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**PUBLIC SUBJECTS: WAYNE STATE, INSTITUTIONAL TEXTS,
AND PUBLIC RHETORIC**

by

MICHAEL MCGINNIS

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Graduate School

of Wayne State University,

Detroit, Michigan

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

2015

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Approved By:

Advisor

Date

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of two people who I wish could have seen its completion and defense. First, to my grandfather Richard Linville, whose eclectic habits as reader (and hoarder) of books I have inherited, and whose self-evident love of writing and the written word has been and continues to be a model to which I aspire. Second, to my dear friend Ryan Hagerman, whose ravenous appetite and capacity for language I can never hope to match. This work is for the both of them. Excelsior!

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Finally, and most especially, my thanks go to my family: my aunts, Kathleen Linville and Barbara St. John, for their love, support, and devotion; and my uncle, Michael St. John, for his love and for many holidays spent in spirited debate. Above all, thanks go to my mother, Deborah McGinnis, without whose love, care, and support both material and emotional none of this could have been possible.

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CHAPTER ONE: “‘ABOUT US:’ WAYNE STATE AND ITS PUBLICS”

We have been deeply connected to Detroit since our founding, when those wounded Civil War veterans watched the carpenters working on a hot summer day in 1868. Today, we find ourselves connected during an unprecedented time in history: a time when a once great American city went into decline; a time when the city had to confront difficult truths and enter into deep self-reflection; a time of renewed commitment and of optimism for re-emergence; a time of immense opportunity to do the right things and make a difference.

Wayne State will remain fully engaged in making a positive difference for Detroit. This is a part of our local mission, and our impact in this regard is tangible. But our impact extends far beyond.

President M. Roy Wilson, Inaugural Address, April 2014

Introduction

Like many university websites, Wayne State University’s site is at once both marketing device and a rhetorically strategic representation of the ideals and goals claimed by the university. Many of the features available on Wayne State’s website are what you would expect from a university’s site: information for prospective and current students (and their parents); links to virtual campus tours; access to the more than 370 academic programs offered by the university; news and announcements about campus events and notable achievements by members of the university community. These links present the university and its programs in predictably appealing, attractive (if maybe idealized) terms—students walking across campus on a sunny fall day; researchers at work in their labs; fans rallying at a Division II football game.

Browsing a little further into the website, though, reveals much more interesting depictions of the work and character of the university. Following a link to the university’s “About Us” page (<http://wayne.edu/about/>), users encounter a snapshot description of the university’s history, enrollment figures, and campuses and extension centers (as seen in Figure 1 below). Immediately following these descriptions, the “About Us” page presents readers with the

University's "Urban mission," which claims that "As a nationally recognized urban public research university, Wayne State's mission is to create knowledge and prepare a diverse body of students to excel in an increasingly complex and global society" ("About Us"). Surely, this finely wrought description is no accident. It marks Wayne State out among other universities by accreting categories upon one another. Repeatedly, the "About Us" page depicts Wayne State not just as a public university, or even as a public research university, but very specifically as a public urban research university. Yet among these categories, it is *urban* that seems to be most determinant of the university's mission as described here, the most weighted descriptor of the kind of university Wayne State envisions itself to be. For example, this page describes the university's vision of becoming "*the* model public research university *engaged* in the urban community" [emphasis mine]; the university pledges itself to five overarching goals in service of this vision:

- Promote an exceptional learning experience.
- Improve the university's stature as a nationally-ranked research institution.
- Nurture a strong and dynamic campus community.
- Sustain our role as an engaged university in an urban environment.
- Diversify and broaden the university's funding base. (Wayne State University, "About")

As described on this page, these goals range from practical necessity (expanding and managing university funding) to the aspirational (fostering engagement and improving institutional prestige). Taken together, these goals articulate the university administration's ambition to "remain one of the nation's most respected public research universities." However, the mission statement continues, clarifying that national recognition is not an end in itself. Rather, "what matters most is how Wayne State's progress as shaped by these goals will position the university to benefit its students and, ultimately, its city, state, nation and the world."

About



Founded in 1868, Wayne State University is a nationally recognized metropolitan research institution offering more than 370 academic programs through 13 schools and colleges to nearly 29,000 students. Wayne State's main campus in Midtown Detroit comprises 100 buildings over 200 acres; its six extension centers offer higher education to students throughout Southeast Michigan.

Wayne State is dedicated to preparing students to excel by combining the academic excellence of a major research university with the practical experience of an institution that by its history, location and diversity represents a microcosm of the world we live in.

Urban mission

As a nationally recognized urban public research university, Wayne State's mission is to create knowledge and prepare a diverse body of students to excel in an increasingly complex and global society.

Figure 1: Wayne State "About Us" Webpage (January 2014)

It would be easy to read this statement of mission and be skeptical of its ambition and optimism. Admittedly, my own long affiliation with Wayne State as student and instructor prompts me to do so; like any large institution, Wayne State embraces change only slowly, and Wayne State's funding and prestige problems have their own long and complex histories. However, I'm interested in this document not in order to have fun at its (or the university's) expense, but instead because I intend to argue that this document, like others to be considered later in this dissertation, situates the university as a public subject. Within these terms, describing an institution like Wayne State as a public subject is meant to invite analysis of the ways an institution engages matters of public concern and responds to other subjects within the public it inhabits. Drawing from the work of Jenny Rice, I use the term *public subject* to describe the university as a certain kind of entity in relation to others within a public, and the related phrase

public subjectivity to describe the processes through which such an entity enacts its public role. As Rice explains, public subjectivity suggests “the role(s) we inhabit when we speak and act about matters that put us into relation with others. ... Public subjectivity is a process of interfacing with others, a kind of being-in-the-world. We act as public subjects when we are in a relation to claims made by others about public situations” (Rice 45). Wayne State functions as a public subject in multiple public arenas, most notably its local urban public associated with issues related to its home in Detroit, Michigan (Wayne State’s main campus is represented by the shadowed area in Figure 2 below); and its national and international academic public associated with issues related to its work as a research institution. Yet while Wayne State occupies a place as a public subject in both of these publics, the competing demands of these publics do not exist without tension or friction. Such tension pulls Wayne State’s institutional values and priorities toward both of these publics, and has significant determining force on the shape of its institutional priorities. By focusing on Wayne State’s urban mission, I will argue that its institutional texts depict the university as a public subject uneasily situated between its urban and community publics and the academic publics of its peer research and urban universities. That is, the urban mission which I’ve described here, like other institutional discourses created within and on behalf of the university, is part of a network of texts that read together articulate a subject position held by the university in negotiating its encounters and engagement across local and academic publics. Rather than seeing such institutions merely as setting or backdrop to the work of various publics, such a reading interrogates institutional texts for what they might reveal about the ways institutions understand themselves and how such conceptions in turn bear upon the ways in which institutions participate in the public work of their communities.

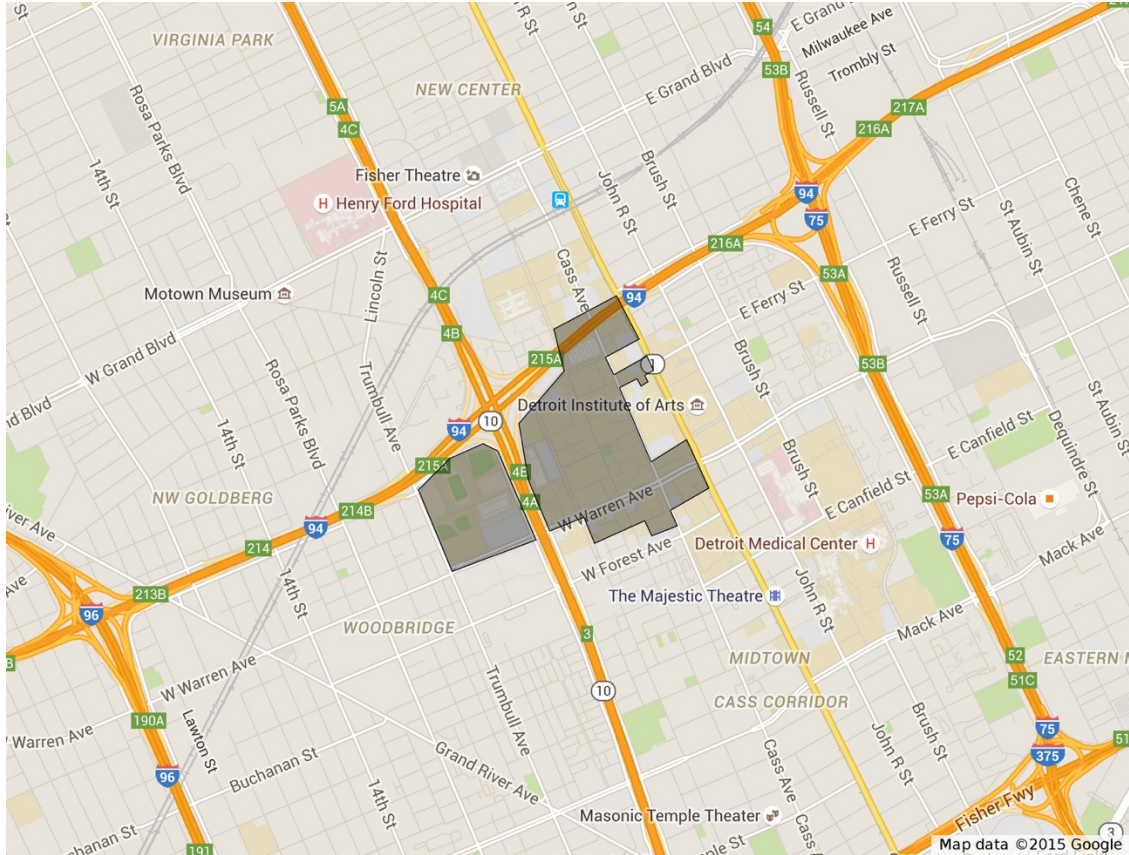


Figure 2: Wayne State's main campus is represented by the shaded area above.

To be clear, Wayne State is not the only university that professes a commitment to a local urban community. Enough such institutions profess such engagement to warrant at least two national organizations devoted to supporting such efforts and fostering collaboration between urban institutions. These organizations, the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities (USU) and the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU), are the successors of earlier such organizations like the Urban 13 and the Great Cities' Universities coalition; Wayne State is as of this writing a member of both organizations. The stated goals of these organizations unsurprisingly echo the Wayne State urban mission discussed in the preceding paragraph. The CUMU's "21st Century Declaration of the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities" describes member institutions' shared sense of commitment to their urban communities:

They are major employers and developers, they stimulate and nurture new economic enterprises, they build the workforce, and they enrich the cultural life of America's cities. They partner with government, community organizations, health care systems, public schools, not-for-profit civic groups and others to address the needs of urban residents, provide vital services and strengthen their host city's social fabric. ("Declaration" 1)

Similarly, USU members share a common dedication to the goals of "building strong communities, improving the health of a diverse population, and fostering student achievement" ("Initiatives"). Beyond supporting these commitments to their own communities, these organizations function to support the institutional development of their members; as explained on the CUMU website, the "Coalition defines, supports and disseminates data, institutional research, assessments, case studies and best practices which enable member institutions to better fulfill their missions, enhance access and learning in urban and metropolitan environments, and ensure continuous improvement, efficiency, effectiveness and accountability" ("Mission and Vision"); the USU, for its part, make similar pledges toward inter-institutional collaboration ("About USU"). Such organizations thus mediate the functions of institutional public subjectivity between its local and national contexts.

Nevertheless, it falls to each institution to negotiate those demands for itself, and the traces of such negotiations can be read through institutional texts. For example, consider again Wayne State's "urban mission" as described above on the University's "About Us" page. What might this document reveal about the institution as a public subject? Above all, the "About Us" page works to portray the University as a credible agent of influence, one capable of exerting influence in its immediate objectives—providing "exceptional learning experiences"—and in local, national, and global contexts. Moreover, this document makes an implicit claim about the moral and social interests of the institution: while the University clearly has its own vested interests in maintaining and improving its reputation among other institutions of higher

education, the “About Us” page acknowledges that such interests exist within broader imperatives to make beneficial impacts upon individuals and their communities across different levels of scale. True, this document doesn’t work to define what those broader imperatives might be (although we will see those articulated more clearly in later chapters). However, my emphasis here is not on the substance of the University’s values (i.e., I am not here interested in arguing that the university has *correct* or *appropriate* values). Rather, I want to argue that the work of figuring out “what matters most” as used here becomes a question of public concern, played out through its relations with other subjects in shared spaces of public engagement and evident in texts created within and on behalf of the University. In this reading, the “About Us” page works as an institutional text to situate Wayne State as a public subject conscious of its own values and its potential impact upon other subjects in its publics.

I find the “About Us” page of interest because in its brief span it reveals much about the kind of public subject Wayne State hopes to present itself as. This reading, moreover, suggests that the University’s public subjectivity is not static; rather, reading this page across time indicates some of the processes through which public subjectivity emerges and shows the University to be a dynamic and fluid public subject. The reading above of the “About Us” page reflects the page’s appearance in late 2013 and early 2014. However, as my project was initially taking shape, the “About Us” page looked much sparser:

About Wayne State

Founded in 1868, Wayne State University is a nationally recognized metropolitan research institution offering more than 370 academic programs through 13 schools and colleges to nearly 29,000 students. Wayne State's main campus in Midtown Detroit comprises 100 buildings over 200 acres; its six extension centers offer higher education to students throughout Southeast Michigan.

Wayne State is dedicated to preparing students to excel by combining the academic excellence of a major research university with the practical experience of an institution that by its history, location and diversity represents a microcosm of the world we live in. Reflecting its location and the excellent international reputation of its graduate schools, particularly in the sciences, Wayne State boasts the most diverse student body among Michigan's public universities.

- [Mission](#)
- [Fact Book](#)
- [Profile](#)
- [Academics](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Administration](#)
- [Midtown Detroit](#)
- [Police Department](#)
- [Visit](#)

Our Vision

Wayne State University's vision is to become the model public research university engaged in the urban community.

Figure 3: Wayne State "About Us" Page (October 2013)

As Figure 3 shows, between September 2013 and January 2014, the "About Us" page underwent a major design change, one likely inspired in part by the retirement of University President Allan Gilmour and the inauguration of his successor, M. Roy Wilson. Setting aside the question of whether these changes constitute any form of "improvement," I want to draw attention to the differences between these two versions of the page because considering these differences reveals how these different versions of one document depict substantively different visions of the University as a public subject. Above, I argue that the later version of the page reveals a public subject mindful of its own interests, but committed to meaningful interaction with other public subjects in a wide variety of contexts. This earlier version, in contrast, suggests a subject much less conspicuously oriented toward its constituent publics. While this version does clearly make reference to the University's diversity and claims "that by its history, location and diversity [it] represents a microcosm of the world we live in," these small glances to the world outside of the

University are here bound to the work of “preparing students to excel” rather than to any commitment to engage with or participate in the public world. Such engagement, on this version of the page, is merely aspirational; “Our Vision,” this page confides, “*is to become the model public research university engaged in the urban community*” [emphasis mine]. As indicated by this version of the page, Wayne State acknowledges the potential for a public role but seems to shy away from fully owning the concomitant obligations and accountability of such a role as it does in the later version.¹

This brief discussion of Wayne State’s “About Us” page is offered as an introduction to the central claim made by this dissertation. This project argues that institutions and organizations act as public subjects in the publics in which they participate, and that analysis of the texts and documents created within and on behalf of these institutions can reveal much about the kinds of public subjects such institutions understand themselves to be. Such texts, which I describe here as “institutional texts,” comprise various kinds of written documents created within institutions for various audiences and purposes. Many of these texts, like the two versions of the “About Us” web page discussed here, are explicitly public texts; that is, some of these documents are composed specifically to address one or more of the publics in which the institution participates. Other institutional texts, however, speak to the institution’s role as a public subject but do most of their work for audiences internal to the institution itself. We will have cause in the following study to consider both kinds of institutional texts.

More pointedly, I argue in this dissertation that attention to institutional texts reveals institutional public subjects to be caught between competing demands voiced by the multiple publics they serve. In the following chapters, I focus on Wayne State’s urban mission as a site of

¹ Indeed, as this chapter was undergoing revisions in the fall of 2014, the “About Us” page changed again, replacing the “Urban Mission” heading of January 2014 with a new “Our Mission” heading.

such tension. Wayne State participates in any number of local, regional, and (inter-) national publics, but as a public urban research university, it is most clearly visible as a public subject in a local, urban public centered on Detroit, and in a broader national and international academic public of peer and aspirational research universities. These two publics produce competing demands for the University's attention, both in terms of its rhetorical strategies and its material resources. The friction between such competing publics hangs over the ways institutions like Wayne State establish, argue for, and support their institutional priorities. As we will see more clearly later in this dissertation, the urban mission at Wayne State is at once a statement of Wayne's role as an institutional public subject and a site of institutional tension about the scope and scale of the University's commitments to its publics.

Theoretical and Methodological Approach

As I note above, my argument in this dissertation is posits that Wayne State frames its role as an institutional public subject by reference to an urban mission which endorses commitments to two very different publics: a local, urban public connecting the University to its home in Detroit; and a broader academic research public connecting it to its fellow institutions of higher learning. Inherent in this argument is an understanding of public spheres or publics as multiple and, thus, as at times in conflict with one another. In this section, I trace a theoretical lineage of this vision of multiple publics; this lineage begins with the work of Jürgen Habermas, who has described the emergence of the bourgeois public sphere from late-seventeenth century literary culture into a site of deliberation and civic judgment in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Following my discussion of Habermas, I introduce the work of Michael Warner and Gerard Hauser. Warner and Hauser share a common insistence on understanding publics not as the unified field of bourgeois debate described by Habermas, but as multiple, polyvocal sites of

engagement, each with its own particular set of interests and concerns. They differ, though, in their approach to this claim and their understanding of its implications. Warner, for example, suggests the necessity of *counterpublics*, discursive spaces that work for oppressed or repressed groups to enable resistance to and critique of hegemonic discourses. Hauser, in contrast, argues for a rhetorical approach to publics: one which understands particular publics as relating to one another in a “web” constituting the broader backdrop of public discourse, and which sees publics as processes of engagement rather than static entities. Finally, I turn to Jenny Rice, whose work points to a new way to do publics scholarship, by turning from the structural questions about how publics are constituted to the rhetorical consideration of how publics constitute subjectivities. Adopting Rice’s theories, I extend the category of public subjectivity to institutional subjects, and rethink her publics approach to place as a publics approach to institutional texts. The theoretical trajectory I trace here thus moves from a conceptualization of the public sphere as a unified space of discursive engagement; to an expanded notion of multiple publics; and concludes by turning to questions of public subjectivity.

