with homemade beer and Mason jars of bootleg corn. One enterprising friend of mine, name of Eight-ball Eubanks, went so far as to steal a ten-gallon carboy from the chemistry laboratory to equip the brewery he installed in his fraternity basement. It paid his way through college.)

Policing the sex lives of students is, of course, equally impractical; boys and girls manage to get together, as they have since Eden, regardless of parietal rules. The pretense that it is an Argus-eyed chaperone merely makes the university look both silly and hypocritical, as Barnard did last spring when one of its girls set up housekeeping off campus with her boyfriend. After pondering for weeks, the Judicial Council composed of faculty and students "punished" her by withdrawing her right to eat in the school cafeteria.

Most students would consider that a nonpunishment, since the typical college dining hall serves the kind of food that causes riots in badly managed jails. (I have, in fact, eaten better in the Pennsylvania Eastern State Penitentiary than in some of the Harvard houses.) At an age when food is nearly as important as sex, undergraduates find university catering a perennial cause for complaint.

A sensible solution, as some of the more venturesome academic administrators are beginning to realize, is to hand over to the students a major share of responsibility for housing, feeding, discipline, and similar quartermaster operations. When given the chance, student organizations usually handle such responsibilities pretty well. In routine disciplinary matters, student courts often have proved more strict than the deans would have been. And the undergraduate approach to such matters is refreshingly realistic. The Yale Daily News, for example, recently suggested that in view of the overcrowding in residential colleges, any student who found it necessary to keep a motor bike, a large dog, or a female in his room overnight really should be encouraged to seek quarters off campus.

In the handling of money and related managerial problems, the student organizations naturally need (and generally welcome) adult help. Serious law violations, such as drug peddling, can be handled by city and state police. Insurrectionary outrages, such as sacking college offices and burning professors' manuscripts, obviously have to be put down swiftly and decisively by whatever police action may be necessary. Outrages may become a little less likely, however, if students are given a substantial measure of control over their own living arrangements. That kind of student power not only could reduce many exasperations, frustrations, and petty conflicts between the generations; it might also be the quickest way to teach adult responsibility.

Moreover, if the administration and faculty could get rid of most of their present Aunt Nannie functions, they should then have more time to work on their big problem: how to restructure the university to make it once more a center of liberal education, rather than a mere training camp for professional specialists. Until they solve that one, they will have no peace.

THE PROFESSORS RESPOND:

Geoffrey Marshall

The victims are those who think nothing is wrong

FISCHER'S ARGUMENT that current student dissatisfaction is a counterrevolution has a very attractive look about it. He is unquestionably right when he says that in the past thirty years faculty power has increased geometrically and that the current academic world reflects faculty desires more than those of any other group. But student dissatisfaction with the current academic world represents a much deeper human dissatisfaction than Fischer reveals. He has probed beneath the surface of where gymnasiums should be built and whether or not students should stay out beyond 11 p.m., but he has not kept probing.

Fischer thinks the students are uniquely dissatisfied with the current state of affairs. I do not. I could only accept his argument that the dissatisfaction is somehow uniquely the outgrowth of faculty control if I were convinced that some earlier or different situation were free from the faults described. Fischer, like many protestors, seems to have no sense of history. Without suggesting for a moment that the current situation is free from manifold problems, it is still only just to note that even a cursory examination of college catalogues shows that the current examples seem to offer a vastly more relevant education than did the fixed curricula of the past. By mentioning counterrevolution, Fischer implies a golden pre-revolutionary era when students wandered beneath the oaks with berobed sages, deep in serious conversation about the essence of essence or how epistemology is relevant to the Civil War. But no such era has ever existed, the Peripatetics possibly excluded.

In fact, rather than seeing the current liberal arts students as "victims" of the faculty-oriented university, I find them marvelous examples of the successes, however limited, of the system. It is the student who does not know that something is wrong who is the victim. It is the student who believes all is right with the world whose education is distorted. It is the student for whom competence is more important than value who has been trained rather than educated.

After all, the fact that the faculty is the "ruling class" (Fischer is a very effective writer) is not the problem, is it? The problem is to determine where and where not it is ruling wisely, where it should give up and where increase its power. The fact that $50,000 incomes are "by no means uncommon" is not the issue. The issue is whether that is too much or too little to pay for something. (And, by the way, Fischer must live in a wonderful world, indeed, because I do not know personal-

ly any teaching faculty member who earns *one half* of that amount.)

I believe as Fischer does that a liberal education involves contact with wise and mature men and is focused on questions of the value and the purpose of life. I believe also that much that passes for education today is in no way connected with liberal education so defined. And so we must work for change; we must work to make the connection. Our desire to work in this way is not served by setting student against faculty in two massive blocks.

Fischer is unfair, or worse, misleading, when he pictures the forces of repression as personified in research-oriented, undergraduate-hating faculty members who have brought the chance for a liberal education close to zero at "most good American universities." I am embarrassed for someone who feels a liberal education cannot be obtained at Harvard, Yale, Berkeley, Wisconsin, Ohio State, Nebraska, Rice, Haverford, Reed, UCLA, CCNY, and so on and on and on.

And I am flabbergasted that anyone would suggest that faculties are "typically" (and that is the word which hurts) unconcerned with undergraduate education. Who is it that the students turn to for support in their quest for change and who gives it if not the faculty? Is it the magazine editors of America? The lawyers? The merchants? The union leaders? Preposterous. And who argues in faculty meetings (where power is indeed often vested) for changes and curriculum reform? Even a haphazard survey of the academic scene would show America's colleges and universities constantly reviewing curricula, aims, and means.

