

*On the contrary, I would let my tongue
be cut off out of sheer gratitude if
things could be so arranged that I
myself would lose all desire to put it
out.*

—Dostoevsky¹

Where are we? A postmodern postmortem

What is the current status of theoretical discourse in the Art World and the University? Has the hegemony of Western values finally been challenged and destabilized allowing for new voices and a space between? Is the postmodernist project even relevant anymore or have I just lost track of it—stopped, mid-draw, like Han Solo hanging before Jabba the Hutt? I wonder. I wonder where art and the mind meet in the new millennium and where an ‘authentic’ voice of artistic integrity resides in the U.S.A. and in the academy? Here we are, ensconced in the Ivory Tower post prejudice, post modern. Yale is ours and we are charged with the role of artists in society—no one could ask for a better stage: millennial, (Middle) East vs. West, rabble-rousing student unionizing—as the last vestige of the old school morphs into the new. Confronted with history, this is an invitation to think differently about the roles of the artist and intellectual in society and at Yale University.

So where is the authentic artistic voice? Have we so obfuscated the authorial ethos of the artist with postmodern hand-wringing that we have lived up to Dave Hickey’s charge that ‘a bunch of tight-assed puritanical haute bourgeois intellectuals [have] simply legislated customized art out of existence?’² What role has the massive shift of art training from the barrio and garret to the academy played in this crisis? Why do you think M.F.A. programs have multiplied more than tenfold in the past thirty years—for the good of art?

Hickey will argue that we should drive the philistines and ivory intellectuals out of the arcane world of art and resume the authentic jam, characterized by pre-parchment individualism. But wait, aren’t the best artists also our culture’s most important intellectuals? And hasn’t the academy been a voice for pro-



*Art and Architecture Building Post
Fire, June 13, 1969. Courtesy Yale Fire
Marshall.*



ART & ARCHITECTURE
JUNE 13, 1969

\$925,015 LOSS

gressive change throughout the twentieth century? And is it not the postmodern point that art should be integrated into the larger culture so as to empower and disseminate the voice of the other? Isn't the *raison d'être* of postmodernism to engage us in a world-class game of 52 card pick-up? Is it the academy's fault that artists feel so confused about their role in the 21st century? Are artists even intellectuals? What in the hell are we doing here at Yale anyways?!

On the intellectual: *lux Et veritas* in the 21st century

In 1864, Yale became the first American university to sponsor a school devoted exclusively to fine arts. Modeled after the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* in Paris, the School of Fine Art's approach reflected the classical emphasis of its European predecessor. Not only was Yale's new School of Fine Art the first of its kind, it was the first place of co-educational learning on campus—a rather notable exception to the exclusion of women from Yale College until 1969. Focused on traditional subjects of painting, drawing and sculpture, the school was then and remains a professional school. Originally it offered only a B.F.A.—the first masters in fine art (M.F.A.) was not awarded until 1936. As the school

It is not hard to imagine (or remember) the excitement of the time and the brilliant array of art and ideas that came out of America's new prosaic intellectuals. As personal expression, and the dollars to cultivate it, began to pour in, institutions designed to facilitate that expression flourished. In a widely quoted article published in *The New Yorker* last April, Calvin Tomkins points out that in the 1940's there were eleven M.F.A. programs in studio art and that today there are more than 180.³ Tomkins notes that this dramatic rise has never been adequately explored. His article asks whether the proliferation of M.F.A. programs speaks to an increase in the numbers of artists, the number of artists wishing to be accredited by an academic institution, or both? The question of why there has been such a significant increase also begs the definition of art and artist, a subject that continues to elicit fierce debate.

Joseph Albers' presence at Yale in the fifties and sixties speaks to our nation's radical renegotiation of the traditional role of the artist—an evolution still in play today. Although the contentious nature of this ongoing debate informs the experience of most artists, both in and out of the academy, the popular American definition of the artist has certainly grown. The question that continues to haunt history is whether this definition has grown to include the artist as an intellectual. In other words, have artists been accepted as an integral

The A and A building in flames may be the most symbolic image of institutional learning molting in real time—the building that housed the country's oldest art school burning at the apex of sixties counter-cultural agitation.

grew it gradually included courses in architecture, drama, and music, subjects that would in time demand their own professional schools at the University.