Habermas: The Bourgeois Public Sphere

My analyses of these texts are informed by work in a long tradition of scholarship on publics and the public sphere. Jürgen Habermas has been by far the most influential writer on the public sphere. In *Structural Transformations of the Public Sphere* (1962/1991), Habermas describes a public sphere articulated through a series of oppositions: public vs. private, public vs. market, public vs. state. The tensions between the public sphere and these other realms mark the boundaries of the Habermasian public and in part determine its form and function. Habermas’s account of the public sphere’s development and emergence is by now familiar. As capitalist economies took shape in early modern Europe, state power became increasingly invested in the

activities of trade and finance; militaries developed in part to guarantee the flow of trade, and state bureaucracies and taxation systems emerged to administer the functions of the state. The power of the state underwent a structural revolution; rather than protecting the interests of privately held local estates, the new nation states came instead to serve the needs of the emerging capitalist bourgeois classes and of their emerging domestic economies. By the early eighteenth century, as it transformed from the protector and organizer of loosely bound private estates to the administrator and guarantor of a domestic capitalist economy, the state gradually took on a public character.

Alongside this evolution of the bourgeois state, civil society began to take form. Habermas describes a shift as the economics of the private household sphere moved into the emerging public sphere, losing its emphasis on household concerns and becoming increasingly oriented toward the new public market for commodities. Concurrently, the importance of the press increased, as the commercial need for news about other states and other markets grew. As participation in public markets spread, increasing numbers of citizens were impacted by state regulation of and intervention in the markets; in response, the press began to fulfill a critical function, allowing an emergent reading public to form and enact critical judgments on the actions of the state. This interplay between public judgment and the state was soon encouraged by the state itself, as state power itself relied upon the press for information and for the indirect administration of civil society. This convergence of state, markets, press, and private citizenry constitute what Habermas describes as civil society, but he further argues that although the rise of the press had prepared citizens for the public exercise of reason, the new order of civil society had not yet fully become a public sphere. Rather, Habermas points to the emergence of a literary public as the necessary additional factor in the development of the public sphere. With roots in

seventeenth-century French literary salons, this literary public sphere conditioned citizens to the habits necessary for the circulation of public texts: the consumption, reading, and discussion of literary texts thus becomes, in Habermas's account, the model for participation in the political public sphere as such.

In Habermas's account, it is this public sphere which becomes a site in which citizens gather to deliberate upon matters of mutual interest in the realms of the market and the state, while the details of private life remain (at least in theory) bracketed from public deliberation. Thus the bourgeois liberal public sphere is a site of textual exchange and engagement with questions and issues affecting its constituent citizens. Habermas explains this public early in *Structural Transformations*:

The bourgeois public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as a public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor. The medium of this political confrontation was peculiar and without historical precedent: the people's public use of their own reason. (27)

Habermas argues that these early public spheres were defined by three characteristics which enabled the development and use of a shared sense of public reason (36-7): First, these public spheres were predicated on a bracketing of social class which in theory, if not in practice, allowed for discussion and critique to focus solely on the rational merit of public arguments, rather than the social position of those making them. Second, the discussions within this public sphere problematized areas of common public concern which earlier forms, such as the literary public sphere, weren't free to discuss. Finally, the new political public spheres were (again, at least in principle) open to the participation of all concerned citizens, even if in practice this was rarely the case. As has often been noted by Habermas's successors and critics, then, his vision of the public was counterfactual but normative: while the public sphere has no instrument to

enforce the assumptions of equality and open discussion, they remain aspirational goals for to which participants in public discussion should aspire.

Habermas argues that it is at this point in the history of the public sphere, in the the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, that the relationship between the public sphere, civil society, and the realm of the market most clearly crystallizes around the dual importance of publics and the state. On one hand, Habermas notes, the public sphere took shape as an organ capable of voicing the needs of civil society; voicing these needs, however, mandated a public sphere that was free of state intervention, guaranteeing the private autonomy of commodity ownership (73-9). Only in this way could the nascent bourgeois remain confident of their freedom to participate in the public sphere's rational-critical discussion of state authority, leaving the market and its publics distinct from the state's public authority while remaining subject to mercantilist regulation. On the other hand, however, the idea of civil society nevertheless depended on the notion that the market was governed by self-regulating free competition (79-81). The market was thus supposed to be free from state intervention and signified civil society's claim to be free of coercion on the basis of the freedom typified by the market itself. In order to be framed as the guarantor of civil society's freedom, the market thus had to be established as distinct from the coercive power of the state.

These emergent public spheres were governed by the conventions of bourgeois rational-critical debate, opening state policies of sovereignty and secrecy to criticism (51-6). Supported by the expanding role of the national political press, the rise of the public sphere also engendered the rise of a political consciousness, a consciousness which in the guise of public opinion demanded general laws justified in its own name. This consciousness, of course, was fundamentally a bourgeois male consciousness, and the legislation justified in its name conflated

the rights of bourgeois property ownership to the more general category of basic human rights—thus lending such laws their moral imprimatur (85-8). This political consciousness also influenced the shape of the developing bourgeois state: insistence on rule of law established links between the exercise of state power and public opinion to which the state must concede (79-81); this insistence in turn established the necessity of the constitutional bourgeois state and the demand for representation in parliaments and assemblies by legislators who were answerable to public opinion and could thus claim to avoid coercion in the exercise of power (81-3). Yet despite the presumed universality of this political consciousness, Habermas notes that women and other dependents were in practice excluded from the political public sphere, although they continued to participate in literary publics in the context of the private sphere. Nevertheless, in spite of this exclusion, the official ideology of the bourgeois political public sphere collapsed such distinctions in order to present itself as an indivisible realm encompassing all manner of publics.

Habermas's history of the public sphere focuses primarily on the role of the public as a site for rational debate and critical interrogation of state authority. As we've seen, the public sphere as described by Habermas exists amid a complex array of various institutions: the organs of state power, the competitive and contentious world of the market and private enterprise, and the intimacies of the private sphere. For Habermas, the public, while representing a unique category of its own, must be understood in relationship to these other areas of activity.

Warner: Performative Publics

Habermas's analysis of the historical development of the public sphere draws attention to the structural relationships between the public and other realms of society. However, as many scholars have noted in response to Habermas, it is more productive to refer to publics—plural—

than to one unified public sphere. As Michael Warner explains, “the ideal unity of the public sphere is best understood as an imaginary convergence point that is the backdrop of critical discourse ... an implied but abstract point that is often referred to as ‘the public’ or ‘public opinion’” (55). For Warner, the distinctions between *a public* and *the public* are not always clear, and are in part dependent on how audiences understand the ways in which they are addressed. Warner observes that “when a form of discourse is not addressing an institutional or subcultural audience like a profession, its audience can understand itself not just as *a public* but as *the public*” (66). For Warner, then, the idealized unitary public sphere becomes a necessary fiction abstracted from audiences’ perception of their own place within public discourse. Recognizing a multiplicity of publics, rather than the idealized unitary public described by Habermas, opens up the opportunity to consider how different publics engage one another, and how subjects negotiate their places within different publics.

Given the importance such questions bear on this project, it is important to consider further how Warner articulates the work of publics. Early in *Publics and Counterpublics*, Warner asks us to consider “What is a public?” and suggests “two apparently contradictory facts” in response (9). First, a public is a social category which “seems to presuppose a contingent history, varying in subtle but significant ways from one context to another, from one set of institutions to another, from one rhetoric to another.” That is, no two publics are the same: understanding the ways a given public functions is necessarily dependent on understanding its historical conditions and the institutions, rhetorics, and materials forms supporting it. Second, Warner notes that despite this critical need for specificity in the study of publics, “the form seems to have a functional intelligibility across a wide range of contexts.” While Warner admits that the spread of publics as a cultural form might be a symptom of globalization or an effect of Western

colonialism, he nevertheless asserts that “no single history sufficiently explains” the ways publics have seemingly become a commonly understood way to discuss a complex social entity across cultural and historical contexts: “... the modern concept of a public seems to have floated free from its original context. Like the market or the nation—two cultural forms with which it shares a great deal—it has entered the repertoire of almost every culture. It has gone traveling” (10). Across these varied contexts, publics share a common dependence on texts and reflexivity. Warner explains that “the notion of a public enables a reflexivity in the circulation of texts among strangers who become, by virtue of their reflexively circulating discourse, a social entity” (10-11). In other words, while the history, content, and context of publics will vary across cultures and moments, publics share a common feature of textual circulation and a common function of reflexive awareness of such circulation.

In addition to these inherent features of publics, Warner describes several other features of contemporary publics: publics are self-organized, existing by virtue of discursive address (67); publics are constituted through attention to its constituent discourses (87); publics are social spaces formed by the reflexive circulation of discourse (90); and, finally, a public acts historically according to the temporal character of its constituent discourses (96).² Over the next few paragraphs, I’ll discuss each of these features in more detail.

Warner argues that publics are self-organized. As he explains, “a public is a space of discourse organized by nothing other than discourse itself. It is autotelic; it exists only as the end for which” texts are produced (67). A public “exists *by virtue of being addressed*.” Warner

² Warner also argues that publics are constituted by relations among strangers (74-5) and that publics comprise both personal and impersonal forms of address (76) but this observation doesn’t bear directly on the arguments I make about publics and public subjects in this work. My own interest in Warner’s work is more specifically motivated by his focus on the roles of discourse and of texts as integral elements in the shape and function of publics. The two features I omit from my discussion above can best be understood, I argue, as furthering the claims made by Habermas that publics work only through bracketing off questions of personal and social status. Such claims—especially as made by Habermas—have been problematized by Nancy Fraser (1992), among others.

admits that such a definition is circular, but points to such circularity as “essential to the phenomenon. A public might be real and efficacious, but its reality lies in just this reflexivity by which an addressable object is conjured into being in order to enable the very discourse that gives it existence.” As Warner notes elsewhere, publics come into being only by being addressed as publics: “The idea of a public is motivating, not simply instrumental. It is constitutive of social imaginary. The manner in which it is understood by participants is therefore not merely epiphenomenal ...” (12). As we have already seen, *a* public understands itself against the horizon of *the* public; however, Warner also argues that publics organize themselves “independent of state institutions, laws, formal frameworks of citizenship, or pre-existing institutions such as the church” (68). Because publics are thus independent of institutional support, their ability to function depends on members’ faith and confidence in belonging to a public. As Warner notes, “a public can only produce a sense of belonging and activity if it is self-organized through discourse rather than through an external framework” (70). Publics are by necessity bound up with discourse and exist wholly through those discourses which address them: “Publics do not exist apart from the discourse which addresses them” (72). Warner again admits the strangeness and circularity of this ontology when he writes: “The peculiar character of *a* public is that it is a space of discourse organized by discourse. It is self-creating and self-organized; and herein lies its power, as well as its elusive strangeness” (68-9). In this fashion, the public sphere described here by Warner is a fundamentally performative space: publicness is enacted and embodied in the very process of engagement with others on matter of shared concern and in shared spaces.

Warner extends this focus on a public’s self-organization into his discussion of another feature of publics: their constitution through members’ attention. Unlike the categories of social class or nationality, a public requires the active participation and attention of its members.

“Because a public exists only by virtue of its address, it must predicate some degree of attention, however notional, from its members” (87). Thus, unlike membership in other categories or institutions, membership in a public does not depend “on its’ members’ categorical classification, objectively determined position in the social structure, or material existence” (88). Rather, publics work by virtue of earning and cultivating their members’ attention to the discourses through which they are organized. Without such attention, publics have no way to sustain themselves since they exist apart from external frameworks and institutions; publics “commence with the moment of attention, must continually predicate renewed attention, and cease to exist when attention is no longer predicated.” This means also that membership in a particular public is never a given: publics “can be understood ... as having a free, voluntary, and active membership” (88-9). In this formulation, to be a member of a public—that is, to act as a public subject, to recall a discussion earlier in this chapter—one must choose to pay attention.

Of course, that invites a reasonable question: to what are members of a public asked to pay attention? For Warner, such a question is answered not by a single text, genre or medium, but instead by the reflexive circulation of discourse. Warner explains this as another key feature of publics: “Not texts themselves create publics, but the concatenation of texts through time. Only when previously existing discourse can be supposed, and when a responding discourse can be postulated, can a text address a public” (90). This conception of publics links discourses through the social character of publics rather than through “mere consecutiveness in time;” public discourse is defined through interaction, not sequence. This means too that the common metaphor of thinking publics as conversation is somewhat limited. Public discourses, even those of “the most rigorously argumentative and dialogic genres ... must accommodate themselves to the special conditions of public address; the agonistic interlocutor is coupled with passive

interlocutors, known enemies with indifferent strangers, parties present to a dialogue situation with parties whose textual location might be in other genres or other scenes of circulation entirely” (90-1). The circulation of public discourse as described here is not strictly dialogic but is rather polylogic, with any particular discourse accruing meaning from its own reflexive understanding of “the field of argument itself—its genre, its range of circulation, its stakes, its idiom, its repertoire of agencies” (91). Members of such publics experience this field in ways bound “both by material limits—means of production and distribution, the physical textual objects, social conditions of access—and by internal ones, including the need to presuppose forms of intelligibility already in place, as well as the social closure entailed by any selection of genre, idiolect, style, address, and so on” (73). From such experiences, “one projects a public” (91).

Such circulation is not a- or trans-historical, however. Warner makes clear that publics exist temporally in contingent moments while maintaining an eye toward future response. He writes: “Circulation organizes time and vice versa. Public discourse is contemporary, and it is oriented to the future; the contemporaneity and the futurity in question are those of its own circulation” (94). This temporal character of publics is key to their ability to exert agency. This feature of publics is explained by Warner’s claim that “publics act historically according to the temporality of their circulation” (96). While not all discourses circulate at the same rate, the temporal character of a public defines its ability to act within its historical moment: “The more punctual and abbreviated the circulation, and the more discourse indexes the punctuality of its own circulation, the closer a public stands to politics. At longer rhythms or more continuous flows, action becomes harder to imagine” (96). Because publics are contemporary, they can be said to act historically; Warner draws a sharp contrast between such publics and academic

publics, whose slower circulation limits their ability to exert agency (97). Rather, publics “have an ongoing life; one doesn’t publish to them once for all (as one does, say, to a scholarly archive).” Public discourse’s constant circulation, giving rise to other discourses in response (which in turn beget other responses, and so forth), “convinces us that publics have activity and duration.” This intertextual and intergeneric character of publics is obscured by metaphors of dialogue and conversation, but Warner admits why these remain “durable illusions: because they confer agency on publics.” Because of the constant circulation of public discourse, such “conversation” rarely actually ceases and transmutes to decision or action, according to Warner, but “the ideologization is crucial to the sense that publics act” (97). Nevertheless, the peculiar achievement of publics as a cultural form to allow participants “to understand themselves as directly and actively belonging to a social entity that exists historically ... and has consciousness of itself, though it has no existence apart from the activity of its own discursive circulation. In some contexts, it can even be understood to act in the world, to claim moral authority, to be sovereign” (105).

This achievement—i.e., the appearance that publics can enact some form of agency—should not obscure the fact that publics are also sites of struggle, of negotiations within and between publics about their own nature and social status. Warner observes that “when people address publics, they engage in struggles ... over the conditions that bring them together as a public” (12). Such struggles negotiate a public’s nature, its membership, its particular forms of address and modes of response and “have fateful consequences for the kind of social world to which we belong and for the kinds of actions and subjects that are possible in it.” While such struggles are part of the normal conditions for publics, they bear particularly on a special kind of public called counterpublics (56). Counterpublics, as described by Warner, exist in tension with

larger publics (or with the idealized unitary public sphere) by virtue of their distinct norms of discourse, behavior, and politics. “Discussion within such a public is understood to contravene the rules obtaining in the world at large, being structured by alternative dispositions or protocols, making different assumptions about what can be said or or what goes without saying” (56). As we’ve already seen, Warner argues that all publics are marked by a certain self-aware reflexivity, but the counterpublics he describes incorporate a further dimension of self-awareness: “This kind of public ... maintains at some level, conscious or not, an awareness of its subordinate status.”

Warner’s framing of counterpublics articulates relationships between various kinds of publics and positions counterpublics as sites of critique of the norms of other publics with greater social standing. Warner reminds us that a “counterpublic, against the background of the public sphere, enables a horizon of opinion and exchange; its exchanges remain distinct from authority and can have a critical relation to power ...” (56). Some of the publics in which Wayne State participates seem to maintain the kind of critical stance Warner describes here, writing that counterpublics are “ideological in that they provide a sense of active belonging that masks or compensates for the real powerlessness” of members of oppressed or repressed publics (113). In that regard, the institutional discourse surrounding Wayne State’s commitment to supporting access to higher education for racial and ethnic minorities and underprivileged students might be seen as a counterpublic discourse, an argument for greater educational and social inclusiveness on behalf of students who might otherwise lack such opportunities. However, it remains true that Wayne State, like any university, enjoys some advantage as a member of its publics by virtue of being a privileged institution of higher learning. Yet as an urban research university, especially one in a troubled urban site like Detroit, Wayne State in some ways must negotiate the demands of responding to counterpublics that are critical of more dominant narratives of educational

access and economic opportunity.