But of course Fischer is exaggerating, and there is plenty of truth in what he says. While it is the faculty who argues for change and reform, it is also the faculty who opposes it. And while it is some faculty who seek to be liberally educated men, it is also some faculty who cannot see beyond the narrowest of researches. (But may I register here a protest to the hackneyed carping at academic research. Fischer says the bulk of it is unpublishable and unreadable. That is true only if one assumes scholarship is designed for the general public. But it is not and never has been. Academic research is designed consciously by specialists for specialists and its relevance can only be weighed in those terms. Accusing scholarship of not being an article in Harper's is the same as accusing a tooth of not being a face, and just as valuable an accusation.)

Fischer is correct to draw our attention to the faculty, but he is cruel and insensitive to generalize about faculty members. It is not the PhD which brings on illiberality; it is something else which we do not understand. I will stand by the dedication to the principles of liberal education of an average faculty as compared to any other professional group. Any other. Including students. If this means that I am saying faculties are simply the least of many evils, then I have made my point. Illiberality is a human limitation, not a professional one.

Restrictive policies, bad teachers, foolish and purposeless assignments in and out of the classroom must be isolated and changed. Dogged and exciting inquiry into the nature of justice, into the makeup of the good life, into the structures of nature must be supported in every way possible. But these things will come about only when we recognize that those who support the ideals of a liberal education are not students alone, or editors, but are men of a certain moral persuasion who will show up nearly everywhere in society, including in college and university faculties. And the enemy is not the faculty, or the student anarchists, or the merchant princes of the community at large, but other men of another moral persuasion who likewise show up everywhere in society, including in college and university faculties. I consider myself part of the revolution against illiberal education and I am a card-carrying faculty member. Some of my colleagues are good guys and some are bad guys, but I will not accept the bigotry of a condemnation of us all.

Richard S. Wells

Neither Don Quixote nor the Lone Ranger

CURRENT COMMENTARY on the state of the American university is perceptive to the point of overkill. Probably anyone connected with a viable university within the last decade, either as professor, administrator, or student, has noted what Fischer notes. If this is the case, then why does so perceptive a man as Fischer say what he does?

It seems to me that articles like Fischer's are part of what is practically a ceremony that we perform when it comes to discussing American higher education. The university is an important and long-lived institution that is undergoing rapid change within an even more rapidly changing society. It is not surprising that we are at somewhat of a loss to explain just from where and to what this change leads us, but it is extremely important that we say *something*; to be mute is tantamount to helplessness and evident lack of comprehension. Thus the ceremony.

Articles like Fischer's are written in a form that amounts to a *genre*. As such, it has the following characteristics: (1) the university is seen as something that at one time was *relevant* to general concerns about the human condition, but not *involved* in the practicalities of living, governing, or gaining; (2) now, the university is *involved* in the managing of society, but has lost much of its *relevant* connection to those attributes of the human condition that make the involved life worthwhile and meaningful; (3) Jencks and Riesman in their recent book, *The Academic Revolution*, are correct about

the current revolutionized state of the American university.

Ceremonies aside, let me offer a few critical observations about what he says, and then offer a few of my own thoughts on the same matters.

First, as Fischer says of the post-World War II period, "The increasing complexity of our technological society required a sharply rising supply of university-trained specialists." The needs of this period were met, and the university can hardly be faulted for doing that. The type of article that Fischer might have written if the needs had *not* been met is interesting and easy to contemplate. Second, Fischer apparently believes that prewar professors were "humble pedagogues" who, after the war, assumed the characteristics of an intellectualized *nouveau riche*. They presumably did all they could to enhance their sense of newfound power and influence, except try to capture the Republican party. In my own field of political science, I think a slightly different view might apply. The postwar scholar was involved, made heroic efforts to be relevant, and in the study of politics was iconoclastic in his successful attempts to change an approach which celebrated seventeenth and eighteenth century political institutions and which overlooked the fact that politics consisted of what people did as well as what they were supposed to do. A new behavioral emphasis flourished, and also became sadly and ironically irrelevant to politics. But the fact should not be missed that their original efforts were intended to make the Western tradition of inquiry and openness an intellectual and pragmatic success.

Third, Fischer makes the rather overmade point that emphasis upon teaching is reduced in the revolutionized university—a point with which I totally agree—and that professors "are never required, at any point in their career, to get any professional training in the art of teaching"—a point with which I do not totally agree. I suspect that Fischer would admit that we know precious little about why one person is a "good" teacher and another is not. In addition, I suspect that he would admit that a good many institutionalized efforts to train teachers have produced an occupational defensiveness in the education professor.

It seems to me that the problem is not whether budding professors are taught to teach; it is really a question of *whom* they are taught to teach. Professors teach, by example, how to reproduce their own kind, and as a preoccupation in teaching I think that this is wrong.

Finally, I should say directly that Fischer's comments on the extracurricular lives of the students seem to me correct and sensible. The tendency for the university to be a living-learning unit is out-of-date and probably impossible in the mobile society. There is probably no sadder sight than a Dean of Students on a panel dedicated to examining his "new role"; it is hard enough to defend his existence in a modern university, much less any particular role.

Now, what of a positive sort do I have to say? Perhaps nothing, and if that is the case the following ought to prove it empirically. There are three comments I have to offer; they are based on my experiences at OU and are meant to apply here. (1) The administrative arm of a university like OU must become an additional alternative to the department in the task of building personnel resources used for academic purposes. (2) Universities should recruit persons for teaching and research from places other than the graduate schools of the nation. (3) The academic unit within the university known as the "college" must become a much more flexible unit than it now is. Let me briefly discuss each of these.

