at the time. In general, many students and some tutors felt that the
College was distinctive by virtue of its educational methods, and thus it seemed
appropriate that its location was equally distinctive.

II

Having considered various aspects of the student experience in the CSS, we will
now examine the role of the individual faculty members who were integral in leading
the College during this period and how these individuals and the College itself related to
the larger university environment.

The sign on the door leading to the College of Social Studies' quarters in Harriman
Hall read "Collegiate Program of the Public Affairs Center". The choice of words was
intentionally modest. Mr. Golob and other tutors strove to retain close contacts with the
PAC departments whenever possible. Partly as a result of this policy of cooperation
during the 1960s, the CSS created a cordial working relationship with its related
departments and gained the support of a number of new faculty members.

Tutors' basic duties in the CSS were both professional and social. With fewer class
hours, tutors had more free time in the CSS than in their respective departments. But,
the College presented constraints as well. While class hours were reduced, frequent
committee meetings and other busywork were necessary. Also, the social features of
the program (lunches, dinners, socializing) were an additional responsibility for tutors.
Finally, for some teachers, the constraints that the College presented had less to do with
the time required than with the type of teaching demanded by the CSS' pedagogy. The
notion of free for all argumentation between students and tutors was disconcerting to
some professors who were more accustomed to lecturing on ideas than discussing
them.

Recognizing its tenuous situation as an experimental program, the supporters of the
College sought close and amiable relations with the departments that provided it
manpower. After the 1962 faculty approval of the Colleges (to be discussed below), the
founders of the CSS made it clear that they would not exercise the program's de jure
power to make personnel appointments directly to the College. Such appointments
would have created professors "of Social Studies". The CSS chose not to use this right
of appointment for two main reasons. First, the tutors sought to avoid alienating the
PAC departments of which the CSS tutors still considered themselves a part. Second,
they did not wish to create the impression that the College was an isolated entity
unrelated to the concerns of the departments. The risks inherent in appointing faculty
directly to the College outweighed the potential stability that such appointments might
have brought.

The PAC departments were thus obligated to provide manpower to the program.
This relationship was never formalized, but it was understood that the College required
a certain number of tutors every year who were suited to the subject matter of the CSS
curriculum. As a general rule, Wesleyan faculty were encouraged to "evolve their own
particular modes of instruction."33 This meant allowing the enthusiastic supporters of
the CSS to teach outside of their departments. It also meant that teaching in the CSS

33 "EPC Recommendation in Regard to College Plans (COL & CSS)." November 8, 1962, p.1
was voluntary. Many senior faculty were suspicious of the CSS' methods and exercised their right to not teach in the College. As a result, junior faculty were a major source of the 'voluntary' manpower of the CSS. Regardless of seniority, teaching in the College was usually limited to between one-third and one-half of a professor's time. Both junior and senior faculty always kept one foot in their respective departments.

Though the departments were reluctant to provide faculty to a program with which they potentially competed for the best students in the university, the first decade of the relationship was generally felicitous. The College's main problem was the continuity of staffing appointments. Ideally, a set of three tutors would follow a CSS class from sophomore tutorials on to junior tutorials and finally to the senior year. A three year "tour of duty" would strengthen the personal ties between tutors and students. In addition, such an arrangement was advantageous for faculty because teaching in the College became progressively less labor intensive in the junior and senior years. Staffing continuities occurred infrequently in the early-mid sixties and then with increasing frequency in the late sixties.34

The real difficulty lay in retaining close contact between faculty in the College and their departmental colleagues. This was especially crucial for junior faculty seeking tenure. By associating with colleagues in their own departments and thereby demonstrating their abilities and interests, junior professors increased their possibility of being granted tenure. Not only did teaching in the CSS entail associating with professors of different disciplines who probably would have little or no say in tenure cases, but it was also a risk to become associated with an unconventional field which might be frowned upon by departments at other institutions if a young scholar decided to teach elsewhere. Contact with departments was significantly reduced by the move to

34 All three sophomore tutors continued as junior tutors for the classes of 1962, 1967, 1968, and 1969. Only one or none followed for the classes of 1963, 1964, and 1965
Lawn Avenue in 1965. The College's physical isolation would become a source of continuous difficulties in its second decade.

Who specifically comprised the faculty of the College in these years? The first generation of CSS tutors included the founders of the program--Messrs. Golob, Mink, Meier, Palamountain, and Underwood--in addition to Assistant Professor of Economics William Barber, Assistant Professor of History Robert Benson, Assistant Professor of Economics Edward Nell, Assistant Professor of Government Nelson Polsby, and Assistant Professor of Government Fred Greenstein. All of these tutors began teaching in the CSS between 1960-63 on a relatively consistent basis, having each taught more than one year of tutorials and/or colloquia.

Of this first generation, however, only Golob, Mink, and Benson continued their involvement in the program into the seventies.35 Interestingly, CSS alumni of the 1960s most frequently regarded these three tutors as their most valuable mentors. Mr. Golob and Mr. Mink, in particular, were central figures in the workings of the CSS throughout their Wesleyan careers. Recruited by Vic Butterfield in the post-war period, Golob provided stable leadership as chairman or co-chair for nine out of the first ten years. More than any other tutor, Golob's active involvement shaped the CSS in this period. Louis Mink was an equally important individual. His wide range of interests--and his omnipresent pipe--signalled his role as a powerful intellectual figure both within the CSS and at Wesleyan.

In discussing the important individuals who contributed to the College over the long term, it would be remiss to not point to Anne Crescimanno, the College's administrative assistant for over twenty years. Referred to fondly by students as the "Mother Witch", Crescimanno was, in effect, a social institution of the College. She was a friend and confidant to students and a crucial administrative organizer to tutors.

35 The rest either chose not to teach in the CSS or left Wesleyan altogether.
Her presence anchored many of the social traditions that gave the CSS its distinctive collegial character.

In an important sense, it was people like Gene Golob, Louis Mink, and Anne Crescimanno who defined the CSS experience during these early years. In the College's intimate learning environment, personalities and pedagogy were two sides of the same coin.

To add to the first generation of tutors, a second generation arrived on the scene in the mid sixties who would eventually help to administer the program in its second decade. Associate Professor of Public Affairs Jeffrey Butler, Assistant Professor of Economics Peter Kilby, Instructor of Government David Titus, and Assistant Professor of History David Morgan joined the College in the mid 1960s and continued their involvement with the program into the seventies. Though Golob and Mink were the mainstays of tradition, it was the energy of these new tutors that would help the program adapt to the circumstances of its second and third decades.

III

In the period 1959-1968, three interrelated events in the larger university significantly affected the CSS. The first was the faculty approval of the College's departmental status in 1962.

In the fall of 1961, an EPC subcommittee was charged with the task of evaluating the experimental Colleges and their effects on the Wesleyan community. The evaluation, released in November of 1962, was conducted by Professor of Psychology William Thompson, Professor of Music Richard Winslow, and Professor of Government Clement Vose.

In its final recommendation to the faculty, the EPC subcommittee made three main observations regarding the Colleges. First of all, the subcommittee noted that there was
a sufficient body of faculty not only willing to teach in the Colleges but strongly supportive of them. It was also found that this core of supporters represented an acceptable drain on departmental manpower. Secondly, the cost of operating the Colleges was reasonable compared to the cost of other Wesleyan departments. The average departmental budget over the period 1959-62 was $18,903 while the figure for the CSS was marginally higher at $19,714. Finally, students in the Colleges performed at a high level of academic achievement and had no trouble securing positions at excellent graduate schools.

Based on these observations, the EPC recommended that "the College of Letters and the College of Social Studies be continued indefinitely as structures in the University; that in terms of polity (initiation of appointments, budget, setting of curriculum, etc.) they be considered as analogous to departments..." The Colleges were thus granted departmental status and, with this status, some sense of permanence.

But the EPC's recommendation also signalled the quiet demise of the College Plan and its original agenda to recast Wesleyan as a federation of Colleges. No vote was needed to decide this issue because of the rise of a competing alternative to the College Plan, which, unlike the Plan, emanated from and had the widespread support of the faculty. The second event which had an impact on the CSS during this period was thus the approval of the Little University plan.

The idea of a Little University announced by the Burford Committee in 1955 evolved into a detailed plan in January, 1961: "Wesleyan is now ready to move in a new direction. This direction should, we urge, be the creation of a new major American university of the highest possible quality." The New University proposal outlined a

36 These calculations exclude salaries, and the average departmental budget figure is probably an overestimate since Division III departments tended to have substantially larger budgets than Division I or II departments. The COL's budget was comparable to the CSS figure.
37 "EPC Recommendation in Regard to College Plans (COL & CSS)", 8 November 1962, p.3
38 Staff Report on the Context for Planning and Decisions at Wesleyan, Vol I, p.7
new set of long-range objectives for Wesleyan: "The university which Wesleyan hopes to become will have as its primary activity the advancement, renewal and dissemination of knowledge by a community of scholars who will participate in both undergraduate and graduate programs...All else will be made secondary to the creation of the new university."\(^{39}\)

The proposal intended to shift the university away from Vic Butterfield's philosophy of undergraduate liberal education toward an emphasis on scholarship and Advanced Learning. In theory, Advanced Learning programs would be graduate programs that stressed extensive interaction between undergraduates and graduate students, thereby improving the liberal arts education Wesleyan was known for while also contributing new knowledge to academic fields. According to this rationale, the Little University would be the best of both worlds.

Why did this bold plan emerge at this time? First of all, as with the College Plan, the Little University proposal was only possible due to the increased wealth of the university. Secondly, the Little University was formulated as a competing alternative to the College Plan. In particular, Division Three faculty opposed the pedagogy of the Plan which implicitly precluded opportunities for scholarship. Wesleyan's scientific community spearheaded the campaign for the Little University. Thirdly, if Wesleyan was to retain its status as a prestigious academic institution, it needed to offer young scholars more than a heavy teaching load--one of the more unpopular aspects of the College Plan. A nationwide shortage of new Phd's in the early sixties meant that young scholars could demand higher salaries and better facilities.\(^{40}\) The Little University's emphasis on scholarship and Advanced Learning was to intended to draw these high caliber scholars to Wesleyan and retain the university's current faculty.

\(^{39}\) Ibid, p.8
\(^{40}\) "President's Annual Report 1957-59," Wesleyan University Bulletin, p.8
President Butterfield strongly resisted the idea of re-shaping Wesleyan as a Little University. Jack Paton, Former Director of Public Information, described Vic's perspective: "Vic always had deep suspicions about scholarship...And faculty members resented it bitterly...So Vic was called anti-scholarly which is not true. Vic believed in great scholarship." However by this time, Butterfield's own post-war recruitment and his encouragement of innovative ideas had produced a faculty who would be satisfied with nothing less than the opportunity to produce great scholarship.

The faculty overwhelmingly passed the proposed Principles and Guidelines for Long-Range Planning and Development in 1962. "Though discussion was rife, a full scale debate on the merits of university versus college never took place. Time and events had largely made a formal decision unnecessary...Such debate as there was would be on procedure rather than substance, on degree rather than on kind." The Principles and Guidelines did not specifically mention the Little University, but they embraced most of the major ideas of this plan.

The adoption of the Little University guidelines made any formal decision on the fate of the College Plan unnecessary. Though Wesleyan was a wealthy university, it could not afford both a College Plan and centers for Advanced Learning, nor in all likelihood would these two entities be philosophically compatible. With the price tag of the New University pegged at $90,000,000, both the energy of the faculty and the resources of the university would be absorbed in the coming years.

