"Save the Cross Campus": Library Planning and Protests at Yale, 1968–1969

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Abstract: In 1968 students and faculty at Yale University protested against plans for a new underground library. The protests reflected and refracted increased student and faculty campus activism, anxieties generated by urban renewal projects in New Haven, and concerns about the university's place in the city. This study challenges the assumption that the academic library was a passive spectator to events on campuses during the 1960s and analyzes how factors like changing space needs, the growth of published information, evolving information technologies, and campus activism impacted library planning and design at one of the country's largest academic libraries.

Keywords: libraries, activism, universities, 1960s, protests

The late 1960s witnessed massive student unrest on college and university campuses across the United States. These were the result of multiple 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, "the year of the barricades," during which widespread protests broke out in Europe and the United States.[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 April in New York students occupied the administration building at Columbia University. Students at the University of California,

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Berkeley, organized a large anti–Vietnam 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 protesters were also heavily involved in demonstrations at the August 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, demonstrations that were put down with immense force by the city's police.[2]

A recent biography of Kingman Brewster Jr. (1919–88), president of Yale University from 1963 to 1977, contends that Yale avoided student unrest until 1970, when the Black Panther trials were held in the university's home of New Haven, Connecticut.[3] Indeed, according to Donald Kagan (b. 1932), a 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 and order, there were a number of campus protests at Yale in the mid- and late 1960s and strong evidence of an activist student and faculty body. In March 1965 students staged a three-day picket outside the president's office in response to the refusal of tenure for Richard J. Bernstein (b. 1932), a popular philosophy professor who was active in the civil rights movement, while an estimated 1,500 antiwar protesters interrupted Lady Bird Johnson's October 10, 1967, visit to campus.[5] A number of anti–Vietnam War protests also took place at Yale in 1968, the largest of which featured speakers such as the university's chaplain, William Sloane Coffin (1924–2006), and Staughton Lynd (b. 1929), a young activist history professor.[6] The university was also dealing with changing social norms and negotiating a new relationship with students. During the 1967–68 academic year, students successfully had regulations like the dining hall jacket-and-tie dress code relaxed, as well as parietal rules that governed curfews and dormitory conduct, including the presence of female guests.[7] Since the mid-1960s, the university had also been exploring the idea of undergraduate coeducation and a potential merger with Vassar College. After Vassar's trustees rejected a November 1967 motion to consider a move to New Haven, the university announced that it would admit female undergraduates in September 1969. 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 embrace marijuana and progressive sexual attitudes. New Haven police arrested ten people for public indecency as some audience members left the theater to stage an impromptu parade.[8]

The most protracted and perhaps most significant protest at Yale during the 1960s began in April 1968, when students and faculty mobilized against designs for a new underground library space that would have

resulted in the installation of ground-level skylights on a large piece of lawn in front of the Sterling Memorial Library. In response to the protests, as well as a change in Yale's financial situation, the university scrapped 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 student and faculty protests within a broader context of campus activism at Yale and anxiety in New Haven in the late 1960s generated by large-scale urban renewal projects, as well as new demands on the academic library and its spaces and collections, the library-centered unrest assumes new and more complex 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 historians "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." According to Blake, the university library was literally and metaphorically "a place from which to view events" during the 1960s rather than a place where events happened.[9] 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." Anderson contends that during the 1960s the "library, like every other building on campus, became regarded as part of the establishment."[10] As a result, the American academic library during the late 1960s is assumed to be a spectator to wider campus events and unrest and a passive, conservative organization and space.

