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Searching for Sustainable, Intergenerational, and Multiracial Coalitions on the Neoliberal Campus: A Case Study

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SEARCHING FOR SUSTAINABLE, INTERGENERATIONAL, AND MULTIRACIAL
COALITIONS ON THE NEOLIBERAL CAMPUS: A CASE STUDY

A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

August 2019

BY

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Chapter 1: Introduction

There is no part of me that regrets taking five years to finish my undergraduate degree, nor is there a part of me that regrets spending a sixth year at the same institution to get my graduate degree as well. It was the time spent fostering relationships on campus that makes the money spent relatively worth it. From student affairs staff to the faculty in my college to my peer students, I've realized that the mentorships and vulnerable relationships I've cultivated in the last six years have been integral to my academic and career success. Had I stayed at the university in the more traditional timeframe of two to four years, would I have been able to become so close to so many people across campus? Would I have worked in five different offices and resource centers here and learned how the university is structured? Would I have learned what it means to be a part of a community? Would I have learned how separated all the silos of the university are?

In understanding that, I've also come to realize that our compartmentalization – the separation and stratification of undergraduate students, graduate students, full-time faculty, term and adjunct faculty, student affairs staff, dining and custodial staff, college bureaucrats, and administrators – is necessary to the way our neoliberalized university functions, depending on a stratified class system within a hegemonic structure that is threatened by any transparency of its operations. It was only when a cataclysmic clash of white supremacy and race-baiting shook our campus in 2016 that there was a brief moment in which undergrads, graduate students, faculty, and student affairs staff came together – albeit loosely – to call out racism and advocate for each other. However, our organizing was diminished in a matter of months by the university administration. In the three years since that event, the jobs of some of those student affairs staff members have been re-structured out of existence for the close and radical relationships they had fostered with student activists; most of those same students have aged out of the university; and

I'm left here now as a graduate student about to spend a seventh year at DePaul as an adjunct faculty member with almost no one who witnessed what we all cultivated together three years ago.

It did not take these three years for me to recognize the significance of that limited time frame embedded in the university in preventing and dismantling even the potential of building a sustainable coalition on campus. I saw and felt it when it was happening to us, when the university dismantled the one office on campus with a critical, multiracial praxis and replaced it with a segregated model and called it “progress” for the marginalized students on campus. I witnessed the ways that the university already housed an entire infrastructure – borne both by coincidence and by design – in place to discourage, co-opt, and dismantle coalitional movements on campus. Neoliberalism has equipped universities with rhetorical and structural strategies to co-opt and quell unrest directed at the university and its administration. Though administrators actively dismantled the systems of support we had in place, the university's statements and even their policy changes after the clash, for the most part, reflected sympathy and regret. However, a deeper understanding of the politics at play behind and within these statements reveal them as effectively performative.

For the last two years, much of my academic focus has revolved around understanding what happened. That question has taken up many iterations, variously focusing on the student organizing that happened, the role of student affairs and its antiracist practitioners, and our campaign's inadvertent flattening of the theory of intersectionality. This thesis, the most comprehensive manifestation of my question, looks at the case as a whole, recognizing that it is in fact a *network* of actions and circumstances that create an atmosphere of individualism on campus that discourages coalitional movements. Through both contextualizing and analyzing

this case study of a racially charged conflict that happened on DePaul University's campus in 2016, the project exposes and examines the rhetorical and structural strategies of neoliberalism as they were used by the university administration in the fallout of this event. The strategies are analyzed in order to understand how the student organizers responding to the university's condoning of a racist action were quickly and easily thwarted from forming meaningful coalitions – particularly coalitions that are sustainable, intergenerational, and multiracial – and effecting real change on campus. In exposing the strategies used against antiracist student organizers, I use this case study to uncover how the neoliberal university structurally and systematically prevents, co-opts, and diminishes sustainable, intergenerational, and multiracial coalitions on campuses and how we can do it anyways.

The Case

It was a Tuesday afternoon, May 26, 2016, when the populist white supremacist social media race-baiter Milo Yiannopolous, invited by the DePaul College Republicans, came to DePaul University's campus on his "Dangerous Faggot" tour and was greeted by over five-hundred audience members.¹ In the weeks before, demands for the administration to cancel the event were ignored. A protest was semi-formally organized by a handful of students who called for one – a call which spread by word of mouth alone and garnered the attendance of at least a hundred students. As the event began and the protests ensued, six organizers gained entry into the event space and took over the stage. Within less than an hour, a riot of his audience members was led by Yiannopolous through campus in the supposed attempt to storm the university president's office. "Riot" is the operative word here and one I have questioned using to describe

¹ See Appendix F for news media coverage of the event, of which there was little from the mainstream media.



Figure 1: Yiannopolous and then-president of the DePaul College Republicans Nicole Been leading their supporters through campus on May 26, 2016.

the events that night, as the level of violence might not quite match the images of looting and burning buildings usually evoked by the word “riot.”² However, what distinguishes the word and guides my use of it here are the words “revelry”³ and “disorder”⁴ used in its definition, which speak to the level of power that Yiannopolous and his supporters owned in the way they were able to take over the campus, unchecked by

police or any other authority and vindicated by the freedom they were allotted that night by the protesters who refused to use violence against them and who had no power to stop them.

In the midst of this disordered revelry, Student Center (the building where the event was held) was locked down with some students and staff still inside. (The cafeteria workers inside – who were almost all people of color – were sent home without pay until students later demanded that the university pay them for the hours missed.) A number of student affairs staff members who had stayed after their working hours were pressed to find ways to help students in the chaos, and many later said that they had become ready to physically defend students in the midst of the

² I also choose to use this word so as not to dismiss the violence that was enacted that night, mostly on the bodies of women of color.

³ *The Free Dictionary*, s.v. “Riot,” accessed August 11, 2019, <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/riot>; *Merriam-Webster*, s.v. “Riot,” accessed August 11, 2019, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/riot>.

⁴ *Ibid.*; *Dictionary.com*, s.v. “Riot,” accessed August 11, 2019, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/riot>.

riot. Many Black and brown students were physically hurt that night, and the Chicago Police officers who were called to the scene did little but protect some of the white Yiannopolous-supporters.

The next morning, the university president at the time, Father Dennis Holtschneider, sent a university-wide email from his fundraising trip on the beaches of Normandy, condemning the protesters for interrupting the event (See Appendix A). Like tearing open a barely healed scar, the night's events spawned a paradigm shift on the campus through which race and racism were finally on the surface for everyone to witness. In the days and weeks after the event, the loudest of us were stalked and harassed by members of the DePaul College Republicans and even more received hate messages and death threats online from inside and outside the university.⁵ Alt-Right internet trolls attacked the Facebook pages for the Center for Identity, Inclusion, and Social Change; LGBTQA Student Services; LGBTQ Studies; and DePaul itself through the ratings section, leaving one-star reviews along with white supremacist and Zionist comments. The overall rating for DePaul's page plummeted to one star and never recovered. Now that Facebook gives business pages the capability to hide their ratings, DePaul has done so. Back on campus, a noose was found hung outside of a residence hall only two days after the event,⁶ and DePaul Public Safety officials refused to check camera footage when a group of us marched to their offices and demanded it.

Once the DePaul administration failed to respond adequately to the emotional and physical harassment and endangerment of students of color, dozens of us came together to organize. Those initial attempts quickly became stalled as we found it too difficult to organize

⁵ Laura Rodriguez, "DePaul Students 'are Scared' After Finding a Noose on Campus," *Chicago Tribune*, May 27, 2016, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/hoy/ct-hoy-8631586-depaul-students-scared-finding-noose-campus-story.html>.

⁶ Rodriguez, "DePaul."

with a mass of disparate, furious, and overwhelmed students before the academic year ended two weeks later. Pockets of staff and faculty also stood their ground against the systemic violence that the university was perpetuating, fighting for our case in meetings and making demands of the administrators. While these multiple fronts presented a more formidable challenge to the administration, the efforts were disconnected and easily diminished by summer break. In the fall, a smaller contingent of students renewed the organizing efforts but were again faced with the same constraints as the previous movement.

A year after Yiannopolous visited our campus and toward the end of then-president Father Dennis Holtschneider's tenure, the university outlined a complete restructuring of the Division of Student Affairs that was predicated on the dismantling of the Center for Identity, Inclusion and Social Change (CIISC).⁷ CIISC had been in operation for about two academic years (as a re-branded version of an office that had opened in 1996), and was charged with providing resources and advocacy for queer students and students of color. There was also a great amount of unofficial labor that the office provided, most predominantly the emotional labor that comes naturally to working with students of color and queer students who are acutely dealing with the systematic oppression of the university, as well as the world outside the university that establishes the conditions of the university's systems of power and oppression. Most of the staff in the office – four of whom stayed on campus the night of Yiannopolous' visit in preparation for what might come of the tensions raised before the event, including physical violence – could be described as radical within the Division of Student Affairs and openly supported the student protesters, even wearing all black during our #BlackOutDePaul and "On Thursday's We Wear Black" campaigns and hanging a large "Black Lives Matter" poster in the

⁷ See Appendices C and D.

front window of their offices. Many of the staff had been vocal about calling out racism and queerphobia within the university long before Yiannopolous came to campus.

The complex restructuring involved terminating the CIISC staff and scattering or ending the various programs that CIISC had developed. What was left – including its favorable office space – became the purview of the Office of Multicultural Student Success, an office very similar to CIISC but with a much more institutionalized and far less radical approach to the work of advocating for marginalized students. The plan would also establish three separate singular-identity-based resource centers in its place, respectively for Black, Latinx, and LGBTQA+ students – and no others. Depicted as a response to concerns raised by students of color in the wake of the Yiannopolous incident, it was clear for many of us that this decision was not made with the intention of truly changing the situation of marginalized students. The unofficial labor that CIISC provided to students was connected to the unofficial duty the office provided for the administration as a source of cultural and racial capital. In other words, CIISC made the university appear to be actively and fundamentally providing extra resources for students of color and queer students, both in just its existence and in the numbers-based reports that CIISC generated for the administration, and this is in spite of the fact that the staff had to perform outside of their job descriptions and hours in order to adequately address the needs of the campus' marginalized students. The restructuring itself provided more assurance that the university was responsive to students' needs while also terminating a staff team that was actively supporting dissenting students and creating an atmosphere for building community and solidarity across identity lines.

Situating the Project: Context and Significance

In the U.S., universities have historically been considered sites of liberal political engagement and intellectual freedom. However, palimpsestic generations of neoliberal policies and rhetoric that champion free market fundamentalism as the basis for liberation have shifted the perception and depth of what counts as “progress,” only requiring that lip service be paid to the plight of minoritized groups. DePaul, in particular, boasts a patently liberal and diverse brand despite the structural harm perpetrated against its students, staff, and faculty of color. In turn, the nature of civic engagement that challenges these neoliberal processes has shifted, its fervor ignited by the “Stand Your Ground” murder of Trayvon Martin in Florida, the police killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and the explosive response of the Black Lives Matter movement. The 2016 U.S. presidential race and the election of Donald Trump opened the floodgate of alt-right opportunists like Yiannopolous, eager to match and overcome the power of BlackLivesMatter. The prevalence of this opposition was so strong at the time of our case that it was the rhetoric to which people immediately went when commenting on the incident. Without an organized name, the antiracist protesters were largely referred to as Black Lives Matter. The alt-Right media outlet Breitbart captioned a picture of a student protester occupying Yiannopolous’ stage with, “A Black Lives Matter protester takes over the stage as Breitbart’s Milo Yiannopolous spoke with a crowd at DePaul University.”⁸ While we all deeply believed and supported Black Lives Matter, the blanket reference to us as Black Lives Matter protesters expressed more about the dismissive flattening of the complexities of race, racism, and antiracism than it did about our campaign.

⁸ Mina Bloom, “DePaul Activist Who Stopped Milo Yiannopoulos Event Gets Death Threats,” *DNAINFO*, May 26, 2016, <https://www.dnainfo.com/chicago/20160526/lincoln-park/depaul-activist-who-stopped-milo-yiannopoulos-event-gets-death-threats>.

Such incidents have made university campuses telling sites for the confrontations expressed in the American zeitgeist. In most cases, university administrations have taken on a staunch centrism that invokes classic democratic values like the freedom of speech and colorblind equality. In a 2016 letter to incoming students at the University of Chicago, Dean of Students John Ellison welcomed the incoming class with this warning:

Once here you will discover that one of the University of Chicago's defining characteristics is our commitment to freedom of inquiry and expression. This is captured in the University's faculty report on freedom of expression. Members of our community are encouraged to speak, write, listen, challenge and learn, without fear of censorship. Civility and mutual respect are vital to all of us, and freedom of expression does not mean the freedom to harass or threaten others. You will find that we expect members of our community to be engaged in rigorous debate, discussion, and even disagreement. At times this may challenge you and even cause discomfort.

Our commitment to academic freedom means that we do not support so-called "trigger warnings," we do not cancel invited speakers because their topics might prove controversial, and we do not condone the creation of intellectual "safe spaces" where individuals can retreat from ideas and perspectives at odds with their own.⁹

Such a response mirrors the popular sentiment of many universities in this neoliberal moment. In fact, this may have been a direct response to what was happening only a few miles away at DePaul that year. Such responses are indicative of the co-optation of classic democratic values in order to gaslight those who identify racism, ableism, transphobia, and other discriminatory systems and practices on campus. It speaks to the ease with which universities invoke notions of academic freedom and assume a collective identity in order to assert community values for the "greater good" without acknowledging multiple and interlocking systems of oppression that impact various groups of students, staff, and faculty differently.

When conceptualizing these kinds of events and challenges on campus as a microcosmic reflection of the U.S. nation-state, the implications of this study for our field are manifold and

⁹ John Ellison, "Letter to the University of Chicago Class of 2020," August 24, 2016, accessed October 14, 2018, https://news.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/Dear_Class_of_2020_Students.pdf.

concentrate on the end-goal of devising methodologies for building sustainable coalitions on campus. In the field of gender and women's studies, we are consistently critical of the university institution, its contempt of our knowledge production, and the capitalist constraints it uses against us. It is exactly these limitations that maintain the silos not just of academic fields and programs but of undergraduate and graduate students, of tenured faculty and student affairs staff, of cafeteria workers and the students for whom they provide, of faculty and the undergraduate students whom they call "kids." These are the divides that must be bridged, and these are the solidarities that this project calls for. When these divides are understood as a product of the global agenda of neoliberalism within our campus pseudo-nation, it provides an opportunity to witness systems of power and oppression under expedited and more measurable conditions. As we watch power imbalances be maintained by neoliberal strategies of co-optation that mirror the imbalances of the U.S. social order, the search for effective and comprehensive coalitional strategies can easily be informed by strategies conceived by our off-campus communities and could ideally, in turn, be used in off-campus work.

Theoretical Frameworks

In endeavoring to situate and interrogate these conditions, I engage theories and scholarship that offer critiques of neoliberalism, analyses of capitalist language, and feminist coalitional possibilities. It is these three areas that I merge together in order to derive new, generative meaning from this case study.

Critiques of Neoliberalism and its Powers of Optics

First and foremost, I rely predominately on theories and critiques of neoliberalism. I define neoliberalism as Dominguez does: “as a political-economic philosophy that de-emphasises positive government intervention in the economy, focusing instead on achieving progress by encouraging free-market methods and fewer restrictions on business operations and economic development. Supporters of neoliberalism argue that free markets, free trade, and the unrestricted flow of capital will produce the greatest social, political and economic good.”¹⁰ This project takes as foundational the theories of neoliberal ideology set forth in Harvey’s seminal work *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, which similarly outlines the economic and political development of neoliberalism. Harvey cites the policies of U.S. President Ronald Reagan and U.K. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher as having ushered in the neoliberal era, effecting significant shifts in global relations and the political, economic, and military dominance of the Global North.¹¹ Harvey posits neoliberalism as a balance of rhetorical strategy and politico-economic strategy predicated on the construction of consent for the open flow of capital across borders and consolidation of power in a class of economic elites.¹² He quite aptly quotes Thatcher as having said, “Economics are the method...but the object is to change the soul.”¹³ The essential economic methods of neoliberalism involve privatization, free market capitalism, deregulation of, and minimal state control in, markets, and the deflation of the welfare state. That said, the state does not lose power but takes on the new role of protecting corporate powers through flexing military strength in order to open national markets to capital exchange and extraction.¹⁴

¹⁰ Rachel Fix Dominguez, “U.S. College Student Activism during an Era of Neoliberalism: A Qualitative Study of Students Against Sweatshops,” *The Australian Educational Researcher* 36, no. 3 (December 2009): 125.

¹¹ David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 13-39.

¹² *Ibid.*, 39.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 23.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 21.

Hong's body of work analyzes a deep history of the development of neoliberalism that necessitated that liberatory values be absorbed by global capitalism.¹⁵ Hong identifies the social movements of the post-World War II era, those that named and advocated for decolonization, desegregation, and self-determination and which came to a head in the nationalist and antiwar movements of the 1960's and 70's, as having opened the opportunity for this co-optation. The battles of this time were ones of epistemology, as the state and the Left contended on the ideals of nationalism and the futures of race and culture. From this era developed a strategy of optics and "diverse forms power" which simultaneously affirmed and repressed the anti-racist values of the post-World War II movements. Naming it as neoliberalism, Hong explains it as "an epistemological structure of disavowal, a means of claiming that racial and gendered violences are things of the past."¹⁶ This optical illusion – which has come to be standard to U.S. institutional powers – necessitates an "official policy" of antiracism as integral to an institution, which, in turn, has created a dynamic that necessitates the subjugation and minoritization of racialized bodies in order to provide a basis for intervening in perceived injustice. Hong maintains that "[n]eoliberal ideologies hold out the promise of protection from premature death in exchange for complicity with this pretense."¹⁷ In this way, race is solidified at the same time that racism is renounced, and the disavowal of racism is always incomplete, a dynamic which Hong refers to as the perpetual "haunting" of the past in this re-branded liberal moment.¹⁸

Melamed concurs in this historical development of neoliberalism and the transformation of antiracism into a national value. Melamed identifies a situation in which racism "constantly

¹⁵ Grace Kyungwon Hong, *Death Beyond Disavowal: The Impossible Politics of Difference* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), 7.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 29.

appears to be disappearing... even as it takes on new forms that can signify as nonracial or even antiracist”¹⁹ and contends that the years since the Leftist movements of the 1960’s have been marked by a shift from “racial liberalism” to “neoliberal multiculturalism” by which multicultural reference has developed as a façade for the prerequisite nature of race and racism to neoliberal policies and ideologies.²⁰ Under racial liberalism, race became reimagined as culture just as culture came to signify a national ethos under which a racially liberal and inclusive U.S. government was folded into the narrative of manifest destiny and U.S. exceptionalism. As an epistemological project, this adoption of a racial liberalism allows institutional powers to renounce “old” ways of knowing as detached and unconnected from the now “liberal” present – while still being “haunted” by the power structures that create and maintain hegemonic powers, rendering past epistemologies of racial relations not only as invisible but as empowered by silence so that they are present in, and communicated by, un-racialized rhetoric. As neoliberal multiculturalism then developed to give language to this officially “nonracial” systematizing of racism, the multicultural rhetoric of “‘diversity,’ ‘representation,’ and ‘fairness,’” was “‘formalized to the extent that political conservatives can designate themselves a ‘culture’ and demand fair representation in universities on identitarian grounds.”²¹

Analyses of Capitalist Language

A cornerstone of what upholds these neoliberal processes are the rhetorical strategies that maintain a common faith in the system, even – or especially – in those most harmed by the processes. In his recently published book *Keywords: The New Language of Capitalism*, Leary

¹⁹ Jodi Melamed, “The Spirit of Neoliberalism: From Racial Liberalism to Neoliberal Multiculturalism,” *Social Text* 89, no. 4 (Winter 2006): 3-4.

²⁰ Ibid., 1.

²¹ Ibid., 19.

introduces this new language of late capitalism as “a metaphorically rich vernacular in which the defenders of private property speak of virtues and ‘vision,’” and as difficult to define “because the language we have to understand and describe our era’s inequality is itself one of the instruments perpetuating it.”²² Leary’s understanding of a “new language” having emerged under global capitalism recognizes that this language is in a mutually reinforcing and constituting relationship with materiality. Shankar and Cavanaugh note the recent scholarly turn away from the separation of language and materiality to better understand the processes of global capitalism and argue that “in our current era...the material can entail facets of linguistic context, and linguistic forms may acquire material qualities when they are pressed into new modes of objectification, circulation, and recontextualization.”²³

Naturally, the rhetorical strategies that uphold the neoliberal nation-state are centered around, and work to produce, a nationalism that leaves little room to question the functioning of the state. Responding to the large-scale nationalist, decolonial, and antiwar movements of the 1970’s that threatened the state as well as the elite classes of the time, nationalism under neoliberalism developed to re-appropriate the definition of freedom in order to regain the consent of the masses. Harvey contends that what was produced was an emphasis on *individual* freedoms.²⁴ He turns to Polanyi’s delineation of the freedom-based rhetorical strategy as a kind of bait-and-switch wherein the “good” freedoms of conscience, speech, meeting, association, and choosing one’s job are only byproducts of the “bad” freedoms of the market economy: to exploit one’s fellows; to make inordinate gains without commensurable service to the community; to keep technological inventions from being used for public good; and to profit from public

²² John Patrick Leary, *Keywords: The New Language of Capitalism* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2018), 1-2.

²³ Shalini Shankar and Jillian R. Cavanaugh, “Language and Materiality in Global Capitalism,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 41 (2012): 356.

²⁴ Harvey, *Brief*, 42.

calamities secretly engineered for private advantage.²⁵ In this way, the evocation of “freedom” in the U.S. upholds the values of free market fundamentalism.

The understanding of freedom as individualistic entraps liberation movements into necessarily egocentric and essentialized goals and strategies. This serves two purposes for those in power: the first is in the essentializing of identity in ways that draw measurable differences between groups of people; and the second is in creating and enforcing a dependence on those in power for liberation. Okihiro’s dependence theory identifies “a discourse and condition of economic, political, and social subordination following conquest and incorporation, at first produced by segregation and, later, by assimilation.”²⁶ As the liberation movements of the 1970’s effected many of the strategies of neoliberalism’s insemination into the common sense understandings of the masses, those strategies first conquered the movements and then pushed them into a model of assimilation in which liberation can only be granted by those in power. They, then, unquestionably sets the terms of liberation so that state-recognized liberties are naturally the only kind. For example, the Black civil rights movement is recognized as possibly the most revered anti-racism movement in U.S. history while the Black nationalist organizing like that of the Black Panthers or Malcom X has come to be depicted as acts of terrorism by the standard, mainstream tellings of U.S. history. Where the former focused more on policy change and “equal rights,” the latter was explicitly anti-capitalist and sought to overthrow the state and forge their own terms of liberation. The historical reverence of the civil rights movement also works to erase its radicalism. The parts of the civil rights movement that most appealed to constitutional liberties have become the model for liberation movements in the years since.

²⁵ Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1954) 256-258.

²⁶ Gary Y. Okihiro, *Third World Studies*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 79.

Coalitional Constraints and Possibilities

In their seminal work *Feminist Freedom Warriors: Genealogies, Justice, Politics, and Hope*, Carty and Mohanty reflect and theorize on the history and state of feminist struggles against racism and capitalism alongside others who have borne witness to the decades of challenges faced by those who do this work. Throughout the interviews in this book, a recurring theme of commodification arises, with Carty identifying our era as one of such intense commodification that:

[Everything is] commodified and appropriated, and the state is a master of this now. Even some elements of human relations are commodified, and the state makes it part of its language—from relating to people to telling them how to relate to each other. If you look at the current [2016 U.S. presidential] election campaign, you see some of these ideas are not these peoples'. They come out of elements of struggle that they have appropriated and commodified.²⁷

What Carty recognizes here is that the commodification of the bodies, words, and affects of the marginalized is key to undermining our movements. What is so insidious about this process of commodification is how easily our own radical interventions can be absorbed into the neoliberal fold and used against us by “including” us. The most readily available example – because we are watching it happen now – is the flattening and commodification of the theory of intersectionality. Carastathis’s meta-analytic study of intersectionality finds that intersectionality theory is often lapsed into a representational model that comes to emphasize “exclusion” as the problem and “diversity” and “inclusion” as answers. In the same script of “disavowal” that Hong identified as crucial to the neoliberal order, Carastathis argues that academic feminism’s disavowal of the “exclusion” of women of color and women-of-color theorizing as the problem establishes this disavowal as the “formal policy” behind which both white-feminist and feminist-of-color work operates. This therefore establishes the major intervention of “inclusion” as the end-all-be-all and

²⁷ Mohanty and Carty, *Feminist*, 44.

excuses any deeper structural changes.²⁸ Carastathis maintains that “inclusion is central to the reproduction of hierarchical power.”²⁹

Returning to Carty’s insight above, the danger of this commodification is in its power to control how we relate to each other. In the case of intersectionality, a theory meant to provide a generative transition away from the commodification of identity politics has been folded into the narrative of inclusion that fuels the false brands of multiculturalism that commodified identity politics in the first place. This has serious bearing on the potentials of coalition-building, as it constrains us from having control over our own identities and communities. Writing just after Trump’s 2017 inauguration, Taylor speaks to the power that co-opted identity politics has against our coalitions and advises us to move forward:

If we told [our stories] together, it could allow us to see that the anxieties, stresses, confusions, and frustrations about life world today are not owned by one group, but are shared by many. It would not tell us that everyone suffers the same oppression, but it would allow us to see that even if we don’t experience a particular kind of oppression, every working person in this country is going through something. Everyone is trying to figure out how to survive, and many are failing... If we put these stories together, we would gain more insight into how ordinary white people have as much stake in the fight for a different kind of society as anyone else.³⁰

This contention that Taylor presents is indicative of the immediate imperative to forge new connections – new ways of connecting – among those of us who have been oppressed and repressed by the separation forced on us. But even more immediately, these words speak to the challenge we face in forging ways of connecting that resist the processes of commodification, including reclaiming the potentials of intersectionality.

²⁸ Hong, *Death*, 22.

²⁹ Anna Carastathis, *Intersectionality: Origins, Contestations, Horizons* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016), 204.

³⁰ Anand Gopal, Jeremy Scahill, Keeanga-Yamahatta Taylor, Naomi Klein, and Owen Jones, *The Anti-Inauguration: Building Resistance in the Trump Era* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2017).

Like those cited above, several feminist scholars identify the U.S. culture of individualism that these commodifications of identity relations produce as an essential deterrent to coalition-building. Angela Davis contends that “progressive struggles – whether they are focused on racism, repression, poverty, or other issues – are doomed to fail if they do not also attempt to develop a consciousness of the insidious promotion of capitalist individualism.”³¹ Accounting for the entrapment of words like diversity and inclusion in the neoliberal narrative, Russo advocates for a move away from a politics of inclusion and toward a politics of accountability that centers our relationships to one another and how we are implicated in the structures of power that dictate our lives and connections. Russo’s work is in line with other theorists like Almeida,³² Carrillo Rowe,³³ and Keating,³⁴ who propose critical conceptualizations of belonging that de-center the ego in building the foundations of the coalitions we need to foster for our collective liberation.

Methods and Questions

Having been one of the students who relied on the Center for Identity, Inclusion, and Social Change as I navigated being poor, queer, brown, and chronically ill on DePaul’s campus, its closing deeply affected and angered me. The swift dissolution of our attempts at coalition-building on campus felt defeating and the constraints on our organizing insurmountable. It was frustrating and disconcerting to see the university administrators dismantle such an integral part

³¹ Angela Y. Davis, *Freedom is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2016), 1.

³² Adjoa Jones de Almeida, “Radical Social Change: Searching for a New Foundation,” in *The Revolution Will Not be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, eds. Incite! Women of Color Against Violence (Cambridge, MA: Sound End Press, 2007.)

³³ Aimee Carrillo Rowe. “Be Longing: Toward a Feminist Politics of Relation,” *National Women’s Studies Association Journal* 17, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 15-46.