A basic question that must be asked about practically any university is this—how does it grow in its breadth of intellectual pertinence? The usual answer is that it grows in terms of the people departmental chairmen manage to hire. Departments tend, for reasons noted by Fischer, to hire in the safe middle rather than at the experimental and indefinite edges of their disciplines. Thus it can be said that the university generally suffers from a hardening of its structural categories. Some way must be found to hire academic personnel who intentionally fit at the fringes of disciplines and who fill the interstitial spaces between them. Although much forensic support of this idea is heard, it is often seen as a potential threat to the principle of departmental autonomy. In my opinion, this problem is sufficiently important to justify the establishment of a personnel fund in an appropriate administrative level above the departmental and the use of that fund to hire on a criterion that takes into account the need of skills that touch the edges of various departments. The problem of which departmental entities shall receive these colleagues is secondary to their needed presence in an institution dedicated to the exploration of a body of knowledge that is expanding more rapidly than university organizational structures.

In the process of adding personnel, by whatever method, the university should go well beyond the graduate school and depart from its unreasoning worship of degrees. Just what a degree tells one about its holder is, to me, a mystery. Presumably, it certifies competence. Professors might ask themselves if they are professors because they are "right" about their areas of special learning or if they are "right" because they are professors. My point is, of course, that graduate schools sharpen minds by narrowing them, but what is worse, they inculcate attitudes toward learning that contain high levels of tolerance to tedium, pedantry, and occasionally unreasonable uses of human reason.

The University's administrative unit with direct responsibility for instruction is the "college"—for example, the College of Arts and Sciences here at OU. The basic paradox of a university's function is to train broadly and yet organize its resources

into more and more narrowly conceived disciplines (which define the "majors" students have affixed to their diplomas). The college must somehow resolve the paradox and manage expertise for non-expert purposes in education. Where the student wishes to have general views of life, it should be provided; where he wishes a more narrow and specific preparation for something he wants to do, the student should be informed in the process as to just how narrow his education is. In my opinion, the college can be a more flexible unit by abandoning the "major-minor" curriculum as a standard approach and providing more variously wrapped packages of learning available to the student. The college should, particularly in the areas of the sciences, stress the appreciative elements of disciplines in contrast to the tendencies implicit in current undergraduate training to make the undergraduate a scientist-in-miniature or an apprentice political scientist. Thus, I feel that the college must innovate as well as administer, and it must lead, persuade, or cajole its departmental units to realize that they must specialize for some purposes and broaden for others.

In conclusion, let me say that Mr. Fischer and I may not agree on a most fundamental point. I gather that he wishes the modern university to preserve the value system of Western society; his call for asking the big questions seems to me such a wish. In my opinion this is an unfair and ill-advised task for a viable institution today. It is probable that our fundamental value system is undergoing abrupt change. If this is the case, the old is in limbo, and the new is not yet stable enough to let one know if it shall prevail or even endure. I find it saddening to think that the university might be relegated to a defender of ancient vereties. It is as ill-equipped to be Don Quixote as it is to be the Lone Ranger.

Fred B. Silberstein

Hunting mice instead of elephants

I FIND MR. FISCHER'S explanation of the student revolt both untrue and patronizing. According to him, as a result of the "academic revolution," by which he refers only to the tremendously increased national demand for university-trained technicians, the professors deserted the traditional objective of an undergraduate liberal education for the greener pastures of money and power via contract research for the military-industrial complex. Hence, the students are revolting against this new ruling class of professors.

The poor students, Mr. Fischer says with sympathy, are confused about many things: the nature of their movement, of their enemies, and of their heroes. Their movement is a countermovement (i.e., aimed at the restoration of a tradition); their enemies are not really the university administrators and the Establishment but the professors. The students would subside into adolescent quiescence if they were just given the following by the administration: a more "normal" dean of women, good food, more student power for purposes of controlling their own deviants, and, most important of all, a flourishing, undergraduate liberal arts program.

Note that in all this Mr. Fischer hardly mentions the off-campus, *political* activities of the students. Strange, since this activity implies an historic change in the American institution of higher education. These unmentioned off-campus activities include action on the civil rights front, Peace Corps and Vista activity, protest against the Dominican Republic caper and the Vietnam War, the dump-Johnson movement, and the Chicago massacre. Aw, come on, Fischer, are these really *counter*-revolutionary actions? Perhaps Mr. Fischer doesn't see any connection between on-campus and off-campus activities of the students. I do.

What bugs the students, I believe, is essentially the same thing which bugs so many other Americans—the belief that morality and authority are absent from today's scene. When morality and authority are believed to be absent, the intelligent man (student or not) turns to the acquisition of *power*. What else? This is my major diagnosis of all the power-seeking found in the United States today: Student Power, Black Power, Red Power, Mexican-American Power, Teacher Power, etc. Beware also, gentlemen, of Female Power—I see that coming on strong.

What brought about this belief in the absence of morality (value consensus) and authority (legitimate power)? Many things. The cold war will do for a starter. The race for mutual coextinction still goes on, and the country seems to have nothing better to offer than an admittedly vapid anti-missle program. Is it any surprise that the student generation has found the older generation *qua* generation to be bankrupt morally?

The highest moral authorities in the land—the Supreme Court, the Church, the University, and the State—have all repeatedly declared the *traditional* American system of prejudice and discrimination against its black brothers to be illegal, unscientifically based, stupid, ungodly, and contrary to government policy; yet the segregated schools and the segregated church are still very much with us. Is it any surprise that the student generation has found the older generation *qua* generation to be bankrupt morally?

The highest moral authorities in the land have declared that mass poverty and disease must go. And yet the Blacks, Indians, Mexican-Americans, Southern "white trash," the Appalachians, Baptist "rednecks," and other "colorful" American groups still starve en masse. Is it

any suprise that the powers-that-be ain't trusted?

The students—the younger generation—therefore search for a new spirituality on which to base a new moral authority. They are after much bigger game than a new Nannie system or "copping-out" professors. Fischer is hunting a mouse, he should be looking for an elephant.

