

# The AAUP and Faculty Organizing at Wesleyan: Historical Lessons

(Draft, August 25, 2022—Corrections are welcome)

*The Wesleyan University Bulletin* of 1916 begins with an editorial warning about the then-fashionable introduction of scientific management techniques into the university: Increased efficiency ought not to be confused with “human development.” Although “the college must be efficient for its purpose,” its educational mission cannot be measured by its “material results.” Rather, a university is to be measured by how well it trains individuals to become “the fore front of the new generation,” and hence the “usefulness of the college to society depends on the number and the quality of the men who compose its faculty, who are its creative element.”<sup>1</sup> The editorial’s insistence that the university is not a factory and cannot be measured according to the standards of industrial activity was expressing resistance to recommendations made by the Trustees’ “Special Committee on Efficiency in College Work.” The new policies would not only increase the workload and surveillance of the faculty’s work, it would also impose curricular expectations in line with the needs of a nation about to join the First World War. As David Potts reports in his authoritative history of Wesleyan, faculty quickly organized to oppose violations “of the rights of the faculty.” Over the course of 1917, trustees began to address faculty concerns and by 1918, “Wesleyan achieved a truce on campus governance.”<sup>2</sup>

What are “the rights of the faculty”? This episode of an attempted but thwarted foray into academic Taylorism highlights a tension in the self-understanding of college professors: On the one hand, they are educators, concerned solely with matters of “mind and soul” and hence must remain unburdened from the business of running the complex institution of the university. On the other hand, the “best college will be equipped with a faculty numerous enough to assure the largest degree of individual training.”<sup>3</sup> In the formula of the *Wesleyan Bulletin*’s editorial, quality depends on number: Only a university that is prepared to provide enough teaching staff can meet its purpose. Because quantity and quality do not exist in isolation from one another, increases in the

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<sup>1</sup> *The Wesleyan University Bulletin*, vol. 10, no. 3 (1916): 3-4.

<sup>2</sup> David Potts, *Wesleyan University, 1910-1970: Academic Ambition and Middle-Class America* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2015), 28.

<sup>3</sup> *Wesleyan Bulletin*, 4.

number of faculty do not only improve the quality of education, but also the assertiveness of the faculty to act as co-constitutive governing body of the university. In 1915, at the annual conference of the Association of American Universities, Columbia University philosopher John Dewey summed up this critical faculty sentiment: “It is an undesirable anomaly that fundamental control should be vested in a body of trustees or regents having no immediate connection with the educational conduct of our institutions.”<sup>4</sup>

Dewey, who had just been elected the first president of the newly formed American Association of University Professors (AAUP), suggested that universities learn from “the experience of cities having commission government. If the legislative prerogatives of faculties were extended,” professors would be able to effectively delegate administrative tasks: They would legislate broad principles, and administrators would implement these principles, hence freeing up “the necessary time to consider matters of greater import.” Dewey’s distinction between legislation and administration underscores that university professors developed a self-understanding as a distinctive group of professionals, the *professoriate*, not only in analogy to other guild-like professions, such as law and medicine, but also in analogy to the ideal of a “self-governing republic of scholars.” This is spelled out by the AAUP’s co-founder and first secretary, Johns Hopkins philosophy professor Arthur Lovejoy:

The professors should elect their own president, with the consent and advice of the trustees; they should, through the president and an elective council, make all appointments, promotions, changes in salaries, and the like. From them all academic honors should proceed. Their control over educational policies should extend to such matters as the acceptance or rejection of gifts and bequests; and they should have coordinate powers with the trustees in the fixation of tuition-fees and other charges. They should, in short, stand before the community as a collegium of men trained for and dedicated to a unique and responsible function, and left (as the special nature of the function requires) wholly free in the exercise of that responsibility, so long as they appear to be devoting themselves to it with disinterestedness and good faith.<sup>5</sup>

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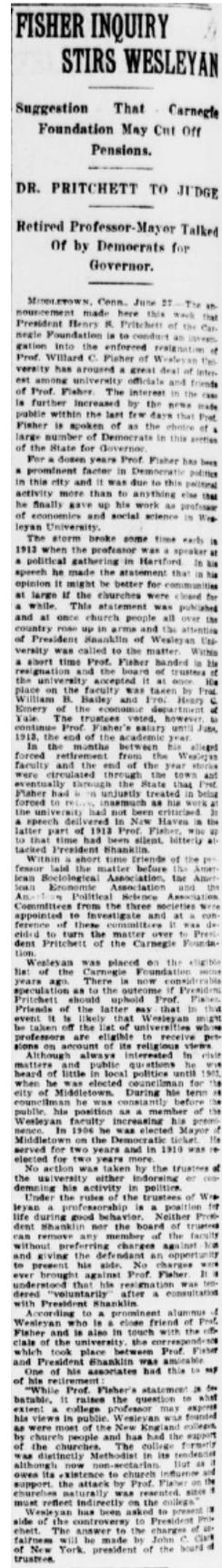
<sup>4</sup> John Dewey, “Faculty Share in University Control,” The Association of American Universities, *Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the Seventeenth Annual Conference* 1915, 27.

<sup>5</sup> Arthur Lovejoy, “The Profession of the Professoriate,” *The Johns Hopkins Alumni Magazine* vol. 2 (1914): 9.

Lovejoy's utopia of the university as a republic of letters reconciles rhetorically what cannot be reconciled materially: Although professors like to view themselves as appointees to an office that serves non-utilitarian, non-economic purposes, they are nonetheless salaried employees. While tenured professors can be considered members of the professional-managerial class, contractual and part-time faculty are largely a proletarianized workforce suffering low pay and little control over their workplace. And although almost all universities grant their permanent faculty some degree of control over the curriculum, only faculties that have gained unionization have any bargaining power over material matters such as compensation and benefits. During the early history of the AAUP, however, this insight was somewhat taboo. Unlike today, when advocacy chapters look up with envy at the power wielded by collective bargaining chapters, the first generation of AAUP professors did not want the Association to be identified with even the rumor of trade-unionist tendencies.

### A Scandal at Wesleyan and the Founding of the AAUP

In the early decades of the AAUP, the academic labor issue was implied but concealed in the Association's principles guiding "the condition of tenure of the professional office." Building on the work of professional associations such as the American Philosophical Association or the American Psychological Association, the AAUP's "1915 Declaration of Principles on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure" arose from the judicial practice of investigating violations of academic freedom. One such violation had occurred at Wesleyan in 1913. Following sensationalist press reports, Wesleyan president William Shanklin, with unanimous consent from the board of trustees, fired economics professor Willard Fisher, who had taught at Wesleyan for twenty years, for an attitude "out of harmony with the spirit of the college," which Shanklin defined as "in sympathy with the Christian churches." The stated reason for Fisher's dismissal was his suggestion, in a speech at the "Get Together Club" in Hartford, that a temporary closing of churches on Sundays would show that there are other,



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equally worthy outlets for religious impulses. Even though Fisher readily agreed to Shanklin's request to resign, his dismissal underscored unanswered questions about the reach of academic freedom: Did it only concern the freedoms of research, teaching, and learning, or did it also concern the freedom to speak freely off-campus, as a private citizen? The German tradition of academic freedom, dating to the revolutionary gains of 1848, had restricted freedom of speech to the university. Grounded in the Constitution's first amendment, the emerging American tradition was more encompassing and was to include the right to extramural free speech.