The painter and color theorist Joseph Albers, who came to Yale in 1950, largely built the contemporary reputation of the School of Art. The philosophy Albers brought from his experience teaching at the Bauhaus and Black Mountain College was a radical departure from what the School of Fine Art had historically represented, and it signaled a sea change in the way art and art education were viewed. Albers and Yale were, in the postwar climate of experimentalism and art theory, to engage in a radical shift away from classical pedagogy and embrace the brave new world of the artist as purveyor of cultural value. Enter the artist as intellectual.

In response to profound social changes in postwar America, the arts and art education began to gain more mainstream acceptance and prominence. Pivotal programs like the GI Bill, and watershed moments like *Life's* article on Jackson Pollock, made a career in visual art appear more feasible than it had ever been before. In concert with the government grants administered after WWII, America's post-war economic boom allowed for two volatile cultural ingredients to mix—creating a potent cocktail. The first was the burgeoning advertising and entertainment sectors and the new industry of selling popular or mass culture. The second was the growing availability of higher education and the commensurate rise in abstract ideas allowed for by this new access.

part of academic culture and received the respect that this acceptance entails? Or are artists still different and therefore isolated from the primary venues of culture i.e., the market and the university?

The maverick group of artists and intellectuals that founded the Bauhaus in 1923 were fundamentally concerned with the definition of education. One of the basic principles of the Bauhaus was integrating art and design with economics in a bid to validate art and bring its particular set of resources to bear on everyday life. This philosophy was inspired in equal parts by Walter Gropius' ergonomic concerns and Kandinsky, Klee, and later Albers' belief that art could invest a sense of spirit back into Western culture.⁴ Much of the curriculum of the Bauhaus was an experiment in mixing these various ideas and technologies without concern for strict boundaries. In many ways this radical approach to education prefigured the variations of pedagogy that would be introduced into American universities, often by émigrés from that earlier experiment.

The notion that all manner of personal expression could be accommodated, and even taught, within a university was still an emerging concept when Albers came to Yale in 1950. Armed with more than twenty years of experimental teaching practice, Albers brought an approach to Yale that helped inculcate a new philosophy precisely when American culture was ready to explore a new approach to lifestyle and values. In effect, the European ideal of the intellectual, one that more generously accommodated the arts, was grafted onto America's unique strain of transcendental individualism and bubbling postwar consciousness.



The Joy of Effort, R. Tate McKenzie. 3' diameter, bronze. 1914. Second floor landing Payne Whitney Gymnasium, Yale University.

This hybridization gave rise to the Beats and finally opened white culture to the African-American traditions that had been developing beneath the radar since the end of the Civil War. Boundaries were collapsing, America was jamming to what was about to become rock and roll and somehow, inexplicably, soldiers were going back to school to become artists.

Yale was right at the epicenter of this cultural fusion. With Richard Serra and the Black Panthers mixing it up in the Art and Architecture Building things were bound to get interesting. The A and A building in flames may be the most symbolic image of institutional learning molting in real time—the building that housed the country's oldest art school burning at the apex of sixties counter-cultural agitation. Though the rest of the arts stayed, sculpture left following the fire, moving across campus to Hammond Hall. A geographical separation that remains in place today

Perhaps it was the cleaving of the disciplines that signaled the end of the intellectual experiment and the beginning of the slow rise of the School of Art's current reputation for professionalism. Whatever it was that happened at the end of the sixties, the great educational experiment of Europe and postwar America did not foster any tangible new curriculum in the teaching of fine art at Yale or at any other top tier universities. While all academic disciplines came under the scrutiny of postmodern criticism during the eighties and nineties, art education seemed to retreat into itself, abdicating its role as a fulcrum for ideological debate. It seems ironic that while every academic field was being radically challenged and restructured, art education both grew exponentially and disappeared off the map. Indeed, the postwar ideology surrounding art education has been supplanted by a debased postmodernist policy where everything is art and teaching is aimed at facilitating this relativism.