After World War II the demands placed by the rest of the society on the university system increased astronomically. There was the increase in population. There were the citizen-parents who refused to legislate and pay school taxes. There was the fantastically increased demand for *applied* scientific research from the traditional business community, from the military-industrial complex, and from the general, technological society. Thus, a situation was created in which the demand for university products far exceeded the university resources. How could the university administration solve this unsolvable problem? What resources did the students possess? Very few. They had their tuition fees, which never have paid for a first-class college education. And they had their parents' gifts (and reluctance to pay taxes). What resources, on the other hand, did the military-industrial complex possess? Hot damn! Billions, man, billions! Guess what happened?

The students (some types more than others, of course) were sold out. Nonexistent computer-training departments were funded, and existent sociology departments were allowed to remain weak and underdeveloped, to pick a case at random. A new reward system was quietly instituted in which the rewards went to those professors with the longest and heaviest list of publications. That is, to those who published the kind of stuff which impressed the government administrators in the military-industrial complex. Publish (i.e., get contract research money) or perish (i.e., move on)! The rules were often changed overnight, and a situation of organizational anomie was created. Cruel stuff! After this the universities became three-ring circuses or multiversities eagerly catering to the *vested* interests (i.e., services to the community): adult education, industry, Post Office training, soil conservation, and God knows what else. The situation became so ridiculous that students in the correspondence school got more attention than those in the mass classes.

This organizational monster, this multiversity, has grown so fantastically complex that, like our cities, few of us can find our way around in it. It is not surprising that the students find themselves alienated, lost cogs in the giant, organizational machine. The stratification system of the multiversity makes those students who have no connection with a funded research program the peons, Negroes, and untouchables; and the liberal arts professor with an interest in education and scholarship, *per se*, becomes the "white trash." Until the advent of the riots—and I don't deny that conflict can have negative functions, too—no one in the administration even knew that the happy peons were alive. Whoever discusses riot control today also thinks about liberal education. Strange, eh?

David P. French

Victim of the age, not villain of the piece

ACCORDING TO MR. FISCHER, the present wave of student violence does not arise from leftist politics, intolerable housing conditions, inept administrators, worldwide student unrest, or concern over Vietnam; these are but irritants to the fundamental sore, which is the faculty. The typical professor, he believes, cares nothing for teaching and destroys true education by spending his time in his own research on such trivial topics as eighteenth-century English poets. Only when student power overcomes faculty arrogance will the rioting stop and true education return once again.

Since I myself potter amiably among eighteenth-century minor poets and since as an associate professor I am by definition part of his "faculty power elite," my doubts may seem a smokescreen designed to conceal my conservative nature. Let me begin, then, by admitting my conservatism openly. Many of his objections, I think, are quite just, and some flaws he mentions need serious reform; his article as a whole, however, seems to me quite wrong. Specifically, I believe that his diagnosis is too narrow, that much of his case depends upon half-truths, and that his cures are no cures at all.

To begin with, surely Mr. Fischer underestimates the force of non-academic events on campus life. More than ever before, we are aware of man's inhumanity to man; more than even during the Enlightenment, we are convinced that men are naturally good until corrupted by institutions, without which the bulk of human woes presumably would disappear of their own accord. Having lost the idea of necessary imperfections within ourselves—original sin, if you wish—we locate evil in authority as the only other possible antagonist. Such presuppositions, if my guess is right, color all our feelings: we assume that the dropped professor must be a martyr, that housing rules must be tyranny, that grading systems and required attendance must be an affront to liberty, and that sadistic administration tools prepare the cafeteria food. John Calvin preached a doctrine of total depravity while Samuel Johnson, speaking for all men, including himself, asserted that a fallible being must fail somewhere. By accepting the more puritanical view, we become necessarily intolerant, and in such an atmosphere suspicion and confrontation seem to emerge automatically. Thus the temper of the age, and not merely the faculty, seems a crucial aspect of student unrest.

Other more specific currents of thought compound the problem. Civil rights marches have shown us that noisy protests do cure evils, a discovery which tempts us to apply them to all parts of life. Improved contraceptives have so changed sexual ethics that breaking dormitory rules becomes for some a moral act, a protest against hypocrisy. The Nuremberg trials, with their insistence upon the moral responsibility of each soldier in a war, have combined with widespread doubts about the Vietnam conflict to make us even more ready to question the decrees of any authority. All these together, plus others, suggest to me that student defiance would have broken out under any conceivable college pattern, with or without a supposed faculty elite. In part, then, the college is the victim of its age, not the villain of the piece, and the cures lie outside the realm of curriculum planning and chains of academic command.

In the second place, Mr. Fischer's lurid description of a recent faculty *coup d'etat* is so distorted as to be nearly useless. He is quite right that professors are better off materially than they have been in the past. A decade or so ago, some of my colleagues worked part-time in Norman stores to pay their bills; now a new assistant professor can get a mortgage on a new house. Teaching loads have throughout the country dropped from twelve to nine hours a semester (some were fifteen or more ten years ago and some are six and even less now), and money is available for research projects today where in the past the man paid the bills himself or dropped the project. Before 1940, most teachers received tenure only at the associate professor rank and many never rose that high; the efforts of groups like the American Association of University Professors have now assured every permanent instructor of tenure and thus academic freedom after a few short probationary years. A shortage of teachers, a baby boom, public demand for better colleges, and competing offers from industry have brought affluence to a rather surprised community of faculty members throughout the country.