There were, it must be added, other reasons why not just Shanklin, but also many trustees and faculty were relieved to see Fisher go. As an advocate of workers' rights, his politics were noticeably to the left of what was then the institutional norm. Fisher taught courses on left economics, endorsed labor unions, and was one of the few faculty to belong to the Democratic party. He had an active political life outside the university, was twice the mayor of Middletown, and, as Potts notes, "was devoting all of his political efforts to economic justice and specific labor issues."<sup>6</sup> On campus, he was a gadfly, refusing the honorary degree granted to all faculty who rise to the ranks of full professor and pranking academic pomp and ritual. More distressingly for Shanklin, Fisher prepared a side-by-side analysis that showed that the president had plagiarized a speech by the president of Hamilton College. Finally, on a campus that was socially dominated by the model of the hetero-patriarchal family, where almost all professors were married with children and living close to campus, the unmarried Fisher stood out as the prototype of the social (and sexual) outsider and rebel.

Fisher's marginalization on the Wesleyan campus, however, was compensated by his belonging to his discipline and his profession. After his dismissal, despite an outburst of letters and resolutions, his Wesleyan colleagues and students failed to organize a unified protest. Instead, the journals *Science* and *The American Economic Review* documented the Fisher case, and it was the American Association of Economics (AEA) that sought an investigation. Fisher's dismissal coincided with more news about violations of academic freedom at other universities. These, too, alarmed several professional associations. "In December 1913, during their separate meetings, the AEA, the American Sociological Society (ASS), and the American Political Science Association (APSA) passed identical resolutions to establish committees on academic freedom and academic

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<sup>6</sup> Potts, *Wesleyan University*, 8.

tenure, each having three members.”<sup>7</sup> From this coordinated defense of academic freedom in the social sciences emerged the “joint committee of nine,” which soon “was to become the AAUP’s Committee on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure, not only in its active defense but also in the conceptual foundation of academic freedom.”<sup>8</sup> Also known as “Committee A,” the committee’s official findings concerning Fisher’s dismissal were cautiously phrased: “the ground upon which Professor Fisher’s removal was officially based was inadequate” and it was likely that “the ostensible ground of Professor Fisher’s dismissal was not the real ground,” since he had long been “a man objectionable to President, or Trustees, or benefactors of the University.” If, the committee warned, “such a method of college government goes unchallenged as a precedent, there can be no guarantee of ordinary personal liberty in thought and expression, or of security of tenure for any scientific or economic teacher.”<sup>9</sup>

Committee A’s brief report on the Fisher case was published only in 1916, three years after the fact, but it had been preceded by aborted investigative efforts. In 1914, Columbia University economics professor E. R. A. Seligman urged the Carnegie Foundation to investigate Fisher’s dismissal, but the Foundation shied away from doing so. If it had been found that Fisher was dismissed over his statement on religious worship, this would have undermined Wesleyan’s official non-denominational status and would have risked its institutional eligibility for faculty pensions provided by the Carnegie Foundation. Subsequently, Princeton University economics professor Frank Fetter wrote a report that addressed various possible reasons for Fisher’s dismissal, and “argued that if extramural speech were not protected, faculty could be dismissed over extramural speech as a pretext for dismissing them over their classroom speech or publications.”<sup>10</sup> Fetter’s argument, however, failed to persuade his colleagues in the AEA and, subsequently, the newly founded AAUP. His report remained unpublished, and Wesleyan’s reputation escaped mostly unscathed.

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<sup>7</sup> Hans-Joerg Tiede, *University Reform: The Founding of the American Association of University Professors* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015), 61.

<sup>8</sup> Tiede, *University Reform*, 61.

<sup>9</sup> Edwin Seligman, “Summary Report of the Committee on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure on the Case of Professor Willard C. Fisher of Wesleyan University,” *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors*, vol. 2, no. 2 (1916): 75-76.

<sup>10</sup> Tiede, *University Reform*, 68.

## The Junior Faculty Organization and “the Tenure Question”

The AEA’s and AAUP’s scrutiny of Fisher’s forced resignation from Wesleyan was one of five violations of academic freedom that shaped the Association’s foundational principles that infringements on the freedom of research and teaching be subjected to judicial investigation and, further, that academic freedom be secured by the permanent security of office after ten years of employment. (The latter policy principle was later changed to the now-customary seven-year probationary period.) This episode was not the last time that the histories of Wesleyan (which had a small but active chapter beginning in 1921) and the national AAUP intersected. The Great Depression aggravated a perennial faculty labor issue: Wesleyan had a consistently low rate of academic tenure, and many young faculty members found that they were *de facto* contingent labor, lacking a contractually transparent path to tenure and wondering every year whether their appointments would be renewed. Wesleyan’s low tenure density, noticeably below peer institutions like Williams, Swarthmore, Pomona, or Amherst, continues to this day, but it is no longer framed, as it was in the 1930s, as “the tenure question.” Instead, while the tenure-track has become transparent and relatively predictable, a third of all Wesleyan faculty in 2022 are explicitly excluded from eligibility for tenure, no matter their length of employment.

After a drop during the First World War, enrollments at Wesleyan steadily increased from a low of 520 in 1922 to a high of 738 in 1940, before they declined again during the Second World War. The number of tenured professors, however, did not increase. The waning prospects of promotion during the Great Depression rendered the junior faculty “second-class citizens within faculty ranks.”<sup>11</sup> In response to this crisis, untenured faculty organized as the Junior Faculty Organization (JFO). With the necessary modifications, the demands they formulated first in 1935 would remain issues of concern until a major push for reform in the late 1960s yielded more inclusive governance structures: 1) that transparent and consistent expectations for promotion conferring tenure be established; 2) that untenured faculty be represented on the Advisory Committee; 3) that the university lift its tenure quotas. In 1937, citing AAUP recommendations, the JFO called for replacing the then-customary one-year contracts with two-year contracts. At the end of the sixth year, the faculty member should be eligible for consideration to be promoted to tenure. While sympathetic to these requests, Wesleyan’s president James McConaughy, in a meeting with the

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<sup>11</sup> Potts, *Wesleyan University*, 546, n. 88.

JFO's executive committee, cautioned that "such a drastic recommendation" would not find the trustees' approval.<sup>12</sup> He suggested that a probationary period of six years was insufficient to ascertain whether a professor was fit to receive tenure. Wesleyan's reluctance to tenure its junior faculty led to a high turnover rate of faculty.

