

**“Save the Cross Campus”:
Library Planning and Campus Protests at Yale, 1968-1969**

Information & Culture 53 (2), 2018

DOI: 10.7560/IC53202

Geoffrey Robert Little

Biographical Statement: Geoffrey Robert Little is Editor-in-Chief at Concordia University Press in Montreal. Previously he worked at Yale University Library, where he edited the first (and last) volume of *Yale Library Studies*. He has graduate degrees in History and Information Studies from Concordia and the University of Toronto.

Abstract

This article explores student and faculty protests in the late 1960s at Yale University against plans for a new underground library. While the protests resulted in a less ambitious facility, they also reflected and refracted significant anxiety at Yale connected to wide-ranging social issues. Moreover, the protests highlighted tensions generated by urban renewal projects in Yale's home of New Haven, Connecticut. Situating the Yale library protests within a local, as well as a national context, fills a significant gap in the history of the twentieth-century American academic library in the face of widespread student unrest and rapidly evolving library information technologies.

**“A Campus is For Students”:
Library Planning and Protests at Yale, 1967-69**

The late 1960s witnessed student unrest and protests on college and university campuses across the United States. These were produced by complex factors including the escalation of the war in Vietnam, demands for civil rights and gender and sexual equality, and calls for more student involvement in governance and decision-making. Events came to a head in 1968, a year that has been called “the year of the barricades” because of widespread protests in Europe and the United States and the assassinations of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Senator Robert F. Kennedy.¹ Throughout 1968 American university students protested in almost every part of the country. In March, students at New York University demonstrated against the presence on campus of recruiters from Dow Chemical, the company that manufactured napalm. One month later students at the University of Georgia organized a three-day sit-in against a restrictive dress code for females while in New York in April students occupied the administration building at Columbia University. Students at the University of California, Berkeley, organized a large anti-war protest in conjunction with May commencement ceremonies, while the longest campus strike in American history began at San Francisco State College in November 1968. Student groups and student protesters were also heavily involved in demonstrations at the August 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, which were put down with immense force by police.²

A recent biography of Yale University president Kingman Brewster, Jr. (1919-88) contends that the school avoided student unrest until 1970 when the Black Panther trials were held in its home of New Haven, Connecticut.³ Indeed, according to Donald Kagan, an historian who took up a teaching post at Yale at the end of the decade, during the 1960s the university was regarded as “the one place in the country where things seemed to be in good control.”⁴ Despite this perception of peacefulness, there were a number of campus protests at Yale in mid- to late 1960s, the most significant of which took place during the 1968-69 academic year and which was focused on the designs for a radically reconceived and expanded central library and a new underground library extension that would have appropriated a large piece of green space at the heart of the campus. Throughout a brief but intense period of unrest, much of it documented by

the student-run *Yale Daily News*, undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty mobilized against the construction of a subterranean library that would have resulted in the installation of ground-level skylights on a portion of the lawn in front of the Sterling Memorial Library known as the Cross Campus. In response to the protests, as well a change in Yale's financial situation, the university scaled back its plan to reorganize its library system, cancelling the central library renovation and building a much smaller and less intrusive underground facility. By situating the protests within a broader context of student unrest and activism at Yale, as well as anxiety in New Haven in the late 1960s as a result of massive redevelopment and urban renewal projects, the library-focused unrest take on new and more meaningful significance.

Historians of America's academic libraries know relatively little about the role or place of the library in the 1960s student protest movement or the ways in which the library functioned during that decade as a site of tension and conflict or, on the other hand, stability. Fay M. Blake has written that academic librarians "remember the Sixties most vividly for the turmoil on university and college campuses, but somehow libraries on those campuses seemed to stand aside from what was happening. Like the eye of the storm, the academic library remained mostly serene in the midst of turbulence." Given that at many colleges and universities the library was situated at the center of the campus, it was, according to Blake, literally and metaphorically "a place from which to view events" rather than a place where events happened.⁵ Barbara Anderson, a librarian who worked at San Francisco State College during the student strike there, echoed Blake's description, calling the library the "choice vantage point for demonstration watching." Blake contends that during the 1960s the "library, like every other building on campus, became regarded as part of the establishment."⁶ As a result, the American academic library during the late 1960s is a spectator to wider campus events and unrest and a passive, conservative agent upon which social, political, and cultural factors acted. This study works to upset this assumption. It embraces Wayne Wiegand's advocacy for Doug Zweizig's call for scholars to examine the role of "the library in the life of the user" rather than the reverse. In this case we can study an event where plans to renovate the central university library building were *the* focus of significant student and faculty protests, and the ways in which discourse around the library reflected and refracted local as well as and national anxieties and tensions.⁷

More recently, Joy Rankin has written that historians know little about how students and faculty used computer technologies on campuses during the 1960s and 70s. This is true of our

knowledge of how users engaged with the libraries in which many of these technologies were being introduced and housed. Moreover, information historians have scant knowledge of how librarians adapted their work in the face of changing technologies and technological expectations, nor how the academic library and its collections and services were articulated and described during this period of significant technological, demographic, and social change on American college and university campuses.⁸ William Aspray has encouraged information historians to engage with complex research themes including the transformative role of technology on both library and library users, intellectual history, and the information society.⁹ In this instance historians have an opportunity to look at how the increased and pressing need for the incorporation of technology, as well as the need to increase space for users and special collections, prompted not just a library building project, but the attempted reorganization of one of the largest academic library systems in the world.