³⁴ Cricket Keating, “Building Coalitional Consciousness,” *National Women’s Studies Association Journal* 17, no. 2 (Summer 2005):

of much of the marginalized community on campus while they simultaneously used language that painted a saccharine picture of an entire DePaul community committed to diversity and inclusion. My first iteration of this project began the year after Yiannopolous' visit and revolved around the ways that "intersectionality" was complicatedly employed by both sides in the struggle over closing CIISC. As I found that the flattening of intersectionality in our campaigns and in its co-optation by the administrators very much mirrored the long-established deflation of "diversity" into a buzzword, I started to realize that much of the rhetoric the university used was substantiated by co-opted buzzwords and sentiments, especially in discussions of race – or, really, the avoidance of discussion of race. I came to see that this case study reveals a larger and more complex depiction of the relationship between the administration of a neoliberal U.S. university and the students and staff who actively and outspokenly challenge the racist structure of the university. What's more, I noticed that it very much reflected the national conversations about race and racism in the U.S., especially how they have drastically changed in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement and the 2016 U.S. presidential race.

In that vein, I began to conceptualize the neoliberal U.S. university as a microcosmic reflection of the U.S. nation-state at large in the way the administration dictates and monitors the nature of its relationships with vocally antiracist constituents with very little transparency of its processes. From that vantage point, my organization of this rhetorical analysis hinges on seeing the university as upheld by a hegemonic maintenance of power and oppression. The authority and power of a hegemonic institution is constituted by a coerced, often passive consent from the people it oversees. Therefore, my rhetorical analysis focuses on discovering the ways that that consent is coerced, how the methods of coercion have been institutionalized over decades, and

how those methods have transformed under the rise of neoliberalism and in the face of challenges presented by those who call out such imbalances of power.

Ultimately, this project seeks to answer: How does the university structurally and systematically prevent sustainable and critical coalitions?; What are the barriers faced by antiracist organizers on campuses?; How is liberatory language co-opted and commodified by the administration?; And most importantly, what does it take to foster sustainable, intergenerational, and multiracial feminist coalitions on campus in spite of it all? Though there are many constituencies with stakes in this case, I focus on the positionalities of the student activists, the university administrators, and the student affairs staff who closely supported the student activists. This is not to say that there weren't many others who supported the student activists, particularly the many faculty who were also actively and vocally supporting us. I focus on the student affairs staff because they hold a particular stake in the university that is wholly indicative of the ways the neoliberalism has manifested within the university at and after the moment of such racial/racist conflicts as this one.

Much of this analysis is rooted in my own experience and the few written documents that have survived on the internet, some only in screenshots. This is of more benefit than hindrance to the depth and integrity of my analysis. My study here is rooted in activist scholarship, which Sudbury and Okazawa-Rey define as “the production of knowledge and pedagogical practices through engagements with, and in the service of, progressive social movements.”³⁵ They note that these “active engagements between the academy and movements for social justice” are a generative space for “emancipatory knowledge(s)” that challenge the processes of neoliberalism

³⁵ Julia Sudbury and Margo Okazawa-Rey, introduction to *Activist Scholarship: Antiracism, Feminism, and Social Change* ed., Sudbury and Okazawa-Rey (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2009), 3.

at a major point of knowledge production – the classroom.³⁶ While there is little record of what happened – in part due to the university’s lack of transparency and their deletion of their statements from that time – this provides the opportunity to employ Blackwell’s method of “retrofitted memory,” which she defines as:

Retrofitted memory is a form of countermemory that uses fragments of older histories that have been disjunctured by colonial practices of organizing historical knowledge or by masculinist renderings of history that disappear women’s political involvement in order to create space for women in historical traditions that erase them.³⁷

I call this an opportunity because being able to identify the exact points of omission, disappearance, and silence within the narrative plainly reveal the strategies that the university employs to control communications, meaning-making, and collective memory of events that compromise their liberal brand.

The focus of my analysis rests mainly on a rhetorical analysis to understand the constraints on student organizers, the performativity of the university’s responses to the protests, and the position that student affairs plays in the maintenance of the university’s power imbalances. Naturally, I look at the rhetoric of the student organizers’ messaging and the university’s statements and policy changes after the event. Because I understand the neoliberal university to be a microcosmic reflection of the U.S., I use the socioeconomic structure of the nation-state to situate the hierarchy of the university, and I use feminist theorizing on antiracist activism to contextualize our case within the 2016 U.S. presidential election and the waves made by the Black Lives Matter movement. This helps primarily to understand the relationship between the antiracist student organizers and the university administration. In order to better understand the positions of SA practitioners within this hierarchy, I interviewed four

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Maylei Blackwell, *¡Chicana Power!: Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 2.

practitioners who were also intimately involved in the conflict and who supported the antiracist student organizing. All interviewees chose to remain anonymous in order to protect their jobs. Therefore, all identifying information, including job titles and descriptions, department names, and gender pronouns, are withheld. Additionally, I look closely at some key student affairs literature to analyze the field's development under neoliberalism.

Chapter Overview

The second chapter, "The Containment of Student Activism," picks up where I have left off on student organizing and activism and seeks to unearth the network of hindering circumstances that we faced throughout the case study and to contextualize the student organizing within the U.S. social formation in 2016. I go through the timeline of our attempts at organizing in the year after Yiannopolous' event and identify the points at which our marginalized positionalities were compounded by the neoliberal processes of the university, deterring our attempts at building a united coalition to advocate for ourselves. Finding both structural and rhetorical entrapments of our efforts, my analysis works to comprehensively depict the situation in which we were operating and the neoliberal praxis with which universities now respond to accusations of racism made against the institution.

In the third chapter, "How Not to Talk about Race," I take up a close analysis of the formal responses from then-president Father Dennis Holtschneider and his administration around the Yiannopolous event, both in comment and in structural reform. What most notably characterizes these responses to claims of racism is the nonracialization of race and the opportunistic appropriation of racism and anti-racism. Split into three parts, I explore first how the university evoked a communal campus identity to shift blame away from individual actors

and to depict racism as something coming from outside the university, affecting and hurting *everyone* in the community. I move into an interrogation of the capitalist inclinations behind the language used in the statements and propose the construction of a “diversity industrial complex” in the way neoliberal hegemonic powers respond to, and profit from, racial conflicts. In that way, race and racism must be retained at the same time that it is denounced by institutions, an aspect identified as crucial to neoliberalism by a number of scholars.³⁸ In the final section, I focus more on the structural changes made after Yiannopolous’ visit and how even measurable actions can serve purely performative functions.

In the fourth chapter, I look further at the beginning and dismantling of the Center for Identity, Inclusion, and Social Change and what they reveal about the position of student affairs in this case study and in my larger question of coalition-building on campus. I analyze some revealing student affairs literature and how the field’s goals of redistributing resources for marginalized students are institutionalized on campus. I take up Kivel’s theory of the “buffer zone” within the U.S. socio-economic organization to situate the role student affairs plays for the neoliberal university administration. In the neoliberalized university, I argue that the rise of student affairs has come about in order to serve as the “buffer zone” between the university administration and the marginalized and dissident voices of students. Student affairs as a buffer zone in this political moment is characterized by its adherence to reductive diversity initiatives, a feigned concern for marginalized students, and the co-optation of classic social democratic values that equate social liberation with capitalist notions of individualism and success.

³⁸ See Hong, *Death*; Melamed, “Spirit,” 1-24; Sara Ahmed, “The Nonperformativity of Antiracism,” *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism* 7, no. 1 (2006): 104-126; Sara Ahmed, “The Performativity of Disgust,” in *The Cultural Politics of Emotions* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004).

In the fifth chapter, “Cultivating Campus Coalitions,” I return to the dangers of individualism that plague our relationships and identities and stop us from forming coalitions that effect change in transformative way. From there, I work toward finding the terms on which we can build communities centered in intersectional analyses and committed to building relationships across and within differences. I find that those terms include “a communal approach to accountability,” as Russo names, through which “we will build relationships and communities that can hold the inevitable conflict, oppression, and difficulty that we will inevitably experience given the ongoing work of interlocking systemic oppression.”³⁹ This approach demands that we care for each other beyond the work, the planning, the organizing we do together because that work is always interconnected with every other part of our lives. To dismiss that is to continue seeing each other on capitalistic terms. Rather than valuing each other based on our productivity, we must honor the fact that we might not always be productive and commit to working with each other through the difficult times and even the times we might harm each other.

The coalitional theories and strategies that foster this approach to accountability and community are those that encourage space to imagine beyond identity politics and the essentialized formation of relationships that value productivity over each other’s wellbeing. Rowe’s community-building strategy is one that recognizes the multiplicity and fluidity of the self that is defined *by* its attachments, while Keating’s approach to coalition-building emphasizes the power of valuing one’s own and each other’s experiences in a way “serves to build nonhierarchical and transformative spaces for thinking about, and acting upon one’s own and

³⁹ Ann Russo, *Feminist Accountability: Disrupting Violence and Transforming Power* (New York: New York University Press, 2019), 21.

each other's different situations.”⁴⁰ Fernandes' approach centers spiritually, and she argues that “movements for social or political transformation have faltered not because of the impossibility of realizing their visions of social justice, but because such transformation cannot be complete unless they are explicitly and inextricably linked to a deeper form of spiritual transformation on a mass basis.”⁴¹

What most defines and unites the strategies I lift up in this chapter is the necessity of long-term commitments to building relationships, communities, and coalition with each other. Of course, this should be negated by the necessarily short-term nature of the university and our connections to each other within it. However, I pose that it is possible to foster an infrastructure of community care and accountability that our coalitions need. To that, I present the DePaul Women's Center, which happened to come under new directorship after the closure of CIISC in 2017, as a real-life model of coalition-building in progress and outline the ways that the center has begun to build the community infrastructure needed to build and maintain sustainable, intergenerational, and multiracial feminist coalitions on campus.

⁴⁰ Keating, “Building,” 90.

⁴¹ Fernandes, *Transforming*, 11.

Chapter 2: The Containment of Student Activism

As of August 2019, a video I posted to Facebook from the night of Yiannopolous' event has garnered over 83,000 views and more than 700 shares.⁴² The video is of a scene on the very edge of the rioting that night. It shows two groups of people, one mostly white and the other mostly of color, one in police uniforms and bullet-proof vests and the other in t-shirts and jeans, dressed for a day of classes, not for night of rioting. The Chicago police officers are standing in a circle, with some using their bikes as an extra layer of protection. In the middle of the circle is a young white man and his girlfriend holding each other, neither of them affiliated with DePaul. Only feet away is a group of students, all people of color and mostly Black women. One is crying and pleading with Ashley Knight, DePaul's Dean of Students at that time. "He came to me and said, 'Asshole,' and pushed me in my breasts." She motions using her entire body to shove Knight down. "Yes, he looked me in the eyes and called me an asshole. I've never seen that man before." Others come to her defense, pointing out that the police were protecting this man who had just assaulted a student. Knight looks around blankly, turning in a circle away from the crying student. Another yells at Knight directly: "YOU let three girls get attacked. Right there," and gestures to a point just behind DePaul's iconic statue of Father Egan, a Vincentian priest and civil rights activist who dedicated his life to alleviating the effects of poverty in Chicago. Knight finally responds when another student asks what the protocol is at this point – what is Knight going to do?

I'm not sure what exactly we wanted Ashley Knight to do. Obviously, she wasn't going to charge at the brigade of cops and fight the white man they were protecting. But in the face of silent, unsympathetic police and vindicated white supremacist rioters, I think the least we wanted

⁴² I have since chosen to make this video private so as not to exploit the harm done to, and the emotional responses from, the Black women students in the video.

or needed was a small sign of compassion from someone with power. But my point here is more about the students in that scene than about Ashley Knight – the Black and brown students who were holding each other in the middle of a white supremacist riot on their campus, sometimes holding each other back from fighting. Really, I want to know what *we* were supposed to do after that? How do we process and respond to the level of vitriol we all experienced that night, perpetrated at a place many of us called home and defended by the people who make decisions about our lives on campus?

In this chapter, I look closely at the ways that the student organizers were constrained not only in our attempts at organizing but also in what kinds of changes we could seek within our university and how we could even conceptualize our needs and intentions. Even in the list of demands some of the organizers later released after this event (see Figure 2), we could only figure to ask for vague ways of supporting marginalized students by listening to our concerns and no longer tokenizing us in their diversity figures and campaigns. The obstacles for organizing and strategizing were limited in a number of ways – by the demands of being a student, our marginalized positions on campus, the logistical constraints of organizing a large number of students, our compartmentalization in single identity-based student organizations, and even the immediacy of our own pain and emotions from such a swift paradigm shift in the atmosphere of our campus. Finding both these structural and personal obstacles and rhetorical manipulations projected by the university throughout the narrative, my analysis in this chapter works to depict and deconstruct the network against which student activists are working.

Overworked and Emotional

The initial protest itself was spontaneous. Though there had been a group of students who had called for the protest weeks before the event – after multiple calls for the administration to cancel the event – not many people, including me, were assuredly on board until the day of the event. One deciding factor for many was when, on the morning of the event, Yiannopolous tweeted an image of three DePaul students and members of DePaul’s Feminist Front student organization, ridiculing the appearance of “DePaul feminists.”⁴³ Another was the long line of hundreds of virtually all white people wearing the infamous red “Make America Great Again” caps, who were mostly not students at the university, who were far past college age, and who were postured as if ready for a fight. When the doors closed for the event, select members (all white men) of the DePaul College Republicans guarded the doors along with the private security that the university ordered them to provide. Outside those doors, at least a hundred students protested and six broke through and occupied the stage. Those six went on to receive the worst of the ridicule, harassment, stalking, and death threats by the alt-Right media online and its supporters in the weeks after. Yiannopolous countered with mobilizing a riot that he led through campus, and then ensued many incidents like the one above, some even more violent. In the few days after the event, we were scolded by the university president, stalked on campus by the DePaul College Republicans, and witnessed a noose hung outside a residence hall.

More than just those at the night’s protests were compelled to organize against what DePaul had allowed to happen.⁴⁴ Through a massive and confusing group chat, dozens of us

⁴³ Because Yiannopolous was later banned from Twitter for leading a barrage of racist and misogynistic attacks against Leslie Jones, a Black actress and comedian, this tweet is no longer available and cannot be cited.

⁴⁴ There were also some students who were part of the protest but couldn’t continue on with us because they were too traumatized from what they went through that night. I believe it important to name these people, too, who were as much a part of our efforts as any of us were.

managed to organize one formal meeting to plan our next steps. Around twenty of us, representing different cultural student organizations at DePaul, met a week after the event in an off-campus apartment with no air conditioning. Many of us didn't know each other, had never met before we went to that apartment. Almost none of us had ever been a part of any kind of organizing and disagreed both on methods and ideology. In one descriptive example, a few cisgender, heterosexual students suggested putting "homosexuals and transgender people" on the "front lines" of a protest at the DePaul College Republicans' next event to "scare" their guest speaker, the notoriously anti-gay politician Rick Santorum. Such a suggestion almost immediately caused the exit of a number of queer students from the organizing.

The meeting lasted for several hours as we tried to narrow down a list of demands or schedule and plan any kind of protest or demonstration. People left throughout that time, some because of the heat and others because of the tensions and hostility. We were all deeply angry, hurt, and reactive and vied for power over our response. We were also students who were a couple weeks away from finals. Planning was especially difficult because most of us did not live in the affluent neighborhood that DePaul calls home and spent a significant amount of time just commuting to and from campus. There is also the fact that almost every single student involved in the organizing held at least one job in addition to being in school full-time, having to do with the increasing rates of poverty, food insecurity, and homelessness among college students in the U.S. One 2016 study found that 48 percent of college and university students experienced food insecurity in the previous month. This pool of students is also disproportionately prone to housing insecurity, with 64 percent reporting having experienced housing insecurity and 15 percent reporting homelessness within the last year.⁴⁵ When students are facing barriers to

⁴⁵ James Dubick, Brandon Mathews, and Clare Cady, *Hunger on Campus: The Challenge of Food Insecurity for College Students* (College and University Food Bank Alliance, National Student Campaign Against Hunger and

obtaining their basic needs in addition to the demands of being a student, organizing to correct the systems and institutions that so marginalize them becomes next to impossible.

This is the general state of activism for students who are systematically marginalized on their campuses, trying to organize through and despite that oppressed position. Dolhinow's research into student activism finds that the nature of student activism has wholly changed in the face of corporatization, focusing more on the immediate student experience and foregoing long-term "social justice" goals.⁴⁶ How can we advocate for ourselves, let alone for our posterity or for our lives and communities outside of campus, when many of us spend an hour just commuting to campus every day and twenty to forty hours working every week? Harré, et al, conceptualize the rub between social justice and the corporatized university as an infinite game opposing a finite game, wherein the inherently-long-term goals of social justice are not compatible with the short-term and fast-paced functioning of the university.⁴⁷ The need to effect some change by student activists then becomes centered on the short-term successes of essentialist identity-based advocacy work for which the university has little accountability as students age out of the institution.

While relatively few measurable outcomes came from that meeting, we did agree to wear all black through the end of the quarter, something I had started as a show of dissent and solidarity after the event, and it was something we continued in the fall. Despite the hostility among us and the failure to plan an action, the solidarity was real and genuine. By the time classes resumed in the fall and a handful of us revived the organizing efforts, it was an unstated

Homelessness, Student Government Resource Center, and Student Public Interest Research Groups, 2016), accessed July 13, 2019, http://studentsagainsthunger.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Hunger_On_Campus.pdf.

⁴⁶ Rebecca Dolhinow, "Activism on the Corporate Campus: It Just Doesn't Have that You Know What Anymore," *Australian Universities' Review* 59, no. 2 (2017): 15.

⁴⁷ Niki Harré, Barbara M. Grant, Kirsten Locke, and Sean Sturm, "The University as an Infinite Game: Revitalizing Activism in the Academy," *Australian Universities' Review* 59, no. 2 (2017): 5.

fact that all the students who had tried to organize before were all devoted friends and ready to try to show up for each other again. Since then, some of us have joked about how hostile we were to each other at that first meeting and how much we disliked each other when we first met. In that time in between, we had come to understand that it was the pressures of our circumstances that pushed us against each other and not our lack of care and concern for each other's wellbeing.

The few who revived the organizing that fall were a group of close friends who were closely affiliated with the Center for Identity, Inclusion and Social. We mistook ourselves to be better equipped to combat the university by our own group's diversity (as we were variously queer, Black, South Asian, Southeast Asian, Indigenous, and Puerto Rican). We had the same logistical constraints as the larger group, but we were again mistaken that our being friends made us better able to organize together. We organized an action campaign around the slogans, "Diversity \neq Inclusion," "Free Speech \neq Hate Speech," and "#DoBetterDePaul," as well as emphasizing direct call-outs to named administrators and demanding that they hire more "Black, Brown, Indigenous, AAPI, WOC, Trans, Queer, and Differently-Abled-Bodied Faculty and Staff." It wasn't long before many of those who had walked away from



Figure 1: Two students, Dina Osama and Leena Almasri, hold #BlackOutDePaul campaign signs outside of the quarterly meeting of the Division of Student Affairs in September 2016

the initial organizing effort returned to get behind this campaign. The core group of us managed to plan and execute only one action, a silent display outside the quarterly meeting of the Division of Students Affairs in the same room that Yiannopolous' event had been held. Around thirty students gathered outside the meeting as it was coming to a close and held signs expressing our messaging. The morning of that event, one of our members broke down trying to finish an assignment on time and still make it to the printing shop to pick up our signs. The rest of us were either in class or at work and couldn't leave to help them. After the event, I sprinted back to the CIISC offices to finish a paper I had due before my next class and didn't expect a deluge of emails, texts, phone calls, and people searching for me in the office trying to talk to me about the event. With such a small group, a number of us had instantly become the faces of the campaign and cracked under the pressure. In the end, the constraints of time, energy, and emotional capacity eventually led to the dissolution of group.

Segregated and Settled

Perhaps what hindered our initial efforts the most was the way we organized ourselves. Because there were so many of us, we structured ourselves by a representational model, allowing two "representatives" to come from each cultural student organization. We found that we all had surprisingly little common ground when we each felt like we were representing and defending our people. Divided by race and affiliation, we were operating on often-opposing ideologies, especially when it came to queerness. Mistakenly, we believed that our student organizations – and by extension our racial and ethnic identities – were ready-made coalitions. However, this only maintained the divisions created for us by the institution and the way it structures its Division of Student Affairs, a structure built on celebratory ideals of superficial diversity, as I

will discuss further in the fourth chapter. As university students, we were pushed by the conditions of our standing to compete, and as sanctioned organizations, we were active competitors for the little resources that the university allocated to our funding.

In fact, these cultural student organizations are a symptom of a growing trend of individualism that has risen next to the neoliberal corporatization of the university. At DePaul, there is no multiracial student organization other than the group Queer People of Color, which I represented in our attempts at organizing. However, in the years of the group's existence, it has struggled to maintain a consistent constituency and has gone defunct several times. While such monoracial groups can be safe havens for so many of us, they simultaneously contribute to the hindrance and dissolution of coalitional efforts on campus. The emergence of this condition has a deep history across the decades of student activism in the U.S. and the manifestations of its malevolence is well shrouded.

Remembering that neoliberalism developed in response to challenges posed to the state and the elite class by the decolonial and Black and Latinx nationalist movements of the late twentieth century which were quelled before their radical ideologies could have much impact on the socioeconomic structure of the U.S.,⁴⁸ the harm of *institution-sanctioned* monoracial groups should be interrogated as a strategy to quell such unrest. Broadhurst traces a history of student activism in the U.S. back to the colonial period, but most pertinent to our case is the transition from the interwar years of the early twentieth century to the present. He finds that, while the prior student dissatisfaction with the U.S. still remained in the interwar years, it was repressed by the intense patriotism and anticommunist fearmongering that the wars effected in the U.S. With those ideologies developing into the “common sense”⁴⁹ narrative of the U.S. identity, the revival

⁴⁸ Hong, *Death*, 7.

⁴⁹ Harvey, *Brief*, 40

of vocal student dissent and organizing in the 1960's and 1970's was thwarted by the economic and political forces of neoliberalism that worked to reshape how students related to their universities and how universities responded to student unrest. At this time, universities experienced a mass influx of students, and Broadhurst's study identifies a strong shift toward the impersonal for undergraduate students as class sizes swelled and university administrations adopted stronger authority and policing practices for their growing populations. From this increase in top-down control, organizing around "students' rights" came to the forefront of campus activism – particularly around "free speech."⁵⁰

The re-direction toward the individual as a cultural product deserving of access to a set of universal rights has been compounded by the corporatization of campuses and the movement toward neoliberal multiculturalism.⁵¹ Again, I refer to Harvey, who contends, "Any political movement that holds individual freedoms to be sacrosanct is vulnerable to incorporation into the neoliberal fold."⁵² The rhetoric of individual freedoms, which has become wound up in multiculturalism and diversity rhetoric, is easily swept into the neoliberal narrative of capitalistic entitlement and competition.

Next to the corporatization that is effecting this shift is the fallacy of the current state of identity politics that is also plaguing the student activism that has increasingly become more identity-based and dependent on institutional recognition. Naming this fallacy is not to say that identity – particularly racial identity – does not have a very material basis in lived realities and is a tangible force for social organization and exclusion. Fernandes contends that progressive critics

⁵⁰ Broadhurst, "Campus," 7-8.

⁵¹ Melamed, "Spirt," 1.

⁵² Harvey, *Brief*, 41.

Today, Thursday, September 22, 2016, DePaul University students interrupted a quarterly Student Affairs Divisional meeting with a silent disruption because DePaul consistently fails to meet the needs of marginalized students and continues to ignore the experiences of these students. We, a collective of students throughout the university community, have come together to demand a series of internal and lasting changes including, but not limited to, the following:

- Support existing departments working for justice on campus with greater institutional and financial resources. Collaborate with these existing departments when attempting to create a campaign for change on campus.
- President Father H. Holtschneider and university administration: stop tokenizing Black students and the Black Student Union. Listen to the concerns of marginalized students rather than boiling down our viewpoints to a single organization or identity group.
- DePaul must support its marginalized students emotionally, financially, and in whatever areas they need to truly achieve academic success.

DePaul University claims to follow the mission of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac, which is to strive for socially responsible leadership and correct injustices that affect marginalized communities including: Black, Brown, Indigenous, and AAPI students, trans, queer and femme students, undocumented students, non-English speaking students, students who are differently abled, those who come from disenfranchised socioeconomic classes, and other communities.

The Race and Free Speech Speaker Series does little to create actual change on campus, as does the university's response via Vice President Gene Zdziarski's aimless DePaulia article. The administration's vague Free Speech and Race Action Plan is filled with one-dimensional approaches to addressing racism on campus that ultimately will do nothing to create lasting change. These attempts have shown a lack of concern and understanding for students of marginalized identities.

DePaul University must pursue change through an intersectional lens which supports the work of, and fosters collaboration between, existing centers and departments for social justice on campus, for example: the Women's and Gender Studies Department, the Department of African and Black Diaspora Studies, the Department of Latin American and Latino Studies, the LGBTQ Studies program, the Office of Multicultural Student Success and the Center for Identity, Inclusion and Social Change.

**We demand transparency. We demand change.
We will hold DePaul University accountable. We will not be silenced.**

A full statement with specific demands will be released at a later date.

**We Are DePaul. We Are Concerned.
#DoBetterDePaul #BlackOutDePaul**

Figure 2: Statement released by student organizers after a demonstration outside of the quarterly meeting of the Division of Student Affairs in September 2016

have mistakenly disparaged identity politics as a means for demanding a “more personal and individualized form of recognition” rather than effecting struggle for social change.⁵³ At the same time, Fernandes argues that an identity-based praxis is limiting. For one, it cannot move past the short-term because it cannot imagine a future without the hierarchies and power structures that produce the identitarian inequalities and are thusly “locked in a position of reclaiming power from the sources that produced a sense of powerlessness in the first place.”⁵⁴ In other words, representation is rooted in identity which is rooted in marginalization and difference and so will never be that which ruptures what produces the need for representation.

In part, these conditions pressure student activists to pursue only short-term, recognition-based goals, and their achievements are confined within the walls of the neoliberal narrative of the liberal university. In our case, we understood this complexity and demanded that the university create lasting change (see Figure 2). However, recognizing again the “rub between social justice and the corporatized university as an infinite game opposing a finite game,”⁵⁵ the university itself is confined by the demands of maintaining a liberal brand and can only save face by creating measurable policy changes that depict urgent responses to accusations that compromise the integrity of their brand. These conditions pushed us to also advocate for superficially identity-based responses from the university in the end, like hiring more staff and faculty of color and providing “more resources” for marginalized students on campus. These demands later came back to haunt us.

⁵³ Fernandes, *Transforming*, 26.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 31.

⁵⁵ Harré, et al., “University,” 5.

Limited and Controlled

Our organizing and demands were also entrapped by a free speech debate, which was the discourse to which the DePaul College Republicans immediately went after the Yiannopolous event, as they were doing their own share of organizing, claiming that the university failed to protect their right to free speech. By engaging with their loudly-declared right to free speech, the university allowed them to establish the rhetoric of the confrontation; framing the issue as an argument of semantics over free speech and hate speech allowed the university to ignore the deeper issue of structural support for racism while still maintaining access to the script of a liberal institution. This trapped our own arguments in that debate. Less than a week after the Yiannopolous event, a group of students unaffiliated with the larger group of organizers, held a banner drop in one of the campus buildings. Their main messaging was “Hate Speech \neq Free Speech.” Even those of us who tried to avoid getting caught in that debate struggled to identify an alternative, so we lapsed into the university-sanctioned language of diversity and inclusion



Figure 3: Gene Zdziarsky, DePaul's Vice President of Student Affairs, at the #BlackOutDePaul demonstration outside the quarterly meeting of the Division of Students Affairs in September 2016

that still worked to maintain the university's liberal branding that can be enforced with numerical “proof” of diversity and inclusion.

In their efforts to provide that proof, DePaul announced a restructuring of the Division of Student Affairs that was predicated

on the closing of an office very close to those of us who had been on the forefront of the student organizing, even though that organizing had waned after our efforts in the fall of 2016. Though I discuss the circumstances and significance of this decision much more in depth in the next two chapters, this decision had an important impact on the discourse between the administration and our antiracist efforts. This decision came almost exactly a year after the Yiannopolous event and replaced the office – which had a multicultural framework but operated with a radical critique of that – with three individual resource centers for Black, Latinx, and Queer students respectively. A resourced center for Asia students was added later.