While the JFO engaged in various fact-finding missions, investigating rates of faculty turnover, work hours, and salaries by asking all faculty to share this information, McConaughy sought to craft universally applicable tenure guidelines. In his role as president of the American Association of Colleges, he initiated a collaboration with the AAUP on "formulating principles and ideals for the tenure office of faculty members and officers of institutions of higher education."<sup>13</sup> Because of the AAUP's success in pressuring boards to dismiss presidents who had violated faculty tenure, McConaughy sought to agree with the AAUP on guidelines that would protect the tenure of office of both faculty and administrators. Several years of collaboration between the two associations produced the canonical "1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure." The joint statement did not include any mention of tenure for administrators; rather, it provided the blueprint for codified faculty tenure policies at most American colleges, including Wesleyan. In 1943, the Academic Council, having reviewed fifty years of past legislation, passed by-laws that indicated that Council had given "careful consideration" to AAUP principles, "so far as practicable," and had "endeavored so far as is consistent with the best interests of the University to act in general accord with them."<sup>14</sup> Notably, however, the new by-laws fell short of the AAUP's recommended standard that "stipulated a probationary period of no more than seven years; employment beyond that period automatically conferred tenure."<sup>15</sup>

Although McConaughy's leadership in producing the joint 1940 statement presents an important milestone in the history of the AAUP's efforts to standardize tenure, its impact on hiring and promotion practices on Wesleyan's campus remained limited. Approval of the new Council by-laws was one the first achievements of McConaughy's successor, Victor Butterfield. The new president added his own set of criteria for promotions, including "insight into the objectives of liberal education" and "breadth and liberality of mind."<sup>16</sup> Potts describes this as the new president's

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<sup>12</sup> Summary of meeting with the president, the Advisory Committee, and the JFO executive committee, December 4, 1937. All unpublished documents cited in this essay can be found in the Wesleyan University Archives.

<sup>13</sup> Letter to Karl Waugh, May 25, 1943.

<sup>14</sup> *By-Laws of the Academic Council*, July 1943, chapter 2, section 2.

<sup>15</sup> Potts, *Wesleyan University*, 259.

<sup>16</sup> *By-Laws of the Academic Council*, July 1943, chapter 2, section 7.

“most important achievement.”<sup>17</sup> The JFO, however, was alarmed by the president’s legislative fiat: “At the present time, such general criteria as insight into the objectives of liberal education and breadth and liberality of mind are apparently unexceptionable, but they could conceivably be given application which could raise issues involving the fundamental assumptions of academic freedom.”<sup>18</sup> Specifically, junior faculty worried that lack of commitment to the educational principles proscribed by the president would facilitate a personnel policy of “weeding out” among the ranks of the untenured faculty designed to both retain a low tenure density and strengthen the president’s hand in his hiring initiatives. Hiring and promoting professors “because they represent a particular school of thought which has a vogue at the moment” was to be rejected; not only because for such hires “there are no scientific definitions or measurements by which particular patterns of ideas can be applied as tests of a candidate’s fitness” but also because hiring and promotion should be guided by the value of faculty “heterogeneity:” “We believe that a college should reflect all points of view.”<sup>19</sup>

Resolving the university’s abiding “tenure question” in favor of the faculty was not on the new president’s agenda. As a matter of fact, a high turnover of faculty was often seen as vital to the university’s success, because it guaranteed a steady influx of young teachers. During the 1950s, Wesleyan had fewer students than during the late 1940s. In 1950, Butterfield sought lawyer and trustee Henry Ingraham’s advice about further diluting tenure protections, which would have enabled the university to shrink the size of the senior faculty. This solution to the “tenure problem,” as Butterfield called it, would have provided the administration with the necessary flexibility to respond to the twin challenge of high post-war inflation and a drop in enrollments, which did decline from 1948 to 1957. Ingraham cautioned: “Unless I am mistaken, of late years it has been pretty generally recognized by the Faculty, the Academic Council, the President, and the Trustees, that the principles of tenure exist at Wesleyan. I would doubt the wisdom at this time of inaugurating a program to rescind a policy which is now so generally accepted in academic circles as wise.” Despite this note of caution, efforts to eliminate tenure entirely and replace it with a more flexible system would return periodically during Butterfield’s long tenure.

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<sup>17</sup> Potts, *Wesleyan University*, 259.

<sup>18</sup> “Memorandum on Junior Faculty Questions,” undated.

<sup>19</sup> “Memorandum on Junior Faculty Questions”

Having a small student body and a high rate of turnover among faculty were integral parts of Butterfield's transformation of Wesleyan into a college dedicated to turning "educational philosophy" into the practice of experimental forms of learning. The paradigm for this was the "College Plan" and the creation of the College of Social Studies, the College of Letters, and the short-lived College of Quantitative Studies in 1959. Butterfield's emphatically "student-centered" approach to higher education was accompanied by his commitment to tenure-rates not higher than 50%. In reality, it was even lower: until the mid-1970s, no more than 40% of Wesleyan's faculty were tenured. As the JFO executive committee noted in its 1968 study of tenure at Wesleyan: "So long as Wesleyan was content to be a prestigious little liberal arts college, the policy with younger men was: run 'em in and run 'em out, the heracleitian flux of assistant professors stabilized by the eternal circles of a very small senior faculty. Wondrous advantages in cost accounting."<sup>20</sup> Keeping down faculty labor costs remained an administrative priority even during the flush decades of the 1950s and 1960s, when Wesleyan's per-capita endowment overtook those of Amherst and Williams.

An important contributor to insecure faculty employment at Wesleyan was Butterfield's success in raising the university's intellectual profile by hiring promising young scholar-teachers who rose to prominence in their fields. Butterfield's hires included Richard Winslow (Music), David McAllester (Anthropology and Music), Norman Rudich (French), Carl Schorske (History), Robert Cohen (Physics and Philosophy), Norman O. Brown (Classics), and Ihab Hassan (English). Faculty hired by Butterfield sometimes had vivid recollections of the one-on-one recruitment process. Here is Hassan: "Then Dr. Victor Butterfield, president of Wesleyan University, visionary with gnarled hands and thin, craggy face. He interviewed me one summer while driving his bulldozer, clearing out boulders on his New England farm. We spoke of Plato and Akhenation, *Billy Budd* and *Science in the Modern World*. (Whitehead was his intellectual hero.) Butterfield hired me, I believe—hired me in his head—before we dismantled from the monster machine."<sup>21</sup>



Ihab Hassan, JFO president in 1957-58

<sup>20</sup> The Executive Committee of the Junior Faculty, *Report to the Junior Faculty on Tenure at Wesleyan*, May 1, 1968.

<sup>21</sup> Ihab Hassan, "The Way We Have Become: A Surfeit of Seeming," *The Georgia Review* vol. 63, no. 2 (2009): 250–64. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41403094>.