This article uses documentation from the Yale University archives, contemporary news sources, and the digitized archive of the undergraduate newspaper, the *Yale Daily News*, to understand how the “Cross Campus crisis” unfolded in 1968-69 and to examine the ways in which student and faculty activism were in part responsible for altering plans for the library renovation and underground facility. In his recently study of Bill Gates’s open letter to computer hobbyists, Kevin Driscoll has demonstrated how the examination and analysis of print culture can illuminate important aspects of the history of information.¹⁰ At the same time, and despite the extensive reporting that the library protests received in the pages of the *Yale Daily News*, the paper should not be read as an unbiased source. Christabelle Sethna has described student newspapers as problematic sources of information that transmit codes of meaning that “privilege assumptions, values, and norms.”¹¹ The codes of meaning disseminated in the pages of the *News* during the period of the Cross Campus crisis were those transmitted and received by the undergraduate student body, which was exclusively male until September 1969 and almost entirely white. Most had no other connection to New Haven other than their association with Yale. Undergraduates also made up Yale’s largest demographic but held the least amount of decision making power and authority. Despite the specific perspective of the *News*’ coverage of the Cross Campus crisis, it is an essential primary source for understanding daily life at Yale to the present, even if the lens through which it is read must account for bias and a dominant discourse.

The Library for Yale College and the Humanities

By the early 1960s, Yale University's magnificent Sterling Memorial Library, which opened in 1931, was running out of space for collections and readers. Library staff also complained that its rigidly constructed and defined interiors were hard to adapt to new purposes, many of which were starting to involve machines designed to automate manual workflows and clerical tasks. Yale's book collection, the majority of which was shelved in Sterling's seven-storey stack tower, had grown from 2,036,405 volumes in 1931 to 4,846,328 by 1965.¹² The library was also struggling with the increased volume of new published information, including books, government documents, and scholarly and professional journals established after 1945 as well with as new formats like microfilm and magnetic tape. Although by the mid-1960s Yale's library system included dedicated medical, art and architecture, divinity, law, and rare book libraries, these facilities took little pressure off Sterling, which functioned as the central library for Yale's humanities, social science, and international studies programs and collections, as well as the home of the university's archives and collection of historical manuscripts. Physically, Sterling could no longer adequately accommodate the thousands of readers who passed through its doors on a daily basis. When the library opened, Yale College, the university's male-only undergraduate faculty, numbered 1,658 students; in 1965 the college enrolled 4,110 students, an increase of almost 150%.¹³ The number of students admitted to Yale's graduate school had also more than doubled during the same period. Librarians and faculty had also started to notice that undergraduates in particular were using Sterling in ways not imagined in 1931. In 1955 the Yale Council's Committee on the Library reported that as a result of the demand for reserve textbooks, "undergraduates flock to the Sterling Library in numbers far exceeding those for which the building was designed and competition is keen both for study space and for books." The report concluded, "There are too many institutions, less distinguished than Yale in other respects, which provide far better library facilities for their undergraduates."¹⁴ Five years later the *Yale Daily News* called Sterling's reserve book room "the principal study area in the library for undergraduates," but complained that it was "seriously overcrowded."¹⁵

An article in the *Yale Alumni Magazine* in June 1965 gave first notice of Yale's plan to transform the architectural and programmatic direction of its library system, described as the fourth largest in the United States. In response to increased enrolments, changes in pedagogy, new technologies, and the explosive growth of published information, a tripartite system of

libraries was proposed to support Yale's three arts and sciences divisions and its graduate school. The magazine reported that the Sterling Memorial Library was to become the "Library for Yale College and the Humanities." Yale's scientists were to have a dedicated library in the new Kline Biology Tower, scheduled to open in October 1966, and social scientists were promised their own facility in the near future. The plans for a transformed Sterling were radical and ambitious. They called for the construction of a second stack tower for books, microforms, special collections, and study and seminar rooms; the creation of a new twenty-four hour undergraduate library in Sterling with a three-floor reference center and access to the latest information retrieval technologies; and a two-storey underground library extension to house area studies collections, historical manuscripts, and the university archives, as well as librarian and staff offices.¹⁶ The cost of the renovations and new construction was estimated at \$15 million, while \$37 million was required to implement the tripartite library plan in its entirety and to establish endowments for collections. James Tanis (1928-2015), Yale's university librarian since February 1965, told the magazine that the renovation would give Sterling enough stack and study space until the year 2000.¹⁷

Yale was not the only American university library confronting the challenges of space, collections, and technology during the 1960s. By the end of the 1940s demands for less intimidating, more accessible academic libraries resulted in the creation of dedicated undergraduate libraries, the first of which opened at Harvard in 1949. By 1965 there were twenty such libraries in the United States.¹⁸ Meanwhile, growing enrolments and the expansion of universities or the creation of new ones in all parts of the country resulted in the construction of libraries. Between 1961 and 1965 there were 504 new academic libraries built in the United States compared with 236 between 1948 and 1957.¹⁹ Librarians were also wrestling with technological, as well as space, challenges. For some, this was an area of pressing concern. In March 1961 the *New York Times* reported that Dartmouth math professor John G. Kemeny had created a plan for a national research library in which materials would be stored on magnetic tape and shared via a long distance dialing system. Kemeny believed that "The present growth rate of major university libraries...will make them so large as to be totally unmanageable and thus obsolete by the year 2000. Some largely automatic system will be necessary to bring order to this prospective chaos." The cost of this new system was estimated at just less than a billion dollars and would take twenty years to achieve.²⁰ For others, the need for libraries to keep up with the

amount of published information, particularly in the context of the Cold War and the hundreds of millions of federal government dollars funding academic research and development, was a matter of national security.²¹ Stafford Warren, special advisor to President Johnson and a former dean of the UCLA medical school, told librarians attending a 1964 conference that the White House Office of Science and Technology was considering establishing a network of automated libraries as a result of the increased availability of information and the inability of libraries to support the demands of researchers and graduate students. Warren claimed that scientists and engineers in particular spent too much time searching for information, taking them away from their work. Given that the volume of information was increasing by 10 to 15 percent each year, it was essential for librarians to find better, faster, and more efficient ways to support researchers. Warren urged his audience to meet the challenge of the information age by embracing computerized information storage and citation retrieval systems.²²