Warner's theory of publics provides a productive grounding for my study. Where Habermas is more focused on the historical development and ideological functions of the (idealized unitary) public sphere, Warner is much more attuned to how publics emerge from the circulation of discourse and how they function as a social space of interaction among their participants. In my reading of Warner, such participants can best be understood as the public subjects described above. Warner, then, offers a way to understand how public subjects come together—via the circulation of discourse—to relate to one another within the bounds of a given public. Such relationships, as we have seen, emerge from common attention to public discourses. Thus, what makes a subject a *public* subject is just such attention to and engagement with the reflexive circulation of public discourses. Focusing on this question of circulation helps to better explain the ways in which we might envision a university acting as a public subject: the University acts as a public subject when it produces discourses (or, perhaps more accurately, when such discourses are authored in the University's name) whose audiences are public and which can only be understood against the kind of social imaginary described by Warner. When the University produces such discourses, it signals that it is paying attention to the concerns of the publics in which it participates, just as would any other public subject. Of course, what remains to be understood is the character of such a public subject and the nature of its relationships to other public subjects. How does a university act as a public subject? To which publics does it address itself? How does a university understand its own publics and counterpublics? What relationships determine how the university enacts its public subjectivity?

Hauser: A Rhetorical Approach to Publics

Like Warner, Gerard Hauser understands the field of public discourse as made up of

multiple public spheres, rather than the unified bourgeois public described by Habermas. Unlike Warner, however, Hauser doesn't emphasize the possibilities for resistance and critique such an understanding warrants. Rather, as Hauser explains in *Vernacular Voices*, the multiple publics he envisions are related to one another in a "montage of discursive arenas" (20), set against the backdrop of civil society. Hauser borrows this term from Habermas, but rethinks it to emphasize plurality and polyvocality rather than unity and consensus, explaining that "*civil society* refers to *a network of associations independent of the state whose members, through social interactions that balance conflict and consensus, seek to regulate themselves in ways consistent with a valuation of difference*" (21). Hauser explains this description as a critique of the Habermasian model of the public sphere, which "*neglects the lattice of actually existing public spheres*" (48). Like other critics of Habermas, Hauser calls attention to the struggle undertaken by oppressed and repressed groups for access to the realm of public engagement. Such efforts "have produced an invasion of the bourgeois public sphere by a range of issues formerly sequestered in private, such as those of property relations brought by workers, of civil rights brought by people of color, of cultural bias brought by non-Christians, and of the family and control of one's body by women" (71). Hauser sees such efforts as indicating the diverse discursive arenas and ways of organizing modes of public engagement.

Such recognition, then, means recasting the idea of a unified public into something other.

Here, Hauser explains how these diverse publics relate to one another:

The contemporary Public Sphere³ has become a web of discursive arenas, each spread across society and even in some cases across national boundaries. Each of these arenas is itself composed of those members of society who, at the very least, are attending to a discourse on issues they share and who are able to understand and respond to the vernacular exchanges that exist outside power and yet are normative of it. Our direct

³ Hauser explains his use of terms as follows: "For better or worse, I have adopted the stylistic convention of referring to these multiple spheres as *arenas*, as well as *public spheres*, while retaining *Public Sphere* to refer to the undifferentiated public domain in which civic conversation, in general, occurs" (40).

daily encounters with others who share our discursive spaces may be local, but our awareness of association with others who are part of its dialogue extends to locales and participants who are strangers and yet whose participation we heed and consider. Collectively these weblike structures of a particular public sphere ... are joined to others in the reticulate Public Sphere, where their collective rhetorical practices produce society. (71-2)

For Hauser, then, the reticulate Public Sphere can be loosely thought of as the broad domain of public discourse writ large, comprised of local and more particular publics; in this telling, the Public Sphere functions, weblike, as a network of networks. In contrast, Hauser situates these more local publics as *“the interdependent members of society who hold different opinions about a mutual problem and who seek to influence its resolution through discourse”* (32). These publics are collectivities manifested through attention to matters of common concern and whose members engage one another through a broad array of discursive activities. Like Warner’s publics and counterpublics, Hauser’s publics similarly emerge from attention to texts and discourses: *“They are not pre-given; publics emerge as those who are actively creating and attending to these discursive processes for publicizing opinions, for making them felt by others”* (32-3). Hauser extends this last thought later in his book, when he explains that a *“public’s essential characteristic is its shared activity of exchanging opinion. Put differently, publics do not exist as entities but as processes; their collective reasoning is not defined by abstract reflection but by practical judgment”* (64). Thus, for Hauser as it was for Warner, publics are constituted as sites of discursive activity, of engagement and exchange. The structure of such a public resides in the processes its members undertake to engage one another; in turn, *“the ‘public sphere’”* (what Hauser above calls the *“Public Sphere”*) takes shape as *“a nested domain of particularized arenas or multiple spheres”* (60-1).

This dual emphasis, first on the multiplicity of publics, and second on the discursive processes through which publics manifest, marks Hauser’s understanding of the public sphere as

a rhetorical model of the public. In contrast to Habermas's disinterested interlocutors, Hauser stipulates a reticulate public sphere in which invested participants engage one another through an array of suasive strategies. As Hauser explains, "[a] rhetorical model of the public sphere would regard each of these engagements as part of the ensemble of discourse that constitutes civil society *A rhetorical model reveals rather than conceals the emergence of publics as a process*" (49). Hauser understands public spheres and, indeed, the very quality of publicness as being inherently rhetorical:

Emphasizing the discursive process by which publics form their views shifts the focus of analysis from a specific, concrete political entity to activity in the public realm. ... Sensible thought about publics requires capturing their activity: how they construct reality by establishing and synthesizing values, forming opinions, acceding to positions, and cooperating through symbolic actions, especially discursive ones. Put differently, any given public exists in its publicness, which is to say in its rhetorical character. (33)

Hauser here argues for a shift away from viewing publics, a la Habermas, as static entities, as stable sites in which discursive exchanges may take place. Rather, Hauser favors an understanding of publics, like Warner's, in which processes of discursive exchange are in themselves constitutive of public spheres. Hauser, though, goes further in explicitly naming as rhetorical an approach to public spheres centered on such discursive processes. Thus, Hauser can claim that "publics are *emergences* manifested through vernacular rhetoric" (14).

Hauser outlines six qualities by which this rhetorical model of the public sphere is defined. First, unlike the Habermasian public sphere's emphasis on class membership as entry to the public realm, Hauser's rhetorical public "is discourse based" (61). In place of emphasizing class, this model, "by contrast, emphasizes the prevailing discursive features in any given body of exchanges." This emphasis on discourse-based publics is underscored by the second quality Hauser explains: "a rhetorical model's critical norms are derived from actual discursive practices. This model replaces the norm of critical rationality with the rhetorical norm of

reasonableness.” This differs importantly from the Habermasian public sphere, with its normative insistence on an idealized assumption of disinterested rationality. Instead, Hauser’s rhetorical model understands that such assumptions are counterfactual to the way real publics function; publics work toward *reasonable* judgments, a standard which “acknowledges that there are no absolutes for assessing the force of a better argument since arguments have no force apart from satisfying those standards that particular publics are prepared to summon” (52). Third, Hauser’s rhetorical model understands the boundaries of publics to be permeable; exchanges in a given public are prone to slippage and can easily be joined by other interlocutors or taken up by other publics. Thus, “a rhetorical focus emphasizes indeterminate bracketing of discursive exchanges. ... When the outcome is public opinion, what starts as a dialogue becomes part of the multilogue of voices along the range of individuals and groups engaged by a public question” (62). Fourth, experience in a public’s discursive exchanges can determine a participant’s sense of self and community; in Hauser’s words, “a public sphere’s prevailing code acquires constitutive force.” Participation in publics bears upon their members’ interpretation of self- and group identity: “it provides orientation, value, and even a telos that defines the subject and the community.” Fifth, rhetorical publics are “specific to particular issues and audiences” (63). Hence, “rhetorically salient meanings are unstable” and unique to the publics which produce them; a rhetorical model of the public argues against the “rationalistic impulse to confine signification to a single category,” favoring instead polysemy and polyvocality. Finally, a rhetorical approach to publics “values communication that is conducive, where possible, to the formation of shared judgments.” This model, like Habermas’s, stipulates appropriate conditions for public discourse: “It must be accessible to all citizens; there must be access to information; specific means of transmitting information must be accessible to those who can be influenced by

it.” Unlike the bourgeois public sphere described by Habermas, however, “a rhetorical model recognizes that in a democracy consensus is not always possible, nor is consensus the test for whether a public sphere has functioned openly and inclusively in encouraging the the judgments that actually do accrue” (62-3). Thus, as we see here, Hauser’s rhetorical public sphere is based on actual discourse practices functions within permeable boundaries is determinant of subject and group identities; is bound to specific issues and audiences; and, finally, emphasizes reasonable judgments over the assumed rationally critical need for consensus.

I share an interest in what Hauser describes as the “rhetoricity” (58) of publics. The approach I call for here emphasizes the permeability and multiplicity of publics: in situating Wayne State amid its academic research and local urban publics, I am arguing that public subjects can profess membership to multiple publics and can move between them—although, as we shall see, not without friction. Importantly, Hauser observes that participation in such publics is a determining force on how subjects understand themselves and their relationships to their communities. In a rhetorical model of the public sphere, attention to the discourses from which a public emerges opens for examination the way its members construct both the public itself and their place within it. This bears importantly on my study. As described above, I am interested in how Wayne State understands both its roles within its own publics, and in how it understands the relationships between those publics themselves. Within a Habermasian model, such questions are closed off by the presumption of the stability and unity of the public sphere, but Hauser’s rhetorical model of the public makes possible and encourages such analysis. Although Hauser’s rhetorical model rightly calls attention to the ways in which participation in publics enable participants’ identification with communities through discursive exchange, it doesn’t fully answer the question of how public discourses make possible different kinds of public

subjectivities for those participants.

Rice: Public Subjects and Public Spaces

As Warner and Hauser remind us, publics exist primarily as a matter of relationships—relationships between interlocutors and onlookers addressing matters of common public concern. Like Warner and Hauser, Jenny Rice in *Distant Publics* understands publics as emerging from relationships between subjects engaging one another on matters of common concern. Early in her book, Rice describes in detail how publics take shape amidst these relationships:

When I use the term “publics” ... I am referencing the active exchanges of discourse that are happening in ordinary spaces of encounter. Listening to publics demands that we pay attention to the nonofficial spaces where such communally sustained consciousness is developed: letters to newspapers, blogs, informal conversations that happen in public spaces, talk radio calls, online message boards, bumper stickers, flyers, community newsletters, rallies, and neighborhood meetings. These are not simply spaces in which publics meet together, but the discursive exchanges that happen here are actually (re)creating publics with every moment. ... Publics are not reducible to individual speakers or writers; the exchange of talk cultivates communal meanings and public subjectivities. (19-20)

I cite this passage at length because it reveals two important claims about how publics might be understood to function. First, Rice argues (like Warner) that publics are fundamentally *relational*; that is, identifying any site as a public means claiming it as a site in which its subjects are involved in networks of discursive exchange and circulation. A public space is thus never a passive space but instead is always an active one, occupied by the dynamics of rhetorical engagement between subjects. Second, Rice here underscores a claim we have already considered about public subjects. Public subjectivity, as Rice explains it, does not simply participate in the activity of a public. Rather, public subjectivity emerges from the throes of engagement with other public subjects—such subjects are always among others like them. As she writes in a later chapter, “I am less interested in ontological questions of subjectivity than I

am in the question of how we come to think of ourselves as beings that exist in relation to others. That is, I am interested in certain modes of encountering and interacting with others” (59). For Rice, it is this notion of public subjectivity as emerging from the process of rhetorical engagement with multiple public subjects that demands investigation.

Toward that end, Rice offers a heuristic she describes as a “publics approach” to investigate the ways public discourse cultivates and draws upon various kinds of public subjectivities. In the context of her study of development debates in and around Austin, TX, Rice describes a “publics approach to place, which reads discourses of place both as symptoms and as catalysts of public subjectivities. Such an approach investigates the discourse itself in order to understand how people imagine themselves in relation to the publics that populate, change, and undergo this physical space” (14). This publics approach is meant to trace out the ways “discourse helps to create particular kinds of *public subjectivities*. How is the discourse underwritten by specific subject positions, and how does that discourse simultaneously help to cultivate and sustain those subject positions” (13)? As I’ve already briefly described, these public subjectivities are bound up in the activity of being rhetorically engaged with other subjects. In particular, this publics approach understands publics and public subjects as tied to the material realities of the physical spaces they inhabit. It seeks to identify “common patterns of everyday talk in order to uncover the ways people read themselves into ... rhetorical acts” (15). What emerges from these patterns is an understanding of how public discourse enables and fosters public subjectivities. A publics approach “simply interrogates place-based exchanges for the kinds of public subjectivities that are being cultivated and drawn upon” (15). Rice describes this approach as concerned with the “habits and practices of the publics who can and do affect” the material spaces they inhabit (14). Thus, a publics approach like the one described by Rice

understands publics and public subjects as capable of exerting agency upon the material world.

I understand this to be a key facet of the way that Rice understands publics, public subjects, and public subjectivity. In Rice's telling, publics are not merely discursive spaces. Rather, just as Hauser's rhetorical model emphasizes a public's emergence from discursive activity, Rice sees that it is through the processes of engagement and participation with other public subjects that public subjects can express their own claims about public subjectivity. Moreover, Rice claims materiality and embodiment as part and parcel of public subjectivity. While I have already argued that such public subjects are bound up in relations to other subjects, it is worth emphasizing here that such relations are not merely discursive—nor are they strictly only relations to other subjects. Drawing on the work of Ronald Walter Greene, Rice reminds us that “the subject is more than an effect of language. Subjectification is a process embedded in material forms of production” (47). The public subjects Rice describes exist not just in discourse, but in the context of material relations to the world. Although the publics approach she describes is driven by close attention to the discourses of public activity, Rice observes that such discourses “are given shelter ... in material places like newspaper stories, letters to the editor, flyers, neighborhood newsletters, and ordinary conversations” (47). Realizing the materiality inherent in the production of public subjectivity should encourage scholars of public rhetoric to “begin by reading the techniques and technologies of such production. Furthermore, this method might also examine the institutions and material apparatuses that house these technologies.” Attention to these technologies, institutions, and apparatuses first means taking seriously the material nature of publics and public subjectivity. While a public approach is nevertheless concerned with public discourse, it does not divorce such discourses from their material backdrops or from the material experiences of public subjects. Instead, this approach “calls for

investigation into the ways people come to think of themselves as subjects who exist in relation to others and to the world.” That is, pursuing a publics approach means understanding public subjects as both discursive and material entities.

This emphasis on materiality is important, for, as Rice explains, a publics approach—in addition to serving as a critical heuristic—is a way to intervene in the production of public subjectivities and to foster a more powerful and robust public discourse. Rice casts this a call to the full powers of rhetorical critics and scholars: “We are rhetoricians. I say this not in order to police disciplinary borders, but rather because I want to celebrate our strengths as critics of public discourse. A publics approach intervenes in crisis in an appropriate way for a rhetorician: at the level of public talk. ... [I]t is public talk that most needs our critical intervention” (16). Such intervention is necessary because of two deleterious trends. First, public discourse has suffered as a result of “the disappearance of public space. Physical common spaces are rapidly decreasing in both urban and suburban areas ...” (39). This erosion of common space for rhetorical encounter with other public subjects, in Rice’s telling, “arguably stunts our ability to imagine ourselves as a public.” Second, and as a result, those sites of eroded public discourse that are available do not produce the richly fertile kinds of discourse Rice envisions. Instead, Rice has it, “these exchanges are not as rhetorically powerful as they should be. If we genuinely wish to encourage sustainable thinking and intervention into place crisis, therefore, we must make public discourse as productive as possible” (17). A publics approach is thus not merely a method or heuristic, though it certainly is both of those, as well. It is also, importantly, an attempt to intervene in the ways public discourses draw on and deploy different kinds of public subjectivities. A publics approach asks rhetorical scholars to bring their critical powers to bear on the work of intervening in and improving the quality of public discourse. For although

discourse remains the appropriate site of intervention for rhetorical critics, Rice remains sanguine about how such intervention might bear material effects: “By transforming the kinds of subjects that public talk makes, we can transform the kinds of rhetorical actions those subjects make” (164).

This sense of mission is also addressed to the relationship between public subjects and the spaces they inhabit. “Perhaps more than ever,” Rice writes, “we need to help cultivate and support public subjects who can make ethical interventions into our endangered places” (40). Indeed, Rice underscores the function of the publics approach as an intervention into how public subjects interact with the material realities of space and place. Taking up a publics approach means sharing the goal of trying to “imagine how we can improve discourse in order to repair damaged places and promote long-term, sustainable futures” (14). For Rice, the endangered, damaged site is Austin.

For my project, the sites at risk are Wayne State and Detroit. My project focuses on a large-scale educational institution, Wayne State University, and the tensions between its academic and urban publics. Drawing from a number of institutional texts—institutional histories, presidential communiques, reports, course bulletins, press releases, websites, and other materials—my project studies Wayne State’s efforts in both historical and contemporary settings to define its place as a public subject acting in both the academic research and the local urban public spheres. A public urban research university and an anchor institution in Detroit’s Midtown community and in the broader metropolitan region, Wayne State has defined and redefined its place as public subject several times throughout its nearly one hundred fifty-year history. These shifting accounts of its public responsibilities suggest Wayne State as a rich and complex case study for understanding how large institutions participate in the work of the publics in which

they are embedded. In particular, this project focuses on Wayne State's urban mission as a lens through which to consider its protean public role. The publics approach I use here, focused on the university's urban mission, opens for consideration the ways the university has both expanded and contracted its relationships to its local and academic publics in the past half-century. This analysis describes how Wayne State's function as a public subject has shifted in the face of both mission retrenchment (for example, the tightening of admissions requirements or the closing of its Division of Community Education) and mission creep (for example, its establishment of the TechTown economic incubator enterprise or its expansion of public safety efforts beyond the university campus). The archive of texts assembled here follows the development of how Wayne State's urban mission has been articulated from its historical roots in the University's nineteenth and early twentieth century precursor institutions; to its present articulation with its own roots in the middle-1960s; and to possible future articulations through the lens of an emergent "culture of entrepreneurialism."