## Academic Freedom Under Threat



Norman O. Brown, JFO president in  
1948-9

Being personally hired by the president was, however, no guarantee of eventual tenure, and many of the new hires, including the names mentioned above, soon joined the JFO executive committee. Brown, Schorske, and Hassan served as presidents, respectively, in 1948-9, 1953-4, 1957-8 and Rudich as vice-president in 1956-7 (and AAUP Chapter president in 1961-2). All untenured faculty were particularly vulnerable to internal and external threats to academic freedom. Internally, a committee of conservative alumni not only sought to ensure WASP hegemony in the student body, but also questioned the “political complexities” of faculty members, especially Assistant Professor Robert S. Cohen’s alleged ‘communist associations.’<sup>22</sup> Cohen, a physicist who also offered a course on Marxism in the philosophy department, had been one of Butterfield’s hires in 1951-52. His arrival on campus coincided with the peak of congressional scrutiny of “un-American” activities. This external threat to academic freedom was not new. As early as 1935, the Connecticut State legislature had considered a bill that would have required all teachers and professors to swear an oath of loyalty. In a press release and letter to the chair of the Senate’s education committee protesting the bill, then President McConaughy had underscored that the faculty were “unanimously opposed to the bill” and expressed his own opposition to it. In the early 1950s, however, the McCarthyite blacklisting of college professors was exacting a heavy toll, costing over one hundred professors their position. In 1953, the Wesleyan AAUP chapter brought a motion to the faculty to constitute an ad hoc Committee on Academic Freedom, which was led by the AAUP chapter president, Larry Gemeinhardt (German), and the head of the JFO (first Walter Filley, followed by his successor Schorske). In coordination with two board of trustee representatives, the committee agreed that no faculty could be dismissed without a hearing of a combined trustee/faculty committee, and that AAUP principles for valid grounds of dismissal be endorsed. The latter included individual “misuses” of the “classroom ... for propaganda purposes or for the advocacy of legally defined subversive action,” but excluded “the organizational affiliations of a teacher, if lawful” as well as their

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<sup>22</sup> Potts, *Wesleyan University*, 596, n. 47.

“social, economic, political or religious opinions, however difficult and however distasteful to others they may be.” With this, the faculty and the trustees joined the AAUP in speaking out forcefully against loyalty oaths. The committee also insisted that “standards for fitness” to work as a professor could only be set by the institution and the profession, not by members of Congress.<sup>23</sup>

In hindsight, the reference to a “*legally* defined subversive act” as valid ground for dismissal looks like a weak defense of academic freedom, because it concedes to legislatures the power to codify what constitutes truth and what constitutes propaganda. The role of the national AAUP during the peak of HUAC activities was inglorious: an overworked and understaffed Association failed to investigate and censor institutions for firing professors for political reasons. When decisive action was needed, Committee A’s annual reports reverted to restating theoretical principles. During the particularly fraught years from 1952 to 1954, English professor and chair of the Honors College, Fred B. Millett, who had previously chaired the Wesleyan chapter, served as president of the AAUP. In his address to the Annual Meeting in 1954, he addressed censorship in the arts, an area where he saw “the police state, with a vengeance,” and bemoaned “the wave of suppression that has swept over this free land of ours during the past two or three years.”<sup>24</sup> Drawing on Freud, he interpreted the “irrational fear” of communism as the work of psychic “displacement”: “I find the cause for the intensified impulse to censorship in the general atmosphere of hysteria and fear of communism that is being systematically engendered in America and—it should be observed—nowhere else in the world. The conversion of communism into the national bogey-man has encouraged the transference of distrust, hostility, and fear to a great many other entities than communism.”<sup>25</sup>



**FRED B. MILLETT**  
Wesleyan University  
President of the Association, 1952 and 1953

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<sup>23</sup> Report on the Faculty Committee on Academic Freedom meeting with three members of a special Committee of Trustees, April 21, 1953.

<sup>24</sup> Fred B. Millett, “The Vigilantes,” *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors*, vol. 40, no. 1 (1954): 48.

<sup>25</sup> Millett, “The Vigilantes,” 54-55.

## Reforming the “Homogenized University”

With the waning of Senator McCarthy’s power, the activities of the Faculty Committee on Academic Freedom subsided. Instead, the JFO’s attention increasingly focused on more subtle, internal mechanism that infringed on the academic freedom of faculty. Perhaps the most intimate and intangible of such infringements are the norms and constraints of campus culture. In their 1968 report on tenure, the JFO described Wesleyan as a “homogenized university:” Promotion ultimately hinged on whether a professor was judged by the senior faculty to embody the “Wesleyan type.” In the 1960s, this standardized type was still almost exclusively male; the Wesleyan Bulletin of 1969-70 lists only 16 women faculty, almost all of them in education, English, and foreign languages. Moreover, according to the JFO’s report from 1968, there were only ten Jewish professors and two Black staff members. As JFO activist Richard Slotkin (American Studies) recalled in 2005: “Although few administrators, then or now, would admit the fact, Wesleyan discriminated against Jews and (to a degree) Italian-Americans, as well as Asians, Blacks and women, in hiring and tenure.” Sexual orientation was another reason for exclusion, and the picture of a typical professor’s life painted by Millett, a closeted gay man, was somewhat suffocating: In Millett’s book *Professor* (1961), the “Wesleyan type” was married with children, his wife stayed at home, except for evenings when the Faculty Wives Club met, while he spent his day teaching and attending committee meetings, followed by awkward faculty dinner parties made bearable only by steady sips from the cocktail glass.

“Community” was another ideological term that facilitated the anti-Semitic exclusion of “urban types” from being promoted to tenure.<sup>26</sup> The Academic Council’s “criteria for judging appointees” codified in 1943 included “suitability for the Wesleyan community.” The junior faculty had long felt that “community” was a deceptive concept because it excluded many young faculty; now the critique was extended to the intrinsically exclusionary and discriminatory practices at the heart of the institution’s self-image. Although little overt discrimination was practiced, the JFO described an “extraordinary atmosphere in which controversy is continuous and free expression is officially encouraged at the same time that all the private and unofficial pressures on the individual faculty demand sycophancy and integration.” Building on decades of junior faculty critique, the 1968 report proposed a number of reforms to diversify and democratize the “homogenized

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<sup>26</sup> Richard Slotkin, “Junior Faculty Organization: A Brief Narrative, 1967-1981,” 2005.

university,” including initial four-year appointments (now the norm for faculty hired on the tenure-track), the consultation of external expert opinions about tenure and promotion cases (this is now the universal standard), and the democratization of decision making processes at all levels, including equitable junior faculty representation on the Advisory Committee.<sup>27</sup>

Although not all the JFO proposals were adopted as official policy, it’s remarkable that many governance reform initiatives did not issue from standing committees of the faculty or from the Academic Council, but from an organization led by untenured faculty featuring new leadership every year. As Richard Ohmann, professor of English and JFO president in 1963-4, recalled in 1998, the concerns driving junior faculty organizing were “good union issues,” such as “the structure of appointments, JF participation therein, criteria for promotion, salaries, benefits, housing policy, prompt notification of personnel decisions, provision of data to JF”. Over time, “many of the JFO’s positions eventually became Wesleyan policy or practice—including not just regularization of appointments and salaries and the like, but Big ideas like making the place more of a university and having a less WASP student body.” In retrospect, Ohmann observed that “the JFO was trying to bring the Administration into line with the traditions and values of the institution, not agitating for a new kind of institution.”<sup>28</sup>

Butterfield’s successors, Edwin Etherington (1967-1970) and Colin Campbell (1970-1988), were open to junior faculty-initiated reform. In 1969, a “Subcommittee on Committees” of the Educational Policy Committee (EPC), consisting of Richard Slotkin and Richard Vann (History and COL), and one student, Charles Dawe, authored a report that recommended that governance could be made both more efficient and more democratic and representative if the messy and sometimes redundant structure of governing through committees be consolidated into a University Senate. The proposal was endorsed, along with a JFO proposal for an ad hoc Financial Planning Committee, by President Etherington, who “expressed his strong conviction that every effort should be made to draw the Faculty and Administration into closer union and to recapture the tradition of the Administration as an extension of the faculty.”<sup>29</sup> Etherington’s remarks signaled a concession to faculty power unprecedented in Wesleyan history. The administration’s eagerness

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<sup>27</sup> Report to the Junior Faculty on Tenure at Wesleyan.