Some academic librarians approached the computer with cautious enthusiasm. An article in the October 1965 *ALA Bulletin* described the “pioneer hardships” faced by librarians at Florida Atlantic University, a newly established school that was the first in the country to have incorporated computers in the plans for its library. An IBM 357 Data Collection system was stationed behind the library’s circulation desk to record transactions and librarians and staff utilized computers to process acquisitions, serials, and catalog records, as well as during reference interviews.²³ By 1966 the president of the American Library Association, Robert G. Vosper, agreed with those who saw the benefits of computerization, telling the *Los Angeles Times*, “Everywhere greater emphasis is being placed on the need for libraries to expand their services to keep up with the scientific age.”²⁴

Despite the pressing demands of the scientific age and the 1965 launch and funding appeal for Yale’s library transformation, it took two years for work to proceed. Finally, on March 7, 1967, a brief news item appeared in the undergraduate campus newspaper, the *Yale Daily News* noting that the university was to renovate the Sterling Memorial Library and build a sixty-one thousand square feet underground extension.²⁵ Ten months later a second article appeared in the *News* on January 24, 1968 with the sub-headline “Massive Changes.” It described the project in more detail and University Librarian Tanis outlined a revised renovation that would take five to seven years to complete. A large portion of Sterling was to be converted into an undergraduate library while a second five-story stack tower was to be constructed to house collections and

seminar rooms. Finally, the grassy area in front of Sterling was to be excavated to build a subterranean facility to house special collections and librarian offices.²⁶ Both the March 7, 1967 and January 24, 1968 articles described how designs for the underground library extension called for a series of ground-level skylights resembling saw tooth windows on the Cross Campus, a wide stretch of lawn originally designed by architect James Gamble Rogers (1867-1947) to be a green avenue leading to Sterling and an area that functioned as the university's central thoroughfare, travelled on a daily basis by students, faculty, and staff. The lawn was also a popular gathering area, unofficial sports field, and leisure spot. An academic building, Harkness Hall, and two undergraduate residential colleges, Calhoun and Berkeley, the latter composed of two mirrored wings divided by the lawn, faced and framed Sterling and the Cross Campus.

“God does believe in green pastures and still waters”:

Students and Faculty Protest the Underground Library

Three months after the *News* reported the library expansion, an article by graduate student Robert Grant Irving in the April 14, 1968 issue of the student-edited *New Journal* went into more detail about the scale of the library renovation plan and the effect that it would have on the Cross Campus. Irving's article, subtitled “Renewal or Requiem?,” was a scathing criticism of the designs for both the renovated Sterling Memorial Library and Cross Campus extension.²⁷ It described how the current plan for the underground library called for sixteen skylights, each eight feet wide and twenty-six feet long, to be placed up the length of the Cross Campus, an intervention that would reduce the size of the lawn by two thirds. Two days after Irving's article appeared a *Yale Daily News* editorial denounced the underground library's plan as “a violation of the architectural integrity of the campus. The weird composition of dainty trees and shrubs, and huge expanses of glass to be substituted for the greenery would destroy both the beauty and utility of the area...[T]he proposed design is a study in sterility.”²⁸ The article and editorial generated a stream of correspondence to James Tanis from members of the teaching faculty who opposed the project. Lewis Perry Curtis, a professor of eighteenth-century British history, described the designs as “horrificing,” while W.J. Cunningham in the Engineering department called the skylights “indefensible.” Maynard Mack, who had taught courses on Shakespeare and Pope at the university since 1936, warned Tanis that he would become “notorious for having been the Librarian who allowed the one public spot of respite in an urban university to be mangled, and in some respects destroyed.”²⁹ Unhappiness with the plans was such that the *News*

reported that a petition against the project has received more than four hundred signatures in the two days following the publication of its editorial, prompting university administrators to schedule a meeting between those who opposed the skylights with Edward Larabee Barnes (1915-2004), the extension's architect and Yale's campus planner.³⁰

The most significant event in the Cross Campus crisis was sparked by events on the lawn itself. On the morning of April 23 a bulldozer and a crew of men appeared on the lawn began work to bring down several trees at its west end. Although the crew told the crowd that the trees were diseased and were being felled for safety, rumors spread that this was the start of excavations for the underground library. Within minutes of the crew's arrival several hundred students, as well as a number of faculty including Berkeley College master and Engineering professor Charles Walker, appeared on the Cross Campus and formed human chains around the fated trees. Protesters also engaged in symbolic acts of planting flowers, tidying shrubbery beds, and tending the grass. An overnight vigil on the Cross Campus was cancelled only after the administration sent the crew home and agreed to give twenty-four hours' notice of any further landscaping.³¹ The Reverend William Sloane Coffin (1924-2006), Yale's chaplain and a prominent civil rights and anti-war campaigner who had been under federal indictment since January 1968 for helping men avoid the draft, did not participate in the April 23 protest, but he was contacted by a *News* reporter following the protest. Coffin declined to make a statement, but he told his interviewer, "God does believe in green pastures and still waters," an allusion to the twenty-third psalm that likely left no reader in any doubt as to his thoughts on the library project.³² Given Coffin's national profile, his brief response likely further swayed campus opinion against the underground library. Tensions on campus were also likely high as Martin Luther King, Jr., who had received an honorary degree from Yale in 1964, had been assassinated less than three weeks before the April 23 protest, and riots and fires broke out in New Haven over April 9 and 10.³³

Following the April 23 protests, undergraduate student Bradley Nitkin told the *News* that a group calling itself the "Committee to Save the Cross Campus" had formed and had mailed three thousand anti-underground library letters to alumni across the country. The committee also demanded that the university alter the library's design by the first weekend in June, which coincided with alumni reunions. "If we get no result," Nitkin told the paper, "we will be forced to call a mass rally and demonstration."³⁴ Additional dissent came from a surprising source. On

April 25, two days after the incident on the Cross Campus, campus planner Edward Barnes urged the university to reconsider the expansion. In a statement released to the media he wrote: “I am asking the President and the Corporation to take into account student interests even if this involves the rescheduling of the Cross Campus library project...I also feel strongly that the University is derelict in not having an established procedure for consultation and communication with affected students.”³⁵ The *News* praised Barnes’s statement, calling it “a welcome move towards accommodation of the student plans and University-wide participation in the decision-making process about the library facility.”³⁶ As a result the articles, letters, and April 23 protest, as well as Barnes’ statement, on April 28 President Kingman Brewster issued a public letter in which he admitted that the university needed “to consult pertinent student opinion about physical plans, especially campus plans which directly affect student life.”³⁷ Brewster’s acknowledgement would ultimately result in twelve months’ worth of public meetings and consultation sessions with students on the library plans, in addition to other campus building projects.