This abdication is in many ways an indication of just how successfully the arts have been integrated into mainstream culture—a process that Dave Hickey argues has created a 'bloated corporate culture that has embraced all the wickedness of mass culture and mass education in its quest for dollars at the door.'⁵

Hickey describes a shift in art culture that is relatively new. Indeed, only twenty years ago many believed that the arts, along with the new disciplines of cultural and media studies, would join with the more traditional academic disciplines to form an innovative interdisciplinary approach to education. Intellectuals such as bell hooks saw the arts as a perfect basis on which to form a new post-modern hermeneutic. The postmodern project has at its roots a challenge to the definition of history and a call to renegotiate the role of the other/artist. Jacques Derrida has argued conclusively for 30 years that this poststructuralist approach be used to validate and challenge the import of the other as author. Within the context of this critical debate artists, because of their investment in the architecture of unique personal expression, are the progenitors of post-modernity. While many artists embraced this dual role of theorist and maker, higher education (Yale included) has not been able to facilitate the paradigm shift many thought inevitable. Art education looks very much the same as it did 50 years ago. Very little of the Bauhaus can be seen on American college campuses today.

At Yale the artist is still firmly established as a member of a professional school within the University, a location which has effectively barred him from entering into the very intellectual debate that he has himself helped to start. Yale University has not been able to make the leap and invite the artist into the College of Arts and Sciences nor have there been any long-term attempts

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Nicholas Herman, *jCulture!*, 36 foot mural on temporary wall adjacent to A and A building, York Street. Thirty day documentation period Sept/Oct, 2002.



at building a bridge between the philosophers and the artists. The postwar and later postmodern climates of boundary shifting have not altered the one wall that is indicative of both modernism and feudalism—the wall between the maker of art and the maker of meaning. The art school is still a professional school and the artist is therefore not privy to the privileges of the Phd. The repercussion of this value hierarchy sting in the context of the academy, but worse still, they suffocate out in the real world.

Tomkin's *New Yorker* article spotlights the tenuous affair Harvard has had with institutionalizing the study of visual arts. Harvard, like all of the Ivy League schools except Yale, has historically been unwilling to foster an art scene within the traditional confines of rigorous liberal arts education. Indeed, while the postwar culture boom was catapulting the arts into the academy, Harvard focused on design and architecture, choosing Gropius over Albers. Despite or because of their reticence, Harvard did make one rather provocative and long lasting gesture in 1956, commissioning a prominent group of intellectuals to assess the importance of the arts in education. *The Brown Report*, named after its primary author John Nicholas Brown, argued that the arts at Harvard were retarded by the institution's, 'dim view of the artist as an intellectual.' This opinion, the report argued, failed to acknowledge that, 'The artist is a creative intellectual, the great artist great both as artist and as intellectual,' and most nettlesome, that 'The university should welcome him.'⁶

The Brown Report has elicited a fair amount of interest since it was referenced in last April's article. What has generated even more debate is the statement by the Dean of Yale's School of Art Richard Benson, that the problem with contemporary art is that its 'subject is the history of art' which is, 'immediately decadent and fundamentally dull.' Benson went on to say, 'There's a lot of conceptual art around today because it's easy. It's much easier to think about something than to make something.'⁷

The upshot of the Dean's comments must be placed within the context of the postmodern theory that has been part and parcel of the history of art over the last 30–40 years. Art history has always been tied to the university since most historians charged with recording and deciphering that history are members of some kind of academic community. Since art has come to be inextricably tied to art education, a feature of that same academic community, and since the theories that underlie both have come to challenge the same core system of valuation and hierarchy, art and history have ceased to be separate endeavors. Indeed, many have argued conclusively that they never were separate and that their having been proposed as such was a disingenuous abuse of power wielded by corrupt hegemonic forces. Ultimately, the whole idea that there is



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a ‘conceptual art’ and an ‘art’ art is bogus. Art is not pure and has never been pure, divorced, or otherwise separated from the larger cultural forces of meaning and intellect. The artist as a filter for and shaper of history is also a purveyor of value—this is the basis of conceptual art and as such is the basis for the radical and imperative postmodern project.