Mr. Fischer's errors lie in three conclusions he draws from this fact: that better material conditions hurt teaching, that teachers who do research will usually teach badly, and that specialized courses must somehow wreck liberal education. All three of these things can happen, but they do not need to happen—and they occur, I feel, far less often than he thinks. For instance, he cites the apparently canonical statement by Jencks and Riesman that much teaching is "dull and ineffective," presumably because of the heady intoxication of new power. What he overlooks is the fact that most of us taught equally badly when we were poor and humble; small salaries and teaching overloads do not necessarily produce sparkling lectures, as anyone knows who went to college twenty years ago. Furthermore, even the best teacher often will be dull, since he wants to test each idea thoroughly in class before going on to the next one and hopes to instill the same scholarly standard in his students as well. We should most certainly encourage good teaching, and undoubtedly there is too little of it, but poverty is no assurance of quality.

The second charge, that we promote the arrogant scholar who cannot teach instead of the brilliant nonpublishing lecturer, is more complex than Mr. Fischer will allow. It is not true, for example, that all professors who fail to publish are good teachers. In a country where all normal schools have raced to become universities, the legacy of superannuated incompetence is great; many nonpublishers merely arrange their stamp collections when they should be preparing their classes. Furthermore, published articles on Roman religion suggest at least two things to a department selecting instructors for the course in Roman religion—namely, that someone else thinks our man is worth listening to and that at least occasionally he has spent his spare time on his field of interest. Finally, it is just plain not true that professors fail to do research in the areas they teach; I can think offhand of at least five people in my own department whose recent articles are the direct results of their classroom discussions. Research may, of course, at times conflict with class preparation; while correcting proof, one is not preparing lectures. But love may also conflict with honor—and many honorable men wisely marry.

He is right in thinking that some colleges reward only research and that the cynical promptly neglect their classes to grind out trivial notes and queries. I think, however, that the University of Oklahoma suffers far less from this tendency than most others. Distinguished professorships, Regents awards, and even student awards are made yearly for teaching alone, quite apart from any research; even more importantly, an able and successful teacher will find his efforts rewarded in pay raises and promotions. One major recommendation of the recent major study of the University was an even expanded program to recognize good teaching. On the other hand, we are unlikely to make the parallel mistake of scorning research as irrelevant; one of the most brilliant members of my department did almost no publishing but was a superb scholar who had read deeply and thought long and who was undoubtedly one of the best teachers the University has had.

Mr. Fischer's supposed dichotomy between liberal education and specialization also bothers me. Such problems do exist: the English department which contemptuously gives watered-down courses to engineers or the refractory physics professor whose punishment is to teach physics to hostile English majors. But I think that his solutions are wrong. The real failure is probably that departments do not ask what any introductory course should contain, whether for prospective majors or not. Both need to explore the main implications of the field: What, if anything, does physics assume about reality? Is there something called scientific method or is it merely modified common

sense? Why on earth would anyone want to read poetry? Does it offer something worth having that other forms of writing cannot? These questions are central to liberal education, but surely they are the basis for any advanced work as well. On the other hand, there is no reason why most seemingly specialized courses should lack broad relevance; even my poor little minor eighteenth century poets were men reacting to the human condition, and surely these two topics are central to any kind of liberal education. Since all men are fundamentally the same, it follows that minor poets will reveal to us parts of ourselves; and since any course can be taught badly, even one called "Man and His Universe" may be a waste of time. To complain because the catalogue lists a course in, say, the Massachusetts shoe trade in the nineteenth century is to convict oneself of hasty shallowness; properly managed, it could illuminate a student's whole view of history at the same time that it prepares graduate students for their doctoral examinations. Our need is not to abolish the specialized course but to make sure that all courses study the central problems of their disciplines.

All three of the above points suggest to me that higher salaries and a love of specialized research are not really the evils that Mr. Fischer believes. Expert knowledge is in itself one of the most precious products of our society, and a teacher will not teach worse by being able to pay his mortgage premium. I have tried to show that there can be real problems here: dull or negligent teaching, overemphasis on research at the expense of the student, and a narrow, uninspired handling of the content of any course. None, however, seems necessarily related to the myth of a faculty power elite; all seem the limitations of fallible men, most of whom are dedicated to their jobs and idealistic about the importance of that work. If not, they would take the offer in industry and not stay on campus at all.

Since I do not accept Mr. Fischer's diagnosis of the problem, I also cannot accept his medications for it. I am not at all convinced that students would run a college better than professors do; in fact, I am reasonably sure that they would botch the job even more completely than we. In the first place, a college is fundamentally a place where those who do not know certain kinds of knowledge come to learn from those who do—as, by the way, Jencks and Riesman also note. To let the ignorant prescribe to the informed is sheer folly, comparable to my guiding trained surgeons during an operation at Norman Municipal Hospital. In the second place, students are here for four years only and have too little time to study curricular problems in detail; if most of their time does not go into their course work, they are wasting their own time and ours. Their worries and complaints are important, as are those of a patient in a hospital who is being badly tended. If a given surgeon consistently kills his clientele, I shall most certainly insist loudly that the hospital needs to replace him, even though I cannot wisely choose his successor or revamp training at the medical school. Similarly if a professor grades unjustly, fails to stick to his subject, shows flagrant bias, or lacks common courtesy with his students, they of course deserve redress. What they cannot do is to plan course offerings in botany and anthropology; these matters require not merely intelligence but a specialized knowledge which they do not have. Student opinion and student influence are desirable; student power in the sense of student control would be a disaster.

