# A NEW (BOWLING GREEN STATE) UNIVERSITY: EDUCATIONAL ACTIVISM, SOCIAL CHANGE, AND CAMPUS PROTEST IN THE LONG SIXTIES

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# ABSTRACT

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This is a case study of student activism in the 1960s at Bowling Green State University, located in Northwestern Ohio, that contributes to the growing historiography of student activism at non-elite state institutions. This study complicates the national narrative of student activism, which asserts that student activism was generally violent, radical, and largely restricted to elite universities. By examining student activism at BGSU, this study demonstrates that student activism was present at non-elite public universities and also introduces the concept of "educational activism," a method of activism that focused on inclusive exploration of contemporary issues rather than radical violence. Prior to 1970, students and administrators established open channels of communication and formed an educational model of activism through the efforts of three areas of activism: the student power movement, the antiwar movement, and the Black student movement. The conservative nature of the university and its administration restricted radical and violent protest, which forced students to address their concerns non-violently. Student activists communicated with administrators to address their concerns and together they established a legacy of peaceful educational activism that mitigated the need for violent protest. Their efforts culminated in the formation of the New University, a series of teach-ins created following the Kent State Shootings. These teach-ins gave students agency in their education, allowed them to analyze contemporary issues, and explore topics that were non-existent in the university curriculum. As a result of the New University, BGSU faced no violent protest and was the only residential state university to remain open in Ohio following the Kent State Shootings.

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# INTRODUCTION

The shocking Ohio National Guard shooting of student protestors at Kent State University prompted nearly every major university in Ohio to close for a period of time prior to the end of the academic year, and caused a number of violent student protests across the state and country. Curiously, one regional institution, Bowling Green State University (BGSU), did not close or face violent student protests in the spring of 1970. What about BGSU made its experience exceptional when compared to similar institutions in Ohio? By examining broader student activism of the 1950s and 1960s as well as the BGSU response to the Kent State shootings, this thesis asserts that BGSU's unique response to the Kent State shootings was the result of a legacy of educational activism that had been established throughout the decade. Educational activism centered activist energy on discussion rather than destruction, mitigating student violence at BGSU.[1]

This thesis develops the concept of educational activism to describe a peaceful and productive alternative to radical and violent unrest that focuses on encouraging critical analysis of contemporary issues, and when possible, formulating local solutions. While many protestors of the Sixties became polarized and radically or violently opposed their opposition, educational activism was designed in many cases to incorporate viewpoints from all sides to analyze and resolve any number of issues in a peaceful manner. The most popular and recognizable of several forms of educational activism are teach-ins, a method of educational activism that began at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in 1965 and quickly spread to campuses across the

[1] Protest and activism are both words used to describe the way students responded to events throughout the Sixties, but each word carries a different implication. Throughout this study, these words are used carefully: protest represents radical, violent, or confrontational acts, while activism represents peaceful or educational acts.

country.[2] While teach-ins garner fleeting analysis or passing mentions in the footnotes of many studies of the 1960s, there have been almost no in-depth studies of educational activism despite occurring nationwide in various forms. This thesis introduces educational activism as a term that includes teach-ins but also incorporates any method of activism that promotes analyzing social issues as an alternative to demonstrative or confrontational protest. Similar forms of activism include organized debates, inviting guest speakers representing various viewpoints, or performance arts. While this study analyzes how educational activism was a method utilized by student activists at BGSU during the 1960s, it is not a comprehensive national analysis of educational activism; there is need for further study of educational activism at other universities to define its true scope.

At BGSU, the peaceful nature of educational activism is most visible when analyzing the student response to the Kent State shootings. Rather than turning to violent protest after hearing the troubling news from Kent State, student activists at BGSU sought to discuss their concerns with the president, William T. Jerome III, who listened to their demands and eased their fear of the National Guard appearing at BGSU. The week that followed consisted of teach-ins, peaceful marches, and sit-ins as students, faculty, and administrators channeled their fear and outrage into peaceful and productive activism. The next week, students formally organized their teach-ins into a alternate curriculum called the New University to analyze contemporary issues, including the Vietnam War, racial inequality, and the *in loco parentis* style of administration that still largely governed universities. The administration sanctioned the New University and allowed students to opt out of their regular university courses to attend. Although the New University was largely discontinued and ceased to exist completely within a year, it remains a significant

[2] "Michigan Faculty Created Teach-In," *New York Times,* May 9, 1965, 43.

example of how educational activism prevented a potentially violent response to the Kent State shootings. Analyzing student power, antiwar, and Black student activism at BGSU prior to 1970, this study examines how students worked with administrators throughout the decade to establish and utilize an educational model of activism that implemented change in a peaceful manner and prevented a violent response to the Kent State shootings. In doing so, this study contributes to the burgeoning scholarship of non-elite state student activism, which complicates the national narrative of student unrest of the 1960s.

The Sixties have been remembered both publicly and in academia as one of the most turbulent and formative decades in modern American history.[3] People from all walks of life took to the streets to participate in "the Movement," a term that represented the revolutionary spirit that fueled the multiple movements of the era. After the end of the 1960s, historians began to work on formulating a narrative and analyzing the events that had taken place during the decade. Since that time, historians have expanded the Movement beyond the boundaries of 1960 and 1970, tracing its roots to postwar America and examining its enduring legacy into the 1980s. Until recently though, the narrative has remained largely focused on the national organizations and images of violent, radical confrontations that were captured by the national media, ignoring the grassroots efforts of many of the movements.

According to historian Terry Anderson, the initial scholarship of the 1960s analyzed the Movement of the 1960s through four major lenses: through the leaders who emerged; through the organizations that became prominent; through the locations in which activism took place, usually focused on student activism within universities; and through New Left ideology, which

[3] The Sixties were also a time of turbulence globally, with protestors taking to the streets in many countries around the world; for an analysis of the global effect of the Sixties, see Jeremy Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); Gerard J. DeGroot, *The Sixties Unplugged: A Kaleidoscopic History of a Disorderly Decade* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

embodied freedom and equality.[4] These approaches confine the era within limited viewpoints, exaggerating the importance of specific actors or carefully formulated ideologies within the Movement. A prime example of such exaggeration is the central role that Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and its leaders have been attributed within the history of the New Left and the Movement.[5] The first works to analyze the Movement limited their analysis to the national narrative, analyzing only the most notable activists and protests without exploring grassroots efforts that did not garner national media attention.[6]

One of the earliest studies to break this pattern and attempt a comprehensive analysis of the era is Terry Anderson's *The Movement and the Sixties*, in which he describes the Movement as amorphous, consisting of many different members and coalitions with various goals throughout the Sixties. Rather than centering the Movement around one group or movement as previous historians had done, Anderson builds a chronological narrative of disparate events, episodes, organizations, and individuals that contributed to the Movement and analyzes how they

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[4] Terry Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties: Protest in America from Greensboro to Wounded Knee* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), ii-iv. The New Left was an amorphous movement that rejected the Marxist- and labor-centered political ideals of the previous generations, instead promoting a counterculture that rejected the oppressive and immoral power structures in society. With such a broad scope, the New Left has generally been extrapolated to incorporate many of the movements of the Sixties; Anderson instead relegates it to one branch of the broader Movement.

[5] Many early histories centered SDS within the narrative of the Movement, portraying the organization as a key influence in how the entire Movement operated. These histories attribute the end of the Movement to the increasingly radical turn of SDS and its disintegration in 1969. Studies of SDS have attributed its disintegration to its increasingly Midwestern student membership, claiming these students were less ideological and more action driven, leading to a less nuanced and more violent approach to achieving the organization's goals. This perception of Midwestern students could also be a factor in how long it took for historians to recognize the importance of student activism at non-elite state universities. See Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1987); Kirkpatrick Sale, *SDS* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973).

[6] For overviews of the decade in the United States, see Milton Viorst, *Fire in the Streets: America in the 1960s* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979); David Farber, ed., *The Sixties: From Memory to History* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); David Steigerwald, *The Sixties and the End of Modern America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995); Kenneth Heineman, *Put Your Bodies Upon the Wheels: Student Revolt in the 1960s* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2001); David Farber and Beth Bailey, *The Columbia Guide to America in the 1960s* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001); Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). For memoirs or histories from participant historians, see Gitlin; Tom Hayden, *A Memoir: Reunion* (New York: Random House, 1988).

interacted and built on one another to collectively shape the decade. His analysis proposes that there was not a singular issue or objective shared between all 1960s activists, but there was a common impulse to collectively attempt to create a more just society through a variety of methods and in a variety of theaters. To Anderson, each movement within the Sixties was tied together by this impulse and they each contributed to a larger Movement, with each action taken by each movement influencing the actions of another. He was first to approach the Sixties in this way.

By challenging previous models of study, Anderson counters earlier narratives of the Sixties in a few important ways. First, his analysis decenters the New Left by approaching the Movement as a broad social instance of activism, an amorphous spirit with no leader or organization, that encompassed a number of individual movements. Second, by classifying the Movement so broadly, he pushes its existence beyond the decade of the Sixties and allows inclusion of a number of minority group movements, including the women's liberation movement, the gay rights movement, and the Black Power movement.[7] Third, Anderson expands the scope of activities that define the Movement, positing that the "death" of the Movement that many other accounts examine was actually just a shift in focus, not the end of the Movement. Analyzing this shift, he classifies the Movement into two periods, with 1968 as the dividing year. The first period, populated by movements such as the New Left and the Civil Rights Movement, focused on ideology and civil rights. The second period, populated by movements such as student power and Black Power, focused on personal liberation and political empowerment.[8] Finally, Anderson recognizes the importance of the Movement beyond the elite institutions that many localized studies focus on, such as University of California - Berkeley and Columbia

[7] Anderson, 294-353.
[8] Ibid., 241.

University on the coasts and the University of Michigan and the University of Wisconsin in the Midwest. He broadens the scope of the Movement by looking beyond these schools to analyze protests in Atlanta, Seattle, Austin, and Minneapolis, representing a far more diverse geography of activism than previous studies.

Anderson's analysis represents a broad shift in the narrative of the 1960s, away from the participant historian, New Left centered studies, towards a more diverse and objective study of the various people that partook in the Movement. One particular shift in the historiography regarded analyzing student activism at non-elite state institutions. Kenneth Heineman's *Campus Wars* was one of the first to do so, breaking the mold of studying student activism at elite universities in favor of non-elite state universities by analyzing student antiwar protest at four state schools in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Michigan.[9] One of the most essential contributions of Heineman's study is his examination of how the experiences of students, faculty, and administrators at non-elite state institutions differed from those at elite institutions, which influenced the way activism developed at non-elite state institutions.

Heineman contrasts the experiences of students at elite universities and non-elite state universities, which is essential for understanding why student activism unfolded in different ways at different universities. Heineman points out that activists at elite universities were typically from wealthy or upper-middle class families that had a history of protest or ties to the Old Left. These students attended elite universities fully funded, and their parents donated money to the schools that they attended. Since their parents were funding the university, the schools did not want to offend their parents, so protesting students from the elite universities were rarely subject to legal action for their protests. With their education funded and family

[9] Kenneth Heineman, *Campus Wars: The Peace Movement at American State Universities in the Vietnam Era* (New York: NYU Press, 1993).

wealth to draw upon, these students were not required to provide for themselves economically and therefore did not need to spend time working, which meant they had a lot of free time while at school. Students at these schools, then, lived relatively unrestrained lives, debating how to change society beyond their school and holding protests as a way to force change.[10] Heineman's analysis suggests that this was less the case with students at Midwestern state schools.

Heineman proposes that the way activism manifested at non-elite state universities relied on the relationships between administration, student, and parent. Since public universities do not offer the scholarship packages that many elite universities do, students either received federal aid to help defray costs, worked to pay for their education, or were funded by their parents. All of these scenarios restricted non-elite state student activism. Reliance on federal aid meant these students accumulated a considerable amount of debt. As a degree was essential to paying off that debt, students needed to respect administrative control to not be expelled or have their aid revoked. And unlike those at elite schools, if these students were funded by their parents and disobeyed university regulations or got arrested in a protest, they could lose their parents' funding. Parents felt that since the students were at school, they should be attending their classes and not protesting and would withdraw their support if they felt their child was wasting their money. Moreover, as state universities were answerable not only to parents who paid tuition, but also to taxpayers that funded the university, if the students were doing something that the public disapproved of, it was the obligation of the university to quell it.[11] Finally, students that had a job were restricted in the amount of free time that they had to organize, protest, or debate, which kept them from organizing in the same manner as elite university students. Because of this,

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid. While there are many factors that affect student experiences at college, Heineman's study focuses on student class. Class was influential in the development of students at public universities and shaped their ability to protest in many cases. However, at BGSU, conservatism and race shaped student-administrator relations more than class.

Heineman suggests, student activism at non-elite state schools was less radical and violent, which led both the contemporary media and scholarly studies to focus on the more visible protests at elite universities.

Since the publication of Heineman's study, a number of studies have been published that have continued the trend of analyzing non-elite state university activism. Historians have written about universities in Texas, Indiana, Illinois, Kansas, and more, focusing on how students at non-elite state universities adopted and adapted the broader movements of the era and challenged the established power structures within the university.[12] Each of these studies has contributed to the effort to build a framework of what student protest was like at non-elite state universities, analyzing not just class but also sex, religion, and political orientation.

This thesis contributes to the historiographical trend of studying non-elite state universities by examining student activism at BGSU, a non-elite regional state university located in Northwest Ohio, leading up to and surrounding the infamous Kent State shootings of May 4, 1970.[13] BGSU was the only public residential university in Ohio to not close at all during the spring semester after the shootings, which this analysis attributes to the legacy of educational activism at the university.[14] Throughout the decade, the students and administration had worked

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[12] Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia University Press: 1998); Beth Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999); Robbie Lieberman, *Prairie Power: Voices of 1960s Midwestern Student Protest* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2004); Mary Ann Wynkoop, *Dissent in the Heartland: The Sixties at Indiana University* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002); Thomas Weyant, ""Your Years Here Have Been Most Unreal": Political and Social Activism During the Vietnam Era at Northern Appalachian Universities" (PhD diss., University of Akron, 2016).

[13] There have been few scholarly analyses of the Kent State shootings. The earliest was James A. Michener, *Kent State: What Happened and Why* (New York: Random House, 1971), which was the most essential scholarly study until recently. A more comprehensive and critical analysis is Thomas Grace, *Kent State: Death and Dissent in the Long Sixties* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2016), which analyzes the history of the university to determine how the circumstances arose that allowed the shootings to occur. There have been numerous oral histories, memoirs, or anthologies recounting the stories of the individuals involved as well, but these lack scholarly analysis in most cases.

[14] Appendix B, Table 1 includes a table of other university's responses to the Kent State shootings. In this context, a university closure entails ceasing all operations, not just classes. Also, residential is a key qualifier in this statement.

together to establish a framework for addressing student unrest in a peaceful and educational manner. However, few histories regarding the university have analyzed student activism in depth due to both the complementary purpose of officially sanctioned university histories and the conservative nature of BGSU.

The desire to maintain a positive image for the university has shaped how institutional histories have analyzed events at BGSU. The overall history of BGSU has been recorded in three books, one commemorating the fiftieth, one the seventy-fifth, and one the hundredth anniversary of the university, while student activism was also the topic of a recent sociological study. The first history, published in 1967, was written by James Overman, a mathematics professor at BGSU who also held multiple different administrative positions before his retirement in 1956. The second university history, published in 1985, was written by history professor Stuart Givens and was designed to supplement Overman's earlier book with an analysis of events since 1967 rather than rewrite the history of the university. The centennial history, published in 2010, was written by Gary Hess, also a history professor at BGSU, and is the most methodically researched of the three. Each offers a unique perspective on the history of the university, but each neglects to develop fully a narrative of student activism.

Overman's account is the least objective of the three and echoes his role as an administrator as he criticizes student activists while praising the administration's efforts to grow the university. There are no footnotes in his book, making it difficult to trace much of the information that he provides, although Overman's various roles within the university gave him the opportunity to gather a sufficient knowledge of the university. His account is largely

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The University of Toledo also never closed after the shootings; however, UT has historically been a "commuter campus," with the majority of students not living on campus, making BGSU exceptional within universities with large residential populations.

narrative driven and designed to highlight the university's accomplishments, which makes his assertions fairly biased in many cases. Givens' book is the shortest of the three, acting more as an addition to Overman's history than a comprehensive history of its own. In this capacity, Givens takes more of a narrative approach to the history of the university as he relates the events between 1963 and 1985. Givens' analysis presents a more objective image of the university's history, reflective of his role as an historian; however, his study is still complementary to the university and critical of student activism in the few places it is mentioned.[15]

The neglect of student activism began to change with the centennial history. When rewriting the histories that Overman and Givens already had covered, Hess uses multiple primary sources and interviews to construct a narrative and present some analysis of the effects of student protest at BGSU, rather than relating a biased analysis or simply triumphant narrative. In the centennial history, he even dedicates an entire section of the book to the 1961 activism that forced President Ralph McDonald to resign; activism that is briefly condemned by Overman and only mentioned in passing by Givens. This marked a shift in the historiography of BGSU towards analyzing student activism at BGSU.[16]

Shortly after the centennial, a sociological study by Wiley et. al appeared that examines how BGSU's tradition of rioting shifted towards organized activism focused on freedom and rights during the first half of the decade. This was the first study to offer an explanation as to why student activism at BGSU developed as it did. Their examination did not reach 1970 however; a historical analysis of BGSU's response to the Kent State shootings did not emerge

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[15] James R. Overman, *The History of Bowling Green State University* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1967); Stuart Givens, *The Falcon Soars: Bowling Green State University: Years of Growing Distinction, 1963-1986* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1986). Overman's tone and word choice demonstrates a disdain and critical attitude towards student protestors, while his narration of administrative action is unequivocally complementary.

[16] Gary Hess, *Bowling Green State University, 1910-2010: A Legacy of Excellence* (Virginia Beach, VA: Donning Co. Publishers, 2010).

until a recent journal article by Joshua Catalano. Catalano's article is the first to analyze deeply the events following the Kent State shootings and concludes that the peaceful response could largely be attributed to Jerome, who Catalano depicts as a democratic leader who was receptive to student concerns. These studies were the first to analyze student activism at BGSU, turning away from the previous institutional histories that for the most part ignore student activism in efforts to promote a positive image of the university and its history.[17]

The conservative nature of the university influenced how the official histories depicted BGSU and delayed critical accounts of student activism for nearly fifty years.[18] This is not surprising, as conservatism has also shaped how the university itself has operated since its founding. In 1910, when the Ohio government was deciding on the location for a new teacher's college in Northwestern Ohio, the final decision was between two locations: Bowling Green and Napoleon, a town an hour farther west. That the final decision was Bowling Green has been attributed to the fact it was a dry town, even eight years prior to national Prohibition, which meant that the town would be safer for the largely female population of a teachers college.[19] Wood County, where Bowling Green is located, has also been a historically conservative area.[20]

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[17] Norbert Wiley, Joseph B. Perry Jr., and Arthur G. Neal, *Uprising at Bowling Green: How the Quiet Fifties Became the Political Sixties* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2013); Joshua Catalano, "President William T. Jerome III: Why Bowling Green State University Remained Open after the Kent State Shootings" *Ohio History* 123, no. 1 (2016): 51-72.

[18] Within the context of this study, conservatism implies a value on authority, hierarchy, and tradition, especially within BGSU. In this sense, the conservative nature of the university disavowed student protest or other behavior deemed immoral or atypical from the status quo.

[19] Overman, 16.

[20] Out of 41 presidential elections since 1856, Wood County voted for the Democratic candidate in 9 elections and Republican candidate in 32 elections. The 1964 election for Lyndon B. Johnson was one of the 9 times Wood County voted for the Democratic candidate. Out of 66 gubernatorial elections since 1855, Wood County voted for the Democratic candidate in 8 elections and the Republican candidate in 58 elections. Each election during the 1960s resulted in a vote for the Republican candidate. Out of 37 US Senate elections since 1910, Wood County voted for the Democratic candidate in 9 elections and the Republican candidate in 28 elections. Each election during the 1960s resulted in a vote for the Republican candidate. "Ohio President County Winner 2016-1856," *Ohio Historical Election Results*, accessed March 31, 2019, http://ohioelectionresults.com/documents/Presidential/Ohio%20President%20County%20Winner%202016-1856.pdf; "Ohio Governor County Results 2014-1855," *Ohio Historical Election Results*, accessed March 31, 2019, http://ohioelectionresults.com

In the 1920s, the county was home to a fairly active chapter of the Ku Klux Klan, and throughout the 1960s, many conservative speakers came to the university, including Richard Nixon while campaigning for the 1968 election and Spiro Agnew when he was Nixon's vice president.[21] Highlighting the prevailing conservative attitude of the times, a leading student activist of the time recalls the irony of SDS students being watched closely by the FBI for being "threats to national security" while the leader of the American Nazi party spoke at the university and drew nearly three thousand students and townspeople but was not seen as a threat.[22]

The influence of conservatism also shaped student activism at BGSU. As Heineman points out, the students' and administration's accountability to the parents ensured that student activism did not become violent because of the potential backlash; at BGSU, this accountability extended to citizens in the surrounding area. Also, many students came from rural working class families which meant, as Heineman asserts, that they were not familiar with activism and Leftist ideology. Without a preconceived framework of activism, students created their own model of activism that was acceptable within the system of accountability they were subject to.

This study contributes to the growing number of case studies on non-elite state university student protest in the 1960s while also revising this period of BGSU's history. As a small,

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/documents/Governor/Ohio%20Governor%20County%20Results%202014 -1855.pdf; "Ohio United States Senate County Results 2012-1914," *Ohio Historical Election Results*, accessed March 31, 2019, http://ohioelectionresults.com/documents/Senate/Ohio%20United%20States%20Senate%20County%20Results%202012-1914.pdf.

[21] Michael Brooks, *The Ku Klux Klan in Wood County, Ohio* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2014); Folder Nixon Day Banquet: Bowling Green, Ohio (5/27/1967), Box 28, Wilderness Years Collection, Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, California; "Agnew Spurs Cheers, Jeers During BG Visit" *BG News,* February 18, 1969, 6-7. Nixon's visit was open to the general public and tickets were sold out before students were even able to purchase any, demonstrating the popularity of the Republican candidate in Wood County.

[22] Nick Licata, "Becoming a Citizen: A Memoir of the Student Power Movement, Democracy & Revolution in the Sixties" (Unpublished Manuscript, in author's possession, 2013), 43, 78. Although George Rockwell Lincoln, head of the American Nazi party, was also deemed a threat by the FBI, Licata's perception was that at the time the FBI was more focused on combatting organizations they deemed communist, such as SDS. While Rockwell represented the blatant threat of fascism, the Americans had already defeated the Nazis; at the height of the Cold War, the subversive threat of communism was much more foreboding.

conservative university, BGSU presents a narrative of student activism that challenges the earlier national image of violent and radical student protest during the 1960s and reinforces Anderson's analysis that the Movement shifted focus towards personal liberation and political empowerment. Similarly, this history of student activism at BGSU supports Heineman's assertion that activism at non-elite state universities was reliant on student-administrator relationships. By examining student-administrator relationships and how these parties cooperated to establish peaceful methods of activism, this study also complicates Catalano's argument that only Jerome was responsible for maintaining peace after the Kent State shootings, which neglects student agency in the university's response despite the fact that the students had established an educational model of activism. Each chapter also contributes to the growing historiography of student power, antiwar, and Black student activism respectively, engaging with previous national analyses while also complicating local analyses.