Several times after 1962, particular faculty attempted to expand the College system, but these efforts were unsuccessful. The CSS in particular urged the administration to consider reviving at least some of the original goals of the College Plan: "At this time we would again ask whether Wesleyan ought not to give renewed consideration to the

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41 Paton, John. Interview by Author.
question, how many Colleges ought there to be? Of what new designs and areas? Of what initiative or method to be begun?43 Efforts were made in later years to start other Colleges, but the College of Quantitative Studies survived for only a brief period. Other Colleges never made it past the planning stages.

In 1959, the College Plan was Wesleyan's vanguard educational experiment. In the fall of 1963, a small group of graduate students began work on their Ph.D.s in mathematics, to be followed by five other Ph.D. programs established by the end of the decade. The Little University was gradually taking center stage. Though the individual Colleges were healthy and intact amidst this change, the College Plan remained an unfulfilled vision.

The adoption of the Little University plan in 1962 signalled the rise of an audacious new mentality at Wesleyan. Though the 1959 College Plan was an innovative idea, the notion of Wesleyan as a prestigious center for the creation of knowledge was truly exciting to the faculty. This new sense of confidence and optimism peaked with the retirement of Victor Butterfield in 1967 and the subsequent inauguration of Edward Etherington in 1968. Eugene Golob reflected on the gradual evolution of the community's mentality:

It was a transformation in Wesleyan's self-perception and in the way it was perceived in the academic world as a whole. It might be summarized as a conviction that Wesleyan was intellectually continuous with the great universities, working at the same intellectual level, and differing from them primarily in its continued commitment to the primacy of teaching undergraduates.44

The 1968 Study of Educational Policies and Programs at Wesleyan commissioned by Etherington demonstrated the community's boldness. The report was to be a

43 CSS Annual Report 1965-66. p.2
blueprint for the future. This blueprint contained a collection of remarkably ambitious recommendations: that Wesleyan move to co-educate; that the Public Affairs Center be reconstituted and rejuvenated; that more graduate programs be added; and that a new and larger library be constructed. This was no meager agenda, but the Wesleyan community no longer considered itself a second-rate university.

One of the reasons for this self-confidence was the continuing financial prosperity of the university. In 1965, the Xerox Corporation bought the immensely profitable American Education Publications (the Press) from Wesleyan for 400,000 shares of Xerox common with an equivalent market value of $54,000,000. Wesleyan's good fortune continued as the value of this stock skyrocketed in the coming years. The university's affluence proceeded to grow and to generate even greater expectations for the future.

Amid these impressive proposals for expansion, Wesleyan was also entering a turbulent period in its history. Students were joining the activist movements of the late 60s, demanding a greater voice in university affairs. The goal of these students was institutional change at all levels of the university. The impetus for the growing student power were a number of events including the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley in 1964, the Civil Rights Movement, and the impending Vietnam conflict. These and other developments created an atmosphere of severe discontent among the student generation of this period: "...in a sense, a new generation of American students was born in response to a perceived need for heightened societal and educational reform. The range of activism became diversified, extending into political, social, and educational areas." 45

Responding to these pressures, president Etherington and Wesleyan's faculty oversaw the formation of new student governing bodies as well as the beginnings of

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45 Ellsworth, Frank L. and Martha A. Burns. Student Activism in American Higher Education. (Washington: Student Personnel Series, 1970) p.11
student representation on numerous university committees. Wesleyan genuinely embraced student involvement in university affairs.

In conjunction with these changes, the university's curriculum was significantly transformed during the first year of Etherington's tenure. On February 20, 1968, the faculty voted to abolish virtually every requirement of Wesleyan's curriculum. In deciding to abolish requirements, the university embraced freedom of educational choice, very much in step with the "liberating" social trends of the time. Students were now merely required to enroll in a major and complete 34 credits in order to graduate. William Kerr, Secretary to the University, summed up this development: "So much for academic depth, while academic breadth became a matter of individual discretion, or, to give it a less genial name, caprice."46

In the years to come, the CSS would be greatly affected by the developments in the larger university. At its inception, the program was innovative, experimental, and relatively unstructured. By 1968, the abolition of curriculum requirements made it the structured, not the unstructured, option at Wesleyan. The effects of this and other changes were not immediately perceived, but they would eventually have a profound influence on the program.

Eugene Golob, among other first generation tutors, stressed continuity throughout the first nine years of the CSS' history. Golob and others feared that one set of changes would lead to a stream of future reforms, quietly transforming the original purposes of the College. As a result, the pedagogical structure of the program remained largely unchanged. Though this early period was notable for its stability, the CSS was in a new and different environment beginning in the late sixties--an environment that did not bode well for stability. It was second and third generation tutors such as Assistant Professor of History David Morgan, Assistant Professor of Philosophy Brian Fay, and Assistant Professor of Government Donald Moon who assumed the most active roles moving the College with the changing times.

The CSS began its second decade by embracing limited change. The College faced some problems, such as student complaints about insufficient time for general education and the rigidity of the curriculum. Yet, the program had shown considerable
staying power by attracting strong students and a second generation of tutors. Consequently, any programmatic reforms would be modest in scope; refinement—as opposed to reorganization—characterized the tutors' ruminations in the late 1960s.

Since the mid sixties, the tutors had been considering revisions to the generalization program and the colloquia system. Each year, the external examiners reviewed the workings of the program, and their comments generally criticized the implementation—though not the idea—of the program. Based on these comments and their own observations, the tutors discussed limited reforms.

The CSS class of '68 provided the impetus for change in the spring of their graduating year. In a formal statement to the tutors, the seniors proposed reforms encompassing all three years of the program. The common theme of these reforms was a desire for wider flexibility within the CSS curriculum.

To begin with, students proposed that "Marx and Marxism", "Epistemology", and "Theory of History" remain required colloquia, but that the second and third trimester colloquia be elective. This change would give students the opportunity to take more university courses. In addition to greater flexibility within the Supplementary Program, the students proposed a wider selection of tutorial fields for the junior year. Psychology, sociology, and philosophy were suggested as logical additions to the four tutorial disciplines currently offered.

With respect to the senior year, the class of '68 reflected on their most recent trauma—their own theses—and came to the conclusion that the experience was not universally beneficial: "Although the exercise of investigating a problem in depth is valuable for many students, there are some who do not benefit sufficiently from the experience to justify the considerable expenditure of time that the thesis requires." Under their plan, the senior thesis would be optional.

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1 Memo FROM: Louis Mink TO: All CSS Tutors, September 18, 1967.
2 Untitled Proposal I. Class of 1968 Student Proposal for changes to the CSS, p.5
Finally, the students recommended closer supervision of general education by the tutors. By this time, both tutors and students realized that many of the independent generalization projects did not produce constructive results. Originally, independent study provided an opportunity to freely pursue interests outside of the social studies which might not be found among the university's course offerings. By the late sixties, though, this freedom became unnecessary as a result of increased university course offerings. Students and tutors agreed that university coursework would be a better use of what little time CSSers spent outside of the College.

The tutors were pleased with the students' proposal because these reforms coincided with their own ideas. The class of '68 was noted in the CSS Annual Report of that year: "...The greatest credit must be given to the initiative and the devotion of our Senior Class...This was genuine and creative participation of students in their own governance..."3 The tutors accepted most of the guidelines of the proposal. In the following years, independent study projects were discouraged rather than encouraged; the thesis was no longer required, though it was strongly recommended; new colloquia and tutorials enriched the available options; and students were allowed to substitute classes in the university program for CSS colloquia on a case by case basis.

The reforms of 1968 signalled the first major instance of student initiative within the CSS, and the experience was a constructive one. Students had acted independently in proposing change, thereby providing the necessary impetus to generate the reforms which had only been contemplated by the tutors. In later years, the faculty actively sought student input in formulating and implementing change.

In addition to representing an important instance of student governance, the reforms of 1968 signified the first in a continuous series of evaluations of the CSS. A significant precedent for change had been set.

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3 CSS Annual Report 1967-68, p.1
The reformed CSS curriculum materialized in the coming years. In 1967-68, students had a choice between two colloquia in the second trimester and a different set of two colloquia in the third trimester. By comparison, in 1972-73, CSSers chose from four colloquia each trimester, effectively doubling their options.

Tutorial offerings were also expanded. Sophomore year remained restricted to learning the fundamentals of the three core disciplines, but in the junior year the choices broadened to include tutorials in philosophy and sociology. The College's curriculum had achieved a new degree of flexibility.

The Afro-Asian Track, an experimental program affiliated with the College, was another initiative to expand the CSS and its curriculum. Conceived by Messrs. Barber and Butler, the Afro-Asian Track was to be a non-Western complement to the CSS. Pedagogically similar to the CSS, the Track was a bold effort to "disseminate knowledge of cultures, hitherto largely ignored" and to "examine the significance of recent changes, particularly as they affect the conduct of Americans, in intellectual, political, and economic affairs."\(^4\)

The CSS Annual Report of 1969-70 described the first year of the Afro-Asian Track as "an outstanding success", but there were immediate problems which threatened the program. At the heart of the issue was the program's subject matter which carried considerable political baggage in the late sixties. In short, the students interested in these cultures were more concerned with the contemporary relevance of non-Western thought than with hard analytical questions. Tutorials on "African Civilization from 5000 B.C. to 1700" and other courses were considered unimportant compared to the more passionate social struggles of that day. Equally unpopular was the rigorous practice of writing weekly essays on these "irrelevant" subjects. The Afro-Asian Track attempted to create a base of knowledge for students with a "romantic interest in non-

western civilizations and problems"\(^5\), but there were few romantics to be found among this student generation.

The Afro-Asian Track began its first year of operation in the fall of 1969 with a full complement of sixteen sophomores. Five students applied in 1970, and seven the next year. Due to the small number of applicants and the "poor quality of work and general fecklessness"\(^6\) of the students enrolled, the experimental program was ended in 1971.

Aside from the complications mentioned above, the demise of the Afro-Asian Track was hastened by the increasing diversity of course options available in the university program. In 1971-72, Wesleyan offered 918 courses, compared to only 516 in 1963-64. The CSS Annual Report of 1970-71 noted the importance of this factor: "It is certainly true that Wesleyan, with its very large range of options, cannot support a rigorous minimal-choice curriculum like the Afro-Asian track, and at the same time offer African and Asian history concentrations and majors in African and/or Asian studies."\(^7\) In other words, the role of the Afro-Asian Track was to provide courses which were distinctive in their subject matter and/or presentation format from other departmental courses. The Track could not compete with other departments for students when those departments offered similar classes without the rigorous work demanded by the program.

Some students and faculty were beginning to apply this same logic to the CSS. What justified the College's use of university resources to teach subject matter that was increasingly being represented by other university departments?

The CSS' expanded curriculum was not without its critics. Mr. Butler, for instance, noted that providing a greater selection of courses deprived students of the common experiences around which to build an intellectual community. According to this view,

\(^5\) CSS Annual Report 1969-70, p.1
\(^6\) CSS Annual Report 1970-71, p.1
\(^7\) Ibid. p.1
the CSS was not a "mini-university" and should not try to be one. Instead, it should offer a structured option which a certain number of students would inevitably desire every year. The cost of the reformed curriculum was also a consideration: "There seems to be a hope that all this adding can be done relatively painlessly...I do not see how it can be done. The tutorial 1/2, colloquium 1/4, generalization 1/4 formula governing a student's time is extremely rigid in relation to teaching cost."  

At some point, the idea of the CSS as a "mini-university" began to become unpopular with students as well as tutors. Ironically, by attempting to expand course offerings, the limitations of the CSS curriculum were made all the more apparent. Compared to the extensive university course options, students were still dissatisfied with the choices within the College.