In undertaking this study, my main methodological framework is the publics approach explained by Jenny Rice. As described above, Rice's publics approach investigates the ways in which public discourse cultivates and draws upon various kinds of public subjectivities. In Rice's work, this method is applied to public debates about community development in and around Austin, Texas. Rice's study analyzes how from these discourses emerge subject positions which describe forms of public response available to interlocutors and other participants in the Austin development debates. The publics approach which draws from these analyses takes as its object of inquiry the way rhetorical engagement with public discourse determines the forms of public subjectivities available to participants in such discussions.

A publics approach like the one I am extrapolating from Rice relies upon three

assumptions (20). First, we “must be willing to accept that subjectivities are created through prior and ongoing talk.” Second, we “also must be willing to accept that vernacular discourse is generative.” Finally, we must accept “that certain talk cultivates subjectivities, and that these subjectivities can sometimes lead toward ineffective ways of acting in the world.” These assumptions power the publics approach as one example of what Rice describes as a rhetoric of inquiry. Drawing on network theory, such a rhetoric recognizes that “[c]rises and controversies are networks, and they invite our investigation into them. Inquiry is an endless survey of these networks within which a crisis is embedded” (168). A publics approach, working within the rhetoric of inquiry, manifests as “the investigation of networked relations.” Such an inquiry doesn’t seek to resolve a crisis or claim authority over it, but rather to understand how it is made up of relationships between subjects and the material conditions they inhabit. The goal is to “uncover the composition of a given scene” (169) by answering questions such as “How is it composed? What are the working relations? How can we change the relations to remake this process” (168)? In resisting the urge toward resolution in favor of producing a network tracing of relationships among subjects (171), a rhetoric of inquiry instead finds itself building a complex articulation of relationships. For Rice, “the work of rhetorical inquiry actually encourages a sustained and ongoing investigation through the work of tracing, collecting, archiving, and reading the networks” (179). It is in understanding these networks that the power of a publics approach to intervene in sites of crisis becomes clearest. “The political potential of network inquiry lies in its ability to imagine new relations, thus creating a new network of meanings” (172). Once existing relations are mapped and understood in their networked complexity, it becomes possible to envision new connections and new relations.

Rice marks her publics approach as one which intervenes at the level of public vernacular

talk—not at the level of specialized institutional texts. While not wishing to diminish the importance of such discourses, an exclusive focus on the level of vernacular exchange risks losing a better understanding of how institutions and organizations inhabit public spaces. Many many institutions and organizations may certainly participate in the kinds of vernacular discourses Rice identifies above, but equating public discourse with a vernacular register means unwittingly overlooking the many different kinds of texts created by, within, and on behalf of large institutions and organizations. Ignoring such texts means closing off the opportunity to understand how institutions situate themselves amongst other subjects alongside whom they participate in public discussion and engagement. Our understanding of how public spaces function—of how public subjects engage one another—is limited if we do not more fully acknowledge the role that institutions and organizations play in shaping the subjects of public discussion.

There exists a growing concern with the erosion of public space and with it the falling away of appropriate sites of public engagement; Rice herself voices such concerns, though it is echoed in work by scholars like Nancy Welch (2008) and David Fleming (2008). These concerns are exacerbated by what Rice tantalizingly refers to as “institutional opacity” (17). That is, one of the difficulties in understanding how public discourses work is that our understanding is limited for not seeing more clearly how institutional public subjectivity is driven by discussions internal to the institution. As Rice observes, decisions about how institutions and organizations act in public spaces “are often made in processes that are far removed from the public sphere.” Such processes are often indeed occluded by the demands of confidentiality or the need to preserve proprietary information. Turning our attention as scholars of publics and public rhetoric to the kinds of institutional texts considered here is an attempt to demystify such processes and to

introduce greater transparency to opaque institutional rhetoric. In this dissertation, I attempt to show how a corpus of institutional texts might be read in an effort to shed light on how institutions like Wayne State discover, articulate, and forward their roles as public subjects. Such institutions are not isolated from the publics and spaces which they occupy. Rather, such institutions are part of the warp and woof of ordinary life. These institutions play important roles in the publics in which they participate: as sites of study, discussion, and labor; as hosts for community engagement and outreach efforts; as repositories of archival knowledge; as drivers of community and economic development; and as the objects themselves of public debate and discussion. Given the complex ways such institutions inhabit and participate in publics, a publics approach to institutional texts is an appropriate way to make sense of the institutional texts in which I am interested.

Project Description

As applied in my project, a publics approach to institutional texts focuses on how the discourses created within or on behalf of large institutions determine or describe the ways a given institution articulates its place as a subject within its multiple constituent publics. My project claims that such a publics approach proves a generative theoretical and methodological framework for analyzing how Wayne State or other institutions function as public subjects when they address their own unique community and academic publics. Applying a publics approach to Wayne State, I will argue that the university has defined itself as a public subject within debates about race, educational access, and economic development in the city of Detroit, even when such commitments to its local urban publics have existed uneasily with its ambitions to function as a recognized member of its academic public as an urban research university with a primary

mission to produce and teach research in an academic context.

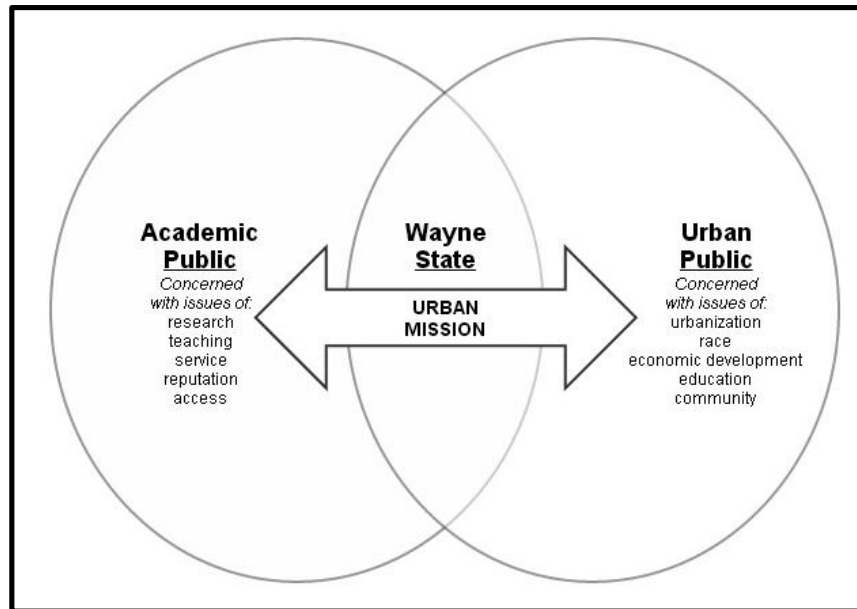


Figure 4: Wayne State and its Publics

My argument that Wayne State occupies a site of tension between its local urban public and its academic public is diagrammed in Figure 4 above. As suggested by this diagram, Wayne State is an institutional public subject participating in multiple publics. To be clear, I do not argue that the publics represented in Figure 4 above are the *only* publics in which Wayne State participates: we could easily posit other such arenas of discursive engagement in which it functions. However, the place of prominence given to Wayne State's urban mission on its website and in other institutional texts signals that the University places a unique and special emphasis on its relationship to Detroit, and thus (in my reading) on its local urban public. In Figure 4 above, Wayne State is an institutional public subject whose competing investments in its local urban publics and its academic publics produce a legible pull on the shape and scale of its institutional priorities. This is especially clear through analysis of the University's urban

mission. While some issues are unique to each public's concerns, others, like the application of research to urban problems, or that of educational access and opportunity, reflect concerns relevant to both publics; the urban mission thus addresses some questions relevant to Wayne State's involvement in both publics. However, the scope of the University's urban mission, as this dissertation will show, often exceeds such shared concerns to encompass more local issues like Detroit's racial tensions, economic inequalities, and urban strife. To be sure, Detroit is not alone in facing such issues. The emergence of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in response to police violence against African Americans in cities as diverse as New York, Baltimore, and Ferguson highlights the fact that such issues are both broadly national as well as bound to specific local contingencies. While the specific arguments of the BLM movement are not relevant to this project, BLM has done important work to show that problems like those impacting Detroit are widespread even as they take specific forms in specific communities. In Detroit, for example, the erosion of the city's industrial economic base over the past four decades has exacerbated problems of unemployment and economic inequality; likewise, the legacy of changing population patterns (i.e., "White Flight") has sharpened tensions both along racial lines and between the city's urban center and its outlying suburban communities. While the University clearly cannot address itself to all such problems, these problems form the backdrop to institutional engagement with Detroit, and the urban mission nonetheless calls upon Wayne State to make some effort toward the alleviation of some of these issues. Attention to these and other local concerns has often left Wayne State uneasily situated between its competing publics: on one hand, its commitment to its local urban public is freighted with the University's legacy of contribution to the city; on the other, its commitment to its national academic public is intertwined with its institutional aspirations. Involvement and investment in one public limits the

resources available to participate in the other, yet both publics make legitimate demands for Wayne State's attention. In my project, the urban mission and Wayne State's changing articulations thereof become the entry point into analyzing the tensions between these publics and how the University has negotiated these competing demands.

Such analysis draws on a wide body of institutional texts, defined above as various kinds of written documents created within institutions for various audiences and purposes. Such texts are significant for my project for two reasons. First, institutional texts articulate the publics in which Wayne State participates. Careful reading and analysis of institutional texts, like the kind I attempt here, discover that such texts, rather than being merely pragmatic or functional, are deeply public and richly rhetorical. That is, a publics approach to institutional texts makes plain the ways that the causes and issues of an institutional public subject's constituent publics are evoked in such texts. For example, Chapter Two identifies a consistent preoccupation across a number of texts, but especially in the papers of President Hilberry as cited in the University course catalogs, with the question of how Wayne State should balance its engagement with Detroit with its aspirations for institutional prestige. Such preoccupation underscores the pull of competing publics to which Wayne State is subjected. While such texts, of course, do not often explicitly invoke publics or public subjectivity as the stakes grounding such questions, a publics approach to institutional texts seeks to uncover how they nonetheless trace out the articulations of Wayne State's processes of public subjectivity and how the University negotiates the tensions between its publics. These institutional texts show Wayne State as a public subject deeply engaged by the issues and topics taken up by the other subjects of the publics in which it participates (as suggested by Figure 4). An important component of my publics approach to institutional texts, then, is reclaiming such documents as valid objects of scholarly study.

Second, institutional texts underscore that publics, and the public subjects which inhabit them, exist temporally. As shown above in my discussion of Warner, publics coalesce with their own tempos of engagement and circulation; Warner, for example, highlights the temporal difference between academic and other publics. It follows, then, that public subjects must be attuned to the tempos and rhythms of the publics in which they participate. This is certainly the case for institutional public subjects as well, although we will see that the differing tempos of engagement between publics can be sites of tension for an institutional public subject like Wayne State. In Chapter Three, for example, we will see in the archived papers of President William Rea Keast a concern that the University's natural tempo—the ruminative pace of scholarly engagement—is inadequate to the urgent demands of Wayne State's local urban public and its social and economic plight. The institutional texts through which institutional public subjects engage their varying publics necessarily carry the imprint of this temporality. First and foremost, such texts of necessity reflect the issues and concerns relevant to the moments in which they are created; we would of course expect that to be true of any texts relevant to public engagement. Yet because the institutions responsible for such texts persist across time in spans far longer than the lives of individual public subjects, institutional texts are perhaps more likely to be accessible to scholars in institutional collections like archives and libraries. Scholars of institutional public subjects, then, have the opportunity to see how such subjects change over time, addressing new issues and abandoning old ones, returning to some questions over and over again, negotiating and renegotiating how they participate in their various constituent publics.

Wayne State's urban mission, then, is an ideal focal point for this study. It functions in this project as the crux against which Wayne State's role as a public subject has been articulated and negotiated. Because the shifting limits and scope of the urban mission can be tracked

through the University's institutional texts, so too can the changing ways in which Wayne State has articulated its public roles. Of course, Wayne State is not the only urban university to proclaim an urban mission, but it is perhaps unique in that its urban mission can be traced back to the founding of its earliest precursor institutions. Wayne State's urban mission, as this dissertation will show, has always been integral to the University's sense of itself. It thus comes as no surprise that the urban mission should be so central to Wayne State's attempts to define itself as an institutional public subject, and the three chapters that follow roughly echo the development of Wayne State's urban mission. Chapter Two, which follows the urban mission from Wayne State's earliest precursor institution through its articulation in the early 1960s, is primarily occupied with the past of the urban mission. Chapter Three, which picks up the historical narrative of Chapter One and traces the urban mission through its articulation in current texts, is primarily occupied with the present of the urban mission. In turn, Chapter Four, which focuses on emerging themes of economic development in Wayne State's institutional texts, offers some conjecture about the future of the urban mission. Through a public approach to the University's institutional texts, then, we can trace the past, present, and future of the urban mission, and through such tracing better understand how Wayne State's processes of public subjectivity have likewise changed.

Wayne State's institutional texts can be read as narrating a complex and continuing negotiation of the appropriate extent and character of the university's participation in and engagement with its local urban publics and its academic publics. Many of these texts are hosted in official University archives; these include, for example, the presidential papers discussed in Chapter Two and many of the course bulletins discussed in Chapters Two and Three. Other texts read here are recent or current University documents. These include the University websites

described above; the recent course bulletins discussed in Chapter Three; and many of the sites and materials connected to TechTown, Wayne State's technology business incubator, discussed in Chapter Four. Yet as this project developed, I discovered that it would need to draw as well on unofficial University archives; these unofficial archives are comprised of obsolete websites and digital versions of presidential communications. Such texts, either overlooked by the official University archives or not yet available for public access at the official archive, were accessed through the *Wayback Machine*, the publicly accessible site supported by the Internet Archive organization. This unofficial University archive, then, exists in the servers and digital storage of the Internet Archive: cached versions of the University's "About Us" page, of the Office of the President's website, and of several generations of TechTown's websites have all informed this project. In the following chapters, this project will undertake an analysis of the institutional texts produced by and within Wayne State University with a particular interest in how such texts both define the university as a public subject, and how they help illuminate how the institution has negotiated tensions between its urban and academic publics.

In reading these institutional texts, I have focused largely on the arguments and claims made in the written discursive text of these documents. I admit that this focus is a narrow one, and does not fully address other questions about the visual and material design of such texts. Wayne State, like many contemporary universities, has established standards governing the design and appearance of many of its official documents. At Wayne State, such standards are overseen by the staff of the Marketing and Communications office, who work to "lead the institution's branding efforts and collaborate with schools and colleges, offices and departments, faculty, staff, students and alumni in activities designed to support the goals and objectives of individual units and the overall university" ("Marketing and Communications"). This office

ensures that institutional texts share a common visual style and vocabulary by publicizing the standards for such documents through the “Wayne State University Identity Manual,” a guide to the expectations for the visual design and layout of University documents. This guide and the design standards it mandates make their own arguments about what kind of institutional public subject Wayne State envisions itself to be. While I will say more about my method of selecting and analyzing texts in the final chapter, here I note that my focus on the written text in such documents focuses the scope of this project on those claims, explicit and implicit, that the University makes for itself as a public subject through the written discursive components of such texts. As I demonstrate throughout the dissertation, such documents have much to reveal about the ways in which Wayne State has articulated its role as an institutional public subject.

Chapter Two, “‘A Wholly New Type of University:’ Wayne State’s First Century,” narrates Wayne State’s first hundred years. Focusing on the University’s historical relationship to Detroit, this chapter draws on institutional history and archival materials to trace the historical development of Wayne State’s urban mission. This chapter looks at *A Place of Light*, an institutional history commissioned in celebration of the University’s first century, to better understand how a background of engagement with the city might have shaped a later, more formal declaration of the urban mission. In a similar vein, this chapter also draws from archived University course bulletins from the 1950s and 1960s. Situating these texts as constituting an extended discussion of Wayne State’s place in both its academic and local urban publics, I focus here on comments from University President Clarence Hilberry (1952-1965), cited in the bulletins, on Wayne State’s identity as an “urban university.” This chapter reads these texts, and Hanawalt’s history of the university, to explain how understanding Wayne State’s historical commitments to Detroit are a necessary part of analyzing its role today as an institutional public

subject.

For example, in my discussion of *A Place of Light*, authored by Wayne State professor of English Leslie Hanawalt, I focus in part on the University's relationship to the City of Detroit's Board of Education. Throughout much of its first century, the University and its precursor institutions (namely, the Detroit Medical College, the Detroit Normal Training School, and the Detroit Junior College) were governed by the Detroit Board; by extension, then, the University's early history was heavily determined by the relationship between University administration and members of city government: the leadership and members of the Board of Education, the Common Council, and the Mayor. While civil politics are not themselves the focus of the chapter, we will see how competition and wrangling between the divisions of city government often influenced the University's attempts to expand and evolve. This chapter, then, reads *A Place of Light* and other institutional texts to see how Wayne State has historically characterized and managed its relationship to its urban public and to the city. What emerges here is a portrait of the University caught between its local commitments to the city and its ambitions to establish its reputation as an educational institution of high renown.