This analysis draws heavily upon the unpublished memoir of Nick Licata, an alum of BGSU who was the president of both the SDS chapter and Student Council. He was involved with nearly every major protest on campus during his time at BGSU from fall of 1965 to the spring of 1969; he dictates the events and his perceptions through his memoir. No previous study of the university's history has had access to this memoir, which introduces a new narrative and perspective of the era. Since the experiences of students are hardly preserved the way that bureaucratic records are, this memoir is essential to understanding the student perspective during this period. Archival records held at the Center for Archival Collections at BGSU, including presidential collections and topical collections regarding student activism, as well as the campus

newspaper, the *BG News*, are also essential to constructing the narrative of student activism and analyzing how each of these movements succeeded in implemented change at BGSU.[23]

Examining how students and administrators worked together throughout the 1960s to establish an educational model of activism demonstrates why BGSU was able to remain open and peaceful in the wake of the Kent State shootings. Each chapter analyzes a specific branch of student activism at BGSU prior to the spring of 1970, evaluating the contribution of the student power movement, the antiwar movement, and the Black student movement to the administrative and student response to the Kent State shootings. These movements correspond with the causes of national campus unrest determined by the President's Commission on Campus Unrest in 1970, which found that discontent with university governance, the Vietnam War, and racial injustice had created an atmosphere of discontent that escalated student protest and culminating in the Kent State shootings.[24]

Although each movement at BGSU influenced the growth of the others, each chapter will focus on the actions of an individual movement leading up to 1970. The student power movement opened channels of communication with the administration, essential for getting the administration to address student demands; the antiwar movement established an educational method of protest, which established a model for peaceful activism; and the Black student movement utilized these methods to establish itself before turning towards more direct activism, reinforcing the efficiency of communication and educational activism while also adopting new

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[23] The *BG News* is published by Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio, and is accessible through the Center for Archival Collections online database found on the Bowling Green State University website. There are also a number of documents regarding student activism in 1970 digitized through their website.

[24] *The Report of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest* (New York: Arno Press, 1970), 57-59. Also known as the Scranton Commission for its chairman, Senator William Scranton - R from Pennsylvania, this commission was created by President Richard Nixon following the Kent State shootings to determine what circumstances led to the tragedy. While women's student activism also was prevalent at BGSU during this time, I have limited my study to the three major causes determined by the Scranton Commission.

methods. In the wake of the Kent State shootings, the students used these methods to create the New University, an administration-sanctioned alternate curriculum of student-led teach-ins which provided students with the opportunity to discuss contemporary issues. This program allowed for peaceful student activism, which resulted in BGSU being the only Ohio public residential university to remain open indefinitely following the shootings. The historiography of student activism is diversifying with a number of local studies that complicate the established narrative, and this study contributes by demonstrating that student activism at BGSU peacefully established a method of educational activism to address issues.

Chapter 1 analyzes the effects of the student power movement at BGSU, focusing specifically on the interactions between the students and the administration. Following the experience of Nick Licata and examining a number of instances that students communicated directly with the administration, this chapter examines how students established a legacy of open communication with the administration as a way to air their grievances and formulate solutions. The ability to communicate openly with the administration assisted in mitigating violent protest in the wake of the Kent State shootings because students and administrators were able to formulate peaceful solutions together.

Chapter 2 analyzes the effects of the antiwar movement at BGSU, focusing on the establishment of an educational model of activism. Antiwar activism was non-violent and educational at BGSU, focused on promoting open and inclusive discussion to analyze the issue from both sides. When students tried non-educational, confrontational protest, they faced backlash from the community and the administration. Educational activism therefore became the predominant method of activism for antiwar protestors because it allowed activists to voice their opinions without confrontational opposition. After the Kent State shootings, non-violent,

education centered activism dominated the immediate response and shaped the university for the rest of the spring semester.

Chapter 3 analyzes the effects of the Black student movement, focusing on how Black students utilized the previously established open channels of communication and educational model of activism to formulate and legitimize their movement, and then adapt to a more direct and demanding method of protest. After presenting the administration with requests to diversify the university population and curriculum multiple times with little response, Black students at BGSU were forced to adapt their methods and successfully threatened the university to have their issues addressed. They also worked throughout the decade to establish and expand Black culture and education on campus using these methods, ultimately laying the groundwork for one of the earliest Ethnic Studies programs in the Midwest.

Finally, the conclusion begins by examining how each of these movements intersected in the spring of 1970 with the formation of the New University. Formulated as a result of student/administrator communication and the university community's preference for educational activism, this program was an alternate curriculum of teach-in courses designed as an opportunity for students to examine contemporary issues and formulate solutions alongside faculty and administrators. The New University was divided into six colleges, each with a specific focus, of which three aligned directly with the student power, antiwar, and Black student issues. The program facilitated an educational dialogue and mitigated violent protest in the wake of the Kent State shootings then dissipated with the exit of the university's president. The conclusion then analyzes how the student power movement, antiwar movement, and New University ceased to exist after the spring of 1970 while the Black student movement continued. This thesis then ends with suggestions of areas of additional study on this topic.

# CHAPTER I. STUDENT POWER MOVEMENT

Fear was widespread at BGSU on the afternoon of May 4, 1970. As BGSU students learned that the National Guard had opened fire on students at Kent State, they were fearful of a similar situation occurring on their campus and were anxious to hear from the administration. Students organized and marched to the president's office, seeking reassurance that the Ohio National Guard would not occupy campus. However, President William T. Jerome III was not there; he was in a meeting with all of the vice presidents, deans, and department heads to discuss recent student activism as well as how to respond to the events at Kent State.[25] When the students realized Jerome was not in his office, they sat in the hallway refusing to move until they had a response. Once Jerome learned of the Kent State shootings and heard that students were sitting outside his office, he sent word that he would give a speech. He asked the students to gather at Williams Hall, whose front porch was a regular gathering space for unofficial demonstrations. Jerome arrived shortly and addressed the 1500 students that had gathered, easing their minds by promising that there would be no such tragedy at BGSU, cancelling classes the next morning, and promising to meet with students the next day to discuss the issues at hand.[26] This interaction demonstrates the legacy of open communication between students and administrators at BGSU, resulting from years of collaborative engagement between students and administrators due to student power activism at BGSU. The following chapter examines how student power activists developed a legacy of open communication with the administration over the course of the Sixties and how student-administrator communication was essential in keeping the university peaceful in the wake of the Kent State shootings.

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[25] Jim Morino, "V.P.'s, Deans, Dept. Heads Confer: Meet on Campus Unrest," *BG News,* May 5, 1970.
[26] Oral History Interview with Dr. William T. Jerome III, MS-449 BGSU Oral History Collection, Box 1, Folder 28, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University, 14-15.

Student protests of the 1960s sought to change many aspects of American society, and some of the most successful protests were those that changed the way that American universities treated their students. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, many university administrations implemented strict regulations that controlled students' behavior, acting *in loco parentis* (in the place of a parent) to take care of students who were leaving home for the first time. The unspoken contract between parents and the university left students subject to the terms without any agency, and granted the university a unique position of control as an institution. The campus became a family home; the administration, a parent. Although never the letter of the law, *in loco parentis* authority was upheld through legal precedent, and the university was granted nearly total legal immunity for anything that occurred on campus.[27] By the 1960s, however, students began to reject the traditional *in loco parentis* style of authority, instead calling for student agency and involvement in the decision-making processes of the university. The student power movement began, centered on students' desire to have influence in forming regulations involving student freedoms like housing, visitation hours, and alcohol consumption.[28]

The student power movement is a recent addition to the historiography of student protest of the 1960s. In the early years following the 1960s, the student power movement was hardly recognized as its own strand of activism. Instead, it was considered part of the New Left movement of the 1960s and largely simplified into the study of two topics: the Free Speech Movement at UC - Berkeley in 1964, and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). The Free Speech Movement was a largely peaceful student protest in 1964 against the Berkeley

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[27] Robert D. Bickel and Peter F. Lake, *The Rights and Responsibilities of the Modern University* (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 1999), 17-27.

[28] Nick Licata, "Becoming a Citizen: A Memoir of the Student Power Movement, Democracy & Revolution in the Sixties" (Unpublished Manuscript, in author's possession, 2013). Activist Nick Licata, a central figure in student protest at BGSU from 1965-1969, uses the term student power to describe his experiences protesting against the administration in an attempt to gain student agency.

administration's rules restricting political activity on campus. The protest lasted many months, gained the attention of national media, and ultimately led to the resignation of the university president and the protection of free speech on campus. Student power activism elsewhere hardly amounted to the scale that it did in Berkeley, which has made the Free Speech Movement the most studied example of student power. This had led to incorrect observations that the Free Speech Movement was a unique instance of activism for reasons other than its scale.[29]

Histories of SDS are more comprehensive of national student activism than Free Speech Movement studies, but still limit the scope of student power to one organization. Many studies of the Sixties that focused on organizations or leaders within the Movement centered SDS, because the scope of their activism meant that members were involved vaguely in many different movements. A prime example is James Miller's *Democracy is in the Streets*, which is designed to be a study of the New Left, but focuses on four leaders of SDS throughout the decade to build his narrative of the entire movement. Kirkpatrick Sale's *SDS* examines the rise and fall of the organization and similarly places SDS on a pedestal within the New Left and Movement, conflating the life of the Movement to that of SDS. The course of the Movement was defined by the actions of SDS in these histories and many others, and Todd Gitlin, an early SDS president, even attributes the end of the Movement to the collapse of SDS late in the decade in his memoir.[30]

Revisionists have started to critique this perception of SDS in recent years though, pointing out that the exclusivity of the organization kept it from working with a number of

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[29] William J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War: The 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); Robert Cohen and Reginald E. Zelnik, eds., *The Free Speech Movement: Reflections on Berkeley in the 1960s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

[30] Kirkpatrick Sale, *SDS* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973); James Miller, *Democracy is in the Streets* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987); Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1987).

constituencies, including Black protestors, women, and non-elite state university students. David Barber attributes the decline of SDS to this exclusivity, noting that the wealthy white elite that the leaders represented were a small percentage of the organization by the end of the decade.[31] These elite students were ideologically driven, focused on debating ideas such as freedom and democracy and how they could be implemented to create a better society. However, at non-elite state universities, students were less concerned with theory and more concerned with issues that affected their personal experiences and sought to gain power within their universities to implement change. This was especially true in the Midwest, which caused rifts within the national organization by the end of the decade.[32]

As the study of student power activism has shifted from the nationally recognized efforts of the Free Speech Movement and SDS towards non-elite state university student activism, it has become clear that student power existed in less radical or violent forms than commonly examined. Students at elite universities were focused on changing society on a broad scale, which required forceful action. Meanwhile, students at non-elite state universities were focused on changing their local environments and empowering themselves, which in many cases did not garner national attention even when their protests were violent. Studies of student power activism beyond the Free Speech Movement and SDS support Anderson's assertion that the Movement shifted focus towards personal liberation and political empowerment by the end of the decade since students at non-elite state universities sought to change their local experiences rather than participate in the increasingly radical national protests.

As noted in the introduction, the historiography of BGSU has been largely silent on student activism at BGSU. Hess' analysis of student activism in 1961 and Wiley et. al's

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[31] David Barber, *A Hard Rain Fell: SDS and Why It Failed* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2008).
[32] Sale; Gitlin; Anderson; Barber.

sociological analysis of the transition between forms of activism analyze student activism at the beginning of the decade but do not examine how student activism was shaped in the second half of the decade or how the BGSU response to the Kent State shootings was shaped by earlier activism. Catalano proposes that Jerome is responsible for the peaceful response, but his analysis limits the complicated narrative of student activism to the response of the administration. A more comprehensive analysis of student activism at BGSU reveals how students also contributed to the peaceful response to the Kent State shootings.[33]

This chapter contributes to the historiography of student activism in the Sixties in three ways. First, Anderson's assertion that the Movement shifted focus can be demonstrated by the emergence of student power as its own form of activism that was centered on personal liberation and political empowerment as students began rejecting *in loco parentis* authority. Next, this chapter also contributes to the growing study of student power at non-elite state universities. By centering its analysis on BGSU, this chapter complicates the narrative of student activism in the 1960s by examining how students at BGSU were focused on local issues and began to operate separately from the national student power organizations such as SDS by the end of the decade. Finally, this chapter reinforces Heineman's assertion that student activism was shaped by student-administrator relations and complicates Catalano's conclusion that Jerome's leadership was solely responsible for the peaceful response to the Kent State shootings at BGSU. The following analysis demonstrates how student-administrator engagement throughout the decade

[33] Gary Hess, *Bowling Green State University, 1910-2010: A Legacy of Excellence* (Virginia Beach, VA: Donning Co. Publishers, 2010); Norbert Wiley, Joseph B. Perry Jr., and Arthur G. Neal, *Uprising at Bowling Green: How the Quiet Fifties Became the Political Sixties* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2013); Joshua Catalano, "President William T. Jerome III: Why Bowling Green State University Remained Open after the Kent State Shootings" *Ohio History* 123, no. 1 (2016): 51-72.

established a legacy of open communication that contributed to BGSU's peaceful response to the Kent State shootings.[34]

To create the narrative and analysis of student power activism at BGSU, this chapter analyzes the *BG News,* the campus newspaper, and an unpublished manuscript written by Nick Licata. While Licata's memoir is a useful tool for understanding the narrative and purpose of the student power movement due to the scarcity of records that document student perspectives, his memory and analysis of the event suffer from the same issues as the early historians of the era. His personal account is sympathetic to the causes of the students and he makes little effort to empathize with the university administrators when analyzing their refusal to accept student demands, resulting in exaggerations of some of the actions and intentions of their decisions.

Although Licata's memoir provides many details about the student power movement, it is biased towards the students and lacks the insight of what was occurring on the administrative side of the movement. Therefore, it is important to consider the administrative perspective on the protests to understand to what extent the student power movement changed the administration. To analyze the administration's perspective on student activism, this chapter relies on the presidential collections at BGSU's Center for Archival Collections, especially the files of President William T. Jerome III. Within this collection are correspondences within the administration, letters to and from parents, and university publications and announcements that represent the standpoint of the administration in response to several events throughout the decade.

This chapter chronologically analyzes the student power movement at BGSU in three main parts. First, it assesses the student/administrator relationship prior to the 1960s and how

[34] Anderson, 294-353; Heineman, 124; Catalano, 52.

those relationships began to shift with the earliest student power protests in 1957 and 1961. Then, analysis turns towards the period of 1966-1969, the main years of the student power movement. During this period, students fought to gain political power within the university and have their grievances addressed by the administration. While students gained very little political power and not all of their concerns were resolved, they did establish a legacy of open communication with the administration that allowed students to air their grievances. The final part of this chapter then analyzes how students utilized open communication in the wake of the Kent State shootings to present their concerns to the administration and cooperatively formulate peaceful solutions that culminated in the New University.

The student power movement first emerged at BGSU as a way for students to address the strict regulations that limited student behavior. These regulations were a result of the conservative nature of the university as well as the *in loco parentis* style of administration still present in the early 1960s. Until the student activism of the 1960s, regulations limited students' ability to drive cars, mandated dress codes and curfews for women, and, most drastically, strictly restricted the consumption of alcohol.[35] While these regulations greatly restricted student behavior, shaping the experiences of students' lives, students had no voice in the process that formulated these regulations due to the *in loco parentis* administration. Therefore, in response to the strict, authoritarian leadership of the university, students began to protest to gain power within the university – significantly, this began years earlier than students at other universities.

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[35] James R. Overman, *The History of Bowling Green State University* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1967; Bowling Green State University, *Women's Handbooks* (Bowling Green, OH: BGSU Association of Women Students, 1946-1970), Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University. These handbooks acted as guides that provided female students with a very specific set of regulations and patterns of behavior that they were supposed to follow. They were phased out by 1970, which is demonstrative of the feminist movement that also existed at the university but is not documented in this study.

The reason for BGSU students protesting earlier than other universities can be traced to the leadership style of the university. Nevitt Sanford, who was a professor of psychology at Berkeley and wrote much about student unrest at Berkeley, defined two main methodological approaches to controlling student behavior: dominance and autocracy. He defined dominance as a flexible method, one that makes students do something they do not want to do by adjusting the method of control to the factors at hand. He defined autocracy as a static method, one that makes students do something they do not want by using the same method of control in every circumstance, regardless of any extraneous factors. In constituents, autocratic rule leads to two results: submissive, highly dependent, and socially apathetic individuals, or aggressive, irritable, and self-centered constituents.[36] After a decade of strict *in loco parentis* rule, students began to demonstrate characteristics of the latter in 1961. While the strict authority of the administration made the academic nature of the university more rigorous and desirable, it made the social experience of students quite restricted. Students detested their lack of agency within an *in loco parentis* administration due to strict regulations on alcohol and visiting hours, harsh penalties for breaking regulations, and a lack of agency in determining how the university operated. These students had been in high school or early college during the burgeoning Civil Rights Movement in the late 1950s, which acted as a model for protesting against institutional oppression and gaining civil rights. Students began to reflect on their experiences at the university in relation to civil rights and power, and they began to adopt the characteristics of the latter group described by Sanford: they became self-centered and aggressive, seeking to loosen the regulations over their lives. The shift in student constitution at BGSU reinforces Anderson's analysis that the

[36] Nevitt Sanford, *Where Colleges Fail: A Study of the Student as a Person* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass Inc. Publishers, 1967), 39-40.

Movement's focus shifted towards personal liberation and political empowerment, in this case for the student, towards the end of the decade.[37]

Rapidly rising enrollment numbers and changes in student demographics were also a factor in the development of student protest on BGSU campus. In the second half of the 1940s, enrollment at BGSU increased three-fold, going from 1,677 in the fall of 1945 to 4,849 in the fall of 1949.[38] This large influx was mainly due to returning veterans taking advantage of the G.I. Bill to attend college. In order to accommodate this influx of students, President Frank Prout was forced to construct a number of temporary buildings and hire a number of faculty who were under-qualified to teach at the university just to keep up with enrollment. The university was able to remain open, but the quality of education suffered. New students also consisted of many older, non-traditional students, which meant that the *in loco parentis* style of administration was more restrictive than protective for these students. Discontent with these restrictions became evident in 1949 when students briefly protested automobile policies that the university had in place, which resulted in Prout loosening the regulations.[39] Although one of the earliest significant protests in BGSU history, it did not accomplish much and is not remembered. In the context of student activism, however, the automobile protest signals that the *in loco parentis* style of administration was beginning to falter even at small, conservative universities.

By 1951 the influx of students had slowed, which gave the incoming president of BGSU, Ralph McDonald, a chance to improve the faculty of the administration and modernize the campus. As the first BGSU president to have higher administration credentials, McDonald arrived at an opportune time to professionalize the university. One of his first decisions was to

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[37] Bickel and Lake, 37-39; Anderson, 294-353.
[38] Enrollment Data 1914-2013, https://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/libraries/documents/cac/Enrollment-Data-1914-2013.pdf.
[39] Overman, 147-148.

improve the educational quality of the university by hiring qualified professors to replace those who had been hired by Prout that did not have doctorates. McDonald also tore down the temporary buildings that had been put up to handle all of the additional students and expanded the university, adding 400 new acres of land and constructing six dormitories and four academic buildings.[40] This allowed the university to comfortably house the larger number of admitted students and give them the opportunity to be trained by professionals in their respective fields.

Although the university flourished, it did so with McDonald ruling the university with an iron fist, which would later cause a division within the faculty and inspire student unrest. In many cases, he felt that he was the only one capable of completing a job effectively and he completed much of the administrative work himself. He had the final say in every new hire or promotion, and he even micromanaged to the point of directing some faculty on how to arrange their office furniture in some cases.[41] Within Sanford's description of leadership, McDonald was extremely autocratic. This style of leadership was possible during the early years of his tenure, as the last of the Silent Generation were entering college and accepted the autocratic rule that had always been common. However, by the end of the decade, the enrollment at BGSU had doubled again and students and faculty alike began challenging McDonald's autocratic methods.[42] Students grew tired of being denied their autonomy and freedom just because they were attending a university, and with the Civil Rights Movement as a model of opposing oppression,

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[40] Overman, 156-165.

[41] Robert Twyman Interview, April 16, 1986, MS-449 BGSU Oral History Collection, Box 2, Folder 15, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University, 5. While Twyman's interview directly addresses the issue, the oral histories contained in this collection create a thorough image of the McDonald controversy when combined. Through an internship where I digitized these oral histories I listened to dozens of hours of faculty and staff recounting the era, which has informed my understanding of the topic but also restricted my ability to cite specific interviews for specific information.

[42] MS-449 - BGSU Oral History Collection, Box 2, Folder 15, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University. Many of the oral histories in this collection discuss the McDonald years. Evident within this collection is how divisive the McDonald years were. While this study focuses on student activism against McDonald, there were also efforts from the faculty to eject him from the university. His authoritarian leadership appealed to some faculty while it repulsed others and his resignation divided the faculty body for years to come.

they began to rebel against the McDonald administration in 1957 with a brief instance of activism.

The 1957 protest against McDonald emerged as a result of a policy of double jeopardy. Students from the Sigma Chi fraternity held their formal dance in Findlay, nearly 30 miles south of Bowling Green. When word got back to the university that students had been drinking alcohol at the dance, McDonald placed the chapter on probation, which was the sanctioned punishment. However, a few weeks later the administration demanded the names of individuals who were drinking so that they could expel them as well. Many students believed this to be double jeopardy and protested by creating a list of grievances and marching to McDonald's house across from campus. When they learned that McDonald had left the premises upon hearing about the march, the peaceful march fell apart and students blocked the road and burned McDonald in effigy. The protest was eventually dispersed when firefighters turned fire hoses on the crowd, and student grievances were never addressed. Although rioting was an ineffective method of activism, students had to resort to confrontation because there was no effective or sanctioned method of peacefully airing grievances to the administration; McDonald had the final say in every decision and would not hear student complaints. However, the next instance of student activism would find students exploring new methods of activism, moving away from rioting and towards more organized civil protest.

Although it would later grow into an organized movement, the student activism of 1961 began spontaneously as a result of a water balloon fight on an unseasonably warm spring day. Fraternity members were celebrating initiation and their water balloon fight attracted a crowd of over a thousand students. This large-sized crowd frightened McDonald, who was walking past on his way to a meeting, and he told the crowd to disperse; the crowd followed, chanting and

jeering at him long after he entered the Student Union for his meeting. McDonald called the Dean of Students to disperse the crowd. When students refused to listen to the dean's instruction to disperse, he began shoving some students in a last ditch effort to force students to leave. This led one of the students to hit the dean with a water balloon, energizing the crowd for the rest of the day. The students continued to heckle the administration and march around campus and town, but McDonald believed that the students' actions were merely the result of spring fever.[43] As they would find though, this was merely the beginning.

The next day, nearly two thousand students boycotted their classes as a continuation of the activism against the administration. The story made national news through an Associated Press story because this protest comprised of a third of the school's six thousand students at the time.[44] That evening, students met outside the Union and set bonfires to discuss the issues at hand. A number of speakers addressed the crowd; most significantly were Reverend James Trautwein of the St. John's Episcopal Church and Professor Sherman Stanage, the chair of the philosophy department. Reverend Trautwein drew parallels between the goals of the students' movement and the ongoing Civil Rights Movement, saying that students were being denied their rights on campus and that they should fight to win them back, especially their freedom of speech. Stanage similarly supported the movement, saying that the students had the faculty support as long as they remained peaceful in their protest.[45] Just one year prior, students had organized sit-ins to combat segregation in Greensboro, South Carolina and within months civil rights protestors would partake in the Freedom Rides to the south, both nonviolent methods of activism. Encouraged to look at these protests as examples and supported by two respected

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[43] Hess, 44.
[44] "Students Set Boycott: 2,000 at Bowling Green U. Agree to Shun Classes," *New York Times,* March 28, 1961, 48. Accessed from *New York Times (1923-Current File).*
[45] Hess, 45.

leaders, students at BGSU began to organize to combat inequality against students. Although the goal of the activists in 1961 was not specifically to transfer power to students, this activism was an exercise of student power. The students were not satisfied with the way the university was being operated, so they organized to have their voice be heard and present a number of changes that they wanted the university to make.

By the end of the night, students created a list of grievances that they wanted addressed, including double jeopardy, the class attendance policy, restrictions on women, administrative censoring of the *BG News*, and administrative/student relations.[46] McDonald called a state of emergency that continued through the next day, requiring all students to remain in their rooms unless going to class. With his autocratic control being questioned, McDonald felt threatened by the protest. Although the students were incapable of enacting change on their own within the contemporary power structure at BGSU, the student activism represented a shift that could potentially deprive McDonald of autocratic control.

Despite the state of emergency that had been declared, the next day, March 28, students left their dorms to actively boycott their classes. The list of grievances created the night before was given to the Student Council, who said that they would consider the grievances in a meeting two weeks away. By delaying the consideration and not immediately taking action, the Student Council reinforced the students' perception that the council was merely a puppet of the administration with no real authority in itself. Without a representative body to stand for them, the students felt that they were left to rely on themselves to enact change within the university.