This study of the Yale library protests works to upset that assumption. It embraces Doug Zweizig's call for scholars to examine the role of the library in the life of the user, rather than the reverse.[11] In this case, we can study an event where plans to expand and renovate Yale's central library were the focus of significant student and faculty unrest and the ways in which discourse around the library channeled local anxieties connected to campus planning, student roles in decision making, and the university's place within its home city of New Haven. Joy Rankin has written that historians do not yet fully understand how students and faculty used computer technologies on campuses during the 1960s and 1970s. This is also true of our knowledge of how users engaged with the libraries in which many of these technologies were being introduced and maintained. 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, services, staff, and spaces were articulated and described during this period of significant cultural and social change.[12] William Aspray has encouraged information historians to engage with complex research themes, including intellectual history, the information society, and the transformative role of technology on the library and library users.[13] Here historians have an opportunity to analyze how the increased need for the incorporation of technology, as well as the need to increase space for readers and collections, prompted not just a library building project at Yale, 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 study how the "Cross Campus crisis," as it was called, unfolded in 1968–69 and to examine the ways in which student and faculty activism were in part responsible for altering plans for Yale's underground library. Despite the extensive reporting that the library protests received in the pages of the *Yale Daily News*, the paper cannot be read as an unbiased source. Christabelle Sethna has described student newspapers as problematic sources of information because they transmit codes of meaning that "privilege assumptions, values, and norms."[14] 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 undergraduates had no 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 undergraduate discourse.

The Library for Yale College and the Humanities

At the start of the post-1945 period, academic libraries and librarians across the United States confronted significant challenges connected to demands for space for increased numbers of students and faculty, the explosion of published information, and emerging computerized information systems. The GI Bill and later the baby boom meant growing student enrollments and the expansion or creation of universities in all

parts of the country. This in turn resulted in the construction of new library buildings. Between 1961 and 1965 there were 504 academic libraries built in the United States, compared with 236 between 1948 and 1957.[15] Technological developments were also a pressing concern for many in the academy. In March 1961 the *New York Times* reported that Dartmouth math professor John G. Kemeny (1926–92) had conceived 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, who would serve as president of Dartmouth College from 1971 to 1980, 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 Kemeny's system was estimated at just less than a billion dollars and would take twenty years to achieve.[16] In some quarters, 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, was a matter of national security. 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. Warren claimed that scientists and engineers spent too much time searching for information, taking them away from their work. Warren urged his audience to find faster and more efficient ways to support researchers, including the use of computerized information storage and citation retrieval systems, among other technologies.[17] By 1966 the president of the American Library Association, Robert G. Vosper, agreed with those who saw the benefits of computerization in libraries, 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."[18]

The Yale University Library was not immune to the pressures of the scientific age. By the early 1960s, Yale'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 tasks. Yale's book collection, the majority of which was shelved in Sterling's seven-story stack tower, had grown from 2,036,405 volumes in 1931 to 4,846,328 in 1965.[19] The library was also struggling with the increased volume of other kinds of published information, including government documents and scholarly and professional journals

Figure 1. Sterling Memorial Library from the Cross Campus, 2015. Photograph by Michael Marsland.

established after 1945, as well 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 library for Yale's humanities, social science, and graduate and area studies collections, as well as the site of the university's archives and collection of historical manuscripts.

Sterling could also no longer 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; by 1965 the college had 4,110 enrolled students, an increase of almost 150 percent.[20] The graduate student body had more than doubled during the same period. Librarians and faculty had also started to observe that students 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."[21] Five years later the *Yale Daily News* called

Sterling's reserve book room "the principal study area in the library" but complained that it was "seriously overcrowded."[22]

Yale's response to these challenges was ambitious and forward-looking. An article in the *Yale Alumni Magazine* in June 1965 outlined the university'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 enrollments, changes in pedagogy, new technologies, and the growth of its printed collections, the university planned to create a tripartite system of libraries to support its three arts and sciences faculties and its graduate school. Sterling Memorial Library was to become the Library for Yale College and the Humanities. Yale's dedicated science library was scheduled to open in October 1966, and social scientists were promised their own facility in the near future. The plans for a transformed Sterling called for the construction of a second stack tower for books, microforms, special collections, and study and seminar rooms; the creation inside Sterling of a twenty-four-hour undergraduate library with a three-floor reference center; and a two-story underground library extension to house area studies collections, historical manuscripts, the university archives, and librarian and staff offices.[23] 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.[24]