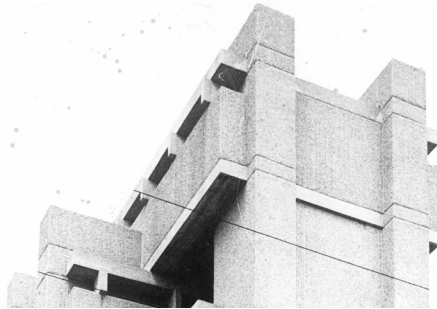
To suggest, as Dean Benson does, that artists are lazy i.e., they have chosen the ‘easy’ way out by thinking and not making, or that artists are ‘decadent,’ because they have engaged in the epistemological project of interpreting history, is not only ill-informed but dangerous. For an artist to take as her subject the history of art is to engage the full historical backdrop of the human experience—nothing less. More importantly, to do so is to engage that history with an informed and critical voice, an essential asset if either the future of art or the future of humanity is to improve.

Art is different than other disciplines in that it usually proposes non-verbal solutions to epistemological query. This difference necessitates that an artist’s quarters be separated from those of an academic—so that at the very least the din of the soiled maker does not interfere with the sanctity of the reader. Most schools solve this logistical problem by creating an art building—often one of the more exciting venues for cross-fertilization on campus. There are a number of buildings that house the arts sprinkled throughout Yale, although there is no center or library charged with fostering their development. Unfortunately for members of the arts communities at Yale, the University has exacerbated the stylistic differences between the arts and intellect and made them intractable by separating each into small, seemingly self-sufficient domains. Nowhere is this arbitrary exclusion more evident than in the designation of the School of Art as a professional school.



George Bush Jr. Yale Class of 1968.

Artists are not professionals. Is it not plain for all to see that this separation is designed to keep the arts away from the other endeavors of academic scholarship? And that this policy is based on an archaic value hierarchy that has been widely and repeatedly debunked over the past 50 if not 500 years?



On what basis are the artists that graduate from the School of Art professionals? Artists cannot practice upon graduation nor hang their shingle and provide a marketable service. It is not the same as Law, or Medicine, or Architecture, or even Drama since there is no union to join. Artists are individual scholars studying and developing the arcane language of form, composition, and culture. Artists are not professionals. Is it not plain for all to see that this separation is designed to keep the arts away from the other endeavors of academic scholarship? And that this decision is based on an archaic value hierarchy that has been widely and repeatedly debunked over the past 50 if not 500 years? No less an authority than Harvard University has authored a report suggesting that this kind of separation undermines the mission of higher education and, by extension, the course of history. Art and academics differ in only one respect: financially. Artists receive virtually no financial support from Yale University.

One of the most peculiar defenses of the School of Art's location at the bottom of the Yale food chain is that, in the real world, artists are treated this way. Artists, this argument goes, suffer because they love what they do while the rest of the world dismisses it as indulgent. Artists therefore should expect nothing more since this is the lot they have chosen. Never mind that their creative capital is exploited in all manner of marketplaces and helps buoy the economic bottom line of most cities. The arts, in the real world, are not deserving of the same respect and privilege as the other intellectual disciplines. The real world? What, pray tell, resembles, even faintly, the real world in a community ensconced in faux-Gothic buildings studying arcane subjects? Campus life has never been about the real world. The university is based largely on a medieval monastic model of rejecting the real world in pursuit of, well, *lux et veritas*. Light and truth? In the real world?