After the state of emergency was declared, the administration waited for the student activism to lose its momentum. Nine students were expelled for their involvement as a way to

[46] "Student Senate Minutes, April 13, 1961," MS-1126 President Ralph McDonald Controversy Collection, Box 1, Folder 2, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University.

remove some of the more radical students, and the administration hoped that the upcoming spring break would quell the spirit of activism by temporarily removing the rest of the students from the school. March 29 was the last day of classes before spring break, and students did indeed begin to head home. Many students were displaying signs that protested the administrative response to the activism; these students were detained for a time by the university. Rather than quelling the spirit of activism as the administration hoped, this restriction on free speech merely reinforced the grievances the students held and further inspired students to use the break to advance their efforts to change the university.[47]

Since the university refused to address the students' demands, a student who had been expelled for the protests led a group to the Ohio state legislature, a body that held authority over McDonald. The students presented a list of grievances, which included a curb on expression through the campus newspaper, a lack of representation in university governing organizations, and double jeopardy in student court. Although the students presented their grievances in an orderly manner, the tone of a United Press International story about the student visit to the legislature belittles the students and casts doubt on the legitimacy of their cause. For example, the article titled "Students Fight Ban on Beer and Kissing" stated that "[Students] denied that that off-campus beer drinking and kissing in front of women's dormitories were major issues in the demonstration."[48] The fact that the article chose to emphasize the issues of drinking and kissing in the headline, despite students insisting that the protests were for larger issues of civil rights, shows how entrenched the idea of *in loco parentis* was in society; it was inconceivable that the students could assemble in an organized and mature manner with a thought out list of

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[47] Ibid.

[48] "Students Fight Ban On Beer and Kissing," *New York Times*, April 4, 1961, 30. Accessed from *New York Times (1923-Current File).*

demands. While newspapers would begin reporting on student activism as valid in the coming years, there was no standard for reporting on this large of a student protest in 1961. Student activism on to this extent was unprecedented; the Greensboro sit-ins the previous year were organized by students, but not centered on student rights. The Freedom Riders, many of whom were students, would challenge segregation with bus rides to the south that summer, but did not address student power. Student power activism would not become a national movement for a few more years: the Port Huron Statement, which was the cornerstone of SDS, would not be written for another year; the Freedom Summer, the first protest experience for many famous Sixties protest leaders, was not until 1964; and the Free Speech Movement, the most recognized instance of student power activism, was also not until 1964. BGSU was ahead of its time; later in the decade newspapers would have no issue framing student activists as having legitimate concerns, but this early in the decade students were still not taken seriously.

Despite not being taken seriously by some media reports, the students' trip to the legislature was successful at drawing attention to their plight. McDonald was informed that if he did not remedy the issues, the legislature would side with the students if further grievances arose. As a response, he opened his door to students to hear their concerns and rectified the list of grievances that students had presented to the Student Council. Regardless, the Ohio State Assembly had lost faith in his ability to govern the university and introduced a bill to change the structure of the BGSU Board of Trustees by adding two members, allowing for new perspectives to be introduced that might prevent the board from rubber stamping everything McDonald did. McDonald fought the bill, perceiving it to be a vote of no-confidence, and tried to discredit the student protests and minimize their importance and validity. His vehement response to the bill discredited any attempts to work with students that he had recently introduced, proving they

were merely attempts to rectify the issue at hand rather than truly democratize the university. The bill passed by the end of June that year and McDonald submitted his resignation to the Board of Trustees, accepting that he no longer held the confidence of those around him. [49]

This was the first example of student power affecting change at BGSU. What started as a spontaneous riot, the typical form of activism at BGSU, quickly evolved into an organized fight for student rights. With the example and inspiration of the Civil Rights Movement and guidance from Reverend Trautwein and Professor Stanage, students successfully presented demands to the university and changed the autocratic control that had restricted much of their lives for a decade. After McDonald resigned, the university's spirit of protest died down for the rest of the first half of the decade. Ralph Harshman, a retired professor, agreed to be interim president. For two years, Harshman's administration sought to disseminate the power that McDonald had hoarded, forming committees to determine how the protest of 1961 had escalated to the point that McDonald was forced to resign. The committee formed to study student unrest, which consisted of students, faculty, and administrators, determined that no major changes were necessary, but reminded students of existing methods of participating in university governance and proposed issues that needed further analysis, such as restrictions on women's visiting hours and dormitory autonomy. Overman concludes that while the findings of this committee helped remind students of their ability to participate in governance and that the presence of students within the committee demonstrated the dedication of the community to improve relationships, ultimately it was that Harshman was president that quelled student unrest. Harshman had worked at the university for many years and Overman believed that he had garnered a reputation as a

[49] Hess, 47-48; 54.

benevolent and fair administrator.[50] Even without many drastic changes in regulation, the students were more willing to be led by Harshman.

In 1963, Harshman's tenure as interim president ended and President William T. Jerome III became the seventh president of BGSU. During his seven-year tenure, Jerome would encounter the largest influx of students in the university's history. From 1963, when Jerome took office, to 1970, when he left, student enrollment leapt from 8313 to 13782.[51] This generation would be called the Baby Boomers, a massive generation of children born following World War II and coming of age in the 1960s. This influx of students, combined with the energy of the Movement throughout the decade, meant that Jerome would have to deal with multiple instances of student activism during his tenure and balance the demands of the students with his responsibilities as an administrator.

That Jerome could not just adhere to student demands was something that students at BGSU did not seem to understand. There were a number of bodies that the administration had to answer to: the Ohio Board of Regents, the BGSU Board of Trustees, the parents, and the surrounding community. Jerome ran the university with these groups in mind, especially parents. As Heineman noted, parents and taxpayers funded the university; as the president, Jerome was responsible for operating the university to their standard.[52] Some things were out of the control of the administration by legal right, and some things were out of the control of the administration because of the backlash that such a decision would bring with it. The critics of the university, Licata included, seemed to not consider this when they demanded power in university decisions.

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[50] Overman, 197-200.

[51] Enrollment Data 1914-2013, https://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/libraries/documents/cac/Enrollment-Data-1914-2013.pdf. The second number is the fall enrollment in 1969, although Jerome left office after the spring of 1970. The fall of 1970 enrolled 14880 students, so the true number is probably somewhere in between those numbers.

[52] Licata, 87; Heineman.

Jerome did not have ultimate power over the university, but as the head of its administration, he would become the subject of much of the anger from student power activists until students and administrators established open communication to allow for compromises to be formulated. Due to Jerome's less autocratic sense of control and the cooperation and open communication between students and administrators, student activism remained largely peaceful throughout the decade, with no other instances of activism occurring that were as massively confrontational as the 1961 protest.

From the student perspective, the years between 1961 and 1965 were transitional and calm. The youngest of the students that experienced the McDonald era were graduating, having experienced the harsh regulations at the university and also succeeded in rebelling against them. To these students, the autocratic, inaccessible administration had been disposed of and Harshman's benevolent leadership made them more content with their experience. However, the students who experienced the McDonald presidency were replaced each year by a new cohort of students that had not experienced the harsher regulations though, and in turn, these students began to once again find the regulations too harsh and believed that the university was not listening to their desires. Along with this, each new cohort spent more of their formative years experiencing the Civil Rights Movement, watching as people fought against a system that oppressed them. This led students to formulate their own opinions on how the university was treating them. As mentioned before though, the vast majority of Midwest students were limited in their ability to participate in activism due to financial constraints and were largely uninterested in the growing Movement beyond BGSU. In fact, the Free Speech Movement, largely considered the landmark movement for student power in the national narrative, hardly received a passing

mention in the *BG News*.[53] The politicization of students to fight for their rights in California had little to no bearing on students in Northwest Ohio; the event was hardly on their radar.

Students at BGSU were not completely out of touch with broader society though; they did begin to become more politically active in general as the Movement began to swell around 1965. Chapters were formed at BGSU of groups such as the Young Democrats, the Young Republicans, the leftist Americans for Democratic Action, and the rightist Young Americans for Freedom by 1965. The Young Democrats and Young Republicans still exist and are moderate organizations on the left and right. The Americans for Democratic Action were replaced as the predominant leftist group on campus by SDS in 1966, while the Young Americans for Freedom combatted SDS throughout the decade. Although few records exist on the chapter of Young Americans for Freedom, they did advertise their meetings and events in the *BG News*. Politically the group seemed to be a right-leaning equivalent of SDS at BGSU, and the chapter largely sponsoring conservative speakers that would attract a few hundred students. For a period of time, there was also a chapter of the National Youth Alliance at BGSU, which was a far-right organization that believed the Young Americans for Freedom were not conservative enough; editorials between the two conservative groups were hostile until it was revealed that the National Youth Alliance was being operated by Nazis and the BGSU chapter dissolved.[54]

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[53] Tom Bodiker, "Berkeley Flares Up Again," *BG News*, March 16, 1965, 2. The only mention of the Free Speech Movement in the *BG News* was from a few months after the movement ended, with a small article mentioning that the university president was resigning. Small editorial articles scattered in the *BG News* made it clear that many students believed similar protests could not occur at BGSU because the university was large or elite enough.

[54] Tom Walton, "Bircher Ignores March," *BG News,* March 16, 1965, 1; George Wallace, "ADA-YAF Political Battle Sets Healthy Trend," *BG News,* March 30, 1965, 2; "Negro FBI Undercover Agent to Make YAF-Backed Talk," *BG News,* May 11, 1965, 1; *BG News,* Spring 1969. There were a number of advertisements throughout multiple issues of the *BG News* in the spring of 1969 for Young Americans for Freedom meetings as well as editorials between the Young Americans for Freedom and the National Youth Alliance, which only existed for the spring of 1969.

The increasingly politicized nature of society and of BGSU inspired two students to pursue a voice in the decisions that affected the lives of students. In the fall of 1966, Nick Licata and a friend read an article in the *BG News* that said the university would be transitioning to a quarter system rather than a semester system starting the following fall; unbeknownst to the students, the administration was being forced by the Board of Regents of Ohio, which provides an example of an issue Jerome had no control over. Licata's friend pointed out that no one had asked the students if they would prefer a quarter system, and not knowing that the choice was made already, the two students started a petition for the university to remain a semester system until the students were consulted.[55] Although the petition would have no influence in changing policy, it gathered over two hundred signatures in only a few days. The scope of interest demonstrated in such a short period inspired Licata, and despite not being able to force change this experience made him realize that students did have power, and that they could change the university.[56]

That same fall, Licata and others founded a chapter of Students for a Democratic Society at BGSU, one of approximately eleven chapters in Ohio and nearly two hundred chapters nationally by the fall of 1966.[57] Dr. William Reichart, a professor in the political science department at BGSU, became the faculty sponsor and even joined the national organization. According to Licata, Reichart was a humanist and a bit of an anarchist, and he was a great ally to

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[55] Randy Ketcham, "Quarter Plan Under Study," *BG News,* Oct. 11, 1966, 1; "Petitions Back Semester Plan," *BG News,* Oct. 12, 1966, 3.
[56] Licata, 22-26.
[57] Amanda Miller, "SDS Chapters 1962-1969," *Mapping American Social Movements Project,* accessed April 3, 2019, http://depts.washington.edu/moves/sds_map.shtml. This project visually displays each chapter of SDS along with its date of creation, which makes it useful for identifying where and when chapters of SDS existed. It utilizes information from Kirkpatrick Sale's *SDS* as well as SDS records located at the Wisconsin Historical Society. This project also analyzes a number of other social movements in the United States with similar visual data.

students throughout the decade.[58] The leftist nature of the organization, while attractive to Reichart, made some students suspicious. The *BG News* published editorials condemning the organization as a whole, quoting J. Edgar Hoover and the federal government in calling the group communist and insisting the local chapter disprove that label or suffer constant suspicion.[59] For the rest of the decade, student informants kept in touch with the FBI, ensuring that the federal government knew when the chapter was founded, who was involved, and what events the chapter organized. While the available FBI reports redact many of the names for confidentiality, Licata freely names his friends and their roles, which confirms the accuracy of the FBI report that includes biographical information on a number of students involved as well as a small summary of events. [60]

Although the chapter never grew very large in number, the lack of information kept by the FBI is surprising: some of the events that the chapter sponsored did attract large numbers of students and some students and administrators remained wary of the organization and its influence throughout the decade. The events sponsored by SDS utilized open dialogue, civil disobedience, and educational seminars to create change rather than radical violence though, so these nonviolent methods probably kept the FBI from investigating further into the chapter. The nonviolent methods that protected BGSU from FBI surveillance contradicts the narrative of radical, violent unrest in the 1960s that most histories recount. As will be seen though, this chapter was just as effective at implementing change as the universities that experienced violent protests and attracted FBI attention.

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[58] Ibid., 29.
[59] "Is 'Red' Label True?" *BG News*, Nov. 15, 1966, 2.
[60] "Memorandum to the FBI Director," COINTELPRO, June 27, 1968, accessed from *FBI Records: The Vault,* https://vault.fbi.gov/cointel-pro/new-left/cointel-pro-new-left-cleveland-part-01-of-01/view, 30-34.

Shortly after founding the chapter, members of SDS at BGSU began to reach out to the broader university community as a way to promote student power. In February of 1967, Tom Shelley, David George, and Charlie Tabasko, all members of SDS, wrote an article in the *BG News* titled "Students: University's Life-Force". This article was a call to action for students that highlighted a number of issues with the university that students had no agency in controlling, such as academic funding, regulations on student housing, and classroom policies. Quoting the Declaration of Independence, the authors remind readers that governments are created with the consent of the governed and that the students are the governed; however, they neglect to mention that students had not consented to be governed, which would have provided a rationale for their call for student power. The article ends with "And if our representatives, administration, and faculty won't realize the problems of the students, who will? Who's left? I guess we're left…" which presents a challenge to the student body to take control of their environment. These students were reaching out to their peers, pointing out that no change would come unless the students themselves took charge.[61] Although only one of many articles these young men would write, this call to action demonstrates their main goal: to challenge authority and politically empower students to take university reform into their own hands.

As the article written by SDS members shows, some students had grown tired of debates and ideas about social change, and wanted to actually do something to change BGSU.[62] One answer to this call to action was to create a new alternative curriculum within the university. Called the Free University, this new curriculum was based on the teach-ins that had become common since the first was held at the University of Michigan in 1965 to educate students about

[61] Tom Shelley, Dave George, and Charlie Tabasko, "Students: The University's Life-Force," *BG News,* February 21, 1967, 2.
[62] Licata, 59, 74-75.

the Vietnam war. It was designed for "learning, free from the pressures of final examinations, research dollars, and 'image'."[63] In other words, students believed that by creating their own courses, they could avoid the biases and influences that came with organized education, such as only addressing non-controversial topics or skipping vital issues for the sake of meeting standards. The program began during the spring of 1967 and continued every quarter for a few years. Free University courses were led by students, and the first quarter the program existed there were 12-14 courses offered; over 300 students and 30 professors turned out to lead or participate in courses.[64] There are no numbers regarding participation for any other time period, but ads in the *BG News* continue for a few years consistently enough to represent continued interest. The program was representative of growing student power because although students could not control their experiences in their normal courses, the Free University offered them the opportunity to explore topics that interested them in seminars that they chose to attend. A student organized and operated curriculum empowered students by giving them agency in the topics they learned about, which was a goal of student power. They could choose when to attend and how much to contribute, and could even teach if they wanted. It was a revolutionary method of education, one that the university administration could not touch and continued to excite students year after year. The student leaders at BGSU were ahead of their time, focusing on giving students power within their education earlier than many other universities.[65]

Although taking some control of their education was effective, the Free University did nothing to alter the broader power structure of the university; to do this, students had to challenge the administration. While the Free University was blossoming, the first largely

[63] "'Free University' Plan Approved," *BG News*, January 19, 1967, 1.
[64] "'Free University' Frees Thought," *BG News,* October 19, 1967, 4.
[65] "Free University Concept to Start," *BG News,* October 18, 1968, 8.

organized instance of student power activism at BGSU was taking place on what was called "Gentle Thursday." SDS members had heard about the concept of Gentle Thursday from Carl Davidson, the SDS national vice president, who visited the BGSU chapter and related stories of his own experience holding the event. The idea was to challenge everyday conformity, even practice civil disobedience, but on a small scale.[66] Student leaders at BGSU leapt at the concept, which would be an ideal practice of activism at a conservative university where students could face backlash, and organized approximately two hundred students to participate in their own Gentle Thursday. The students chalked the sidewalk outside of the administration building, which was against the rules but was not harming anyone. When the police arrived, expecting a riot, they were confused to only find students happily drawing. It was an exercise in civil disobedience; it did not attempt to change anything within the university, but it promoted the spirit of student power. Shelley, George, and Tabasko once again wrote an article for the *BG News*, this time describing the event. In this article, they describe the experience of chalking, criticize Jerome specifically for leading an administration that would make the beautification of campus against the rules, and call the Student Council Uncle Tom's for being submissive to the administration.[67]

Although a drastic accusation to direct at their own representative body, it represented the authors' interpretation of how the Student Council handled the debate on serving alcohol on campus. Recently, the Council had voted unanimously to allow "weak beer" (3.2 percent alcohol and below) to be served on campus in three locations despite the issue having been considered in the fall of 1965 by the administration, who decided that alcohol did not belong at BGSU. After

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[66] Licata, 40.
[67] Tom Shelley, Dave George, and Charlie Tabasko, "Gentle Thursday Starts BG Spring Revolution," *BG News,* April 5, 1967, 2.

the resolution passed in the Student Council, Jerome refused to acknowledge its legitimacy because the Student Council held no actual executive power at the university. Although Jerome's administration was more progressive than McDonald's, the conservative spirit of the university continued to shape how the university operated, in this case restricting the student desire to have alcohol on campus. Even though the Student Council was designed to represent the student body to the administration, meaning their vote should have been considered representative, Jerome insisted on a referendum to gauge the true interest in passing the act.[68] Nearly three thousand students voted on the issue, a third of the student population, with the final results tallying 1570 students supporting alcohol on campus and 1355 opposing; however, Jerome once again denied the results, declaring the vote void because too few people voted.[69] When considering such a decisive issue as bringing alcohol onto a historically conservative campus, and that Jerome would have to answer to the students' parents for such a decision, this seems like a fair decision: only a third of the student body voted, and within that third, there was only a 215 vote difference.

The Student Council accepted this decision, weary of fighting with the administration and not willing to continue the fight. However, those fighting for student power and those who wanted alcohol on campus were not satisfied with Jerome dismissing the vote; thus, the biting article in the *BG News* written by Shelley, George, and Tabasko calling the Student Council "Uncle Toms." The leaders of the student power movement believed that the Student Council had been submissive in 1967, not serving the public it was designed to represent. As a result, these students exercised their power on their own, writing editorials and creating surveys to demonstrate the popularity of the act and critiquing the administration for not supporting it. It

[68] Mike Kuhlin, "Jerome Blocks Rights," *BG News*, April 4, 1967, 2.
[69] "Beer Plan 'Sips' by Voters," *BG News*, May 9, 1967, 1; Licata, 87.

took two years of consistent effort, but the student power movement worked with administrators to create a compromise that satisfied both parties. In 1969, the Board of Trustees approved a bill allowing beer to be sold at one place on campus. Jerome was reluctant, but admitted that this was the desire of those he represented.[70] This issue was one of the earliest addressed directly and consistently by the student power movement and it gave student activists experience combatting an administration resistant to change.

After gaining experience in the student power movement in 1967 by fighting for the beer bill, working within the Free University, and becoming president of SDS at BGSU in the fall of 1967, Nick Licata decided to run for Student Council President in the spring of 1968. While the hope was to implement actual change, Licata did not expect to win the election for many reasons. One was that few SDS members were able to become student government members at any university and even fewer remained in power due to the perceived radical nature of the organization and the fear of Communist influence. Another was that his opponents were well known and popular fraternity members who were pristine representatives of the image BGSU wanted to portray. Finally, the previous year the administration had tampered with the election results to keep Ashley Brown, a notorious activist without political ties, from being vice president. Their tampering included forcing the Student Court to invalidate the votes, disbanding the election board, and manipulating the recount. When students turned to outside legal counsel to investigate, it was determined that the election was tampered with and that the administration was outside of their right to do so. Jerome, fearing the reality of Brown being a face of the university, responded by seeking a second opinion from another legal counsel. While the second opinion came to the same conclusion, claiming that Brown should be allowed to hold the

[70] Judi Wright, "Trustees Approve Beer Bill," *BG News,* January 28, 1969, 1.

position, the decision was not finalized until Brown's term would have been over.[71] Since the administration had blocked an outspoken activist from coming into power, it made sense that they would also attempt to block the president of SDS, who by the spring of 1968 was the most visible activist against the administration on campus. However, the administration simply ignored Licata leading up to the election; in his memoir, Licata theorizes that administrators believed that ignoring him was the most likely way to leave him unnoticed, rather than giving him a platform to protest against them right before an election.[72]

Despite being president of SDS on a conservative campus and running against popular fraternity members that represented a traditional institution, Licata won the position of president by 600 votes in an election that brought a record 36% of the students at BGSU to vote. As the *BG News* put it, he was "a capable negotiator, initiator and a person with a definite concern for students" while his opponents either did not have direct means of addressing problems or did not actively approach problems.[73] The fact that Licata won this election as he was president of SDS demonstrates the growing importance of student power movement in the eyes of BGSU students. Clearly the administration's recent refusal to recognize student requests or autonomous decisions highlighted the necessity for a student leader that would fight for student power. This represented an important shift away from the generally conservative nature of the students in regards to student power within the university. While Licata's potential power was a symbol of hope for

[71] Licata, 6, 101-102. Brown was seen as a threat by both the administration and university police and was consistently the target of suspicion. Even as students and administrators began compromising on issues, it is unlikely that the administration would have felt comfortable with Brown as the Student Council president.
[72] Ibid., 106.
[73] "Once Again," *BG News,* May 8, 1968, 2; Mike Kuhlin, "Licate Sweeps Presidency," *BG News,* May 9, 1968, 1; Licata, 109. While attending BGSU, Licata's last name was spelled "Licate"; he later changed it.

students, the ever conservative administration feared it and immediately started taking action, denying Licata the stipend that Student Council presidents were supposed to receive.[74]

That summer, Licata watched as some of his friends took part in the riots at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. He was shaken by the police brutality that the rioters were subject to, and it renewed his dedication to free speech as a necessary right. At the beginning of the fall semester, Licata was one of the speakers to introduce the new freshman entering the university. He was introduced with the line "his election reflects a sense of responsibility in our student body," and Licata's speech promoted "the voice of the average student" and called for an examination of the university.[75] He wanted to introduce new students to the battle for student rights on campus and know that as the president of the student body he would be fighting for them.

The student power movement made the most headway during the academic school year of 1968-1969. During his last year at BGSU, Licata used his role as president of the Student Council to bring the student power movement to the forefront of the university, which frightened the administration. The first pushback against the administration from Licata's council was when they did not just routinely accept a revision to the student code. Student power activism had pressured the administration to reconsider some of the *in loco parentis* regulations, and they expected the Student Council to simply accept their revisions. However, the proposed regulations allowed for the vice president of student affairs to have the sole responsibility for student suspension. The Council saw this as a lack of fair due process and proposed their own revisions that reshaped the student court and made the final appeal decided by the VP of student affairs, the student body president, and the chair of the faculty senate. By implementing this model,

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[74] Licata, 118.
[75] Judi Wright, "President Jerome Welcomes Record 3250 Freshman Class," *BG News*, Sept. 26, 1968, 1.

students would be subject to a tribunal, which would include a peer, rather than a single individual who was not a peer.[76] These revisions were presented to the administration and considered in their final revisions of the code, demonstrating the increasingly common compromises derived from student-administrator communication. In addition to these revisions, the Council passed "A Declaration of Specific Student Rights," a list of student rights that included the right to due process, to participate in non-violent demonstration, and to only be subject to rules that been "clearly formulated, published, and distributed to everyone concerned."[77] These rights became the basis of the Student Council conflicts with the administration.