What can we do, then, about the problems which both Mr. Fischer and I agree upon? My own answers, I am afraid, are pretty humdrum. Because institutions are made up of people, and because people are imperfect, we shall never have a perfect college and should not expect one. Learned men will at times be unable to share their enthusiams in class, at times they will be badly prepared, they will make mistakes in grading, they will be unknowingly biased. Students will put off the term paper until the night before, they will miss the main point of the lecture, they will feel abused when they are not. Within these limits, however, we can do much. We can try to hire men who give promise of good teaching as well as expert knowledge (though the task is formidable); we can steadily combat the danger of teaching trivia where we should deal with broad implications; we can prod ourselves into increasing the breadth, depth, and pertinence of our course offerings. Students, by the way, could do far more than they do. If two students in every class appeared every morning with a couple of piercing questions based on the reading for that day, they could almost overnight turn the man who monotonously repeats the chapter in class into one who is challenged into his best possible work. In fact, students practically never do anything of the sort—but it is the most challenging kind of confrontation I know of, and it puts the challenge where it really belongs: on the quality of instruction. And I think, in fact, that most teachers would be delighted once they recovered from the shock.

The Profs

Geoffrey Marshall is an assistant professor of English and director of the Honors Program.

Richard S. Wells is an associate professor of political science and former assistant dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Fred B. Silberstein is an associate professor of sociology.

David P. French is an associate professor of English and a recipient of the Regents Award for Superior Teaching.

David A. Whitney is an assistant professor of sociology.

Paul G. Ruggiers is David Ross Boyd Professor of English.

Alan R. Velie is an instructor in English.

J. Clayton Feaver is David Ross Boyd Professor of Philosophy and Kingfisher College Professor of Religion and Ethics.

These are undramatic but I think important steps toward improving the quality of education. They do not, however, abolish college authority of faculty power, and they will not provide instant reform of all our ills. In part, I think, student dissatisfaction will continue until extracollegiate tensions also abate, if the world some day again settles into peace. In part, we might also reduce these tensions by relinquishing college control over nonacademic affairs. Essentially, a college is a library and a series of classrooms in which the uninformed learn to imitate the informed; there is thus no necessary connection between education and living quarters, food distribution, social life, and social mores—as institutions like the Sorbonne show. If students wish to arrange their personal lives, even at the loss of the advantages of campus life, this seems to me a matter in which they should have the controlling voice. By exercising it, they may perhaps feel less imposed upon in the necessary structure of meaningful college education.

David A. Whitney

Superstudent has not arrived

THE ARTICLE BY MR. FISCHER betrays the "myth of the garden" syndrome, i.e., that the current university situation represents a descent from the Garden of Eden. I don't believe I can go along with either the notion that university programs have changed dramatically and are therefore the causal agent or that Superstudent has arrived on the scene.

First, I'm sure that the courses fifty years ago (or ten, twenty, thirty, or forty) were exactly as relevant or irrelevant as today. In fact the relevance of courses is irrelevant in explaining the current phenomena. Relevance is always a judgment from the point of view of particular goals and not a "real" characteristic of courses. Rather the *decline* in the *belief* that courses are relevant is the question to be explained.

Second, I find the vast majority of students to be apathetic, uncritical, and conformist, with nothing admirable about them in either character or intellect (of course, I wouldn't exclude any group in society from the statement—including the faculty). In other words, while there may be a few students who are reflective, critical, and knowledgeable, if this were Germany, 1932, most of the revolting herd would be members of the Nazi Youth movement.

Although I can't say I'm sure this is valid, an explanation that is more pleasing to my perverted (sociological) perspective is the following: A value that is widely shared is not very highly valued and as a reward cannot be very effective in influencing behavior. As a college education has ceased to be a virtually exclusive right of the aristocracy, its power as a symbol of distinction has declined. Therefore, what the student gets for being docile, subordinate, and respectful isn't worth it anymore. A professor can't rely on his mere incumbency in the role to produce domination but must now demonstrate competence or become a pal (pander).

Needless to say, this is far too simple a statement to cover the diverse character of "the university," but it is a better framework than Mr. Fischer's to start tacking in the variety of players.

Paul G. Ruggiers

Toward opening the boxes

I HAVE HAD a keen interest, sharpened over the past five years as Director of Honors at the University of Oklahoma, in the learning experience. It has been my conviction that we know more (though not much) about the teaching experience than we do about the learning experience of students. One of the sad things about institutions is their drift steadily towards rigidifying their practices: a classroom becomes a box, like many other boxes, within a larger box; the physical plan itself suggests our hypnotic fascination with the method we inherit from our earliest exposure to teaching. And the sad fact is that we come out of the graduate schools with little or no interest in pedagogy, feeling no doubt that our zeal for the discipline and our respect for the profession will in some way compensate for the somewhat arid and frequently naive methods we engage in. The fact that over the past quarter century students have had the data of life provided for them in a variety of exciting new ways seems not to have effected a change commensurate with the difference of these students from their pre-World War II predecessors. The presence of a new and receptive kind of intelligence and general awareness has produced relatively little change in the presentation of materials or the instigation of new learning experiences. And yet we remain convinced that students will learn if we provide them with a suitable climate of learning.

It seems to me that some must and can be found by which to make the college experience a vital learning time. Many students discover soon that the rigidity of a very structured college world can be used to their advantage: if this is what the world offers as the price of a degree and if success has to be achieved via this particular route, they will learn its rules, mouth platitudes in class and on examinations, garner their grades. In short, play the game, do the virtuoso performance of cramming just

enough to "ace" an examination, win the support of the conventional teacher who will write the letters of recommendation, which are subtle forms of face-saving, image-preserving activity. I do not wish to overstate the case, but I feel strongly the hypocrisy implicit in fine buildings and well-trained professionals with little interest in the means by which students can be given the most meaningful kind of liberal education possible.

It becomes increasingly clear to me that many of us are interested in student "life" (a nice complex of organizational problems which can remain comfortably abstract) but not much interested, paradoxically, in students. The universities and colleges have not been notoriously innovative in relating what students learn to what they are concerned about. Relevance to the interests of a student's life cannot, naturally, be the sole rationale by which an institution of higher learning orients itself, but the failure to take this special kind of relatedness into account has produced in countless students a boredom with any system which is indifferent to the fact that it is persons who are being taught, not merely materials that are being presented.