Of course, this plan reactivated the waning unrest of students of color, and in our renewed efforts, we invoked “intersectionality” to make our case that separating us was not an answer to our institutional subjugation, but our swift and unorganized calls for intersectionality were supplemented by our own confused explanations of intersectionality as 1. applying mostly to those of us who were both queer and of color or who were mixed race and therefore had complicated connections to the established identities, 2. as the answer for the exclusion of Asian, Arab, and Indigenous students, and 3. as a theoretical backing for



Figure 4: Students stage a banner drop in DePaul's Arts & Letters building on June 1, 2016

our desire to be in a shared physical space across races. The administration's answer to this was the creation of a staff position titled "Intersectional Programming Coordinator," whose job was to work with these various centers to create "intersectional programming," which was also accompanied by vague explanations of what that actually meant in practice. Just one year after these announcements, the position was phased out. In the end, however intervening intersectionality in its most effective definitions could have been, our use of it was easily absorbed into the neoliberal fold and became a stand-in for the false ideals of multiculturalism, diversity, and representation.

Inspired and Hopeful

As I introduced in the previous chapter, it's clear throughout this narrative that the circumstances and aftermath of the Yiannopolous event were a reflection of the larger struggle happening in the midst of the 2016 U.S. presidential race that culminated in the election of Donald Trump. Even though it was not one of our campaign slogans, we were immediately referred to as "Black Lives Matter" by the alt-Right media, illustrating the blatant ignorance of the complexities of systematic racism. At the same time, it also illustrated the power and influence of the Black Lives Matter movement.

Speaking just after the inauguration of President Trump in January of 2017, Klein highlights the most important aspect of the neoliberal conditions for those who had been organizing, and who continue to organize, against the racism, xenophobia, misogyny, and classism of the new Right and the centrist Left that is unwilling to actively work against it:

This is the backdrop of the inauguration: we were starting to win... We have to know this, we have to understand this, because everything we're going to experience in the coming days and weeks is going to be expressly designed to make us feel powerless. I'm

not saying our movements were strong enough – they weren’t. I’m not saying we were united enough – we weren’t... But something was shifting, something was happening...⁵⁶

This of course begs the question: What did these movements do right? In one simple answer, the Black Lives Matter movement marked a paradigm shift in methods of coalition-building and intersectional analyses. Here, I defer to Ransby’s work:

The breadth and impact of *Black Lives Matter* the term has been extraordinary. It has penetrated our consciousness and our lexicon... The powerful phrase has resonated as a moral challenge, and as a slap in the face, to the distorting and deceptive language of colorblindness and postracialism that gained traction in the United States after voters elected the country’s first African American president in November 2008... The protest and transformative justice movement that emerged...rejected representative politics as a stand-in for substantive change in the condition of Black people’s lives.⁵⁷



Figure 4: A student, Sarah Ahmad, holds a #BlackOutDePaul campaign sign outside of the quarterly meeting of the Division of Student Affairs in September 2016

Ransby goes on to insist that “there is always a set of conditions and circumstances that set the stage for movements to emerge”⁵⁸ and attributes much of the movement’s spark to the disillusionment of many Black people in the U.S. after President Obama’s failure to create any substantial change in their material reality. This class-based catalyst meant that the Black liberation struggle had to operate with a fundamentally

⁵⁶ Anand Gopal, Owen Jones, Naomi Klein, Jeremy Scahill, and Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, *The Anti-Inauguration: Building Resistance in the Trump Era* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2017), chap. 1, Kindle.

⁵⁷ Barbara Ransby, *Making All Black Lives Matter: Reimagining Freedom in the 21st Century* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2018), 1-2.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 11.

intersectional lens in order to emerge from the stagnancy of representative politics.

While President Obama's tenure in office exposed a widespread blindness toward class, there was not a vacuum of class analysis within Black liberation struggles. Ransby identifies the influences of the Occupy Wall Street movement, the Black radical tradition, and the theories and leadership of Black feminists as providing the theoretical groundwork for the Black Lives Matter movement to move past calls for representation and ground itself in a more complex intersectional approach to the work of building and sustaining coalitions critical of the façade of institutionalized diversity. She contends that BLM has not been just a Black struggle but a "Black-led struggle" that operated on the idea that "once all Black people are free, all people will be free,"⁵⁹ a fundamentally intersectional framework. As Klein contends above, these revolutionary developments in organizing have not been perfect, but these notes reflect not only the ideas and methods that were germinating in 2016 but also the complexities and conditions with which Leftists organizers were grappling.

While then-president Father Holtschneider claimed that "protests only work when people conduct themselves honorably" in his first statement after the Yiannopolous event,⁶⁰ I argue that protests only work when they avoid infiltration and co-optation by the hegemonic systems they seek to challenge. The ability to build coalitions across lines of difference – lines exaggerated and maintained by the institution – is crucial to effecting substantial change in the lives of marginalized students on campus. Fostering the close and committed relationships that we weren't able to in the few days we had to respond to the initial events is integral to building sustainable coalitions and nearly impossible to do on short notice. Our networks of support and commitment must be more comprehensive and run deeper than the network of containment that

⁵⁹ Ibid, 3.

⁶⁰ Dennis Holtschneider, email to DePaul students, staff, and faculty, May 25, 2016; see Appendix A.

the neoliberal university holds against our movements. While it might seem like we failed in our mission to effect real change at DePaul and that our work has been forgotten now that only a few of us are left on campus, our work might still go on to haunt the institution and the work of students in future generations if the faculty and staff who supported us find ways to keep our energy alive. In the fifth chapter, I review and discuss ways that student movements and university communities might build the intergenerational and sustainable foundation necessary to avoid co-optation into the neoliberal fold.

Chapter 3: How Not to Talk about Race

Dear Members of the DePaul University Community,

I am writing from France, where Fr. Udovic and I are leading a mission trip to introduce our trustees to the life and legacy of St. Vincent de Paul. Because today is a free day, a number of us are spending the day in Normandy, touring the museum, walking the famous beaches of the D-Day landings and standing silent before the rows and rows of graves honoring the men and women who gave their lives so others might live in freedom.

I tell you this because I awoke this morning to the reports and online videos of yesterday's speech by Milo Yiannopolous and the accompanying protest. I was sorry to see it...⁶¹

The above quote begins the first statement made by then-university president Father Dennis Holtschneider in an email sent to DePaul students, staff, and faculty the morning after white supremacist and social media race-baiter Milo Yiannopolous' chaotic appearance on our campus in May of 2016. This statement has since been disappeared, automatically deleted from email inboxes, links embedded in news articles redirected, and only now living in screenshots found deep in my own Facebook posts from that time. Fr. Holtschneider goes on to vehemently condemn the student protesters who disrupted Yiannopolous' event (which led Yiannopolous to direct an angry and volatile mob to find Holtschneider's office). He apologizes to the organizers of the event, the DePaul College Republicans who "deserved an opportunity to hear their speaker uninterrupted, and were denied it." After six days of being condemned himself from both sides of the debate and after a noose was found hanging outside of a residence hall, Fr. Holtschneider redirected his sentiments in his next statement to apologize to the students, staff, and faculty of color involved, recognizing that many had been the targets of physical violence from Yiannopolous' mob and that the loudest of us were now being stalked and harassed on campus by the College Republicans and inundated by hate messages and death threats on social media.

⁶¹ Dennis Holtschneider, email to DePaul students, staff, and faculty, May 25, 2016; see Appendix A.

His tone in this second statement flips completely as he now finds that “many of our students, staff and faculty felt insufficiently supported by the DePaul community last week, including by me. For all of this, I deeply apologize.”⁶²

In this chapter, I analyze the statements and policy changes made by the university in the fallout of our night with Milo Yiannopolous, as well as statements responding to events leading up to that night. As shown in the last chapter, rhetorical strategies are fundamental to the maintenance of a hegemonic power structure, and an obsession with optics has consumed U.S. universities in this neoliberal age. Here, I draw heavily from two language theorists to better understand the rhetorical strategies of the university administration – or, the university pseudo-nation – and how student dissent – especially when it is about race – can be absorbed into, and tamed by, the university structure. Leary, in his recently published *Keywords: The New Language of Capitalism*, provides insight into the way language – even individual words – has developed and changed to support neoliberal whims. Sara Ahmed’s body of work provides insight not into how words on a page come to life but how that page, or document, itself comes to life – or, how it necessarily never moves. Ahmed uses the terms “performativity” and “nonperformativity” throughout her work to describe this complex of inactive action. What follows is a depiction not of how institutions talk about race but how institutions avoid talking about race.

Communal Identity – Or, Pseudo-Nationalism

In his initial statement written hours after an angry white supremacist mob went searching for his office after an interrupted event, Fr. Holtschneider takes a divisive stance,

⁶² Dennis Holtschneider, email to DePaul students, staff, and faculty, June 2, 2016; see Appendix B.

recognizing two opposing sides and granting one the privilege of being “right” and the other being “wrong.” In that statement, he uses the pronoun “I” twenty-nine times and “we” only five times. As shown in the quote that begins this chapter, Fr. Holtschneider lays a foundation of the American values of freedom and sacrifice by invoking memories of a U.S. military operation that led to an Allied victory in World War II. This invocation of the deaths of U.S. troops is nearly a guilt trip to force our contentions into a more civil discourse. Three of his five instances of “we” are used to return to this sentiment in the end of his message, declaring, “I realize also that these young soldiers died for all the freedoms enshrined in our Bill of Rights, including freedom of speech and assembly. We honor their sacrifice best if we, too, remember and honor all the rights of human freedom, even as we fight for more freedom and justice for all.” While he does mention the “DePaul community” briefly, he keeps his sentiments of community broad, invoking “our human community,” “the rights of human freedom,” and patronizingly, “the rows and rows of white crosses in the American cemetery [that] speak to the selflessness of the human spirit at early adulthood to lay down their lives for a better world.”

In Fr. Holtschneider’s follow-up statement – the one in which he sympathizes with those he had scolded and marked as “wrong” six days earlier – his use of “we” jumps to twenty-two instances and his use of “I” drops to just twelve. And perhaps I should say “empathize” rather than “sympathize,” as Fr. Holtschneider’s words turn from division toward a communal one-ness as he asserts, “As a community, we are coming to the close of this academic year, and many among us are beleaguered and afraid. We have much work ahead.” This invocation of community is nothing new for an in-crisis DePaul, and it comes with much more than a set of pronouns. In the weeks leading up to Yiannopolous’ appearance, Fr. Holtschneider found himself responding to racist sidewalk chalkings. When the College Republicans wrote messages

like “Blue Lives Matter” (a pro-police slogan used to counter “Black Lives Matter”) and “Build a Wall” (in support of then-presidential candidate Trump’s plan to build a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border) on campus sidewalks, he claimed:

If we are doing our part as an intellectual community, we must engage the topics of the day with all their apparent weaknesses. We do this not only to refine better ideas, but to create the conditions for people to genuinely hear the other and be heard by the other – a space for inquiry.⁶³

He comes with more urgency in his response to “F— MEXICO” being painted on a campus sidewalk the morning of Yiannopolous’ event, saying:

The markings in the Quad last night run contrary to the type of environment we foster at DePaul. Destruction of property and profanity are never acceptable ways to voice opinions. This slur against Mexicans goes against everything DePaul stands for. We will work to identify the individual, file charges with the police, and bring the university's disciplinary process to bear.⁶⁴

In these responses, Fr. Holtschneider alludes to a defined set of values to which all DePaul constituents are inherently dedicated and accountable, similar to the set of values he invokes – both directly and indirectly – in his poetic tribute to the American soldiers in his first post-Yiannopolous statement. This rhetorical strategy has many implications for any attempts to hold those in power accountable or to maintain enough collective energy to continue protesting the administration’s decisions.

First, the invocation of community and communal responsibility mars any idea of individual culpability in the face of crisis – in this case, the “crisis” of accusations of institutionally-supported racism. In her research into such statements and policies, Ahmed finds

⁶³ Kirsten Onsgard, “Holtschneider Urges Openness and Kindness After Chalking Controversy,” *The DePaulia*, April 15, 2016, <https://depauliaonline.com/21685/news/holtschneider-urges-openness-kindness-chalking-controversy/>.

⁶⁴ DePaul University, “Statement from DePaul University President about Profane Graffiti on Campus,” News release, (May 24, 2016).

that, by “collapsing the ‘I’ with the ‘we,’”⁶⁵ “the transformation of the collective into an individual (a collective without individuals) might allow individual actors to deny or refuse responsibility for collective forms of racism.”⁶⁶ Recognizing this complex, a group of student organizers (of which I was a part) countering what



Figure 2: Two students hold signs reading, "What's good Father?" during an action outside the quarterly meeting of the Division of Student Affairs in September 2016.

we saw as the university’s empty and performative responses to racism on campus made it a point to name and call out those most culpable for the harm of their neutrality and most able to correct it – notably, Father Holtschneider as the president, the vice president of the Division of Student Affairs, the Dean of Students, and the director of the Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity. This complex is supported by a standard lack of transparency between the university administration and its students.

This community rhetorical strategy also works to create, solidify, and perpetuate the university’s brand. Curran and Hague worry about the obsession with branding that now plagues most universities in the U.S. and describe faculty as “cogs in the machine of manufacturing ‘brand DePaul’” wherein students are to be sold a lifestyle rather than simply a critical education.⁶⁷ In the context in which Curran and Hague speak, this brand involves a show of care for students by providing them with the amenities, experiences, and innovative technology of a

⁶⁵ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotions* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 109.

⁶⁶ Ahmed, “Nonperformativity,” 107.

⁶⁷ Winifred Curran and Euan Hague, “A Special Brand of Sausage,” *Antipode* 40, no. 5 (2008): 724-726.

luxury lifestyle available to smart consumer-citizens, which Curran and Hague find to be limiting the actual educational foundation of the university around which the brand is built. In a similar way, the promise and insistence of a diverse and accepting campus climate is marketed as an exclusive amenity and foundational value that sets DePaul apart from other campuses – a very apparent form of racial capitalism in which “a white individual or a predominantly white institution derives social or economic value from associating with individuals with nonwhite racial identities.”⁶⁸

What’s more, the cashing in of this racial capital takes advantage of moments of crisis such as that of our case study by suggesting negative affects that work to bring the “community” together in “difficult times.” As introduced in the previous chapter, Ahmed speaks to the feelings



Figure 3: Gene Zdziarsky, Vice President of Student Affairs, reads a sign that says, "What's good Gene?" during an action outside the quarterly meeting of the Division of Student Affairs in September 2016.

of disgust and shame with which institutions invoke a togetherness. Such displays of emotion allow the university to acknowledge a communal “failure” to live up to its supposedly unwavering and foundational “ideals,” thereby solidifying a collective identity in which all are accountable to the university’s failures: “if you feel shame, you are ‘in’ the nation, a nation that means well.”⁶⁹ Just as well, expressions of disgust necessitate the

⁶⁸ Nancy Leong, “Racial Capitalism,” *Harvard Law Review* 126, no. 8 (June 2013): 2154.

⁶⁹ Sara, Ahmed, “In the Name of Love,” in *The Cultural Politics of Emotions*, 101-121, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 109.

naming and disavowal of the disgusting object as something invading the community from the outside in order to express the desire of movement away from it.⁷⁰ In these ways, the university can effect a personality of diversity and inclusivity through “speech acts” which utilize the affects of disgust and shame to keep alive its history of injustice while *suggesting* a commitment to future action. This is the bedrock of institutional branding in an era of neoliberalism that necessitates an institution’s “official policy”⁷¹ of antiracism but not any action to hold itself or its constituents accountable to that policy.

Fr. Holtschneider employs such affective nationalism in his second post-Yiannopolous statement (in which he uses the pronouns “we,” “our,” and “us” forty-seven times):

At DePaul, we will never tolerate actions that are antithetical to the Vincentian values we teach, and we hold ourselves accountable to this from the first day students, faculty and staff set foot on our campus. I am deeply sorry for the harm that was unleashed by a speaker whose intent was to ignite racial tensions and demean those most marginalized, both in our society and at DePaul. Perhaps we should not have been surprised, but I think all of us – protesters, event organizers and administration alike – were taken aback by the level of vitriol that was unleashed and the damage that our community would experience. I am truly sorry that members of our faculty, staff and students have experienced this kind of hatred. No member of our community should ever feel unsafe at DePaul and we will do all that we can to protect our students, faculty and staff.

At the same time that this evokes a forwardness, these sentiments also depict the persistence of the past. As Hong writes, “The relationship between the past and present is best described as haunting, in which certain elements of the past – and therefore, the present – are repressed and disavowed, but never entirely or successfully.”⁷² This haunting is apparent in the fact that, in reference to matters overwhelmingly about race, Fr. Holtschneider makes startlingly few references to race (only in referring generally to “students of color” when recounting student complaints in his second statement) and only mentions whiteness once when listing some of

⁷⁰ Ahmed, “Performativity,” 85.

⁷¹ Hong, *Death*, 7.

⁷² *Ibid*, 29.

Yiannopolous' beliefs. In further statements and policy change announcements (which I will discuss later in this chapter), he and Gene Zdziarski, the vice president of the Division of Student Affairs, only mention specific racial issues when referring to matters brought up by institution-sanctioned cultural student organizations.

Despite these minimal references to race, the persistence of racism is clear in the need to label racial/racist tensions as a “surprising” discovery and in the contradiction of recognizing a “level of vitriol” that “damaged our community” without recognizing that much of the vitriol came from *within* our community. Ahmed’s work finds that “what is behind the shock is a belief that the whiteness is in the image rather than in the organization. Diversity and equality work hence becomes about changing perceptions of whiteness rather than changing the whiteness of organizations.”⁷³ In this way, the official policy of antiracism that the university might construct can be done not only without any action but also without directly mentioning race at all. Effectively, the official antiracism has almost nothing to do with race or racism at all.

Melamed defines this glossing over of race as “multicultural reference” or an “ethic of multiculturalism” that “masks the centrality of race and racism to neoliberalism.”⁷⁴ She names this brand of multiculturalism as the “spirit of neoliberalism” in that it maintains hegemonic power structures by “[producing] a situation where official antiracisms themselves deflect and limit awareness of the logics of exploitation and domination in global capitalism” and “[portraying] neoliberal policy as the key to a postracist world of freedom and opportunity.”⁷⁵ As we will see later in the chapter, the DePaul administration used a model of restructuring in the Division of Student Affairs that was characteristic of student affairs as a bureaucratic buffer zone

⁷³ Ahmed, “Name,” 118.

⁷⁴ Melamed, “Spirit,” 1.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 1-2.

in order to quell the student unrest and simultaneously dismantle an office that was doing critical and radical work alongside some of the most outspoken student organizers.

Capitalist Inclinations

Before I introduce the neoliberal policy changes produced by Yiannopolous' visit later in this chapter, I turn first to look more closely at Fr. Holtschneider's words in order to locate the capitalist inclinations that construct what I term as a "diversity industrial complex." To call something capitalist is to allude to an inclination toward profit and, under neoliberalism, exploitation for profit. This inclination is most apparent in the racial capitalism at play both in the university's construction of its community and its stated commitment to diversity and in the capitalizing on a campus crisis to further establish that brand. It is in the seeming minutiae of words that we see liberal sympathies become empty, neoliberal promises that further the profitability of race, racism, and even "antiracism." As Leary puts it, "Not only have our private aspirations been appropriated *by* the market, they are held to be its most dynamic sources."⁷⁶ On a university campus, this means that any remote success for marginalized students – whether or not it has anything to do with the university – can be taken, advertised, and monetized. In turn, any kind of measurable move made "for" marginalized students by the university is a marketable asset. When a crisis breaks out around racism on campus, it can be a launching pad for administrations to create more of those assets in front of a broader audience.

Already quoted above, Fr. Holtschneider asserts in his second statement, "At DePaul, we will never tolerate actions that are antithetical to the Vincentian values we teach, and we hold ourselves accountable to this from the first day students, faculty and staff set foot on our

⁷⁶ Leary, *Keywords*, 18.

campus.” The operative word here is “accountable.” A word very meaningful to many antiracist feminists is also one that evokes the quantification and systemization of responses to accusations of racism that is characteristic of the diversity industrial complex – or, the processes, structures, and discourses set in place to manage and even promote an institution’s image under racial/racist tensions in this neoliberal time. Leary’s history of the word finds that “accountability cannot be separated from a bureaucracy’s public performance of responsibility – you are accountable to the degree that you can be perceived as being accountable.” He goes on to say that “accountability is unthinkable apart from the mechanisms of enforcement and punishment.”⁷⁷ As I argue in the next chapter, student affairs structures are primed to absorb the need for accountability measurements in the field’s fundamental reliance on quantification, assessment, and restructuring. Because accountability rests on the need for quantifiable results, the policy changes made in response to such campus crises must be executed and assessed rapidly, often to the detriment of effecting lasting and comprehensive change for marginalized students on campus. In any case, the assessment of a policy change made in *response* to an event is only necessary for as long as those who remember the event are still present – which, on a modern university campus with rotating student bodies, expendable staff, and increasing rates of adjunct faculty, is not very long. This leaves space for administrators to knowingly employ ineffective policies and structural models and benefit from the appearance of *doing* something.

In his ending remarks at a town hall meeting days after his second statement, Fr.

Holtschneider told us:

What you’re pointing out is that we’ve failed this time, we really failed. Not just in the invitation of the speaker, but how this managed everything substantially [sic], the threats that hit people’s emails, the ugliness of the messages that people received. We failed. We

⁷⁷ Ibid, 22.

didn't succeed in creating the community that we've always talked about. You don't have the perfect president, but I will work my heart out at it.⁷⁸

Leary identifies the words “fail” and “failure” as gaining increasing social capital within neoliberal rhetoric. In this context, failures are seen as necessary, expected, and commendable in the pursuit of success, and the admittance of failure as a noble and humbling deed. He finds that failures are not seen as “consequences of an unfair system, but temporary setbacks in a basically fair order that can prepare you for later success.”⁷⁹ What this implies is that the university has the ability in its established systems and ways to “succeed” at diversity, or at creating a “safe” atmosphere for its diverse constituency, dispelling any possibility that the system and institution might need to fundamentally and comprehensively change – if not be dismantled – in order to combat the ways racism manifests on campuses. As the word “presumes a normative model of success,”⁸⁰ the admittance of the university failing to prevent such an instance as our case study or to “correctly” respond to it is then allowed to be a “learning experience” and an “opportunity” to grow and strengthen as a community.

Another telling word from these proceedings is “conversation” – or, as used interchangeably, “dialogue.” In the neoliberal zeitgeist, Leary broadly defines “conversation” as “any large-scale, mass-mediated social interchange” and finds that the measure of the productivity of such conversations is not in resolving or solving issues but in the ability of mass media and large powers to gauge the interests, motivations, and skepticism of the populace in relation to a certain issue. In a political context, Leary says, “In a nominally democratic culture like the United States, in which dissent is tolerated up to the point it seeks to disrupt the

⁷⁸ Matthew Paras, “In Town Hall, Holtschneider Faces Anger from Students, Expresses Regret,” *The DePaulia*, June 5, 2016, <https://depauliaonline.com/23303/news/students-express-anger-demand-change-town-hall-holtschneider/>.

⁷⁹ Leary, *Keywords*, 93.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

institutions it targets, political opposition is routinely framed as an opportunity for dialogue.”⁸¹

In other words, conversation is a word through which democratic ideals can be expressed, projected, and performed without any real intention to create or allow democratic change. The large-scale nature of the word allows it also to be used to effect the communal feelings that are so integral to neoliberal rhetorical strategies in the U.S. Leary finds that the ways “conversation” and “dialogue” are employed imply that “all participants are on the same side, troubled by shared problems, pursuing a common outcome.”⁸² Though he does not use the word “conversation,” Fr. Holtschneider expresses this sentiment in his second statement:

I personally worry about the months ahead as the [2016 U.S. presidential] election continues to embolden and unleash the worst elements of society. Those voices will rankle within the university, and will threaten to divide us further. The question for DePaul is how to strengthen and maintain a human community where all of us commit to kindness and civility first, even as we discuss matters where we disagree. And for this, I write to request your help today.

In this passage, Fr. Holtschneider posits discussions of issues as the rational opposite of hostility. He does not acknowledge the uneven (read: historically and systematically racist) terrain on which participants would be approaching such “civil” discussions as he imagines them, nor does he recognize that the “matters where we disagree” are life-threatening for some and empowering for others.

Leary goes on to point to the “national conversation about race” as the most indicative example of the motif of conversation and asserts that “in spite of the encouragement of bluntness and honesty, the ‘national conversation about race’ is a rhetorical means by which racism is loudly *avoided* in U.S. media and politics.”⁸³ In the same performative fashion as Bill Clinton’s 1997 town hall speaking event series “Initiative on Race,” Fr. Holtschneider’s first step after his

⁸¹ Ibid, 48-49.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

initial statements was to hold a limited-attendance town hall event in which he never directly responded to the students who spoke but made only opening and final statements. The event was also moderated by the president of the Black Student Union, a move many of us saw as grossly tokenistic and performative as the student mostly only discouraged other students from personally attacking the administrators. Fr. Holtschneider also directed meetings between a few of his subordinates (without him) and “representatives” of racial/ethnic minority groups and queer students on campus.⁸⁴ The president’s limited participation in these more small-scale conversations despite his apparent dedication to creating a campus dialogue “on where DePaul goes from here” went so far as for him to decline meetings with any student reporters, saying that “the only way to build back trust from the student body is to do it with action.”⁸⁵ This forebodes the administration’s drastic policy and structural changes that I discuss in the next section and the following chapter.

Doing Deeds

Thus far, I have analyzed the language of then-president Fr. Holtschneider’s two statements made in the wake of Yiannopolous’ disastrous visit to DePaul’s campus. This review and the identification of the statements’ rhetorical strategies has been imperative to locating what Ahmed terms the “nonperformativity” of diversity documents – or how the performance of these documents for the university is in their nonperformativity. In other words: rather than the efficacy of the statements being in the creation of action, it is in the existence and performance of

⁸⁴ Along with the presidents of the queer student organizations, I was invited to the LGBTQ meeting as the student assistant to the LGBTQ Studies program and LGBTQA Student Services. To challenge the idea of institution-sanctioned “leaders” of LGBTQ students on campus, I brought around twenty other queer-identified students with me. Our concerns about closing CIISC and being segregated in this new model were little acknowledged, and the vice president never followed up with meeting notes or invitations to additional meetings as he promised us.

⁸⁵ Not a direct quote from Fr. Holtschneider but paraphrased in Paras, “Town Hall.”

the statement itself, as “the failure of the speech act to do what it says is not a failure of intent or even circumstance, but it is actually what the speech act is doing. In other words, the nonperformative does not ‘fail to act’ because of conditions that are external to the speech act: rather, it ‘works’ because it fails to bring about what it names.”⁸⁶ At the same time, what’s most interesting about this particular case study, is that DePaul did “do” something more than these released statements. However, I argue that even these more tangible doings – the movement of funds, the restructuring of offices, the formation of physical spaces, the creation of new staff positions, and more – continue to perform in their nonperformativity, especially under the conditions and context of universities in this neoliberal social formation.⁸⁷

These structural changes actually begin with Fr. Holtschneider’s one-year notice of resignation a week after his second statement. It could easily have been constructed as such, but he did not resign directly because of the strong critiques of his handling of the Yiannopolous situation, as he had already been in the process of confirming and presenting his resignation in the months before the incident. However, many of us saw that the policy changes he enacted in his last year of presidency in response to the Yiannopolous event were made from the safety he had from living through the ramifications of his decisions, as the contentious restructuring he commanded did not start until August of 2017, just as his successor, A. Gabriel Esteban, was taking over.

A year after Yiannopolous visited our campus and toward the end of Fr. Holtschneider’s tenure, the university outlined a complete restructuring of the Division of Student Affairs that

⁸⁶ Ahmed, “Nonperformativity,” 104-105.