At the same time that Licata and the Student Council were amplifying their movements against the administration, nationally the student power movement was shaken by a pamphlet published in the underground newspaper the *Los Angeles Free Press.* Titled "The Student as Nigger," this essay written by Jeremy Farber condemned professors and students alike, for both being oppressors and accepting oppression willingly. It was a controversial work, even for the student power activists at BGSU; the Student Council voted down a motion to distribute the pamphlet to everyone on campus.[78] Despite this, the pamphlet was circulated quickly throughout the university and the SDS chapter held events to discuss its contents. The *BG News* published multiple editorials praising the message and encouraging students to read it.[79] This pamphlet contextualized the struggle for student power within the country, showing BGSU students that they were not alone in their struggle. Although their struggle remained internal, it gave students a

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[76] Licata, 123.
[77] Licata, 124; Bruce Larrick and Dave Winney, "Council OK's Bill of Rights," *BG News,* October 11, 1968, 1.
[78] Licata 125; Larrick and Winney, "Council OK's Bill of Rights," 1.
[79] David Guion, "The Students as What?", *BG News,* October 23, 1968, 2; "'Student as Nigger' Should be Read," *BG News,* October 25, 1968, 2; Stephanie Cardullias, "'Student as Nigger' - It Never Happened," *BG News,* October 23, 1968, 1.

sense of camaraderie with other students across the country, knowing that they were all combatting similar systems of oppression.

This energy carried into the next spring as students protested the strict regulations that they were still subject to within their dormitories. Residence regulations were some of the last to change, as even in 1969 Jerome believed that "that [a] residence hall is not a student's home away from home, but rather a place of institutional living where rules must be obeyed."[80] Students disagreed with this sentiment, believing that dormitories should operate autonomously under student control, and performed a "walk-in" in Rogers Hall, a dormitory. The protest was specifically against the rules of "open houses", times where women were allowed to visit men's dorms under a vast number of restrictions including leaving the lights on and doors open. The students remained in the dormitory despite being asked to leave, and by the end of the night between 70 and 80 students faced disciplinary action.[81] At this point Jerome was growing tired of the student power activism and wanted students to remain passive; he even said in the *BG News* that students who did not like how the university was operated were free to leave and open spots for students who had been denied admission.[82] Jerome's increasingly impatient attitude towards student power signaled that the movement was making headway; although Jerome was resistant to change, he was realizing that the student power activists would not disappear.

In fact, student power was only expanding, as evident by the activists fighting for dorm autonomy and the Student Council defense of their actions. Earlier in the academic year, the Student Council had passed two bills which they used in defense of the activists: one which allowed for dormitory autonomy in creating regulations, and one that allowed for student

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[80] Walter Starr, "Jerome Studying 'Walk-in'," *BG News,* March 7, 1969, 1.
[81] Licata, 178-179; "Policy Protestors 'Walk-In' Rogers," *BG News,* March 6, 1969, 1, 12.
[82] "Jerome Studying 'Walk-in'," 1.

creation of social regulations.[83] Licata legitimized these bills as new policy by claiming that the Council's power is drawn from the students, not from the administration. However, the administration did not recognize that the Council had any inherent power separate from their control; they still had to approve Council bills before they were official and the Vice President of Student Affairs, Dr. James Bond, told the *BG News* that any rule passed that removes dorm halls from university rule is illegal. Dr. Bond also informed students that the administration had refuted the dorm autonomy bill the previous quarter, although they had never informed students that this had happened. While Dr. Bond claimed that the dorm autonomy issue was a misunderstanding of the way power is devolved within the university, Licata was infuriated that the university would allow students to believe that they had autonomy until they attempted to utilize it.[84]

While contemplating how to handle the rising tensions on campus, Licata learned that the Board of Trustees would be meeting on campus just a few days after the walk-in. He believed that meeting would be the perfect opportunity for students to air their grievances and let those who had ultimate control over the university know how the university was being operated. He contacted Jerome to let them know that he would be attending the meeting with a few other students. However, that "few other students" escalated quickly, resulting in four room changes and over eight hundred students attending the meeting.[85] Through miscommunication, Licata missed a meeting with Board members in the morning that could have been used as an opportunity to discuss issues more intimately and put them on the agenda for the afternoon. While Licata later sent a letter explaining the misunderstanding to Donald Simmons, the

[83] Licata, 182; "Policy Protestors 'Walk-in' Rogers," 12.
[84] Licata, 183. Jim Marino, "'Walk-in' Demonstrators Face Probation," *BG News,* March 12, 1969, 1.
[85] Licata, 185; Judy Eicher, "Fees Hike to $20 per Term," *BG News,* March 11, 1969, 1.

chairman of the Board, this was a poor first impression to make on the Board.[86] That afternoon, after hundreds of students shuffled into the ballroom where the meeting was to take place, Licata asked the students to remain calm and respectful throughout the meeting to prove that they could have a mature interest in the well-being of the university as students. After Licata, the spokesman for Rogers Hall, who represented the issue of dorm autonomy, stated that the dorm would remain autonomous as long as the students wanted autonomy, and the BSU president reinforced Jeremy Farber's message from *The Student as Nigger* by asserting that the students had no say in the system.[87] The meeting then commenced, and the Board approved a $20 increase in fees per term before opening up the floor to questions from the students. There was a specific structure for the Q&A session where they would accept questions from students in an alternating pattern from each side of the floor.

Licata suggests that the structure of the meeting was designed to oppose student power. The Board had proposed a private meeting with Licata when he requested an interview format, but he felt that would have invalidated the trust that the students had in their Student Council president. The resulting Q&A at the Board meeting did not resemble the interview format that Licata had requested, but was structured so that the Board could address the students one at a time as they asked questions. The Student Council did not stand out at all, but were lost within the sea of other students, invalidating that they had any real control over student life.[88] These observations are in line with Licata's usual critiques of university power, but he seems to exaggerate their intentions here more than elsewhere. While it is true that they would have wanted the meeting to remain orderly, it does not seem like they specifically wanted to keep the

[86] Donald Simmons, "Trustee Explains Actions," *BG News,* March 11, 1969, 2; Nick Licate to Donald Simmons, March 13, 1969, UA-002F President's Office: William T. Jerome III Collection, Box 32, Folder 9, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University.
[87] Licata, 185; "Fees Hike to $20 per Term," 1.
[88] Licata, 187-188.

students from voicing their concerns. Also, with such a large crowd of students in attendance that had to be accounted for on such short notice, it would have been difficult to construct a kind of meeting that would satisfy Licata. Regardless, Licata did what he could to voice his opinion in a situation he felt was designed to keep him silent.

After two questions were presented and answered, Licata walked up to the microphone when the third student was chosen. When challenged by Donald Simmons, the chairman of the Board, for being out of order, the third student deferred his opportunity to speak, giving it to Licata. When Licata was told that he could not speak unless he was called upon on the floor, he countered by saying that was using the procedure to avoid the main issues. Simmons then adjourned the meeting, much to the chagrin of the students. The next day the *BG News* was full of articles praising Licata and condemning the administration for not letting the students speak, as well as including comments from Jerome and Simmons to justify their actions.[89] Students were proud of Licata's efforts on their behalf.

Shortly after, Licata himself wrote a letter to Simmons two days later, apologizing for missing the meeting in the morning as well as for arguing with Simmons about the procedure. Licata attempted to justify his behavior, telling Simmons that he felt the presentation had been one sided and he had been denied his goal of presenting a list of student issues to the Board. Upon receiving the letter, Simmons then shared it with Jerome and others in the administration. Dr. James Bond did not believe that Licata wrote the letter; Licata wittily remarks in his memoir that they must not have assumed he could be reasonable.[90] The vice-president, Kenneth McFall, suggested that students and faculty should no longer be allowed to discuss policy with trustees; instead, they needed to talk to the president first. This policy was quickly implemented.

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[89] Licata, 188-189; *BG News,* March 11, 1969, 1-3.
[90] Licata, 191.

After reading Licata's letter, Jerome wrote to inform him that Simmons would respond after a business trip and to scorn him for his behavior at the meeting. Jerome told Licata that he had previously respected how Licata handled communication, but after this meeting he felt that Licata needed to reflect on the activism that he was leading and determine whether it was worth the administration "taking heat" for issues that Jerome felt "seem[ed] to bear in a very minor way on the well-being of the University and its students." In another attempt to convince Licata to ease the student activism against the administration, Jerome presented Simmons with a list of points to emphasize in his response to Licata. Portions of each point are included word for word in Simmons' response to Licata, which encourages Licata to abandon the dorm autonomy issues and rethink what it is that would improve the university.[91] This letter was then blind carbon copied to multiple members of the administration to keep them updated on communications between the Board and students.

In his memoir, Licata reflects on the ordeal as exactly the kind of activism that would occur at BGSU: cautious and constrained.[92] Students worked within the system to attempt to enact change. They attempted to work with the administration, and when that did not work, the Trustees. Then the Trustees neglected to listen and referred them back to the administration. The whole experience was orchestrated to leave the students where they had started: under the thumb of the university. However, this episode proves that even if the students could not always enact broad change, the administration was willing to listen. Even though Jerome disapproved of the

[91] William Travers Jerome III to Nick Licate, March 19, 1969, UA-002F President's Office: William T. Jerome III Collection, Box 32, Folder 9, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University; Kenneth McFall to President Jerome, March 27, 1969, UA-002F President's Office: William T. Jerome III Collection, Box 32, Folder 9, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University; William Travers Jerome III to Donald Simmons, March 26, 1969, UA-002F President's Office: William T. Jerome III Collection, Box 32, Folder 9, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University; Donald Simmons to Nick Licate, April 4, 1969, UA-002F President's Office: William T. Jerome III Collection, Box 32, Folder 9, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University.

[92] Licata, 191.

activists' objectives, he gave them a platform to air their grievances and respected Licata for leading the students calmly. Similar to the protests at the beginning of the decade, the students were left to work within systems already established for student participation; unlike the earlier protests, however, the students were able to communicate their grievances with the administration without facing repercussion.

Following Licata's graduation in the spring of 1969, the student power movement struggled to continue, but ultimately faded with the loss of its most visible leader. The next Student Council passed a resolution in the fall of 1969 to analyze the university's grant of powers in an attempt to find out why the Student Council had an advisory role at best when determining university policy and to learn how to gain a more executive role. No action was taken following the resolution being passed though, and the Student Council continued in a largely advisory role.[93] It is important to note that although the students did not continue their attempt to gain more power, they also did not disregard the power they had gained by establishing open communication with the administration. Although they failed to become a more executive body by 1970, the Student Council made great strides to become more representative of the student body and to act as a mediator between students and administrators, and the student body became more comfortable sharing their concerns with the council as well as the administration because the student power movement had established a legacy of open communication between the bodies. Open communication would become essential in the spring of 1970 after the Kent State shootings.

As recounted at the beginning of this chapter, after receiving news of the shootings, many students at BGSU demanded to hear from Jerome, who later addressed a crowd of students,

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[93] Jim Smith, "Council Committee to Study Grant of Powers," *BG News,* October 31, 1969, 1; "Student Body Elections Today," *BG News,* May 7, 1970, 1.

promising that the Ohio National Guard would not come to BGSU and cancelling classes the next morning. Early May 5, students held a memorial service for the Kent State students. This was followed by a number of speakers that gave suggestions for how BGSU should respond to the shootings, including Jerome. Students took the opportunity to present Jerome with a list of 15 demands that they had compiled the night before.[94] Jerome promised to take the demands into consideration, then addressed the crowd saying that he did not want the National Guard to become involved on campus and that he believed the students were capable of formulating solutions on their own rather than being controlled by the administration.

The rest of the week consisted largely of teach-ins, with one peaceful march against the war. Class was only cancelled again for Wednesday morning; in the afternoons, many students were boycotting their classes to attend various events or teach-ins being held on campus. Through communication with the students, Jerome knew that some students wanted to attend their regular courses while other students would continue to boycott, so rather than continuing to cancel class, he made sure that there would be no repercussions for students missing classes.[95] The teach-ins and relaxed attendance policy were so successful at keeping the peace in the immediate wake of the shootings that they were then formalized the next week into the New University as a way to continue the peace through the end of the semester.

The peaceful BGSU response following the Kent State shootings was in part the result of years of student power activism at BGSU. Students utilized their ability to openly communicate

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[94] Concerned Students of the Bowling Green Community, "Flyer Listing Fifteen Student Demands for the BGSU Administration," 1970, UA-002F President's Office: William T. Jerome III Collection, Box 10, Folder 17, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University. These demands included the formation of a community council consisting of one third students, faculty, and administration, a condemnation of the use of the National Guard at Kent State and other campuses, a condemnation of military involvement in Cambodia, and student support of a list of demands that Black students had presented to the administration the week before.

[95] MS-1123 New University Collection, Box 1, Folder 3, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University Library.

with the administration to present them with a list of demands, which the administration took into consideration rather than rejecting student concern. While this response is important, it gains significance because Jerome was no longer going to be the president of the university at the end of the semester. He easily could have just ignored the student demands, but as a leader who had worked with students throughout the decade, he understood that listening to the students was essential. Even if no solution to the students' demands was implemented, communication between the students and the administration kept the university peaceful.

Although the most recognized incident of student power was the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley in 1964, students at BGSU actually formed an organized protest for civil rights three years earlier, which resulted in the resignation of the university president. This was the first time that activism at BGSU took a civil approach rather than students rioting, an important step in the development of student activism at BGSU. Although the transition of presidents and the addressing of student concerns in the immediate wake of the protests quelled student protests for half a decade, the movement resurfaced in 1966. At the center of the renewed movement was activist Nick Licata, who became both the president of BGSU's chapter of SDS and the president of Student Council. During his time at BGSU, he was involved with nearly every incident of student power at BGSU, and even though he was an active member of BGSU's chapter of SDS, his efforts did not reflect the trajectory of the national organization. While the national organization of SDS became more radical and violent, splintering into groups like the notorious Weatherman, Licata continued to champion democratic change and student power through political activism. Student power activists at BGSU may have been influenced by SDS at times, but the success that they achieved is not to be attributed to broader efforts of SDS. Instead, the shift towards political liberation and personal empowerment in the second half of the decade, and

subsequently the peaceful activism in the wake of the Kent State shootings, can be attributed to the efforts of students and administrators to communicate and cooperate to formulate peaceful solutions.

This chapter examined how the student power movement at established a legacy of open communication with the administration as a way to present student issues and cooperatively formulate solutions, which mitigated the necessity for violent protest in the wake of the Kent State shootings. While students did not receive full power over their lives, they did manage to establish open communication with the administration, have their opinions heard, and enact some of their plans. Opening communication also benefited other student movements at BGSU by allowing the antiwar movement to work with the administration to establish an educational model of protest and providing an avenue for the Black student movement to present their demands to the administration. Communication ultimately mitigated the necessity for violent protest in the spring of 1970 as well, keeping the university open in the wake of the Kent State shootings. Communication, along with the preference for educational activism and the desire to share Black culture, was also responsible for the formation of the New University, which was the intersection of each of these three movements and a prime example of how students and administrators worked together to find a peaceful solution that satisfied everyone.

# CHAPTER II. ANTIWAR MOVEMENT

Eight thousand candles lit the streets of Bowling Green the evening of May 6, 1970. A number of BGSU students had organized a silent candlelit march, attracting over half of the university's enrollment to memorialize the students who had been killed at Kent State and to protest the war in Vietnam. The students marched half a mile to downtown Bowling Green and back to campus, with the first students already arriving back as the last were leaving. It was the largest display of activism in the university's history and has been remembered as a moving experience due to the students' dedication to peace during the march.[96] Peaceful activism was common at BGSU, especially for antiwar activists, because as the national media reported on increasingly violent protests, the administration and citizens of Bowling Green began to fear that violent protest could occur at BGSU. Therefore, antiwar activists attempted different methods of activism to determine which would yield the least suspicion and opposition while still allowing them to protest the war. Students found the most success with an educational model of activism, which lowered suspicion by establishing open dialogues that included pro-war students. Educational activism became the preferred model of activism by students and administrators alike because of its peaceful and inclusive nature. This chapter examines how the model was shaped by backlash and suspicion from pro-war students and the administration and how the model influenced the student response to the Kent State shootings.

The Vietnam War, a topic still highly contested amongst historians, veterans, and public, dominated United States politics and divided much of American society for over a decade, with the deployment of American troops from 1965-1972 creating the greatest backlash. The war

[96] Personal interviews with Dr. Louis Katzner, Dr. Donald Rowney, Dr. Charles Shirkey, 2018; MS-449 BGSU Oral History Collection, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University. All of the professors that I interviewed remember the march clearer than any other event of that period and noted how moving the scene of 8000 silent marchers with candles was. Also nearly every interview within the BGSU Oral History collection recounts the experience.

represented two global struggles of the time: decolonization and the conflict between imperialists and colonial subjects, and the United States' foreign policy of containment to restrict the growth of communism. Vietnamese nationalists had started to protest imperial French powers following World War II, dividing the country between Vietnamese nationalists fighting for a free Vietnam and the colonized Vietnamese supporting French rule. The First Indochina War, as it would come to be known, ended with the defeat of French forces in 1954 and their withdrawal in 1956 that left the country divided into North Vietnam and South Vietnam. The governments established after the war set the stage for the Second Indochina War, or known in the US as the Vietnam War. The leader of North Vietnam was Ho Chi Minh, a communist nationalist, and the leader of South Vietnam was until 1963 was Ngo Dinh Diem, an American ally that rejected communism. Therefore, the United States supported the South Vietnamese, practicing their Cold War strategic priority of limiting the spread of communism. There is no specific date that began the Vietnam War, but early support from the United States consisted of military advisors and few ground troops. After the assassination of Diem in 1963 and the rapid succession of coups, the stability of the region began to dissolve. As a result, the number of ground troops sent to Vietnam began to grow exponentially, especially after mid-1965, which could be considered the beginning of the war. While the deployment of American soldiers peaked in 1968, the United States military remained in Vietnam until 1973. The South Vietnamese continued the war until 1975, when they ultimately lost to the North Vietnamese and their South Vietnamese allies.[97]

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[97] For an overview of the Vietnam War, see George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1996); David Anderson, *The Columbia History of the Vietnam War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011); Marilyn B. Young, *The Vietnam Wars: 1945-1990* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1991); see also the documentary series Ken Burns and Lynn Novick, *The Vietnam War* directed by Geoffrey C. Ward, 2017 (Arlington, VA: PBS Distribution), DVD; for an overview of the historiographical debates, see Gary R. Hess, *Vietnam: Explaining America's Lost War* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008).

As with any war, there were those who opposed American involvement in the war. Like the war itself, there is no particular date that the antiwar movement began. Prior to 1965, individual activists opposing the Vietnam War emerged from the larger peace movement that protested the testing and use of nuclear weapons in the Cold War.[98] After 1965, with the escalation of deployed American military ground forces, activism against the Vietnam War emerged as its own movement. The antiwar movement was further amplified by the implementation of the draft, which forced young people to fight in a war that many found unjust. The scope of the antiwar movement escalated alongside the draft numbers and only began to cease once students were killed at Kent State. Although the antiwar movement against the Vietnam War produced some of the largest organized national protests in American history it was never formally organized. National organizations such as Students for a Democratic Society and the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam (MOBE) contributed to the organization of protests throughout the decade, but neither was an official representative for the movement as a whole.

Because the antiwar movement lacked a single national organization with centralized management, it was never able to establish definite goals or a united method of activism. Over time, the fringes of the movement became more radical, which led the media to focus on the most confrontational and violent protests; this gave the entire movement the reputation of being violent and radical, ostracizing many who would have identified as part of the movement but did not want to be labelled radical. In response to antiwar activism being increasingly described as radical and violent, the methods used by law enforcement agencies also became more radical. As

[98] For an overview of the anti-nuclear movement, see Lawrence Wittner, *Confronting the Bomb: A Short History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009). This is a concise version of his trilogy on the world nuclear disarmament movement

a result, clashes between antiwar activists and law enforcement agencies became increasingly violent, eventually peaking when the Ohio National Guard opened fire on students protesting the war at Kent State on May 4, 1970. After the Kent State shootings, antiwar activism began to de-escalate, as did the number of American ground troops in Vietnam. Although American military forces withdrew before the final peace treaty was signed 1973, the United States continued to assist the South Vietnamese government until the fall of Saigon in 1975, which ended the war and by extension, the antiwar movement.[99]

As one of the largest movements in the history of the United States, the effects of the antiwar movement are highly debated amongst historians. While some historians argue that the antiwar movement pressured the United States administration to withdraw conventional forces and end the war, others have proposed that radical protestors actually prolonged the war by restricting the administration's option to fight in Vietnam with conventional ground forces in South Vietnam, which led to administration to adopt an extensive bombing campaign in North Vietnam instead.[100] While it is possible that the national antiwar movement could have had these effects, only considering the legacy of the antiwar movement by its effect on the Vietnam War limits the scope of the change it wrought. These analyses tend to only regard the effects of nationally organized protests, established by broad organizations or students at elite universities that garnered media attention. In doing so, they neglect the grassroots efforts of students at non-elite state universities that defined the antiwar movement in their local community.

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[99] For detailed overviews of the national antiwar movement, see Charles DeBenedetti and Charles Chatfield, *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990); Tom Wells, *The War Within: America's Battle Over Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California, 1994); and Melvin Small, *Antiwarriors: The Vietnam War and the Battle for America's Hearts and Minds* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources Press, 2002); for how the media covered the movement, see Melvin Small, *Covering Dissent: The Media and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994).

[100] Adam Garfinkle, *Telltale Hearts: The Origins and Impact of the Vietnam Antiwar Movement* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995); Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *Peace Now! American Society and the Ending of the Vietnam War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

While studies of student antiwar activism have been conducted, early narratives largely focused on student antiwar activism at elite universities such as the University of Wisconsin and suggested that antiwar activism was largely absent at non-elite universities. Heineman's *Campus Wars* broke this mold and introduced a new strand of historiography by studying the antiwar movement at four non-elite state universities, demonstrating that antiwar activism did exist at these schools. Heineman's analysis suggests that while antiwar activism at elite universities and within the national antiwar movement may have influenced the formation of antiwar activism at non-elite state universities, there was no unified method of activism. Instead, he suggests that the shape that activism manifested in at universities was ultimately determined by the relationships between students, parents, and administrators and that the circumstances surrounding non-elite state university students restricted radical activism.[101] Heineman's analysis complicates the narrative of student antiwar activism and rejects the notion that it was limited to elite universities.

Since Heineman's introduction of this strand of historiography, more studies have started to emerge that continue to challenge the absence of non-elite state universities within the historiography. A prime example is Robbie Lieberman and David Cochran's study of how Southern Illinois University at Carbondale shut down in the wake of the Kent State shootings by examining how three strains of student activism culminated into an antiwar movement in the spring of 1970. The authors challenge the idea that there is a dominant narrative that can comprehensively describe student activism in the Sixties as well as the perception that student

[101] Kenneth Heineman, *Campus Wars: The Peace Movement at American State Universities in the Vietnam Era* (New York: NYU Press, 1993). A more in-depth analysis of Heineman's argument is provided in the introduction.

activism was declining by 1970.[102] Each emerging study of student activism continues to reject the common national narrative and emphasize the importance of local context. This new focus is redefining the historiography of student activism, particularly regarding antiwar activism.[103]

This chapter contributes to this trend by examining the student antiwar movement at BGSU, which did not begin until 1967, when the antiwar movement was violently escalating in response to the rapid deployment of American military forces. Unlike the student antiwar activism that the national media covered, antiwar activism at BGSU was not violent; instead, the students worked with the administration to formulate an educational model of activism that was peaceful, agreed upon, and beneficial to all parties involved in activism regarding the war. Educational activism prevailed over violent protest, in part, because the conservative nature of Northwest Ohio has always dominated the university culture and condemned any model of activism that could result in violent protest. Many people within and around the university supported the war, so protesting against it was a minority opinion; however, by forming an inclusive method of activism, antiwar activists still had a platform to speak their opinion. Also, since antiwar activism began turning radically violent by the middle of the Sixties, and many nationally recognized leaders of SDS, and later the violent radical Weatherman, came from nearby schools such as the University of Michigan, administrators and citizens of Bowling Green were suspicious of student activism.