Chapter Three, "'Special Obligations:' William Rea Keast, Wayne State and the Urban University Ideal," resumes the history begun in Chapter Two. In this chapter, I track the contemporary articulation of Wayne State's urban mission to its roots in the middle-1960s, noting the particular influence of former University President William Rea Keast. In reading and analyzing Keast's archived papers, I argue that his presidency (1965-1971) was marked by an interest in what I describe as "the urban university ideal:" an optimistic, if possibly phantasmatic, vision of Wayne State as "the nation's unique urban university" (Report to the Faculty, 24 October 1969) dedicated in both its teaching and research work to the alleviation of the pressures

of urbanization. I then turn to a 1968 report, *Wayne and the Inner City*, to show how Keast's vision was being put into practice in the wake of the 1967 Detroit riots. This focus on Wayne State in the middle and late 1960s is then followed by a return to the University course bulletins. Following these documents from the 1970s up through the current bulletins of the 2010s, I show that, despite Keast's efforts in the 1960s, the University has been slow to commit to his urban university ideal. This chapter, then, seeks to ask what was the significance of such an ideal, and what it means for Wayne State not to have fully embraced it.

In this chapter, for example, one of the texts I analyze is Keast's inaugural address, delivered to the University in October 1965. In this address, titled "The Urban University," Keast takes as his theme the "profound, though as yet largely undefined, role" of the urban university. Focusing on problems of urbanization such as poverty and racial inequality, Keast argues that the defining characteristic of urban universities in their "engagement with the pressing problems of city life." Building from this description, Keast establishes what I describe as an *urban university ideal*, a conceptualization of the urban university as a center for the research of and intervention into social ills associated with mass urbanization. This chapter tracks the development of this ideal through Keast's papers and the *Wayne and the Inner City* report before turning to see how this ideal is reflected in the course bulletins of Keast's era and of the years following his presidency. The juxtaposition of Keast's papers and the report with the university bulletins raises significant questions about how Wayne State articulates its mission in terms of its commitments to both its academic and local urban publics.

Chapter Four, "'A University of Opportunity': Wayne State, TechTown, and the Entrepreneurial University," expands my investigation of Wayne State's public subjectivity and its urban mission into its most current forms, investigating institutional texts from the turn of the

twenty-first century forward. In particular, this chapter turns around two intertwined sets of institutional texts: the first describing the emergence of a “culture of entrepreneurialism” at Wayne State; the second about TechTown Detroit, a business incubator and entrepreneurial development hub sponsored by Wayne State University, Henry Ford Health System, and General Motors. In the first part of this chapter, I examine an array of documents from Wayne State’s four most recent presidents, following a thread which describes economic development and entrepreneurialism as new priorities for the University. I then offer a brief account of TechTown’s history, focusing on how accounts of its founding and development mark it as both continuous with and divergent from Detroit’s industrial history. Then, I present a reading of archived and current TechTown documents, focusing on TechTown’s changing roster of programs and shifting descriptions of mission. Reading TechTown as a proxy for Wayne State, this chapter discovers a significant change in the University’s urban mission that would tie Wayne’s urban mission toward economic development and entrepreneurialism rather than to its traditional research functions.

For example, in this chapter I present a reading of several current and archived versions of TechTown’s website. Reading this site across several versions, I argue in this chapter that the development of TechTown’s own descriptions of itself have evolved parallel to an emerging discourse about economic development evident in the presidential communications read elsewhere in this chapter. By focusing on how TechTown’s own institutional texts portray entrepreneurs and entrepreneurialism, this chapter traces how Wayne State’s urban mission has shifted in response to these emerging entrepreneurial discourses. This chapter, then, argues for the emergence of the figure of the entrepreneur as central to understanding the future of Wayne State’s urban mission.

Chapter Five, “Conclusion: Theory and Method,” draws my dissertation to a close by expanding the insights of Chapters Two through Four into broader claims about the theoretical and methodological agendas of this project. In the first part of this conclusion, I sharpen my focus to the theoretical claims to which my project points about Wayne State’s urban mission specifically and institutional public subjectivity more broadly. Here, I argue that the urban mission at Wayne State needs to be understood as the product of a public subject; that, indeed, the urban mission is itself *necessarily* public; and that the urban mission becomes especially visible as a site of institutional tension. Pushing these insights about Wayne State’s urban mission further, I then make three arguments about the nature of institutional public subjectivity which emerge from the discussions in the preceding chapters: institutional public subjects are functionally self-aware of their roles *as public subjects*; institutional public subjects are historically situated; and, finally, institutional public subjects exert real material agency within the publics they inhabit. In the second part of this chapter, I weave together the methodological threads of earlier chapters to discuss in greater detail how my publics approach to institutional texts works as a model for future research. By focusing on the discovery and analysis of institutional texts, I pay particular attention to the complex readings of institutional subjectivity that such a method produces. Finally, this conclusion ends by briefly discussing several acknowledged limits to my study and by pointing to future directions scholars might take the study of institutional public subjectivity.

Chapter Two: “‘A Wholly New Type of University:’ Wayne State’s First Century”

We should expect something special to happen at Wayne State because our character is special. We are urban. Our graduates should become urbane. Since the liberal disciplines are central to the Wayne State programs, what particular qualities of urbanity should the citizens of Michigan expect their sons and daughters to attain at this university?

President Clarence Hilberry, informal notes to the faculties, 1961

Introduction

In Chapter One, I introduced my central claim that institutions, like individuals, can be read as participants in their own publics; as participants in public spheres, institutions take on the role of public subjects and engage with others on matters of shared public concern. The processes through which such engagement occurs, described here as public subjectivity, occur through material and textual relations with other public subjects. As we have seen, scholars like Jenny Rice have focused their own analyses of public rhetoric on the vernacular talk and texts created by individual persons in response to diverse rhetorical exigencies. While these studies are important for their insistence on the value of such vernacular rhetorical performances, they are also limited by a blind spot which fails to account for the ways institutions participate in public spheres. Yet Rice’s publics approach also gives us a way to ease the limits of this blind spot: by looking at the texts produced within and on behalf of large-scale institutions—texts I describe here as institutional texts—we can analyze the ways institutions envision themselves as public subjects.

As a public subject, Wayne State most clearly addresses itself to two publics which do not always clearly complement one another. As a public urban research university, Wayne State is engaged with an academic public absorbed by questions of research, standings, enrollment, funding, pedagogy, and administration. This public, as we have seen in Warner’s description of

academic publics in the preceding chapter, is characterized by a long, slow, continuous temporality that makes difficult the execution of action or agency in response to immediate contingencies: the purpose of the academic public, as Warner describes it, is one of discussion and contemplation, not urgency or action. Within its own context, such an orientation is appropriate for academia's focus on the discussion and exchange of intellectual novelties. Yet Wayne State, as we've already seen, also envisions itself as a participant in an urban public engaged by questions situated amid the social and economic problems of Detroit and its metropolitan area. Such a public, of necessity, requires quicker and more flexible responses than an academic public. As explained in Chapter One, I focus on Wayne State's "urban mission" as a key rhetorical trope to explore the tension between these two competing visions of Wayne State's public subjectivity.

In this chapter, I take up the history of Wayne State's urban mission and the history of the university's relationship to its urban public. Despite its centrality to Wayne State's current articulation of its public role, the urban mission is the product of Wayne State's long history of engagement with its academic and urban publics. As I will show, while Wayne State and its precursors have identified themselves in part by their relationships to Detroit since at least the late nineteenth century (Hanawalt 22, 63), the university has not always explicitly claimed for itself a unique urban mission. Wayne State's relationship to its urban Detroit public is thus a complex one with its own history, and understanding that relationship and its history is important to the substance of the argument I make here about Wayne State as a public subject. In this chapter, I take up a variety of institutional texts to better understand the historical roots of the University's urban mission. This historical work serves the paired arguments to which I return in this chapter's conclusion: first, that understanding an institution's processes of public

subjectivity requires an exegesis of its historical engagements with its constituent publics; and second, that Wayne State's own processes of institutional public subjectivity are marked above all by a friction between its national and international academic public and its local, urban Detroit public.

The history offered in this chapter covers slightly less than Wayne State's first hundred years of existence; this chapter traces Wayne State's history from the founding of its precursor institutions in 1868 through 1965, the year William Rea Keast assumed the presidency of the University (we will hear much more about Keast in the following chapter). From its precursor institutions founded in the mid-nineteenth century to its place in pre-riot Detroit in the mid-twentieth, the history of Wayne State unsurprisingly often intersects with that of Detroit. Here, my focus remains on the history of Wayne State and its urban mission, but with a particular interest in those moments in which the university most clearly engages the city of Detroit and their shared urban public. I focus on these hundred years because they constitute the years covered by Leslie Hanawalt's history of the university, *A Place of Light*. Commissioned by University President Clarence Hilberry in 1956, Hanawalt's history of the university was prepared as part of the university's centennial celebrations in 1968. Leslie Hanawalt, as revealed in *A Place of Light* itself, joined the Colleges of the City of Detroit (one of the University's precursor institutions) in 1929 as an instructor of English (217; 259), serving throughout his career as chair of the University's faculty library committee (259), admissions officer (215), chair of the Department of English, and director of the centennial's History of Wayne project (446). While Hanawalt does not explicitly thematize the history of the University's relationship to its urban public (and certainly not in the specific theoretical terms I employ here), his history of the University nevertheless describes several moments key to understanding this relationship.

That is, at least insofar as Hanawalt's history is an official history (Hanawalt 16), I read it here as an institutional text which makes its own claims, however implicit, about Wayne State's relationship to Detroit.⁴

In this chapter, I also offer a reading of material from Wayne State's university bulletins, covering material from the 1950s and into the middle 1960s. In these texts, I am interested in the claims such documents make about the University, its purpose, and its relationships to its urban and academic publics. I will focus in this chapter and the next on the more conspicuously public work of the university bulletin: that material, often found under the "General Information" or "Foreword" headings of each section, that describes the guiding principles of the University, its colleges and schools, and their relationship to Detroit. The university bulletin or course catalog, although ostensibly a document produced for primarily internal audiences of students, faculty, and administrators, nevertheless participates in the ongoing work of articulating Wayne State's stance as a public subject. The university bulletin embeds within its discussion of policies and regulations a constant, if changing, discourse about what it means to study and teach at a public urban research university, and it is the thread of that discourse I follow here.

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, I draw on Hanawalt's work to offer a historical survey of Wayne State and its predecessor institutions. I choose three moments from the University's history for closer consideration which illustrate its complex relationship to the city of Detroit. These moments include the incorporation of its precursor institutions into a unified university structure in the early 1930s; the University's planning and

⁴As this chapter was being composed, Wayne State celebrated the inauguration of M. Roy Wilson as its twelfth president. In his inaugural address, President Wilson makes repeated reference to *A Place of Light*, asserting that reading Hanawalt's history inspired "a greater appreciation of Wayne State" (Wilson, "Inaugural Address"). In the address, Wilson also promises to "continue that story from the Centennial of 1968 right up until our 150th anniversary in 2018" in a sequel to be authored by one of the University's (here unnamed) "distinguished historians."

expansion efforts in the early and middle 1940s; and the University's attempts to secure state funding and emerge from the oversight of the city's Board of Education in the middle 1950s. In the second section, I offer a detailed analysis of material from the University bulletins described above. As we will see, the bulletins considered here offer considerable insight, often through the words of University President Clarence Hilberry (as in this chapter's epigraph), into how Wayne State understood what it meant to be an urban university as its first century drew to a close. Finally, I will conclude by returning to the paired arguments described above.

Read together, the institutional texts examined in this chapter inform my historical account of Wayne State's record of public engagement, a historical account necessary for understanding the University's processes of public subjectivity. In this chapter, Wayne State and its precursor institutions have yet to articulate a specifically urban mission; however, we will see that in describing the University's relationship to Detroit the institutional texts read here are nevertheless conscious of Wayne State's fundamental commitment to the city. As later chapters will show, the urban mission has been a key rhetorical device through which the University has sought to articulate its role as an institution of higher education against the backdrop of a troubled urban public. In this chapter though, we will see the urban mission begin to take shape as it emerges from the University's earlier understanding of what it meant to be an urban university.

Wayne's First Century

As this chapter's epigraph suggests, even in the late 1950s and early 1960s Wayne State and its leadership understood the University as possessing a uniquely urban character. The history of Wayne State as described by Hanawalt underscores the fact that the University and its forerunner institutions did acknowledge their relationship to the local public in multiple ways. In

fact, for much of their history, these institutions of higher education were under the administrative jurisdiction of the city's Board of Education; only with the assumption of state control in 1956 (a transition I will return to later in this section) did Wayne emerge from the city's oversight. Indeed, Hanawalt, in his own assessment of the transition from local to state control, writes with admiration that the Detroit Board of Education "had enjoyed a unique distinction: it was the only elected board in the nation that operated both the common schools and a university," opining that "the achievement was anything but commonplace—indeed, it was amazing" (410). This history of local oversight alone suggests some of the complex history that stands between Wayne State and its local publics: while never identified exclusively with service to Detroit, these institutions were nevertheless originally administratively and fiscally bound to the city and to its municipal government. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that Wayne State should eventually identify an urban mission like the one under discussion here.

As valuable as Hanawalt's history of the University is, it is worth acknowledging here some cautions about the use I make of it in this chapter, especially since I do not offer here an extended rhetorical analysis of the text. As noted above, the work is in some sense an official institutional history of Wayne State, but Hanawalt assures readers early in the text that his history of Wayne State has not been censored by University leadership. He emphasizes having not "asked or received an approval from anybody for any part of the book," underscoring that nothing in the book was "omitted or changed on account of official policy" (16). Nevertheless, like any text, it bears the imprint of its own historical moment. Written as part of the University's preparations for the celebration of its centennial in 1968, it presents a relatively uncritical account of Wayne State's development and institutional maturation; it is a text designed to celebrate the University, not interrogate it. In this regard, it is also worth noting that Hanawalt

himself was deeply embedded in the institutional life of Wayne State, serving as professor, department chair, and committee director through his nearly forty years at the University when *A Place of Light* was published. Put simply, it is reasonable to ask whether Hanawalt was in an ideal position to engage University history as critically as later writers (like myself) would hope.

More pointedly, *A Place of Light* does little to address the University's role in and response to the sweeping social and cultural changes of the middle and late 1960s. Though published in 1968, it ends with the arrival to the University of President William Rea Keast (1965-71), who will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter. Keast's arrival in 1965 merits barely more than a paragraph on the last page of the book. The realities of the slow process of researching, composing, editing, and publishing a detailed and meticulous text like this no doubt prevented Hanawalt from continuing work through the actual centennial in 1968, but if he had it would be of considerable interest to see how he would have covered Keast's presidency, the radicalization of the student newspaper, and the 1967 Detroit riots—all events which remain unaddressed in *A Place of Light* for reasons likely as pragmatic as ideological. The history presented here is thus a history of Wayne State up to the brink of an era that saw major institutions, like the University, facing major challenges to their presumed institutional authority. Hanawalt's historical narrative thus should be understood as almost precariously situated on the edge on the era of the Civil Rights movement; the Vietnam War and antiwar movement; and racial tensions like that which sparked the 1967 Detroit riots. While later histories, like Charles Hyde's introduction to *A History of Wayne State in Photographs* (Aschenbrenner), are more critical of the narrative of institutional expansion development, Hanawalt's history remains laudatory while at times so focused on the University that it seems isolated from larger social forces.

Hanawalt's history of the University is thus not a history of Wayne State's urban mission and the urban public it inhabits. Nevertheless, Hanawalt's work does make clear some of the ways that Wayne State's precursor institutions participated in the work of their local urban publics. *A Place of Light* tells the early story of the University by focusing largely on three precursor institutions: the Detroit Medical College, founded 1868, later the Detroit College of Medicine following the 1885 incorporation of its rival Michigan College of Medicine (Hanawalt 45-6, 57); the Detroit Normal Training School, founded 1881, later rechristened the Detroit Teachers College after earning four-year degree-granting status in 1923 (Hanawalt 107, 139); and Detroit Junior College, founded in 1917, later becoming the four-year College of the City of Detroit. This version of Wayne State's history is largely supported by the University's current (as of this writing) online account of its history. As shown in Figure 5 below, the University's website makes plain the continuity between these precursor institutions and Wayne State's current assemblage of colleges and programs, connecting the Medical College to the current School of Medicine, the Normal School to the College of Education, and the Junior College to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences ("History").