Universities and colleges must walk a delicate line between innovation and conservation. Naturally, no institution has the privilege of remaining static. Sometimes, in the passion for change resulting from pressures coming from outside to accommodate the institution to newly defined services to the community of which it is undeniably a part and to which it surely has obligations, there lurks a subtle possibility that the institution may be moved off its centers of teaching-learning and research into exaggerating its relation with the worlds of industry, for example, and the services which it can render there. It would be dismal indeed if sometime in the future we would be forced to look back and discover that it had indeed been ourselves who were responsible for moving the university off-center, whether by inadvertence or by misplaced zeal.

It would be disconcerting if my insistence upon the necessity of finding ways to give greater validity to the learning experience should be construed as merely an old-fashioned conservatism. If we see it from the vantage of the teacher who is a prisoner of the structures of the past and, better still, from the vantage of the student who needs to know, more than anything else, the delicate balance between his freedoms and his responsibilities and who is cheated of the delight and joy of finding out, then the revitalization of the learning experiences appears as a radical wrench from our hypnosis with jejune methods, inherited along with our diplomas or assumed with our contracts, into a self-conscious and deliberate wrestling with the present.

Alan R. Velie

Toads and frogs and sub-sublibrarians

I DON'T PRETEND to be an expert on the subject of liberal education, and I have been at OU only a year and a half; yet what I have seen bears out Fischer's main contention—liberal education is very hard to come by. Or, let's put it this way: few of the students in my classes seem to have acquired what I consider a liberal education by their junior or senior year.

Fischer places the blame for today's student unrest on the faculty, who he says fail to provide liberal arts students what they're looking for—a liberal education. The defenders of the faculty claim they are deeply committed to the ideal of a liberal education. Perhaps they are, but the fact remains that faculties set the curriculum at universities today, and, as Fischer alleges, it has become increasingly difficult for students to get a liberal education. This seems to be the case not only at the prestigious and strife-ridden schools like Berkeley and Columbia; it is also the case at OU.

Liberal education traditionally has been based on what have been known since the Middle Ages as the seven liberal arts: grammar, logic, rhetoric, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. In addition, an educated man was expected to be familiar with the works of the major figures of his culture. Recently the concept has been narrowed somewhat—a liberally educated man might be ignorant of astronomy, say, or geometry, but he is still expected to be familiar with the major works of the major thinkers of his culture. For an American this means the major figures of Western civilization—men like Plato, Dante, Voltaire.

I find that most of my students know very little about these men. When I first started teaching at OU I noticed that whenever I dropped what I thought to be a well known name—Augustine, Aquinas, Montaigne—I was greeted with blank looks. Suspecting that the major figures in Western thought were virtually unknown to my students, I made up a list of influential thinkers from Plato to Bertrand Russell and asked the students whether they could name the major works of these men and discuss them briefly. The only men that more than twenty students (out of a hundred) felt that they could discuss confidently were Marx and Freud. In the heart of the Bible Belt, only a handful felt up to the task of discussing the ideas of St. Paul, Calvin, and Luther. (One wonders, incidentally, how the citizens of Wewoka and Wetumka would react if they knew that their children could discuss Marx but not Calvin.) Whether the students in the classes of '10 or '20 would have fared better with my list I don't know, but I suspect that they would have.

The blame for the ignorance of these students lies with the men who set the curriculum rather than the students themselves. It is true that

most of the figures in question are taught in one course or another at OU, but it is extremely difficult for one student to set up a program that covers any number of them. It's difficult because there seems to be insufficient interest at OU in stressing a continuing tradition of Western thought. Ideas about liberal education here are often badly confused. For instance at a meeting welcoming new faculty members into the Bachelor of Liberal Studies program, the main speaker of the evening gave a talk entitled "What Are the Liberal Arts?" The speaker, a psychology professor, not only failed to answer the question he raised but he expressed some quite surprising ideas about liberal education. He traced the tradition of the liberal arts in the United States to the men who came over on the Mayflower. The Puritans, he claimed, founded America's first college, Harvard, in order to train their sons to run the family business. This is simply wrong. And it is worth noting briefly what the founders of America's first college did make the basis of education. The Puritans established Harvard not to train businessmen, but to train an educated ministry. The student was instructed that the "main end of his life and studies is 'to know God and Jesus Christ, which is eternal life.' " Students learned the Scriptures virtually by heart. They also studied the seven liberal arts and the works of those men whom the Puritans felt to be the major figures in Western thought: among others, Aristotle, Cicero, Augustine. There was no place in the curriculum for business management.

I am not suggesting Harvard's original goals or curriculum for OU today. Harvard itself has instituted great changes. I am arguing that part of the trouble with liberal education at OU may be traced to ignorance of its history. When the keynote speaker for a liberal studies program can speak for an hour about the liberal arts without mentioning the traditional seven and without discussing the cultural tradition of Western civilization, it seems fair to conclude that there is some confusion about liberal education at OU.

The BLS speaker is just one faculty member, albeit an influential one. The confusion about the nature of liberal education is widespread. Much of it may be traced to the training that those who teach the liberal arts receive. Some may insist that the PhD does not bring illiberality. I think perhaps it does. I am just completing my doctorate, and the memory of graduate school is still sharp. Much of the training I received seemed to be aimed at producing the sort of sub-sublibrarian that Melville makes fun of in the introduction to *Moby Dick*. The sub-sub "appears to to have gone through the long Vaticans and street-stalls of the earth, picking up whatever random allusions to whales he could anyways find in any book whatsoever. . ." Does that sound like a parody of a scholar? A professor of not inconsiderable reputation at a highly respected midwestern university has published recent articles tracing all the allusions he could find to the toad and the fly in classical and medieval literature. This type of scholarship is held up as a model at most graduate schools.