The legacy of open communication established by the student power movement was essential in addressing these suspicions. Communicating concerns with the administration and

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[102] Robbie Lieberman and David Cochran, "We Closed Down the Damn School": The Party Culture and Student Protest at Southern Illinois University During the Vietnam War Era," *Peace & Change* 26, no. 3 (July 2001): 316-331.

[103] These new studies are largely in article format and have been published largely in the past twenty years. For a comprehensive list of articles, as well as a historiographical review of antiwar literature, see Charles Chatfield, "At the Hands of Historians: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era," *Peace & Change* 29, no. 3&4 (July 2004): 483-526.

listening to their feedback was essential to identifying a model of activism that eased both student concerns and administrative concern. Having their voices heard inspired an interest in the politics of the students' locality as the students felt politically empowered; this also reinforced the students' interest in the national political scene, which connected them to the international struggle of the Vietnam War. The formation of a chapter of SDS at BGSU also reflects this turn towards national politics as the organization contributed to the beginning of the antiwar movement at BGSU. In the years following its formation, the chapter would organize a number of antiwar protests and events.[104]

Many of the events held by antiwar activists at BGSU mirrored events organized by the national movement, although they did not always take the same form. At BGSU, antiwar activism was largely peaceful and educational, as activists aimed to discuss issues and educate themselves and those around them; nearly every antiwar demonstration was even-handed, designed to represent both antiwar and pro-war viewpoints. This was in stark contrast with the typical marches and chants of the antiwar movement and the stereotypical violent protest that occurred at many other college campuses. Students at BGSU attempted to use these methods one time in 1968, but they were immediately confronted by a violent group of students that supported the war with no response from the administration. Administrators condemned the violent protest that they saw throughout the rest of the country and did not want BGSU to be home to similar protests. As a result, the students returned to an educational method of activism.

This chapter challenges the previous narrative that student antiwar activism became violent by the end of the 1960s by analyzing the antiwar movement at BGSU. Following the example set by Heineman's study of non-elite state universities as well as Lieberman and

[104] Nick Licata, "Becoming a Citizen: A Memoir of the Student Power Movement, Democracy & Revolution in the Sixties," (Unpublished Manuscript, in author's possession, 2013), 32.

Cochran's analysis of how multiple student movements converged on antiwar activism, this chapter examines how students attempted multiple methods of activism and refined the most successful method to establish an educational model of activism that was approved by the university and utilized by multiple movements to maintain peace at BGSU following May 4, 1970. The process of developing an educational method of activism reinforces Heineman's suggestion that while local student activism did follow the ebb and flow of the national narrative of student activism, the relationships that students had with the university administration, faculty and pro-war students determined how activism took shape within each locality.[105] With an administration that largely supported the war, was suspicious of student activists, and fearful of violent protest, students were unable to utilize a method of activism that was confrontational. As a result, students and administrators worked together to find the most constructive method of activism that benefited everyone and mitigated radical violence. However, with the departure of Jerome in 1970, the educational model of activism faltered, further demonstrating that the relationship between the antiwar activists and the administration was the bedrock of this model.

The *BG News* holds the most comprehensive record of antiwar activism at BGSU. Each of the major antiwar events was advertised through the *BG News* prior to the dates they occurred, and a summary of the events was published shortly after each. In between the major protests, the Vietnam War was constantly the subject of editorial content, far more often than is possible to document here. Nick Licata's memoir is also useful for documenting these events, as he was present or involved in a number of the major events. Finally, records from the university archives demonstrate the fear that administrators felt regarding student activism and their disdain for violence, as well as demonstrating the administrative response to the Kent State shootings.

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[105] Heineman, 124.

This chapter examines the establishment of an educational model of protest through a chronological series of relatively large-scale events at BGSU. Starting with 1967, when the national antiwar movement began to escalate in both scale and violence, student antiwar activism at BGSU began to reflect the events organized at the national level. The first instance of antiwar activism analyzed is a "Day of Dissent" on October 19, 1967 that allowed pro- and antiwar activists to present their viewpoints on the Vietnam War; at BGSU, tensions escalated into heated arguments, but the discursive nature of the event mitigated any violence, demonstrating the benefits of giving a voice to both sides of the debate. The next event, a ten-day series of events that ran from April 21-30, 1968, invited speakers to represent both sides of the Vietnam War debate, was completely non-violent and garnered administration support, exemplifying two other key features of the educational model of activism. Only a few weeks later the antiwar activists attempted to directly protest against the war at an ROTC Review, which resulted in minor violence and administrative disdain, proving that non-educational protest was not going to be effective at BGSU. After over a year of little antiwar activism following this event due to increased violence on the national stage and administrative disdain at the local level, the antiwar movement continued when it participated in a national call for a moratorium in the fall of 1969, which returned the movement to the educational model of activism, reinforcing its effectiveness. The chapter ends by examining how this legacy of non-violent educational activism informed the student reaction to the Kent State shootings and how the antiwar movement intersected with the student power and Black student movements through the New University.

In 1967, the Vietnam War was showing no signs of ending, images of the war were spreading rapidly as veterans began returning and sharing their experiences, the draft was forcing young people to fight in a war that many of them found unpopular, and national leaders such as

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy were coming out against the war. Over five thousand American soldiers were killed and thirty-five thousand were injured, most of whom were working class young men, most of whom had been drafted.[106] In the United States, antiwar activism on the national stage began to escalate, becoming more common and turning more violent as the number of people drafted increased exponentially. On October 15, activists at the University of Wisconsin - Madison held a massive protest of Dow Chemical, the main supplier of the United States military and the producer of napalm, a flammable gel that was used in many attacks in Vietnam. Students demonstrated against the recruiters who came to campus to hire students, and the demonstration turned violent when police were called to remove the activists. This was the most violent antiwar protest to date, as sixty people were injured.[107]

The week following the protest at UW-Madison was known as "Stop the Draft" Week. This national week of activism demonstrated an important shift within the antiwar movement, as parts of the movement began moving away from peaceful activism and towards more militant resistance of the draft and the war. Across the country, young men turned out to burn their draft cards, which was something that SDS leaders promoted within the national organization.[108] The MOBE organized a march for that weekend in Washington D.C. to protest American involvement in the war. On October 21, over one hundred thousand activists joined the march through the capital, making this one of the largest protests in American history. During the march, tens of thousands of activists split from the larger group and marched to the Pentagon to protest of the draft. During that weekend of protest, over six hundred were arrested, almost fifty

[106] DeBenedetti and Chatfield, 160.
[107] Ibid, 196. 1967 was such a year of growth for the antiwar movement that in *The War Within,* Tom Wells dedicates two chapters to analyzing the events of the year.
[108] Licata, 76.

were hospitalized, and many others were injured. This was the first time that antiwar activists directly confronted active-duty troops, solidifying the militant turn of the antiwar movement.[109]

As the national antiwar movement escalated in scale, antiwar activism began to occur at BGSU. While this escalation resulted in a turn towards violence for the national antiwar movement, this was not the case at BGSU; instead, students began establishing an educational model of activism to protest the war in a nonviolent way. Just two days before the march on the Pentagon, during "Stop the Draft" Week, BGSU students organized a "Day of Dissent" to protest the war. Six speakers addressed students from the top of the steps of Williams Hall, the building home to the departments of history, sociology, and political science that opened up to the largest lawn at the university. Five of the speakers were professors and one was perhaps the most outspoken activist students at the university. The original turnout of the event was about two hundred people some of which were veterans. While two hundred was a large crowd for a single event at this point at BGSU, it was still only a small portion of the nearly 14000 students enrolled.[110]

The first two speakers spoke without issue. The first speaker, Dr. Sheldon Halpern gave a speech called "They Shall Have Died in Vain" in which he refuted arguments that dissent and criticism of the war is a disservice to American soldiers dying in Vietnam. Although not blatantly biased, this speech did support the antiwar sentiment and defended the right for activists to have free speech. The next speaker was Dr. William Reichart, a political science professor who was a devout pacifist and the sponsor of the campus' SDS chapter since its founding the previous year. He argued that behind every man-made law was a higher law of

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[109] Wells, 203; DeBenedetti and Chatfield, 198.
[110] Licata, 14; Enrollment Data 1914-2013, https://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/libraries/documents/cac/Enrollment-Data-1914-2013.pdf.

justice, and that protests against the war were questioning the justice of American policy when the United States could end the war. A clear antiwar activist, Reichart would come to be a strong faculty ally for the antiwar movement on campus.[111]

The Day of Dissent began to deteriorate during the third speaker's presentation. Dr. Howard Hamilton accused the United States and North Vietnam of not caring for the welfare of the Vietnamese, and said that a United States victory was the only priority in the war. As he spoke, the pro-war veterans that were in the crowd became more aggressive in their criticisms of the event, arguing with antiwar activists in the crowd with them. The commotion attracted a much larger crowd, drawing nearly seven hundred more people to the demonstration. The next two speakers were more radical in their speeches, which only continued the dissonance between the pro-war and antiwar crowds. Dr. Richard Carpenter was much more conservative than the other speakers as he spoke of the tyranny of the majority, criticized the activists for their opinion on the war, and reminded them of their privilege to protest as Americans. This opinion was shared by many BGSU students and their families, as was common at Midwestern universities.[112] This also aligns with what Nixon would later call "the silent majority": those who supported the war but did not voice their opinion and were drowned out by the noise of those opposed. After Carpenter's conservative speech was Ashley Brown, one of the most liberal activists on campus. He avidly opposed the war and pointed out the hypocrisy that the war was started by old men and fought by young men without providing the students a voice in the

[111] Kelly Kramer and Bill Moes, "Oct. 19: BG's 'Day of Dissent'," *BG News,* October 20, 1967, 1. While SDS did not necessarily take a leading role in the antiwar movement at BGSU, many prominent SDS members on campus also partook in antiwar activism.

[112] Rusty Monhollon, *This is America? The Sixties in Lawrence, Kansas* (New York: Palgrave, 2002); Kenneth Heineman, *Campus Wars: The Peace Movement at American State Universities in the Vietnam Era* (New York: New York University Press, 1993); Thomas Grace, *Kent State: Death and Dissent in the Long Sixties* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2016). Monhollon speaks of the fervor of anti-communism, which similarly led people to criticize protestors for seeming anti-American; Grace and Heineman both discuss the conservative, working class background of students and their families at Kent State.

matter, as the 26th Amendment which lowered the voting age from 21 to 18 would not be passed until 1970. Brown believed students' voices should be heard throughout the country, since they were the ones fighting and dying.[113] This created a foil for Carpenter's speech, as Brown represented the spirit of the activists at BGSU.

The final speaker created a sense of balance for the end of the program, which led the *BG News* to characterize his speech as the best summary of the day's events. Dr. Edward Shuck, who was co-chair of the Ohio Committee for Reasonable Settlement in Vietnam and would become another professor that actively supported the educational model of activism, said that the facts of the war were obscured by emotion and that nobody in the country was prepared to have a rational discussion. This certainly seemed true during BGSU's Day of Dissent, as the crowd became physically divided based on their stance on the war and the rhetoric of both sides escalated. However, the protest did not turn to violence; it retained its peaceful and discursive nature and ended with seventy students marching across town to mail letters of protest to Washington D.C.[114] By ensuring all sides of the debates were heard, the students both attracted a crowd and ensured that everyone was represented. Despite the conflict between the two camps of activists, the Day of Dissent is an early example of the inclusive activism that encouraged open dialogue which would evolve into the educational model of activism.

Students continued debates over the war in op eds for *BG News*, but these did little to contribute to the movement on campus. Each issue contained a few editorials, documenting the opinions of an antiwar activist, a response from a pro-war activist, or a neutral observer proposing a third viewpoint. These editorials did little to change the way the antiwar movement

[113] "Oct. 19: BG's 'Day of Dissent'," 1; Licata, 15. Licata describes Brown throughout his work as one of the most avid activists on campus for a number of issues.
[114] "Oct 19," 1; Terry Roth, "Protest Speakers Arouse Crowd," *BG News,* October 20, 1967, 1, 6.

on campus advanced. Although this offered students the opportunity to debate opposing viewpoints, it removed the immediacy of discussion that could refine an argument or sway an opinion. There was also no guarantee that anyone that submitted an editorial would read a response directed at them. Therefore, the editorials are notable for their demonstration of growing concern regarding the war, but not for the establishment of the movement on campus or the growth of the educational model of activism.

It was not until the next organized antiwar event on campus that antiwar activism really established a foothold on campus. In the spring of 1968, the student government and the SDS chapter organized a ten-day series of events from April 21 to 30 with the goal to "provide information about the pros and cons of America's involvement in Vietnam." These events included a documentary film on North Vietnam, a screening of the movie *War Games*, and a series of seven speakers. True to the goal of education, the speakers did not all support the antiwar movement, but instead had a variety of experiences and opinions regarding the war. Some of the speakers that objected the war included a conscientious objector who shared his experience doing relief work in Vietnam, two national SDS members (including ex-president Tom Hayden) and university sponsored Vietnam dove Senator Albert Gore from Tennessee.[115]

Those who supported the war included a Jesuit priest and war hawk who was on the National Advisory Board for the Young Americans for Freedom, the largest conservative youth group in America at the time, a World War II veteran from Toledo, a graduate of the University of Michigan who had visited both North and South Vietnam, and the national vice-chairman of

[115] *BG News*, April 19, 1968, 1; "Senator Gore to Speak Today on Vietnam War," *BG News,* April 30, 1968, 1; Licata 79-81. Gore was one of several high profile figures to visit BGSU during this era. Others included popular folk singers Phil Ochs and Peter, Paul, and Mary in 1968, as well as presidential candidate Richard Nixon in 1967 and Vice President Spiro Agnew in 1969. The Student Council, SDS, and university administration wanted to bring as many speakers as possible to campus to represent different voices in the issue of the Vietnam War.

the Young Americans for Freedom. Other speakers included a *Toledo Blade* editor who had visited Vietnam, an assistant to the Secretary of State, and an ex-Hanoi official.[116]

Although students at BGSU did not directly demonstrate or protest at these events, they ensured that all perspectives of the war were represented so that students had the opportunity to learn about the issues. This insistence on representing all sides was one of the key factors that made the educational model of activism so successful. Rather than attacking their opponents, the antiwar activists allowed them to voice their concerns as well, and everyone felt that they had a voice. As a result, the events attracted hundreds, and in one case over a thousand students. Even over the course of ten days with speakers that represented both sides, there was no violence. A significant benefit to emerge from this event was that the administration worked with the activists to secure spaces and organize events.[117] Since this was an educational opportunity, an obviously ideal form of activism compared to violent marches, the administration was willing to help. Administrative support would become key to peaceful and successful educational activism at BGSU.

The next antiwar protest occurred a few weeks later, just before summer vacation. Rather than continuing to promote a discourse through educational activism, a few students decided to make signs and protest the ROTC Review, an annual event where the ROTC students line up and parade past the university president. There had been small protests at the Review in years prior, but nothing more than a couple people with signs.[118] It was not until 1968 that the crowd was of significant size and the protestors were antagonized. The previous week, students had lined the university lawn with small white crosses in memory of those who had died in Vietnam.

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[116] "Vietnam Activities to Begin Sunday," *BG News,* April 19, 1968.
[117] Licata, 92.
[118] Ibid.

However, these were smashed by pro-war veterans during the Review who began "accusing [the protestors] of using the deaths of their fallen buddies to question the value of the war effort, and by extension the value of their friends' lives in that effort."[119] Some protestors also refused to stand for the National Anthem, which only irritated the veterans more. The counter protesters roughed up a few of the antiwar activists, but there were no injuries reported and the Review went on to completion.[120] Though there was a number of security officers around the demonstration, they refused to interfere despite the fact that the counter protestors had turned slightly violent. President Jerome also refused to call to help the activists, believing that they would have reported police brutality. Some other administrators did voice their support for the anti-demonstrators, but overall they received little sympathy from the administration.[121] This lack of sympathy demonstrates the conservative nature of the university administration, who distrusted students who protested in a disruptive manner and did not condone their behavior. This distrust arose from the increasingly violent protests at the national level, usually involving college students. However, as discussed, this stereotype was only popular because of the visibility of violent protests; students at BGSU subverted this stereotype even while demonstrating in a non-educational way.

Despite administrative suspicions, the relatively peaceful nature of the antiwar protestors was demonstrated further when a student named Steve Lipson used an amplifier to read Mark Twain's "War Prayer" from the second floor of Williams Hall off the side of the protest. The poem was cut short when the power to the amplifier was cut and students came to confront Lipson. His defense was that he assumed reading a prayer would be more effective than any

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[119] Ibid., 89.
[120] "ROTC Review: Protestors vs. Protestors," *BG News*, May 22, 1968, 4.
[121] *BG News*, May 22, 1968, 4.

other form of protest, and would not cause people to be as hostile; this, unfortunately, was not true.[122] Similarly, counter protestors interrupted a discussion about the war hosted by Dr. Reichart following the Review. This was in part because they opposed what he was saying, and in part because during the review Reichart had not stood during the National Anthem. His pacifist philosophy led him to protest the war, and by extension refuse to honor the system that was providing officers to the military.[123] Once again, security refused to become involved without a direct order.

Shortly after the Review, the President's Advisory Council created a Fact Finding Committee (FFC) to analyze the events of the protest. Although the commission's final report stated that neither party had planned their protest prior to it occurring, there was a clear bias against the antiwar activists. The report claims that "the FFC struggled for a considerable amount of time with the possibility that the demonstrators expected (and perhaps even desired) that their actions would provoke violence among their observers."[124] This insinuates that the FFC assumed the activists had an ulterior motive to their protest, which was then proven wrong upon deeper investigation. Despite their bias against the activists, the administration was willing to create an atmosphere that promoted peaceful protest, and as a result they relocated the Review and guaranteed protection for activists as long as they remained in a specific area and gave prior warning about the protest.[125] This attitude was common in administrators of the time, as violent student protest across the country was becoming more common. However, BGSU is exceptional in that the relationship that was being established by the SPM allowed students to form a

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[122] "War Prayer Reading Ends Abruptly," *BG News,* May 22, 1968, 5; Licata, 93.
[123] "Reichart Answers," *BG News*, May 22, 1968, 5.
[124] President's Advisory Council Fact Finding Committee, "Final Report," 1968, UA-002F President's Office: William T. Jerome III Collection, Box 44, Folder 7, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University, 2.
[125] Ibid., 3.

working relationship with the administration to navigate issues of student freedoms to find a compromise that appeased both parties. In this case, administrators allowed for student activism with prior warning, establishing a policy that allowed for students to protest while easing the administration's fear of violent protest.[126]

Between the administration's apathy to the antiwar activists' plight and the violence they faced from pro-war counter protestors, antiwar activists realized that simply being peaceful was not enough; antiwar activism needed to be educational in nature to appease the administration and the opposition. Although the protestors took advantage of the administration's promise for protected protest, the protest at the next year's Review was almost completely ignored. The 1969 Review had a record number of people in attendance, and relegated the antiwar protestors to a small area off to the side of the parade. Students remained standing, unlike at the previous Review, and were largely ignored by all in attendance. In 1970, the Review was cancelled because of the Kent State shootings, but protests did resume in subsequent years; however, they were either restricted to permissible zones or non-educational, leading to administrative punishment.[127]

There were no large protests at BGSU for over a year after the incident at the Review. In part, this was because the violence that students faced in Chicago during the summer of 1968 reaffirmed the administration's fear that radical protest was becoming more common, and the antiwar movement relied on the university's assistance and approval to hold educational events. Also, the student activists on campus had begun to turn their focus towards student power rather than the war. In lieu of educational protest, the Free University that the SPM spawned provided

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[126] Anthony O. Edmonds and Joel Shrock, "Fighting the War in the Heart of the Country: Antiwar Protest at Ball State University," in *The Vietnam War on Campus: Other Voices, More Distant Drums,* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001), 146; Monhollon, 79-80; Grace; Heineman, 36-38. Grace and Heineman both discuss the president of Kent State opposing protest on Kent State's campus throughout their works.

[127] *BG News*, May 21, 1969, 1; May 18, 1970, 1.

seminars to discuss the war, but those were not on as grand of a scale. As another form of protest, some SDS students put on a short reenactment of a Vietnam battle on campus; however, it was very short and students passing by hardly noticed it even happened.[128] This model of reenactment would be copied at a later ROTC Review, but never was a popular form of protest at BGSU.

After a long hiatus from large organized demonstrations of antiwar activism, the next major protest at BGSU was once again educational. The national antiwar movement called for a moratorium against the war to take place on October 15, 1969, and hundreds of schools across the country, including BGSU, organized teach-ins, demonstrations, marches, boycotts, and more in protest of the war. Events were planned from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and included a silent vigil and funeral procession, open discussions, a teach-in, a sing-in and a mail-in. The teach-in was one of the largest protests to date at BGSU with over a thousand students attending to listen to multiple speakers. Some speakers included Dr. Jerome, who spoke as a conservative dove, and Dr. Edward Shuck, who saw the entirety of the moratorium as an opportunity for open discussion and hosted a discussion on the international implications of the war.[129] The decision for Jerome to join the discussion was an important point for the protest. By participating, Jerome validated the educational model of activism and proved that this model was beneficial to all parties involved. While on a national scale students were turning towards violence to implement change, the students at BGSU had established an effective and peaceful model of activism. It offered them the opportunity to air their grievances, allowed for an open discourse rather than one sided protest, and was approved by the administration so they did not need to fear repercussion.

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[128] "SDS Stages Mock Vietnam Campus Battle," *BG News,* October 31, 1968, 4.
[129] Jan Jones and Holly Hutton, "Teach-in Highlights Day of Protest," *BG News,* October 16, 1969, 1, 6.

However, this would be the last antiwar protest of its kind. The SPM had effectively established open channels of communication with the administration by this point, and the movement was ending. While the educational model of activism would be utilized in the wake of the Kent State shootings, it was in a broader context than just the antiwar movement. Then, the model ceased to continue following Jerome's resignation the next spring, as it had been formulated through the cooperation between the students and the president. Also, as the next chapter will analyze, activism at BGSU began to shift away from this educational model and towards direct action.

The ability of the activists and administration to construct educational models of activism was put to the test in the spring of 1970, when students at BGSU were shaken by the news of the Kent State shootings. Students at BGSU were scared, and with good reason; the schools were very similar in many ways. Both began as teachers' colleges, founded by the same bill in the early twentieth century. Both became universities in 1935 and benefitted from the massive enrollment of GI's after World War II and then their children in the 1960s. Both universities had largely middle-class students drawn from Rust Belt cities such as Toledo and Cleveland. Kent State was slightly larger than BGSU with roughly ten thousand more students by 1970.[130] The most important difference, however, was the administrations between the schools. At Kent State, President Robert White detested the activists and did everything he could to minimize their protests. Meanwhile at Bowling Green, President Jerome supported the students' protests as long as they were not potentially violent.[131] White's anger towards and fear of the activists created an environment that escalated tensions until students were killed. Jerome fostered an environment

[130] Grace; James R. Overman, *The History of Bowling Green State University* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1967). Grace describes the formation and growth of the university at the beginning of his book and refers to it throughout; Overman's book details the first fifty years of BGSU history.
[131] Heineman, 37-39; Catalano, 59. Catalano's entire article argues that Jerome's philosophy of leadership is what saved the university from violence following the Kent State Shooting, but does not consider the role of students.

of educational protest, which influenced the way events played out in the weeks after the Kent State shootings.

Since the Kent State shootings themselves were the result of antiwar protest, the topic was highly prevalent in the days following. When the students presented their list of demands to Jerome the day after the shootings, a third were directly related to either the Kent State shootings or the Vietnam War. These demands included condemning the invasion of Cambodia and the Kent State shootings, the removal of National Guardsmen from Kent State and the discontinued use of their forces on university campuses, divestiture of university stocks to halt war materials production, the continued deferment of teachers and students, and the cancellation of classes for the rest of the week in memory of the Kent State students.[132] While Jerome refused to answer to "demands" he did consider the list and defended the students' ability to present them to the administration when parents criticized his decision to allow it. Some, such as the condemnation of the shootings and the war, were addressed. Others, such as demands regarding student life, were hardly addressed, which aligned with Jerome's previous actions. One demand that Jerome actively refused was a call for campus police officers to no longer carry firearms; he felt that it was a necessary precaution.[133]

The largest antiwar protest that the students organized, both during the decade and in the wake of the shootings, occurred that Wednesday night, two days after the shootings. After a morning of teach-ins to talk about the war, students went out into the town to answer any questions residents had about what was happening on campus. They then assigned student

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[132] Concerned students of the Bowling Green community, "Flyer listing fifteen student demands for the BGSU administration," 1970, UA-002F President's Office: William T. Jerome III Collection, Box 10, Folder 17, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University.