⁸⁷ Just as in any participant-observer position, there is a level of bias that must be recognized. As someone who was intimately and emotionally involved in these proceedings, it might be easy to skew the presentation of these policy changes as linear attacks on the people on “my side.” However, I cannot pretend to believe that such linearity is even possible under the complexities of such a situation and the entrenched bureaucracy of such a neoliberalized university. And just as my proximity to the situation might make me privy to bias, it also makes me privy to the intense politics that went on “behind the scenes” of these decisions and complicated any imagining of linearity.

was predicated on the dismantling of the Center for Identity, Inclusion and Social Change (CIISC), a resource office with a multicultural framework.⁸⁸ The non/performativity of this restructuring exists in the *depiction* of a committed alliance with the Black Student Union (BSU) and in the less than desirable follow-through with the plans. The decision to dismantle CIISC was done in part to appease the Black Student Union, who had been in talks with the administration since before the Yiannopolous event about creating a resource center exclusively for Black students, something Fr. Holtschneider made sure to reference in his second post-Yiannopolous statement. Remember, also, that the then-president of the BSU was used as a moderator and token in Fr. Holtschneider's town hall event. The BSU – whose leadership leaned conservative, respectable, and oftentimes queerphobic – also had fundamental differences with CIISC as many of the staff in the office were very critical of respectability politics and tried to center queerness in their praxis and spaces.⁸⁹ Taking these challenges into consideration, the request for an exclusive resource center for Black students on campus was complex in that it compromised the idea that CIISC was to provide those resources. This is not to suggest that the BSU intentionally acted with such animosity but to show how the creation of a Black resource center was always wrapped up in compromising CIISC. This was also, in part, because the university structure could imagine only a single-track solution to resourcing an identified and officially represented marginalized group.

⁸⁸ See Appendices C and D.

⁸⁹ It is necessary to note here that I struggle to explain these dynamics and that they were not as clear-cut as I might suggest here. It is true that the community of students and staff around CIISC were more or less organized into cliques, often ones that were tied to our social identities and our politics. There were tensions with one CIISC staff member and the students with whom she worked closely, who frequently enforced respectability politics by shaming behaviors that didn't uphold traditional ideas of formal relationships, enforcing formalwear at certain events and meetings, and alienating queer-presenting Black students from their organizations. Of course, my perspective on these relationships come from my own experience and that of those to whom I was close. What's most important to note here is that there were cliques and tensions within the community that very few of us were committed to fixing or even equipped to fix.

This precarious dynamic was a convenient place for the administration to make a show of supporting the BSU while at the same time repressing the most dissenting voices on campus, i.e. the student organizers (who were mostly multiply marginalized) and the staff who very closely supported and amplified our voices within the division – especially as “budget constraints” could be employed to argue that the division could not afford both CIISC and a new resource center. The request for a new resource center catalyzed the making of an “African American Resource Center Report” from DePaul’s Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity that looked at various models of Black resource centers and concluded its ten pages with:

This report presents the research conducted this year on AARC’s. We put forth this data with no recommendations but for consideration of what an AARC at DePaul can be. The AARC Committee also strongly suggests including students in every level of planning as DePaul moves forward in creating a center. Students are at the heart of this matter... Lastly, the committee is aware that in creating a center may precipitate the creation of other identity centers. This runs contrary to DePaul’s current structure. However, this should not be a rationale for not moving forward with creating a safe space for African American students where they feel safe, supported and have a sense of belonging. The PDC AARC committee respectfully submits its report, we strongly recommend moving forward with creating an AARC, and we anxiously await the decision on which model will be best for DePaul University.⁹⁰

The report looked at three different AARC models at other universities, including the “multicultural model” that CIISC mirrored, and made no recommendations for what DePaul’s model should be. Despite this, the report was often referenced by administrators in support of the new model, seemingly in the hopes that no one would actually read the report (which appeared to be over a hundred pages but was actually 90 percent minutes and notes from meetings).

What’s more, many parts of the plans laid out by Fr. Holtschneider just as he was leaving were not actualized either at all or to the extent presented. Of great consequence to students was the delayed opening of the new centers: though promised to be open in the fall quarter of that

⁹⁰ DePaul Office of Institutional Diversity & Equity, *OIDE African American Resource Centers Report* (Chicago: DePaul Office of Institutional Diversity & Equity, 2017), 11.

year, the centers did not open until January of the following year. This meant that dozens of students were without the jobs they were promised for four months. The plans had also stated that each new center would have a graduate assistant to work with each center's coordinator, but this never happened. It was not until the winter quarter of 2019 (two years after opening) that the coordinators were given the green light to each hire an undergraduate programming assistant.

As of the spring of 2019 and to my knowledge, only three students who were involved in the post-Yiannopolous student organizing, including myself, are still at DePaul. As more of us have left every year, the institutional memory of Yiannopolous' visit is waning, and attempts to organize around the products of an event that no one remembers are futile at best, especially when these restructuring plans themselves were not announced for a full year after the events and after many of those students had already left the university. 2020 should host the three-year review of the resource centers model as laid out in the original restructuring plans, and there will be no students around who were present at Yiannopolous' event and very few who were connected to the Center for Identity, Inclusion, and Social Change during its last year.

This cycle of non/performativity is integral to the rhetorical strategies that I have outlined in this chapter. The immediate and fast-paced nature of this cycle is not exclusive to this case study, as it reflects the ways that universities at large have come to respond to "diversity issues" in our current socio-political context in the U.S. This same dynamic is a microcosmic reflection of how neoliberalism has evolved and the ways that such rhetorical strategies are employed in times of heightened attention to certain social and political issues, most notably during large-scale instances of racial/racist tensions and often without making direct mention of race or racism. This case study works to show not just how documents can perform functions in their failure to act, as Ahmed suggests, but also how tangible actions can hold only performative

significance and how these processes might work to create a diversity industrial complex steeped in bureaucracy and without much accountability to those most detrimentally impacted by racism.

Chapter 4: Student Affairs as Buffer Zone

I think a lot of [student affairs] practitioners exist like we're at-will. We can go at any time. I mean...it's hard. It's not going to be like DePaul can instantly get rid of someone, but they can and they will get rid of people. And they'll keep themselves safe. The university will save itself because that's what it's meant to do. It's not actually that invested in any of us, especially folks who are really trying to be like, "Hey, you're not doing this thing right." It's not like [they'll say,] "Oh hey thanks." It's like, "Keep on talking like that and I'll make sure you don't have a job," because we live in a capitalist world. That's terrifying for a lot of people.⁹¹

—Student Affairs Employee B

At some point in the midst of the riot, I found myself alone and unable to find anyone I knew. The Student Center, the building where the event had been held, was locked down, and most of the people I knew were still inside. The number of vindicated white supremacists around me far outweighed the number of people of color. Suddenly, I was in the arms of Sara Furr, the director of DePaul's Center for Identity, Inclusion, and Social Change (CIISC), being pulled by her through the crowds outside of the Student Center. Despite the lockdown, a door was opened somehow by Rico Tyler, another student affairs staff member, and I was taken through and back to the CIISC offices. A year after the event, CIISC was dismantled and Sara Furr's position was terminated.

Sara and Rico were only two of the many staff from their division who stayed on campus (past their working hours) the night of the event, including more than half the staff from CIISC. Two of the staff had even organized a counter-event that acted as a healing and talking space for those who supported the protest but couldn't physically or mentally take part in it. Ashley Knight, the Dean of Students, was the only upper administrator who was present for the event and protest. Though the administration knew weeks in advance that there would be a protest,

⁹¹ Interview with Student Affairs employee B, April 25, 2018.

President Holtschneider was touring Normandy at the time, and Gene Zdziarsky, the Vice President of Student Affairs, was on his boat in Lake Michigan.⁹²

In the year between that event and the dismantling of CIISC, the staff in that office, along with other antiracist faculty and staff throughout the university, absorbed the labor produced from that event in several ways. Both the statements and the policy changes put forth by Father Holtschneider and the university were effectively performative. In order for policy changes – in our case, tangible structural changes – to be performative, they must fail to perform the function they are directed to perform. However, a university cannot direct the opening of a new office without hiring people to do something in that office. How, then, can it fail to perform its duty? In this chapter, I posit the field of student affairs – realized at DePaul as the Division of Student Affairs – as a buffer zone that maintains a bureaucratic distance between university administrators and students, particularly students publicly challenging the university’s brand. Situating CIISC and its dismantling within a larger analysis of the field of student affairs, this chapter analyzes the structural strategies that have developed to support the neoliberal processes at work within the university that deter multiracial work among students and alliances between antiracist student organizers and staff, even when their job descriptions direct them to aid marginalized students.

Student Affairs as Buffer Zone

I find it useful to conceptualize student affairs as a reflection of Kivel’s “buffer zone.” Kivel situates the buffer zone within the socioeconomic structure of the U.S. in which the top 20 percent holds a far majority of the wealth, while the bottom 80 percent share 7 percent of the

⁹² This was confirmed by staff in his office.

wealth. As Kivel argues, the central purpose of the buffer zone is to maintain the (im)balances of the nation-state's socio-economic classes (see Figure 1) by coercing implicit consent from those at the bottom, who, in fact, produce the "social wealth" that allows the ruling class to maintain its riches.⁹³ The buffer zone is made up of intermediaries who sit below the ruling class and above the masses who make up the lower classes. The aims of the buffer zone are achieved by "taking care of people on the bottom," "keeping hope alive," and

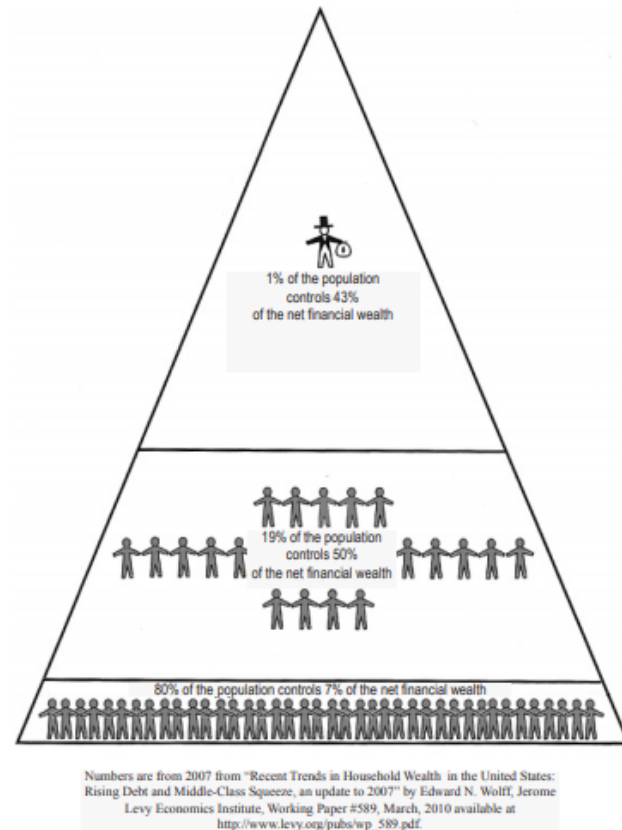


Figure 4

"maintaining the system by controlling those who want to make changes."⁹⁴ Much of this work is not done intentionally to benefit the ruling class, especially the caretaking jobs like teaching, social work, nursing, and counseling, which are primarily performed by women among the lower classes. While these functions purport the advancement of people at the bottom, they simultaneously stagnate the people they are meant to help. This is done structurally, through bureaucracies like health care, public education, the welfare state, and even non-profits that are systemically racist and under-funded and are governed, regulated, and influenced by those in the ruling class. All the while, the bodies who perform the actual labor are the most visible and

⁹³ Paul Kivel, "Social Services or Social Change? Who Benefits from Your Work," in *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, edited by INCITE! (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 133.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 134-136.

therefore immediately accountable – that is, expendable – for the failings of the work they do. The role of the ruling class in this help/harm paradox is invisibilized, preventing them from being held accountable.

Positing student affairs as a buffer zone structure allows us to understand the bureaucratic reaction to diversity and to explore how neoliberal restructuring systematizes threatening structures or entities into an unproductive bureaucracy. In connecting with my arguments in the previous chapter, I contend that systematizing initiatives that respond to diversifying student populations through student affairs allows the university to create a narrative in which socio-economic marginalization happens only outside of the university and the university is righteously making up for that by providing “more” resources than “normal” students are given. Most importantly, the university administration – as the ruling class in our scenario – profits off the appearance of an embraced diversity because, as Leong puts it, “in a society preoccupied with diversity, nonwhiteness is a valued commodity.”⁹⁵ There is a familiar contradiction in the way that student affairs programs were created to accommodate (and even recruit⁹⁶) these marginalized populations at the same time that universities were rapidly raising tuition costs, furthering the marginalization of these under-resourced populations. In this way, student affairs has always operated in a deficit, with the student populations they are meant to serve remaining in perpetual marginalization.

⁹⁵ Leong, “Racial,” 2154.

⁹⁶ Larry Moneta, “Intersectionality in Student Affairs: Perspective from a Senior Student Affairs Officer,” *New Directions for Student Services*, no. 157 (Spring 2017): 69-70.

Template Responses to Student Protest

Responsive to student protest and willing to establish structural support for marginalized students when demanded, DePaul boasts a commitment to “[providing] equal opportunities to students and employees without regard to age, national origin, race, sex, handicap, creed or color. Moreover, it strives to recruit and retain faculty and staff who reflect the diverse mix of the student body.”⁹⁷ However, as evident in the recent years, this language of diversity and inclusion has done relatively little to change the experiences of people of color and queer-identified people at DePaul. This history shows first that absorption into the Division of Student Affairs and reactive restructuring are the university’s primary responses to students’ claims of racism. Secondly, it shows that the university structure is, in a number of ways, antithetical to supporting marginalized students, as budgetary allocations and constraints detrimentally impact the kinds of resources with which rapidly diversifying student populations are provided.

From its onset, CIISC had always performed unofficial labor for the university, providing the optics needed to affirm DePaul’s brand as a devotedly diverse institution and to show that the administration is responsive to student protest. In fact, the office that eventually became CIISC was spurred by student protest. In 1994, Latinx students staged a sit-in to call to question the university’s dismissal of two Latinx staff members and its ability to work with students, staff, and faculty of color.⁹⁸ In 1995, a coalition called Concerned Black Students protested the publication of anti-Black articles in the school newspaper, *The DePaulia*, with a ten-day sit-in, supported by students from other cultural student organizations. The protests were answered by the university administration’s creation of the Multicultural Implementation Committee, which

⁹⁷ DePaul University Mission Statement, updated 2016. <https://offices.depaul.edu/mission-and-values/about/Pages/MissionStatement.aspx>.

⁹⁸ Monica Schrager, “Latino Students Hold Sit-in over Personnel Turnover,” *The DePaulia*, May 13, 1994, 1.

declared needs for increased funding, institutional support, and representation of students of color.⁹⁹ By early 1996, the Cultural Center opened on DePaul's Lincoln Park Campus.¹⁰⁰ This attempt at accountability sparked a chain of constant overhauls in the ways resources were allocated to support marginalized student populations. Between 2004 and 2005, responding to more student protest, LGBTQ Studies and LGBTQA Student Services were advocated for, and implemented, with the support of then-president Father Dennis Holtschneider, who served as the university's president from 2004 to 2017. 2009 saw the merging of the Cultural Center and the Office of Diversity Education, becoming the Center for Intercultural Programming (CIP). In 2014, LGBTQA Student Services was subsumed by CIP. In 2015, CIP was restructured and rebranded as the Center for Identity, Inclusion and Social Change. And finally, at the end of the 2016-2017 academic year, the administration announced a comprehensive restructuring of the Division of Student Affairs that was predicated on the dismantling of CIISC.

In its final iteration, CIISC's purpose was to support the increasing number of marginalized students that constituted the diversifying student populations to which universities struggled to respond through the corporatization. In its institutional capacity, CIISC hosted speakers, artists, and workshop facilitators with social justice-oriented work to share with students; provided dozens of student jobs; space and computers to do homework; a library of queer literature and media; support, training, and funding for cultural student organizations; social justice educational training for groups, faculty, and classrooms; and advocacy for students experiencing problems with professors, financial aid, and other institutional barriers faced especially by marginalized student populations. The office operated with a multiracial and

⁹⁹ Vanessa Weber, "10 Days that Rocked DePaul," *The DePaulia*, April 21, 1995, 1.

¹⁰⁰ Colin Moeller, "DePaul Celebrates Opening of Cultural Center: Students, Faculty, and Staff Participate in the Week-long Celebration," *The DePaulia*, January 26, 1996, 1.

intersectional framework, dedicated to seeing identity holistically and forging connections among students from disparate positions. The office's programming doubly emphasized recognizing the material realities of race, gender, sexuality, disability, and class and fostering spaces of solidarity across these lines. This was most reflected in the unofficial labor that the staff in CIISC performed for the students they were directed to help. Next to its intended structural functions, the CIISC practitioners scouted out ways to get as much free food for students as possible, often forfeited their offices to students who needed to sleep during the day, held intentional healing spaces after local or national tragedies, and often made themselves available for students in emotional crises. In the weeks after Yiannopolous' event, CIISC's offices and conference room were full of students almost all day, every day.

However, the office was not without its many and complex problems, as it was an entity sanctioned by an institution which was founded on hegemonic constructions of power. There were also sharp contentions among different pools of students. At times, there seemed to be multiple CIISCs with varying ideas of the mission of the office. A contingent of queer people space who saw the office and its staff as radical antiracist change agents within the university, of color thrived in the space, but problems of both ego and want of safety arose when students or staff in the office did not share the same queer and antiracist politics. This discouraged younger students or students new to social justice language and theory from joining a community that might have made justice work more accessible to them. The predominate queerness of the space pushed many cisgender and heterosexual students of color to their own silo, closely connected to the one staff member in the office who pointedly did not operate with the queer, anti-institutional framework but with a more respectable and capitalist approach to antiracism. There were also the students, often white and cisgender/heterosexual, who filled some of the administrative student

jobs and who were uninterested in the social justice mission of the space. However, this disinterest at times might have been assumed. Some questioned their presence and commitment from the start, and they were not frequently invited to come into the community and learn more about how they, too, had a stake in the mission.

These issues were, of course, compounded by our logistical constraints as students and sometimes employees and the capacity everyone had for diving into the deep work needed to unravel the complexities of these relationships. With only seven core staff members, there was only so much they could do to change these dynamics in which they were also actively implicated. By the nature of the office and positions, they were also forced into an irreconcilable friction between defying the institution and keeping their jobs, some were often resented by students for not being “radical enough.” Along with these politics, we all just did not have the time or energy necessary to fostering an accessible and sustainable community, let alone a coalition ready to fully commit to each other. Ultimately, many of these issues were rooted in a praxis that focuses on sharp lines of identity and difference, a consequential lack of will to adapt and make room for others’ needs, and an egotistical and individualistic understanding of justice.

Dolhinow argues that neoliberalism on university campuses functions as an “agent of enclosure” which uses institutional means – commonly through restructuring – to enclose activist spaces and collapse collectives.¹⁰¹ The decision to dismantle CIISC was in accordance with the university’s historical responses to student unrest, as student organizers had waged a campaign against the university’s “diversity” practices in the year after Yiannopolous’ visit and amidst the concurrent inflammations of racism. These student organizers were connected to, and supported by, many of the CIISC staff, as well as other staff and faculty throughout the university. At the

¹⁰¹ Dolhinow, “Activism,” 14-16.

same time, groups of Black and Latinx students had started advocating for having their own, respective resource centers (in addition to CIISC) months before Yiannopolous' event. At this juncture of student demands, vocal dissent among some student staff and faculty, and budgetary considerations the administration took the opportunity to kill a number of birds with one stone.

The responsive restructuring involved scattering or ending the various programs that CIISC had developed and establishing four resource centers in its place, respectively for Black, Latinx, LGBTQA+, and AAPI and Desi students. Of course, the plan itself didn't say that any of these programs would be ended but that they would be redistributed to other parts of the division. However, a number of programs – student jobs – were lost in the shuffle. All seven of CIISC's staff positions were terminated in this plan and only two staff members were hired into new positions. And as discussed in the second chapter, student organizers tried to counter this plan with calls for a more "intersectional" framework. The administration's response to this was the creation of a staff position titled "Intersectional Programming Coordinator," which never had a clear job description and was phased out within a year. Had it lasted, this position would not have made up for the coalitional intentions at the root of CIISC's work. From the start, CIISC was a token for the university administration, providing the optics and work necessary for the university to maintain a brand of diversity and inclusion that masked the racism entrenched in the university. While they were not completely unafraid, the staff in CIISC were vocally supportive of the student coalitions who posed a threat to the university's brand, supportive enough to threaten and lose their jobs. Without the infrastructure that CIISC provided as a base for antiracist student organizers to build critical connections among each other and compounded by a segregationist model of providing "resources" for students at the university's margins, the

dismantling of CIISC compromised the little hope we still had to build any kind of sustainable, critical community on campus, let alone an active, effective coalition.

The Constant Assessment of Student Affairs

The contentions in this case study are indicative of the fundamental construction of the field of student affairs under neoliberalism and corporatization. In an integrative literature review of competencies important to professional development in the field of student affairs administration, Herdlein, Riefler, and Mrowka found that “as institutions of higher education have become more diverse, complex, technologically sophisticated, and financially challenged, there has been a shift in focus from a counseling and interpersonal orientation to an administrative and managerial approach.”¹⁰² Of course, this is part of a comprehensive shift in the atmosphere of universities with soaring tuitions costs,¹⁰³ rapid demographic changes in university populations,¹⁰⁴ and an upsurge of public scrutiny of the efficacy of higher education – changes to which universities were not equipped to react effectively.¹⁰⁵ In responding to this confluence of obstacles, universities are forced to compete more than ever before and have trended toward creating economies in themselves, as Curran and Hague suggest in their critique of the obsession with branding both at DePaul University and universities across the U.S. In this condition, Curran and Hague describe faculty – and I argue staff as well – as “cogs in the

¹⁰² Richard Herdlein, Laurel Riefler, and Kaleigh Mrowka, “An Integrative Literature Review of Student Affairs Competencies: a Meta-Analysis,” *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice* 50, no. 3 (2013): 266.

¹⁰³ Florence A. Hamrick and Krista Klein, “Trends and Milestones Affecting Student Affairs Practice,” *New Directions for Student Services*, no. 151 (Fall 2015): 15-17; Kent T. Porterfield and Elizabeth J. Whitt, “Past, Present, and Future: Contexts for Current Challenges and Opportunities for Student Affairs Leadership,” *New Directions for Student Services*, no. 153 (Spring 2016): 11.

¹⁰⁴ Hamrick and Klein, “Trends,” 17; Porterfield and Whitt, “Past,” 11-13; Raechele L. Pope and Amy L. Reynolds, “Multidimensional Identity Model Revisited: Implications for Student Affairs,” *New Directions for Student Services*, no. 157 (Spring 2017): 15.

¹⁰⁵ Hamrick and Klein, “Trends,” 20-23; Porterfield and Whitt, “Past,” 11-13.

machine of manufacturing ‘brand DePaul’” wherein, rather than a critical education, students are to be sold a lifestyle in which diversity becomes an amenity,¹⁰⁶ rather than a critical methodology that challenges the commodified identity politics at work with the institution.

In 2018, I interviewed four student affairs employees from DePaul who had either worked in, or closely with, CIISC. They represented a contingent of radically antiracist student affairs staff who operate with a deep critique of the positions they hold, positions directed to help marginalized students at the same they are implicated in the further marginalization of those students. One interviewee named these conflicts very early in their interview as one of the hardest issues for them in navigating their position, saying that they struggle constantly with adequately advocating for students (i.e. needing to be vocally critical of the institution and the administration) while still remaining non-threatening enough to the administration in order to keep their job.¹⁰⁷ Three of the interviewees saw that their purpose was actually in strategizing around the institutional barriers of their positions in order to support students. Referencing Audre Lorde’s assertion that “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house,” one practitioner offered this allegory:

[This work is] not going to dismantle the house. Right? But here's what I can do. I can be like, “The master goes to bed at this time, so you can go this way. This step right here is really squeaky, so don't go on that step. Here's a few things that will make dismantling that a lot easier. Like I already ripped up the carpet so...all you need to do is pull it up as opposed to having to do the hard labor of pulling out the staples of it...”¹⁰⁸

This approach goes beyond the material bureaucratic systems to a navigation of the culture of the division. One interviewee of color spoke several times of knowing their place as a tokenized body for the institution and that being outwardly “complacent” with their position as a token is

¹⁰⁶ Curran and Hague, “Special,” 724-726.

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Student Affairs employee A, April 24, 2018.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Student Affairs employee B, April 25, 2018.

what allows them to be able to do the work they feel they couldn't do if they vocally and actively refused to play into the optics of the division.

The interviewees still had more to say about the bureaucratic side, particularly around the constant assessment and restructuring within the division:

I truthfully believe that the profession is still in transition and when we develop these programs or these initiatives...we're always in pilot mode, and I think that's what student affairs practitioners maybe sometimes forget or sometimes faculty don't understand. There is always a pilot mode because students are ever changing, and people are ever changing and the institution is ever changing. So how can we say this program is going to stay here and be the same, have the same vision, mission and goals moving forward when that can change from year to year, potentially quarter to quarter as we've seen obviously.¹⁰⁹

The same interviewee went on to say that this constant change can be both good and bad but that, regardless, it is compounded by the short-term memory of the institution so that the division tends to re-do models and methods from the past without moving forward. Two of the other interviewees recognized that the model for the separate identity-based resource centers is outdated and predicted that they will be overhauled in the next few years and possibly even returning to a model similar to CIISC.

This constant assessment has become an essential element in the field of student affairs. In order to respond to these rapidly-diversifying student bodies – which include race as well as socioeconomic status, age, dis/ability, and students with children¹¹⁰ – and to the notion of universities in “crisis” that predominates U.S. sentiment around universities, assessment and “accountability” have taken on a dominant role in student affairs scholarship and, of course, in the practices within universities.¹¹¹ The constant assessment of program efficacy calls for

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Student Affairs employee C, May 2, 2018.

¹¹⁰ Hamrick and Klein, “Trends,” 16; Porterfield and Whitt, “Past,” 9-13; Rosemary Gillett-Karam, “Student Affairs: Moving from Theories and Theorists to Practice and Practitioners,” *New Directions for Student Services*, no. 174 (Summer 2016): 86-89.

¹¹¹ Hamrick and Klein, “Trends,” 20-23; Porterfield and Whitt, “Past,” 9-13.

constant changes and restructuring;¹¹² Rankin and Garvey go so far as to say, “Perhaps nowhere is the expression ‘the only constant is change’ more evident than in student affairs.”¹¹³ Many in the field, particularly those in higher positions, commend this cycle of assessment. Christakis sings the praises of quantitative program assessment and “scaling” programs both in bettering program efficacy and in improving the optics of a university. Christakis encourages rapidity in assessment and scaling in order to “signal” to parents and students a student affairs division’s desire to retain students and to other programs within a division to quickly assess and scale their own programs in order to compete for expansion resources.¹¹⁴ Charles J. Fey, vice president for academic support and student affairs at the New Jersey Institute of Technology, urges practitioners to “keep everyone minimally disadvantaged” in order to signal to the university that student affairs divisions need more funding. Fey also encourages practitioners to take advantage of crisis situations such as “unexpected deaths of students or community members” to take on leadership roles in the campus community to prove to faculty and administrators that student affairs is a necessity to the school during budget crises.¹¹⁵ And yet another vice president (of academic services and student development at Lehigh Carbon Community College) Thomas W. Meyer makes recommendations for “[applying] business-world techniques to student affairs

¹¹² Hamrick and Klein, “Trends,” 17; Heather N. McCambly and Karen J. Haley, “Equity and the ‘B’ Word: Budgeting and Professional Capacity in Student Affairs,” *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice* 53, no. 2 (2016): 215.

¹¹³ Susan Rankin and Jason C. Garvey, “Identifying, Quantifying, and Operationalizing Queer-Spectrum and Trans-Spectrum Students: Assessment and Research in Student Affairs,” *New Directions for Student Services*, no. 152 (Winter 2015): 73.