In response to student dissatisfaction, a Colloquium Reform Committee headed by Brian Fay was formed in the academic year 1973-74. The committee was composed of tutors and students, reflecting the increased student role in reviewing College policies. Though certain changes to the tutorial system were considered, the committee focused on the unpopular colloquia format which had drawn complaints from students, tutors, and external examiners.

By the end of spring semester, the committee formulated three reforms to be implemented in the following year. First of all, the committee proposed reducing by half the number of colloquia options. This would effectively reverse the 1968 decision to expand the colloquia selections.

In addition, the committee suggested changing the colloquia from trimester to semester length. Since the inception of the College, all CSS courses were taught on a trimester basis; this was one of the distinctive structural characteristics of the program. The committee concluded, however, that this distinctiveness was one of the factors

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8 Memo FROM: Jeffrey Butler TO: CSS Faculty. November 9, 1970 p.2
isolating the College from the faculty and students of other departments. Since the mid sixties, colloquia had been open to non-CSS students who made special requests to enroll. Ideally, the interdisciplinary colloquia would be utilized by the entire Wesleyan community, thus tying the College to the it. The trimester length of these courses, though, made enrollment and the credit transfers awkward. The new semester length of CSS colloquia was expected to increase the involvement of university students and better integrate the CSS with the university's departments. To further this objective, a Standing Colloquium Committee was created to coordinate CSS offerings with departmental courses and to review the workings of the colloquia in general.

The committee also recommended a renewed emphasis on interdisciplinary approaches and group teaching in the colloquia. According to the committee, efforts to make the colloquia fulfill their interdisciplinary purpose were genuine, but haphazard. As early as 1963, the external examiners reserved their harshest reviews for the implementation of the College's colloquia system. The committee hoped that a systematic focus on interdisciplinary learning would present new solutions to this old problem.

In the past, the colloquia served an exploratory and experimental function. They were a forum to test courses that did not fit established departmental practice. In the 1960s, colloquia such as "Colonial Ideologies and Problems of Development" and "Epistemology" held the interests of students because they were unique CSS offerings; such substantively interdisciplinary courses would not have been possible to teach within a department. Some CSS colloquia of the 1970s were equally imaginative and distinctive. For instance, Lecturer of History Sheila Tobias taught one of Wesleyan's first courses in Women's Studies--"Aspects of Women's History"--as a colloquium in the CSS.

However, students considered many other CSS courses to be tired and worn. They were generally dissatisfied with the inflexibility of the format and the subject matter of the colloquia. The committee report described a commonly held view: "...Colloquia are often seen as restrictive because they are viewed as mere courses given 'to the same old students by the same old teachers'. There is a desire for new experiences and wider contact- a feeling that the CSS is too ingrown."¹⁰ Thus, the committee suggested cutting the number of available options while at the same time urging the tutors teaching the remaining colloquia to make their colloquia 'laboratories' for innovative interdepartmental collaboration.

The recommendations of the Colloquium Reform Committee were implemented in the academic year 1974-75. The colloquia were changed to semester length and the number of colloquia was cut from sixteen to nine, additionally, tutorial selections were decreased from five to four options; sociology, psychology, and philosophy were no longer offered as junior tutorials.¹¹

While structural reforms could be mandated by the committee, an 'increase' in interdisciplinary learning was more difficult to effect. Prior to the committee's recommendations, the tutors had only marginal success fostering interdisciplinary perspectives. The committee's reforms did relatively little to change this, though the issue continued to be considered by the Standing Colloquium Committee.

Similar to the revisions of 1968, the 1973 reforms were mainly limited to changing the Supplementary Program. In the coming years, pressures for actual structural revisions would arise, but it was not until 1976-77 that the College approved more substantive reforms to address the curriculum problems.

¹⁰Memo FROM: CSS – PAC Colloquium Committee to CSS Tutors and Students. February 11, 1974
¹¹The College had only infrequently offered these tutorials in the past five years due to staffing difficulties.
Aside from the College's internal difficulties, the relationship between the CSS and the larger university became increasingly precarious in the 1970s. Most notably, Wesleyan's financial stability began to erode in the early seventies, foreshadowing a decade characterized by retrenchment and fiscal belt-tightening. During this period, the Little University made the painful transition "from its Golden Age to its Age of Survival." The CSS was significantly affected by these changes.

In the sixties, few people saw the downturn coming. The endowment had risen from $9 million in 1944 to $60 million in 1963 and ultimately reached over $150 million by the time President Butterfield retired in June of 1967. The university's profitable investments bred an air of audacious optimism among students, faculty, and administrators. A number of ambitious projects were undertaken, and future ventures were anticipated. Chief among these projects was the plan to transform Wesleyan into a Little University.

The Little University plan prescribed large increases in the size of the faculty and student body. According to the plan, the student/faculty ratio would increase from its 1963-64 level of 8.6 to 1 to an estimated 10 to 1 by the turn of the decade. This projection, however, was not realized in the coming years as the student/faculty ratio actually decreased substantially. Even though the student population had risen from 1200 in the 1963 to over 1500 by the turn of the decade, staff levels had grown at almost double that rate. The expansion of graduate and undergraduate programs and the subsequent hiring of new personnel resulted in a conspicuously low ratio of 6.4 students to every instructor in 1970-71.

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This development was a major strain on the operating budget of the university. Obviously, there were more faculty drawing salaries, these salaries being among the highest in the nation. In many cases, compensation levels exceeded those of major research universities in urban centers. In addition, the growing student body also resulted in increased expenditures. By 1970, the construction of new buildings and the renovation of virtually every existing structure on campus made Wesleyan's square footage of facilities-per-student the highest in the nation.13

To add to the situation, the bulk of the university's outlays were not covered by new tuitions. Since the 1940s, Wesleyan had been subsidizing approximately two-thirds of the cost of students' education. One consequence of this policy was that increases in student enrollments failed to significantly boost revenues. Circumstances were exacerbated in the mid sixties by new expenditures to increase the socio-economic diversity of the student body. As a result of this admissions initiative, "the proportion of students on financial aid (and the amounts) awarded rose steadily and dramatically, requiring an increasingly large allocation of general funds."14

Though budgetary strains were increasing, Wesleyan was not actively pursuing alternative sources of income during this period. Fund raising efforts had largely been unsuccessful because the university was perceived to be so wealthy as to not need external support from alumni or philanthropic foundations. During the 1950s and 1960s, this development was not a cause for concern because of the flow of profits from the university's investments.

Administrators began to take note of the weak alumni ties and the imposing financial liabilities of the university in the early 1970s. With a downturn in the stock market and a simultaneous rise in inflation, Wesleyan's operating budget was squeezed by falling income and rising costs. The situation became apparent as early as 1970-71 when $10

13 Ibid. pps. 1-2
14 Ibid. pps. 1-2
million was liquidated from endowment capital in order to cover current expenditures. Wesleyan's financial foundations were eroding, thereby limiting its capacity for future growth and stability. A long-range projection by Professor of Mathematics Robert Rosenbaum demonstrated that at the current rate of spending the university's then $170 million endowment would be gone by 1981.15

The Wesleyan community reacted slowly to the deteriorating financial circumstances. The buoyant optimism born of years of affluence was fading—but only gradually.16 A priorities study was conducted in 1972 resulting in the elimination of the Master of Arts in Teaching program and an increase in the student body from 1547 in 1970-71 to 2240 in 1974-75. But the oil shock of 1973 along with the worsening condition of the American economy meant that Wesleyan remained overextended.

In 1975, the university administration formulated the Plan for Action, a far-reaching and painful initiative which called for simultaneous efforts to reduce expenses, increase income, and systematically strengthen the university's fund raising network. The Plan effectively cast Wesleyan into a new era of retrenchment; though not everyone wanted to consider the implications of the new environment. Accusations of fiscal irresponsibility were hurled by faculty and students who were unprepared for the extensive cost-cutting measures. Determined efforts were made to protect departmental budgets and staffing levels, only contributing to the atmosphere of disappointment and frustration. Though the Plan did not specify which programs would be eliminated or reduced, the community realized that there would be no sacred cows left untouched.

III

15 Ibid. pps. 1-3
16 Ibid. pps. 1-3
By the time that the Plan for Action was released in 1975, events inside and outside the CSS were drawing attention to the College as an area ripe for cutbacks. The most significant internal factor was a simultaneous decline in enrollments and rise in attrition. The CSS Annual Report of 1974-75 elaborated on this disturbing trend:

The dominant problem of the CSS is numerical: how to attract and hold more students. Total CSS enrollment is down by over a quarter since the late 1960s...More nagging than total enrollment figures is the high drop-out rate of sophomores, which has approached or exceeded 50 percent in three of the four last entering classes.¹⁷

Since the mid sixties, the College aimed to admit twenty-seven sophomores each year. With applications throughout the CSS' first decade numbering 35-40, this target was consistently met.¹⁸ The years 1972 and 1973, on the other hand, were characteristic of a decade of substantially decreased enrollment. In 1972, twenty-one out of twenty-four applicants were admitted, and in the following year just twenty applicants were accepted to the program. Only four of the sophomore classes in the 1970s began the first year of the program with a full complement of twenty-seven students.

Due to the reduced applicant pool, the tutors were often not able to select students based upon academic ability. In the previous decade, the College was able to reject the least able candidates. In the 1970s, on the other hand, some weak candidates were admitted out of necessity. Many of these students were not of the caliber which the CSS was accustomed to teaching. Even the students seemed to be aware of this fact:

Recently though, either because of the quality of high school education, or Wesleyan admissions policy, or the type of demand for the CSS, there is distress over the quality of CSS students. They are not as

¹⁸ Memo FROM: Louis Mink TO: All CSS Tutors. September 18, 1967.
broad-minded and interesting as they might be, and there is a feeling that CSS potential is wasted on them.19

Retention was an even greater problem than recruitment. The worst years were the classes of: 1975 with seven graduates, 1977 with ten graduates, 1979 with ten graduates, 1981 with seven graduates, and 1982 with eleven graduates. From 1973-1982, the program graduated an average of twelve students per year. By comparison, the average was fifteen throughout the 1960s. This drop is even more startling when one considers that during the CSS' first half decade sophomore classes were limited to twenty-one students, as opposed to twenty-seven throughout the seventies. Clearly, there was a disparity in enrollment trends between these two periods.

The decline in CSS enrollments was made starkly apparent as the total student population of Wesleyan grew. The proportion of Wesleyan students enrolled in the CSS fell dramatically as the student body grew to 2450 in 1979. In 1968-69, the CSS represented 3.4% of total enrollments, ten years later this percentage had dropped by more than one-half.20

Having outlined some of the major internal problems of the CSS, we now turn to the equally important external factors which impacted on the College. One of the direct manifestations of the university's budget crisis was the growing tension between the CSS and its related departments.

In the 1960s, the informal relationship between the CSS and its contributing departments was generally congenial. If necessary, departments could fulfill their manpower obligation by 'asking' junior faculty to teach in the College. During this period, the hiring of new faculty to staff the Little University provided an ample pool of young instructors that departments could assign to the CSS.

20 A Planning Report for the 80s. pps. 4-10
However, hirings slowed and staff levels were stabilized in the early seventies as the university began to experience financial troubles. Consequently, the CSS was deprived of a key source of new manpower. A core group of experienced tutors, including Messrs. Benson, Kilby, Golob, Mink, Morgan, and Titus, frequently taught. This group was in turn joined by a fourth generation of tutors who included Assistant Professor of Economics Richard Adelstein, Assistant Professor of Economics John Bonin, Visiting Instructor of Philosophy Brian Fay, Instructor of Government Donald Moon, and Instructor of History Frank Tipton. Even with these new recruits, though, the College often depended upon other faculty members who were ambivalent to or unfamiliar with the spirit of the program.