[133] Letters to Jerome, May 1970, UA-002F President's Office: William T. Jerome III Collection, Box 10, Folder 20, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University. This folder includes a number of letters and documents between Jerome and administrators, students, alumni, and parents that justify his decision to accept the students' list of demands and address them.

marshals to organize a candlelit march in memory of the Kent State students and soldiers killed in Vietnam, as well as to protest the war. This was when eight thousand of the thirteen thousand total students at BGSU met on the university lawn outside the administration building, lit candles, and silently marched almost half a mile to downtown Bowling Green, then turned to the next block and marched back to campus.[134] Despite the students having gone into town to reassure the community of their passive goals, the conservative citizens were still suspicious of antiwar activism and feared violence. The sheriff organized about 200 deputies to ensure that a riot would not occur, keeping them just out of sight of the march so as to not antagonize the activists. However, they were not necessary as the march was entirely peaceful in one of the most memorable protests of the era. The students even gained the respect of the mayor of the town, who in a letter to the townspeople commended the university students for their peaceful protests and for reaching out to the town rather than excluding them.[135] This protest succeeded because the students reached out, educated the townspeople and each other, and peacefully marched in silence rather than trying to demonstrate.

Besides the march, many students also took part in a number of teach-ins across campus during the week of May 4. Taking advantage of cancelled classes and then a relaxed attendance policy, students took it upon themselves to discuss and debate contemporary issues revolving around the war and the Kent State shootings. After a week of teach-ins, students decided that they wanted to formalize and continue the teach-ins, so they reached out to the Faculty Senate, who approved the idea, and the New University began as a result of educational activism.

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[134] "7000 Mourn Kent Dead in Candlelight Parade," *BG News,* May 7, 1970, 1. While the article lists 7000 as the number, most accounts place the number closer to 8000 students.

[135] F. Gus Skibbie, "The City's Response," in *Teach-In: Viability of Change,* B.D. Owens and Ray B. Browne, eds., (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1970), 94-95.

The educational model of activism collapsed following the spring of 1970. The model was established through the open channels of communication established by the student power movement, and was founded upon the relationship between the student body and the administration. Therefore, when Jerome left the university after the spring of 1970, the educational model of activism was no longer viable. Antiwar activism also dwindled in the following years after Nixon began withdrawing troops in 1969, with only one major antiwar protest that followed that was not educational in nature. Students at the 1971 ROTC Review stood outside the Review area interrupting and heckling those at the Review until the Review was disbanded.[136] The students who were involved had disciplinary action taken against them by the administration; this reinforced that antiwar activism had only been permitted by Jerome because of the educational model of activism. This left the New University as the last example of the educational model of activism at BGSU. It proved that educational activism was the most capable method at BGSU. In a spontaneous moment of student unrest, it captured the most important aspects of educational activism: diverse viewpoints and administrative support.

This chapter examines how antiwar activism prior to 1970 offered students the opportunity to establish a framework of educational, non-violent activism which shaped student response to the Kent State shootings. Many of the major antiwar events throughout the decade were designed to be inclusive and educational, encouraging open dialogue over voicing dissent, and they provided students with the opportunity to formulate an effective method of activism that the administration approved of. When students tried a non-educational method of protest against the ROTC Review in 1968, the activists were faced with a backlash. The administration's disdain of non-educational activism and approval and support of educational activism clearly

[136] "Demonstrators Disrupt President's Review," *BG News*, May 19, 1971, 1.

communicated which method they preferred. Coinciding at times with the Free University established by the student power movement and utilized to spread Black culture by the Black student movement to explore issues relevant to each, the educational model of activism was an essential aspect of student activism at BGSU. In the face of a suspicious, hawkish administration, adopting an educational model of activism allowed activists to explore issues without facing backlash. This remained true in the wake of the Kent State shootings when students and administrators relied on their preference for educational activism to create the New University, which effectively demonstrated that educational activism was a useful tool for every movement at BGSU.

As with the student power movement, the antiwar movement at BGSU faltered at the end of the 1960s. The educational method was put to the test in the wake of the Kent State shootings in the spring of 1970, and it succeeded. Students came together to utilize the educational model of activism in their response to the shootings by creating the administration-sanctioned New University, which offered students the opportunity to channel their fear and energy following the Kent State shootings into debating contemporary issues and formulating solutions rather than violently protesting. The educational focus of activism at BGSU would also assist the growing Black Student Movement at BGSU, which would result in the establishment of a Black Studies program at BGSU in the fall of 1970 that would later become one of the earliest Ethnic Studies departments in the Midwest in 1979.

# CHAPTER III. BLACK STUDENT MOVEMENT

On April 28, 1970, the Black Student Union (BSU) at BGSU gave the administration a list of demands and insisted they be addressed immediately. The students threatened to conduct a national campaign that would dissuade any other Black students from attending BGSU, where the student body had consistently remained at or below one percent for over a decade, if the administration did not quickly open a dialogue about the demands. Threatening the administration in this way was unprecedented at BGSU and arose from three years of administrative apathy to Black student concerns. Just over one year old, the BSU succeeded in pressuring the administration to immediately begin formulating solutions to the demands.[137] When it learned of the Kent State shootings, and of the administration diverting attention to that issue, the BSU reasserted their dedication to having their demands addressed and consistently pressured the administration until solutions were created. Their dedication to addressing racial issues also shone through the New University, which included a college of minority studies that housed many courses that analyzed the racial problems that still plagued society. That the Black students succeeded in having their demands heard and addressed, as well as establishing a college of study within the New University, demonstrated the importance of the channels of communication that the student power movement opened as well as the educational model of activism that the antiwar movement established. It was alongside these movements and their successes that the Black student movement at BGSU was able to flourish and establish itself to continue protesting throughout the 1970s.

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[137] "Memorandum to the Administration of Bowling Green State University," Black Student Union, April 28, 1970, UA-002G President's Office: Hollis A. Moore Jr. Collection, Box 5, Folder 6, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University. The demands included increased diversity in students and faculty, greater exposure to Black culture, the formation of a Black Studies curriculum, recognition of the BSU, the creation of a committee to address Black student concerns, the disarmament of campus police, and amnesty for presenting these demands.

The Black student movement was part of the larger Black Freedom Struggle, which was one of the most visible parts of the Movement during the 1960s. The Black Freedom Struggle (BFS) is the long running effort of Black Americans to gain freedom, equality, and power in the United States, and in most scholarship is defined by two major movements in the 1960s: the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power Movement, which commonly have been represented off-campus.[138] Recent scholarship has started to complicate this narrative by analyzing the role of students as well, situating their protests within the Black Power Movement and the larger BFS. All of these movements were essential aspects of the Movement and the changing shape of the BFS across the decade fit into Anderson's analysis of the shift in the Movement from ideology to personal liberation and political empowerment.

The Civil Rights Movement has been subject to a vast number of scholarly studies and has come to dominate the public perception of the Black Freedom Struggle in the 1960s. It was defined by its peaceful methods and focus on civil rights, and images of Rosa Parks and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. have come to represent the Civil Rights Movement through their non-violent boycotts and marches pressuring the government to put in place anti-discrimination laws, including laws that provided voting rights and fair housing rights. Although the temporal boundaries of the Civil Rights Movement are contested, by 1968 the federal government had implemented its last law to guarantee civil rights regardless of race with the Fair Housing Act, and Black Americans were legally ensured social and political rights; notably, economic equality was not included in the legislation. While the spirit of the law was to ensure equal rights, legislation did not immediately resolve racial inequality. Those who opposed civil rights either followed the legislation to the letter, with many of the laws only followed to the bare minimum,

[138] For an overview of the Black Freedom Struggle, see Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *The Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (March 2005): 1233-1263.

or they actively resisted the change; for instance, schools shut down in protest, or enrolled the minimum number of black students required by law. Thus, while *de jure* segregation was eliminated, many Black citizens still faced either reluctant acceptance or *de facto* racism.

This led many to approach a new kind of Black protest, one focused on empowering Black citizens. This movement, called the Black Power Movement, came to dominate the BFS in the second half of the decade as Black activists sought to empower themselves. The movement centered on Black nationalism and revolutionary rhetoric, seeking to restructure systems of oppression to give power to Black citizens that they had been denied. This meant that the passive resistance methods adopted by civil rights activists were abandoned in favor of more active and sometimes violent methods. The Black Panther Party, an organization whose revolutionary rhetoric has been mischaracterized as violent and supremacist, became the most visible representation of the Black Power Movement because media coverage focused on instances of violent and militant activity. Similar to the antiwar movement, the media coverage characterizing the movement as violent marginalized the Black Power Movement, restricted public support for the movement, and kept it from gaining the traction of the Civil Rights Movement.[139]

Many studies have put the Civil Rights Movement and Black Power Movement at odds with each other since they had such drastically different goals and methods; however, recent literature points to the similarities in the movements' roots instead. Ibram Rogers succinctly describes the difference between these movements as a shift from white suasion to black suasion: from trying to appeal to the moral conscious of white Americans to developing a moral, cultural,

[139] The historiography of the Black Power Movement largely consists of autobiographies from leaders of the movement or studies of the Black Panther Party specifically. The few studies of the movement outside of these frameworks include Peniel Joseph, *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2006); Jeffrey O.G. Ogbar, *Black Power: Radical Politics and African American Identity* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004); and William L. Van Deburg, *New Day in Babylon: The Black Power Movement and American Culture, 1965-1975* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

and political consciousness in Black Americans.[140] This shift aligns well with Anderson's interpretation of the Movement shifting from ideology and universal civil rights to personal liberation and political empowerment. Although the Civil Rights Movement and Black Power Movement were drastically different in terms of methods and ideas, by interpreting them as two stages of the larger BFS, the shift in focus from ideals and civil rights to personal liberation and political empowerment becomes clear.

Another uniting force between the movements is the involvement of students in each, although their contributions have been largely marginalized in the literature.[141] Until recently, the contributions of students within the Black Freedom Struggle have revolved mainly around the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). SNCC was established at the beginning of the decade to combat racial inequality and attracted Black and white protestors alike in an attempt to change issues like voter registration, most notably assisting in organizing the Freedom Summer of 1964 that gave many prominent Sixties protest leaders their first experience in activism. Despite being one of the most influential and formative organizations of the decade, their contributions have been largely ignored because the organization achieved few tangible successes and because of the group's turn towards Black Power in the middle of the decade.[142] The fact that the most notable example of Black student protest is the subject of so few studies demonstrates that the historiography requires more studies of Black student activism.

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[140] Ibram H. Rogers, *The Black Campus Movement: Black Students and the Racial Reconstitution of Higher Education, 1965-1972* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 67.

[141] Ibram Rogers, "The Marginalization of the Black Campus Movement" *Journal of Social History* 41, Issue 1 (Fall 2008): 175-182. Rogers reviews the few works of the Black Power Movement to point out how they marginalize the contributions of Black students to the movement.

[142] Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981); Howard Zinn, *SNCC: The New Abolitionists* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1965). SNCC persisted until the end of the decade before beginning to collapse, but has rarely been extensively researched. Zinn's book was the earliest published on the organization, but is heavily influenced by his own experience. Carson's book is more scholarly, dividing the lifespan of SNCC into three periods and examining its establishment and decline through the 1960s in an objective way.

As a result, new scholarship has begun addressing this gap in the historiography by analyzing Black student involvement in the Black Freedom Struggle of the 1960s, largely as a subfield of the Black Power Movement. Two recent studies of the Black Freedom Struggle center Black student activism within their analysis and present Black student protest as a separate social movement of the 1960s. Ibram Rogers calls for a new branch of historiography to analyze Black student protest in his study *The Black Campus Movement*, which examines a broad narrative of Black student activism to introduce what he calls the Black Campus Movement (BCM). Introducing the Black Campus Movement as a new topic to examine, he situates the BCM within three larger movements: the transhistorical Long Black Student Movement, waged through the century; the transracial student movement of the Long Sixties, the central analysis of this work regarding the Movement; and the transobjective Black Power Movement, which shared the goals of Black personal liberation and political empowerment outside of a campus setting.

Alongside Ibram's study, Martha Biondi's *The Black Revolution on Campus* also analyzes how Black student protest reshaped various institutions across the country and how they influenced the creation of Black studies programs. Biondi also criticizes the historiography of protest in the 1960s, pointing out that while many studies center on the New Left, Black students were more successful at implementing change in their local environments.[143] In a more localized study, Joy Ann Williamson analyzes the effect of the Black Power Movement at the University of Illinois. Her examination traces how students followed the trend of the national BFS, moving

[143] Rogers, 3; Martha Biondi, *The Black Revolution on Campus* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), 2.

from a desire to assimilate to a focus on Black culture, similar to the experiences of students at BGSU.[144]

This chapter contributes to the growing historiography of Black student activism during the 1960s, pioneered by Kendi and Biondi. It also reinforces Anderson's analysis of the Movement and Williamson's analysis of the University of Illinois by examining the evolution of the Black student experience at BGSU. Anderson's assertion that the Movement turned towards personal liberation and political empowerment and Williamson's assertion that Black students turned away from assimilation and towards empowerment within their own culture both are evident when analyzing Black student activism at BGSU. Contradictory to the notion that the Black Power Movement was radical and supremacist, this chapter analyzes the peaceful activism of Black students at BGSU as they turned towards personal liberation and political empowerment, examined Black culture, and promoted Black education. The evolution of how Black student activists pursued these goals offers a clear demonstration of Heineman's assertion that the relationship between student and administrator shapes how student activism manifests. Jerome's relationship with the Black student movement was defined by his apathy towards their concerns, which is at odds Catalano's description of Jerome being receptive to student concerns throughout the decade.[145]

There are few sources from the earliest years of the Black student movement at BGSU. The earliest records of the Black Student Union held in the university archives are from the early 1970s, but this study ends with the spring of 1970. Therefore, the analysis relies heavily on the *BG News* during the 1960s because the paper was published multiple times a week and largely

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[144] Joy Ann Williamson, *Black Power on Campus: The University of Illinois 1965-1975* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003).
[145] Anderson, 294-353; Heineman, 124; Catalano, 52.

covered news related to campus. Analyzing a few weeks or months of issues allows the narrative of any singular event to emerge and provides a number of editorial opinions to add details. Because the administration began to keep records of Black student activity towards the end of the decade, the president's collections also become useful; President Jerome's collection contains a few sources regarding Black student issues while President Hollis Moore's collection contains a comprehensive collection of Black students' official interactions with the administration. Finally, Nick Licata's memoir provides a general framework for the earliest years of the Black student movement because he crossed paths with some of the Black student activists during his own experiences.

The first part of this chapter analyzes the experience of Black students at BGSU prior to 1968 and the beginning of Black student activism, suggesting that the context of the university prevented Black student activism from beginning earlier. The chapter will then focus on the formation of the Black Student Union (BSU) at BGSU in 1969 and the initiatives that the organization took during the year prior to the Kent State shootings, tracing how Black students began to shift their focus from assimilation to empowerment. Finally, the chapter will close with an analysis of the demands that the BSU presented to the administration prior to May 4, 1970, how they pressured the administration into addressing their demands promptly in the wake of the Kent State shootings, the legacy of those demands, and how the New University acted as a model and tool for the Black student movement.

As discussed in previous chapters, the conservative nature of BGSU and the surrounding area had a dramatic effect on the culture of the university. Although never explicitly discriminatory, BGSU was largely white for years after desegregation of schools was required and made few efforts to increase the number of Black students or emphasize the Black culture on

campus. Although Bowling Green was not home to the racial violence that the South is famous for, the Black students were subject to racial discrimination and prejudice whether it was intended or not. Whether was *de facto* segregation within Greek life or landlords refusing to rent to Black students, racism at BGSU existed. An article in the *BG News* from 1968 demonstrates in greater detail the experience of being a Black student at BGSU. Two journalists for the *BG News* interviewed forty members of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, an all-Black fraternity at BGSU. These students' first concern was the lack of Black students on campus, pointing out that less than one percent of over thirteen thousand students was Black. They accused the admissions office of having an unwritten rule of keeping Black students to a minimum as a way to force them to assimilate to the white culture of campus.[146] This was a strong accusation, and while there is no evidence of such a policy, there was no increase in Black enrollment the BSU pressured the administration to change their funding and recruitment tactics in 1970.

Even without an official policy, the point that there were so few Black students on campus had merit. Enrollment records with demographic data are scarce for this era at BGSU, so determining the exact number of Black students is difficult, but the numbers that do exist do show a scarcity of Black students at BGSU. Articles from the *BG News* in 1968 include comments about how the Black student population had consistently remained below 1% in the past decade and that in 1968 the percentage was "four-fifths of one percent," which would be just over one hundred students. When compared to the average Black student enrollment across the country in 1969, BGSU was abysmal. While the average percentage of Black student enrollment in the Midwest was 2.98%, almost three times that BGSU, the lowest average

[146] Judy Eicher, "At the Phi Alpha Phi House: This is What They Really Think," *BG News,* May 7, 1968, 5.

percentage, 1.34% in the West, was still about half a percent higher than BGSU.[147] While lacking a large Black student population does not necessarily make the university racist, the lack of increased growth in enrollment of non-white students compared to the total enrollment does emphasize that diversifying the university was not a concern of the administration.[148]

Along with this accusation, the Black students interviewed related their experiences with housing at BGSU. They claimed that even after being restricted to only 1% of the population, Black students were still usually assigned to live with another Black student. The students mention that people send out cards to new students asking if they would want to live with a Black student; however, in another article, the administration refuted that the university was responsible for sending such cards out.[149] After discussing dormitory life, the students began to speak about what life was like trying to live off-campus. Two students recall their experience trying to organize a tour of potential rental properties. They had called the landlord and organized a tour, but when they showed up and the landlord saw that they were Black students, he suddenly claimed that he had no more vacancies; yet when their white friend organized a tour shortly after, he was given a full tour of a number of properties. In the interview, Black students who already had rentals off-campus expressed that they had no issues with their neighbors, although the cops were suspicious of them at times. Discriminatory treatment was not limited to

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[147] Biondi, 17.

[148] Comparatively, non-white residents had consisted of 0.8% of the 13,574 residents of Bowling Green in 1960, and 0.6% of the 72,596 residents of Wood County. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population, 1960: Vol. I, Characteristics of Population*, Pt. 37 Ohio (PC(1)-B) (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), 47, 52.

[149] Eicher, "At the Phi Alpha Phi House," 5. While the administration may not have been responsible, the Black students being interviewed seemed to have experienced this phenomenon. These circumstances are all anecdotal but the students all seemed in agreeance that this was the culture at BGSU.

students. Dr. James Bond, a Black professor hired as Vice-President of Student Affairs in the fall of 1967, was still having trouble finding a home in Bowling Green in the spring of 1968.[150]

The surrounding community had no issue expressing their racist opinions to the president of the university either. After Black students presented the administration with a list of proposed changes for the university in 1969, President Jerome received a copy of an article regarding the proposals that was published in the *Toledo Blade* from an anonymous sender. The article was covered in handwritten comments that included "no more taxes for this kind," and "send this S.O.B. back to Africa or Vitnam [sic]."[151] Though there was no name attached, so no author can be attributed, it can be assumed that it was someone within the broader community of Bowling Green or Northwest Ohio. Use of the words "this kind" in reference to the picture of the Black student included in the article and the threat of sending them out of the country demonstrates the racism that the BSU was trying to counter, and the racism that Black students at BGSU were subject to when they left campus. Jerome also received a letter from an attorney in Maumee, a suburb of Toledo twenty miles from Bowling Green. The letter complained about "certain demands" and insisted they be rejected. The author of the letter goes on to list a number of statistics, incorrectly citing quotas for non-discrimination and insisting that as an Ohio taxpayer he was not obligated to pay for out-of-state students, which he seemed to associate with Black students. He then ends his letter claiming that Arabic culture would have a greater claim to an entire curriculum than Black culture, and that the entire education system is reliant on teaching Anglo-Saxon culture to succeed.[152] These personal anecdotes and letters present vivid examples of the racism and discrimination that Black students at BGSU were subject to during the 1960s.

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[150] Licata, 163.
[151] "Negro Students Submit 16 Proposals at BGSU," *Toledo Blade,* March 5, 1969, 57, UA 002G - President's Office Hollis Moore, Box 170, Folder 6, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University.
[152] Paul B. Shawen, "Letter to President Jerome and Dean Ray Whittaker," UA-002G President's Office: Hollis A. Moore Jr. Collection, Box 170, Folder 6, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University.

The students were discriminated against and encouraged to simply assimilate to the existing white culture on campus. By the end of the decade however, the students would be fighting to establish their own culture on campus.

Before 1968, the attempts made to rectify discrimination focused largely on making assimilation easier for Black students. An example of this came from the Ohio Civil Rights Commission (OCRC), who investigated the discriminatory policies of fraternities and sororities in 1964. The inquiry was conducted by a state organization because, unlike at most universities, the fraternities and sororities at BGSU were all located on campus. This meant that the OCRC had concern that these organizations were practicing discriminatory practices while using public funds, which would violate the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Upon finishing their investigation, the OCRC sent a letter to Jerome outlining their concerns about discrimination, but he seemed to disregard the importance of the matter, claiming "I don't like this type of investigation, but these people must keep in business."[153] Therefore, while Jerome did not seem personally motivated to resolve the issues presented by the agency and its conclusions, he agreed to take action. Some students wrote editorials in the *BG News* criticizing this attitude. At the same time, however, others wrote editorials that amplified it and actively wrote against the OCRC's criticism of discrimination on campus.

One such article, entitled "'War on Human Nature' Reaches Provincial BG," argues that forcibly resolving discrimination will actually make prejudice worse and that the strengths of Greek life are borne from its discriminatory nature.[154] The apathy of the administration and

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[153] Ronald Pejsa, "Rights Commission Charges Discrimination: Director Invited to IFC Meeting," *BG News,* October 9, 1964, 1. While Jerome does not elaborate on this comment, his word choice and tone implies that he believed discrimination investigations were another example of bureaucratic busy-work and therefore unnecessary to operating the university.

[154] Jerry Scanlan and John Bengston, "'We Are Appalled'," *BG News,* October 16, 1964, 2; George Wallace, "'The War on Human Nature' Reaches Provincial BG," *BG News,* October 20, 1964, 2.

direct opposition by students shows that even though the Civil Rights Movement had succeeded in forcing some changes, the racism that the movement fought against still persisted. Despite prevalent attitudes on campus, the OCRC inquiry did result in policy change at BGSU in that the Student Handbook was updated to forbid any student organization from practicing discriminatory practices under penalty of losing their rights and privileges on campus. Although an editorial in the *BG News* points out that organizations with other entry requirements could work around the discrimination policy, and the debate was addressed again in November of 1966, the issue with Greek discrimination would not be resolved; in 1968, there were only three fraternities and sororities with Black students, and two of those fraternities and sororities were all-Black. While not a successful attempt, this is notable for being BGSU's first active step towards equality for Black students on campus.[155]

Besides sporadic debate about discrimination in Greek life, the issue of discrimination was ignored for the next few years at BGSU. Nationally though, Kendi notes that the Black Campus Movement was escalating in scope as Black Student Unions were being established around the country and demanding change to combat the racism that Black students faced. The first example of Black students addressing institutional racism at BGSU was in the spring of 1968 when a student called out the university for its discrimination at a Student Council meeting by saying "Most white students don't even know that discrimination is a problem at Bowling Green…" Edward Sewell, who was the senior class president, dared to break the silence of discrimination with these words and began the shift in Black student protest from assimilation to Black Power. After pointing out that white students do not recognize the discrimination but that

[155] "Discrimination Pledge a Pacifier?" *BG News,* September 22, 1965, 2; Bruce Larrick, "Sewell Charges BG with Discrimination," *BG News,* March 8, 1968, 1; Licata, 163. There are also a number of editorials in all of the November 1966 issues of the *BG News* as Greek organizations wanting to move off-campus re-sparked the debate about discrimination. Students and citizens of Bowling Green expressed their opinions on whether or not discrimination in Greek housing was an issue.

every black student does, he accused the university of exploitation, pointing out that many Black students were recruited as athletes and encouraged to focus on their athletics and not their academics.[156] This accusation was astounding to students and administration alike, since the only other issue with discrimination to ever be discussed was within Greek organizations. Many refuted it; the *BG News* was filled with students and professors, white and Black, contradicting Sewell's remarks and resenting his accusation, because they believed that the university was making a strong attempt to fight discrimination and that was enough to avoid criticism.[157] Regardless of the opposition though, Sewell's incendiary remarks started the debate about discrimination at the university. This accusation, followed by Dr. King's assassination a month later, inspired the university community to begin considering the effects of discrimination on the school.