Many of those who objected to the underground library did so because it threatened campus green space that had been invested with symbolic and aesthetic meaning. Others saw the library as an extension of large-scale urban planning projects underway in New Haven. One of the letters that James Tanis received in mid-April was from graduate student Daniel A. Harris, who wrote that the Cross Campus skylights would become targets for vandalism and damage. To Harris, Yale was effectively “endorsing urban blight.”³⁸ Perhaps more than anywhere else in the country, “urban blight” had particular meaning in Yale’s home of New Haven, a place that the *Saturday Evening Post* condemned in 1958 as “a dead city” as a result of massive post-war deindustrialization and a shrinking population.³⁹ By the middle of the 1960s, however, New Haven had ostensibly reinvented itself as a center for large-scale urban planning and regeneration, much of it funded by the federal government. In 1965 New Haven was spending \$745.38 per capita on urban renewal, more than \$450 per capita than Newark, New Jersey, the second most funded city in the country.⁴⁰ The scale of the city’s redevelopment was vast and several neighborhoods were condemned and razed to make way for high-profile projects including a convention center, sports arena, downtown shopping mall and hotel complex, and parking garages, as well as Interstate Highways 91 and 95. Redevelopment ultimately destroyed swathes of housing, small businesses, and historic buildings, and displaced more than 22,000

individuals.⁴¹

The number, scope, and results of New Haven's urban renewal projects and the university's place within the city's socioeconomic structure during the late 1960s were not lost on many who protested the Sterling Memorial Library renovation and Cross Campus extension. On April 29, five days after the protests on the Cross Campus, art history professor Vincent Scully (b. 1920) who had been born in New Haven and educated in its public school system before taking his undergraduate and graduate degrees at Yale, published an op-ed in the *Yale Daily News* titled "Cross Campus: Things vs. People." Scully criticized the Cross Campus skylights and Barnes's design for the underground library and he articulated the problems created by the massive changes to New Haven's built environment. He told his readers that the threat to green space on the Yale campus could not be considered in isolation of other threats to community, social cohesion, and quality of life in New Haven:

The Cross Campus, where people now on occasion meet, sit, talk, stand around, sleep, make speeches, and pray, is better, not worse, for the touch football that goes on it...If we are to defend the Cross Campus, let us now not forget the Hill, City Hall, and the Ring Road. In the near future, reason and decency may well call many of us to the defense of the first two and the prevention of the last.⁴²

The Hill was a predominantly African American neighborhood adjacent to Yale's medical school that had long been a target for slum clearance while New Haven's 1861 city hall had been marked for demolition in 1965 to make way for a modern civic complex.⁴³ A circular, multi-lane highway linking a state road with Interstate 91, referred to in planning documents and by the press simply as "the ring road," had been proposed for the city in 1965 and would have appropriated large sections of middle- and working-class housing.⁴⁴ By connecting the underground library and the loss of green space with three other examples of supposed improvement, Scully asked his readers to look beyond the library and the Yale campus into New Haven where large-scale building or renewal projects had destroyed landmarks and weakened bonds of community or where projects designed to improve lives and the health of the city and its residents had resulted in the opposite. For others, the project was symptomatic of Yale's broken relationship with New Haven. Writing in the April 28, 1968 issue of the *New Journal* graduate student James Vivian stated, "The time has come to state simply and emphatically that Yale's concern with New Haven has been minimal. Only after this admission will Yale shed its

three-piece tactfulness, making itself fully vulnerable to criticism and thereby open to new possibilities.”⁴⁵

The student and faculty protests against the underground library resulted in concrete change. Less than two weeks after the flash protest on the Cross Campus, Edward Larabee Barnes presented three new options for the underground library at a public meeting on May 7, 1968. None of them featured skylights. Barnes told his undergraduate audience in the Berkeley College common room, “You’ve made a point. I understand it and I’m sympathetic to it.”⁴⁶ Bradley Nitkin praised the designs, which he felt showed that there was “room for rational discussion without resorting to militant protest.”⁴⁷ By late May or early June 1968, however, Nitkin and the Committee to Save the Cross Campus had rejected the revised plans. In an undated statement issued before June 10, 1968, the committee, along with the New Haven Preservation Trust, condemned the library space as “aesthetically reprehensible, functionally needless, and financially extravagant.”⁴⁸ The statement urged members of the Yale and New Haven communities to write to President Brewster and to protest the Yale Corporation meeting on June 10. Meanwhile, on May 21 it was announced that James Tanis was leaving his position as university librarian and would be replaced on an acting basis by John Morton Blum (1921-2011), a professor of twentieth-century American history.⁴⁹ On June 25, 1968 the Yale Corporation’s prudential committee approved revised plans for the extension that featured light wells or moats at the perimeter of the Cross Campus in place of the central skylights. At the same time, however, the committee also put the extension and Sterling renovation projects on hold for one year in order for the university to raise more funds and to allow Barnes and the Yale facilities office to draw up new designs for lighting, heating, and ventilation. Writing to inform Barnes of this decision, President Brewster told him that the committee was concerned with the university’s public relations and that as a result of the earlier protests “there was a natural reluctance to move into the excavation and a visible commitment beyond the point of no return when the faculty and the student constituency were out of town.”⁵⁰ Events beyond the Cross Campus may have also pushed Brewster and the Corporation to attempt to de-escalate the situation: Senator Robert F. Kennedy had been assassinated in Los Angeles on June 6, 1968 and four days later 312 members of Yale’s graduating class published a commencement day petition against the Vietnam War. That year’s commencement ceremony also made national news when the Right Reverend Paul Moore, Episcopal suffragan bishop of Washington, DC, and a member