Despite the 1965 public launch and funding appeal for Yale's library transformation, two years elapsed before work went forward. On March 7, 1967, a brief news item appeared in the undergraduate campus newspaper, the *Yale Daily News*, noting that the university planned to renovate the Sterling Memorial Library and build a sixty-one-thousand-square-foot underground extension.[25] Ten months later, on January 24, 1968, a second article appeared in the *News* with the subheadline "Massive Changes." It described the library renovation project in more detail and quoted Tanis as saying that the plan 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 area in front of Sterling was to be excavated to build a subterranean facility to house collections and librarian offices.[26] Both the March 7, 1967, and January 24, 1968, articles described how designs for the underground extension included a series of ground-level skylights resembling sawtooth windows on the Cross Campus, a wide stretch of lawn originally

designed by Sterling's architect, James Gamble Rogers (1867–1947), to be a green avenue leading to the library. This area functioned as one of the university's central thoroughfares, traveled on a daily basis by students, faculty, and staff and doubling as 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 project, 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 and the effect 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 the Cross Campus extension.[27] It described how the plans 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 proposed underground library and the loss of green space as "a violation of the architectural integrity of the campus. The . . . 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 Tanis from members of the faculty who opposed the project. Lewis Perry Curtis, a professor of eighteenth-century British history, described the designs as "horrifying," while W. J. Cunningham in the engineering department called the skylights "indefensible." Maynard Mack, who had taught courses on Shakespeare and Alexander 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 "Save the Cross Campus" petition had received more than four thousand signatures in the two days following the publication of its editorial. Buttons emblazoned with "Save the Cross Campus" also began to appear on shirts, lapels, and backpacks. These responses prompted university administrators to schedule a public meeting between the students

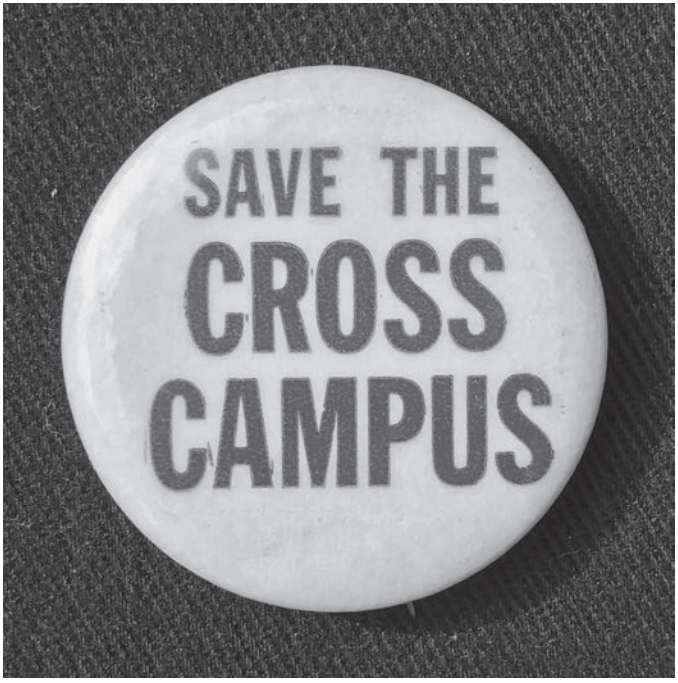

Figure 2. "Save the Cross Campus" button, ca. 1968. Courtesy of Basie Bales Gitlin.

and faculty who opposed the skylights with Edward Larrabee Barnes (1915–2004), the extension's architect and Yale's campus planner.[30]