<sup>28</sup> Letter to Slotkin, August 4, 1998.

<sup>29</sup> Faculty meeting minutes, September 16, 1969.

to work with the faculty set the stage for a decade of faculty-driven reforms that unfolded in trial-and-error fashion in a climate of radical social and political change and economic turbulence.

Many governance reforms were short-lived: The University Senate, a legislative body constituted of both faculty and students, came and went. It was dissolved in 1975, when a task force led by Government professor Russ Murphy found that most of the Senate's tasks could be folded into the EPC. With the dissolution of the Senate, three standing committees of the faculty were also abolished: The Committee on Graduate Instruction, the Financial Planning Committee, and the Committee on Admissions. In retrospect, it seems that this reform, undertaken in the name of decreasing the burden of committee work, signaled the retreat from the faculty playing an active role in financial planning and admissions. Only a few years earlier, an alternative proposal for a University Senate had been floated by students and faculty affiliated with the New University Conference. Their proposal had called for considering a "universal, sovereign, decision-making senate whose members are nominated by petition and democratically elected by their constituencies, electing its own officers and committees, and subject only to the statutory, residual authority of the trustees." Crucially, this model conceived of faculty power as "subject to review by the trustees only. The administrators will administer," while the trustees would delegate "all policy-making powers" to the Senate.<sup>30</sup>

### Moving to Collective Bargaining

Perhaps crucially, the University Senate was not equipped to strengthen the role of the faculty regarding budget priorities, financial planning, and faculty compensation. In the AAUP's guidance on shared governance and "The Role of the Faculty in Budgetary and Salary Matters," the trustees are tasked with raising and overseeing the capital necessary to fund the university's operation. While "the president is expected to maintain existing institutional resources and create new ones, the faculty is expected to establish faculty salary policies and, in its primary responsibility for the educational function of the institution, to participate also in broader budgetary matters primarily as these impinge on that function."<sup>31</sup> Faculty participation in budgetary matters includes both the overall institutional budget as well as its "specific fiscal division." Decisions concerning research,

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<sup>30</sup> Faculty meeting minutes, November 18, 1969.

<sup>31</sup> AAUP, *Policy Documents and Reports*, eleventh edition (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015), 289.

library, and laboratory budgets should be made by a “university-level, all-faculty committee as well as by the faculty agencies directly concerned.”<sup>32</sup> Along with salaries, the faculty should also “participate in the selection of fringe-benefit programs and in the periodic review of those programs.”<sup>33</sup> These various areas of faculty participation in shared governance all requires that faculty “be given full and timely access to the financial information necessary to the making of an informed choice.”<sup>34</sup>

Wesleyan’s wealth peaked in 1965; for the rest of the decade and all of the 1970s, the endowment was in decline, due to low returns, meager fundraising, and the need to significantly draw on the endowment for the operation budget. When a new president, Colin Campbell, came into office, he made long-range plans to address operating deficits by reducing labor costs, since salaries constituted about 75% of the annual operating budget. The 1972-3 Faculty Compensation Survey presented to the trustees ranked Wesleyan’s average faculty compensation at the very top of a peer comparison group of thirteen other colleges and universities that included Amherst, Williams, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Dartmouth, Stanford, Cornell, and the University of Chicago. Understandably, Wesleyan’s faculty were less than eager to sacrifice their top-ranked compensation package; after all, this was a considerable achievement that had been won through persistent faculty effort. Although Wesleyan never had an official bargaining agreement between faculty and the administration, during the Butterfield years, the president and the JFO would engage in bargaining on an ad hoc basis.<sup>35</sup> In addition, members of the tenured faculty served on a consultative Finance Committee. Through these combined efforts, faculty compensation had steadily improved.

The long economic downturn starting in 1971 pushed faculty activism increasingly towards the compensation issue. The Senate’s Financial Planning Committee was frustrated that it was missing the tools to do its job. In its analysis of the annual budget, it “has felt itself inadequately informed, unduly pressured with respect to the time it has available to review the budget, and essentially impotent to modify or even influence the administration in its development of the budgets.”<sup>36</sup> Moreover, committee members were unsure about the committee’s purview vis-à-vis the

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<sup>32</sup> AAUP, *Policy Documents and Reports*, 290.

<sup>33</sup> AAUP, *Policy Documents and Reports*, 291.

<sup>34</sup> AAUP, *Policy Documents and Reports*, 290.

<sup>35</sup> JFO executive committee minutes, September 30, 1952.

<sup>36</sup> “The Role of the Financial Planning Committee,” University Senate records 1972-3.

EPC's treatment of the budgetary matters related to educational policy. Besides the official governance structure, the JFO pursued its own negotiations with the president. In 1971, it demanded a 7% across-the-board pay increase and a provided a list of 125 faculty signatories who had authorized the JFO executive committee under Paul Schwaber (COL) to negotiate on their behalf. In 1973, following discussions about faculty unionization, a group of nine unelected faculty under the leadership of Donald Meyer (History) formed a Faculty Caucus Steering Committee and entered into direct negotiation with President Campbell over salary and benefits, asking the trustees to guarantee that pay increases never fall below the level of inflation. While such a guarantee was dismissed, the trustees communicated that they "welcome[d] the stated intention of Faculty Caucus members to establish a more permanent organization with which the administration can discuss such matters."<sup>37</sup>

The Faculty Caucus, it turned out, was a transitional phenomenon. As the still-young already-old Senate devised by Slotkin and Vann was mired in dysfunction, members of the Caucus regrouped in the fall of 1974, after they had rejected the administration's proposed compensation packet in the spring and following a vote by the Board of Trustees to cut the university's retirement contribution from 15% to 7%. At its meeting on October 9, the 110 faculty members present voted to reinstate the university's dormant AAUP chapter. An executive committee of six was elected at the meeting: Victor Gourevitch (Philosophy; chapter president), Carl Viggiani (Romance Languages), Vince Cochrane (Biology), Allan Berlind (Biology), Bob O'Gorman (Sociology), and Bruce Greenwald (Economics). Berlind and O'Gorman were untenured. Unlike previous faculty organizations, the chapter invited members from all ranks of the faculty to join, as well as librarians and graduate students. The first order of the new chapter was to establish bargaining rules with the president and the trustees. Accordingly, the by-laws were designed to build a formidable bargaining chapter: In addition to a Negotiation Committee, a Liaison Committee was to