¹¹⁴ Michael N. Christakis, “Using Assessment Data to Scale Programs in Student Affairs,” *Assessment Update* 28, no. 6 (November–December 2016): 8.

¹¹⁵ Claudine McCarthy, “Demonstrate Value of Student Affairs by Boosting Leadership Skills for Managing Challenges Facing Your Campus,” *Student Affairs Today* 19, no. 2 (May 2016): 12.

leadership,” including providing “good customer service” to students: “Many higher education professionals think that students aren’t customers. But they are...”¹¹⁶

Living the Contradictions of Student Affairs

This numbers-driven and optics-focused direction in student affairs speaks to the contentious ways that student affairs praxes contribute to the maintenance of a bureaucratic distance between students and the university. This was a significant contention within CIISC. As I mentioned earlier, there were tensions between staff and students within CIISC over the constant assessment within the programs that turned students into numbers and sometimes seemed to negatively influence how the staff allocated time and resources. Because the processes of the university lack transparency, what’s difficult for students to conceptualize is how necessary this often gross and uncomfortable assessment is to staff keeping their jobs and accessing resources for their programming.

Another common thread in these practitioners’ praxes was their personal identities as a driving force for them to even do the work to navigate these compromises. Among the four interviews were identifications as assault survivors, queer people, and people of color and all named such identities as what propelled them to work with marginalized student populations and what distinguished them from many of their colleagues with relatively-less personal commitment to students. Three of the four spoke to the fact that this personal attachment to the work pulled them toward these jobs and blurred the traditional lines between work life and personal life and that late nights and heavy emotional labor were an implicit but integral part of their jobs. These personal attachments showed up on the day of Yiannopolous’ visit when dozens of practitioners

¹¹⁶ Joan Hope, “Apply Business-World Techniques to Student Affairs Leadership,” *Student Affairs Today* 18, no. 7 (October 2015): 7.

made the decision to stay after their working hours in preparation for the brewing confrontation, including three of my interviewees. Each of these interviewees felt that being there was part of the commitment they made to students in their jobs, and as the conflict erupted that evening, all three said that they became prepared to physically defend students. One interviewee hinted that it has since become an ongoing touchpoint within the division to acknowledge that it was staff of color who did end up physically putting themselves in between students and the white supremacist rioters that day.

Such personal investments make for natural coalitions between student affairs practitioners and the marginalized students they feel compelled to protect and advocate for. Though my description might not communicate it, these relationships were more often true friendships than the paternalistic depictions that talking about the field of student affairs evokes. It is a difficult line to conceptualize when the assessment-focused direction in which the field is headed forces a bureaucratic distance between the staff and students. With the same purposes of Kivel's buffer zone, the contradictory space of student affairs is designed to fail at its job at the same time that it generates "proof" both formally and informally that they and the university are succeeding in their responses to accusations of racism. Of the policy changes and restructuring in the two years since Yiannopolous' event, the interviewees recognized the undeniable causation between the events of that day, the student organizing, the outspokenness of many of the CIISC staff members, the university's systemic racism, and the dismantling and replacement of the Center for Identity, Inclusion, and Social Change. At the same time, however, the interviewees did not pretend that it was as simple and linear as this narrative suggests, as they recognized the complicated politics and interpersonal histories within the division, the real budget constraints that the university is facing, and the need of then-president Father Holtschneider to leave a

seemingly-positive legacy behind him with the creation of a resource center for Black students. This bureaucratic network necessarily prohibits the kind of coalitions that the devoted student affairs staff in CIISC tried to foster after the event.

Conclusion

This last perspective of the university's anti-coalitional network paints a daunting picture of an impossible landscape on which to effect antiracist change on campus. And while it is not exactly a linear cause and effect, seven people lost their jobs in part because they refused to be silent and persisted in fostering the radical spaces that encouraged coalitions among students across identity lines. That kind of infrastructure is the most difficult and most necessary ingredient of building sustainable campus coalitions that are also multiracial and intergenerational. In the next chapter, I discuss further the importance of such infrastructure and what it takes to build a foundation on which it can be fostered.

Chapter 5: Cultivating Campus Coalitions

A praxis of accountability draws our attention to the ways in which identities, cultures, and communities are produced through historical, structural, and systemic inequities... If we cultivate critical and compassionate consciousness and skills to address these structural inequities as they manifest in our identities and relationships as well as in our theorizing, research, organizations, political visions, and strategies, we build more collective accountability within our antiviolence work to transform rather than to deepen these systems of oppression and violence, and to create the spaces where we can practice creating the world we envision.¹¹⁷

Recently, I was talking with one of the two staff members from the Center for Identity, Inclusion, and Social Change (CIISC) who were hired into new positions after its closure. We caught up on things going on in the Women's Center, where I have been a program assistant during my graduate years at DePaul, and he thoughtfully and pointedly remarked that the work we had been doing there in the last couple years reminded him of a certain other office that we had both been deeply involved in. While CIISC and the Women's Center are different in many ways, both were committed to building loving, supportive, and coalitional spaces despite the constraints put on us by institutional powers and the times that we might have caved into them. This connection also shows that we never truly do lose the coalitional power that generations of feminist and antiracist actors have built on our campus, even when it seems that the university has decimated our energy. Like the mythological, many-headed Hydra, when one head is cut off, two more take its place.

This is important to understand and hold as we also acknowledge that we are, nonetheless, systematically prevented from forming *sustainable* intergenerational, multiracial, and feminist coalitions on U.S. university campuses that might effect lasting and fundamental change on the way universities operate. I have spent the preceding chapters detailing such systematic processes of destroying activist coalitional energy on campuses through a case study

¹¹⁷ Russo, *Feminist*, 9-10.

that might serve as a microcosmic illustration of the same processes in place in the U.S. at-large. Before I move on to discuss what it might take to build and sustain the campus coalitions that we need, I will recap what it is that we are working against.

Under neoliberalism, universities in the U.S. have rapidly become corporatized entities focused on efficiency, marketability, and competition within a globalized world. However, because of its role in the lives of its constituents, its organization of those constituents, and it being the major site of much of the knowledge production in the West, the university has taken on a position more similar to a modern nation-state than a corporation. It is both the bureaucratic and political structure of the university and the respectability politics of academia that necessitate a social separation and stratification of undergraduate students, graduate students, full-time faculty, term and adjunct faculty, Student Affairs staff, dining and custodial staff, college bureaucrats, and administrators. Whereas universities once held a more personal relationship with its students, it is now their preoccupation to produce “educated” consumer-citizens ready to take on their place in the global markets – which is often their participation in cycles of debt repayment, still with an allegiance to the ideologies of free market fundamentalism. What interferes most in this intention are the critical voices and actions of antiracist and feminist students who are unafraid to interrupt and work against such corporate allegiance. Dolhinow’s research finds neoliberalism to be “an agent of enclosure in public universities” – I would argue private universities as well – “when they use administrative growth (or bloat) and restructuring to control and correct student activism through spatial appropriation on campus. What the corporate university cannot control through enclosure it exerts control over through cooptation, sanitization, and bureaucratization.”¹¹⁸ Over the years and as university populations have

¹¹⁸ Dolhinow, “Activism,” 14.

diversified, it has been student affairs that has developed to take on these roles, working to absorb critical ideas into marketable skills and competencies and serve as a buffer zone between student dissent and the university administration, acting along the zone's stagnating and limiting tenants.

These processes and structures could not operate successfully without the rhetorical strategies that work symbiotically with neoliberal policies and institutions. Most insidiously, the evocation of "freedom" in the U.S. that upholds the values of free market fundamentalism has become "a button that elites can press to open the door to the masses to justify almost anything."¹¹⁹ There is also the avoidance of mentions of race when discussing race and racism within the neoliberal discourse of institutions in favor of a buzzword rhetoric of diversity and inclusion, as well as the co-optation of antiracism for its cultural capital and marketability. More specific to universities and their responses to crisis situations like that of our case study, administrators tend to invoke a pseudo-nationalistic rhetoric of a campus community that fails collectively to live up to its ideals and must all be held accountable for its failures. This strategy helps to reinforce the institution's brand of liberal values by obfuscating the individual accountability of those with power in the institutions and creating the illusion that racism is a force coming only ever from *outside* the institution and never from within. In the end, universities earn the cultural capital of being ashamed of racism without doing anything substantial to change it. Even in the cases where there are policy changes, these acts – whether by coincidence or design – inevitably fall to the omnipotence of bureaucracy and do not fundamentally change the university.

¹¹⁹ John Rapley, *Globalization and Inequality: Neoliberalism's Downward Spiral* (Boulder: Lynne Reiner, 2004), 55.

Next to these bureaucratic and rhetorical processes of preventing sustainable coalitions is the mere fact of being a student – especially one who holds marginalized identities – in this neoliberal moment. A significant aspect of my analysis of this case study has been the logistical constraints on student organizing. In the case of DePaul, the inciting incident happened only days before the end of the quarter and the end of the academic year, meaning not only that we were occupied with finals but also that we had very little time to act before many of us graduated or left the city for the summer and before there was no longer a student body on campus to witness our organizing. There is also the fact that every single student involved in the organizing the following fall quarter held at least one job in addition to being in school full-time, having to do with the increasing rates of poverty, food insecurity, and homelessness among college students in the U.S.¹²⁰ When students are facing barriers to obtaining their basic needs in addition to the demands of being a student, organizing to correct the systems and institutions that so marginalize them becomes next to impossible. Working with limited time and resources, student organizers are constrained to short-term, identity-based goals rather than the needed long-term trajectory of comprehensive and lasting social justice. As Dolhinow finds, “Activist work on topics which foster long-term social justice commitments to social change in general is changing in nature so dramatically due to corporate controls on campuses, that this work is disappearing as identity-focussed [sic] and off-campus activism becomes more evident.”¹²¹ In answer, Lugones pushes for “deep coalitions” that move us beyond short-term and single-issue alliances and embolden us to align our own struggles toward liberation with those of other oppressed groups.¹²² This is the foundation of my search for sustainable and effective campus coalitions.

¹²⁰ Dubick, et al.

¹²¹ Dolhinow, “Activism,” 14.

¹²² María Lugones, *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes: Theorizing Coalition Against Multiple Oppressions* (Latham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 26.

The Ills and Insights of Intersectionality

Foundational to any recent conversation about feminist coalition-building has been the oft-misunderstood theory of intersectionality, a term coined by Black legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 to theorize the position of Black women within the discourse around violence against women. As Carastathis puts it, “Intersectionality is celebrated as the remedy of, and as the only ethical stance toward, power relations within feminist theory and politics.”¹²³ She finds that the absoluteness with which many invoke intersectionality as *the* way to do feminist theory and practice has transformed the word into a cliché, a buzzword, that falls flat once its name is dropped and its cultural capital collected. In the case study, we have seen how student organizers campaigned against the restructuring of our resource center into individual identity-based centers (Black, Latinx, and LGBTQIA+) by invoking intersectionality as 1. applying mostly to those of us who were both queer and of color or who were mixed race and therefore had complicated connections to the established identities, 2. as the answer for the exclusion of Asian, Arab, and Indigenous students from the new model, and 3. as a theoretical backing for our desire to be in a shared physical space across races. The university’s response was the creation of an “Intersectional Programming Coordinator,” whose job was to work with these various centers to create “intersectional programming” but was phased out soon after.

The “ills” of intersectionality are not in the theory itself but in the fundamental misunderstanding of its foundation and intended purposes that has pushed it into the same flat trajectory of “diversity.” At its core, Crenshaw’s intersectionality is rooted in a long history of Black feminism, marked by the Combahee River Collective’s 1974 statement that called for a transformative understanding of interlocking systems of oppression that was missing from the

¹²³ Carastathis, *Intersectionality*, 106.

civil rights and women's rights movements. As one member later remarked, "We wanted to integrate a race/class analysis with an antisexist analysis and practice. And we didn't just want to add on racism and class oppression like white women did."¹²⁴ Despite this and the Collective's assertion that "the *synthesis*¹²⁵ of these oppressions creates the conditions of our lives,"¹²⁶ intersectionality – or, the critical understanding of interlocking systems of oppression – has arguably been used by many in dominant discourse to "add on" considerations of different axes of oppression.

The flattening of intersectionality and the idea that it is the final solution to feminist and antiracist theory and movements has allowed users to continue with the fallacies of identity politics under a guise of a more evolved and inclusive praxis, even where there is no praxis. By fallacies, I mean the way identity politics has been taken up and de-radicalized under neoliberalism, stagnating marginalized identities in perpetual relativity. As Fernandes contends, "While identity-based movements are effective in mobilizing short term political action, in the long run they cannot produce an alternative future that is free from the very identity-based divisions and inequalities that they oppose."¹²⁷ She goes on to argue that "while the very real hierarchies, boundaries, and exclusions of identity must be confronted and changed, the politics of identity cannot provide a lasting strategy for transformative social justice."¹²⁸ Ironically, it was exactly these fallacies that Crenshaw was seeking to confront when she identified intersectionality theory as a *provisional* concept rather than a solution:

I consider intersectionality a provisional concept linking contemporary politics with postmodern theory. In mapping the intersections of race and gender, the concept does

¹²⁴ Kimberly Springer, *Living for the Revolution: Black Feminist Organizations, 1968-1980* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 60.

¹²⁵ My emphasis.

¹²⁶ "The Combahee River Collective Statement," in *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology*, ed. Barbara Smith (Latham: Kitchen Table Women of Color Press, 1983), 26.

¹²⁷ Fernandes, *Transforming*, 26.

¹²⁸ *Ibid*, 27.

engage dominant assumptions that race and gender are essentially separate categories. By tracing the categories to their intersections, I hope to suggest a methodology that will ultimately disrupt the tendencies see race and gender as exclusive or separable.¹²⁹

This, then, begs the question of what it means to use intersectionality provisionally, especially in the face of its mainstream flattening. To this, there are many answers.

This Bridge Called Intersectionality

While Mohanty and Carty rightly find the commodification of our language and movements to be one of the most insidious strategies of neoliberalism, this does not necessitate that we abandon intersectionality theory. As Carastathis argues, “If intersectionality has been uprooted and transplanted in various sites, domains, and contexts, its roots in social-justice movements and critical intellectual projects – specifically, Black feminism – must be recovered, retraced, and embraced.”¹³⁰ In that vein, Okihiro argues for a social formation theory that “[expands] upon intersectionality and its permutations” and attends to the Collective’s emphasis on the synthesis – rather than the layering – of oppressions.¹³¹ His theory underscores exercises of power as its central concern and acknowledges the constant change and negotiation that takes place in the ever-shifting formation of society. He says, “Social formation theory is not solely the intersection or sum of oppressions; it accounts for those meeting points but also their resistances (and accommodations) and the mutually constituting and shifting relations between discourses and the material conditions.”¹³² Okihiro also advances a complex approach to the problem of commodification, advocating for a critical engagement with, and mastering of, the “discourses of

¹²⁹ Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color,” *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (July 1991): 1244-45n9.

¹³⁰ Carastathis, *Intersectionality*, 5.

¹³¹ Okihiro, *Third*, 141.

¹³² *Ibid*, 144.

the ruling class”¹³³ as imperial ideologies and discourses haunt and produce the material realities and power structures of oppression. In many ways, he argues for a multi-front approach to re-appropriating and expanding our theories and language that holds the historical multitudes of Black and Third World feminisms.

Russo, meanwhile, sees the provisional nature of intersectionality as a “bridge to accountability” in the making of feminist coalitions, contending that the theorizing on interlocking systems of oppression “underscores the significance of taking accountability for our differential relationships within these systems as a praxis of critical analysis and action as well as alliance, coalition, and solidarity.”¹³⁴ She advocates for a movement from a politics of inclusion to a politics of accountability that emphasizes a critical examination of our relationships to one another and how we are implicated in the systems and structures that shape and dictate our lives and connections.¹³⁵ And it is not only that we should examine and acknowledge these connections but to actively take responsibility for them. Because the move toward a politics of accountability is a fundamentally transformative cultural shift in oneself and one’s community and is contrary to the individualistic and binary logic that dominates in the West, Russo emphasizes that this is a long-term, collective, and on-going process in which we acknowledge the difficulty and pain in holding ourselves and each other accountable for our complicities with hegemonic power imbalances: “A *communal* approach to accountability means that we build relationships and communities that can hold the inevitable conflict, oppression, and difficulty that we will inevitably experience given the ongoing work of interlocking systemic oppressions.”¹³⁶

¹³³ Ibid, 141.

¹³⁴ Russo, *Feminist*, 4-5.

¹³⁵ Ibid, 7.

¹³⁶ Ibid, 20-21.

Both Okihiro and Russo underscore the transformative complexities involved and necessary in moving intersectionality past its stagnant commodification. Primarily, they advance multi-front movements and community-based coalitions that critically engage with the systems that construct the dominant logics of white supremacist capitalism. Angela Davis likewise says, “Progressive struggles – whether they are focused on racism, repression, poverty, or other issues – are doomed to fail if they do not also attempt to develop a consciousness of the insidious promotion of capitalist individualism.”¹³⁷ If a coalition is to be sustainable, it must also be holistic in its approach to systemic change and constantly self-reflexive among the community. This work cannot be done on the community or coalition-level without being done on the individual level, and vice versa. Jones de Almeida asserts that “[the] struggle for revolutionary change in [the U.S.] has been derailed not only due to institutionalization of social justice movements, but also because of our inability to quiet our egos.”¹³⁸ She argues that what will transform the way we do social justice work is abandoning the capitalistic and individualistic ego and seeking out and internalizing a sense of humility and collectivity that connects us to community and accountability. Forging ahead with a progressive intersectional analysis and actively fighting against its commodification opens pathways to transforming our logics of community, connection, and movement-building as we acknowledge our tendencies to separate from one another.

New Belongings

¹³⁷ Davis, *Freedom*, 1.

¹³⁸ Almeida, “Radical,” 192.

On campus, this approach means acknowledging and organizing against the dangers of the brand of identity politics forced on students, staff, and faculty that encourages individualistic, single-issue campaigns and connections dictated almost solely by social identities organized and compartmentalized by the university's hegemonic powers that profit from that separation. The problem, then, is in finding new ways to relate to one another and build communities that do not also forget the material realities that our social identities invoke. What's more, while letting go of the ego is crucial to coalition and community building, it is not useful to pretend that the ego and the logic of the ego are, or can be, gone from us. Rowe advances a community-building strategy that recognizes the multiplicity and fluidity of the self that is defined by its attachments, contending that "the meaning of self is never individual, but a shifting set of relations that we move in and out of, often without reflection."¹³⁹

Expanding on the values of a politics of accountability, Rowe presents a "politics of relation" that "is not striving toward absolute alterity to the self, but rather to tip the concept of 'subjectivity' away from 'individuality' and in the direction of the inclination toward the other so that 'being' is constituted not first through the 'Self,' but through its own longing to be with."¹⁴⁰ She seeks to reconstruct our idea of "belonging" to "be longing," where the former is a passive, colonial state dictated by social constructions of identity, citizenship, and the heteronormative family and the latter is an active, decolonial state in which we recognize "the politics at stake in our belonging and...envision an alternative."¹⁴¹ Working against the strict confines of the individual ego, Rowe proposes what she calls a "differential mode of belonging" that "allows us

¹³⁹ Carrillo Rowe. "Be Longing," 16.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, 17.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, 16-18.

to move among different modes of belonging without feeling trapped or bound by any one in particular.”¹⁴² She identifies five modes of belonging in this model:

1. An assimilationist mode of belonging speaks to the desire to be recognized by those in power as equals, despite our differences, and to be treated along the lines of our universal humanity. The mainstream civil rights and gay rights movements express an assimilationist mode of belonging in seeking state-sanctioned recognition and the “same” rights whites and heterosexual people.
2. A revolutionary mode of belonging is more critical of mainstream validation. It seeks recognition of the power imbalances that make our differences disadvantages and calls for structural change to correct that.
3. A supremacist mode of belonging seeks to have our differences be not just recognized but valued. In this mode, we understand our differences as qualities that make us better equipped to transform the world than the dominant groups and give us a vision for the world that we want for everyone.
4. In a separatist mode of belonging, we value our differences and “seek to nurture them solely among people ‘like us.’” Though identity-based separation on its own can benefit hegemonic powers as we’ve discussed, Rowe affirms that this, among the other modes of belonging, can be essential to mass movement-building in the opportunity to foster visions of the world with others who have been put at the same vantage point as ourselves.
5. Finally, a differential mode of belonging pushes us to recognize the value and lessons learned in each mode of belonging and understand that the movement between these modes is crucial to building sustainable relationships and movements.¹⁴³

This model of belonging allows us to free ourselves and each other from the egos reinforced by the hegemonic powers of the university and hold each other accountable in realistic ways that value who we are and how we love comprehensively. It allows us to think beyond “I am here because I am queer, Palestinian, Black, etc.,” or “I am an Asian showing up for a Latinx cause,” and moves us toward “I love and care for you as my oppression and liberation is intimately and irrevocably bound with yours, whoever we are.” At the same time, this multimodal conception of belonging honors the saliency of our social identities and the desire to center that at certain times. We are pushed to reconceptualize how we relate to each other and how we understand our connections to identity, community, and power. When we recognize that

¹⁴² Ibid, 33.

¹⁴³ Ibid, 33-34.

there are multiple fronts to community and coalition-building, we might recognize that there are multiple fronts from which to build a movement, as Okihiro contests. We might, then, begin to evade the cycles of commodification that profit from the essentialist forms of identity and belonging that leave us stranded and vulnerable to the ego.

In the same journal issue as Rowe's proposal, Keating responds to the question of sustainable coalition and movement-building with a model of "coalitional consciousness-raising" that "is based on the radical democratic practice of feminist consciousness-raising, yet reconfigures the method in several ways in light of critiques of second-wave feminism in the United States."¹⁴⁴ Contrary to the failure of second-wave feminists to meaningfully integrate contexts of race, transnationalism, class, and sexuality into their model of consciousness raising, Keating contends that "building feminist solidarity requires critical self-reflection that acknowledges that how one lives impacts the lives that others are able to live... We are all connected because of our relational insertion into hierarchies of power and privilege, hierarchies that we also can resist and transform."¹⁴⁵ She emphasizes that "coalitional consciousness [is not] an entity lying dormant or hidden that needs to be elevated or brought to light but...a set of understandings, motivations, and ways of seeing that can be constructed, formed, and fostered together."¹⁴⁶ In other words, this model – as any coalitional model should be – is a long-term commitment to recognizing, and being held accountable for, mistakes, complacencies, and complicities, and to challenging the logics of white supremacist capitalism that stagnate us in our social identities.

Keating offers three steps in building coalitional consciousness:

¹⁴⁴ Cricket Keating, "Building Coalitional Consciousness," *National Women's Studies Association Journal* 17, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 86.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 93.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 94.

Step One: Locating Experience

In a small group that meets regularly, share experiences relating to a chosen theme, paying close attention to the national, racial, class, and other relevant contexts and histories in which the experiences being articulated are being played out.

Step Two: Seeing Resistance to Multiple Oppressions

Examine the experiences with an eye for the multiple relations of oppression and resistance at play.

Step Three: Coalitional Risk-Taking

Explore the barriers to, and possibilities for, coalitional action with regards to the experience. What are the power relations among women themselves that must be challenged in order to build and sustain coalitional action?¹⁴⁷

This model emphasizes interrogating, contextualizing, and historicizing oneself, one's experiences, and one's connections to others in order to understand the complexities of how our world and its power structures have been constructed around and through us. The model's emphasis on valuing each person's experiences "serves to build nonhierarchical and transformative spaces for thinking about, and acting upon one's own and each other's different situations."¹⁴⁸ Russo also applauds a storytelling model in her discussion of Richa Nagar and the Sangtin Writers' work in *Playing With Fire*. Navigating the power dynamic among a Western researcher and the women of a grassroots women's empowerment NGO in northern India, the writers used intimate storytelling in order to break down their bureaucratically-constructed relationships to one another; "they made visible the intersecting powerlines of caste, class, and religion in their lives – in their families and communities. This enabled them to collectively recognize how the power lines shaped the dynamics in their group, the NGO, and their broader interconnected communities."¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, 90.

¹⁴⁹ Russo, *Feminist*, 36-37.

What's most significant about Rowe's and Keating's models is that they must be a regular and consistent practice established before crises like that in our case study happen. This means there must be infrastructure established with a network of support throughout the university and a commitment to caring for and helping each other before we know what the other needs. While the values reflected in, and fostered by, these practices are necessarily anti-bureaucratic, the need for institutional support – i.e. staff and faculty who carry on the work as students age out more rapidly – and resources to create and sustain a coalitional infrastructure still poses the danger of bureaucratic co-optation, the emergence of the individual ego, and the reality of logistical constraints on our time and energy. What makes the difference is a spiritual commitment that fundamentally shifts how we understand the power of institutions – or, as Almeida proposes, “While we can't ignore the pressures and demands of the material world around us, we can shift the perspective that dictates our reality.”¹⁵⁰

Within non-profit and liberation movement work, Almeida laments how the cycle of funding has warped our sense of purpose and justice. She points to a complex of deficit, single-issue, and essentialist thinking of ourselves, our constituents, and our work that prevents us from doing the radical social change that she describes as “[pulling] out the weeds that choke our existence by their roots.”¹⁵¹ Even as we might recognize and struggle against these forces, she contends that money, bureaucracy, and hierarchy have become so central to our organizations that we know no other way to structure ourselves. In her search for hope amidst this seemingly inescapable cycle, she argues that “faith and spirituality can provide us with a new foundation for our work, by shifting our perspective of what is possible. Spirituality provides people with an alternative lens to the deterministic vision of reality which equates power to money, and which

¹⁵⁰ Almeida, “Radical,” 194.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 185.

constantly tries to tell us that there is no alternative to the oppressive reality we live in.”¹⁵² She goes on to survey spiritualized liberation movements and finds:

Across these movements there is an emphasis on integrity, faith in humans to transform their realities, humility, non-materialism, commitment, and sacrifice. While there are differences in how these elements are understood, these kinds of values are explicitly linked to the idea of divine love, which is seen as holding radical power that can transform any situation, no matter how hopeless it may seem. Love has the power to create miracles for those who believe. Whatever our traditions or beliefs may be, we can be strengthened by recognizing the radical principle of believing and living out our vision. In this way, we might discover ways to more fully integrate our personal and spiritual lives with the social justice work to which we are committed.¹⁵³

In her own internalization of this perspective, Almeida comes to rethink the connections between her personal, work, and activist lives and to move away from focusing on her paid non-profit work as her channel of activism toward focusing on her activism in her personal life. In this way, her goals, successes, and methods are no longer motivated or dictated by capitalistic parameters that limit how we might imagine community, connection, and progress.

Fernandes similarly identifies a need for a different kind of hope and posits a spiritualized feminism as a fruitful direction. She extends a methodology for this spiritualization into a fundamentally decolonial praxis in which we search “beyond the commodification of God” by hegemonic religious institutions and seek “a radical form of liberation of the divine – within ourselves, our communities, our world.”¹⁵⁴ She uniquely describes the nature of that commodification as hegemonic powers engaging in a “secular colonization” that mirrors the ways that they also colonize the radical hope of liberation movements.¹⁵⁵ In finding, creating, or reclaiming a decolonized spirituality that then guides us in our movement, community, and coalition-building, we might then be able to escape the “cycles of hope and decline” and

¹⁵² Ibid, 188.

¹⁵³ Ibid, 191.

¹⁵⁴ Fernandes, *Transforming*, 115-116.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, 104.

“structures of inequality” that have always plagued our histories and limited the social transformation that we can imagine.¹⁵⁶

A Real-Life Model in Progress

I began this chapter with the assertion that campus activism is inherently constricted to a short-term, identity-based model of organizing and have since offered coalition-building methodologies rooted in long-term, transformative work that involves a fundamental shift not only in what it means to do that work but in what that work actually is. And while this work must be anti-institutional, it does need infrastructure that is supported at multiple points within the university in order to sustain itself. This kind of infrastructure would take years of commitment from a population with rapid turnover. There is also little precedence for such a commitment and no simple guide for how the coalitional values and models presented here should be implemented. At the same time, this work has always been in progress wherever anyone has begun to call out power imbalances, racism, and violence within universities. In continuing the conversation that began this chapter, the Women’s Center at DePaul can be looked at as a real-life model in progress in how we practice our commitments to lasting coalitional work, transformative justice values, and community-building across differences on campus.