An otherwise innocuous event on the Cross Campus itself worked to generate additional—and seemingly urgent—public opposition to the library renovation and expansion. Following the appearance of a bulldozer and a crew of men on the lawn on the morning of April 23, the rumor began to spread that excavations for the underground library were about to begin. Within a short amount of time several hundred students, as well as a number of faculty, including engineering professor and Berkeley College master Charles A. Walker, gathered on the Cross Campus. They successfully stopped the crew and did not disperse after being told that the men had only been directed to remove several diseased trees and undertake basic landscaping. Some of the protesters formed human chains around the marked trees, while others engaged in symbolic acts of laying sod, tidying shrubbery beds, and planting flowers. An overnight vigil on the Cross Campus was canceled only after the university administration sent the crew home and agreed to give

twenty-four hours' notice of any further landscaping.[31] Chaplain Coffin, 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 afterward. Coffin declined to make a statement, but he told his interviewer, "God does believe in green pastures and still waters."[32] This allusion to the twenty-third psalm likely left no reader in any doubt as to his thoughts on the threat to the Cross Campus. Given Coffin's national profile, his brief response likely further swayed opinion against the underground library. Tensions on campus were also likely high because of the assassination less than three weeks earlier of Martin Luther King Jr. (1929–68), who had received an honorary degree from Yale in 1964. Following his death on April 4, riots and fires broke out in New Haven.[33] Within this highly charged context, the threat of the destruction of trees and green space on the Cross Campus was unacceptable to segment of the student body and the teaching faculty, many of whom felt no hesitation in engaging in nonviolent but disruptive actions to thwart the university's plans.

The unrest on the Cross Campus particularly motivated student protesters and spurred their efforts to combat the underground library project. On April 24 undergraduate student Bradley Nitkin told the *News* that a student group calling itself the Committee to Save the Cross Campus had mailed three thousand anti–underground library letters to alumni across the country. Given Yale's reliance on its alumni donors, this represented a direct challenge to the university's ability to raise funds for the new library. The committee 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 support for the students came from a surprising source. Two days after the incident on the Cross Campus, university planner Edward Barnes urged the university to reconsider its plans. In a statement released to the media, he wrote, "I am asking the President and the [Yale] 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] There is no evidence in the university archives that Barnes informed Brewster in advance of issuing this critical statement, but there is also no evidence that Barnes was reprimanded for it, nor did the relationship between the two appear to suffer. The *Yale Daily News* praised Barnes's intervention, 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 of the articles, letters, and April 23 protest, as well as Barnes's statement, on April 28 President Brewster issued an open letter in which he acknowledged that the university needed "to consult pertinent student opinion about physical plans, especially campus plans which directly affect student life."[37] Brewster's admission would ultimately result in twelve months' worth of public meetings and consultation sessions with students on the library renovation and expansion. It would also galvanize students who demanded a stronger role in Yale's decision-making processes.

Some of the students and faculty who objected to the underground library did so because it threatened campus green space that had been invested with symbolic and aesthetic value, while others objected to plans made without any consultation. Another constituency saw the library as an extension of the harmful urban renewal projects under way in New Haven. One of the letters that James Tanis received in mid-April 1968 was from graduate student Daniel A. Harris, who wrote that the ground-level Cross Campus skylights would become targets for vandalism. To Harris, Yale was effectively "endorsing urban blight."[38] 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 postwar deindustrialization and a shrinking population.[39] By the middle of the 1960s, however, New Haven had 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 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 swaths of housing, small businesses, and historic buildings and displaced more than twenty-two thousand people.[41] Meanwhile, as light and heavy industries closed or relocated during the 1950s and 1960s, Yale emerged as one of the city's biggest employers. It was also the second largest landowner in New Haven after the city itself, yet it enjoyed tax-free status and paid nothing toward the municipal services that it received.[42] By the end of the decade this situation had become untenable for a city government desperate to protect its tax base.