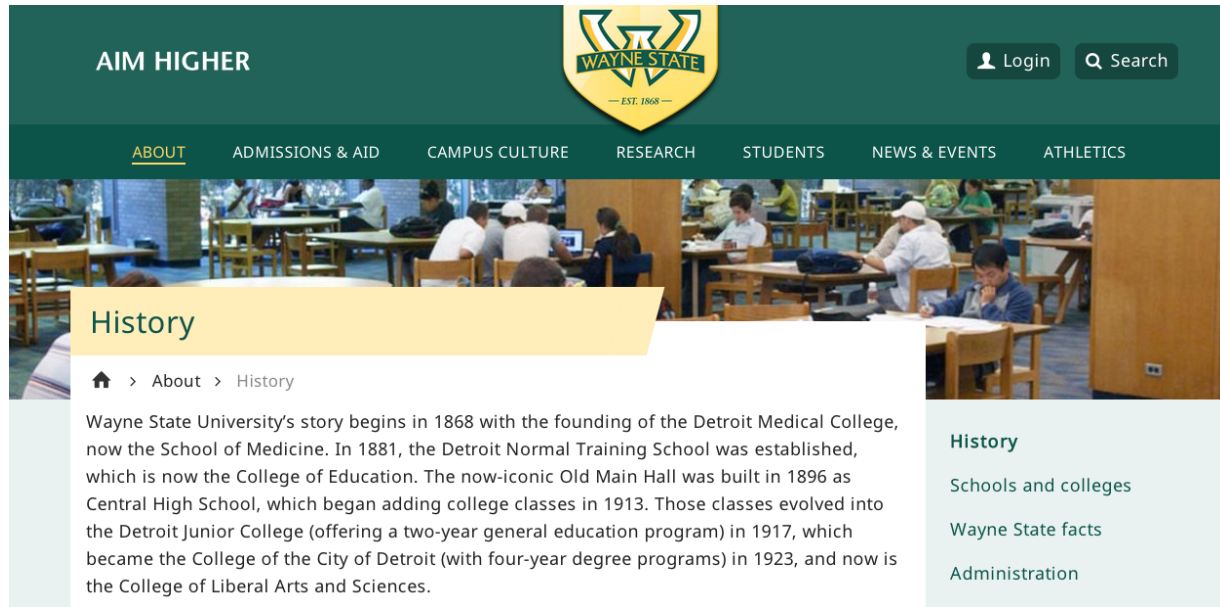


Figure 5: Wayne State “History” Webpage (July 2014)

Detroit Medical College

Looking closer at Hanawalt’s depiction of these three predecessors and their relationships to Detroit helps fill in some of the roots of the urban mission. The oldest of these, the Detroit Medical College, was founded in 1868 by five young physicians operating private practices in the city. As Hanawalt explains, the founding doctors “desired the self-improvement that study and teaching in a college would furnish; and they were encouraged by the likelihood that the terminal training of students enrolled at the University of Michigan’s medical school could be taken over by a Detroit college, which would have good hospital facilities while the university had practically none” (Hanawalt 44). Faculty and students of the Medical College, on the other hand, enjoyed affiliation with Harper Hospital⁵ and St. Mary’s Hospital. The Medical College, in line with efforts by the still-new American Medical Association (founded 1846), “was interested in national attempts to raise the standards of medical education,” and Hanawalt records a number

⁵ Harper Hospital, founded 1863, continues as Harper University Hospital, part of the Detroit Medical Center and Wayne State’s School of Medicine (Harper University Hospital, “History”).

of such improvements undertaken by the college: lengthening terms of regular and summer studies between 1872 and 1874; involvement in the American Medical College Association's efforts to develop curricular ground rules for medical training; the installation, in 1879-1880, of new laboratory facilities at the College and a teaching amphitheater at St. Mary's; and increasing the rigor of standards for would-be applicants in 1880 (Hanawalt 53). Despite such improvements, the Medical College found itself losing students to its nearby rival, the Michigan College of Medicine.⁶ Despite this rivalry, the two institutions merged with few evident difficulties in 1885, the new institution calling itself the Detroit College of Medicine (57).

The new College of Medicine was a successful venture, and its success funded efforts to improve its curriculum, facilities, and amenities. In 1889, the College opened an impressive new building Hanawalt describes as "a model medical-school home," featuring "not only laboratories for four sciences (chemistry, anatomy, physiology, histology) but also a large lecture-demonstration amphitheater, an office, a faculty room, a museum-library room, a freight elevator (to convey cadavers from basement vats to the dissection laboratory, and a large student hall" (62).⁷ The College's continued success amid the national economic boom of the late nineteenth century fueled further plans for expansion, including the creation of new departments of pharmacy, veterinary medicine, and dentistry; the administration and faculty of the College, who "desired to render a public service to the city," also envisioned a medical university "which, partly by its size, would add prestige to the city" (63). This hypothetical "University of Detroit" would encompass the existing College and its departments; the Detroit College of Law; a new

⁶ Hanawalt seems to imply that these students saw the Michigan College of Medicine as an enticing rival because of its looser requirements for enrollment. "Evidently," Hanawalt suggests, "the raised standards [at the Detroit Medical College] caused a loss of students" (54). The Medical College loosened the graduation requirement from three years of study to two in 1883 in its attempts to reduce declining enrollment numbers (54-5)

⁷ This building was "the first separate building ever erected in Detroit for a college," according to Hanawalt (62).

college of arts and sciences incorporating the city's museums of art and natural history; and a preparatory academy to train these schools' future students. Such plans were motivated by a wish to contribute to the welfare of the booming metropolis: "Aside from providing Detroit youth who could not afford to go to a university elsewhere, a great 'literary and educational center' would bring many benefits to Detroit" (64). Ultimately, these plans never came to fruition, and "the vision disappeared gradually from sight" following the economic depression of 1893-1897 and the death of a key planner.⁸

Unfortunately, such success couldn't be sustained. In 1905 and 1907 the AMA produced surveys ranking the nation's medical programs, and the College ranked favorably in both surveys. However, maintaining that standard required greater financial support than the College could call upon, subsisting until then solely on student fees (84-5). One possibility for saving the College was a merger with the medical programs of the University of Michigan in nearby Ann Arbor.⁹ The secretary of the state medical board secured such an agreement from the College's trustees in 1904-1905, despite the resentment of many alumni "who had always viewed the university school as a hated rival" (86). Nevertheless, such plans came to naught when the regents at Michigan voted in 1910 not to move their medical program to Detroit. Similar plans for the purchase of the College by the Jesuit-affiliated University of Detroit (now U of D Mercy) were scuttled by 1912. In 1912, the AMA again increased the standards for medical education (requiring, for example, that its highest ranked schools have at least six full-time salaried teachers), standards which the College was once again unable to meet under its financial model;

⁸ Hanawalt writes, almost wistfully, of the collapse of these plans as an intriguing missed opportunity, conjecturing that "if the plan had gone forward successfully, one can easily imagine, the subsequent history not only of the medical school but of higher education generally in Detroit could have turned out very different from what it was" (64).

⁹ As I'll show below, the possibility of a "merger with Michigan" is almost a recurring trope in the history of Wayne State.

by January 1913, the College had lost its Class A status and fell into Class B (87-8). The shareholders of the College opted to sell to an association of alumni, and under this new leadership the school became the Detroit College of Medicine and Surgery. The change in ownership saw no disruption to the operation of the college, but it did make possible new endowments, new faculty hires, and the remodeling and expansion of College buildings and facilities; these improvements were impressive enough that by June 1914 the AMA restored the College's Class A status.

Despite the improved ranking, the College continued to be beset by problems. Rifts between faculty and ongoing financial problems put the College in jeopardy again by 1917. A community fundraising effort stalled, and a contingent of faculty began to insist that the College merge with the University in Ann Arbor (91-2).¹⁰ In February 1917, headlines announced that the University of Michigan regents had elected to proceed with the takeover of the College, assuming the College's trustees could raise an endowment in excess of a million dollars. The merger seemed certain, but the U.S.'s entry into the first World War interfered: military enlistment disrupted enrollment and war bond sales made it difficult to raise funds for the promised endowment. Instead, after a suggestion from the faculty, the trustees put into play a plan for the Detroit Board of Education to adopt the struggling College. Hanawalt's description of the campaign for adoption is especially interesting, given my interests here, and I quote this account at length below:

The faculty devised a whirlwind campaign to convince not only the Board but the mayor, the common council, and the citizenry that, like other medical schools, the college was forced to ask for help, that it was needed to produce M.D.'s for the army and the home front, that it benefited the city's health, that its honorable history and A status made it a civic asset too valuable to lose, and that it would fit into an eventual city university for which the Board of Education had already created the beginnings at Cass High School, the Normal School, and the Junior College. (93)

¹⁰ And this is not yet the final time this recommendation would be made.

Despite some missteps in governance by the Detroit Board (Hanawalt mentions the selection of an unpopular and unqualified dean (94) and the Board's attempts to open enrollment to any Detroit taxpayer who met the College's entrance requirements (100)), the adoption by the Board in 1918 brought needed stability to the College. By the end of the 1920s, the College was once again able to expand its physical holdings into new buildings and laboratory facilities (101-2).

Detroit Normal Training School

The second oldest of Wayne State's precursor institutions was the Detroit Normal Training School, founded 1881. Until the founding of the Normal School, teacher training in Detroit was a function of the public schools; the city's Board of Education granted teaching certificates to qualified high school graduates who successfully completed the relevant examination (Hanawalt 105). Regionally, however, there was support for post-secondary teacher training: such training had been long supported by state superintendents, the Michigan State Normal School had opened in Ypsilanti in 1853,¹¹ and the University of Michigan instituted a chair in teaching in 1879. These developments were part of a broader national movement for normal school training which "produced in the United States by 1880 some 100 private and 80 public-teacher schools" (105). In Detroit, a normal school was first proposed to the Board of Education in 1864 by Superintendent John Sill, though at least one member preferred sending prospective teachers to the normal school in Ypsilanti; despite a momentary delay in the spring of 1881 the Detroit Board adopted plans for the opening of a normal school by August the same year.

¹¹ The state Normal School would eventually become the College of Education at Eastern Michigan University (Eastern Michigan University, "History").

The new Detroit Normal School enjoyed the leadership of a trio of experienced educator-administrators. John Sill, himself an alumnus of the State Normal School in Ypsilanti, had previously held the superintendency of Detroit schools from 1863-5 before returning to the position in 1873. Sill served in Detroit until 1886, when he accepted the presidency of the State Normal School (109). Amanda P. Funnelle, responsible for overseeing the curriculum and organization of the Normal School, was an alumna of the Oswego Normal School and brought to Detroit nearly twenty years of experience as an educator and administrator in normal schools in Albany, Indianapolis, and Terre Haute. Funnelle would lead the Detroit Normal School from its founding until 1886, when she returned to Oswego to lead its Normal School (110-1). Harriet Maria Scott, an alumna and later faculty member of the Indiana State Normal School, joined the Detroit Normal school in 1882, becoming its principal upon Funnelle's departure (111).

Under the leadership of first Funnelle and later Scott, the Normal School was centered on progressive pedagogical forms that spurned rote learning and recitation of older teaching methods. Instead, trainees at the Normal School were steeped in approaches drawn from the educational philosophies of humanitarian Johann Pestalozzi (116) and his contemporary Johann Friederich Herbart; both Pestalozzi's and Herbart's had informed Funnelle's and Scott's own training. Here, Hanawalt describes the Pestalozzian approach favored by Funnelle: "... the Pestalozzians had the revolutionary idea that a child's psychology, his interest in knowledge, was different from an adult's; the learning process must begin not with abstractions, but with the senses, with objects. Words by themselves in books meant little. Textbooks should play a minimal role; indeed Pestalozzi had almost despised them. The child grew more by activity than by pedagogic process" (117). At the Normal School, these approaches were accentuated by attempts to add in three other revolutionary teaching approaches which "would bring the child, it

was believed, into contact with the real world of fact, matter, and personal skill” (117): “[k]indergarten, the ‘republic of childhood,’ made a link between infant life at home and the primary grades; manual training gave the pleasure and benefit of coordinating hand, eye, and intellect; natural science was necessary in an age of greatly expanded scientific knowledge” (118). Scott, for her part, was more influenced by Herbart, who “carried educational theory beyond the point reached by Pestalozzi in important respects: the development of pedagogy as a science; the concept that education should produce ‘personal character and social morality’; the addition of history and literature as key subjects” (120).¹² Under Scott’s leadership, teachers and trainees at the Normal School emphasized “the systematic study of their own methods” (121). Scott herself explained her approach as “experimental” in her 1897 book, *Organic Education, A Manual for Teachers in Primary and Grammar Grades*. Here, Hanawalt summarizes Scott’s approach: “By ‘organic education’ Miss Scott meant that education that was unified, integrated, coordinated. . . . One area of learning formed the center. Into it as the children went along were drawn, by the inherent unity of all knowledge, the other contents and skills that a pupil needed to learn. A teacher’s function was ‘only to disclose the natural and organic unity pre-existing in the material’” (121).

Unlike the Detroit Medical School, which operated autonomously of the Detroit Board until its adoption in 1918, the Detroit Normal School was always intertwined with the Board and the Detroit political scene of which the Board was a part. Local politics were characterized by conflict between the mayor and city council, and corruption was assumed to be standard practice at all levels (Hanawalt 123). The Board of Education was not innocent of such allegations; according to Hanawalt, “common rumor was that some members were corrupted by textbook

¹² The internally quoted passage here is from a 1912 text cited by Hanawalt, Samuel C. Parker’s *History of Modern Elementary Education*.

companies, that the promotion of teachers and the appointment of janitors and engineers came through political favor” (123-4). Thus, the Detroit Board’s oversight of the Normal School was often characterized by the same kinds of political in-fighting and maneuvering which typified city government at the time.

For example, Hanawalt recounts the attempts in the 1890s by a Detroit Board of Education faction led by Robert Hall to marginalize the leaders of the Normal School: Superintendent William Robinson and his successor William Martindale, and Harriet Scott, then the principal of the Normal School and the chief designer of its curriculum. When letters appeared in the newspapers decrying Scott’s curriculum as faddish and substandard, Hall and his cohort seized the opportunity to attack the school on the same pretense, and complained of the Normal School’s expense to boot—despite the Normal School being able to show a financial gain in excess of thirty thousand dollars (124). Such antics drove Superintendent Robinson out of public service, but Hall and his circle weren’t satisfied (125). They continued their harassment of the Normal School by removing the responsibility for trainee oversight from Principal Scott and her faculty in 1898 and granting it instead to teachers in the public schools; Hall’s coterie also minimized Scott’s role in granting and approving diplomas of Normal School trainees (126). Principal Scott, with other colleagues, formed the Detroit Teachers’ Association, an organization which further infuriated the Normal School’s critics by lobbying for an 1899 bill to reform the procedures for electing Board members (127). In 1899, amid rumors that the Detroit Board had begun planning in secret to fire Scott and other supporters of the Normal School and the Teachers’ Association, Principal Scott submitted her resignation, telling reporters that her resignation was directly tied to the mismanagement and harassment she’d endured from the Board (127-8).

After this period of strife between the Detroit Board and the Normal School's leadership, affairs calmed and became more professional and cooperative in the early decades of the twentieth century. Hanawalt summarizes this period of the Normal School's development:

In 1900 it had 135 students and was a close-knit, one-purpose, ill-housed school supplying each year a few dozen elementary and kindergarten teachers for Detroit only; in 1920 with 400 students in modern buildings it was operating not only its regular program but also a county school, a summer school, and an evening school, and was turning into a degree-granting teachers' college with a dean instead of a principal. (128)

In 1917-8, the Normal School's admissions policies were expanded to married women, men, and any "graduate of any high school on the accredited list of University of Michigan" who earned her principal's recommendation (136-7). The Normal School enjoyed a strong reputation for qualified and competent trainees, and by 1919 its diploma was endorsed by the state as certification for teaching the first eight grades (137). Its programs expanded (as Hanawalt explains above) to meet growing demand, and in 1920 the Board officially converted the Normal School into the four-year Detroit Teachers College (139). The Detroit Board, in pursuit of legislative recognition of the new Teachers College, committed the new college to continued support of its two-year certification program and to the training of teachers for all levels of Detroit Public Schools.

The Detroit Teachers College, in its capacity of preparing and supplying teachers, took on a wide range of duties in service to the city's schools; by the middle 1920s, the Normal School had a near-monopoly on staffing and training in Detroit schools:

First, it followed up the cadet teachers in the year when they were being considered for contract status. Second, it rendered the same service for teachers new to the city — that is, teachers trained (and often experienced) elsewhere. Third, it performed the enormous daily task of supplying substitute teachers, supervising them, and recommending some for regular placement. Fourth, it made up each semester placement lists, ranking its own graduates and other applicants with data about performance, suitability, etc., from which the Board did its hiring. Finally, it supplied undergraduate trainees to render (unpaid) help to contract teachers when the latter were called away by demonstration classes or

other special events, or at semester-end when the load of paperwork became abnormal. (145)

In addition to these measures, the Teachers College, under Dean Stuart Courtis, undertook in the early 1920s attempts to test Detroit schools' students in order to generate efficiency ratings on their teachers. Hanawalt, in explaining the effects of these tests, is critical of Courtis and his assistant dean, Leo Breuckner, who "were not only building up an extensive empire at the College, but also effecting changes in the schools that were, from the point of view of practical expediency, too rapid and too doctrinaire. Even though a good many of the teaching corps were alumni of the College, they developed a mood of alienation" (149). Following the resignation of Breuckner and several other members of the Detroit Board of Education, Superintendent Frank Cody relieved Courtis of his administrative duties and installed him instead as an educational consultant to the Board (150). Cody replaced Courtis and Breuckner with Dean Warren Bow and Associate Dean Arthur Dondineau. Under their leadership, supervision of Detroit's teachers was removed from the College's bailiwick; in 1926 an instructional council was established to review appropriate instructional and supervisory policies at the Teachers College (151). By 1930, both the directorship of instruction and responsibility for substitute teachers were returned to the Detroit Board; as Hanawalt puts it, "the scope of the College had been much reduced".

Detroit Junior College

Like the Normal School, the Detroit Junior College was founded to meet educational demand in Detroit. In the early 1900s, the prestigious Central High School offered classes to its graduates designed to fulfill basic requirements when those students transferred to regional colleges and universities (Hanawalt 152). Starting in 1913, Central High also offered a one-year pre-medical course at the behest of the Detroit College of Medicine; this course was accredited

by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1916. That same year, facing new American Medical Association stipulations that medical students would require two years of premedical training before admittance to a medical degree program, the leadership of Central High and of the College of Medicine proposed to the Board that the course be extended to two years. The Detroit Board sought approval from the legislature, and the Detroit Junior College was formed in 1917.