A month after King's assassination, the *BG News* published a segment entitled "Sound-Off: The Negro on Campus," designed to address the issue of discrimination on campus that the *BG News* felt needed to be addressed. This segment was the first university-wide attempt to confront the issue of discrimination and gave the Black students a platform to voice their opinions on the topic for the first time. The articles included an interview with Phi Alpha Phi students, an article about Dr. James Bond's experience as a Black administrator caught in the middle of two different worlds, and an article detailing Jerome's opinion on the issues that Black students faced on campus. Most importantly, in the centerfold of the section, there was a list of requests that a group of Black students had presented the administration. These requests included admitting a greater number of Black students on an academic basis, hiring more Black coaches,

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[156] Larrick, "Sewell Charges BG with Discrimination," 1.
[157] "Letters from Our Readers," *BG News,* March 20, 1968, 2; Allen V. Wiley, "The Discrimination Problem," *BG News*, March 13, 1968, 2.

providing more classes on Black literature, conducting investigations into potential discrimination in the Office of Admissions and off campus housing, and creating charters for more Black fraternities and sororities.[158]

These sorts of demands had become common as the Black student movement gained traction after 1965 and Black Student Unions began appearing across the country. Between 1968 and 1970 was a common period for Black student organizations to start trying to implement change within universities across the country and in Ohio, as organizations at Kent State and Ohio State confronted their respective administrations as well with issues such as increasing diversity and implementing Black studies courses. The Black Student Union at San Francisco State was the first to create and operate a Black Studies program, which by 1968 was the goal of many Black Student Unions. The failure of administrations to react to earlier demands across the country energized the national movement, and this new energy finally reached BGSU by 1968.[159] Black students at BGSU were following the national trend towards Black power through their attempts to change the university and shape their experience rather than assimilating to the existing culture of discrimination.

Similar to the concerns regarding the student power movement and antiwar movement, the administration was willing to address the issues since they were presented as requests in a nonviolent manner. However, the responses that the administration provided lacked detail or a dedicated plan to resolve the issues addressed by the requests. In regards to the accusations of discrimination in admissions, the administration denied that there was a quota for Black student enrollment and welcomed an outside agency to perform an investigation, but they offered no

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[158] *BG News,* April 5, 1968; "Sound Off: The Negro on Campus," *BG News,* May 7, 1968, 5-8. The *BG News* published a special edition on April 5, consisting solely of articles regarding the death of Dr. King.
[159] Kendi, 92-94, 111-115.

alternative reason for the static admissions rate for Black students, which was the real issue. As a solution to the request to recruit more Black students, the administration promised to make a stronger effort to do so. By the end of the month, the Office of Admissions provided Dr. James Bond with a list of the programs that were already in place that focused on Black student recruitment, provided a list of new initiatives to recruit Black students, and listed questions that they hoped could be answered by current Black students that would help with the process of recruitment.[160] The administration claimed that progress had been made on the other requests, including hiring more Black coaches, providing Black literature, and creating charters for Black fraternities, and provided vague promises of pursuing these goals further without any suggestion as to how or when.[161]

Jerome's personal attitude towards the issue of Black students was expressed in another article. In an interview with the *BG News*, Jerome made his opinion clear that while he wanted to help Black students to succeed in the changing society, he felt that it needed to be done by giving them opportunities to succeed themselves, rather than doing favors for them. He also defended the lack of Black students on campus by pointing out that the university had an open admissions policy, believing that the university had no control over the students who decided to matriculate beyond the students recruited for athletics. Jerome also believed that an increased number of Black students would not necessarily solve the issues that Black students faced on campus, and that it was up to the students to resolve issues of discrimination rather than the university administration. Despite this, Jerome agreed to start identifying ways to increase Black student

[160] "Negro Student Relations," Memorandum to Dr. James G. Bond, April 29, 1968, UA-002F President's Office: William T. Jerome III Collection, Box 35, Folder 17, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University.
[161] "Negroes Ask - Officials Answer," *BG News,* May 7, 1968, 6-7.

enrollment.[162] Jerome's defense is fallible however; although the university did not control who matriculated, it was possible to increase advertising efforts and expand funding for non-white students, both of which were done just a few years later. This demonstrates that Jerome did not understand the issues that Black students faced at BGSU and did not seek to analyze ways to address the issues. He recognized that they faced a lack of diversity on campus, and while he promised to increase Black enrollment, there was no action taken for at least two years.

On the other hand, Bond, the Black Vice-President of Student Affairs, felt that the university was failing by not actively making extra efforts to ensure discrimination was not occurring. He criticized the university for the fact that it was not able to put a picture of a Black student on the university bulletin in previous years because the university did not have any pictures of Black students to put in. Bond wanted the university community to realize that it was not exclusively a "white world", and believed each student needed to undergo "soul searching" to help resolve the issue of discrimination. While he recognized the issue of discrimination both on campus and in the town (reflecting upon his difficulty finding a home), Bond felt that there was great potential to resolve the discriminatory practices as long as an active effort was made.[163]

The actions taken during the spring of 1968, including Sewell's accusation of discrimination and the presentation of requests to the university, signaled the emergence of a more organized Black student movement at BGSU. There was less direct action in the fall, as students were waiting for the administration to take action. A panel discussion in November entitled "The Negro and the University" only reinforced the concerns of Black students though. The panel was supposed to consist of all faculty, but two Black students were required to sit on

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[162] "Feelings of the President: Student Attitudes Disappoint Him," *BG News,* May 7, 1968, 7.
[163] Judy Eicher and Lee Stephenson, "The Man in the Middle," *BG News,* May 7, 1968, 7.

the panel because the university only had one Black professor. The students voiced their opinion that more Black faculty was required at the university, because only two faculty members were Black: a professor and a coach. They discussed that having more Black faculty members would mean more Black families, which means a larger Black community for students to be a part of. Students also called for more courses on Black culture and history, which aligned with their goals from the previous spring.[164] This panel was not as public as the efforts of the BSM in the spring, but it shows that the students were thinking through their demands and considering the long term effects of building a community.

A few weeks later, the Black student movement found inspiration from Black student protest at Kent State. Black students were protesting because they felt they were not able to communicate with their administration; their administration responded by taking pictures of the protesters and levying charges against them. Black students at BGSU supported their protest, and some students even viewed the Black United Students organization at Kent State University as a model, calling for the creation of a similar organization at BGSU.[165] This energy then carried into the spring and the Black student movement at BGSU really began to fight for empowerment. As was becoming common across the country, Black students at BGSU organized a Black Culture Week during the first week of February in 1969 that was designed to expose white students to Black culture, something that many of them were not at all familiar with.[166] Unlike student power events that were directed at administration or antiwar events that were sponsored by or involved administration, Black Culture Week was organized and operated almost solely by

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[164] Marilyn Canfield, "Campus Blacks Cite Negro Culture Gap," *BG News,* November 8, 1968, 1.
[165] Jim Marino, "Black Exile Plagues KSU," *BG News,* November 20, 1968, 1; "BG, Kent Negroes on 'Walkout'," *BG News,* November 20, 1968, 1; Ronald Johnson and Larry Witherspoon, "Blacks Unite," *BG News,* November 21, 1968, 2.
[166] Kendi, 82. This was an additional Black Culture Week at BGSU. There had already been a Black Culture Week in January of 1968 and 1969, but Student Activities and the BSU planned a second week for February.

students. While the administration advertised conservative speakers to the general public and faculty avidly participated in antiwar events, this level of involvement was absent for Black culture events. These events included a series of films across campus, a performance by an African Heritage group, and presentations by a number of speakers, including Reverend Channing Phillips, a civil rights leader, and Jackie Robinson, the first Black Major League Baseball player.[167] During this week, Black students not only put on programs to emphasize their culture, but they also made the first attempt to gain representation within the university.

At the Student Council meeting on February 6, seven Black students addressed the Council to try and gain representation for the Black population on campus. Rather than focusing the discussion on receiving equal treatment or eliminating discrimination, these students emphasized empowering the Black community on campus and giving themselves agency in their experience. This shift represents the further evolution of the Black Student Movement at BGSU towards empowerment and Black Power, with Black students fighting for their own power, rather than fighting to change how others acted. In response to their attempts to gain representation, one member of the Student Council accused the students of asking for "token liberalism" and said that if they wanted a Black representative that they should elect one through the normal measures. The students insisted they were not asking for special treatment, but that they wanted advice on how to win a seat through regular channels when the Black student population was so minimal and insignificant on campus. The students left after half an hour of trying to make the Council understand that normal channels would not work, dissatisfied with

[167] "Culture Week Will Feature Negro Leader," *BG News,* January 31, 1969, 1; "Black Culture," *BG News,* February 4, 1969, 2; *BG News,* February 6, 1969, 1, 8; *BG News,* February 7, 1969, 4, 7-8. These issues each have multiple articles about various events during Black Culture Week.

the lack of action by the Student Council.[168] This left the Black students voiceless within the student government, powerless to change the university through regular channels. As a result, within the next two weeks, the students empowered themselves by forming their own Black Student Union (BSU) to represent the Black student body.

The organization was formed on February 19 and consisted of 105 students: there is no indication of whether they were all Black students, but the group's spokesman said that "[t]he only stipulation for membership is that members be 'black-minded'. There are no racial barriers." The spokesman also stipulated that the BSU was not affiliated with any other organization on campus and represented only its own members.[169] With this focus in mind, nearly half of the members attended the Student Council meeting the next night to resolve the issue of representation on the Student Council. They insisted that they would not be able to get a representative on the council through typical means and demanded a seat. Nick Licata, who was the Student Council president at this time, suspended certain parliamentary procedure to hold a simple roll-call vote to add two Black student representatives to the Council, bringing the total number of representatives up to nine. Even though holding a vote in this manner went against usual Council procedure, it passed unanimously.[170] This was a major success for the new BSU. Just weeks prior, Black students had gone to the Council asking for representation and been turned away, and now, with the help of an organized community, Black students represented nearly a fourth of the Student Council. Although multiple letters to the *BG News* supported the action, including one from the BSU faculty sponsor, the seats the BSU earned on the Student Council were not permitted for long.

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[168] "Bruce Larrick and Rich Bergeman, "'We Have No Place to Go' -- Negro Students," *BG News,* February 7, 1969, 1.
[169] Paul Collins, "Black Student Union Lists Demands Before Council," *BG News,* February 21, 1969, 1.
[170] Rich Bergeman, "Blacks Seated on Council," February 21, 1969, 1. Three students abstained from voting.

By the next Student Council meeting, it was determined that due to a violation of the structure of the parliamentary procedure of the meetings, the vote they had held that allowed the Black students onto the Council was invalid. Therefore, the students were removed from their positions and a new amendment was introduced to be passed in the official manner. Along with this, a student at the university had filed a statement with the Student Court charging the Council with unfair and discriminatory representation because of their admittance of two new Black representatives. Upon investigation, the Student Court determined that interest groups held too much control on the Council and that the Council did not operate for the good of the entire student body. The Student Council had been run by special interest groups for years, and students recognized this, but Licata notes that because the Council had benefited from it, the issue was never resolved. Once Black students were represented on the Council though, the topic of interest groups was immediately used to remove them from the court. As a result of the Student Court's findings, the Council was forced to take six weeks to reorganize its structure. During this period, they could pass no legislation, including the bill to allow Black students onto the council. This delay took until the next student government election, effectively killing the motion.[171]

During the same Student Council meeting that eliminated the Black representatives, the BSU presented the Student Council with a list of proposals for changes to the university. Many of these proposals echoed the requests that students had made the year before but were more specific. One similar proposal was that an increase in the number of Black students admitted be made, but the new demands specifically called for the Black population to double in one year and make up ten percent of the student body within five years: a tenfold increase that also would

[171] Paul Collins, "Council May Go to Court," *BG News*, February 25, 1969, 1; Bruce Larrick and Rich Bergeman, "Technicality Unseats BSU Reps," *BG News,* February 28, 1969, 1; Licata, 174-177.

have equivalently increased the number of Black citizens in Bowling Green. The BSU proposed that in order to recruit more Black students, the administrative recruiting cycles change to increase visits to "ghetto" high schools, the university offer financial aid for needy Black students, and the university include Black students in recruiting literature and orientation. The demands also included the creation of an Office of Black Affairs with a Black staff, a complete curriculum of Black courses taught by Black professors, a Black newspaper, Black social spaces, and Black counselors.[172] The proposals made here were drastically different than those of the year before. The new proposals emphasized Black culture and community and did not rely on working within the white culture on campus. Black students were working to establish their own culture and experience on campus rather than attempting to fit in to the established white culture. After presenting the proposals to the Student Council, the BSU passed them along to the Dean of Students to begin discussions with the administration.

Even though the administration accepted the BSU's proposals, no sense of urgency seemed to be felt to fulfill them; at the same time, Jerome maintained his critical stance on Black issues. This became evident at the Board of Trustees meeting set up by Licata to discuss issues at the university, which was attended by a number of Black students, to discuss their issues with the university with the Board. However, before the students even had the chance to address the Trustees, Jerome insulted the entire Black student movement by saying that Black students on campus were being used by the New Left. This accusation further reinforces that Jerome did not understand the issues that Black students faced at BGSU. Rather than recognizing that the failure of the university to make the community more inclusive for Black students was powerful enough to drive the Black student movement, Jerome believed that they were merely protesting because

[172] Ibid.

the student power activists had enlisted them. This was not taken lightly; the members of the crowd there to support the Black student issues left, insulted that they were not being taken seriously. Jerome hardly even took note of the incident, and continued with the meeting.[173]

Despite Jerome's attitude towards the movement, the administration began to address some of the Black student concerns. However, the solutions that were implemented were minimal, reflective of Jerome's shallow understanding of the issues that Black students faced. By the fall of 1969, the administration implemented a new program for financial aid that would fund Black students, but enrollment only increased slightly. Also, the university began the remodeling of a social area called Rathskellar on campus to address the students' demand for a Black social area on campus. Although the university was unable to provide an area strictly for Black students, as that would be segregationist, they decided to convert Rathskellar into a soul-jazz environment that would be a more comfortable place for Black students to spend their time.[174] Another demand was addressed in the spring with the approval of an experimental course that "[wa]s a study of the family life of the American Negro" and was designed to provide Black students with the chance to adjust to university life.[175] Although only one course, it was the beginning of a curriculum that focused on Black studies, which was something Black students had demanded. Each of these "solutions" minimally addressed Black student concerns. Similar to broader societal reactions to civil rights legislation, the university took minimal action to be able to claim that they were addressing student concerns. Achieving partial results for only three goals within a year was not enough to satisfy the BSU, however. They wanted faster change, and this time they took their demands directly to the administration.

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[173] Licata, 186; Judi Wright, "Jerome and Licata Exchange Blame for Trustees Walk-Out," *BG News,* March 11, 1969, 1.
[174] Jim Marino, "Rathskellar to Switch to 'New Look'," *BG News,* October 22, 1969, 1; Kathy Fraze, "BSU Requests Nearer with Rat's Soul-Jazz Environment for Blacks," *BG News,* October 23, 1969, 8.
[175] Rich Bergeman, "New Course Explores American Negro Life," *BG News,* February 18, 1970.

On April 28, the BSU presented a list of demands to the administration and in a more authoritative tone than they had ever used before. The demands echoed many of the proposals that they had presented to the administration the year before, but this time the BSU made the demands more specific. The previous demands had been vague, demanding certain changes without presenting the administration with specific enough goals to be held accountable for actual change, which had resulted in the administration never implementing true change. For example, while they still requested increased recruitment of Black students, the new demands specified a number -- ten percent -- as the desired goal. According to BSU leader Gerald Dillingham, this was the most important goal out of the list, so it was the most specific.[176]

They also made it clear that they would no longer accept an answer of "just wait a while longer" from the administration. This was the third list of suggestions/demands in three years, with few changes being made over that time despite promises made by the administration. The students threatened the university, saying that if negotiations to discuss the demands did not start within twenty-four hours, that the BSU would start a nationwide campaign to prevent any other Black students from enrolling at BGSU.[177] It was a more serious approach than any before it, which again was common in the national Black Campus Movement. Kendi notes that requests became a common form of forcing change for Black Student Unions early in the movement, but early responses ignored or insufficiently addressed the requests. This caused Black students to turn towards the more direct terminology of "demand" which held more power, begin to emphasize the urgency of their demands with timelines to respond, and issuing threats if the

[176] "Memorandum to the Administration of Bowling Green State University"; "BSU, Jerome Resolve Dispute," *BG News,* May 8, 1970, 1. The other demands were less specific than the demand for increased enrollment, but still detailed specific results the BSU wanted to see.
[177] "Memorandum to the Administration of Bowling Green State University"; "Agree to One-Week Deadline for Action - BSU Demands Go to Committee," *BG News,* May 1, 1970, 1.

demands were not met.[178] Since the Black student movement at BGSU was delayed compared to the national movement, it makes sense that the local movement would evolve to utilize these methods by the spring of 1970.

This trend could be why the administration yielded to the Black student movement in the spring of 1970. Although there is no direct evidence for why the administration decided to consider these demands when they largely ignored prior demands, it is likely that the decision revolved around Jerome. Prior to 1970, contrary to Catalano's assertion that Jerome was receptive to student concerns, he had been largely apathetic or ignorant to the experience of Black students and had done little to attempt to remedy the issues that they raised.[179] By 1970 though, Jerome was aware of the changing climate of higher education across the country, recognized that he would be held responsible if the BSU fulfilled their threat, and knew that he would be leaving the university shortly.

As a university president, Jerome was aware of how other universities were operating through contact with other presidents.[180] He would have been aware that Black students had been issuing demands and implementing change across the country, and that this trend was bound to affect BGSU. Also, Jerome was acutely aware that there were a number of bodies that would hold him responsible for any decision that he made, including the Board of Trustees, parents, and citizens in the surrounding community. Had the BSU committed to smearing BGSU's name, that would anger each of these bodies and the university would suffer. Finally, Jerome had already committed to leaving the university, with his term ending just a few weeks after these demands

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[178] Kendi, 111-120.
[179] Catalano.
[180] Correspondence from Other Universities About New University, MS-1123 New University Collection, Box 1, Folder 1-2, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University Library. This collection includes letters between Jerome and several university presidents in the wake of the Kent State Shootings that include references to academic articles or newly implemented programs designed to quell the protests that occurred.

were presented. His justification was that administrators outgrew their institutions after a time and that he had to step aside if the university was to continue growing. Perhaps this idea coincided with his growing recognition that Black student issues needed to be resolved, and he decided that his successor would need to address the problems.

In response to the threat, and possibly determining that the time was right to address the issues, the administration began negotiations just hours after being presented with the demands. The administration responded to the threatening and authoritative manner in which the BSU presented the demands by setting up negotiations with the BSU almost immediately, sitting down with them for three hours, and designating John S. Scott, the only Black faculty member on campus, as the liaison between the BSU and the administration. Administrators supported the BSU presenting the demands and agreed to develop programs of action and described the BSU's tactics as "very reasonable."[181] Jerome and his advisory council immediately set out to forge a way to address the demands, but they were quickly sidetracked by the Kent State shootings.

While many students feared a similar tragedy occurring at BGSU, the members of the BSU immediately acted to ensure that the administration's response to their demands was not delayed again. The day after the shootings, nearly four hundred Black students occupied the second floor of the Administration building, demanding that Jerome appear to discuss their demands.[182] John Scott convinced the students to exit the building and wait until Jerome could come out to discuss the demands. Jerome was much less supportive during this discussion than he had been previously, claiming that the university had been trying to increase Black student enrollment and the students needed to be patient; he also claimed that the university was not committed to creating a Black studies program because that was "not compatible with the kind of

[181] Ibid.
[182] "Students Rally in Support of Black Demands," *BG News,* May 6, 1970, 1.

university Bowling Green represents."[183] Despite being less supportive when addressing the members of the sit-in, that night Jerome met with the BSU to discuss the administration's response to their demands. Rough drafts of the responses demonstrate the difficulty of formulating a response that would be both feasible and satisfy the BSU, and Jerome edited multiple drafts in the few days between the meetings.[184]

The BSU students were satisfied with the proposed responses for all of the demands except that for the first, the demand that the student population consist of ten percent Black students. Dillingham was displeased because Jerome's solution was providing more financial aid for Black students entering the university, which Dillingham claimed would not attract more Black students to the university.[185] However, through continued discussion, the students accepted the conclusions drawn by the administration. The BSU sent Jerome a letter on May 11 expressing their appreciation for his concern, support, and action. Jerome responded in kind, expressing hope that the university was finally on the right track.[186]

The spring of 1970 saw the beginning of the Black student movement's most important legacy: the establishment of the BSU as a university recognized student organization, whose demands were met and acted upon by the administration for the first time. In the fall of 1970, the

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[183] Ibid.
[184] "Earlier Drafts of May 7 Memorandum," UA-002G President's Office: Hollis A. Moore Jr. Collection, Box 5, Folder 6, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University.
[185] William T. Jerome III, "Memorandum to Black Student Union and Interested Members of the University Committee," May 7, 1970, UA-002G President's Office: Hollis A. Moore Jr. Collection, Box 170, Folder 6, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University; "BSU, Jerome Resolve Dispute," *BG News,* May 8, 1970, 1. Other solutions included plans to form an Ethnic Studies program, a commitment to recruit more Black faculty, providing more opportunities to experience Black culture on campus, providing funds to the BSU, establishing a committee to review Black student grievances, and amnesty for those involved with the demands. The only demand without a commitment was the disarming of campus police; a report was requested to determine whether that would be a viable course of action.
[186] Black Student Union, "Letter to Dr. William Travers Jerome, III," May 11, 1970, UA-002G President's Office: Hollis A. Moore Jr. Collection, Box 170, Folder 6, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University; William Travers Jerome III, "Letter to the Black Student Union," May 18, 1970, UA-002G President's Office: Hollis A. Moore Jr. Collection, Box 170, Folder 6, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University.

university had a new president, Hollis Moore, who began his tenure with a dedication to meeting BSU's demands that Jerome promised. In December, the BSU requested a progress report on the promises made by the administration the previous spring. Moore responded to the BSU shortly after their winter break, promising to organize a report once he could gather the information from the various sources addressing each issue; he sent the report to them three weeks later. The report outlined the exact number of Black students already enrolled, their target number, and how many had already been recruited for the fall of 1971; over two hundred new Black students had been admitted by the time the report went out, which was the number of Black students enrolled when the demand was made.[187] There is no record of the final number of Black students enrolled by the fall of 1971, but the number of students admitted by January met the demand. Even if not all of the students who were admitted attended the university, the number of Black students would be close to the goal. The report also contained information about the new financial aid packages available for new Black students, a report on the organization of the newly established Ethnic Studies program, a list of newly hired Black faculty and staff, a list of renovations and dedications to benefit Black culture on campus, a recognition of the official standing of the BSU, a paragraph on the newly created Human Relations Committee and a statement that campus security would continue to bear firearms.[188]

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[187] Enrollment Data 1914-2013, https://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/libraries/documents/cac/ Enrollment-Data-1914-2013.pdf; Hollis Moore, "Memorandum: Progress Towards Achievement of Goals; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population, 1970: Vol. I, Characteristics of Population*, *Pt. 37 Ohio Section 1* (PC(1)-B), (Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973) 75, 80. This memorandum suggests that in the spring of 1970, Black student enrollment was at 200 students. When comparing this number to the Fall Quarter Enrollment Report for the entirety of student enrollment, it shows that 1.3% of students at BGSU were Black in the spring of 1970, almost double the number that had been enrolled prior to the BSM beginning. In comparison, the 1970 Census records display roughly equivalent growth outside the university over the course of the decade, with non-white residents consisting of 1.6% of the 21,760 citizens of Bowling Green and 0.9% of the 89,722 citizens of Wood County.