of the Yale Corporation, offered public prayers in support of Chaplain Coffin, then on trial in Boston.⁵¹ The postponement allowed the library's administration to review and revise plans it had made for collections and staff in Sterling and the new facility. Five months into his acting appointment, John Blum received a detailed report from senior librarians in which they concluded that the plans for the Sterling renovation and the Cross Campus extension were no longer feasible for the purposes of library services and operations. In particular, they noted that moving librarians into the Cross Campus extension would needlessly separate them from technical services staff and that splitting book collections between Sterling and the new space would prove confusing for users. The plans for the Library for Yale College and the Humanities came under criticism for providing less student seating space than was required, as well as for a lack of space for interlibrary loan services, not enough security and exit control features, and too many partitions that would needlessly break up useful large spaces into smaller ones.⁵² Yale's administration was dealing with a space to which librarians, as well as faculty and students, objected.

Students Demand a Role in Yale's Campus Planning

Despite the pause imposed by the Yale Corporation, feelings surrounding the library project were still tense at the end of 1968. On November 25 Barnes held a public meeting to discuss the university's planning philosophy in light of a swathe of proposed future construction projects including not only the Sterling renovation and Cross Campus library, but a new social science center, math building, two undergraduate residential colleges, and a gallery for Paul Mellon's gift of his collection of British art. Barnes wanted to talk about "how to dovetail professional work with student views, what a working relationship actually is between professionals and students."⁵³ The library protests and the university's admission that student opinion was important had galvanized activists. In spite of Barnes's conciliatory approach, Manfred Ibel and Herbert Short, students in the Yale Architecture School, were quoted by the *News* as saying that they wanted the meeting to be "a confrontation in which the students will show they are not willing to tolerate any more dishonesty or bad planning at Yale."⁵⁴ Meanwhile, on December 2, 1968 Barnes presented yet another set of revised plans for the underground library extension that were considerably scaled back in response to the spring protests, but also because of a lack of donations for the project and a negative change in the university's general financial situation.⁵⁵ The Cross Campus skylights had disappeared in the

revised May 1968 plans, but now the library's purpose and program had been radically revised. Instead of functioning as a space for area studies collections, historical manuscript collections, and the university archives, the underground library extension was imagined as a facility that would offer access to high-circulating books for undergraduate students as well as graduate students engaged in pre-dissertation course work. The project to expand, reorganize, and transform Sterling into the Library for Yale College and the Humanities was cancelled outright and the concept of the tripartite library system envisioned in 1965 was entirely abandoned. John Blum told the audience at the December 2 meeting with Barnes that instead of offering access to various specialized collections, the reconceived subterranean facility would provide more and much-needed study space for students, including female undergraduates who would arrive on campus in September 1969.⁵⁶

In early 1969 John Blum held additional public meetings with students and during an interview with the *News* on March 12, 1969, he was quoted as saying that the university was “not going to ram [revised plans for the library] down [students'] throats...The plans include almost nothing that has not been responsive to student demands.”⁵⁷ That same day Blum presented final plans drawn up by Barnes, which student representatives from the Yale Student Advisory Board and Berkeley College, deemed “generally acceptable.” Bradley Nitkin echoed his peers, calling the revised design “definitely more acceptable than last spring's plan.”⁵⁸ Now, large light wells at each corner of the upper half of the Cross Campus were to provide some natural light to the first floor, but none to the second. Sterling and the new library were to be linked by a basement tunnel and space was made for lockers, a snack bar, and vending machines. Writing to President Brewster and Provost Charles Taylor on April 8, 1969 after a final public consultation, Blum described his audience as “apathetic” and he reported that “no-one raised points or hands against the contemplated building.” He urged the university to begin construction as soon as possible “since we have now cleared the hurdles erected by participatory democracy, and since all other constituencies seem pleased with the plan.”⁵⁹ Excavation for the underground facility, which was called the Cross Campus Library and often referred to simply as CCL, began in June 1969, four years after the space was first described in the *Yale Alumni Magazine*. It opened to little fanfare on January 25, 1971 and five years later the *Yale Daily News* described the facility as functional yet “monotonous in color and spatial layout.”⁶⁰ In his 2009 history of Yale's library architecture, Robert A.M. Stern called the library “much-used but little-loved” and a “fundamentally soulless

environment” defined by “plain-vanilla, white sheetrock, plastic, and aluminum.”⁶¹ The facility also suffered from significant engineering problems, including a chronically leaking roof.

Despite a belief that Yale avoided the protracted or violent protests that took place on campuses elsewhere, the university experienced significant student protests during the 1960s. Indeed, there is evidence that points to significant unrest in the years leading up to the Cross Campus protests. In March 1965 students staged a three-day protest outside the president’s office in response to the refusal of tenure for Richard J. Bernstein, a popular philosophy professor who was also active in the civil rights movement, while an estimated 1,500 anti-war protesters interrupted Lady Bird Johnson’s October 10, 1967 visit to campus.⁶² Several anti-war protests also took place in 1968, the largest of which occurred on April 3, 1968, just three weeks before the student and faculty intervention on the Cross Campus, and included speeches by Chaplain Coffin, James Bevel of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and Staughton Lynd, an activist historian who was denied tenure at Yale that year.⁶³ The university was also coming to terms with changing social conventions and relationships at the same time as it was planning the Sterling transformation and Cross Campus extension. During the 1967-68 academic year the school debated and revised regulations like the dining hall jacket-and-tie dress code as well as the question of parietal rule that governed curfew and dormitory regulations.⁶⁴ Since the mid-1960s the university had also been exploring the idea of undergraduate coeducation and a potential merger with Vassar College. One year after Vassar’s trustees defeated a motion to consider a move to New Haven in November 1967, the university announced that it would admit female undergraduates in September 1969. Social and campus issues were reflected in Garry Trudeau’s *Bull Tales* comic strip, first published in the *News* on September 30, 1968. Although Trudeau did not cover the Cross Campus Crisis in the strip, he did engage with coeducation and gender relations, the draft, semi-professional student protesters, the Black Panther trials, and the Harvard-Yale football rivalry.⁶⁵ September 1968 also saw a performance by the experimental Living Theatre group at the Yale Repertory Theatre during which the actors exhorted the mostly undergraduate audience to eschew clothing and to embrace marijuana and liberal sexual attitudes. As the audience left the theatre to stage an impromptu parade, ten people, including two actors, were arrested by the New Haven Police Department for public indecency.⁶⁶