Depending on such variables as tenure decisions and the timing of leaves and sabbaticals, the difficulties of the College in acquiring departmental manpower varied cyclically. In some years, particular departments cooperated in staffing the courses that the College wished to offer. In other years, though, they resisted fulfilling their obligation due to "personnel turnover, departmental needs, and possibly also personal factors". The problem of recruiting tutors became so touchy that Co-Chairmen Titus and Morgan remarked in the CSS Annual Report of 1974-75, "There are some recent signs, connected with the staffing pressures on all departments, that we may have to formalize into contractual understandings relations that we have preferred to leave informal in the past." This step was never taken, but tense relations persisted in the following years.

The situation was only exacerbated by the College's isolation at Lawn Avenue. While draining departmental manpower, its physical location made the CSS appear even more remote to the concerns of the departments.

21 Moon, Donald; Professor of Government. Interview by Author. March 14, 1991. Wesleyan University.
23 CSS Annual Report. 1974-75, p.3
The reluctance of departments to provide the CSS with teaching staff intensified as it became clear that College enrollments were actually declining due to problems of recruitment and retention while the departments were experiencing increases as a result of the growing student population. Departments were teaching greater numbers of students by expanding enrollments in seminar and lecture classes, but the pedagogical style of the CSS prevented it from making similar changes. Specifically, the College's tutorial system required a low student/faculty ratio compared to the university average in the 1970s and 80s which was approximately eleven students for every instructor. Some department faculty resented this disparity.

The simple fact was that the College was costly to operate, a fact especially evident in times of fiscal belt-tightening. With per student costs in the CSS approximately one-quarter higher than in other PAC departments, real consideration was being given to reallocating these resources to other areas of the university.

IV

In response to the discouraging situation within the College, changes were called for in 1976. A joint student-tutor Steering Committee was formed, the impetus for which came directly from the students:

Creative student initiative is not too common in the CSS, but it has changed the face of the program in the past and may do so again. Starting with a CSS students' meeting, on September 15 [1976], the students have undertaken to try to help us recognize and rethink our most serious problems. The new steering committee has been put together at their request and in recognition of the potential importance of their help.24

24 Memo FROM: David Morgan TO: CSS Tutors. October 7, 1976
The committee considered substantial reforms to two of the more troubling aspects of the College: the examination system and the senior year. The general imperative of the committee was to search for solutions to the flagging student interest in the type of education that the CSS offered.

Though the examination procedure drew some criticism from examiners in the sixties, these comprehensives generally functioned smoothly. The external exams of the seventies, on the other hand, frequently produced horrendous results. In particular, the junior examiners of 1972 and 1976 awarded extremely low grades to virtually every student. Such results wreaked havoc with students whose undergraduate education was largely evaluated based on results of this single exam. It was immensely frustrating for both students and tutors to have two years of work undervalued because of a failure of understanding between the tutors and examiners.

The whole comprehensive examination system was generating serious dissatisfaction among students. In general, students perceived that the exams both failed to measure their two years of cumulative knowledge and—as a result of the simplified grading system—did a poor job of communicating their abilities to graduate schools. The sentiment of one member of the class of '72 was common throughout the classes of this decade: "A fault, I believe, was the comprehensive exam system, which was poppycock and rewarded bullshitters, of which society has quite enough." Mr. Morgan assessed the situation and the extent of the changes that were needed:

The students, I believe—particularly after they have taken the exams—have come to resent the comprehensives. We have for several years now had a significant element in each Senior class that was sullen, passive, and poisonous to the atmosphere of the College; and the most important single cause of this mood seems to have been the experience of taking the comprehensives. What do we do about this? This is our problem. At any rate, we can not meet the situation just by redesigning the Philosophy
section of the comprehensives, which is where we were in danger of stopping in our reforms.25

The examination system was a further problem due to its apparent effects on College seniors. Since the early years of the CSS, seniors had been plagued by a lack of initiative and spirit. After the structured format of the first two years of the program and the 'climax' of junior comprehensives, seniors often displayed a certain degree of anomie through their final year of relatively unstructured study. The Senior Challenge Essays were often met with disinterest, and the results reflected this attitude.26 In the 1970s, the cumulative problems of the College caused bitterness to replace anomie as the dominant senior mood.

The examination system and its recent failures were threatening to corrode the general morale of the College. The task of the Steering Committee was to identify the exact problems and propose possible changes to the system.

By the end of the academic year 1975-76, the committee had suggested few substantive improvements for revamping the senior year, but alterations to the exam system were affected. The changes were threefold. The structure of the junior comprehensive was altered to restrict the examiners freedom in determining the format of the exams. Beginning in 1977, the tutors themselves organized a set of potential examination questions from which the examiners could then choose.27 This change was expected to reduce the unpredictability of the comprehensives results. Secondly, the sophomore comprehensive exams were to be graded by the tutors, for internal purposes only. Previously, ungraded practice exams were given after the sophomore year in order to prepare students for the externally set junior

25 Ibid.
27 Memo FROM: David Morgan to All CSS Tutors September 8, 1976. Re: Report on Tutor's meeting.
comprehensives. Internal grading by the tutors was expected to make the sophomore exams a more serious exercise and thus a more useful preparation for the actual comprehensives. Finally, tutors were to make an explicit effort to emphasize the interdisciplinary content of the exams. Improving the interdisciplinary approaches of the CSS was an objective of the 1973 colloquia reforms and continued to be an important priority in 1976.

In the same year that the steering committee made its recommendations, Brian Fay and Don Moon suggested further changes to the colloquia. The Fay-Moon proposals led to the replacement of "Marx and Marxism" with a new colloquium called "Models of Man and Society". Though the Marxism colloquium had varied dramatically in popularity throughout the sixties and seventies, it was regarded as unusually successful in the years immediately preceding its replacement. But due to the increased emphasis on interdisciplinary learning noted above, "Models of Man and Society" was instituted in order to strengthen CSS students' understanding of the philosophical concepts central to the social studies. "Epistemology" and "Theory of History" were still required for juniors and seniors. In addition to the change in the sophomore colloquium, second semester colloquia were made optional. Beginning in 1977-78, students would be free to replace second semester colloquia with university courses in social studies departments.

On the one hand, the Steering Committee strove to improve the examination system. On the other, the Fay-Moon proposals attempted to rejuvenate the languid colloquia program by decreasing its role in the College and presenting new ideas to bolster the popularity of the remaining required colloquia. A common objective unified both of these initiatives: to make the CSS an interdisciplinary program in practice, not simply in theory.

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Curriculum reforms could mandate changes in methods, but their direct effect on the students themselves was limited. The personalities of CSSers were integral in determining the extent to which an intimate learning community arose. In the 1970s, the College's role as an "intellectual fraternity" was significantly affected by the inception of "diversity university". Over a relatively short time span, the homogeneity of Wesleyan was transformed into geographic, cultural, racial, gender, and socio-economic heterogeneity. In many ways the university community, as well as the College of Social Studies, was unprepared for the consequences.

The story of Wesleyan's diversification begins in the Butterfield years. President Butterfield and many members of the Wesleyan faculty, had long embraced an ideal of non-discrimination. In "The Faith of a Liberal College" (1955), Butterfield wrote:

> Our task is to seek those individuals who give most promise of enrichment from their education, and whose later impact on their professions and on their communities will count for something. Whether a man be rich or poor, the son of a plumber, banker, minister, or alumnus, whether he be Methodist, Presbyterian, Catholic, or Jew, whether white, yellow, or black, athlete or non-athlete, whether from private school or public school, these things count neither for nor against him. He is not to be judged by the accidents of his history but by his essence as a man.29

A real attempt to diversify Wesleyan waited until the appointment of John Hoy as Admissions Director in 1964. Hoy instituted an aggressive minority recruiting program, and, by the time the first group of fourteen black students graduated in 1969, the proportion of blacks at Wesleyan approximately equalled their proportion in

29 "The Faith of a Liberal College", 1955, p.15
American society. This process of transformation, however, was not painless—sometimes violent race relations punctuated these years.

The university moved further toward heterogeneity with the admittance of a small group of women transfer students in 1968. Each successive year, more women enrolled until the student body was half female by the mid seventies. Wesleyan had come a long way toward diversity and co-education in a very short time.

Real diversity, however, did not simply imply admitting a certain number of minorities and women. Diversity meant the integration of these groups into the educational, social, and political institutions of the university. The CSS played a role as one of these institutions in this period of change. Though the efforts of the tutors were at times meaningful and effective, they were insufficient to draw and retain substantial numbers of women and minorities to the CSS.

Though women comprised 47% of the total population of Wesleyan by 1974, only 22% of the CSS' graduates between 1973 and 1979 were female. Some classes graduated between zero and two women (1974, 1979, 1981). In fact, 1981 marked the first time that a CSS sophomore class contained approximately one half women and one third minority students, and yet this seems to have been an anomaly.

To an extent, the experience of women in the CSS was analogous to the experience of women at Wesleyan in general. Just as minority students were not automatically accepted into the Wesleyan community, integration was not an easy process for the University's first female students. Having learned certain lessons from the ongoing experience of racial diversification, Wesleyan attempted to prepare itself for co-education in the early seventies. Nevertheless, "despite planning and good intentions,

31 It is true that the CSS has always graduated more men than women. But this was also the case for other PAC departments. In 1984 and 1985, an average of only 28% of the graduating classes of the Economics, Government, History, and Philosophy departments were female. Only history approached female/male parity with a 40% average [Memo from David Titus to The Tutors, 9 May 1984].
for the women, aspects of those first years of coeducation were neither pleasant nor equitable."\textsuperscript{32} The Wesleyan community was unavoidably unprepared for diversity.

Women CSS graduates of the 1970s and 80s testified to their mixed experience. Virtually every alumni respondent gave positive reviews of the education that they received in the College. The strong emphasis on writing skills and the seriousness of the learning environment were not the problem. Rather, the difficulties of being a woman in the CSS revolved around experiences with sexism and the chauvinistic atmosphere of the College. A woman from the class of 1974 described her deeply ambivalent feelings:

CSS provided an extraordinary education. The modes of analytic thought, writing skills, habits of discipline and standard of excellence taught by the program are my greatest assets...But I hated CSS and, candidly, thought I was treated unfairly by the program. Although I don't know how many will admit it now, I was not alone.

This graduate considered the "maleness" of the College oppressive. The social institutions that the CSS had built into venerable traditions were viewed as a breeding ground for sexist behavior: "Beer & Bull was a keg of beer in the corner, a pizza on the table, and young men with their legs slung, huddled talking sports and getting bleary eyed with their tutors."

Ten years later, other women graduates had similar reflections. The class of '84 began sophomore year composed of approximately half women and a third minorities. One woman from this class recalled the problems that this composition generated:

Exacerbating the anxiety some of us felt at beginning CSS (which promised to be "tough") was the fact

that our cultural, racial, and gender make-up was new to CSS... One year at Wesleyan had not mellowed our differences sufficiently to prevent them from being obvious, immediately, in class, at Beer and Bull, at any time we got together. Some of the CSS professors... couldn't understand why we didn't come to drink every Friday, frat-style, to discuss our ideas at Beer and Bull! We were not the "intellectual fraternity" CSS seemed accustomed to, whether in reality or myth.