Another important reason that work for the doctorate may lead to narrowness is the requirement that the doctoral thesis must be on an original subject. In their search for virgin topics, students dredge up ever more obscure figures: Shakerley Marmion, Barnabe Googe, Jones Very. What happens when these students go out to teach? Sometimes they become great teachers. Often, however, they resent teaching. They long to spend their time on the obscure research which they have been repeatedly told is the noblest task of a true scholar. One of my colleagues recently told me, "Teaching interferes with my work." His attitude is not uncommon in modern universities, and the better students resent it.

To be sure, we haven't had a riot at OU. If we do, it probably won't be because the students aren't getting enough Plato. But some students are grumbling about the education they are getting. Fischer is right; it is harder to get a liberal education these days. And, as far as I can see, much of the blame lies with the faculty.

J. Clayton Feaver

No exit but the future

WITHOUT A SENSE of useful service the university will disappear as a power for man's growth. Useful service is expressed in several ways: in relief work, as respite from mishap; in corrective and preventative activity, as solution to adversity; in invention and creative endeavor—translation of vision into the better and the best.

Many students, as many faculty, would have the university render the greatest possible service in lessening human misery, in solving problems, in opening new possibilities. Accordingly, the demand is to consider important and relevant questions; the concern is for the sharpest focus possible on specific human interests "seen" in the most comprehensive context possible; the expectation is for goals and directives that will enable man to steer steadily into the future.

Students, parents—most of us—illustrate two basic drives: the impulse to live and the impulse to improve. The "trick" is to keep these two in fruitful tension.

We seek security, order, the regular and dependable behavior and results, the balance sufficient for preservation. We also seek a certain quality of existence, excellence—even ecstasy; we aspire to the as-yet-not-achieved; we risk for the better and the best. We

would avoid both perils, excessive security and excessive risk; for neither permits growth.

Within the university these two human endeavors express themselves in the concerns to conserve and to innovate. The university would preserve, keep safe the remarkable increment of knowledge, as a reservoir of enjoyment and as the foundation from which to advance. The university would also toy, experiment, adventure with the new—in method, content, goal—as the assurance of growth. The trick is again to keep these two interests in fruitful tension.

Students, some of them, champion the finest interplay of conservation and innovation—perhaps, properly, with the accent on innovation—as the key to growth. Students, again some of them, realize that for those in whom the concern for excellence has taken hold, the present, good though it may be, is not good enough; they seek an added quality, style, perfection. And some students feature lesser interests—"the housekeeping of the university." . . . And who would gainsay an array of intentions among faculty as well?

Growth is an imperative. There is no hope for the university, or any institution, except it face straightway into the future with vision and daring, lively imagination, and careful planning, to let be what must be in the challenge of this complex century. There is no exit but the future—for persons or institutions.

A footnote: there is no future for the university without fine students; and there is no future for the university without fine teacher-scholars.

THE STUDENTS RESPOND:

Duane C. Draper

A vote against makeup for the measles

DISRUPTION! DESTRUCTION!! The red and black flags of revolution and anarchy flutter over the prostrate bodies of some of the noblest American institutions of higher education. In spite of the get-tough policies of some university administrations and the general outrage of public opinion at campus disturbances, the conflict continues unabated. In fact, many of those professionals who study the phenomena of crumbling universities tell us that the end is not in sight and, indeed, that the events of Columbia and Berkeley will spread in various forms from campus to campus across the nation.

Meanwhile, throughout the country we find ourselves asking, "Why?" Whether the answer to that question is considered in state legislatures or in after-dinner conversation, most Americans eventually decide the culprits are the "hippies" and "long hairs." That many of those who actively disrupt campuses are unkempt or perhaps don't bathe is a fact. But one reality seems to be escaping many of us. It is that these unwashed, unshaven few (the New York Times estimates that they make up no more than 20 percent of the students on the left *who are themselves a minority*) lack either a coherent philosophy or established leaders. Their intercampus communication is relatively primitive where it exists at all. In addition, recent events at San Jose State College (Calif.) indicate that when the mass of students really want to curb or oppose radical activities they can be an exceedingly effective force in suppressing those activities and lending support to established institutions. Yet despite this ability, experience indicates that the majority of the students are seldom motivated to action.

The indifference to campus rebellion which grips this mass of students (and particularly undergraduate student leaders) may take several forms. They simply may not care or, perhaps, even secretly sympathize with the rebels' goals while denouncing their means. It may also be that some of these students no longer consider existing academic institutions able or willing to ameliorate grievances. A phenomenon, then, that deserves as much attention as the activists themselves is the general unwillingness of moderate students to care enough about existing institutions to try to save them.

In seeking the causes for this unrest and apathy let us first consider what they are not. The building of a gymnasium, the firing of a popular professor, or being prevented from yelling four-letter words on campus are not the sort of deep-seated issues which cause students to sabotage a university or its administration. Such annoyances are rather the catalysts which bring to the surface a real and growing frustration with their education by students, many of them our brightest.

Most campus rebels, according to John Fischer in the August issue of Harper's, are undergraduates majoring in liberal arts as are the majority of those student leaders who might oppose them. The underlying frustration with their education often felt by both these groups is, in many cases, one of uselessness.

The standard liberal arts curriculum is generally of such a nature as to arouse in the student a feeling for those human issues which often spark campus unrest. He is also less likely to feel that he is risking a career by demonstrating. In fact, he often has no idea whatsoever what he will or can "do" with his education. This feeling is accentuated by the fact that many liberal arts students come to college with no real idea of what they want to do in life. They thus are expecting not only preparation for the future but help in deciding what kind