The Cross Campus protests, as well as President Brewster’s open letter, sparked life into the debate about the role of students in campus planning and decision-making. On November 25,

1968, the day before an open meeting on plans for the library extension, a *News* editorial claimed that the event “should be considered as the sequel to last spring’s Cross Campus dispute. At that time, student interest in the library’s expansion prevented the disappearance of finite campus green space. The concern and participation of students and faculty is just as important to the success of the overall development of the entire Yale campus as it was to the Cross Campus.”⁶⁷ The editorial further asked, “How are planning decisions made? Why aren’t the public spaces at Yale utilized more fully? How will campus expansion affect the city?”⁶⁸ The December 10, 1968 issue of the *News* continued this theme with a series of articles titled “Three Views on Library Design.” In one, Herbert Short asserted: “In campus planning the student is the ultimate architect.” The sub-headline of his article was “A Campus is for Students, So We Must Help Plan It.”⁶⁹ A formal proposal by Short and Ibel that Yale students be given a formal role in Yale’s campus planning came to nothing.

Other protestors believed that the Cross Campus project was symptomatic of Yale’s antipathy towards New Haven and its willingness to plan significant building projects without thought for the city, its economy, and its residents. In November 1968, as Edward Barnes was convening his meeting on campus planning in response to the Cross Campus protests, the *Yale Daily News* asked: “Is there any master plan for Yale? Does Yale know what its power is? An institution which occupies half of central New Haven?”⁷⁰ Concerns about Yale’s role as an urban bully were raised again in spring 1969 when the university announced plans to demolish almost an entire block in the city’s downtown and displace a number of small businesses in order to build what would eventually become the Yale Center for British Art. In response to the university’s attempts to increase its footprint at the expense of New Haven’s tax base, in 1969 the city passed a bylaw that required Yale to seek municipal approval before starting any new building or expansion projects. This resulted most spectacularly in the city’s rejection in 1973 of Yale’s plans to build two new residential colleges.

Conclusion

In May 2006 the Cross Campus Library was closed for a complete structural overhaul and it reopened in September 2007 as the Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Library.⁷¹ The closing, renovation, and erasure of the Cross Campus Library was the symbolic conclusion to Yale’s ambitious attempt in the mid- and late 1960s to create a modern library for the information age. The Library for Yale College and the Humanities represented the cutting edge of library design

and planning and offered access to reference services, study spaces, technology, and to traditional as well as new kinds of collections required by a student body that had far outgrown the Sterling Memorial Library. Despite lofty goals, the library's and university's administration severely misjudged the desire of students and faculty to preserve an important piece of campus green space, even if that meant a less attractive or even less useful library. For some the threat to the Cross Campus was emblematic of the poorly planned improvement projects unfolding in New Haven, a city that had been undergoing massive urban and social change for the better part of a decade. Finally, the university's administration was unprepared for and taken aback by the desire by a newly engaged student body to be involved in campus planning and decision-making. Ultimately, however, financial considerations as much as any protests derailed the library plans and the cancellation of the Library for Yale College and the Humanities.

The academic library and its place on 1960s American college and university campuses offers rich opportunities for historians of information. During this decade student activism, coeducation, and massive campus construction in most parts of the country transformed the academy. In academic libraries, computers and other machines were changing how librarians and staff worked, while at the same time they had to grapple with new expectations for library buildings and new kinds of library collections and services. A study of the Cross Campus crisis demonstrates that more work can be done on the role and place of the academic library, both as space and organization, in the student protest movements of the 1960s as well as the ways in which librarians and administrators encountered the challenges of the information age, expanding student numbers, and space pressures. By looking at these events together, rather than in isolation, scholars have an opportunity for better understanding the history the American academic libraries and their roles as centers for information collection, curation, access, and discovery. The Library for Yale College and the Humanities and the Cross Campus crisis illustrate the ways in which a library, generally imaged as a quiet place of scholarship and learning, was seen as a threat to the quality of life of its users and where changes to the library's physical footprint would have a negative, rather than beneficial, impact on the campus. During the turbulent 1960s the university or college library might have been the best place on campus to watch protests and demonstrations, but, as this study illustrates, it was not simply a passive observer, but an engaged and contested actor.

¹ David Caute, *Year of the Barricades: A Journey Through 1968* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988); Annenberg Learner, “1968, Year of the Barricades,” accessed January 20, 2017, <http://www.learner.org/courses/lens/collections/protest-politics/>.

² Histories of the American and international student protest movement include Clara Bingham, *Witness to the Revolution* (New York: Random House, 2016); Holly V. Scott, *Younger Than That Now: The Politics of Age in the 1960s* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2016); Kenneth J. Heineman, *Put Your Bodies Upon Wheels: Student Revolt in the 1960s* (Chicago: I.R. Dee, 2001), Gerald J. DeGroot, ed. *Student Protest: The Sixties and After* (London and New York: Longman, 1998), Martin Klimke, *Other Alliance: Student Protest in West Germany and the United States in the Global Sixties* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), Heather Ann Thompson, ed. *Speaking Out: Activism and Protest in the 1960s and 1970s* (Boston: Prentice Hall, 2010).

³ Jeffrey Kabaservice, *The Guardians: Kingman Brewster, His Circle, and the Rise of the Liberal Establishment* (New York: Henry Holt, 2004), 402.