Further, the pedagogy of the CSS, which emphasized the integration of academic and social life, worsened the situation. According to this same graduate from the class of '84, social problems became academic problems:

Many students felt alienated after our first year, I'm afraid, and the colloquium became quieter and quieter, with the same few students speaking each week... I remember arguing the use of the term "feminine" to describe passivity and nurturing (as a characteristic in Japanese society) was inappropriate—and being mocked and accused of excessive "sensitivity", and heavens, being called a "feminist"! And all this at progressive, diverse Wesleyan!

Some women respondents did not mention sexism. Others emphasized its effects on their education. It seems likely, though, that there were others who left the program due to these problems.

The CSS experienced similar difficulties recruiting and retaining minority students. The early black students at Wesleyan were mostly drawn from Harlem, Cleveland, Newark, and other metropolitan areas. Admissions recruiters were looking for youth who had not had the privilege of a good education but who demonstrated the potential ability to succeed at Wesleyan. It was a noble initiative, but one which threw academically unprepared black students into a college community that was similarly unprepared for their presence.
Beginning in the late sixties, Mr. Titus, among other tutors, made concerted efforts to recruit minority applicants for the College. The benefits that the CSS potentially offered some of these students who came from underprivileged educational backgrounds were substantial. In theory, the College was an ideal choice for this student generation because of its distinctive pedagogy. Specifically, the CSS' modes of evaluation were well suited to academically disadvantaged students. Intensive writing tutorials without grades for two years gave some students an opportunity to transform ability into real excellence.\footnote{Titus, David. Interview by Author.}

In practice, relatively few minorities applied over the years and some of those dropped out of the program. One of the reasons for this was the difficult workload which caused some students--minority or otherwise--to withdraw. The below average academic standing of many minority students was a source of dispiritedness and poor morale among both students and tutors.

The CSS' social elements sometimes exacerbated the experience of students of color. Anne Crescimanno recalled the role of minority students in the social life of the CSS: "There was a time when [the CSS] did get quite a few minorities and then they [the students] didn't mix anyway...They didn't want any part of the CSS as a social unit." Events such as Beer & Bull were perceived as "white male culture's form of social interaction/bonding", in the words of one member of the class of '84.

In general, minority students were put off by their perception of the College as an "elitist" institution. The cloistered nature of the CSS was seen by many as a source of closed-mindedness at best, racism and sexism at worst. Regardless of race or gender, most alumni respondents noted the elitist atmosphere that pervaded the CSS, but there were markedly different perceptions of this aspect of the College. Similar to the alumni of the 1960s, some alumni of the 70s and 80s found the elitism of the College's esprit
de corps to be a positive element of the CSS. On the other hand, a considerable number of women and minorities viewed the atmosphere as threatening.

What aspects specific to the College defined this atmosphere? Aside from personality difficulties, the problem of female and minority recruitment, retention, and morale seems in large part due to the CSS' foundations in Western knowledge and the distinctive pedagogy used to teach these foundations.

From its inception, the College imparted a broad-based understanding of mainly Western theories of economics, government, history, and philosophy. With the abolition of distribution requirements in 1968, the program had become the most structured option in the university. This development meant that some CSS students felt restrained from pursuing subjects that the College did not regularly teach. As the university course offerings expanded in the 1970s to include non-Western cultures and alternative theories of social science, some women, minorities, and men described their rigorously structured College experience as alienating. One alumnus of the class of '84 suggested changing the Western focus of the program:

The CSS should move forward in the Wesleyan tradition and start to integrate (equally and not as a side show) the contributors of black, brown, yellow, and red people into its curriculum.

Complementing this viewpoint, some women alumni pointed to developments in feminist theory which were not treated by the CSS. These students felt that the CSS was denying them crucial forms of knowledge which challenged traditional Western thought.

The pedagogical methods of the College also played a role in this situation because the tutorial and colloquia system were intimate learning settings. One member of the class of '71 noted this as a positive factor:
At times when political divisiveness and racial conflicts made it difficult for different groups at Wesleyan to communicate with each other, CSS enabled me to stay in close touch with blacks and "radicals" with whom I would have had no relationship without CSS.

On the other hand, the College's personal environment could be a negative factor. CSS students were encouraged to argue aggressively and actively engage ideas in these small classes. Thus, when the College did teach alternatives to Western thought, these alternatives were met with criticism from both students and tutors. In most respects, this was the same type of criticism that any Western theory received, but debates potentially took on the image of a desperate battle. Since the 1960s, Wesleyan had been at the forefront of progressive intellectual, educational, social, and political ideas. Marxism, radicalism, relativism, "political correctness", and a host of other "-isms" were given a relatively open forum among students and faculty. But the CSS was an unusually harsh forum. This was not necessarily because of the closedmindedness of the community, but because of an attitude that intellectual positions could be not be accepted until they had first been subjected to critical analysis.

The CSS pedagogy, though, bred an aggressiveness which could border on insensitivity. In the previous chapter, we mentioned the personality profiles of CSS and non-CSS students compiled by Hess Haagen in the EPC's 1963 Evaluation of the College Plans. Comparing CSSers with COL students and non-College students, he indirectly noted the aggressive character traits typical of CSS students: "...In personality tests, the COL students come off as much more self-contained, less outgoing, non-aggressive in their social attitudes. On a social dominance scale they run as far below the college average as CSS students go above it."34 In the seventies and eighties, aggressiveness could easily become unconscious or conscious sexism or racism, or at least be interpreted as such by women and minorities.

34 "A Radical Proposal" p.16
Thus, the CSS had the potential to be the best and worst of educational institutions. The collegiate nature of the program nurtured rewarding social and intellectual interaction between students and faculty. But should this cohesiveness be encouraged if it alienated women and students of color? The College represented an arena where ideas of all sorts could be critically assessed through open debate. Yet, if overly aggressive stances deterred women and minorities from entering this debate, could this be considered a free and open arena? These questions are without answers.

Though we have discussed at length the difficulties of women and minorities in the CSS, the College was not unresponsive to these problems. Most importantly, women gradually joined the corps of tutors throughout the 1970s and 80s. This, however, was an extremely slow process, and a strong female presence was lacking until the early 1980s. Visiting Associate Professor of History Rosalie Colie, Lecturer of History Sheila Tobias, Visiting Assistant Professor of Government M. Catherine Newbury, and Assistant Professor of Government Martha Crenshaw Hutchinson all taught infrequently in the College in the 60s and 70s. However, it was not until Assistant Professor of Government Nancy Schwartz arrived in 1982 that the CSS consistently had a woman tutor on its faculty. Assistant Professor of Economics Wendy Rayack and Assistant Professor of History Ann-Louise Shapiro joined the College in 1985-86, and the CSS, fifteen years after the university coeducated, finally had a core group of women teachers.

VI

Though it could not directly affect the sometimes unsatisfying situation of women and students of color in the College, curriculum reform was still an important factor.

35 Rosalie Colie was the only female tutor of the 1960s.
affecting the CSS experience. The 1976 reforms were the last significant changes made to the program until 1982. The interim period, however, was not characterized by passivity. The problems that the Steering Committee and the Fay-Moon proposals addressed continued to be scrutinized, and new reforms were being debated.

The examination system was a persistent topic of debate. Another disastrous external comprehensive in the spring of 1978 led to calls for abolishing external exams altogether. Mr. Moon was among a group of tutors who proposed abolishing externally graded exams and eliminating the junior comprehensive altogether.36 Having begun teaching in the CSS in the fall of 1970, Moon was part of a generation of CSS tutors that had witnessed three horrible examinations in the 1970s. To solve the problem, he suggested shifting the emphasis normally placed upon junior comprehensives to the sophomore exam. The sophomore comprehensives would then be graded "blind" with the results formally recorded on students' transcripts. Juniors would take part in graded tutorial work and a less imposing comprehensive exam at the end of their year. Finally, seniors would continue to write the Challenge Essays, but these exams would be graded internally and "blind". Not every tutor who favored revamping the examination system embraced Moon's ideas, but his proposals indicate the type of alterations being considered.

Mr. Golob and others opposed discarding the externally graded examinations.37 When the College began in 1959, the faculty possessed no formal power of evaluation over its students, and the format had been changed marginally since then.38 Golob and others continued to advocate restraint in revising elements of the program they considered vital to its original philosophy.

36 Memo FROM: Don Moon TO: CSS Tutors. June 6, 1978
38 Note the changes to the junior comprehensive instituted in 1976 which gave CSS tutors more power over the format of the exams.
In addition to debating the merits of the external examinations, the persistent problem of interdisciplinary learning--and the CSS' failure to foster it--was a continual source of discussion. Morgan, among others, was instrumental in proposing solutions. Though the tutorials were the most successful and distinctive pedagogical method of the College, their role was traditionally disciplinary in nature. Morgan and others believed that these courses could be altered so as to make them more interdisciplinary. In a 1978 memo, Morgan recommended that new consideration be given to "the idea of a reformulation of our curriculum and possibly our teaching methods in the direction of inter- or cross-disciplinary studies". He envisioned effectively coordinated tutorials whose content interpenetrated in tangible ways. This coordination would require a stable and professionalized group of sophomore and junior tutors.

While Morgan considered possible reformulations of the tutorial system, Fay, Moon, and William Panning, Assistant Professor of Government and a tutor in the CSS in 1978-79, collectively proposed additional changes to the colloquia system. The Fay-Moon-Panning proposal (FMP) was circulated among the tutors in October of 1978. Complementing Morgan's interdisciplinary initiatives, the FMP recommended a greater emphasis on the substantive coordination of CSS tutorials and colloquia. In addition, under the proposal, these courses would be organized around the unifying theme of "Social Theory and Industrial Society" in order to provide greater coherence to the subject matter of all three years of the program.

Responding to FMP, a year long senior seminar called "Problems of Advanced Industrial Societies" was introduced in 1979-80. It replaced the senior colloquium--"Theory of History"--which had been required for graduating classes since the early sixties. Though Golob resisted this move, a majority of the tutors favored the new focus on modern industrial society.

39 Memo FROM: David Morgan TO: the CSS Tutors. June 6, 1978
Although certain changes did occur, substantial reforms along the lines of Morgan's ideas and the FMP proposal were not rapidly implemented. However, the general scope of these recommendations demonstrated a willingness on the part of many tutors to seriously consider a significant reorganization of the program.

While the new focus on "Industrial Society" was being implemented, the CSS was experiencing a recurrence of the old problem of attrition. In 1979, the College made conspicuous headlines in the *Argus* after only seven of twenty-seven sophomores survived their first year. Students who had left the program spoke of the lack of integration of the disciplines and the conduct of sophomore tutors who were unfamiliar with the workings of the College.\(^{40}\) The CSS was able to recruit only seventeen students for next year's sophomore class.

In addition, the White Book--another long-range plan for the university--was released in 1979, outlining further steps to reduce Wesleyan's reliance on its endowment. Among the programmatic reviews in the White Book was a proposal to consider alternatives to the three existing Colleges (CSS, COL, and the Science in Society Program). The proposal argued that the Colleges had returned significant dividends to their students and to Wesleyan during the 1960s, but the costs of the programs now outweighed the returns. Further, the Colleges were no longer distinctive educational programs because of the large array of similar interdisciplinary courses offered by various departments. Finally, the isolation of the Colleges from their related departments was problematic and unconstructive.

The CSS tutors were frank in adding arguments of their own for revising the structure of the College. The CSS' inability to retain students and the sometimes difficult relationship with the PAC departments were two additional problems.\(^{41}\) After


\(^{41}\) Memo FROM: Co-Chairmen of the College of Social Studies TO: The Vice-President for Academic Affairs. November 26, 1979, p.2
considering these points, the White Book suggested that "the CSS might be reshaped into a program for cross-disciplinary studies in the Social Sciences, designed especially to suit the requirements of upper-level generalization."42 Under this scheme, the CSS would either be phased out or assume a markedly different structure and purpose.