If a professional school such as the School of Law feels that it can train and promote its graduates in such a way that their education assures future employability then the investment of tuition dollars is justified. This formula cannot be used in the School of Art, however, since this field is far less secure. If the assertion by Yale University's provost, Alison Richard, that the 'professional schools are an integral part of the University and the wider community,' is to be taken literally, then it stands to reason that the arts should be supported economically, like the rest of the graduate programs in the humanities and sciences. Indeed, the issue of financial aid seems impossible to ignore when discussing the value of different fields of research at a place such as Yale. When economics are used as a measure of institutional support, the question of whether the artist is equal to the intellectual is clearly 'no.'

At a Yale Alumni Assembly in 1995 the subject of money figured prominently amongst the gathered Deans of the creative professional schools. Stan Wojewodski Jr, then the Dean of the Drama School, spoke for all those gathered when he stressed that 'theater has the ability to save the world. But I'm bothered by what happens to our students financially.'⁸ Although Yale is generous in its subsidy of the physical maintenance of the less well-endowed professional schools, the hand-out pales in comparison to that given to the Graduate School of Art and Science. Where artists, musicians, and those in theater all pay full fare, their peers pursuing Phds are treated differently: 90% of graduate students have their entire tuition waived—an individual stipend that costs the school an average of \$130,000.⁹

Fittingly, the same year the Deans of the professional schools were lamenting the lack of funds available to help support their students, a group in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences formed the Graduate Employees Student Union (GESO). GESO's issues had been long in the making, but as an organized group it was an attempt to better advocate for a livable wage and medical care for students while they were studying and working at Yale. Although GESO contin-



ues to fail in their bid for recognition, they have been instrumental in helping Phd students gain substantial increases in financial aid. One of the points graduates in the Graduate School of Art and Sciences have used to leverage more generous aid packages is that although the numbers of high quality graduate students is rising, their job prospects once they graduate are diminishing. Things used to be different, allowing former Yale Graduate School Dean (and current Yale University President) Richard Levin to remark confidently that the economic burden of graduate study is, 'ultimately made tolerable by the confident knowledge that the experience was very likely to have a happy ending—a finished dissertation in four years or five, and a job teaching in a good college or university.'¹⁰

Obviously Levin's assertion is based on a different era, when Ivy League graduates held greater sway in a smaller and less competitive marketplace. This change is precisely why the former Graduate School Dean Thomas W. Appelquist went to such great lengths in the mid-nineties to obtain more aid, not only waiving tuition and providing \$10,000–\$15,000 stipends to graduate teaching assistants, but also creating a new dissertation fellowship where students in their last year are given \$15,000 just to write. The upshot of this policy is that Yale is paying its Phd candidates to study, while demanding cash on the barrel for its professional school services. Why the discrepancy between artists and intellectuals?

Two issues inevitably come up when art students demand that they be treated the same as graduate students in Phd programs. The first is the surprisingly tenacious belief that artists are not doing the same caliber of work as Phd students. In other words, in the real world M.F.A. graduates are not as valuable to Yale as Phd graduates. The second is that Phd students work harder and teach more than Yale art students do.

Yale admits the best candidates into all of its graduate programs—this is why it has a world class reputation. These students in turn go on to make history in their respective fields, effectively insuring that Yale's reputation will last in perpetuity. In strictly economic terms Yale's greatest asset is the legacy built on the many achievements of its alumni. If alumni achievement is indeed Yale's criteria for success, than the professional schools are clearly equals, having graduated prominent leaders in their fields.

The broader debate about whether or not artists are deserving of the title 'intellectual' smacks of the most odious chauvinism. Since no one can deny

that it is the culture of inquiry that is the primary subject being trafficked here at Yale, then the argument that one variety is better than another is moot. There may be hierarchy within the fields, but not across them. If there is then Yale is not a place of higher learning but rather an agent of politics. But this accusation need not be applied, as Provost Richards has already been quoted as saying that the, 'professional schools are an integral part of the University and the wider community.' Integral is defined as 'essential to completeness.' We all know that the heart is no more or less integral than the brain. It stands to reason that the definition of integral demands that the administration of Yale University put its money where its mouth is and includes the fine arts as a full member of the academic community.