The Women’s Center was established in 1995 and has since been supervised by three directors, each with their own vision for the center. In the summer of 2017, when the Center for Identity, Inclusion, and Social Change (CIISC) was closed, the Women’s Center changed hands as Dr. Ann Russo, an aforementioned tenured faculty member in the Women’s and Gender Studies (WGS) department, took over directorship. In the two years since then, the space,

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, 116.

programming, and vision of the Women's Center has radically changed, and the center has forged a broader feminist community than we thought possible before. The center functions both as a drop-in space welcome to all students, a resource center, and a programming office, all done with a complex praxis grounded in centering, supporting, and amplifying the voices of, those left in the margins of the university.

The center's ability to create such change has, in part, to do with its structural positioning. For one, it is housed in, and funded by, the College Liberal Arts and Social Sciences and headed by a faculty member but is not an academic program – though it has close and structural connections with WGS and other departments within the college. It also has the privilege of not being housed within the Division of Student Affairs (where CIISC was housed), where departments are under much stricter control and staff are less valued, more exposed, and far more expendable. Though the director of the Women's Center is still accountable to higher powers, the current leadership and organization of the college lends to a freer rein. Being a tenured faculty member also allows one to operate relatively more safely under the protections of the ideals of academic freedom. What's more, Dr. Russo came into the position after two decades at DePaul and so had already established a network of connections throughout the university. It is from this structural foundation that the center has been able to provide a transformative presence on campus. What follows are the ways that the Women's Center at DePaul has tried to answer the call to build sustainable, intergenerational, multiracial, and feminist coalitional energy on campus.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ It should be noted that, while I focus on the Women's Center, I do not pretend to believe that the center is the only entity doing coalitional work on campus. In fact, I believe absolutely the opposite. The Women's Center could not live out its values and practices without the work of many others on campus, both in the present and in the past.

Intergenerational

One of the most divergent aspects of the Women's Center's mission and programming has been in bringing together, and serving, faculty, staff, and students. From its onset, the Women's Center was commissioned to support women in every part of the university – in very different fashion from the resource centers within the Division of Student Affairs. As the center has developed a more complex praxis that seeks to serve more than just women on campus, it has still maintained the same commitment to serving students, faculty, and staff. In recent years, the center has made active moves to queer even how we approach those statuses. In one example that reflects many others, the Women's Center co-organized a panel with DePaul's Latinx Cultural Center on the legacy of Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands* and invited not only faculty but also students and Student Affairs staff to speak on the panel. This distinction affirms the academic authority of those not traditionally respected as such in academic settings. The Women's Center has hosted a number of such panels in the last two years, as well as panels connecting current student activists and alumni activists with each other and with more “seasoned” organizers.

What's more, the Women's Center highly values student ideas, even those not directly or explicitly involving women's liberation. The center has developed a close relationship with DePaul's chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine, as well as with unofficial student organizations like Students for Reproductive Justice, Students Against Mass Incarceration, Advocates for Sexual Assault Prevention, and Women's March DePaul from their inception, helping to plan and advertise some of their events, providing institutional support and advice, and offering our physical space for meetings. The center has also worked to help students realize their independent event and programming ideas. After the release of Sandra Bland's cell phone

video of her arrest,¹⁵⁸ the center provided organizing support to a student who saw the need for a rally in support of women, queer, trans, and nonbinary people of color and a person-of-color-only healing circle. While the Women's Center provided support, the students organizing the event had full control over the programming of the event.

On university campuses, undergraduates, graduate students, staff, and faculty are systemically separated by the structure of the university, the social order of academia, and socially constructed ideas about age, intellect, and authority. At the foundation of disrupting these logics is an embrace of, and commitment to, those who might be less versed in the theory and praxis of anti-racist feminism rather than shaming or dismissing. This has been one of the most challenging values that the Women's Center has committed itself to in the last two years. It is difficult to balance leaving room for people's mistakes and holding people accountable for causing harm to others, especially when they might not understand the nature of the harm done. However, that complexity is necessary to coalition-building. Loving and supporting someone who has caused harm *and* the person who has been harmed is uncomfortable and challenging, especially when we ourselves might have been harmed. From these experiences, though, we might learn to reconceptualize what it means to love and be in community together and to challenge the limiting and divisive logics of "good" and "bad," and "right" and "wrong." We might also learn how to absorb these difficult situations into our community, to stop seeing them as "setbacks" to the liberation movements we have committed ourselves to, and to see them as a necessary and integral part of those movements. In decentering punishment, choosing sides, and being "good" at feminist theory and praxis, we are challenged to relate to each other differently and to skew what we think separates us. Rather than a checklist or even a programming

¹⁵⁸ Information about Sandra Bland

methodology, forming intergenerational coalitions necessitates forging new ways of relating to each other and holding each other accountable, challenging the knowledgeable/ignorant dichotomy, and challenging how we perceive “authority” in our spaces and communities.

Multiracial

This aspect, again, comes from finding new ways to relate to each other and share space, while still honoring the material reality of our racial identities and centering that when we need to. On campuses, students of color are pushed to racially and culturally segregate themselves and compete with each other for funding and resources, as identity-based models become increasingly polarizing and under-resourced. Faculty within the identity-based and area-based fields are pressed to do the same under worsening budget cuts. The Women's Center is in a unique position to foster multiracial solidarity because it is not structurally bound to a racial or cultural identity and so has a wider purview and is more accessible to more students.¹⁵⁹

What’s important to holding the balance between honoring the materiality of race and forging new ways to relate to each other is trying to maintain multiple mode of belonging, as Rowe proposes in the previous section. In the center’s programming, the academics, speakers, and activists that the center hosts have a committed intersectional praxis, even in our very identity-specific events like Dr. Barbara Ransby’s talk on her book *Making All Black Lives Matter* in 2019. The Women's Center also emphasizes points of connecting that are not just a single racial identity. For instance, the center hosts regular support circles for people affected by sexual violence, birthday celebrations for astrological signs, and fostering conversations about voting. In the coming academic year, the center has made plans to develop more people-of-color-

¹⁵⁹ This is not to say that the identity-based resource centers on DePaul’s campus do not also have inclusive and multiracial praxes but that they are structurally set up not to have that.

only programming to ensure that some of the university's most vulnerable people can also find belonging in the separatist spaces we sometimes need – and always in conjunction with a larger, multiracial vision.

Sometimes, fostering multiracial coalitions can look like several racially separatist groups coming together around an issue or supporting each other's movements. Multiracial coalition-building can also be misconstrued as necessitating a transcendence of race that attempts to forget or ignore the materiality of racialization. Even as an identity-specific resource center itself, the Women's Center has developed a praxis that understands that women's liberation is dependent on the liberation of all other marginalized people and that our connections to each other run deeper than any socially constructed identity. Because of this, the center attempts to create space for different modes of belonging that simultaneously affirms the material reality of socially constructed identities and pushes people to forge new, transformative ways of connecting.

Sustainable

Sustainability is simultaneously the most integral aspect of effective coalitions and the most difficult to realize on a university campus. With the expectations and demands put on students, staff, and faculty, as well as the routine turnover of both students and some pockets of staff and the increasing use of adjunct faculty, there is little of the structural support needed to establish a coalitional network across campus. Some of the ways the Women's Center has tried to create this network are in the strategies and practices already mentioned. Much of the emphasis to this end is on bringing together people across differences, especially the differences most often exploited by the university. It is also imperative to create nontraditional connections. In the last two years, the center has created programming series with organizations outside of DePaul,

like the coalitions of parents who have protested the closures of Chicago Public Schools in their communities and the anti-state and intimate violence community organization Love & Protect. Even collaborations between academics and student affairs staff are relatively uncommon on DePaul's campus, and the Women's Center has actively worked to collaborate on programming together.

What's also integral to fostering sustainability in our coalitions is nurturing ourselves and each other collectively and establishing such practices before crisis breaks out on campus. The Women's Center's first and foremost aim is to be "a space for rest and rejuvenation from your everyday activities at DePaul, as well as a space for reading, writing, collaborating, and connecting with others."¹⁶⁰ Among the center's regular programming are sessions of mindfulness practices with a trauma-informed therapist; community writing circles, community celebrations of birthdays and milestones, and support circles for people affected by sexual violence. What's more, in beginning the support circles, Dr. Russo trained around a dozen undergraduate and graduate students to lead the circles. This creates a ripple effect for our community, wherein students can take the circle-keeping skills into other kinds of support work on and off campus and can train more and more students to do the same. In that, lasting change on campus is made through a single program.

Conclusion

What the neoliberal university has on our liberation movements is a hegemonic power structure that enables the administration to control campus discourse, effect a liberal brand identity, and profit from the co-optation of social democratic values like freedom of speech, anti-

¹⁶⁰ "About," DePaul University Women's Center, <http://www.go.depaul.edu/womenscenter>.

racism, and community care. In a time where “everything that can be commodified is commodified,”¹⁶¹ our coalition-building strategies must be developed through more complex praxes than those based on essentialized and limiting social identities. We must create divergent ways of connecting with each other that defy the logics of white supremacist capitalism and evoke a deeper spiritual connection between us. This necessitates a letting go of the ego and a commitment to working through the ugly parts of coalition-building together. On campuses, these are the kinds of relationships we must foster in order to create and maintain the infrastructure needed for building sustainable, intergenerational, and multiracial feminist coalitions.

¹⁶¹ Mohanty and Carty, eds., *Feminist*, 45.

Appendices

Appendix A

25 May 2016

Dear Members of the DePaul University Community,

I am writing from France, where Fr. Udovic and I are leading a mission trip to introduce our trustees to the life and legacy of St. Vincent de Paul. Because today is a free day, a number of us are spending the day in Normandy, touring the museum, walking the famous beaches of the D-Day landings and standing silent before the rows and rows of graves honoring the men and women who gave their lives so others might live in freedom.

I tell you this because I awoke this morning to the reports and online videos of yesterday's speech by Milo Yiannopolous and the accompanying protest. I was sorry to see it.

Mr. Yiannopolous and I share very few opinions. He argues that there is no wage gap for women, a difficult position to maintain in light of government data. As a gay man, he has claimed that sexual preference is entirely a choice, something few if any LGBTQ individuals would claim as their own experience. He claims that white men have fewer privileges than women or people of color, whom he believes are unfairly privileged in modern society – a statement that is immediately suspect when white men continue to occupy the vast majority of top positions in nearly every major industry.

Generally, I do not respond to speakers of Mr. Yiannopolous' ilk, as I believe they are more entertainers and self-serving provocateurs than the public intellectuals they purport to be. Their shtick is to shock and incite a strong emotional response they can use to discredit the moral high ground claimed by their opponents. This is unworthy of university discourse, but not unfamiliar across American higher education. There will always be speakers who exploit the differences within our human community to their own benefit, blissfully unconcerned with the damage they leave behind.

Now that our speaker has moved on to UC Santa Barbara and UCLA, we at DePaul have some reflecting and sorting out to do. Student Affairs will be inviting the organizers of both the event and the protest – as well as any others who wish – to meet with them for this purpose. I've asked them to reflect on how future events should be staffed so that they proceed without interruption; how protests are to be more effectively assisted and enabled; and how the underlying differences around race, gender, and orientation that were made evident in yesterday's events can be explored in depth in the coming academic year.

As this proceeds, I wish to make a few matters crystal clear:

- Yesterday's speaker was invited to speak at DePaul, and those who interrupted the speech were wrong to do so. Universities welcome speakers, give their ideas a respectful hearing, and then respond with additional speech countering the ideas. I was ashamed for

DePaul University when I saw a student rip the microphone from the hands of the conference moderator and wave it in the face of our speaker.

- I was alarmed when I watched individual students on both sides intentionally provoking the others with inflammatory language, but I was proud when I saw students – many students – working to calm each other, and at times, even hold people back from hasty decisions. Many of our students understood that protests only work when people conduct themselves honorably. I wish to thank all of them for self-monitoring the crowd's behavior. The experience could have been a far worse experience had they not done so.
- I wish to thank our Student Affairs staff, Public Safety team, Student Center employees, Chicago police, and temporary contract safety personnel. They were thrust into an unexpected and challenging situation that we must examine for hard learned lessons. I am grateful that the situation was calmed and dispersed without serious injury to anyone's person. I know the staff, too, are reflecting on these events and what might be learned for the future.
- On behalf of the university, I apologize to the DePaul College Republicans. They deserved an opportunity to hear their speaker uninterrupted, and were denied it.

Here in Normandy, I expected to be moved by the generosity of those who gave their lives on the beaches early on June 6, 1944. I did not expect, however, to be shocked when I realized that most of the soldiers were the same ages as our students today. The rows and rows of white crosses in the American cemetery speak to the selflessness of the human spirit at early adulthood to lay down their lives for a better world.

I realize that many of yesterday's protesters hold similarly noble goals for a more inclusive world for those traditionally held aside by our society. I realize also that these young soldiers died for *all* the freedoms enshrined in our Bill of Rights, including freedom of speech and assembly. We honor their sacrifice best if we, too, remember and honor all the rights of human freedom, even as we fight for more freedom and justice for all.

God bless you.

Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M.
President

Appendix B

2 June 2016

Dear Members of the DePaul University Community,

As a community, we are coming to the close of this academic year, and many among us are beleaguered and afraid. We have much work ahead.

Students, startled that the Milo Yiannopoulos lecture and the events surrounding it could happen at DePaul, feel let down that the university community did not more immediately close ranks around them when they needed it most. When discussing this in classrooms, our students heard other students recommend that they develop “thicker skins” or “shake it off.” They were surprised to find that some faculty were unaware of the events, and they were concerned that the stress and trauma of the situation would adversely affect their ability to complete the term successfully. They read my letter about free speech as they were still shaking from the frightening effects of the hate speech they experienced. They further felt exposed and blamed for the escalation of the crowd’s behavior. And I’m concerned that my own silence in recent days, as we’ve begun a series of meetings to hear people’s feelings firsthand, has been deafening. In short, many of our students, staff and faculty felt insufficiently supported by the DePaul community last week, including by me. For all of this, I deeply apologize.

Let me recount what was obvious to many regarding the recent events, but perhaps not to all.

- You have seen the videos by now of the crowd attending the Yiannopoulos lecture harassing and verbally abusing DePaul students of color and others. Some students were shoved and hurt. Sixty-nine percent of the crowd were not from DePaul, but we also have reports of DePaul students joining in the taunting. The abusive taunts targeted protestors in the room, those peacefully gathered outside, students simply studying in the Center for Identity, Inclusion and Social Change, and also our staff who were trying their best to keep a bad situation from devolving further.
- A number of faculty, staff and students are still reeling from being subsequently targeted by the blogosphere, especially individuals who supported our students or who challenged the racist, xenophobic, anti-feminist, homophobic, transphobic, anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim messages that they encountered online. Not merely were our email and social media accounts overrun with hate-filled and threatening messages, but we witnessed anonymous attempts to ruin personal reputations or fake Twitter accounts set up in the name of loved ones. The pure evil of this activity has no name and we had few means to protect ourselves from it.
- The discovery of a noose as well as the sidewalk tagging with an anti-Mexico slur added to the fear among the student body, especially as the culprit who fashioned and left the noose has not yet been identified. Last night, at a gathering of students, a young man talked about the collective effect of all this, courageously describing his fear walking alone to his car.

We are not talking about speech alone on these matters, but people's actions. At DePaul, we will never tolerate actions that are antithetical to the Vincentian values we teach, and we hold ourselves accountable to this from the first day students, faculty and staff set foot on our campus. I am deeply sorry for the harm that was unleashed by a speaker whose intent was to ignite racial tensions and demean those most marginalized, both in our society and at DePaul. Perhaps we should not have been surprised, but I think all of us — protesters, event organizers and administration alike — were taken aback by the level of vitriol that was unleashed and the damage that our community would experience. I am truly sorry that members of our faculty, staff and students have experienced this kind of hatred. No member of our community should ever feel unsafe at DePaul and we will do all that we can to protect our students, faculty and staff.

I am grateful for the many faculty and staff who have worked tirelessly trying to support students and their own colleagues through this. Student Affairs and Public Safety immediately began new safety initiatives, including 24-hour campus escorts, visible staff presence during class exchange, and expanded patrol presence. Faculty spent long hours speaking with students, giving reassurance that students had someone in their corner. Indeed, the students did that for each other as well. That was DePaul at its best, and seeing the care you showed for each other reassured me and made me proud.

All of this has a context that is important. The Black Student Union (BSU) told us earlier this year that they were growing weary of the racism they found within DePaul, which they described in details that enabled the President's Diversity Council (PDC) to begin designing specific actions for each of their concerns. The BSU were not the only students feeling these things of course; they were simply the first voice invited to come forward. Other student groups of Latino/a students, as well as STRONG, Feminist Front and others have now come forward and are contributing their own observations to the mix. Faculty and staff are as well.

Several of you, for example, have asked if, hypothetically, DePaul would invite the head of the KKK to speak on our campus. My answer is no, but it immediately makes obvious that the university has no bright line defined for such questions. A task force of faculty and staff gathered and created a statement on speech at DePaul in 2008, and it has served us well, but it does not address the full range of questions that now faces us. Is there any person DePaul University would not permit to speak on campus? What would the criteria be? Who would decide? Is there a difference if university funds are used or an outside entity pays? What if the students hold the event off campus? These are dangerous waters to navigate — for the bar for free speech is extremely high at a university — but others have charted them before us and we have the resources to address it. I appreciate the care many of you have taken in sending me your views and will work with all of you to reconstitute that task force when we return in the fall.

I personally worry about the months ahead as the election continues to embolden and unleash the worst elements of society. Those voices will rankle within the university, and will threaten to divide us further. The question for DePaul is how to strengthen and maintain a human community where all of us commit to kindness and civility first, even as we discuss matters where we disagree. And for this, I write to request your help today.

A number of you have already met with me or other university administrators to talk about these matters. In each case, we sought advice on what initiatives DePaul should consider now and for the future. Those meetings will continue. Your ideas are already being collected and will be carefully reviewed by the PDC and/or the relevant university office responsible for those activities. I will also set aside funds in the coming year so that these initiatives can be initiated immediately — without waiting for the usual budget cycle to begin. In the immediate term, we will continue to actively listen and support and care for the community in every way we can. Please know that, in addition to all the usual ways to communicate with one another, you have the ability to file a confidential, anonymous report via either the telephone at 1-877-236-8390 or online.

Communities are not built alone but as a collective of people who care and respect one another. I am fully committed to devoting my energies to creating a culture of kindness and attentiveness in the coming year, but I also know it will take the whole village. We cannot eliminate all of the racism and sexism around us, but together we can and must do a great deal better within DePaul.

Thank you for your willingness to help improve the safety and civility of our campus. May God bless us all, particularly in the summer months ahead.

With great respect,

Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M.
President

Appendix C

11 May 2017

Dear DePaul Students,

We write today to announce that DePaul will immediately create a new center dedicated to serving African-American students; that centers for Latinx and LGBTQ students will soon follow; and the university will establish a formalized point of contact for undocumented students.

Center for African-American Students

In January 2016, the Black Student Union requested the creation of a center for African-American students. To give this request the in-depth consideration it deserved, the President's Diversity Council conducted comprehensive research including surveys and site visits and we invited the community to provide feedback and perspectives.

With this work now complete, the university has decided to accept the BSU's request. In order to accomplish this immediately, we must repurpose existing space and reorganize current efforts to support our diverse students. We will also move forward with plans to create similar centers to serve DePaul's Latinx populations and LGBTQ community. Each of these centers will have a full-time staff member and a graduate assistant, as well as any student workers required to provide adequate staffing. While we have not received a formal request from our Asian population, we will immediately begin a study of whether we should do something similar in that regard.

We are grateful for the work of the Center for Identity, Inclusion and Social Change, which has worked long hours to support all of our students within one office. We will rethink its design and activity to accommodate these new structures.

Formalized Point-of-Contact for Undocumented Students

A group of our professional staff recently brought a challenge to us that undocumented students do not have one clear place in the organization to go for information and for coordinating all the issues they face. They recommended that an individual be designed for this purpose and that the office be placed within Student Affairs. We are happy to accept this recommendation, and have asked Student Affairs to plan and implement this as soon as is practicable. In so doing, they will work closely with the individuals who proposed this and who have already given good thought to what is needed.

Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M.
President

Gene Zdziarski
Vice President of Student Affairs

Appendix D

29 June 2017

Members of the DePaul Community,

Last month we shared with students the university's plans to create three new centers dedicated to serving African-American, Latinx, and LGBTQ students. today we can share a status update as the Division of Student Affairs moves forward with a larger restructure of several of its key activities. These changes are part of a university-wide set of conversations on how best to accomplish our aims for our students within limited resources. They also address three separate questions the university has been discussing in one form or another for some time.

Formalized Point-of-Contact for Undocumented Students

A group of our professional staff recently brought a challenge to us that undocumented students do not have on clear place in the organization to go for information and for coordinating all the issues they face. Staff recommended that an individual be designed for this purpose and that the office be placed within Student Affairs. I have accepted this request and Student Affairs will assign the Associate Director of Multicultural Student Success to be responsible for these efforts.

A Combined Office of Mission and Ministry

To better align their respective work, University Ministry will become part of the Office of Mission and Values, which will be renamed the Office of Mission and Ministry. University Ministry staff will report to Fr. Ed Udovic, C.M., whose title will be changed to Vice President for Mission and Ministry. This reporting change will be effective January 1, 2018. University Ministry's office space will remain in its current location and department budgets will be combined. Fr. Udovic will work with both teams to design a fully integrated approach to Mission and Ministry for planned implementation in September of 2018.

As part of that redesign – and because this work serves not only students, but also staff and faculty – they will consider the question of how the social justice training that, up until now has been part of the Center for Identity and Inclusion & Social Change's [sic] work, can be re-envisioned and funded under their auspices.

Recognizing that this change removes University Ministry's voice and perspective from Student Affairs' deliberations, the division will appoint an individual from its current ranks to serve as a liaison with the Office of Mission and Ministry. This Student Affairs liaison will help ensure that DePaul's Catholic and Vincentian values are always front and center within the work they do for students.

The Cultural and Resource Centers

In response to student requests going back many years, but most recently to January 2016, DePaul will recognize its current efforts, designing several new centers and reappointing the existing services accordingly.

The Centers:

In conjunction with the Office of Multicultural Student Success, the centers provide resources, support services, community engagement and educational experiences to support academic and social success of under-represented and marginalized student populations. The centers facilitate and nurture university wide collaborative partnerships to help foster an inclusive campus environment.

Structure:

The centers will initially be structured as: The Black Cultural Center, The Latinx Cultural Center, and The LGBT Resource Center. Each self-contained center will function as a hub for an identity specific charge to connect students with institutional resources, create a community space, and provide educational programs. Each of the centers is to be staffed with a full-time staff professional, a graduate assistant and student workers to support its operations.

The centers will report through the Associate Director of Multicultural Student Success, who will provide overall coordination and supervision, in addition to serving as point-of-contact for undocumented students.

Programming funds will be provided to support each of the centers. Additional centers can be created for other defined student groups as sufficient student need is demonstrated and appropriate resources are identified.

Intersectional Programming:

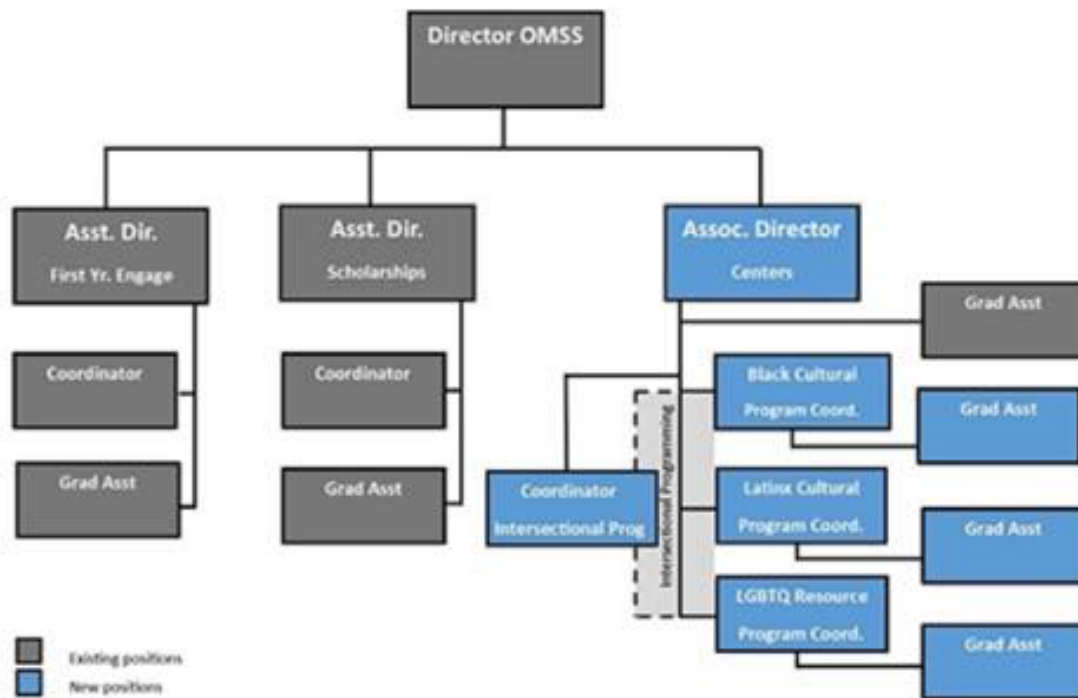
A professional staff member will coordinate programming to address the intersectional nature of identities through collaboration across the intersectional nature of identities through collaboration across the centers, as well as work with Men of Color (MOC), Women Empowered (WE) and Providing Access through Holistic Support (PATHS) programs. Funding will be allocated specifically for intersectional programming. In addition, the full-time professionals staffing the three centers will be required to provide significant and sustained intersectional programming as part of their annual programming.

Facilities:

Space for these centers as well as a more general space to accommodate and draw together the great mix of students who use our centers will be identified and designed over the summer. The President's Office will secure the one-time funds for this purpose. Dr. Esteban is aware of this commitment and has agreed to honor it.

Review:

This new model is to be reviewed in three years' time (2020) to determine whether it will be continued, adjusted, or replaced with another model that serves student needs more effectively.



As a result, the Center for Identity, Inclusion and Social Change will close August 15. Current staff will have the opportunity to apply for positions in the three cultural resources centers, as well as receive priority consideration for any other open positions within the Student Affairs divisions or within other university departments for which they are qualified. CIISC staff have been notified that this center will close and will have the month of June through mid-August to begin their job search. Staff members that do not secure new positions by **August 15** [emphasis added by original author] will receive severance pay, subsidized benefits, a tuition waiver extension, if applicable and access to outplacement services.

My Gratitude

I know that decisions like these are difficult, especially as they involve adjustments to existing work that has been good and valuable. I also realize that this model is being created in a period of constrained resources, and that it will require a redeployment of current spending to accomplish these new aims. As a part of this process we have made every attempt to ensure that the new structure is one that can be sustained should budget constraints continue in the near term.

While priority consideration will be given to those in positions that are being eliminated, we also recognize that some colleagues may not secure other positions here at DePaul. We thank them for their service to the university.

These are large changes and I am grateful for everyone's commitment to seeing them fully realized for the good of our students.

Gratefully,

Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M.
President.

Appendix E

Below is every article written in the student newspaper The DePaulia about the Yiannopolous event and its aftermath.

Holtschneider discusses race relations at DePaul with Black Student Union
Matthew Paras | **February 7, 2016**

<https://depauliaonline.com/19664/news/depaul-race-relations-black-student-union/>

When junior Mario Morrow was on break in December, he received two emails — one to his personal account and one to his email as the president of DePaul’s Black Student Union (BSU). The emails were from DePaul president Rev. Dennis Holtschneider, C.M., who expressed his desire to meet sometime during Winter Quarter to discuss race at DePaul.