In response to these criticisms, the tutors consulted with students to outline possible directions for major change. In past years, reform movements were largely generated by forces of discontent within the College:

The CSS program has undergone a number of changes since about 1975; cumulatively they are of considerable importance, and the pace of change has been accelerating in the past year. But by far the greater part of the changes are not related in any evident way to the changes inaugurated by the Plan for Action... The bulk of our program alterations...are what we like to think of as responses to changed student needs and preferences, and to opportunities and limitations imposed by the interests of our available staff.43

In 1979, however, the CSS was under direct pressure from Wesleyan's unstable economic circumstance. The College had been contemplating revisions for some time, but the recent economic pressures qualitatively altered the scope of the changes being considered.

In short, the CSS was at a crossroads. The College could effectively repudiate its past strategy of relations with the departments and the larger university which emphasized cooperation and diplomacy. In principle, the CSS could have elected to appoint faculty directly to the College. This would have amounted to a rejection of past practice and would probably have created permanent friction between it and the PAC departments. Alternatively, the CSS could accept the criticisms levelled against it and

42 Ibid, p.4-8
43 Memo FROM: Jeffrey Butler and David Morgan TO: Hope Weissman. November 1, 1979
pursue a substantial reorganization of its operations. Debate and discussion on these issues continued for three full years, but the plans for substantive reorganization had largely been composed by late 1979.\textsuperscript{44} During the interim period, continuing attempts were made to improve the interdisciplinary content of the tutorials and colloquia.

In 1982-83, major curricular revisions were formally instituted which significantly altered the structure of the sophomore and junior years. The sophomore curriculum was left intact, but the comprehensive exams were administered by the sophomore tutors and officially recorded on students' transcripts. This development signalled the first time that any CSS examinations were set and graded by faculty within the College. The junior year was completely overhauled; tutorials were abolished along with comprehensives.\textsuperscript{45} Juniors were now required to take a mixture of newly designed CSS seminars and university coursework. A year long interdisciplinary seminar was also mandatory. Required university coursework for the junior year entailed at least one course in a minimum of two of the three core CSS disciplines.

Finally, "Philosophy and Social Inquiry", a new colloquium designed by Fay, was substituted for the traditionally required junior colloquium. Many people thought this change was long overdue. "Epistemology", like "Theory of History", was conceived by one of the founders of the CSS--Louis Mink. By the mid-seventies, though, the format of this colloquium had become outdated. The course was immensely successful for the student generation of the sixties, but in the 1970s and 80s most students arrived at Wesleyan already ingrained with the relativist perspective that the colloquium tried to teach. Because few students actually believed in the positivist position anymore, the knowledge that the "Epistemology" colloquium imparted had become stale. Fay's

\textsuperscript{44}Memo from The Co-Chairmen of the College of Social Studies to The Vice-President for Academic Affairs: "Report on prospective program revision in the CSS," 26 November 1979, p.3-4
\textsuperscript{45} External examinations were given in 1984, but the comments of the examiners made it apparent that students lacked a common body of knowledge without the junior tutorials.
"Philosophy and Social Inquiry", on the other hand, took a fresh look at other contemporary intellectual issues.

Though the problems of morale in the senior year persisted, the curricular revisions of 1981-82 did not make any major alterations to the senior program. It was hoped that changes in the first two years of the program would have repercussions which might solve the intractable problem of motivation in the senior year. According to this reasoning, with the removal of the junior comprehensives, students would more successfully adjust to the lack of structure in the final year of the program.

The changes in 1981-82 did in a markedly dramatic way what the other reforms of the seventies had done: reduced the requirements of the College, lessened the staff resources needed to run the program, and deprived the CSS of a considerable degree of its distinctiveness as an alternative educational program.
CHAPTER FIVE
POST-1982 AND RETROSPECTIVE

If this life be not a real fight, in which something is eternally gained for the universe by success, it is not better than a game of private theatrical from which one may withdrawal at will. But it feels like a real fight.

-William James

The Will to Believe [1897]

The 1982 reforms were the culmination of changes begun in 1968. The structure of the CSS' academic program was most dramatically reshaped in a single year--1982. The College's social elements were altered over a period of years. Cumulatively, these changes represented a qualitative transformation. This chapter briefly assesses the College's internal workings and external relations following the 1982 reforms. In addition, it offers a retrospective look at the evolution of the CSS and its place in the university.

I

The College's inability to recruit and retain students was its principal problem during the 1970s. The reforms of 1982 substantially alleviated this problem. In 1982-83, the College received sixty-three applicants--a record number--for the class of 1986. Fifty-seven frosh applied the next year, with the following years being slightly lower (35-45) but still significantly better than the recruitment numbers of the seventies.¹ Also in

¹ The turnaround cannot be completely attributed to the reforms, however. Since 1980, the College had been experiencing similarly large applicant pools.
1982-83, thirty-one out of thirty-three sophomores completed their first year of the program. This dramatically improved retention rate was repeated in the period 1984-89 when the average size of a graduating class was twenty-three students.

Enrollment increases were largely due to the increased flexibility and decreased demands of the program. The junior tutorials were replaced with CSS seminars, creating a range of new possibilities in the second year of the program. Juniors could now choose to either sample a wider range of university courses or use the year to study abroad. This latter option had never before been available to CSS students because of the rigid tutorial programs of the sophomore and junior years.

In addition to greater freedom, the absence of weekly tutorial papers and externally graded comprehensives meant that the CSS junior year had effectively become easier. The first year of the program became the most challenging of a CSS student's career. This fact was made even more apparent in 1988 when the Senior Challenge Essays were abolished in response to student complaints.

Understandably, CSS students generally approved of these changes because the College was imposing less structure on their choice of interests and impinging less on their free time. In a word, after the reforms, students had less reason not to apply and less reason to leave the program. The College offered close personal attention and small classes without asking for as much in return. Enrollments increased as a result.

But the reforms also generated problems. Before the changes in 1982, the sophomore and junior years were characterized by their rigid structure while the senior year was largely unstructured. The transition from two years of set regimen to a final year of freedom was sometimes difficult. Particular senior classes showed little cohesion and even less enthusiasm for their academic program. Without junior tutorials or a required senior thesis, the CSS acquired the image of a sophomore program. This problem was considered by the majors and selection committee in 1984:
[There is] a sense that the essential rite of passage in CSS is at the end of the Sophomore year. This encourages people to think of CSS as a one year major with a few extra courses tacked on...Perhaps the greatest problem for morale in recent years has been the perception by students that the Junior Colloquium, and indeed the junior and senior years taken as a whole, have been an ad hoc affair put together with little concern for balance, structure, and planned, progressive development.\textsuperscript{2}

This lack of overall coherence to the three years of the program remains a serious problem facing the College in 1991.

II

In addition to the internal problem of recruitment and retention, the reforms of 1982 attempted to address the external pressures from the administration and the departments. The administration had been harshly critical of the College's high costs since the mid 1970s. These criticisms were unambiguously voiced in the 1979 White Book program reviews. In response, the CSS abolished junior tutorials and the junior external examinations, significantly decreasing the resources that the College required to operate. The CSS' good faith efforts to reduce costs were explicitly noted by the administration in 1984:

The value and effectiveness of the kind of self-study called for here has been demonstrated by the College of Social Studies. A few years ago the College undertook an examination of its curriculum and made major changes to deal with the problems it discovered. The College is now flourishing; it has many more applicants than places in its program, it has reduced attrition, and morale is high. Moreover, this reorganization of the curriculum has significantly

\textsuperscript{2} Memo FROM: The Majors and Selection Committees TO: The Tutors and Students of the CSS. February 14, 1984 p.1-2
reduced the staff the College requires. It is vital, however, that the College not suffer further losses if it is to continue to mount an effective interdisciplinary program in the social sciences and philosophy.  

Though the CSS' voluntary cost reductions met with the genuine approval of the administration, relations between the CSS and its contributing departments continued to be difficult, although less so than before the 1982 reforms. The relationship continued to have its cyclical rough spots. Enrollments in economics, history, government, and philosophy courses continued to burden the staff of these departments. New appointments were made, but the CSS was still regarded by some faculty as an undue strain on departmental resources. Staffing shortages thus continued to vex the College on a cyclical basis.

Contributing to the thaw in relations were the reduced manpower requests of the College and the larger student enrollments in the program which justified the use of this manpower. Also, a fourth generation of junior faculty joined the College in the eighties, providing a new corps of tutors familiar with and enthusiastic about the aims of the CSS. The new tutors included Assistant Professor of Government Giulio Gallarotti, Assistant Professor of Economics Wendy Rayack, Assistant Professor of History Ronald Schatz, Assistant Professor of government Nancy Schwartz, and Assistant Professor of History Ann Louise Shapiro.

The physical relocation of the CSS to the newly remodelled Public Affairs Center was an additional factor contributing to the easing of tensions. The effort to move the College back to the PAC was spearheaded by Mr. Titus with the support of virtually

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every tutor in 1977. The move was finally made in 1985. This development also signalled the end of the CSS as a residential college, a role which it had effectively ceased to fill by this time.

Some tutors had always considered the 1965 move to Lawn Avenue to be a mistake. At the time, though, there were valid reasons to move out of--what was then--Harriman Hall. The creature comforts that Lawn Avenue offered were undeniable advantages: luxurious student living quarters, a dining room and kitchen, new offices. Eventually, the many of the immediate advantages of the new quarters were recognized as long-term liabilities. Autonomy became isolation, and a host of problems accompanied this isolation. First of all, the physical distance between PAC and Lawn Avenue denoted a general remoteness of the CSS from the concerns of the departments. The CSS was poorly integrated with the PAC departments and the university as a whole, which made it difficult to recruit both faculty to teach in the CSS and students to enroll in the program.

Second of all, the social elements of the College had changed significantly during the years following the move. In a word, the secluded and residential Lawn Avenue quarters became unnecessary as the social functions of the College receded in importance. This trend was evidenced primarily in shifts in residential lifestyles of CSSers, changes in the Monday luncheon series, and a general lack of enthusiasm for College social events such as Beer & Bull and the banquets.