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 some 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 (1920–2017), 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 generated 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 from other threats to 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."[43] The Hill was a predominantly African American neighborhood adjacent to Yale's medical school that had long been a target for slum clearance and redevelopment, while New Haven's 1861 city hall had been marked for demolition in 1965 to make way for a modern civic complex.[44] A circular, multilane 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 in 1965; it would have appropriated large sections of middle- and working-class housing.[45] By connecting the underground library and the loss of green space with three other examples of supposed urban renewal and improvement, Scully asked his readers to look beyond the Yale campus into New Haven, where large-scale redevelopment projects had weakened bonds of community or threatened social cohesion. For others, the project was evidence of Yale's broken relationship with New Haven. Writing in the April 28, 1968, issue of the *New Journal*, graduate student James Vivian concluded, "The time has come to state simply and emphatically that Yale's concern with New Haven has been minimal."[46] In November 1968, as Edward Barnes was convening one of a series of meetings on campus planning in response to the Cross Campus protests, Manfred Ibel and Herbert Short, students in the Yale School of Architecture, asked in the *News*, "Is there any master plan for Yale? Does Yale know what its power is? An institution which occupies half of central New Haven?"[47] Concerns about Yale's role as an urban bully were raised again in the spring of 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.

The spring protests resulted in significant changes to the design of the underground library. Less than two weeks after the April 23 demonstration on the Cross Campus, Edward Barnes presented three revised plans for the underground library at a public meeting. None of them featured skylights on the lawn. 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."[48] Bradley Nitkin praised the designs, which he felt showed that there was "room for rational discussion without resorting to militant protest."[49] 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, the committee, along with the New Haven Preservation Trust, condemned the library space as "aesthetically reprehensible, functionally needless, and financially extravagant."[50] The statement urged members of the Yale and New Haven communities to write to President Brewster and to picket the Yale Corporation meeting scheduled for 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.[51] On June 25, 1968, the Yale Corporation's prudential committee approved revised plans for the underground library that featured glass moats around the perimeter of the Cross Campus, which would let light into the library. At the same time, however, the committee also put the expansion 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, Brewster told him that the university was also sensitive to appearing heavy-handed. As a result of the earlier protests, "there was a natural reluctance [by the committee] 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."[52] Events beyond the Cross Campus may have also pushed Brewster and the corporation to attempt to deescalate the situation: Senator Robert F. Kennedy (1925–68) 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 made national news when the Right Reverend Paul Moore (1919–2003), suffragan Episcopal bishop of Washington, DC, and a member of the Yale Corporation, offered public prayers in support of Chaplain Coffin, then on trial in Boston.[53]

The twelve-month postponement also allowed the library's administration to review plans it had made for collections and staff in Sterling

and the new underground facility. Five months into his acting appointment, however, John Blum received a detailed memorandum 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 underground library 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.[54] Yale's administration was now dealing with a space to which librarians, as well as faculty and students, had serious objections.

Students Demand a Role in Yale's Campus Planning

Emboldened by President Brewster's open letter about campus planning and the success of the spring protests against the underground library, students began to press for a greater role and voice in campus planning and design. On November 25 Edward Barnes held a public meeting to discuss the university's planning philosophy in light of a rash 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."[55] In spite of Barnes's conciliatory approach, Manfred Ibel and Herbert Short 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."[56] A *News* editorial claimed that the public meeting with Barnes "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."[57] The editorial also posed a series of questions to the university's administration: "How are planning decisions made? Why aren't the public spaces at Yale utilized more fully? How will campus expansion affect the city?"[58] The

December 10, 1968, issue of the *News* continued this theme with a series of articles titled "Three Views on Library Design." In one, Short asserted: "In campus planning the student is the ultimate architect." The subheadline of his article was "A Campus Is for Students, So We Must Help Plan It."[59] Despite this sustained advocacy, in April 1969 President Brewster rejected a proposal by Ibel and Short that would have given students a formal role in campus planning. According to the *News* (and contrary to his open letter of April 1968), Brewster believed that students were already appropriately consulted during planning processes and that they did not have the appropriate training or qualifications.[60]