## *Faculty Resurrects AAUP As Replacement For Caucus*

**By CHRIS MAHONEY**  
A general meeting of interested faculty voted last week to resurrect a Wesleyan chapter of the American Association of University Professors. (The AAUP is a national organization of college-level teachers, founded in 1940 to deal with questions of faculty status and academic freedom.)  
Newly-elected Wesleyan AAUP president Victor Gourevitch told *The Argus* that the move was "suggested by the faculty caucus."  
AAUP vice president Vincent Cochrane reported that the AAUP will largely supersede the caucus. "The caucus has closed its doors. The officers have resigned. It was wholly temporary."  
**More Stable**  
Former caucus chairman Donald Meyer explained that "we just felt that we could get along better with a more stable organization"

When asked if compensation figured prominently on the AAUP chapter's agenda, Cochrane said that "that's been done elsewhere. If it's appropriate, it might."  
Cochrane said that what the AAUP becomes here "depends on how many people join. If 100 people join, it'll be bigger than the faculty meeting."  
Cochrane explained that "to form a chapter, all you have to do is pay dues to Washington. Washington then says OK and gives you a charter. In our case, I don't know whether we get a new one, or whether they can take our old one and put it in the active file."  
**Declined**  
"There used to be an AAUP on campus, but it declined over the years. Fewer and fewer people went to the meetings, and soon there were few regular meetings at all."  
"An AAUP chapter is supposed

to be able to address a wide range of issues. It can be a semi-annual beer party. The members determine what to do. If a lot sign up, it could be active and enjoyable. If few do, it will be a sad thing. We'll know in a few weeks. Right now we have seven members."  
President Campbell welcomed the AAUP chapter, citing a letter he sent to the faculty last June which "included a statement to the effect that a permanent faculty organization."  
(Continued on page 5)

**Inside The A**  
*Loneliness . . . . .*  
*January Term . . . . .*  
*Cards Fall . . . . .*

*Wesleyan Argus* frontpage Oct. 15, 1974

<sup>37</sup> Colin Campbell, Memorandum to all Faculty, June 11, 1974.

represent one member of each department or professional unit in the university, thus enabling the constitution of a combined bargaining unit of faculty and librarians.

Gourevitch, who had been in communications with the president during the weeks leading up to the chapter reactivation, quickly informed Campbell and the Trustees about the turn of events. Campbell agreed promptly that he was ready to discuss with the AAUP all matters concerning “conditions of employment and compensation,” and was willing to address, as Gourevitch reported to his colleagues, “the unilateral decision to cut back the TIAA/CREF contribution” as well as “the absence of a clear public statement of policy regarding tenure quotas, ratios, etc.”<sup>38</sup> At the same time, Gourevitch emphasized the widely felt frustration that faculty concerns were not only not met, but frequently simply ignored. To address these frustrations, he proposed a set of negotiation rules, noting that the “fact that we are working under terms we have not ratified should not be misinterpreted to mean that we accept these terms.” The AAUP’s “perfectly straight-forward, common-sense rules of good faith negotiations” were as follows

1. to acknowledge the negotiations of terms of employment and compensation for what they in fact are, namely negotiations, instead of referring to them by such euphemisms as “discussions” or “exchanges;”
2. to conduct these negotiations by clearly enunciated formal rules;
3. to conduct negotiations in good faith, and with access by all parties to all relevant information;
4. to conduct these negotiations according to stated schedules, and to conclude them in time to announce their results while school is still in session;
5. to have the negotiated terms ratified by the relevant constituency, and hence to have them ready in adequate time for ratification;
6. to provide stipulated and binding procedures for mediation, appeals, and arbitration;
7. to recognize that existing terms of employment and compensation remain in effect until and unless new terms have been duly negotiated and ratified.

In prepared remarks for a meeting with a group of Trustees on October 18, 1974, Gourevitch presented a distilled version of the negotiation rules, and informed the trustees that about 65% of the faculty were supporting the implementation of collective bargaining:

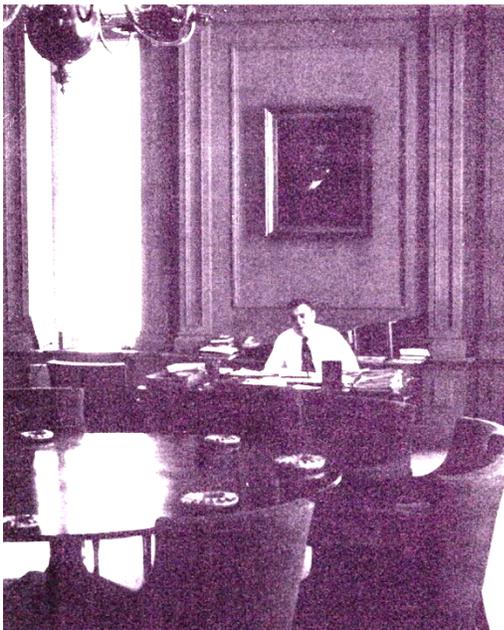
“Certainly, the University's decision to cut the TIAA/CREF contribution has been a decisive factor in this development; and *everything* in the way that decision was reached and carried out has contributed to the faculty's sense of impotence and frustration to its bitterness and to its sense of being dealt with in a demeaning, humiliating manner. If the administration had attempted to rouse and unite faculty sentiment, it could not have proceeded more effectively; so that the only thing that has surprised those of us who have been close to the developments of the past month and a half is the administration's apparent surprise

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<sup>38</sup> AAUP chapter meeting minutes, October 9, 1974.

at—and lack of preparedness for—the unanimity and the depth of the faculty's feelings. We are in a crisis of confidence of very major proportions.”<sup>39</sup>

Gourevitch then explained that the reactivated Chapter was not merely a sign of protest against the administration stated intention to make “no compromise” with faculty demands. Rather, the events leading up to the reformation of the Chapter were only the occasion for a larger “move toward collective bargaining.” This move, however, came up short: In November, the Chapter collected unionization pledge cards from over half of the faculty, yet decided not to pursue formal unionization, out of concerns, according to Allan Berling’s recollections, over “likely defections by faculty who wanted to send a signal to the Administration rather than being committed to establishing a bargaining unit (some colleagues told us explicitly that they were signing the cards with this intent).”<sup>40</sup> Internal faculty divisions continued to undercut the establishment of an effective bargaining mechanism. President Campbell voiced concern that collective bargaining would radically transform “relationships among individual members of the faculty, and between the faculty and the administration.”<sup>41</sup>



Where is the bargaining committee?  
President Campbell in South College

Campbell’s concern, of course, was neither unusual nor surprising. Universities like to portray themselves as being sustained by altruistic commitment and blissful self-sacrifice rather than by salaried labor, and they see unions as outsiders driven by vulgar material motives. In this vein, even the founders of the AAUP were eager to distance themselves from any association with trade-unionism. For Lovejoy and his peers, to be a professor was to follow a vocation; a university was a republic of scholars; accordingly, professors were appointees rather than employees. In 1974, however, when the golden age of American higher education was coming to its end, faculty no longer had the luxury of pretending that they were not employees, and that university

<sup>39</sup> Victor Gourevitch, meeting with ad hoc group of trustees, October 18, 1974.