Sometime around the mid to late seventies the CSS effectively ceased to be a residential college due to the low number of CSS students who chose to live at Lawn Avenue. Since the 1965 move, sufficient rooms were reserved in Unit A of the

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4 Memo FROM: David Titus TO: CSS faculty, past and present and department chairmen of the PAC, Philosophy, and Religion regarding Physical relocation (return) of the CSS to the PAC (where it all began. October 11, 1977
5 Golob, Eugene. Interview by Author. February 14, 1991
dormitory complex to house any CSSers who wished to live there. Sparse records from the sixties indicated that approximately 70% of the students in the CSS lived together at Lawn Avenue in 1967.6 During the mid seventies, slightly fewer students opted to live in the Lawn Avenue dorms. In the years 1976-77 and 1977-78, 59% and 53% of all CSS students lived in the College's quarters with these groups being evenly composed of sophomores, juniors, and seniors. This limited data appears to indicate that the CSS was a residential college during the sixties and into the seventies. In contrast, through the late seventies until 1985, the number of students who chose these dorm rooms substantially decreased, and virtually all of the CSSers who opted for Lawn Avenue housing were sophomores. A sampling of the years 1979-1985 showed that less than 20% of all CSSers lived in Lawn Avenue during this period and only 13% of these were either juniors or seniors. Anne Crescimanno described this deterioration of the College's residential character: "At the beginning, CSS was like a big fraternity...You could always go by [the library or common room] and there would be a bull session going on...When the students didn't live there, that faded away."7

The Monday luncheon series was another social institution that faded in importance. These lunches were one of the most successful elements of the CSS' social program in the 1960s. However, during the 1970s and 80s, this program lost some of its original purpose. Specifically, the lunches remained an opportunity for students and professors to socialize together, but they no longer served as a training ground for students' verbal and mental skills. At some point, the role of the lunches as a "student show" where CSSers learned to think on their feet and ask incisive questions was abandoned. This development was accompanied by a reduction in the number of luncheon speakers. In 1977-78, the Monday lecture series included twenty-six speakers. Beginning in 1978-

6 Memo FROM: Louis Mink TO: All CSS Tutors. September 18, 1967. p.2
7 Crescimanno, Anne, former Administrative Assistant to the CSS. Interview by Author. January 8, 1991. Wesleyan University.
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79, on the other hand, there were eighteen speakers. The number of speakers continued to diminish in later years until lunches were accompanied by a structured intellectual discussion once every two or three weeks. Thus, budgetary constraints and the complacency of students and tutors led to a transformation of the original purpose of this social institution.

Other CSS social events seemed to suffer a similar malaise. The number of banquets was reduced from two to one per year as a cost-saving measure. Beer & Bull's "Nine O'clock Club" of devoted socializers did not survive past the mid eighties, and even the idea of Beer & Bull was criticized as "frat-style" gathering. The CSS as an academic institution could possibly be revived by curricular reforms, but such changes potentially had little effect on the flagging social aspects of the College.

The evolution of the CSS' once distinctive social element was affected in part by long term changes in Wesleyan students' social attitudes and customs. In the 1950s and into the mid sixties, the Wesleyan student community was characterized by an unusual degree of "group-consciousness."8 One measure of the validity of this characterization was the degree to which students joined tightly knit social organizations. The most prominent of these organizations at Wesleyan were the all-male, all-white fraternities which had traditionally dominated the social scene on campus. In 1965-66, approximately 80% of all Wesleyan undergraduates were fraternity members.9 This estimated fraternity population dropped to two-thirds of the student body in 1966-67. Decreases continued in the following years: half of the students in 1969-70, one-third in 1970-71, and finally one-quarter in 1972-73. The current percentage of fraternity members stands at about 15%. These rough percentage estimates do not necessarily indicate a decline in the absolute numbers of the fraternity members over these years.

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8 Jacob, Philip E. Changing Values in College. Printed by The Edward W. Hazen Foundation. 1956. p. 105
but they do show that the proportion of Wesleyan students enrolled in fraternities declined substantially in this period. One of the many reasons for this development concerned the social trends of the late sixties which championed ideologies of free-speech and liberty--ideologies that transcended the old notions of "group-consciousness". The activism of this period branded fraternities "elitist", and this pejorative image has remained with them ever since.

The CSS was an "intellectual fraternity". Its structured educational philosophy was an equally suitable target for the activist currents in the university. The trends of the late sixties thus affected the College's enrollments and campus fraternity membership in a similar fashion. In response to these trends, the CSS was resigned to becoming a less important part of students' lives--both socially and academically.

With the cost-cutting reforms of 1982 and the move back to the PAC in 1985, the CSS left behind much of its former identity as a residential college and as a distinctive educational program.

III

Though we have described the changes to the academic structure of the CSS in the period 1968-1982, it is helpful to assume a wider perspective on these reforms. Therefore, we will briefly address the evolution of the major elements of the College's academic program: the colloquia, the tutorials, the examination system, the generalization program, and the senior thesis.

The CSS began its era of reforms in 1968 with changes to its Supplementary Program, believing this area to be in need of minor repairs. Initially, the College attempted to be a "mini-university" by expanding its colloquia offerings. This path was understandable considering the interdisciplinary philosophy of the College. If boundaries between disciplines were artificial and permeable, how could the CSS
theoretically justify not including particular areas of knowledge? The desired flexibility, however, was not achieved as students' expectations outpaced curriculum expansions. Thus, instead of providing more options, flexibility was attained by reducing requirements. 16 colloquia were offered in 1973-74 as opposed to 5 in 1982-83. Though the role of colloquia in the College was diluted over the years, the persistent problem of these courses was not solved. Theoretically, the colloquia were the interdisciplinary cornerstone of the program. Team taught colloquia--discontinued after 1977 for pedagogical and financial reasons--were especially designed to facilitate an integration of the disciplines. In reality, this integration was not often achieved. With their reduced role in the seventies and eighties, the colloquia were also standardized in their subject material so as to provide greater stability from year to year.

Tutorials were the CSS' most distinctive and most successful pedagogical feature. These intimate classes taught disciplined writing skills and encouraged students to actively engage the material. Increased tutorial options were briefly offered in the early seventies, but psychology, sociology, and philosophy never took hold as tutorial subjects. In the mid seventies, efforts were made to make the tutorials substantively interdisciplinary after similar reforms to the colloquia proved unsuccessful. In 1982, the CSS was transformed from a program with two years of tutorials to one with a single year of tutorials. This reversal signified a significant structural alteration to the CSS. With half of its tutorial structure gone, the College lost some of its distinctiveness. Finally, like the colloquia, the tutorials were partially standardized. In practice, the sophomore economics tutorial ("The History of Economic Thought" as of 1985-86) was the most effectively standardized, with the format of the government and history tutorials relying more upon the interests of particular tutors.

The CSS examination system went through similarly substantial changes. Originally, the senior comprehensives were intended to be the major evaluation of a CSSer's career. In 1967, these exams ceased to evaluate cumulative knowledge when
the format was switched to Senior Challenge Essays in which students answered questions set by external examiners about a particular set of assigned books. The Challenge Essays were conducted by external examiners until 1985-86. After a single year of being internally graded, they were abolished following the spring of 1988. Over the years, this exam was more often than not the object of a mixture of resentment and resignation among students who perceived the exercise to be a meaningless chore. By 1988, its demise was overdue.

Regardless of their title as "Preliminary" exams, the junior comprehensives had always been the crucial evaluations of a CSS student's career. These exams largely remained in their original form until 1978 when a series of troubled years led the CSS to introduce tutors into the process as guides in setting and grading the examinations. Finally, the reforms of 1982 abolished the junior tutorials and the comprehensives along with them.

The last surviving comprehensive examination in the sophomore year was not originally intended to be an official evaluation. Though these exams had often been given either at the end of the sophomore year or the beginning of the junior year in order to prepare students for the junior comprehensives, they were internally graded beginning only in 1977. Finally, the sophomore comprehensives became the major evaluation for CSSers in 1982. Without external examiners to complicate matters, these exams worked exceptionally well in the following years.

Thus, the modes of evaluation within the CSS were significantly transformed over the years, but especially with the revisions of 1982. The tutors were re-appointed to their conventional role as dispensers of grades, and the only examination of a CSS student's career was at the end of the first year of the program.

At the inception of the College, general education was one of its most innovative elements. Though not many students chose to pursue independent study, this was still an adventurous option that challenged students' self-discipline and intellectual curiosity.
By the 1970s, the CSS' generalization program was nondistinctive. University coursework became the norm.

The CSS also tended toward the university standard with regard to the senior honors thesis. Originally, the thesis was to be the culmination of CSS students' three years of intellectual freedom. This was to be one of the final shared experiences of each CSS class. In 1968, the thesis requirement was dropped but was still strongly recommended. In 1977, the implied pressure to write a thesis was supposedly no longer applied. In reality, a large proportion of CSSers did opt to complete a thesis, but, not being required, the thesis was no longer a final rite of passage for the class as a whole.

These changes to the College's structure over the period 1968-1982 solved the problem of sagging enrollment and improved the CSS' standing with the administration and the departments. But at what price? In the sixties, the nature of the College's distinctiveness lay in its innovative interdisciplinary approach, close knit social environment, and unusual pedagogical methods. By the seventies, however, it became clear from the comments of external examiners and the observations of the tutors themselves that the theoretical underpinnings of the College's interdisciplinary program were not being justified by the performance of the students that the CSS produced. Reforms, largely unsuccessful, were continuously initiated to address this problem. At the same time, the social institutions of the College entered a slow decline. No curriculum reforms could halt this process. By 1982, the College was thus distinctive by virtue of the rigorous challenge that it offered.

This aspect of the CSS, however, had been made a liability rather than an asset as a result of events beginning in the late sixties. One particular event represented a turning point for both Wesleyan and the College. Responding to the student clamorings for greater freedom, the faculty abolished virtually all distribution requirements in 1968. In effect, the university curriculum was now a free market. Among other changes, there
was an immediate shift in enrollments away from the Physical and Natural Sciences and into the Arts and Humanities. This shift alone would perhaps not have been important if not for the fiscal downturn of the 1970s which made the educational market at Wesleyan even more 'competitive'. In this environment, departments could best justify their manpower requirements and their budgets if they were enrolling relatively large numbers of students. The CSS clearly encountered this problem when its enrollments nosedived in the early seventies, but other departments were affected as well.

While the College sought to increase the distinctive and innovative interdisciplinary aspects of its curriculum, there was another route to take. Because students often took into account the difficulty and the workload of both particular courses and professors in choosing their list of courses, university coursework accommodated the demands of student consumers by becoming gradually less strenuous. This development was reported by Co-Chairmen Golob and Titus in 1973:

The College has maintained and even strengthened its academic standards...It is sad to report that -- from departmental majors as well as CSS students, from other faculty colleagues as well as tutors -- we are repeatedly told that the CSS is more demanding than any major outside the natural sciences. It is even sadder to hear students observe that they can surely attain a "high GPA with very little effort, and by picking some soft courses boost the major course average"; hence why work as hard as CSS demands? Since we are convinced that the College's requirements are by no means excessive, we can only infer that Wesleyan must soon decide what standards, and what educational criteria, it wishes to uphold.  

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10 Kerr, William. Interview by Author.
11 CSS Annual Report 1972-73. p.1
The years had changed Wesleyan, and the CSS with it. Finally, in 1982, the CSS resigned itself to a point somewhere slightly above the equilibrium to which the rest of the university had fallen. The reforms had made the program less challenging and more flexible, thereby ensuring the survival of the College. But, structurally, this College in 1982 was not the entity that it had once been.
CONCLUSIONS

Despite these gains, it is nonetheless proper to ask whether our basic policy is a sound one for the future of the College, and if so whether we have made it clear to ourselves and to others. Have we a full and coherent set of principles, reflected in practice to which [we] can wholeheartedly subscribe?

-Victor Butterfield
"The Faith of a Liberal College" [1955]

The CSS was more stable during the 1960s as an experimental program than at most other periods in its history. During its early years, the College had the strong support of the administration and the tolerance of the university's departments. Students applied to the College in good numbers because it offered a distinctive educational environment. Stability in such an environment was relatively easy to come by. The seventies and eighties brought lasting change in many forms. The CSS adapted, albeit painfully. And, in the mid-late eighties, the College experienced new stability as a considerably leaner entity.

The historical framework that this thesis creates can potentially illustrate the relation of the CSS' the pedagogical structures to the educational philosophy which underlies these structures. Currently, there is a gap between the structure and theory of the CSS, and history is one tool by which to recognize and bridge this gap.