Members of the BSU’s executive board met with Holtschneider and Provost Marten denBoer Jan. 25 in a two-hour meeting that outlined ways to improve the culture on campus for students of color. Topics ranged from micro-aggressions and racial profiling to larger ideas such as a gathering place on campus for students of color.

“It was a good two hours,” Morrow said. “It was very successful. (Holtschneider) was very receptive to what we were saying.”

Morrow and other BSU members noticed how many notes both Holtschneider and denBoer took throughout. In an email, Holtschneider told The DePaulia that he will be sending his notes from the meeting to the President’s Diversity Council, who will also meet in the future to propose next steps.

“The meeting with BSU was one part of a larger listening process we’ve begun here on campus,” Holtschneider said. “You saw the beginning of the process when I invited the entire university community to use MLK Day to reflect on race at DePaul and send forward any reflections. My office received several helpful emails from this.”

On Jan. 12, Holtschneider sent out an email to students and faculty to reflect on race and identity, encouraging those to email any concerns and ideas to his office. When the meeting began, Morrow said Holtschneider presented those emails and the discussions evolved from there.

One of the central topics of discussion was micro-aggressions in the classroom, meaning small instances where students of color were targeted because of their skin color.

“When a student of color feels like (they’re) being attacked, for instance, or singled out to represent in front of the whole class to give the whole black experience, it puts us in an awkward position,” junior Aja Van Buren, who is on the BSU board and was in the meeting, said. “We are not the voice of the black community. We do not pretend to be. We’re students. Yes, we’re black students and will always be black. That’s not the problem.

“The problem is when you’re addressing us and giving us the title (of being the voice of the black community).”

As for possible solutions, Morrow and the BSU suggested to implement cultural competency training for students and faculty.

“We didn’t come in here with just problems and complaints,” Morrow said. “With everything that we said, we had solutions for everything. To combat (micro-aggressions), we suggested cultural competency training ... so that if it does happen, there’s really no excuse.”

Racial profiling was also brought up. Sophomore Kendall Sprinkle detailed an instance when another member brought up an example of where Public Safety unnecessarily asked an Arab student to leave the Demon Den because other white female students felt uncomfortable he was there.

“He was just studying,” Sprinkle said. “They approached him. They made him leave and checked his ID, his DePaul ID, to make sure he was a student. And it was all because students felt uncomfortable.”

“Public Safety does have to answer every call. They should,” she said. “But you also have to take it with a grain of salt and you can’t automatically assume the worst. You can’t enter a perceived notion of what the situation is.”

Sprinkle said that Holtschneider said there are cultural competency training programs in place for Public Safety. Holtschneider said in his email that there was a sense among students of color that Public Safety attends their events more frequently than other students’ events.

However, student profiling wasn’t the only concern communicated through the meeting. Topics such as financial aid, the needed addition for faculty and staff of color and the academic success rate of black students were all discussed. Since 2011, the number of undergraduate African-American students has decreased by the beginning of each fall quarter, per DePaul’s Institutional Research and Market Analytics.

In 2015, DePaul had 1,297 undergraduate African-American students, the lowest since 2008. Total enrollment throughout DePaul is down about six percent since 2011.

Of DePaul’s 915 full-time faculty, 591 faculty members are white. Sixty-five faculty members are black, a slight decrease from 2013 and 2014, where DePaul had 67 black full-time faculty in each year.

Van Buren, a psychology major, said the College of Science and Health lacked faculty of color, sometimes making it harder to approach her professors.

“I just changed my major from health sciences. I was taking biology, chemistry classes and there was no professor of color,” Van Buren said. “(They) were predominately white, which is not a problem. But when you have problems in classes when you know you need an extension, or it

may just be harder to approach a professor because he doesn't feel you're worth the time of day, that's a problem."

A long-term fixture for black students to feel more comfortable, Morrow said, was for DePaul to build a "black center," or a place black students can go for academic and social needs. Morrow pointed out that many other universities, including Northwestern, have one.

"(Northwestern) uses it for everything. They have meetings and events, board rooms and offices," Morrow said. "We used this to combat everything (we suggested)."

But for now, Morrow said the conversations that are being held on campus are productive. He said that Holtschneider will meet with the group again for a follow-up.

Sprinkle and Van Buren said it was also encouraging that Holtschneider heard the information first-hand.

"You can hear all day long," Van Buren said. "We've been in every paper from here to Mizzou to Michigan since Mizzou happened. You can only hear bits and pieces of what we actually think, what we actually want to say.

"Yes, we have our public statement about the Mizzou incident, but then having a conversation with us, you'll be able to understand that we don't want a Mizzou here. We want to change these problems before it gets there."

Holt Schneider urges openness and kindness after chalking controversy
Kirsten Onsgard | **April 15, 2016**

<https://depauliaonline.com/21685/news/holt-schneider-urges-openness-kindness-chalking-controversy/>

College Republicans' campus chalkings earlier this month may have been erased within hours, but the verbal sparring in response to writings like "Blue Lives Matter" and "Build a Wall" has reverberated for more than a week.

During that time, students on both sides of the issue expressed outrage over issues of free speech and racism, along with confusion about what kind of chalking is permissible on campus. In a statement Friday, DePaul President Rev. Dennis Holt Schneider, C.M., acknowledged this conflict while attempting to clarify earlier statements and encouraging openness and kindness among students.

"If we are doing our part as an intellectual community, we must engage the topics of the day with all their apparent weaknesses," he wrote. "We do this not only to refine better ideas, but to create the conditions for people to genuinely hear the other and be heard by the other – a space for inquiry."

The chalkings were created late at night on April 4 by DePaul College Republicans and were erased sometime the following morning by campus grounds crews. In the following days, many students took to social media to express their outrage over statements they considered racist and xenophobic. College Republicans, however, maintained that the demonstration was meant to draw attention to conservative values.

A week later, an email sent by Vice President for Student Affairs Gene Zdziarski also pointed to DePaul's policy on political campaigning. As a non-profit organization, DePaul is "prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign" and therefore clarified that partisan chalking constitutes public political campaigning.

Chalking is allowed when it does not contain political or abusive speech and is located on a flat sidewalk where it can be reached by rain, among other restrictions. Zdziarski also said that though chalking is not explicitly included in the university's policy on Political Campaign Activities, this is not a policy change.

"Obviously there was some confusion about how the policy was applied," he said. "The intent of my message was to clarify that to the student body and everyone involved."

Still, several members of College Republicans said they believed their actions were in accordance with university policy on chalking at the time.

"We as a club know that we didn't do anything wrong — I think the whole situation was blown out of proportion," said junior finance and mathematics major Kati Danforth, a member of

College Republicans. “We looked at the guidelines before doing the chalking and we didn’t break any rules.”

Similar chalkings have occurred and sparked protests at dozens of other universities across the country, including the University of Illinois and Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. Emory, which is also a private university, did not cite its non-profit status as a reason for removing the chalkings.

Further complicating the issue is the ongoing conversation surrounding race and inclusivity at DePaul. University policy also states that “messages may not contain profanity or may not abuse, assail, intimidate, demean, victimize or have the effect of creating a hostile environment for any person or group of people based on any of the protected characteristics in the University’s Anti-Discriminatory Harassment Policy.”

In Holtschneider’s statement sent Friday, he said DePaul will not protect its students or faculty from unwelcome or uncomfortable ideas.

“Some asserted last week that the mere mention of the name Trump was offensive and should be prevented. We will never do that. Other groups over the years have asserted that student demonstrations outside the student center made them feel unsafe. We did not support those assertions either,” the statement read.

Still, he encouraged humility and kindness between students in addressing sensitive matters, and to avoid provocation.

“The phrase ‘All Lives Matter,’ for example, sounds obvious, even banal. In fact we are all aware it is frequently used to reject out-of-hand the core message of the ‘Black Lives Matter’ movement. Members of our community are calling for attention to the indignities and injustice suffered by the black community, and it’s simply insensitive to repeat something that we know in advance will bring pain and frustration to others. Our policies are not devised to prevent its use. Nor can we compel students to avoid its use. Can DePaul ask our students for kindness and sensitivity? Yes,” Holtschneider wrote.

But in an election cycle when ethics and policy values often overlap – and have been compounded by discussions on inequality – this issue has highlighted the complex political and racial environment at DePaul and nationally.

College Republicans member John Minster admitted earlier this week on Facebook to writing in chalk “Build a wall,” a statement criticized as racist. But for him, it was a clear declaration of supporting a policy of strong border protection.

“None of us believed that these statements were in any way racist or xenophobic, and if other people do, I guess we have different definitions of what those are,” Minster said. “(People) are free to disagree, but don’t shut me down when you do.”

For others, these statements are reprehensible. Junior Michael Lynch – who has been vocal online in his dissent of sayings like “Build a wall” and “Blue Lives Matter” – said he is not interested in silencing different political viewpoints. But Lynch, who is a member of the Black Student Union, said he also spoke with several groups about ways to better report incidents of racism to administration.

“Minority students absolutely cannot experience everything DePaul has to offer when they feel like they are being disrespected,” Lynch said.

Going forward, Zdziarski said the Division of Student Affairs will work with faculty and staff “to provide opportunities for open discourse on these issues so they can be appropriately debated and discussed.” The goal, he said, is to provide a space to have respectful conversations on these issues. Minster, Danforth and Lynch all said they hoped for dialogue among student groups.

“You have one side making a statement, and you have the other side making a statement,” Lynch said. “We’re spending a lot of time talking at each other, instead of talking to each other.”

College Republicans working to bring in controversial speaker
Kyle Woosley | **May 1, 2016**

<https://depauliaonline.com/22267/news/depaul-college-republicans-controversial-speaker/>

With the recent ‘chalking’ incident on campus and a national debate over political correctness as a backdrop, the DePaul College Republicans are aiming to bring the self-proclaimed “internet’s greatest supervillain” to campus later this month.

Milo Yiannopolous, a conservative activist, is known for expressing his highly controversial viewpoints on college campuses across the country. He is the tech editor for Breitbart, a conservative website, and is also known for starting a scholarship program called the Privilege Grant, which is an award only extended to straight white men.

Campus Republicans started a GoFundMe account to fund the event, scheduled for May 24 in the Student Center. While the College Republicans declined to comment for this article, the description on the GoFundMe page reads: “after recent chalking incidents, DePaul students need a wake-up call” and “Universities are under attack by liberal agendas.”

As of April 29, the page had received \$1,095 out of the \$3,000 sought to bring Yiannopolous to DePaul. Brandon Ferllini, a sophomore computer science major, donated \$35 to the cause. He hopes the event will bring more attention to free speech issues on college campuses.

“I donated to support Milo’s visit to DePaul because, in my opinion, Milo advocates for people’s right to free speech whether the words are offensive or not, especially in today’s safe space and trigger warning culture,” Ferllini said.

Jack McNeil, a DePaul freshman and the vice president of the College Democrats of Illinois, said he was not at all surprised by the news of the guest speaker.

“The Republican lean on campus has an advantage in terms of outside money,” McNeil said. “They are able to get funding by anyone, especially more conservative grassroots organizations. They are able to go out and get high-profile and more provocative speakers.”

McNeil said this decision demonstrates how the party is “messy from the top down.”

“They need to find people who is spreading their message in a positive way,” he said. “This is not getting us anywhere. This is not furthering any conversation or any policies.”

Mackenzie Carlson, a freshman psychology major, said she thinks Yiannopolous’ outrageous statements cross a line.

“He only believes in white male privilege and, as a female, that’s very depressing,” she said. “I don’t understand how somebody could be so ignorant to the fact that there’s diversity in the world.”

Carlson said Yiannopolous is trying to blur the line between free speech and hate speech.

“It’s definitely hateful speech, not just free speech,” she said. “It’s exercising your right to free speech so much that it’s discriminatory and wrong.”

But McNeil said that is what he and the College Republicans want.

“I think that’s kind of what his goal is,” he said. “That’s why he’s being sent to college campuses. They know that he is going to upset people and that is his sole goal. He would not be making money or touring if he were not saying very offensive things. The event is meant to be chaotic and that’s the only reason why this thing exists.”

The initial anger came from the use of a homophobic slur in the title of Yiannopolous’ college tour, which is called “The Dangerous F— Tour.”

DePaul spokesperson Carol Hughes said she did not believe the event at DePaul contained a slur, but could not confirm.

“When you’re using homophobic slurs, you’re crossing a line,” McNeil said. “There’s no space for slurs or hateful rhetoric on a campus that is trying to promote a conversation. It’s very concerning. What does your party stand for then?”

If the slur is included in the title, McNeil said he suspects it would play out the same way as the chalking incident.

“DePaul’s a private university that has its own policies in place,” he said. “I’m not sure what rules DePaul has in place but if it has a problem with a slur being used in the event title, then we have a problem.”

And, just like before, McNeil said it would not be about slamming conservative values.

“This is a blanket rule that applies to everyone,” he said. “It (the chalking incident) was fake, they knew the outcome and they went ahead with it — and they did a very good job spinning it.”

Ferllini said he does expect more liberal students to disrupt the event.

“Students have the choice and right to not listen to him and not give him any attention if they please,” he said. “Milo is free to speak and students are free to protest.”

McNeil said, just as Yiannopolous’ right to speak at the university is free speech, so is the students’ right to protest.

“People can react as negatively as they want, and people can speak up against very hateful things because that’s also freedom of speech,” he said. “So they (College Republicans) can’t whine when people get upset when they bring in an offensive speaker.”

Carlson said his ideals are too right wing for her to support, and plans to stay away from the event.

“I’m embarrassed for him, and even more embarrassed for the people who want to hear him speak,” she said.

Ferllini said there can be value found in hearing what the other side has to say.

“Milo is exercising free speech, whether students find it hateful or not because, in my opinion, it mostly depends on how someone interprets hate speech,” he said. “But I also believe there is educational value in listening to and understanding views and opinions that others may disagree with.”

McNeil agreed, but said he does not see the value in hosting an event strictly in the name of being controversial.

“College campuses should be the place to promote diverse opinions,” he said. “People will attend out of curiosity and outrage, but it’s going to move the party forward on any conservative issues forward.”

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT 24 May 2016

Statement from DePaul University president about profane graffiti on campus

<https://resources.depaul.edu/newsroom/news/press-releases/Pages/statement-from-university-president-on-the-incident-of-graffiti-on-the-quad.aspx>

CHICAGO — Very early this morning, Public Safety received a call from the College Republicans reporting that someone had painted on the sidewalk in the Quad the words Trump 2016 and F__K Mexico. This was not written in chalk, but rather a paint-like substance that was difficult to remove. The university filed a criminal damage to property report with the Chicago Police Department and Public Safety is investigating the incident.

In response to this profane graffiti, the Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M., president of DePaul University, issued the following statement:

“The markings in the Quad last night run contrary to the type of environment we foster at DePaul. Destruction of property and profanity are never acceptable ways to voice opinions. This slur against Mexicans goes against everything DePaul stands for. We will work to identify the individual, file charges with the police, and bring the university's disciplinary process to bear. If anyone has knowledge of this matter, I ask them to come forward.

“As I said in my April letter to the campus community, ‘The responsibility for a vibrant intellectual debate rests with everyone.’ I encourage the campus community to raise your voices in support of our friends and colleagues of Mexican descent.”

DePaul's president expresses discontent following Yiannopoulos controversy
Kirsten Onsgard | **May 25, 2016**

<https://depauliaonline.com/23050/news/depaul-president-holtschneider-letter/>

Following a heated day on campus marked by a controversial speaker, protests and markings containing an anti-Mexican slur, DePaul President Rev. Dennis Holtschneider responded to concerns both within and outside the DePaul community.

In an email statement sent to students, faculty and staff Wednesday morning, Holtschneider expressed his disagreement with speaker and journalist Milo Yiannopoulos, worries about the “inflammatory language” and apologies to College Republicans, who hosted the event.

“Generally, I do not respond to speakers of Mr. Yiannopoulos’ ilk, as I believe they are more entertainers and self-serving provocateurs than the public intellectuals they purport to be,” wrote Holtschneider, who is currently in Normandy, France. “Their shtick is to shock and incite a strong emotional response they can then use to discredit the moral high ground claimed by their opponents. This is unworthy of university discourse, but not unfamiliar across American higher education. There will always be speakers who exploit the differences within our human community to their own benefit, blissfully unconcerned with the damage they leave behind.”

Yiannopoulos was invited to speak at an event hosted by College Republicans Tuesday evening, attended by more than 500 guests from within and outside the university. The Breitbart journalist is notable for saying that “feminism is cancer,” that Black Lives Matter protesters are sensitive and that there is no wage gap between men and women. In his statement, Holtschneider disagreed with all of these views.

“(Yiannopoulos) argues that there is no wage gap for women, a difficult position to maintain in light of government data,” he wrote “As a gay man, he has claimed that sexual preference is entirely a choice, something few if any LGTBQ individuals would claim as their own experience. He claims that white men have fewer privileges than women or people of color, whom he believes are unfairly privileged in modern society — a statement that is immediately suspect when white men continue to occupy the vast majority of top positions in nearly every major industry.”

Still, Holtschneider expressed his discontent at protesters who interrupted the speech, the focus of which College Republicans said was free speech, a hot topic issue both on campus and in a difficult political climate.

“Yesterday’s speaker was invited to speak at DePaul, and those who interrupted the speech were wrong to do so. Universities welcome speakers, give their ideas a respectful hearing, and then respond with additional speech countering the ideas. I was ashamed for DePaul University when I saw a student rip the microphone from the hands of the conference moderator and wave it in the face of our speaker,” he wrote.

He also apologized to College Republicans, writing that, “they deserved an opportunity to hear their speaker uninterrupted, and were denied it.”

Holtschneider also touched on the campus divide made evident following a day wrought with campus issues, controversy and divisive rhetoric. Earlier Tuesday, markings with the phrase “F— Mexico” were painted on the Quad, which he condemned as hate speech.

Prior to Yiannopoulos’ appearance, about 100 students took to the Quad to discuss their grievances about how the university has handled this tension. Several said DePaul had failed to address ongoing hate speech on campus, especially following April’s chalking in which “Build a Wall” and “Blue Lives Matter” were written.

Holtschneider praised protesters who were “working to calm each other, and at times, even hold people back from hasty decisions,” and “understood that protests only work when people conduct themselves honorably.”

Going forward, he said, Student Affairs will be reaching out to students on all sides of the issue.

“We at DePaul have some reflecting and sorting out to do,” he wrote. “I’ve asked (Student Affairs) to reflect on how future events should be staffed so that they proceed without interruption; how protests are to be more effectively assisted and enabled; and how the underlying differences around race, gender and orientation that were made evident in yesterday’s events can be explored in depth in the coming academic year.”

Letter to the editor: Holtschneider must step down or be fired
Terry Smith | **June 2, 2016**

<https://depauliaonline.com/23285/opinions/letter-editor-depaul-president-step-down-or-be-fired/>

Fucking n—!!

*Africans belong in Africa. Negroes will never assimilate into a civilized society.
Argentina exterminated their Negroes for this very reason.*

Faubus and Wallace were right.

Any loudmouthed black racist can pass as a professor in Obobo's America. Same criteria as the presidency.

"For the record, I don't have children" Gee, I wonder why? It couldn't possibly be because you're such an insufferable b— that no men would dare even consider dating you, let alone have children with you. Nah, it must be white people's fault, somehow.

You blacks are utterly stupid, the US is going down the drain financially and you think you are helping?

These e-mails were sent to DePaul Political Science Chair and Professor, Valerie Johnson. Her crime that incurred the wrath of the blogosphere? She tweeted support for an African-American female student at DePaul who led a protest against Milo Yiannopoulos' "Feminism is Cancer, Dangerous F—t Tour." These comments reflect true malice and threat, and were completely foreseeable given the Breitbart editor's claim to fame in the #gamergate online harassment of journalists critiquing sexist video games and the rabid following of alt-right trolls he inspires.

Under the guise of free speech, the President rejected calls to disallow Yiannopoulos' appearance on campus, although from the inception of the controversy Holtschneider knew that the speaker was "unworthy of university discourse." That the president of a major American university could harbor such an incoherent conception of free speech is both shocking and embarrassing; that he would then blame the subjects of Yiannopoulos' hate speech for asserting their own free speech rights is unconscionable.

Under the president's jejune understanding of free speech, the College Republicans would be free to invite former Ku Klux Klan Grand Wizard David Duke, who has now recast his white supremacist past as a present-day crusade to ensure that "the rights of people of European descent be respected as much as any other people's rights." Duke's rhetoric is of a piece with Yiannopoulos', who sponsors a "privilege grant" "exclusively available to white men who wish to pursue their post-secondary education on equal footing with their female, queer and ethnic minority classmates." If this is not evidence enough of the white supremacist ilk from which Yiannopoulos' rhetoric derives, consider some of his comments from his appearance of at DePaul:

“You know, I worked out why there are so many black girls here. I think it’s because I f—d their brothers.”

“I give (the Black Lives Matter protest) twenty minutes. The statistics for black incarceration are about to go up.”

“If you weren’t such an obnoxious c—t, I might even hit on you.”

Even the most rudimentary understanding of free speech would see this language for what it is: classic “fighting words” which would be entitled to no protection under the First Amendment. Yet in his May 25 e-mail, rather than acknowledging that allowing the speech to go forward was an error of judgment that promoted white supremacy, President Holtschneider remarked that “those who interrupted the speech were wrong to do so.” But why? The president acknowledges that the speech did not rise to the level of intellectual discourse. Yiannopoulos was not in the same category, for instance, as Michael Steele, the former chairperson of the Republican National Committee, who was invited to DePaul by its College Republicans a few years back. Steele’s speech went uninterrupted because, to borrow Holtschneider’s own description of Yiannopoulos, Steele was not a mere “entertainer[] and self-serving provocateur[]” whose “shtick is to shock and incite a strong emotional response.” In short, Yiannopoulos has no right to speak uninterrupted by those who oppose his views any more than did segregationist Gov. George Wallace when he decided to take his 1968 presidential campaign of bigotry and white backlash to New York City. A university president who cannot understand these distinctions is one who is ill-suited to lead a modern university such as DePaul whose very business model depends on the recruitment of a racially and ethnically diverse student body.

There is no precept of free speech known to the law, to morality, or to common sense, that required marginalized communities of students to sit quietly as supplicants while the campus that their tuition, grant and loan dollars fund was deployed as a sounding board for their own belittlement based on their race, gender, and sexual orientation. The president has betrayed these students and has undoubtedly done lasting harm to their perceptions of DePaul.

How much longer will the DePaul University community be subject to embarrassing headlines produced by a president who has had a 14-year learning curve but who, incident after incident, seems to learn very little except how to protect his own power? When the university made national news for denying tenure to all its minority applicants while granting it to all its white applicants, the university responded by attempting to assign racial minority status to white applicants who had not self-selected a race. When President Holtschneider was presented with the choice of protecting the free speech rights of a prolific faculty member, Norman Finkelstein, or succumbing to outside disapproval of Finkelstein’s pro-Palestinian views, Finkelstein was denied tenure and DePaul has since become a symbol of censorship within academic circles. Elevating the free speech rights of Yiannopoulos above those of a serious and respected scholar will only make DePaul a further laughingstock. And when DePaul’s Conservative Alliance held an “affirmative action bake sale” the objective and effect of which was to belittle students of color based solely on their race, rather than sanctioning the group, President Holtschneider added to the controversy by allowing an all-white committee to promulgate a vague and toothless speech and expression “guideline.”

In his lengthy tenure at DePaul, the President has compiled a similarly lengthy compendium of presidential mishaps and misjudgments, such as the few previously mentioned. The University community can no longer afford the costly on-the-job training it has extended Father Holtschneider, only to have that latitude misused for the president's preservation of his own power at the cost of the academic freedom of DePaul's professoriate (Finkelstein) and the equality of marginalized communities (Yiannopoulos, tenure controversy, affirmative action bake sale). Enough is enough.

Terry Smith is a Distinguished Research Professor of Law at DePaul.

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT 13 June 2016

DePaul University president stepping down in summer 2017

<https://resources.depaul.edu/newsroom/news/press-releases/Pages/President-stepping-down.aspx>

CHICAGO — DePaul University announced today that the Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M., will step down from his position as president at the end of the 2016-17 academic year. After 13 years of leadership, Fr. Holtschneider will assume his tenured faculty position at DePaul, following a one-year sabbatical.

“It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as the president of DePaul University,” Fr. Holtschneider said. “In the past 12 years, the university has achieved many of the goals set for enrollment, finances, academic excellence, new programs, facilities, alumni organization, national reputation and, most important, its Catholic and Vincentian mission. A new leader can assist the institution to name and ambitiously pursue its next set of goals.”

The transition in leadership occurs after a decade of significant growth, new levels of academic achievement and national recognition for DePaul. During Fr. Holtschneider’s tenure, the university established two new colleges: the College of Communication and the College of Science and Health. The construction and acquisition of new buildings provided state-of-the-art facilities for the College of Communication, College of Education, School for New Learning, The Theatre School, liberal arts programs in Arts & Letters Hall and the DePaul Art Museum. Construction is currently underway on new facilities for the School of Music and a new events center in Chicago’s South Loop that will host DePaul basketball.

Fr. Holtschneider also led the university during the development and completion of its “Many Dreams, One Mission” capital campaign, which surpassed its goal of \$250 million and raised \$333 million. DePaul allocated the largest portion of the campaign to student scholarships.

DePaul’s current strategic plan, “Vision 2018: Dedication to Excellence, Commitment to Community,” launched in September 2013. Work on the university’s next strategic plan will begin during the 2017-18 academic year.

“Fr. Holtschneider has led the university through two successful strategic plans. His leadership has been transformational for DePaul,” said William Bennett, board chair. “When Fr. Holtschneider shared his plans with board leadership last March, we could not help but admire the selflessness of his decision to step down so that DePaul’s next strategic plan can proceed with its next leader in place. The board of trustees is enormously grateful for Fr. Holtschneider’s dedication to DePaul.”

DePaul Trustee and Vice Chair Jim Ryan will lead a search committee with representatives from the board, university administration, faculty, staff and students. The board invites members of the university community to submit candidate names for consideration for DePaul’s next president.

“The board is dedicated to conducting a comprehensive national search to find the best individual possible to lead the university,” Bennett said.

To assist the committee, the university has retained the services of the executive search firm, Witt/Kieffer. The board will consider both Vincentian and lay leaders.

Additional information regarding the search will be made available throughout the year as it becomes available.

DePaul President Holtschneider: ‘We can and must do a great deal better within DePaul’
Ben Gartland | **June 2, 2016**

<https://depauliaonline.com/23287/news/depaul-president-holtschneider-can-must-great-deal-better-within-depaul/>

DePaul President Rev. Dennis Holtschneider, C.M., sent out a university-wide email Thursday afternoon apologizing to those who felt insufficiently supported by administration following last week’s Milo Yiannopoulos event and ensuing protests, and asked for the university community’s help in forming initiatives to address these matters. The email is also in response to what many say are ongoing tensions and charged rhetoric on campus.

“I’m concerned that my own silence in recent days, as we’ve begun a series of meetings to hear people’s feelings firsthand, has been deafening,” Holtschneider said. “In short, many of our students, staff and faculty felt insufficiently supported by the DePaul community last week, including by me. For all of this, I deeply apologize.”

He announced that DePaul will reconstitute the Speech and Expression Taskforce for DePaul, which was originally formed in 2006 as a response to hate-related events. He also announced that he will set aside funds to be used immediately to implement ideas and initiatives that result from meetings with himself, the President’s Diversity Council, faculty members and students, particularly groups such as Latinx groups, the Black Student Union and STRONG.

Holtschneider also expressed surprise at the result of the event, and apologized to those affected.

“Perhaps we should not have been surprised, but I think all of us — protesters, event organizers and administration alike — were taken aback by the level of vitriol that was unleashed and the damage that our community would experience,” Holtschneider said.

Last week, Holtschneider also apologized to College Republicans in an university email for the actions of protesters who shut down controversial Breitbart reporter Milo Yiannopoulos’ speech. In that email, Holtschneider defended College Republican’s right to host Yiannopoulos, despite emphatically disagreeing with his positions.