<sup>40</sup> Allan Berling, *An Idiosyncratic History of Wesleyan University, 1971-2005*, 9.

<sup>41</sup> Colin Campbell, remarks at AAUP chapter meeting, October 23, 1974.

were not corporations run by businesspeople whose fiduciary responsibility in the face of diminishing financial returns incentivized them to lower faculty compensation.

Despite his reluctance to endorse a formalized mechanism of collective bargaining, Campbell took the AAUP's demands for a rules-based process of negotiation seriously, even though he refused to use the word "bargaining" to describe the mechanism he was endorsing. In response to Gourevitch's seven principles of good-faith negotiations, he suggested the following five:

- (a) a close, on-going, relatively structured relationship between administrative representatives and representative faculty members,
- (b) access to relevant information,
- (c) full opportunity for dissemination and discussion,
- (d) timely and orderly consideration of decisions which may affect vital faculty interests,
- (e) maintenance of existing policies and practices pertaining to employment until these processes have been observed.<sup>42</sup>

Campbell further suggested that before the faculty pursue implementation of collective bargaining, it explore "all other avenues." At first, this informal approach to negotiations did not led to results and an outside mediator was called in to find a compromise between faculty demands and administrative offers, which yielded a slight increase in the salary pool and a scolding by the mediator, Homer Babbidge, a former president of the University of Connecticut, "that this fine institution had arrived at a state where his services were needed."<sup>43</sup> This was the beginning of annual compensation negotiations between the AAUP Chapter and the administration that lasted until the Chapter was dissolved and replaced by a new standing committee of the faculty, the Compensation and Benefits Committee, which was introduced after a round of faculty governance restructuring recommended in Russ Murphy's report in 1997-8.

The second half of the 1970s witnessed the administrative implementation of further cut-backs, including the proposed elimination of 35 faculty positions. These measures brought two faculty grievances to the fore: the lack of faculty participation in long-term planning and the limits of the faculty's negotiation power absent formalized collective bargaining. In February 1980, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that faculty at private universities were managerial staff and did not enjoy collective bargaining rights. This fateful ruling coincided with the peak of the Chapter's efforts to unionize faculty and librarians. In 1978, clerical and physical plant workers had gone on strike and successfully formed a union. In Spring 1979, as the administration did not even come

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<sup>42</sup> Colin Campbell, letter to Victor Gourevitch, November 7, 1974.

<sup>43</sup> Allan Berlind, *Idiosyncratic History*, 11

close to the Chapter's compensation demands, the move towards collective bargaining gather momentum. After consultations with representations from the national AAUP and the American Federation of teachers, the Chapter in September 1979 won the faculty's approval to begin unionization by 88 to 49 votes. However, only a month later, the faculty voted 66 to 61 against moving ahead with the unionization effort. Apparently, the voices of prominent anti-union professors had had an impact, and the Chapter had failed to muster a membership drive. In October 1979, AAUP membership stood at 75 faculty and librarians, less than one third of all faculty.

## Faculty May Follow Wesleyan Workers Down Union Road

By ELIZABETH SANGER

MIDDLETOWN — Wesleyan University professors may be following the lead taken by the school's secretaries, custodians and maintenance workers who in the last year have fought for and won the right to union representation.

Last week faculty members and professional librarians voted 88-to-49 to immediately begin organizing toward a collective bargaining election under the regulations of the National Labor Relations Board.

Physical plant workers at the 148-year-old private college accepted their first union contract earlier last week. The secretaries and clerical workers ratified their first union pact last year.

Richard Slotkin, a co-chairman of the executive committee of the Wesleyan chapter of the American Association of University Professors, said the faculty favors collective bargaining because of insufficient salary increases, lack of faculty influence on university decisions and Wesleyan's financial policies.

The faculty resolution last week said the efforts to unionize "will proceed no matter what happens in discussions with the administration." To start the process, the faculty will invite representatives of the professors' association and the American Federation of Teachers to the university to

discuss how to begin and what benefits can be obtained from affiliating with either of the two national organizations.

Slotkin, a professor of English, said 137 faculty members attended the Tuesday meeting, "substantially more than have ever turned out for a faculty meeting." There are 262 full-time professors and 38 part-time ones at the university.

"The executive committee offered the resolution to test the faculty sentiment and ask for endorsement," Slotkin said.

The faculty is to meet Tuesday to vote on specific recommendations concerning compensation, job security and working conditions, Slotkin said.

When the faculty decides that the debate on the issue has been completed, the Wesleyan chapter will vote by secret ballot on unionization, probably by April 1980.

For the 1979-80 academic year, the faculty received a 7 percent across-the-board salary increase, although Wesleyan's president, Colin Campbell, said the average increase was 8.5 percent. An agreement already reached for 1980-81 calls for a 9 percent increase. "With inflation at 13 percent, we consider that ruinous," Slotkin said. "Since 1971, there hasn't been a single year when the increase met the cost of living," Slotkin said. He also said that, although the number of fac-

ulty members has decreased, enrollment has increased and the student-faculty ratio has grown 20 to 30 percent in the past eight years. The student-faculty ratio now is 10.2-to-1. There are 2,550 students. "None of that is compensated in wages," Slotkin said.

"I'm as troubled as the faculty members are about their compensation, but some feel the way to respond is through collective bargaining," Campbell said, "this is a matter of

not a document on which the faculty can legislate," Slotkin said. He also said that any fringe benefit can be taken by the administration without consulting faculty members. The faculty wants to "freeze present arrangements to prevent unilateral changes by the administration," Slotkin said.

Slotkin also said that many faculty members had assumed they had the power to control the curriculum, when, in fact, that authority is held by

port that will guide the school for the next five years starting July 1, 1980. The school will eliminate positions through attrition but will not lay off faculty members, Campbell said. Twenty faculty positions have been eliminated in the last five years.

"There is concern about economic pressures and concern about what's going to happen," Campbell said. "That's understandable at this time. But the fact that faculty concern is not being addressed is not a valid concern."

After representatives from the two national organizations came to Wesleyan, "we will have a marathon faculty meeting to get response," Slotkin said. All faculty members are welcome at the association meetings, Slotkin said.

Slotkin said the faculty isn't committing itself to either of the two national organizations "and might conceivably conclude that collective bargaining is not the way to go." But, he said, the current nine-member executive committee "is convinced it is the way to go." The faculty might join a coalition of the two national organizations, join one or the other, or could form an independent local union.

The executive committee "is doing the faculty's homework in organizing this so we can act in a fully informed manner," Slotkin said. He and a biology professor, Spencer Berry, are the executive committee co-chairmen.

If the faculty succeeds, "it would be an extraordinary breakthrough for faculty unions in a quality university," Slotkin said.