Change can blur the relation between structure and philosophy. The CSS is clearly no longer the same institution that it was in 1959, but its philosophy has remained virtually unchanged throughout its history. Structural changes to the program have outpaced adjustments to the educational philosophy that supposedly guides these changes.
Why is a re-definition of the theory of the CSS necessary? Most importantly, the philosophy that the College publicizes helps to create expectations that students carry with them throughout their three years in the program. These expectations are crucial in shaping a student's experience in the College. In the its early years, the CSS successfully offered a particular kind of education. As one graduate from the class of '63 put it, "It is a singular and highly effective educational program that delivers on its premises and promises." At present, students' expectations of the program often do not correspond to reality. Students come to expect all things from this one program. Some imagine the CSS to be a mini-university where equal treatment is given to Western and non-Western ideas in addition to alternative theories of social science. Others expect an automatic unification of disciplinary knowledge or a mastery of each CSS discipline. Disenchantment and discontent are the result of such expectations. One graduate from the class of '88 summed up the problem: "The major fault is that CSS is not all that it advertises to be."

What is required is an honest and encompassing explication of the philosophy of the CSS. This is not a novel idea. In fact, the Majors and Selection Committee suggested it in 1984: "It remains a problem, though, that CSS currently lacks a coherent educational philosophy...It is necessary that a clear idea of what a student of the social studies should know be elucidated..."¹ Arthur Levine and John Weingart proposed this same idea in 1973 with regard to American colleges and universities in general. Their appraisal seems to have relevance for the CSS today:

The external vagueness attributed to colleges goes hand in hand with internal vagueness. As our study of curriculum structures has shown, undergraduate programs today lack curricular cohesion, and curriculum structures fail to meet stated objectives. These failings are largely the result of poorly formed curriculum ideals, based upon conflict avoidance and designed without cognizance of the

¹Memo FROM: The Majors and Selection Committees TO: The Tutors and Students of the College of Social Studies regarding Changes in the Program. 14 February 1984. p.3
realities of the university... 2

What is the CSS? The answer to this question should not be limited to vacuous viewbook descriptions of the College as "a coordinated multidisciplinary program of studies". Rather, the specific elements of the CSS' pedagogy have specific theoretical underpinnings which should be elucidated. Most tutors realize what these underpinnings are, but students are sometimes unaware of why the College embraces certain methods and not others.

This problem is especially acute among students applying to the program. Frosh apply in the spring of their first year to a program that will last for their remaining three years of college. Initial openness is of the utmost importance in setting the expectations of these students.

What does the CSS offer both students and tutors at Wesleyan in 1991? The answers can be of help in fashioning the type of philosophy to which I am referring. To begin with, the university is no longer the small liberal arts college that it was in 1959. It is a Little University, but in most senses it is no longer as "Little" as its name implies. By virtue of its pedagogical methods in the sophomore year, the CSS holds a distinctive place in this educational market. The College's emphasis on the tutorial method is, thus, its greatest asset and its most notable selling point. This fact is well known by the tutors, but it is not sufficiently exploited at this time.

But the College' tutorials are disciplinary in content and structure. While the CSS fundamentally claims some relation to interdisciplinary learning. Yet, the experience of thirty years seems to show that the program is not interdisciplinary in the commonly held sense of the word. The insights of Gene Golob are helpful on this point: "This ability to think all things together is a function of... intellectual maturity, not of studies or

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years... We never realized that integration could not be taught *per se.*"\(^4\) According to Mr. Golob, integration usually happens "ten years after graduating". This fact should be taken into account in any description of the philosophy of the College.

Finally, the College currently describes itself as a one of the few "programs" that Wesleyan offers. Theoretically, the CSS represents a three year course of study. Necessarily, such a course of study must be progressive. In one sense, CSS students are progressing through different stages of writing skills. The sophomore tutorials teach students how to write a classic "seven page memo". The senior year should culminate in the writing of an honors thesis. Somewhere in the junior year must be the link between these two. Currently, the 1991 second semester junior tutorials serve that function well. The point is that the concept of a progressive course of study is so foreign to today's students that this aspect of the CSS must be made explicit.

Each element of the program should be honestly described both in terms of what the student is doing and why he/she is doing it. Structure and philosophy must be understood in conjunction with one another. Without a detailed and convincing rationale, the pedagogical methods of the College become mere "requirements"--an undesirable and unnecessary label.

Victor Butterfield spent the first thirty years of his life searching for a life philosophy. The CSS must take its own educational philosophy as seriously.

II

In the final analysis, the CSS is a distinct entity at Wesleyan because its philosophy and its structure seek to facilitate intimate learning relationships among students and teachers and among students themselves. As a result, the College represents a fragile educational environment in which so much depends on the personal chemistry between students and

tutors. On the one hand, students bring markedly different views and backgrounds with them each year. On the other hand, tutors bring personal styles of teaching to each class. The CSS experience can vary remarkably from year to year due to the different personalities that comprise the College.

In this sense, the university curriculum is considerably more dependable, continuously churning out B.A.'s. But, unlike the larger university's educational program, the College puts a stamp on its graduates. This stamp has become less prominent with the deterioration of the social elements of the College and the erosion of a common academic experience among students, but the impressions that the College leaves are still significant. In order to continue in this tradition, the CSS must find alternative ways of impressing its distinctiveness on its graduates. This is no meager task. The experience of the 1970s and 80s has shown that this distinctiveness cannot lie in the rigor of its curriculum nor only on its claims to interdisciplinary learning.

The first step comes with an honest appraisal of the principles that guide the CSS. The College requires constant and constructive re-examination. It was re-evaluation which led to the inception of the College in 1959, and it is re-evaluation that will preserve its vitality past 1991.
APPENDIX I

Questionnaire

CSS Alumni Response Form
Please feel free to write on the back or attach additional sheets

Name: ____________________________ Class Of: ______

Address: __________________________

__________________________

Telephone #: (___)______________

Please describe your post-Wesleyan career path, including occupations, titles, and further graduate education (if possible, a resume would be a helpful substitute):

(1) What attracted you to the program? In answering this question, please comment briefly on any aspects of the college that you feel are particularly important:
- the substantive mix of disciplines
- the latitude accorded to students in fulfilling university requirements
- the opportunities for close interaction with faculty
- the freedom allowed students in structuring their academic regimen
- the emphasis placed on disciplined writing skills
- the comprehensive examination system
- the social aspects of the college
- other

(2) If CSS had not been available to you, in what field(s) would you most likely have studied?

(3) What particular experience(s) were especially noteworthy from your CSS days?

(4) What would you regard as the major strength(s) and major fault(s) of the program?

(5) In what ways were your expectations of CSS fulfilled/disappointed?

(6) As a CSSer, how do you feel the college fit into the university as a whole?

(7) How effectively has CSS prepared you for life after Wesleyan?

(8) Do you think CSS accomplished the 'goals' (however you may define them) that it set out to achieve?

(9) What modifications, if any, would you make to CSS?

(10) In times of 'budget crunches', CSS is predictably vulnerable to administrative cost-cutting because of its high per student expenditures. If you were to defend the college against these 'cost-effectiveness' arguments, what counter-arguments would you put forward?
# Appendix II

## Chairpersons of the CSS: 1959-1987

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### Class of 1962

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### Class of 1967

**Junior Preliminary Examination, May 1966**

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**Senior Comprehensive Examination, May 1967**

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### Class of 1968

**Junior Preliminary Examination, May 1967**

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**Senior Comprehensive Examination, May 1968**

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### Class of 1969

**Junior Preliminary Examination, May 1968**

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**Junior and Senior Comprehensive Examination, May 1969**

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Junior and Senior Comprehensives not administered in 1970 due to student strike.
### Junior Preliminary Examination and Senior Comprehensive Examination, May 1971

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### Junior Preliminary Examination and Senior Comprehensive Examination, May 1972

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### Junior Preliminary Examination and Senior Comprehensive Examination, May 1974

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Junior Preliminary Examination and Senior Comprehensive Examination, May 1981
Examiner | Department | University
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Andrzej Rapaczynski | Philosophy | Yale
Robert Westbrook | American History | Yale
John P. Spielman, Jr. | European History | Haverford College
Gerald M. Meier | Economics | Stanford Univ.
Robert S. Wood | Government | Naval War College

Junior Preliminary Examination and Senior Comprehensive Examination, May 1982
Examiner | Department | University
--- | --- | ---
Eugene Leach | American History | Trinity
John Halstead | European History | Amherst College
William Connolly | Philosophy | Univ. of Mass.
David Cameron | Government | Yale
Daniel Orr | Economics | VA Polytechnic Institute & State Univ.

Junior Preliminary Examinations were no longer administered after 1982.

Senior Comprehensive Examination, May 1983
Examiner | Department | University
--- | --- | ---
William Connolly | Government | Univ. of Mass.
Robin Winks | History | Yale
Arthur Wright | Economics | Univ. of Conn.

Senior Comprehensive Examination, May 1984
Examiner | Department | University
--- | --- | ---
Andrzej Rapaczynski | Government/Social Theory | Columbia
Robin Winks | History | Yale
Gordon Winston | Economics | Williams

Senior Comprehensive Examination, May 1985
Examiner | Department | University
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Gerald Meier | Economics | Stanford
David Schoenbaum | History | Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars
David Braybrooke | Government/Social Theory | Dalhousie Univ.

Senior Comprehensive Examination, May 1986
Examiner | Department | University
--- | --- | ---
Richard Adelstein | Economics | Wesleyan Univ.
Brian Fay | Philosophy | Wesleyan Univ.
Peter Kilby | Economics | Wesleyan Univ.
Robert Wood | Government | Wesleyan Univ.

Senior Comprehensive Examinations Abolished In 1987
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"A Junior Faculty Discussion of the 'College Plan'," December 9, 1960. A report on actual College Plan practice from junior faculty members teaching in the various Colleges.


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Faculty Minutes. December 16, 1975. Marking the Death of Victor Butterfield


Letter FROM: President Victor Butterfield TO: Editor of the Amherst Alumni News, September 11, 1964. Describes the resemblance between the Oxford Tutorial System and the CSS.


Memo FROM: Co-Chairmen of the College of Social Studies TO: The Vice-President for Academic Affairs. November 26, 1979. Re: Report on Prospective Program Revision in the CSS


Memo FROM: David Morgan TO: All CSS Tutors and Students. September 12, 1974. Re: Colloquia.

Memo FROM: David Morgan TO: All CSS Tutors. September 8, 1976. Re: Tutors' Meeting

Memo FROM: David Morgan TO: CSS Colleagues. October 7, 1976. Re: A note, strictly personal, to accompany the postponement of this semesters second tutors' meeting.


Memo FROM: David Morgan TO: CSS Tutors. February 2, 1977. Re: Record of the Tutors Meeting of February 1, 1977


Memo FROM: Devid Titus TO: CSS Faculty, Past and Present, and the Department Chairmen of the PAC, Philosophy and Religion. October 11, 1977. Re: Physical Relocation (Return) of the CSS to the PAC (Where it all began.)


Memo FROM: Jeffrey Butler and David Morgan TO: Hope Weissman, for the working group of the EPC subcommittee. November 1, 1979. Re: Changes to the CSS.

Memo FROM: Jeffrey Butler TO: CSS Faculty, November 9, 1970. Re: Proposals for change.

Memo FROM: Louis Mink TO: All CSS Tutors, September 18, 1967. Re: CSS Tutors meeting with the Board of Trustees on September 19, 1967.


Memo FROM: Vincent Cochrane TO: The SEPP Group, July 14, 1967 Re: Afro-Asian Proposal
Describes the resemblance between the Oxford Tutorial System and the CSS.

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Crescimanno, Anne, former Administrative Assistant to the CSS. Interview by Author. January 8, 1991. Wesleyan University.