In the days that followed, several students and faculty members have been harassed after protesting or expressing solidarity, as Holtschneider noted in his most recent email, and a noose was reportedly found on campus.

Wednesday, students dropped banners in Arts & Letters Hall decrying hate speech. Later, a sit-in was staged and a Black Student Union town hall was held, in which students discussed next steps to prevent future harm.

“I am truly sorry that members of our faculty, staff and students have experienced this kind of hatred,” Holtschneider wrote. “No member of our community should ever feel unsafe at DePaul and we will do all that we can to protect our students, faculty and staff.”

A town hall with Holtschneider scheduled for Friday, June 3, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. was also announced. Students must RSVP to attend and present their DePaul ID and confirmation upon entry. Space is limited to 200.

Here is the email in its entirety:

“Dear Members of the DePaul University Community,

As a community, we are coming to the close of this academic year, and many among us are beleaguered and afraid. We have much work ahead.

Students, startled that the Milo Yiannopoulos lecture and the events surrounding it could happen at DePaul, feel let down that the university community did not more immediately close ranks around them when they needed it most. When discussing this in classrooms, our students heard other students recommend that they develop “thicker skins” or “shake it off.” They were surprised to find that some faculty were unaware of the events, and they were concerned that the stress and trauma of the situation would adversely affect their ability to complete the term successfully. They read my letter about free speech as they were still shaking from the frightening effects of the hate speech they experienced. They further felt exposed and blamed for the escalation of the crowd’s behavior. And I’m concerned that my own silence in recent days, as we’ve begun a series of meetings to hear people’s feelings firsthand, has been deafening. In short, many of our students, staff and faculty felt insufficiently supported by the DePaul community last week, including by me. For all of this, I deeply apologize.

Let me recount what was obvious to many regarding the recent events, but perhaps not to all.

- You have seen the videos by now of the crowd attending the Yiannopoulos lecture harassing and verbally abusing DePaul students of color and others. Some students were shoved and hurt. Sixty-nine percent of the crowd were not from DePaul, but we also have reports of DePaul students joining in the taunting. The abusive taunts targeted protestors in the room, those peacefully gathered outside, students simply studying in the Center for Identity, Inclusion and Social Change, and also our staff who were trying their best to keep a bad situation from devolving further.
- A number of faculty, staff and students are still reeling from being subsequently targeted by the blogosphere, especially individuals who supported our students or who challenged the racist, xenophobic, anti-feminist, homophobic, transphobic, anti-Semitic and anti-Muslim messages that they encountered online. Not merely were our email and social media accounts overrun with hate-filled and threatening messages, but we witnessed anonymous attempts to ruin personal reputations or fake Twitter accounts set up in the name of loved ones. The pure evil of this activity has no name and we had few means to protect ourselves from it.
- The discovery of a noose as well as the sidewalk tagging with an anti-Mexico slur added to the fear among the student body, especially as the culprit who fashioned and left the noose has not yet been identified. Last night, at a gathering of students, a young man talked about the collective effect of all this, courageously describing his fear walking alone to his car.

We are not talking about speech alone on these matters, but people's actions. At DePaul, we will never tolerate actions that are antithetical to the Vincentian values we teach, and we hold ourselves accountable to this from the first day students, faculty and staff set foot on our campus. I am deeply sorry for the harm that was unleashed by a speaker whose intent was to ignite racial tensions and demean those most marginalized, both in our society and at DePaul. Perhaps we should not have been surprised, but I think all of us — protesters, event organizers and administration alike — were taken aback by the level of vitriol that was unleashed and the damage that our community would experience. I am truly sorry that members of our faculty, staff and students have experienced this kind of hatred. No member of our community should ever feel unsafe at DePaul and we will do all that we can to protect our students, faculty and staff.

I am grateful for the many faculty and staff who have worked tirelessly trying to support students and their own colleagues through this. Student Affairs and Public Safety immediately began new safety initiatives, including 24-hour campus escorts, visible staff presence during class exchange, and expanded patrol presence. Faculty spent long hours speaking with students, giving reassurance that students had someone in their corner. Indeed, the students did that for each other as well. That was DePaul at its best, and seeing the care you showed for each other reassured me and made me proud.

All of this has a context that is important. The Black Student Union (BSU) told us earlier this year that they were growing weary of the racism they found within DePaul, which they described in details that enabled the President's Diversity Council (PDC) to begin designing specific actions for each of their concerns. The BSU were not the only students feeling these things of course; they were simply the first voice invited to come forward. Other student groups of Latino/a students, as well as STRONG, Feminist Front and others have now come forward and are contributing their own observations to the mix. Faculty and staff are as well.

Several of you, for example, have asked if, hypothetically, DePaul would invite the head of the KKK to speak on our campus. My answer is no, but it immediately makes obvious that the university has no bright line defined for such questions. A task force of faculty and staff gathered and created a statement on speech at DePaul in 2008, and it has served us well, but it does not address the full range of questions that now faces us. Is there any person DePaul University would not permit to speak on campus? What would the criteria be? Who would decide? Is there a difference if university funds are used or an outside entity pays? What if the students hold the event off campus? These are dangerous waters to navigate — for the bar for free speech is extremely high at a university — but others have charted them before us and we have the resources to address it. I appreciate the care many of you have taken in sending me your views and will work with all of you to reconstitute that task force when we return in the fall.

I personally worry about the months ahead as the election continues to embolden and unleash the worst elements of society. Those voices will rankle within the university, and will threaten to divide us further. The question for DePaul is how to strengthen and maintain a human community where all of us commit to kindness and civility first, even as we discuss matters where we disagree. And for this, I write to request your help today.

A number of you have already met with me or other university administrators to talk about these matters. In each case, we sought advice on what initiatives DePaul should consider now and for the future. Those meetings will continue. Your ideas are already being collected and will be carefully reviewed by the PDC and/or the relevant university office responsible for those activities. I will also set aside funds in the coming year so that these initiatives can be initiated immediately — without waiting for the usual budget cycle to begin. In the immediate term, we will continue to actively listen and support and care for the community in every way we can. Please know that, in addition to all the usual ways to communicate with one another, you have the ability to file a confidential, anonymous report via either the telephone at 1-877-236-8390 or online.

Communities are not built alone but as a collective of people who care and respect one another. I am fully committed to devoting my energies to creating a culture of kindness and attentiveness in the coming year, but I also know it will take the whole village. We cannot eliminate all of the racism and sexism around us, but together we can and must do a great deal better within DePaul.

Thank you for your willingness to help improve the safety and civility of our campus. May God bless us all, particularly in the summer months ahead.

With great respect,

Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M.

President”

In town hall, Holtschneider faces anger from students, expresses regret
Matthew Paras | **June 5, 2016**

<https://depauliaonline.com/23303/news/students-express-anger-demand-change-town-hall-holtschneider/>

The walls of Cortelyou Commons are lined with portraits of DePaul's past presidents. Eleven men have held this position, each a priest responsible for overseeing the university and its students. And under each portrait, the years of when each president served remains etched on a plaque with their name.

Only two men have served longer as DePaul president than Rev. Dennis Holtschneider, C.M. In his 12th year, Holtschneider found himself at Cortelyou Commons last Friday afternoon.

With so much history represented on the walls, it's hard to imagine any of the previous presidents dealing with the type of scrutiny to their face than what Holtschneider dealt with Friday.

In a town hall setting, Holtschneider watched as students expressed anger, disappointment and called for more direct action after the fallout from Milo Yiannopoulos' visit to campus. Anger not only stemmed from Yiannopoulos — a conservative speaker who can easily offend — being allowed on campus in the first place, but the university's lack of action taken.

Through the meeting, it was apparent that DePaul had failed its students — Holtschneider admitted as much.

"What a lot of us realize from that shocking moment last week is what we haven't done a good job at is preparing for the divisions that can appear (from the Yiannopoulos event)," Holtschneider said. "The same dynamics that affect all of humanity can appear in the community too. That be can be transphobia to sexism to racism ... all the things that we see in the world, and that we hoped as a university that we could have an all around good quality, is we've discovered that's not what we've done.

"The message I most want to say today is one of apology," he said later. "I'm incredibly sorry that our university wasn't prepared in advance for the kinds of questions that are now being raised.

"Whether that's your safety, whether that's how we actually hold events, how we think of the creation of events, how we create the community that people feel safe long term where people are actually telling us there's racism among us ... how do we do that community better? Clearly, we haven't done that good enough. I apologize on the behalf of DePaul."

Holtschneider accurately called Yiannopoulos' event a tipping point for most students. Earlier in the year, Holtschneider met with members from the Black Student Union that detailed how the experience for black students and other minority groups differ from whites, ranging from

microaggressions in classrooms to being treated differently by Public Safety. Yiannopoulos' tour was the last straw for many students who felt that they had been ignored all year.

After his opening remarks, Holtschneider invited students to share their story and ask questions. The goal of the town hall was to create a dialogue on where DePaul goes from here. The day before, students were invited to the event and the 200 available spots were reserved in just three hours, 150 of whom showed up.

But the type of dialogue students wanted to have was quickly obvious.

"These last couple of months with some of the incidents on campus, I think we've been let down by (the administration), by you (Holtschneider) in particular," DePaul Democrats president Nassir Faulkner said. "I don't feel like any of you have had my back in the last two weeks ... This (town hall) is too late. We should have got together after the first chalking incident that happened.

"We've already been let down. How can we trust that you're the right person to move us forward where everyone feels safe? You're late to the game."

Faulkner was the first of 36 students to vent their frustrations over the course of the next two hours, mostly directed to Holtschneider. Of the 36 speakers, seven explicitly called for his resignation while others blasted him for his initial response to the Yiannopoulos' event.

Take sophomore Daveonne Burks, for instance. Burks took issue with the fact that Holtschneider was initially in France when Yiannopoulos visited campus, saying "I don't know about you, but if I'm president I'm hurrying my ass back to campus to see what's going on," which drew major applause from the audience.

[Pulled out quote] "This (town hall) is too late. We should have got together after the first chalking incident that happened." – Nassir Faulkner, president of DePaul Democrats"

Like many, Burks also criticized the email responses sent out. Holtschneider addressed the student body two times, initially apologizing to the College Republicans for Yiannopoulos not being able to speak and then to the entire student body for those who felt unsafe following the event.

"Things have to go further than emails. Like Bernie (Sanders) says, I'm sick of the damn emails," Burks said. "When it gets to the point where (people are) threatening me or put (their) hands on me, I'm going to fight back. On the behalf of my marginalized students, we will fight back. We won't stand for this."

However, others like junior Fabrice Lekina, a disabled student, used time to point out major flaws with DePaul's Public Safety. On May 24, Lekina said he started to feel unsafe when he saw lines of Yiannopoulos supporters in the Student Center after getting out of class.

“This was the first time I’ve felt unsafe on DePaul’s campus and I’ve been coming here for three years,” Lekina said. “When you’re disabled and an African American at that, you don’t know what’s going to happen. I remember I went right after the Student Center was closed, I asked Public Safety to walk me to the church so I could get on the bus and go home. A Public Safety officer told me they were short staffed and to walk home. I said to myself, out of all the people on campus, I’m the one person you can’t say that too.

“I’m disabled. If anyone needs to get out of the building first, it’s me.”

In his opening remarks, Holtschneider said he was surprised how “ugly and fast” the Yiannopoulos event turned, and that it was the first time DePaul had to deal with something like that. But some students also criticized DePaul for not being prepared.

“I went up to Chicago police and I talked with administration and the head of security to do something, but (I said) there will be something where they will attack each other. They did nothing,” one student said, who was working with the Yiannopoulos event. “I went up to Milo to make sure he wasn’t going to get hurt, but that’s not my job ... I think Public Safety has failed us.”

The issue of what is free speech and hate speech also was brought up multiple times. Before speakers, Holtschneider said that DePaul had a lot to discuss when it came to speech.

But Charia McDonald, a protester who rushed the stage during Yiannopoulos’ visit, ended a thoughtful speech with how DePaul’s speech policy already had a line that, in her opinion, should have prevented Yiannopoulos from coming. McDonald was brought to tears after detailing how she was called the n-word, being threatened to be raped and being threatened physically after taking the stage.

“We go into these classes and don’t feel safe — why is it that I have to take two religion courses, but not take a required class of women and gender studies?” McDonald asked. “We need to change the curriculum ... there’s so much more in this world than this white perspective.

“I’m very proud of what we did on that day,” she added. “We told this university that we understand and that if you want to hold that kind of conversation, that you’re not going to hold it in the building I pay for, sweetheart ... Just know that this fight is not over.

“With that, I’ll leave you with a quote from DePaul’s guide of Freedom of Speech and Expression, the bylaws that say ‘we accept that there’s a distinction from being provocative and being hurtful. Speech whose primary purpose is to wound is inconsistent with our Vincentian and Catholic values. The university community must meet these situations by reasserting our fundamental values and by fostering educational opportunities, where appropriate.’ Thank you.”

Mario Morrow, the president of the Black Student Union, was the moderator for the town hall and occasionally directed students to not make personal attacks. Morrow, though, also knew many of the speakers and admitted it was hard for him to be neutral when he’s used to being an activist.

Morrow personally struggled with Holtschneider's initial letter, saying he was furious and said he needed to realize how Holtschneider needed to hear the full perspective to reach a consensus on what happened. Morrow said the town hall was a great example of him hearing that discussion.

"I thought it was good for Fr. Holtschneider to hear the emotion and the passion behind each student," Morrow said. "So he fully understands the perspective and experience they've had in the last couple of weeks here."

This has been a difficult time for DePaul. Even outside of the last two weeks, the meeting felt more like an airing of grievances from the last three years, with students referencing other issues like the call for DePaul to divest in companies who support the Israeli occupation of Palestine, accused rapists who are moved from dorm to dorm and a lack of empathy from some faculty to students of color.

Holtschneider took most stories in and remained composed, jotting down notes. Off to the side, Provost Marten denBoer, Vice President of Student Affairs Gene Zdziarski and Vice President for Institutional Diversity and Equity Elizabeth Ortiz also took notes.

When Holtschneider was abroad, denBoer was at the helm of communicating, dealing with students, faculty and staff. Originally scheduled to join Holtschneider in France on Friday night, denBoer canceled his trip to stay at DePaul because he said it became "obvious" that he should remain put.

Asked about possible solutions, denBoer said some of the changes that were brought up can happen quickly while longer term issues, like changing the curriculum, will need more discussion.

"I think it's important and that people should be exposed to multiple ideas and points of view," denBoer said, regarding a curriculum change. "I think that's part of our responsibility as a university. How we do that consistently and prepare students for the workforce is the question."

Holtschneider, meanwhile, declined to meet with any of the student press on campus, including The DePaulia. In the town hall, Holtschneider said that the only way to build back trust from the student body is to do it with action.

He said DePaul will further think about how the university handles speakers on campus, campus safety and the curriculum. Holtschneider acknowledged that DePaul has been very decentralized in how speakers are invited and that speakers who target students "is not a good DePaul."

"What you're pointing out is that we've failed this time, we really failed," he said. "Not just in the invitation of the speaker, but how this managed everything substantially, the threats that hit people's emails, the ugliness of the messages that people received. We failed. We didn't succeed in creating the community that we've always talked about."

“You don’t have the perfect president, but I will work my heart out at it,” he added.

Fr. Holtschneider to step down as president
Mariah Woelfel | **June 13, 2016**

<https://depauliaonline.com/23371/news/fr-holtschneider-step-president/>

DePaul president Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M. announced he will resign as president of DePaul University effective summer of 2017.

“It’s best for DePaul if I step aside in the summer of 2017 so that a new leader can assist the institution to name and ambitiously pursue its next set of strategic objectives,” Holtschneider said in an email sent to faculty and staff Monday afternoon.

According to the email, the decision has been underway since December of last year.

“My decision to step aside as president has been underway since my Christmas retreat,” Holtschneider said in his email. “In late January, the provincial of my Vincentian congregation gave permission for this transition. I informed DePaul’s board leadership in March, at which time we decided to share this news more broadly at the conclusion of the academic year.”

The email also stated that he will not be leaving for another position, but rather return to a tenured faculty position after a year away from the University.

Holtschneider’s resignation comes just weeks after increasing tension on campus, the tipping point of which was a visit by Milo Yiannopolous and subsequent protests, where many students called for his resignation.

DePaul professor of law Terry Smith was one of the people who called for Holtschneider’s resignation in a recent letter to the editor.

“The President’s decision to step down was an act of true leadership,” Smith said in response to Holtschneider’s announcement today. “His decision, however, should not be used as an excuse to slow-walk or ignore the demands set forth by the university’s black community.”

“My concern is also that the faculty not be passive in the selection process for a new president, and that the leadership of Faculty Council does not betray the interests of the faculty in that process.”

The University will comprise a search committee of board representatives, university administration, faculty and students, led by DePaul Trustee and Vice Chair Jim Ryan, to hire a new president, according to a university press release.

“The board is dedicated to conducting a comprehensive national search to find the best individual possible to lead the university,” board chair William Bennett said in the release.

The committee will also retain assistance from an executive search firm, Witt/Kieffer, and “will consider both Vincentian and lay leaders.”

The board will also invite the submission of candidate names from members of the university community, according the release.

Holtschneider dispels rumors, says resignation not a result of campus tension
Rachel Hinton | **June 15, 2016**

<https://depauliaonline.com/23395/news/holtschneider-resignation-unrelated/>

On Monday, DePaul President Rev. Dennis Holtschneider announced he would step down at the end of the 2016-2017 school year after nearly 13 years as president. The announcement comes shortly after protests and racial tensions on campus reached their highest point following Milo Yiannopoulos' visit.

In a brief meeting with Holtschneider, he dispelled rumors and ideas that his resignation was due to the protests and tension. The first weekend of March 2016, he met with the board chair to talk about his decision.

While on retreat between Christmas and New Year's, he considered the near-completion of the strategic plan and master plan, as well as the success of the "many Dreams, one Mission" capital campaign and growth of the university. Holtschneider felt that now would be a good time to let a new president step in and craft a vision for DePaul's future.

"It's time in '17, next year, to start saying what are the next set of ambitions for DePaul," Holtschneider said. "What does DePaul want to do next? That is a perfect time for an organization to bring in new leadership, as opposed to being in the middle of that. If I waited a couple more years I would've slowed down all the activity."

The national average for a university president is around five or six years, Holtschneider is currently in his 12th. When his decision to step down was set he notified his religious superiors first, in January, followed by the Board of Trustees' leadership in March and then, after a search for search firms to look for new presidents, a search team was chosen.

It was after this that the protests occurred and the noose was found on campus and Holtschneider sent the first email to the student body apologizing to the College Republicans — which angered some students and organizations — and another email atoning for what was left out of the first. Quelling rumors and false headlines, Holtschneider said that the decision was not impacted by the protests.

"They're completely unrelated," he said. "I actually felt bad when some students were talking about that, that I couldn't tell them, but I hadn't told the board yet. I had to tell the board first."

Before the end of the school year, Holtschneider took part in town halls to address the concerns of students and faculty. Many statements from student organizations and within the faculty called for his resignation, but the news still surprised some, given his commitment to addressing concerns, a commitment Holtschneider said would be a focus of the summer and his last year as president.

"The resignation announcement comes as a surprise because of his recent commitment to addressing the issues that have plagued this campus," Michael Lynch, senator for intercultural

awareness, said. “With the SGA President sitting on the search committee. This is yet another indicator that we need a student Diversity and Inclusion Committee so that the SGA President is aware of the expectations that we have for the next President.”

Others saw the announcement as a victory for the student body. Ira Lowy, of Feminist Front, which called for Holtschneider’s resignation, said that the mishandling of issues, including sexual assaults and racism on campus show instances where “justice was sought by the students and denied by the administration.”

“Father H’s decision, while it may have been made in advance of Feminist Front’s campaign for his resignation, is a victory for the student body” Lowy said. “From the handling of the student athletics sexual assault scandals to the recent racist outbursts on campus, Holtschneider has consistently mishandled key moments in our schools history. At Feminist Front, we are glad to see him go.”

In the next few weeks and the year to come, Holtschneider said he wants to devote the time to addressing issues of free speech and race. A lot of ideas, he said, were generated and he and others intend to pull all of the ideas together and think of what would be best for students. He also wants to raise more money for scholarships, renovations and new center on homelessness research. Since he has one year left, Holtschneider said, he’s going to go “all out” on the issues related to free speech and fundraising.

After he steps down, Holtschneider said he will work on two books and potentially return to teaching — he’s a tenured professor in the College of Education — unless he’s called away by the religious order. Until then, he’ll continue trying to address the issues within the student body, as well as prepare to step down.

“I think I need to spend time this year helping prepare for the next president so that they can have everything in very good shape for when they come and so that I can teach them DePaul well,” Holtschneider said.

DePaul College Republicans say University's decision is "contemptible," still plan to host Milo Yiannopoulos
Ben Gartland | **July 7, 2016**

<https://depauliaonline.com/23569/news/depaul-college-republicans-say-universitys-decision-contemptible-plan-host-milo-yiannopoulos-anyways/>

The DePaul College Republicans released a statement Thursday afternoon in response to the University's decision to deny them a space for a second visit from controversial speaker Milo Yiannopolous, saying that they still plan to host him despite the University's decision.

The statement, which can be read in its entirety below, said that the University's decision was "contemptible," and called the denial a "heckler's veto."

Yiannopoulos was originally invited by the Republicans to speak about free speech at the university in May, but his event was shut down by protestors. He was invited to speak again by the Republicans and was slated to appear at DePaul Sept. 20, according to his tour schedule, which was announced on Breitbart yesterday. The request for a space for him to speak was denied earlier today by the University. Here is the statement in its entirety.

This afternoon, the DePaul College Republicans were informed DePaul University's administration is refusing to allow guest speaker Milo Yiannopoulos to return to campus. According to the University, "having consulted with Public Safety and having reviewed last Spring's events, it is clear that it would not be possible for DePaul to provide the security that would be required for such an event."

Essentially, this is a heckler's veto. DePaul is setting the precedent that if enough students protest a speaker who has the wrong opinions and disrupt it, administration will not allow that person to speak. For a group that has minority viewpoints on campus and revolves many of our events around speakers talking about those viewpoints, this is extremely troubling.

Never mind that Milo is a gay conservative, a rare opportunity for students to learn from a unique individual. Never mind that our first event was disrupted and cancelled expressly because security refused to do their jobs. Never mind that our guest was threatened on stage for everyone to see, yet he's kind enough to return and finish our talk. Never mind that DePaul has happily hosted a convicted terrorist, Rasmea Odeh, on campus.

Despite all this, apparently Milo is the "inflammatory" one, rather than the radicals who ended our event in the first place. For a University that supposedly maintains the founding values of free speech and equality, one that claims administration "will continue to work with student organizations to sponsor events and speakers representing a broad range of opinions," this is disgraceful. We do not accept DePaul's contemptible response and will be having Milo Yiannopoulos on campus September 20. Book the date.

College Republican responds to criticism of party
John Minster | **March 6, 2017**

<https://depauliaonline.com/27478/opinions/republican-responds-criticism/>

Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA) skipped out on President Donald Trump's historic speech to a joint session of Congress last Tuesday. When speaking at a House Democrat's caucus meeting beforehand, Waters said she would not be able to control herself during the speech. In an interview with ABC News just after, Waters said "the president is not going to say what I want him to say," so she would not attend. The "queen of the resistance" has also contended that the president's team is a "bunch of scumbags."

I highlight Waters' choice to refuse to even listen to President Trump because it is a microcosm of what happens on college campuses across the country, where students quite often either disrupt or refuse to consider anybody else's viewpoints.

This is American politics today.

However, to Waters' credit, she did not attend and subsequently disrupt the speech. Perhaps she's saving that act for President Trump's post-re-election speech.

DePaul College Democrats President Jack McNeil wrote an op-ed in this publication last week arguing College Republicans (CRs) have refused to have a "productive dialogue" and have apparently been "trolled" by media personality and provocateur Milo Yiannopoulos. McNeil claimed that CRs consistently "chose provocation over substance," that conservatives should "join the real world."

I have consistently defended Yiannopoulos over the past few months after his appearance at DePaul. I was on stage when a group of militant agitators hijacked the event, unable to hold themselves together the way Waters so courageously did. I was also present outside the event, essentially acting as a bodyguard for Yiannopoulos. I watched a mob threaten my close friend and DePaul CRs' President Nicole Been, chanting "F*** Nicole Been!" In the days after the Yiannopoulos event, a group of CRs were surrounded and screamed at by hostile students while minding their own business on the Quad. On the day after Trump's victory, DePaul contacted Been and offered her round the clock security, concerned that she would be violently attacked.

My point in saying this is simply that the claims McNeil makes are not a one-way street. Conservatives on campus are concerned about free speech and student civil liberties, because, unlike leftist students on campus, they actually have to worry about being attacked for their beliefs. **And yet apparently, we are the ones hindering a "productive dialogue." Perhaps leftist privilege has blinded leftist students to this reality.**

However, as McNeil says, Yiannopoulos is a troll. He's a comedian, but comedians are funny because their humor is rooted in truth. Perhaps much of what Yiannopoulos says is not true at DePaul, **but in the real world, third-wave feminism is bad, multiculturalism is a sham and**

social justice is not actual justice. Yiannopoulos has simply given those ideas the ridicule they deserve.

Indeed, Yiannopoulos and those like him serve a vital role in our society. Former Breitbart Editor and Yiannopolous colleague John Nolte put it aptly, “bottom line: If you are not being shocked, offended or insulted, you are not living in a free society. And if you are okay with that, you are either a fascist or a slave. God bless the provocateurs.”

None of this is to say the Yiannopoulos statements unearthed last week were good. They were bad, and were rightly condemned across the board. The American Conservative Union was, oddly enough, right to disinvite Yiannopoulos from the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC). I myself do not agree with Yiannopoulos on everything. It is important for him to take time to reflect on what has happened and address it. If he is the person I have known him to be, a man who despite his “trolly” nature has always been incredibly kind and helpful to me and our group, he will come out better for it.

With all that said, Yiannopoulos is not the face of the movement. McNeil argues that by inviting Yiannopoulos “conservatives traded quality of character and value sets(...)for racist trolling and ratings.” This is silly. One speaker garnering some publicity does not a whole movement make. Not even close. Yiannopoulos certainly speaks to a few issues for conservatism, but the ideology as a whole remains.

The real movement McNeil claims has disappeared is the one that just won the presidency, while also retaining the House and the Senate. It’s the one that is going to put Neil Gorsuch on the Supreme Court, repeal the disastrous Obamacare and reform our broken tax code. It’s the one I saw at CPAC two weeks ago, where thousands of people, predominantly young people (and over 30 DePaul students, I might add), gathered in Washington D.C. to hear from many of our elected officials, revel in our victories, but also trade ideas and continue to develop our worldviews. It’s the one I see at DePaul, where, despite Yiannopoulos apparently trolling us, our membership has nearly doubled in his wake.

The contrast with the Democratic Party is stark. At every level of government, Democrats are in disarray. The same weekend of CPAC, there were protests because Keith Ellison (D-MN), accused of being one of the most anti-semitic, a Muslim brotherhood sympathizer and Louis Farrakhan acolyte, was not elected DNC chairman. They made him Vice-Chairman instead. And yet, the mainstream media would have people believe the pro-Israel Trump administration is anti-Semitic. Indeed, Democrats have created guides to heckle and harass Congressmen at town halls, while Anti-fascist parades around campuses attack anyone who might even slightly disagree with them. Only one party here is and has clearly been a danger to productive dialogue.

The truth is, while the left is having an identity crisis, the conservative movement is alive and well. Yiannopoulos has simply been a part of this organization, a useful tool in mobilizing students who have been dismayed by the leftist propaganda so pervasive on college campuses.

Democrats accusing Republicans of losing their values should take a look in the mirror; the illiberal left has taken over their party, while Republicans hold more elected seats than at any

time since before the Great Depression. Democrats should actually have the productive dialogue they supposedly revere, and perhaps win some of those arguments for once. Of late, it has not gone too well.

John Minster is the president of the DePaul College Republicans and Vice Chair of DePaul's Young Americans for Freedom Chapter.

Appendix F

News Media Coverage of the Yiannopolous Event

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