[188] Black Student Union, "Letter to Dr. Hollis Moore," December 18, 1970, UA-002G President's Office: Hollis A. Moore Jr. Collection, Box 5, Folder 6, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University; Hollis A. Moore, "Memorandum to the Black Student Union Executive Committee," January 6, 1971, UA-002G President's

The greatest legacy of the Black student protest in 1970 was the development of the Ethnic Studies program. Directed by Robert Perry, an instructor of Sociology, the Ethnic Studies program employed eleven faculty, staff, and graduate students. During the program's first year, professors developed seven courses that emphasized Black studies, and by the end of the first year Perry was designing a Black Studies major and minor.[189] The program continued to grow exponentially throughout the 1970s until it finally became one of the earliest Ethnic Studies departments in the country in 1979. The program even attracted James Baldwin, a renowned Black author, as a visiting professor. Although the Black student movement did not end in the spring of 1970, the demands presented by the students and their persistence in having those demands recognize left an undeniable mark on BGSU.

With the exit of Jerome from BGSU in the spring of 1970, the student power movement and the antiwar movement at BGSU faltered, but the Black student movement continued. The other movements had worked within Jerome's preference for open communication and desire for order, relying on his personality and leadership style to survive. However, when faced with a new president, both movements crumbled, mirroring the collapse of the respective national movements as well. The Black student movement, on the other hand, thrived in the 1970s, mirroring the changing shape of higher education across the country as Black students enrolled in historically white institutions in higher numbers. While the Black student movement utilized open communication and educational activism to establish itself early on, it quickly adapted to

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Office: Hollis A. Moore Jr. Collection, Box 5, Folder 6, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University; "Progress Toward Achievement of Goals as Outlined in April 28, 1970, Memorandum," January 28, 1971, UA-002G President's Office: Hollis A. Moore Jr. Collection, Box 5, Folder 6, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University.

[189] Robert L. Perry, "A Preliminary Report on the Activities of the Ethnic Studies Center Academic Year 1970-1971," August 2, 1971, UA-066 Department of Ethnic Studies Records, Box 1, Folder 1, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University, 3, 6. Many of the positions in the program were half- or part-time positions.

new methods when change was not implemented quickly. Because of the apathy of the administration under Jerome, Black students turned towards more direct means of achieving their goals by threatening the administration to have their issues addressed. This demonstrates the difference between the three movements. While the Black student movement relied on the methods utilized by the other movements to support itself in its early years, it was forced to adopt new means of protest to achieve its goals. This transition allowed for the Black student movement to continue beyond Jerome's presidency.

This chapter examines how the Black student movement at BGSU utilized methods of open communication and educational activism established by the student power and antiwar movements to create a foundation for Black student activism, then adapt their form of activism to ensure that their demands were addressed in the wake of the Kent State shootings. Although it began later than the other two movements at BGSU, the Black student movement quickly adapted their methods to be able to have their concerns addressed efficiently. Early on, the Black student movement relied on the same methods as the student power movement and antiwar movement. Utilizing open communication, the BSU directed multiple demands to the administration over the years and eventually was able to pressure the administration into formulating real solutions in 1970. Then, Black students used the educational model of activism in the form of the New University to address racial issues and promote Black culture at BGSU.

# CONCLUSION

After a week of speeches, marches, demands, and teach-ins following the Kent State Shootings, students, faculty, and administrators had to determine how the university would operate for the remainder of the semester. Rather than returning to regular courses, the university decided to continue the tradition of educational activism and support teach-in seminars through a formally organized "New University" curriculum. Educational activism reached its zenith that spring and while students attempted to continue the program beyond the spring of 1970, the New University ceased to exist entirely by the end of the next school year. Despite its short duration, the New University remains historically significant as the culmination of the combined efforts of the student power, antiwar, and Black student movements to channel their renewed activist energy into exploring contemporary issues in an educational and peaceful manner.

The weekend after the shootings, the Faculty Senate held a meeting with students, faculty, and administrators to decide the best course of action for the rest of the academic year. Graduate students requested that the teach-in programs they had been hosting during the week be continued, and the Faculty Senate approved. As a result of this discussion, the graduate students organized their teach-ins into a curriculum they called the "New University"; meanwhile, the Faculty Senate held an emergency meeting to implement an S/U (pass/fail) option of grading.[190] With the S/U option, students were able to opt out of their spring semestercourses without consequence as long as they already had a passing grade. This allowed for students to take advantage of the New University.

The goal of the program was for students to learn about contemporary issues, contextualize the issues in their own lives, and then take action to try and promote some kind of

[190] Marvin Kumler, "Cooperative Participation is Bowling Green," in *Teach-In: Viability of Change,* B.D. Owens and Ray B. Browne, eds., (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1970), 28.

social, political, or academic change.[191] Creating a course was simple: students merely contacted the committee that operated the New University to have the course listed on the New University curriculum, then taught whoever attended the class. By the end of the spring quarter a little over a month later, over 150 New University seminars were held with over 3000 student participants.[192] These classes were organized into six colleges: University Curriculum and Governance, Ecology, Peace, Culture, Minority Group Studies, and Community Relations.[193] Except for ecology, each of these colleges related to the student activism that had been present at BGSU for half a decade prior; University Curriculum and Governance, Peace, and Minority Group Studies specifically related to student power activism, antiwar activism, and Black student activism.

Within the college of University Curriculum and Governance, students could take courses to analyze issues regarding the structure of universities. Examples of classes in this college included: "Student Power and Academic Politics," which was designed to explore how student power could be exercised within the power structure of BGSU; "Academic Freedom and the Curriculum," which considered ways that the traditional curriculum could adapt to the shifting tides of higher education; and "Restructuring the University," which was a workshop that examined the roles, power, and functions of the various members of the university community.[194] Jerome also got involved with the New University, teaching a course called "Roles in Higher Education" that examined the role of the governor, chancellor, Board of Regents and Board of

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[191] "New University Curriculum," *BG News,* May 14, 1970, 4-5; "A Manifesto," UA-002F President's Office: William T. Jerome III Collection, Box 35, Folder 21, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University.
[192] Daneene Fry, "The New University and Change," *BG News,* June 25, 1970, 2; Ibid. These statistics are seemingly accurate, but it is difficult to verify the exact number of courses or student participants because of the fluid nature of the New University. While there was an executive committee that organized and advertised classes, any records this committee accumulated were hardly preserved.
[193] Helen Pendleton, "'New U. to start Thursday." *BG News.* May 12, 1970, 1.
[194] "New University Curriculum," *BG News,* May 14, 1970, 4.

Trustees in the higher education system of Ohio. This topic choice reflects Jerome's interpretation of the presidency as a position that responds to multiple constituencies and this class allowed him to share that perspective with students interested in student power.[195] Jerome teaching a course also ultimately represents the open communication between students and administration that had been formulated by the student power movement. Rather than leaving students to their own devices, he actively participated in the system of activism that students created to empower themselves.

In the College of Peace, students were offered the opportunity to analyze not just the Vietnam War, but all of the violent conflict or protest that was afflicting the world during this period. Courses in this college included: "Hatred of the Military, Abolition of the Draft, and Barring ROTC from Campus: Mechanisms for Peace or Examples of Superficial Thinking," which was designed not necessarily to support the antiwar activists, but to make them reflect on and refine their arguments and goals; "United States, China, and Vietnam Conflict," which sought to educate activists on the history of the geopolitical issues of Southeast Asia; and "Civil Disobedience," which investigated the responsibilities and risks involved with civil disobedience.[196] None of these courses represented a specific side of the antiwar debate. Instead, these New University courses demonstrated the key aspects of the educational method activism upon which it was formed: inclusivity and open dialogue. It was not just for antiwar activists, but for all members of the university community to debate their ideas and maintain peace.

While classes in the College of Minority Studies were not solely about Black issues or culture, it was the first time that these issues were formally discussed outside of Black Culture Week, an important development when only one percent of the population was non-white. Some

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[195] Ibid.
[196] Ibid., 5.

of the courses that did address Black issues or culture included: "Discrimination and Equality in American Life," which examined the origins of racial prejudice in America, considered how it was compatible with the American ideal of equality, and discussed solutions for lessening or eliminating further prejudice; "Seminar on Black Studies," which sought to introduce participants to some of the complex issues that Black Americans faced through readings, films, discussions, and field trips; and "A White Effort to Understand the Black Experience," which sought to introduce white students to the experience of Black students in 20th century America.[197] Each of the classes within this school offered the opportunity for students to explore the racial issues that were plaguing contemporary society. The formation of these classes was significant for two reasons. First, Black students had the opportunity to share Black culture outside of Black Culture Week and directly address their peers. Second, only five years before no one would have considered holding a seminar about Black studies or that a course on discrimination in American society could have been centered on the situation at BGSU. The existence of an entire college focused around Minority Studies that included multiple courses on the Black experience proves that the Black student movement at BGSU had successfully made their voices heard within the community.

In response to the New University program, President Jerome received many letters from parents and students. These letters varied in tone and purpose. A number of the letters admired President Jerome's actions in his final months. Some praised his administration, claiming they had kept student activism peaceful throughout the decade and admiring Jerome's handling of the university in the wake of the Kent State shootings. However, there were those who disagreed with his actions, feeling that the president was giving in to student demands when he should have

[197] Ibid.

ruled with an iron fist. These letters surprised Jerome, as he had never seen such polarization in a response from parents.[198] Despite some discontent with his decisions, Jerome was satisfied with his decision and exited the university knowing that tragedy had been avoided.

After the spring of 1970, as the student power and antiwar movements faded, the New University also suffered from the transition between administrations. Graduate students attempted to keep the New University alive through the fall semester, advertising in the *BG News* "now that the "emergency" is over, it's time to begin exploring avenues of making regular courses more involved with issues that may be pertinent…" Despite this advertisement, fewer than twenty courses were advertised in the *BG News* in the fall, less than an eighth the number offered the previous spring.[199] By the spring of 1971, even the few classes that remained were hardly meeting or had achieved their goals. The last major New University course was also one of the longest running, having started in the spring of 1970. Students involved with the "Humanizing the University Through Better Evaluation," course conducted research about S/U grading systems at multiple universities to be able to support a proposal for the continuation of the S/U grading option for non-major courses, which resulted in the Faculty Senate passing a resolution approving the S/U option.[200] After the spring of 1971, the students' experimental system of educational activism ceased to exist, having successfully kept the university peaceful and given students the chance to analyze issues they otherwise could not have examined.

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[198] Letters to Jerome, May 1970, UA-002F President's Office: William T. Jerome III Collection, Box 10, Folder 20, Center for Archival Collections, Bowling Green State University; Daneene Fry, "Parent's Say New U. is Threatening," *The BG News,* 18 May 1970.

[199] "New University," *BG News,* October 8, 1970, 2; "New University Classes," *BG News,* October 26, 1970, 7. A few courses offered in the fall continued with similar themes as the previous spring, such as "Black-White-Yellow Encounter," "Psychology of Peace," and "City Government and College Students."

[200] Patty Bailey, "New U Course Sponsors 24-hour Identities Festival," February 25, 1971, 3; Terry Cochran, "New U. Course Achieving Goals," March 10, 1971, 1. The festival included a time to watch films, a space for spiritual experiences, an area to work with counselors in various ways, a colloquium on sexuality, and a "marketplace of ideas."

The New University program helps to explain why BGSU was the only public, residential university to remain open indefinitely in the wake of the Kent State shootings. By allowing students to channel their activism into an educational outlet, the New University mitigated violent protest in spring of 1970. A legacy of student/administrator communication and educational activism led to the creation of the New University, where the student power, antiwar, and Black student movements all converged. In the tumultuous wake of the Kent State shootings, the student power, antiwar, and Black student movements coalesced to create the prime example of educational activism at BGSU. Although the program marked the end of the student power and antiwar movements, it offered the earliest platform for the Black student movement to approach Black education and culture outside of Black Culture Week, acting as a final promotion of student power and antiwar activism as well as an opportunity to expand the Black student movement.

Student power activists had worked throughout the decade to communicate their concerns with the administration and gain more influence over their experience at the university. Open communication in the wake of the Kent State shootings allowed students and administrators to cooperate and establish a program that satisfied the student desire for activism within the boundaries approved by the administration. Students and administrators worked together to attempt different methods of activism and identify the most accepted model. This resulted in a preference for educational activism, which normalized having an open dialogue and discussing issues rather than turning to violent protest. The educational model of activism, when combined with the model of the Free University, resulted in the formation of the New University. The New University then acted as a platform for Black students to capitalize on their successful demand for change. For the first time, Black students had a widely recognized platform to

promote Black studies and culture beyond Black Culture Week. When considered alongside the administrative response to their demands, it is clear that by the spring of 1970, the Black student movement was fully established and prepared to change the university.

By analyzing the student power, antiwar, and Black student movements at BGSU, this study contributes to the growing historiography of non-elite state university student activism in the 1960s. Each of the movements studied here reinforce Terry Anderson's assertion that the Movement, the broad social unrest of the 1960s, shifted focus at the end of the decade to seek out personal liberation and political empowerment. Students sought a voice in the university operations, attempted to formulate solutions to social ills, and combatted inequality on campus. Although attempts to do the same were common on campuses across the United States during this era, student activism at BGSU was exceptional for its non-violent, educational nature. As first proposed by Kenneth Heineman, the nature of student activism at non-elite state universities was shaped by the relationship between students and administrators, which is evident at BGSU. Student power activism mainly took the shape of a dialogue with the administrators because they were prepared to listen, even if they did not choose to act; antiwar activism took the shape of educational activism because the administration and community were displeased with confrontational protest; and Black student activism gradually became more direct and demanding because of administrative apathy throughout the Sixties. Examining student activism at BGSU also complicates Catalano's assertion that Jerome was responsible for the peaceful response to the Kent State shootings by demonstrating the cooperation between students and administrators throughout the decade. Together, students and administrators communicated to establish and

utilize an educational model of activism that was focused on creating tangible solutions to issues on and off campus, which mitigated violence in the wake of the Kent State shootings.[201]

Although the scope of this study does not extend beyond 1970, it does provide the first in-depth analysis of student activism during this era at BGSU and incorporates new interviews and unpublished memoirs unavailable to previous studies on the topic. As a regional Midwestern university in a conservative area, student activism has largely been ignored in university histories; what has been analyzed either focuses on the beginning of the decade or disregards the students' influence on BGSU's peaceful activism. Included in this activism is the student response to the Kent State shootings, which was exceptional in its peaceful and educational nature. Every other residential public university in Ohio shut down for a period of time, but due to the legacy of student activism at BGSU, students and administrators were able to peacefully respond to the tragedy in a constructive manner. Examining the efforts of student activists within the student power, antiwar, and Black student movements prior to 1970 demonstrates how students worked with administrators to establish open communication and a legacy of educational activism, both of which contributed to a peaceful and education-centered response to the Kent State shootings.

While not as "exciting" as violent protest or wide enough in scope to attract national attention, student activism at BGSU is unique for its peaceful and educational nature that was established over the course of multiple years. The New University represents the zenith of peaceful educational activism at BGSU, acting as the peak of the student power and antiwar movements while simultaneously propelling the Black student movement. Since the program was designed as a response to the Kent State shootings, this study focuses on the three main

[201] Anderson, 294-353; Heineman, 124; Catalano, 52.

causes of student unrest as determined by the President's Commission on Campus Unrest: student discontent with the university, the Vietnam War, and racial inequality.[202] The movements that formed to respond to each of these issues shaped student activism at BGSU and the establishment of the New University, but they are not representative of all student unrest at BGSU.

Coinciding with these movements was a growing feminist movement that combated the strict regulations on women as well as a growing environmentalist movement that pressured the administration to take action. Also, these movements extended beyond the timeframe examined here: the feminist movement, the environmental movement, and the Black student movement each extended into the 1970s, which is beyond the scope of this study. Further study into these movements is necessary to create a more comprehensive analysis of student activism at BGSU that is not limited to the New University.

Student activism at BGSU was peaceful and educational throughout the 1960s, establishing a framework that would mitigate violence in the wake of the Kent State shootings in 1970. Although this study only examines the experience of students in one locality, the unique preference for educational activism complicates the narrative of violent student unrest during this period. By analyzing the contributions of student power, antiwar, and Black student activists, this study demonstrates that not all student activism was violent after the Kent State shootings. Instead, students at BGSU demonstrate that cooperation and communication within a community such as a university will produce more effective solutions than violent protest and confrontation.

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[202] *The Report of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest* (New York: Arno Press, 1970), 57-59.

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# APPENDIX A. TIMELINE

1946-1951:
BGSU enrollment increases threefold, forcing President Frank Prout to quickly construct temporary buildings and hire unqualified faculty to keep the university operating

1951:
President Ralph McDonald becomes the fifth president of BGSU and starts modernizing the university, funding quality buildings and hiring professional faculty

1957:
Students protest against an episode of double jeopardy by rioting; first notable protest but implements no change

1961:
Student protest against strict regulations evolves into non-violent activism, reflecting the civil disobedience of the Civil Rights Movement; McDonald resigns as a result of the activism

1961-1963:
President Ralph Harshman becomes the sixth president of BGSU and works to ease the tension following McDonald's exit from the university

1963:
President William T. Jerome III becomes the seventh president of BGSU; enrollment nearly doubles during his seven-year tenure

1964:
Civil Rights Act of 1964 passed; Ohio Civil Rights Commission conducts investigation of discriminatory practices of fraternities and sororities at BGSU

Free Speech Movement at Berkeley; hardly noticed at BGSU

Chapters of youth political organizations such as Young Democrats, Young Republicans, Americans for Democratic Action, and Young Americans for Freedom formed

1966:
Nick Licata, a sophomore, and his friend organize a petition for student involvement in the decision to change the university semester system

Students at BGSU form a chapter of Students for a Democratic Society

First Black Student Union established at San Francisco State University

1967, Spring:
SDS editorials become common in the *BG News*; the Free University is founded

"Gentle Thursday" chalking of administrative sidewalk as act of civil disobedience

The student vote to allow beer on campus fails, beginning a two-year campaign to change the regulations

Administration tampers with Student Council election to prevent known activist from being president

1967, Fall:
Nick Licata becomes president of the BGSU chapter of SDS

Student activists at UW-Madison protest DOW Chemical

"Stop the Draft" Week leads over one hundred thousand to march against the war in Washington D.C.; tens of thousands clash with military at the Pentagon, demonstrating increasingly violent antiwar movement

"Day of Dissent" organized at BGSU, inviting speakers that supported and opposed the war

Editorials in the *BG News* regarding the war become common

1968, Spring:
Edward Sewell accuses the university of being a discriminatory institution

Students, with administrative support, organize a ten-day series of events that presented various films and invited numerous speakers from both sides of the debate over the Vietnam War

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated; students send administration a list of requests regarding issues Black students faced at BGSU

The *BG News* publishes the first extensive series of articles addressing the experience of Black students at BGSU

Student protest against the ROTC Review garners negative response from community and administration

Nicki Licata runs for Student Council president and wins

1968, Summer:
Violence at Democratic National Convention in Chicago renews Licata's dedication to free speech and reinforces necessity for peaceful activism at BGSU

1968, Fall:
Licata's Student Council does not rubber stamp student code revisions; pass "A Declaration of Specific Student Rights" that shapes their pursuit for student power

"The Negro and the University" discusses issues Black students had on campus

The Black United Students organization at Kent State University protest their administration ignoring Black student issues; inspires the creation of a similar group at BGSU

Jeremy Farber's "The Student as Nigger" rocks the national student power movement with its radical simile

SDS members put on brief reenactment of Vietnam battle on campus; hardly anyone notices

1969, Spring:
Black students organize a Black Culture Week, establish a Black Student Union, and present a new list of concerns to the Student Council

The Student Council adds two Black student members to the council; almost immediately, action deemed illegal and reversed by the Student Court

Student activism for dormitory autonomy escalates in scale; administration rejects notion that Student Council has any real authority to permit dormitory autonomy

Licata organizes over eight hundred students to attend the Board of Trustees meeting to air student grievances; Jerome offends BSU by suggesting they were being used by other student activists; meeting ends when Board feels Licata is co-opting the meeting

Small group of antiwar activists attend ROTC Review, but are largely ignored

1969, Fall:
Student Council passes resolution to determine why the body had no power; no further action is ever taken

Moratorium against the war organized across the country; students at BGSU focused on teach-ins and invited speakers; Jerome participates in activism, reinforcing administrative support for non-violent educational activism

Administration begins responding to some Black student concerns, including remodeling a social hall on campus, new plans for funding Black students, and the first class regarding Black studies

April 28, 1970
Black students present list of demands to the administration, threatening a national smear campaign if negotiations not immediately organized

May 4, 1970:
Four students at Kent State University are killed by Ohio National Guard

Students at BGSU perform a sit-in to demand a response from Jerome; Jerome reassures them that no such violence will occur at BGSU and cancels classes the next morning

May 5, 1970:

Students perform teach-ins and give speeches in the morning, presenting Jerome with a list of demands; Jerome reasserts his desire for peace and promises to work on demands

Four hundred Black students perform a sit-in to reassert their dedication to having the administration address their demands; Jerome presents answers to their demands that night

May 6, 1970:
Classes once again cancelled in the morning; students create marshals, reach out to the town, and organize an antiwar march; over eight thousand students participate in silent candlelit march

May 7-8, 1970:
Classes resume with no sanctions for skipping; teach-ins continue

May 9-10, 1970:
Students, faculty, and administration decide to implement a pass/fail system and create an organized program of teach-ins called the New University

May 14, 1970:
The New University program begins, with students, faculty, and administrators teaching a variety of courses

May, 1970:
ROTC Review cancelled; no protests

June, 1970:
Hollis Moore becomes eighth president of BGSU

1970, Fall:
Black Studies program begins at BGSU, which became the Ethnic Studies program in 1979

May, 1971:
Students heckle the ROTC Review and face administrative backlash

1971, Fall:
Black student enrollment began increasing due to plans created in response to the BSU demands

1979:
Department of Ethnic Studies founded

# APPENDIX B. CLOSURES OF MAJOR OHIO UNIVERSITIES, SPRING 1970

**Table 1. Closures of Major Ohio Universities After the Kent State Shootings[203]**

| **University** | **Amount of time closed after May 4, 1970** | **Instances of Protest after May 4, 1970** |
|---|---|---|
| Kent State University | May 4 to the end of the quarter | N/A |
| Miami University | May 7 - May 17<br><br>Ten days | Thousands march nonviolently through campus; credit/no-credit grading implemented; three minor fires |
| Ohio State University | May 6 - May 18<br><br>Twelve days | Students broke administration buildings' and business' windows; National Guard used to restore order |
| Ohio University | May 14 to the end of the quarter<br><br>Roughly four weeks | Students harassed local businesses and set off firebombs on campus. 23 students hospitalized and 54 arrested after conflict with police on May 14 |
| University of Cincinnati | May 8 - end of quarter | 5,000 student and faculty march in protest of the war; students call for three-day strike and block university buildings, issuing demands |
| University of Toledo | Never closed; 3 day moratorium where classes were optional immediately following Kent State, then again after Jackson State | 3,000 person rally to discuss the war and shootings; 500 person candlelit march; 24 hour vigil; pass/no-credit grading option implemented |

[203] Curtis W. Ellison, Editor, *Miami University 1809-2009* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2009), 284-286; Francis P. Weisenburger, *History of the Ohio State University Volume IX: The Fawcett Years, 1956*-1972 (Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press, 1975), 171-173; Betty Hollow, *Ohio University: The Spirit of a Singular Place, 1804*-2004 (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2003), 213-217; David Stradling, *In Service to the City: A History of the University of Cincinnati* (Cincinnati, OH: University of Cincinnati Press, 2018), 184-188; Matthew J. Deters, "Preventing Violent Unrest: Student Protest at the University of Toledo, 1965-1972" (University of Toledo, 2010), 62-66.