The Detroit Junior College, Hanawalt explains, was part of a movement in the early twentieth century that saw explosive growth in the number of two-year and junior colleges: “public junior colleges multiplied from 3 in 1910 to 40 in 1920, 162 in 1930 (and 452 in 1965)” (157). This movement sought to expand access to higher education to those who otherwise could not afford it, provide exposure to collegiate life, and offer vocational training for those pursuing semi-professional careers. For example, Hanawalt lists “store buyers, statistical clerks, cement testers, laboratory technicians, florists, photo-engravers, etc.” as examples of such careers (157). The Detroit Junior College was much in this mold. Hanawalt cites Dean David Mackenzie’s description in the 1917 course catalog of the three courses of study available to the Junior College’s students: first, transfer courses meeting the requirements of the first two years’ of study for those students planning to complete a university degree; second, forming the “first interest of the college,” courses in “applied science, in political and social theory, and in a variety of cultural subjects” for students pursuing neither a degree nor professional certification; and third, personal enrichment courses for “that portion of the public that desires a wider intellectual outlook” (qtd in Hanawalt 157-9).¹³ Mackenzie also used this catalog to argue the necessity of an institution like the Junior College, writing (in Hanawalt’s summary) that “the

¹³ Hanawalt notes that this curriculum anticipates what by 1968 “would now be called a community college” (159).

additional cost to the city of operating a junior college ... was insignificant compared with the savings to students; the classes were smaller and better taught than those of freshmen and sophomores in universities;” and that students at home, freed some the distractions of college social life, “could do better work” (159). Despite some clashes between Junior College and Central High students and a constant need for greater space and resources (164-7), the Junior College was a success and continued to expand. Students began forming extracurricular clubs and organizations, and athletic teams were established. The Junior College especially prided itself on its students’ commitment to work in the community. Students told stories to the children of the city’s settlement houses, participated in mentorship programs, and collected folklore and stories from the city’s immigrant communities (171-2).

The Junior College’s transition to a four-year college grew out of calls for the establishment of a municipal university. In 1918, the president of the Board of Education, Andrew P. Biddle, authored an article in *The Collegian*, the college’s newspaper, calling for the establishment of such a university. Dean Mackenzie wrote in the next issue supporting Biddle’s call, but emphasized that the Junior College had no ambition to expand further or to grant the bachelor’s degree. Other calls for a university emphasized “the help it would give industries, banks, professions, and city agencies, not only with trained personnel but with applied research” (177). Support for such a university came both from the public and from within Detroit’s existing colleges; however, an attempt for state legislative approval failed in 1919. Further attempts in 1921 were also met by inaction by the Detroit Board. Following those failures, the *Collegian* led an effort to convince the state legislature to allow the Junior College to transition to four-year status; this effort garnered thousands of petition signatures and earned support from college administrators, state senators, Board members, and newspaper editors (178). The argument of

this campaign leaned heavily on how such a transition would serve Detroit, and which justified the transition against the needs of a growing urban public: “New arguments appeared: that Detroit, the fourth largest city in the nation, had more population than 18 of the states which operated universities; that 65 percent of the students had to work daily or on weekends; that JC was the third largest institution in the state . . . ; that it ranked nationally among the top 10 percent of colleges by enrollment” (179). Finally, the Detroit Board prepared a bill that came to the state legislature in 1923. The Michigan legislature approved the bill, and the Board was authorized to create the College of the City of Detroit.

In its new guise, City College continued to flourish, seeing increasing enrollments through the early years of the Depression (182-3). The College expanded its faculty and departments, adding courses and degrees in engineering, business administration, government, and history, among others (185). In 1925, City College issued its first degrees; the commencement speaker was Alfred Lloyd, dean of the graduate school at the University of Michigan. Hanawalt’s summary of Lloyd’s address, titled “The Freedom of the Modern City,” draws particular attention to the the College’s situation in Detroit:

... Lloyd acknowledged that the city offered a college no chance to be cloistered in “the secluded and classic grove,” but he believed that more important was its having handed to the college the keys of the city—the opportunity to keep learning close to life in a great industrial center. “The doors must swing freely and both ways.” He noted that Socrates, defending himself, spoke to his own city when he said that the unexamined life was not worth living. A city college, said Lloyd, “may mean and certainly should come to mean a city’s Socratic awakening.” (180-1)

Being embedded in its urban setting had other effects as well, both practical and for the reputation of City College. Few students owned automobiles; most relied on the city’s system of public transportation, earning City College a reputation for being a “streetcar college,” though Hanawalt notes this was true for “most of the new municipal colleges” of the era (188). More problematic was the worry that City College was not the equal of its peers: “Many of the

students were inclined to underrate the College and themselves. Often the first in their families to go beyond the 12th [sic] grade, they chose City College because it was handy and inexpensive, and tended to assume that the education they got in their home town was somehow inferior to that at such places as the University of Michigan or the University of Chicago.” Despite such worries, the College of the City of Detroit continued to expand and thrive as part of the higher education landscape in the city.

These three institutions formed the backbone of what would shortly become Wayne University, and later still Wayne State. In the next section, I continue to follow Hanawalt through the development of Wayne State’s urban mission by focusing on three key scenes in the University’s history. The first moment will take us to 1933, the year Wayne State’s precursors were first brought together in a single university structure. The second, set in the early and postwar 1940s, will consider the ways Wayne State planned its future development into the city’s own growth. The third, set in the middle 1950s, will describe how the University separated itself from the Detroit Board of Education and came under state control.

1933: Becoming Wayne University

By the early 1930s Detroit had a robust higher education infrastructure. From the founding of the Detroit Medical College in 1868, to the development of the Normal School in 1881, and to the establishment of the Junior College in 1917, Wayne State’s precursor institutions served Detroit’s educational needs, training students for professional and vocational work, both in the city and beyond. The need for higher education continued to expand and diversify, yet the people of Detroit still did not have a university to call their own. Although talk of a city university had been part of both the Medical College’s pursuit of adoption by the Board and of the Junior College’s expansion to a four-year program, the Detroit Board had taken no

action to plan for a university. An initial attempt in 1926 by the Board's leader, Superintendent Frank Cody, to bring the Teachers College and City College under common leadership was derailed when Mayor John Smith blocked Cody and the Board's nominee for the new position (197). Hanawalt characterizes Smith's action as "a blistering denunciation of the Board." Hanawalt quotes Smith complaining about the Detroit Board's attempt to "organize an extensive collegiate system at the expense of ... taxpayers and to the detriment of the common and high schools [omission in original]" and advising the Board instead to "refrain from experiments in higher education." Nevertheless, as my explication of this historical moment will reveal, Cody and the Detroit Board were committed to continued experimentation in Detroit's higher education scene.

Despite Mayor Smith's objections, Cody and the Detroit Board, looking ahead to the creation of an eventual municipal university, brought in Wilford Coffey as dean of City College in 1928 with the apparent understanding that Coffey (the former head of public instruction in Lansing) would "draw the colleges together and become their head administrator" (197-8). This drawing together happened slowly at first: Coffey worked closely with the deans of the other colleges (which by this time included both pharmacy and law, in addition to the Teachers College and College of Medicine) in order "to arrange such things as unified statistics for Cody's annual reports and a common format for the catalogs of the colleges" (199). By 1929, the colleges were holding joint commencements. In June 1930, a memo from Coffey to Cody implied that such a merger was soon to come; the local press carried the story soon after. At a Board meeting in July, a report from Cody argued that, due to changing enrollment patterns, curricular overlap, and duplicate costs, the Board's finances would be well-served by the merger of City College and the Teachers College. Despite anxieties from Teachers College faculty that

their school would be absorbed entirely into City College, and despite the faculty's similar worries over who would lead the merged administration, the Detroit Board approved the plan for common leadership, centered on City College with Coffey as the head dean (202-4).

Hanawalt describes the 1933 amalgamation of predecessor institutions into one university as both "an act of defiance" and "an act of desperation" (31), growing out of a number of crises, both internal and external, that the colleges had to confront. The first was a freedom of speech issue at City College. In 1931, the *Collegian* launched a speaker series critical of the Board's plan to institute an ROTC unit at City College. Board of Education member Burt Shurly accused the school and paper of sedition and called for the firing of a faculty member who had spoken as part of the series; however, when Shurly presented such a motion to the Board, he was outvoted. Hanawalt argues that this was "City College students' first public assertion on a controversial nature, and the city accepted the assertion" (23-4). The second crisis grew out of the city council's 1932 budget negotiations. During these negotiations, the city council entertained the possibility of cutting first the College of Medicine's, and then all of the colleges', funding from the Board's budget, demanding instead that the colleges become self-supporting. The students, supported by a number of the city's ministers, organized a march on City Hall in orderly protest of the session in which the city council took up the measure. Some students addressed their concerns to the council; after an attempt to shift responsibility for the budget cut to the Board of Education, the city council ultimately restored the colleges' funds to the budget. Hanawalt explains the significance of this episode: "Not only had City College saved the Board of Education a budgetary fight. It had emerged a strong entity itself. The incident also suggested that separate budgets for the colleges made it possible for the council to destroy the Board's

college system piecemeal, whereas a unified institution, presenting a unified budget and backed by the combined loyalties of different clienteles, would be harder to attack” (24-5).

The colleges also faced crises arising out of their internal operations. The first of these had to do with the faculty’s demand for increased participation in the governance of City College following the 1930 merger with Teachers College. While the College continued to expand and grow into its role as a four-year college, the Detroit Board continued to govern it in the same style it governed the elementary and high schools; in Hanawalt’s telling, “none seemed to know that an institution of higher learning had to be a cooperative enterprise” (28). Spurred on by the 1929-1930 creation of the City College chapter of the American Association of University Professors, the College faculty organized a study committee to resolve these concerns. This committee produced a roster of “Articles of Cooperation” which “defined the powers and prerogatives of the dean, a faculty Council, a departmental board ..., the departments, and the faculty assembly” (30). These articles also clarified the relationship between the College’s own governing structure and that of the Detroit Board of Education in an attempt to “make the Board of Education aware that the faculty itself could be a powerful ally in policy-making, not merely a background for the executive, the dean; and it must provide machinery that would force Dean Coffey to consult with suitable faculty groups.”

City College also faced an internal crisis stemming from its 1930 joining to Teachers College. Dean Coffey of City College and Dean Waldo Lessenger of the Teachers College were in a struggle over which of them had the greater authority over curriculum and hiring decisions at the Teachers College. Lessenger accused Coffey of “instituting improper admission rules for freshmen and ... destroying the accreditation formerly held by Teachers College” (32), charges which Coffey resented. In 1932 the faculties of the the two colleges collaborated on an

agreement outlining their points of conflicts and possible solutions, but this in itself did little to resolve the power struggles. In an attempt to resolve the conflict, Superintendent Cody and his chief deputy, Charles Spain, commissioned a report from George Zook, president of the University of Akron. Zook's report called for the installation of a chief administrator to oversee all operations of the colleges; that position went to Spain. The creation of this new position likely only worsened the situation. In May 1933, Cody announced his plan to install Spain in the administrative role contrary to what he had seemingly promised Coffey several years earlier, and prompting Coffey's sudden resignation (34-6). Coffey's resignation made it clear to Superintendent Cody that such internal wrangling could only be curtailed by strong administrative leadership over the colleges (37-8). That realization made, the transition to university status was accomplished largely by bureaucratic fiat:

... the Board of Education in August 1933 put under one head the units already in being (liberal arts, education, medicine, pharmacy, engineering, graduate), called the institution a university, made the superintendent of schools the president and the deputy superintendent the executive vice-president, and reaffirmed an awkward collective name "Colleges of the City of Detroit" that had been in casual use since 1930. It gave official sanction to certain special arrangements that had existed for some time: the council of deans, the graduate school (deans plus selected faculty), and three "University officers," the dean of students, the registrar, and the librarian. And it adopted a set of university bylaws. (38)

The new university needed a new name as well. A number of possibilities were considered, including several that emphasized the University's relationship to the city: Detroit City University, University of the City of Detroit, Detroit Civic University. Such names were taken out of general consideration when agreement settled on the fact that they would produce confusion with the Jesuit-affiliated University of Detroit (founded as Detroit College in 1877). Other names pointed instead to a more regional vision of the new university's service: University of Southern Michigan, Wolverine University, and Great Lakes University were all under

consideration as well. Hanawalt writes that “just who first thought of the name finally chosen is a matter of debate” (40):

It may have been a student moved by James H. (“Pop”) Russell’s description of Anthony Wayne’s career.¹⁴ Publicly Wayne seems to have been suggested only by German Instructor Hans Boening, in a letter to the *Collegian*; but it must have had wide enough discussion to reach President Cody, who more or less made the final choice. Before the Board’s meeting on January 23, 1934, Cody remarked, “Well, let’s just take Wayne.” That is what the Board did, and the name became officially “Wayne University.” (40)

1940s: The Urban University Expands

By the middle 1940s, Wayne University had indisputably become a fixture in Detroit and its metropolitan region. The dozen years since 1933, when its precursor institutions were joined into a shared university structure form, mark for Hanawalt “a natural period in the history of Wayne State” (207). Of the era from 1930 to the middle 1940s, he writes:

Though established and progressive, the colleges in 1930 could not feel sure what might happen: they were planning progressively and were rendering good educational service, and hence were not likely to be wiped out; but city politics, state politics, or financial crisis might bring them under the control of persons or forces unknown. By the end of the period all this was past and the mood in the University was one of confidence and self-assurance. There was no longer a question about the institution’s fixity, stability, and power. Its ever-increasing space, enrollments, budgets, and staff were matters of public knowledge and pride, the only question being how fast money could be found to extend them. It might be poorly housed, but no imaginable wind could blow it apart. (207-8)

As the end of this passage makes clear, Hanawalt characterizes this period largely as one of the university’s expansion—both in the scope of its curricular and programmatic base—i.e., the number of students enrolled, faculty and staff employed, and courses and degrees offered—but also as a physical, material site within the city (Figure 6 below shows Hanawalt’s map of the main campus circa 1936). Those two senses of expansion necessarily complement one another, and looking at this historical moment will illustrate how further consideration of Wayne State’s

¹⁴ Hanawalt fails to explain in this passage who James H. (“Pop”) Russell was, nor does he explain why his description of Revolutionary War figure “Mad” Anthony Wayne’s career was so memorable. According to *A Place of Light*’s index, this is the only reference to Russell in the text.

expansion along both vectors help explain the University's evolving relationship to Detroit in this period.

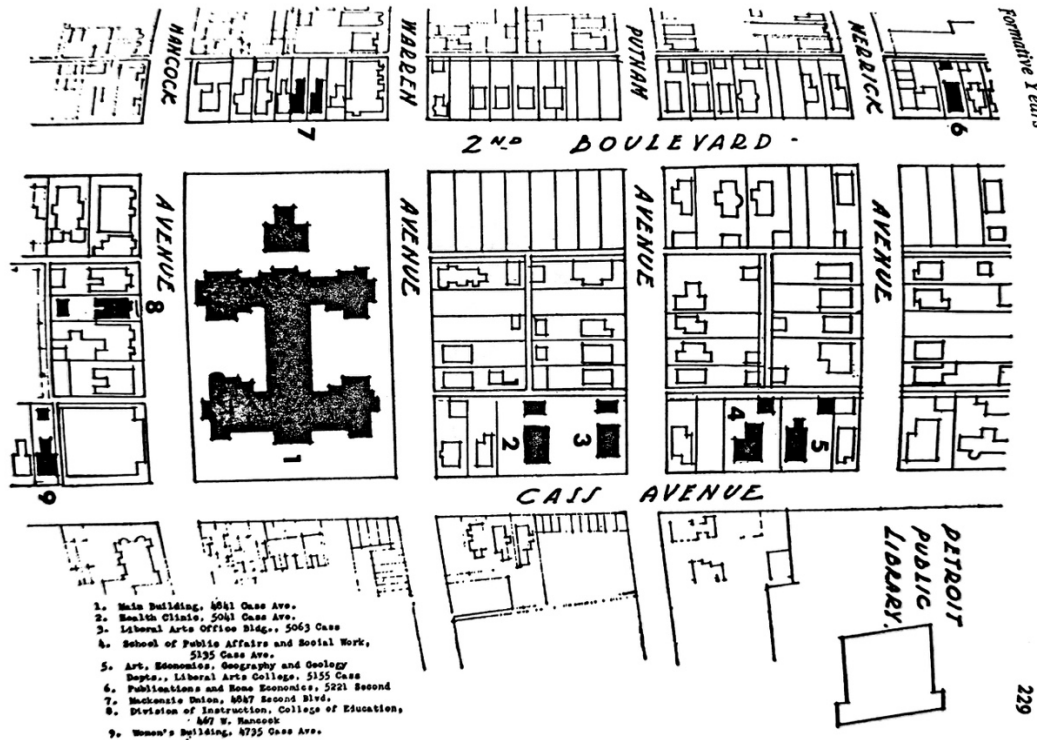


Figure 6: Wayne State's main campus, circa 1936 (Hanawalt 229)

Early in this period, Hanawalt explains, it was already becoming “evident ... that in the long run the city could not support the University as it would develop, that therefore the University must seek other sources of income” (223) than student fees and monies allocated by the Detroit Board. Attempts from 1936 on to solicit gifts or grants from private donors were largely unsuccessful, possibly (Hanawalt conjectures) because the University, in its relative novelty, could not trade on older schools’ claims to legacy; or possibly because Wayne’s “off-campus enthusiasts” were primarily professionals and mid-level executives who didn’t have

access to the fortunes necessary for such endowments (224). In 1935, however, the University successfully secured an allocation of funds from Wayne County. “Thus a goal important in the creation of a larger public image was gained,” Hanawalt notes: “elimination of the idea that Wayne University was merely a local Detroit operation of no concern to the rest of the state” (224). Yet in other ways Wayne University was unable to persuasively make the case that its mission extended beyond Detroit. A 1937 campaign to win state support was buttressed by the arguments made by the University’s Executive Vice President David Henry, who appealed to the state legislature on the basis of “the proportion of Michigan’s population that Wayne served; the need to render better service to the youth of this population; the low per-student cost at which Wayne operated; the action of other states in granting aid to ‘certain public and semi-public institutions which are primarily local in nature and which are not under state jurisdiction’” (225). Henry also noted that refusal of such support discriminated against the citizens of Wayne’s metropolitan area, and that “the question of state aid for an urban educational institution [was] inextricably interwoven with the general question of distribution of state funds for urban centers” (qtd in Hanawalt 225). As we will see in the next section, however, it was not until the 1950s that the University successfully sought state aid.