In Connecticut, the association represents the faculty at the University of Bridgeport, Post Junior College in Waterbury, the University of Connecticut and Eastern, Western, Southern and Central Connecticut state colleges.

The teachers' federation represents faculty at Mitchell College in New London, Quinnipiac College in Hamden and the University of New Haven.

Slotkin said in 1974 a faculty group tried to organize, but only 81 percent of the faculty favored it.

"Last year, there was a substantial increase in the militancy of the AAUP chapter, and this year, the committee built on that," Slotkin said.

One who opposes unionization is Jeffrey Butler, a history professor. "I don't regard it (a union) as an appropriate organ for a university of this size and nature. I really don't see what it achieves for the faculty, how it improves the faculty's muscle. We've never had a debate where someone cogently argues on what the advantages are," Butler said.

Slotkin said two-thirds of the faculty would have to vote in favor of unionization to obtain support from the national union for strikes. If a local union was formed, only a majority of the faculty would be required to join.

*Success 'would be an extraordinary breakthrough for faculty unions in a quality university'*

very serious concern. The collective bargaining issue is far broader than compensation. The implications go far beyond."

The average compensation for 1979-80, which includes salary and benefits, is \$39,030 for a full professor, \$27,385 for an associate professor, and \$20,500 for an assistant professor.

Another faculty complaint is that the "blue book" of the university regulations which spells out faculty benefits and rights and determines how the faculty is governed, "is

the board of trustees. The faculty does control curriculum day-to-day, but only when the "administration feels it has to cut back positions and programs" does it act unilaterally, Slotkin said. The university's bylaws permit the board of trustees to determine curriculum in consultation with the faculty.

"The faculty has always played a central role in curriculum," Campbell said. He said the faculty is "an initiating body," and has "substantial impact on academic affairs."

Wesleyan currently is writing a re-

*Hartford Courant, September 9, 1979*

With the failure of unionization, the AAUP was without the most powerful tool to address the erosion of faculty salaries. Yet a unanimous vote by the faculty rejecting the administration's salary offer in Spring 1981 reinvigorated the desire to unionize. Although this renewed push won a majority approval from the faculty, it fell short of the two-thirds majority the AAUP executive committee had wanted to move ahead.<sup>44</sup> Despite these defeats, the original agreement between the Chapter and the AAUP to hold annual compensation negotiations continued for almost twenty more years. As unionization vanished from the horizon of possibilities, the AAUP Chapter became the AAUP discussion group; dues-paying membership dwindled and coaxing faculty into serving on the negotiation committee became more challenging. To some degree, this might have been due to the fact that the Chapter's connections to the national AAUP had always been weak (with the exception of Gourevitch, who served on the Association's "Committee F on Chapters,

<sup>44</sup> Alexandra Ricks, *When Workers Organized at Wesleyan*, Honors Thesis, 2006, 92

Conferences, Members, and Dues” for several years) and old membership records suggest a surprisingly high turnover from one year to the next. Still, compared to today’s CBC, the old AAUP Chapter could count on a relatively high degree of administrative transparency and openness, condition to which Campbell had agreed in 1974. Predictable working relations between faculty and administration were also facilitated by the fact that from 1977 to 1988, negotiations were led by the same person, VPAA Nathanael Greene. In the 1980s, a new generation of activist faculty, including Henry Abelow (English), Paul Haake (Chemistry), Ann Wightman (History) and Betsy Traube (Anthropology), took on leadership roles in the AAUP, and in the 1990s, the Chapter became more informal, with a large executive committee and few remaining ties to the national AAUP. Nonetheless, the earlier efforts to move to collective bargaining continued to undergird the faculty’s ability to represent its interest and hold the trustees and the administration accountable. The unsurprising but important lesson here is that for faculty and the administration to engage in negotiation, trust must be built, and it can only be built through consistent commitment to fixed rules, open communication, and timely sharing of all relevant data.

### Lessons

The first lesson of this short account is that forming an AAUP Chapter is not the only path for faculty organizing. For much of its history, the AAUP was, not without reason, primarily regarded as an authority that sets principles and best practices for the profession of college and university teachers and investigates violations of academic freedom. The history of the Wesleyan JFO shows that for several decades, the role of the AAUP was primarily to set and promulgate standards for hiring, reappointment, tenure, and promotion. In comparison to the highly activist JFO, Wesleyan’s AAUP Chapter, established in 1921, played second fiddle. Only during the economic turmoil of the 1970s did the AAUP emerge as the best vehicle for the full faculty to pursue the goal of collective bargaining—and even during this activist period, leaders of the Chapter considered ditching the AAUP for the AFT. At Wesleyan, the AAUP played only minor roles in the fights against anti-Semitism and racism, in recruiting Black students starting in 1965, and in admitting women starting in 1970. As the New University Conference polemicized in its 1969 “Statement on Racial Problems at Wesleyan,” co-signed by several JFO and AAUP activists, the AAUP’s core concept of academic freedom “is a rationalization of the white-designed status quo.” Only after

the reconstitution of the Chapter did it become involved in activities such as the campaign to protect faculty and students from the CIA and FBI surveillance and recruitment and the campaign to divest from South Africa.

While the AAUP is present on many college campuses, the longevity of the JFO (from the mid-1930s to the mid-1990s) is a phenomenon particular to Wesleyan's troubling history of low tenure density. The transition from the 1950s to 1960s was decisive in shaping the contradictions that continue to distinguish Wesleyan from its peers. On the one hand, it is the university transformed by Butterfield into a distinctive college priding itself for educational experimentation; on the other hand, it is the "Little University" shaped by a plot between faculty and trustees in the early 1960s to establish PhD programs in the sciences that would be competitive with R1 universities. Today, the burden of this contradiction between college and university is borne by the growing ranks of contingent faculty, without whom the push for innovation and expansion would be unaffordable. The earlier fate of the junior faculty, to be disposable, foreshadows the precariousness of today's professors of the practice. The junior faculty's exclusion from the running of the university quickly taught it to self-organize: Starting in the 1930s, it created mechanisms of self-reporting and sharing data on teaching loads and salaries. Such grassroots methods of information gathering, storing, and distributing remain crucial for today's faculty organizing. In a memo written shortly after Butterfield's arrival on campus, the JFO described itself as a kind of intentional institutional memory: "The above suggested procedures [on hiring, reappointment, and promotion] are based on the supposition that all mechanics, written criteria, etc., are likely to be forgotten or gradually neglected unless there is a continuous process for calling them to mind and keeping them a vital actuality."<sup>45</sup> This note speaks to the importance of having an archive outside the official rules and records from which faculty activists can draw. Lacking an archive of faculty organizing and activism and thus being deprived of a political memory of its origins and purposes, university governance runs the risk of becoming an instrument that has forgotten its purpose. Committee service then becomes a time-destroying chore better delegated to administrators. At such junctures, only a jolt from the outside can renew the precarious dialectic of procedural efficiency and legislative effectiveness. The more each generation of faculty organizers can draw on the collective memory of past actions and experiences, the less they will have to waste their time relearning its forgotten lessons.

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<sup>45</sup> "Memorandum on Junior Faculty Questions," undated.