⁴ Donald Kagan in Nathaniel Zelinsky, “Who Governed Yale? Kingman Brewster and Higher Education in the 1970s,” accessed January 30, 2017, http://elischolar.library.yale.edu/mssa_yale_history/2.

⁵ Fay M. Blake, “In the Eye of the Storm: Academic Libraries in the Sixties,” in *Activism in American Librarianship, 1962-1973*, ed. Mary Lee Bundy and Frederick J. Stielow (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), 61.

⁶ Barbara Anderson, “Ordeal at San Francisco State College” in *Social Responsibilities and Libraries*, ed. Patricia Glass Schuman (New York: Bowker, 1976), 293-94. See also, Charles D. Churchwell, “The Evolution of the Academic Research Library during the 1960s,” *College & Research Libraries* 68, no. 2 (2007): 104-05.

⁷ Doug Zweig in Wayne Wiegand, “Tunnel Vision and Blind Spots: What the Past Tells Us About the Present: Reflections on the Twentieth-Century History of American Librarianship,”

Library Quarterly 69, no. 1 (1999): 24.

⁸ Joy Rankin, "Toward a History of Social Computing: Children, Classrooms, Campuses, and Communities," *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing* 36, no. 2 (2014): 87.

⁹ William Aspray, "The History of Information Science and Other Traditional Information Domains: Models for Future Research," *Libraries & the Cultural Record* 46, 2 (2011): 230-48.

¹⁰ Kevin Driscoll, "Professional Work for Nothing: Software Commercialization and 'An Open Letter to Hobbyists,'" *Information & Culture: A Journal of History* 50, no 2 (2015): 257-83.

¹¹ Christabelle Sethna, "'Chastity Outmoded!' *The Ubyyssey*, Sex, and the Single Girl, 1960-70," in *Creating Postwar Canada: Community, Diversity, and Dissent, 1945-75*, eds. Magda Fahrni and Robert Rutherford (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007), 290-91.

¹² George W. Pierson, table F-3.2, "Total Holdings of Yale University Library, 1923-1978," in *A Yale Book of Numbers: Historical Statistics of the College and University, 1701-1976* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 629.

¹³ *Ibid.*, table A-1.6, 'Statistics of Enrolment, 1916-1939,' 9; *Ibid.*, table A-1.8, 'Statistics of Enrolment, 1956-1976', 11.

¹⁴ Report of the Yale Council's Committee on the Library, April 20, 1955. Yale University Library Records Concerning Sterling Redevelopment and the Cross Campus Library, 1967-71, RU 807, box 2, folder 9, Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library (hereafter MSSA, YUL).

¹⁵ "Babb Lauds Library Addition," *Yale Daily News*, November 11, 1960, accessed April 10, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/45329>.

¹⁶ "A \$15 Million Program for Sterling Memorial Library," *Yale Alumni Magazine* (June 1965): 11-16.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ George S. Bobinski, *Libraries and Librarianship: Sixty Years of Challenge and Change, 1945-2005* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007), 41.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 103.

²⁰ Harold M. Schmeck, Jr., "Librarian of 2000 May be Computer," *New York Times*, March 28, 1961.

²¹ James W. Cortada, "Studying History as it Unfolds, Part 2: Tooling up the Historians," *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing* 38, no. 1 (2016): 53.

-
- ²² Watson Davis, "Plan Automated Libraries," *The Science News-Letter* 85, no. 24 (June 1964): 371.
- ²³ Joseph Becker, "Using Computers in a New University Library," *ALA Bulletin* 59, no. 9 (October 1965), 823-24.
- ²⁴ Ken Hansen, "Library of Today Assumes Changing Role," *Los Angeles Times*, April 17, 1966.
- ²⁵ "Library Plans Expansion," *Yale Daily News*, March 7, 1967, accessed April 10, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/8856>.
- ²⁶ Hugh Spitzer, "Library Sets Expansion Plans," *Yale Daily News*, January 24, 1968, accessed April 10, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/23538>.
- ²⁷ Robert Grant Irving, "The Heart of the University: Renewal or Requiem?," *The New Journal*, April 14, 1968: 3-6.
- ²⁸ "The Cross Campus," *Yale Daily News*, April 16, 1968, accessed April 10, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/23908>.
- ²⁹ Lewis Perry Curtis to James Tanis, April 20, 1968. W.J. Cunningham to James Tanis, April 16, 1968. Maynard Mack to James Tanis, April 14, 1968. Yale University Library Records Concerning Sterling Redevelopment and the Cross Campus Library, RU 807, box 2, folder 10, MSSA, YUL.
- ³⁰ "X-Campus," *Yale Daily News*, April 18, 1968, accessed April 10, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/23922>.
- ³¹ Robert J. Mascia, "Students Foil Bulldozers in Cross Campus Clash," *Yale Daily News*, April 24, 1968, accessed April 10, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/ref/collection/yale-ydn/id/23944>.
- ³² Ibid.
- ³³ "Blazes Break Out in Tense Elm City," *Yale Daily News*, April 10, 1968, accessed May 18, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/23880/rec/3>.
- ³⁴ Robert J. Mascia, "Students Foil Bulldozers in Cross Campus Clash," *Yale Daily News*, April 24, 1968, accessed April 10, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/ref/collection/yale-ydn/id/23944>.
- ³⁵ Timothy Bates, "Architect Says Students Deserve Voice in Plans," *Yale Daily News*, April 26, 1968, accessed April 20, 2017,

<http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/23964>.

³⁶ “Barnes, Plants, and Students,” *Yale Daily News*, April 29, 1968, accessed April 20, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/23971>.

³⁷ Frank Kryza, “Scully Not to Speak in Cross Campus Row,” *Yale Daily News*, April 29, 1968, accessed May 10, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/23971>.

³⁸ Daniel A. Harris to James Tanis, April 16, 1968. Yale University Library Records Concerning Sterling Redevelopment and the Cross Campus Library, RU 807, box 2, folder 10, MSSA, YUL.

³⁹ Joe Alex Morris, “He is Saving a ‘Dead’ City,” *Saturday Evening Post*, April 19, 1958.