More changes to the form and function of the underground library came in late 1968 not because of additional campus protests or student agitation but as a result of financial difficulties encountered by the university. On December 2, 1968, Edward Barnes presented yet another set of revised plans for the underground library extension that were considerably scaled back not only in response to the spring protests but also because of a lack of donor support for the project and a negative change in the university's general fiscal situation.[61] 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 book and archival collections and staff offices, the underground library extension was described as a facility that would offer access to high-demand books for undergraduate students and for graduate students engaged in predissertation course work. The project to expand, reorganize, and transform Sterling into the Library for Yale College and the Humanities was canceled, and 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 and resources, the reconceived subterranean library would provide much-needed study space for students, including female undergraduates, who would arrive on campus in September 1969.[62]

Meetings about the library between students and university administrators continued into 1969. On March 11, 1969, almost eleven months after Robert Grant Irving's article was published in the *New Journal*, acting library director Blum told the *News* that the university was "not going to ram [plans for the library] down [students'] throats. . . . The plans include almost nothing that has not been responsive to student demands."[63] The next day he presented newly revised designs for the library by Edward Barnes, which student representatives from the Yale Student Advisory Board and Berkeley College deemed "generally acceptable." Bradley Nitkin echoed his peers, calling the plans "definitely more

Figure 3. Cross Campus Library construction, 1968–69, with Sterling Memorial Library in the background. Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University.

acceptable than last spring's."[64] The light moats had disappeared, and large wells at each corner of the upper half of the Cross Campus were to provide some natural light to the first floor of the library but none to the second. A basement tunnel would link Sterling and the new library, and space underground was made for student lockers, a snack bar, and vending machines. The *Yale Daily News* predicted, "Frisbees will fly forever on the Cross Campus if students accept the new plan for the extension of the Sterling Memorial Library."[65]

Writing to President Brewster and Provost Charles Taylor on April 8, 1969, after a final meeting with students, John Blum described his audience as "apathetic" and reported that "no-one raised points or hands against the contemplated building." He urged the university to begin construction on the extension as soon as possible, "since we have now cleared the hurdles erected by participatory democracy."[66] Excavation for the underground space, which was called the Cross Campus Library and usually simply called 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."[67]

In his 2009 history of Yale's library architecture, Robert A. M. Stern (b. 1939) called the library "much-used but little-loved" and a "fundamentally soulless environment" defined by "plain-vanilla, white sheetrock, plastic, and aluminum."[68] The facility also suffered from significant engineering problems, including a chronically leaking roof.

Conclusion

In May 2006 the Cross Campus Library was closed for a complete structural overhaul, and it reopened at midnight on October 19, 2007, as the Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Library.[69] The closure, renovation, and erasure of the Cross Campus Library were the symbolic conclusion to Yale's attempt in the late 1960s to create a modern library system for the scientific age. The Library for Yale College and the Humanities represented the cutting edge of library design and planning. It was imagined as a place offering access to dynamic reference services, classrooms, study spaces, and both traditional and new kinds of scholarly collections required by students and faculty. Despite these bold ambitions and creative plans, 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 and even less useful library. For some, the threat to the Cross Campus was emblematic of the disruptive, harmful urban renewal projects unfolding in New Haven and exemplified the university's broken relationship with its home city. Finally, the university's administration was unprepared for a newly engaged and activist student body's desire to be involved in campus planning and decision making. Ultimately, however, financial considerations as much as any protests derailed the library plans and resulted in the cancellation of the Library for Yale College and the Humanities.

The academic library and its place on 1960s American college and university campuses offer rich opportunities for historians of information. During this decade, the academy was literally and metaphorically transformed by construction and building projects, coeducation, student activism, technology, and the growth of academic programs and research. 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 spaces, collections, and services. A study of Yale's Cross Campus crisis demonstrates that more work can be done on the role of the academic library as both place and organization in the history of 1960s campus activism. Historians also have opportunities to study how librarians and administrators encountered the challenges of new technologies, 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 of the American academic library and its role as a center for information collection, curation, access, discovery, and activism. The Library for Yale College and the Humanities and the Cross Campus crisis illuminate the ways in which a library, generally imagined as a calm oasis of scholarship, was seen as a threat to the quality of life of its users and in which changes to its physical footprint would have had a negative 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, the library was not simply a passive place of observation but at significant moments an engaged and contested space.

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