Sending aspiring artists and graduates of Yale University into the world burdened by a minimum of \$40,000 of debt, while it sponsors their peers in the Graduate School of the Arts and Sciences *in toto*, is inappropriate and a gross prejudice. There is just no excuse for this kind of double standard if Yale wants to remain an institution devoted to the highest ideals of education.

The second argument used against artists is that graduate students are required to do more teaching and therefore deserve to be paid more handsomely. This distinction must be approached carefully. It is true that most graduate students pursuing Phds are required to teach more. The reason is that most of the professional schools are devoted primarily to graduate study and therefore have few if any undergraduate students. Phd students in the humanities and sciences, on the other hand, research subjects undergraduates

are required to study. As a result students in the School of Art are generally granted only one semester of work as a Teaching Assistant. For this they are paid \$1,400. For the same semester of work a graduate student T.A. pursuing his Phd is paid five times as much. The point then is raised: are graduate students in Phd programs required to do five times as much work? The reality is that a T.A. in history or chemistry is generally required to teach a session that supplements the professor's lecture in addition to grading papers or monitoring a lab. In comparison, a T.A. in the School of Art is expected to supplement the professor's lesson plan on conceptual art practice and history while simultaneously helping the student master the various technologies of rendering and composing. Is there really a five-fold difference in these responsibilities?

Students in the professional creative art schools would teach more if given an opportunity. Why? There are two reasons. The first is that students in these schools have to support themselves, and working is a better option than taking out loans that in the end cost more. In the real world massive debt is a disservice to a burgeoning creative talent. Secondly, although some artists are able to live off the sale of their work, most are required to teach, just like graduates from the Phd programs. Getting the terminal degree that grants them the right to teach in higher education is one of the primary reasons an artist chooses to go to school in the first place. And just like in the Graduate School of Art and Sciences, artists are concerned about the increasingly competitive job market and the difficulty in finding gainful employment.

The fact that there are not more opportunities to teach as a graduate student in many of the professional schools is often because it appears that there is not enough undergraduate students interested in taking courses in that field of study. This lack of undergraduate interest may be true in the School of Law or Divinity, but it is not the case in the School of Art. Quite to the contrary, the School of Art has the highest enrollment of any of the professional schools. In 1997 the S.O.A. taught 732 students spread across its 24 undergraduate courses. Compared with other areas of study like history, which boasts 128 courses, undergraduate course offerings in art are hard to come by. The result is that all of the courses offered are filled to capacity and that hundreds of students who would like to take art courses are turned away because there is no room.¹¹ This paucity in course offerings is mirrored in other creative professional schools like Architecture and Drama.

To reframe the problem: Yale has talented graduate students in the arts who want to teach and eager undergraduates who want to learn and yet the University cannot accommodate either. Why? Though admittedly complex, one obvious reason is the arts are still not seen as being as important as other subjects taught at the University. Back to square one. Despite lip service, the Yale community seems resigned to disparage the creative arts. Art still can't get itself to be taken seriously and treated like any other intellectual endeavor. Despite a century of progress where the arts have contributed in innumerable ways, including the development of a rigorous academic culture, they are still seen as second class. That is a shame and a stumbling block for Yale and the greater society.

Given the above situation is it any wonder that when GESO decided to expand its fight to include all graduate students, and not just Phd candidates, it found fertile soil in the professional schools? The School of Art reached a majority more quickly than any other school on campus, signing up 85% of students almost overnight. What did those unionizers tell the artists that was so enticing? In addition to laying out the basic economic disparity outlined above, GESO asked a series of simple questions about how the students in the professional schools felt. This simple act of inquiry was the radical spark that sent so many artists toward the union cause. What were the questions? A short list is below:

1) Why did you come to graduate school? What do you intend to do after graduation?



Nicholas Herman, YYY, 5'x3', felt, 2002.

2) How many tenured faculty are there in your department? Do you think that there are enough faculty to foster teaching and mentoring relationships in your school?