⁴⁰ Douglas Rae, *City: Urbanism and its End* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 324.

⁴¹ Anthony V. Riccio, *The Italian American Experience in New Haven* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 438.

⁴² Vincent Scully, ‘Cross Campus: Things vs. People’, *Yale Daily News*, April 29, 1968, accessed April 10, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/23971>.

⁴³ A portion of the building was demolished in 1976.

⁴⁴ ‘City Ring-Road Study is Ordered’, *New Haven Register*, April 10, 1967; John B. Wood, ‘Long Range Plans: Highways to Gird Yale’, *Yale Daily News*, May 2, 1967, accessed February 14, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/ref/collection/yale-ydn/id/9133>; William H.H. Rees, “How We Stopped the Ring Road,” *New Haven Independent*, February 4, 2014, accessed August 27, 2016, http://www.newhavenindependent.org/index.php/archives/entry/how_we_stopped_the_ring_road/.

⁴⁵ James Vivian, ‘Beyond the Fringe: Yale Misses the Crises in Urban Education’, *New Journal*, April 28, 1968, 11.

⁴⁶ Robert Nath, “Barnes Rules Out Library Skylights,” *Yale Daily News*, May 7, 1968, accessed April 20, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/24017>.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ “The Cross Campus Is Not Yet Saved,” n.d. Records Concerning Sterling Redevelopment and the Cross Campus Library, 1967-71, RU 807, box 2, folder 9, MSSA, YUL.

⁴⁹ Ray Warman, “Blum, Staff Tackle Library Problems,” *Yale Daily News*, November 11, 1968,

accessed April 10, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/9639>. In 1969 Tanis became director of the library and professor of history at Bryn Mawr College.

⁵⁰ Kingman Brewster, Jr. to Edward Larabee Barnes, June 25, 1968. Records Concerning Sterling Redevelopment and the Cross Campus Library, 1967-71, RU 807, box 2, folder 9, MSSA, YUL.

⁵¹ William Borders, "Yale Awards 2,402 and Honors 14 at Commencement," *New York Times*, June 11, 1968; Willis Rudy, *The Campus and Nation in Crisis: From the American Revolution to Vietnam* (Madison, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson Press, 1996), 176. Coffin was found guilty in June, but the conviction would be overturned in 1970.

⁵² David E. Sparks, Harry P. Harrison, and Howard W. Keith to John M. Blum, October 18, 1968. Records Concerning Sterling Redevelopment and the Cross Campus Library, 1967-71, RU 807, box 1, folder 7, MSSA, YUL.

⁵³ John Coots, "Barnes to Discuss Plans," *Yale Daily News*, November 25, 1968, accessed April 20, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/9725>.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ James Tanis to Edward Larabee Barnes, March 17, 1967; James Tanis to Edward Larabee Barnes, January 15, 1968. Records Concerning Sterling Redevelopment and the Cross Campus Library, 1967-71, RU 807, box 2, folder 9, MSSA YUL; Nikolas Bowie notes that by 1968 the university was spending almost \$1 million more per year than it generated in revenues. See: Nikolas Bowie, "Poison Ivy: The Problem of Tax Exemption in a Deindustrializing City, Yale and New Haven, 1967-1973," *Foundations* 3, no. 2 (2009): 73.

⁵⁶ "Library Program Altered; Architect Airs Designs," *Yale Daily News*, December 3, 1968, accessed April 20, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/9753>.

⁵⁷ Tom Anderson, "Students to Consider Cross Campus Design," *Yale Daily News*, March 12, 1969, accessed April 20, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/10200>.

⁵⁸ Tom Anderson, "Blum Reveals Library Plan; Students Indicate Approval," *Yale Daily News*, March 12, 1969, accessed April 20, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/ref/collection/yale-ydn/id/10201>.

⁵⁹ John Blum to Kingman Brewster, Jr. and Charles H. Taylor, Jr., April 8, 1969. Records of the University Librarian, RU 120, accession 19ND-A-239, box 4, folder 59, MSSA, YUL.

⁶⁰ Jim Frasierman, "The Changing Yale Building: Monumentality to Functionalism," *Yale Daily News*, October 15, 1976, accessed April 20, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/140990>.

⁶¹ Stern, "Library Architecture at Yale" in *Yale Library Studies: Library Architecture at Yale*, ed. Geoffrey Little (New Haven: Yale University Library and Yale University Press, 2009), 51.

⁶² Scott D. Newman, "First Lady's Visit Sparks Protest," *Yale Daily News*, October 10, 1967, accessed January 6, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/ref/collection/yale-ydn/id/23059>.

⁶³ Douglas L. Hallett, "McCarthy to Talk; Resistance to Rally," *Yale Daily News*, April 2, 1968, accessed May 5, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/ref/collection/yale-ydn/id/23840>.

⁶⁴ Paul Taylor, "SAB Proposes Abolition of Parietal Rules," *Yale Daily News*, January 25, 1968, accessed April 4, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/ref/collection/yale-ydn/id/23545>; Alan Boles, "Saybrook Takes Off Coat, Tie," *Yale Daily News*, September 27, 1967, accessed April 4, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/ref/collection/yale-ydn/id/22972>.

⁶⁵ Garry Trudeau, "The Yale Strips," accessed January 12, 2017, <http://doonesbury.washingtonpost.com/strip/archive/yale>.

⁶⁶ William Borders, "Indecent Exposure Charged to Becks," *New York Times*, September 28, 1968.

⁶⁷ 'Campus Planning', *Yale Daily News*, November 25, 1968, accessed April 10, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/9725>.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Herb Short, "Three Views on Library Design: A Campus is for Students So We Must Help Plan It," *Yale Daily News*, December 10, 1969, accessed April 10, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/9804>.

⁷⁰ Ibel and Short, 'Away with Pointless Planning', *Yale Daily News*, November 25, 1968, accessed April 10, 2017, <http://digital.library.yale.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/yale-ydn/id/9725>.

⁷¹ Ibid.