3) What do you think would make your school more competitive and create more opportunities for you to achieve your goals as a student at Yale?

These questions are noteworthy not only because they validate the concerns of the graduate students in the professional schools, but because they are more or less the same kinds of questions that the Committee on Yale College Education (CYCE) are charged with asking. What is the CYCE? In keeping with the tercentennial celebration of Yale's legacy and the ongoing massive reinvestment in Yale's physical plant, President Levin organized a group of faculty, students, and recent alumni to review the mission of Yale and ask, 'How can we be more innovative?' What is so unique about the CYCE is that it is positioned to give a comprehensive evaluation of the school's curriculum, a process that, according to Yale College Dean Richard Brodhead, usually 'take(s) place at a time of crisis and wrenching national transformation.'¹² Instead, Brodhead points out, Yale seems to be doing quite well.

Well, yes, Yale is doing quite well. The buildings are tucked and pointed and streets have been repaved. Look below the surface, however, and there are profound issues concerning higher education that are being raised by graduate students and GESO. Indeed, a majority of Yale graduate students have repeatedly requested a meeting to help define their role at the University and have been ignored. The unwillingness of the Yale administration to validate the concerns of its students serves to infantilize those students and undermines the purported caliber of the whole institution. If Yale's graduate students are so smart, then why are their concerns so unworthy of consideration? This seems to contradict the assertion that all is well at Yale.

Yale's official policy of not responding to GESO's demands or reaching out to its graduate students is all the more perplexing when one considers the argument of CYCE board member and economics professor Donald Brown, a veteran of a similar review process at Stanford. Brown points out that, 'No one has asked how other aspects of Yale University are being utilized to supplement and enrich undergraduate education,' and therefore 'It's that question that makes this enterprise different from other reviews.'¹³

Why has no one involved in GESO (or any graduate student for that matter) been asked the very question that Mr. Brown proposes Yale use as the basis of its innovative curriculum review? It stands to reason that if the members of CYCE and President Levin want the best for Yale they will take advantage of and nurture the incredible talent in their own backyard. Living in New Haven, gathered around this venerable institution, is a passionate group of incredibly creative and enthusiastic artists, intellectuals, and researchers that want to help shape a new paradigm for education and build on the legacy of Yale University. We want to participate, but feel that the many calls for innovation and new partnerships have been met with only silence. CYCE and the rest of the Yale administration might be surprised at how many graduate students would like to be involved in undergraduate education. There is a very real opportunity for a potentially profound evolution of the role of higher education in undergraduate, graduate, and broader civic affairs. If GESO is such a bad idea, then the administration should offer up a better one. Stop sending your students propaganda and start sending us proposals!

One simple yet profound way Yale could enrich undergraduate education is to support all of its graduate students equally. There is no debate when it comes down to economics: Yale sees its academics as more important than its artists. This disparity undermines the foundation of the institution's mis-

Ultimately, the whole idea that there is a 'conceptual' art and an 'art' art is bogus.

sion. Since many of Yale's brightest undergraduates want to take, and would benefit from, art classes and since there are many accomplished graduate students in the School of Art, there is a real opportunity to improve the caliber of the entire institution. Invest in the members of your community and your community will be stronger.

In a time when many feel a disquieting powerlessness and anxiety in the face of rapid national and international change, a clear role for the intellectual and artist has failed to materialize. Yale could organize a forum that would draw on the many graduate schools that make it such a brilliant cultural constellation. Together we could explore in a collaborative way what the future of graduate education should look like. Nothing would distinguish Yale more than leading the way in a national reassessment of this issue. There is a crisis, Dean Brodhead, despite your sense of equilibrium at Yale, and many students are not living up to their potential because of a lack of clear leadership. There has never been a better time to make more room at the table and I call on you, President Levin and all the professional school Eeans to organize such a forum—history demands that we make a bold new step.

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Notes

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- 3 Tomkins, Calvin. 'Can Art be Taught?', *The New Yorker*. April 15, 2002, 44-49.
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