While Wayne University was having mixed success expanding its service and mission beyond Detroit, its physical plant was expanding rapidly beyond the old Central High building, which the University had taken over in 1926 and renamed “Main Building,” later still to become “Old Main” in 1950 (225). In addition to refurbishing and remodeling Old Main, the University expanded outward from Main, buying and renting nearby houses throughout the 1930s. The Depression didn’t unduly prevent Wayne University from expanding; as Hanawalt notes, “[I]ike municipal colleges elsewhere, Wayne grew rapidly” in this period (220). The Depression, did,

however, make long-range planning difficult; in this period the University's "physical expansion was opportunist and haphazard" (230). Hanawalt explains: "Nobody had ever decided which direction the University's land-expansion should take, or even where the institution should permanently be located in the city. ... The depression prevented long-range plans as did the inchoate idea that somehow the University of Michigan might adopt and provide for Wayne" (230).

The direction of the University's expansion was ultimately decided in part through input from citizens of Detroit. In 1936, the Detroit Board commissioned Superintendent Cody to appoint a public committee including "18 Detroit leaders in the professions, the business world, the clergy, and education" to study possible avenues of expansion (230). The report produced by this committee recommended a northward expansion from Old Main, which would permit the continued use of existing holdings and which would be "'in keeping with [Wayne's] metropolitan character,' being accessible from all parts of the city, and would aid city planning by its nearness to two other educational institutions, the Detroit Public Library and the Institute of Arts" (Hanawalt 231). Between 1941 and 1945, the University acquired the three blocks recommended by the public committee and began planning for and developing its new site. Development of these blocks and of the University's existing holdings in local housing stock began to make clear how the University was expanding into the city: "Up and down the streets, uniform signs on the lawns announced inhabitants as 'Wayne University—College of Liberal Arts, Department of English' or 'Graduate School' or 'College of Engineering, Office of the Dean.' Indeed, an important effect of the space expansion was to make Detroiters visually aware that their University now consisted of much more than the familiar old City College building" (232).

Having acquired the site for its expansion, the University could turn to planning how to fill the new space. Such plans were limited by the post-war availability of critical building materials, but the Detroit Board established a competition to choose an architectural plan for the new three-block campus; the University envisioned the eventual development of the new campus, a new student center, and a much-expanded medical center. Talk of campus planning and the competition for campus designs represented the fulfillment of a dream, and, Hanawalt adds, “these were being fitted into a still larger dream, the city’s cultural center” (235). The competition’s winning plan was submitted by Suren Pilafian, but Pilafian’s competitors, as well as three of the experts on the competition’s panel, argued that Pilafian’s design was too small to accommodate the University’s expansion. Other responses to Pilafian’s plan suggested a more critical understanding of Wayne University’s relationship to its urban situation. As Hanawalt explains, Pilafian’s design isolated the campus from the city: it “was enclosed, presenting on the perimeter the faces of the buildings, and inside them open space, an island of quiet amounting to a quadrangle. Others thought this arrangement not only too traditional, but unsuited to a city-rooted institution like Wayne” (236). Dean Joseph Hudnut of Harvard’s graduate school of design, one of the panel’s experts, spoke eloquently on this theme. Hanawalt quotes Hudnut at length:

“The idea of a university in a city like Detroit, having so direct a relationship to the vital activities of the city, is a very thrilling one. I can imagine a wholly new type of university ... As a matter of fact, that new kind has been under development for some time, beginning in the University of London, New York University, and now Wayne.” Hudnut even wished that this unique breed, leaving the old label university to traditional institutions, could proudly invent some novel name that would indicate their discovery of a “new dignity in an immediate serviceability to the cities which nurture them.” ... Wayne’s architecture and landscaped spaces ought somehow to open up, and signify that in the midst of the modern city’s “social disintegration” the university remained steady as “a great cultural heart out of which will flow the currents which inform the life of the city with dignity and meaning.” (236)

Where Pilafian's design seemed to construct an idyllic oasis of meditative scholarly space isolated from the city, Hudnut's comments suggest the opposite approach: an architecture open to the vitality of the city, unmistakably part of its urban environs.

Indeed, in other respects the University was especially mindful of how its plans for expansion dovetailed with the city's. "For by 1942," notes Hanawalt, "the Detroit city plan commission, under the stimulus of far-seeing Mayor Edward J. Jeffries, Jr., had come enthusiastically into the university's planning" (236). This city plan, published in brochure form in 1944 as *Your Detroit*, incorporated the University more fully still into its vision for the future of Detroit: "It changed the name of the general area from art center ... to cultural center. Its total city plan included a north-south and an east-west freeway. The land southeast of their intersection, some 85 acres, was set aside and reserved for future University expansion, as were 55 acres at the medical center site" (Hanawalt 237). Such plans were pragmatic and optimistic for the University's continued success, while others now seem laughably far-fetched. The city planning commission's secretary, George Emery, encouraged the University's planners: "Don't be afraid to dream. The students of tomorrow may come to classes in helicopters. Make your plans flexible" (qtd in Hanawalt 236-7).

In addition to the expansion of its physical plant, this period also saw Wayne University attempt to expand its pedagogical mission as well, albeit without the same success. As discussed above, the Junior College had committed itself in part to providing instruction for all students, regardless of whether they sought a degree; this was in line with Dean Mackenzie's "vision of the city institutions as intellectual centers for the whole community, opening new horizons to all" (241). These students represented a large and heterogeneous group of non-matriculated students, ranging from bored housewives to "employed people who desired educational advantage in their

careers—accountants, secretaries, policemen, businessmen, nurses.” While a diverse group, these students did share in common “their non-matriculated status, a limit of nine credit-hours at a time, a restriction to evening classes, and an almost universal coveting of credit” (242). By 1937, the largest segment of what Hanawalt calls “non-matrices” (242) were “high-school graduates whose preparation was so frail that they had been refused admission to a college, obviously, on the average, poor academic risks.” Attempts by University counseling to productively guide these students was often futile unless students voluntarily sought such aid. Hanawalt’s description of these students is tinged with pathos: “... they simply appeared for registration some evening, often after classes had started, filled out a few forms, paid their fees, and went to class. Many seemed content to go on indefinitely this way, failing semester after semester. They nursed the illusion that in going to college they were doing something meritorious, and they liked the college associations.”

Organized by Don Miller, the associate dean of liberal arts, the School of General Studies was an attempt to answer the needs of these students. The General Studies program would remove younger students from the non-matriculated evening classes and enroll them full-time in its courses: “some general education, but mainly two-year terminal vocational curricula, aimed at technologies and sub-professions and culminating in a certificate in art, business, accounting, advertising, household administration, industrial technology, laboratory technology, music, public administration, or secretarial science” (242-3). The General Studies program was marked too by its attendance to community need: “Detroit needed workers in these fields; in this respect the school would be a community college. It was intended to be, said the catalog, ‘less standardized and more adaptable to the needs of the community’ than liberal arts and the

professional schools, and would 'extend its services to all high-school graduates whose educational needs [were] not adequately served' by those colleges" (243).

Ultimately, the School for General Studies failed by undermining its own objectives. Although it launched with a two-year vocational certificate as its terminal goal for students, the University also offered a feeder plan which would allow General Studies students admission to one of the degree-granting colleges after a dean's review of their work in General Studies. Hanawalt notes that "nearly all" of the School's students "harbored other notions: they intended to earn admission to a degree college" (244). Alarmed by the number of General Studies students who sought transfer rather than the vocational certificate, a group led by Vice President Henry and Dean Miller rescinded the transfer privilege in February 1939. In announcing the change, the group observed that having so many transfer students marked a distortion of the School's original purpose, and that "the prestige of the degree-granting colleges among other institutions may be harmed by the impression that unqualified students in large numbers are gaining access to the university" (qtd in Hanawalt 244). The opportunity for transfer eliminated, enrollment in General Studies plummeted, as Dean Miller had feared; Miller recommended closing the School for General Studies in 1943 and 1947. In 1950 the School for General Studies was finally closed, having issued only 127 certificates in its 13 years of operation (245). Despite its failure, the School for General Studies speaks provocatively to the University's expanding sense of mission. As Hanawalt observes: the need to help such students "was evident then and remained evident until the University eliminated the whole non-matriculated category in 1958. That a public urban university feels some duty to help the city's academically marginal and sub-marginal high-school graduates is evidenced by Wayne's efforts with special admission groups in the forties, with the

trial program of the fifties, and with more recent proposals [that is, circa 1968] for something like a division of basic studies.”

1956: Wayne State University

As we’ve already learned, Wayne University, for a considerable time, needed to draw funds from only two sources: student fees and Detroit Board of Education appropriations. After the second World War, however, it became clear that the University would not be able to suffice on these funds alone. After the war, Wayne University, like many other institutions, saw a huge boom in enrollment as new students poured into the colleges—not only recent veterans, but “a backlog of young people who during the war had put off their college plans” (361). The post-war period saw the University reach new peaks of enrollment: nearly 15,000 in 1948-1949, and nearly 19,000 in 1949-1950. Fueled by these new achievements in enrollment, this era also marks the last period of Detroit Board control over the University, as this section explains.

Even before veterans began enrolling, the University had begun to make plans for seeking state aid. In 1944-1945, foreseeing difficulty securing the necessary funds from the Detroit Board, the University once again revived attempts to persuade the state government for support. The University prepared a booklet, “The Case for State Aid for Wayne University,” met with the State planning commission, and asked Governor Harry Kelly for a five-million-dollar appropriation for new facilities (366). Public support for these widely publicized efforts made it “evident that Wayne had more backing, both in Detroit and outstate, than ever before. The main arguments were the same as in former years: that Wayne benefited the whole state in various ways; that in its populous area it served the same purpose as a state university; and that the city of Detroit could not pay all the necessary expenses of expansion.” Despite these arguments, the legislature only approved a \$500,000 fund “for two years to be shared by Wayne and [the

University of] Michigan's locally financed junior colleges on the basis of veteran enrollment." While not the success the University had hoped for, Vice President Henry noted that this outcome marked an important precedent in getting the state legislature to recognize some responsibility for Wayne.

The 1944-1945 funding campaign also had the side effect of renewing discussion about possible state control of Wayne University. Vice President Henry had wanted to include such discussions in the funding campaign, but was overruled by University President Warren Bow and the Detroit Board. In late 1945 and into 1946, now serving as the University president, Henry continued to foster the idea of state control: he encouraged the University's funding legislation committee to maintain its alumni contacts and urged the broader Wayne University community to keep the issue alive. Hanawalt describes some of the efforts undertaken in support of the cause of state control: "Radio stations carried Wayne programs; citizen groups, including alumni, met and exerted influence; veterans' organizations issued endorsements. A revised version of 'The Case for State Aid' stressed the veteran problem; the Board of Education prepared a large booklet of its own" (367). In addition, Henry commissioned a policy letter from the Detroit Board to Governor Kelly and the state legislature about how state funds might be used to support Wayne; the letter was, in Hanawalt's estimation, "a landmark:"

It said that the University's crisis was more important than the Board's pride in supporting and controlling Wayne; that the Board, short \$8 million in expansion funds for the lower schools, could not furnish new buildings necessary at the University; that "The future welfare of the University and the needs of higher education in the metropolitan area of Detroit demand that the state of Michigan assume complete financial responsibility for Wayne University." The Board recognized that "a corollary of such action" would be "the establishment of a plan of separate management under direct state authority." (367-8)

Opposition to this entreaty arose, both from existing state institutions who feared greater competition for existing funds, and from other institutions, like Wayne, that were seeking state

adoption. The legislature once again declined full adoption of Wayne, but issued a \$2.7 million grant for a classroom building and a science building.¹⁵ Acknowledging the state's assistance, the Detroit Board "quickly changed the University's resident-student area from Wayne County to the entire state of Michigan, thus further nailing down the idea that the University was a quasi-state institution" (368-9). One further attempt in 1947 to bring Wayne University under state control failed as well. A year-long study led by State Senator Don Vander Werp sought "to examine the whole question of Wayne University's relationship with the state government" (369). The Vander Werp committee recommend the state adopt Wayne, and even began preparing the bills necessary to make it happen. These plans, however, were derailed by Governor Kim Sigler and legislative leaders angered by a 1946 amendment to the state constitution which diverted state sales tax funds to local control; the legislature let the Wayne bills die in committee. Sigler laid the blame for the failure of the bills on the state of Michigan's finances and the diversion amendment. For the moment, the University's hopes of state adoption were dead.

By the early 1950s, though, the moment was finally right. The University, facing the threat of decreased income as the post-war student veterans began to graduate, once again had to negotiate with the Detroit Board for improved finances. Millage taxes passed in 1949 and 1953 promised some small relief from the University's financial pressures, but "already it was plain that Wayne's share would have to be used for current operation, and that in any case the Board of Education was becoming less and less able to support the University" (404). In late 1954, the newly elected Michigan Secretary of State James Hare (himself a Wayne alumnus) wrote to President Clarence Hilberry; Governor G. Mennen Williams had appointed Hare to oversee educational matters. Hilberry and other University leaders spoke to the governor and leaders of

¹⁵ In Autumn 1946, the University broke ground on the classroom building, to be called State Hall (368).

the state legislature, and decided to take the opportunity to once again pursue state adoption. In January 1955, Governor Williams appointed Hare to head a nine-man fact-finding committee to study Wayne; the Governor, in February, Williams also solicited Alexander Ruthven, president-emeritus of the University of Michigan, to lead the larger committee studying the prospects of state adoption of Wayne.

The Study Commission on State Support for Wayne University, more commonly called simply the Ruthven commission, had a mandate from the Governor to move swiftly, in hopes that the new legislative term of fall 1955 could act on its recommendation. The Ruthven commission was a “remarkable group of people,” in Hanawalt’s account, and its makeup “said much for the position that Wayne University had attained in the state. All 39 were publicly known in their various fields: presidents of state colleges and other educational officials, editors (including a farm editor), labor and union leaders, jurists, corporation presidents, businessmen, physicians, members of the legislature” (407). Building from data collected by Hare’s earlier fact-finding committee, the Ruthven commission formed committees to study Wayne at all levels: “it formed committees on location, on objectives, on junior-college problems, and on support and control.” By December 1955, the commission submitted its report to Governor Williams with a unanimous recommendation: the state should assume control and support of Wayne University.¹⁶

In addition to its recommendation in favor of state adoption, the Ruthven commission made several noteworthy findings about the University and its operations. First, the commission observed that the University faced some disadvantages in location—namely “high land costs and

¹⁶ To some extent, Hanawalt notes, such a recommendation was a foregone conclusion. Before the commission had officially begun its work, “Ruthven had little doubt even then what his group would recommend. He stated publicly his own view: ‘The people of Michigan—all of its people—need Wayne University. If the Russians should drop a bomb on Wayne University, there is no question whatever but that the state would have to create another university to take its place’ (406-7).”

insufficient room for parking” (407 —but that these were offset by other advantageous factors: “accessibility to students, proximity to the cultural center and community agencies, and valuable existent buildings.” The commission recommended admissions be determined to maintain an equal balance between underclassmen, upperclassmen, and graduate students; and that the University continue to provide its existing services: “instruction at all levels, research pure and applied, and consultative services to the Detroit community.” As to this last point, the Ruthven commission made plain that although it recognized the importance of Wayne’s service to metropolitan Detroit, it did not see the University as serving only Detroit. As Hanawalt writes, the Ruthven commission recognized “that although Wayne University ‘was a municipal institution in respect to its support and control,’ it was not parochial, ‘either in its student body or in the services which it renders’” (408). The Ruthven commission also proposed a three-year transition period from 1956 to 1959 during which control of the university would gradually move from the shared control of the Detroit Board and a state-appointed Board of Governors, to full control by an eight-member Board of Governors.¹⁷

The Ruthven commission’s report was a major victory in favor of state adoption, but President Hilberry and other University leaders still had to convince state legislators to act on its recommendations. The University “put its public-relations machinery into high gear” (408-9) behind this effort, alongside similar efforts led by the alumni association. Hilberry and other University leaders met legislators and other interested parties. In its efforts, the University was supported by many other groups: “Resolutions of approval went out from the university council (representing the faculties), the [Detroit] Board of Education, the Detroit Board of Commerce, and the council of state college presidents. Detroit newspapers favored the change,

¹⁷ The final bill, as passed, made provision for a “permanent board numbering six (rather than eight) and being elected, not appointed” (409).

as did most of those out of state” (409). The state legislature took up bills to adopt Wayne in 1956. Despite some minor controversy—including, once again, “a short-lived bill that would have joined Wayne to the University of Michigan”—the bills passed the legislature with minimal opposition. The final bill, Public Act #183, was signed 22 April 1956, marking the institution’s official transition from Wayne University to Wayne State University. The Detroit Board surrendered control of the university it had overseen for nearly ninety years, the passing of an era Hanawalt marks with some pathos: “‘We have been very proud and happy in our relationship with Wayne University I am sure that each one of us relinquishes the control and support of Wayne University with deep regret.’ It was Mrs. Betty Becker, president of the Detroit Board of Education, saying an official farewell.”

A Theoretical Interlude in the Public Sphere

Before turning to the University bulletin, I want to develop a reading of Hanawalt’s work in *A Place of Light* in the theoretical framework laid out in Chapter One. There, I articulated a theoretical framework based on work in public sphere theory and public rhetoric. This theoretical framework, drawing especially from Habermas, Warner, and Rice, understands publics as those sites where public subjects draw together to address one another on matters of common concern. Theorists of the public sphere are thus interested in the historical and material conditions of such engagement and in the wide variety of discourses such engagement generates. More narrowly, scholars of public rhetoric take particular interest in the texts comprising such discourses: how they are created; how they attempt to persuade other members of the public; and how they are determined by material and historical conditions of their publics. My method here for reading and analyzing such texts extends and rethinks Jenny Rice’s publics approach, arguing that we

can read institutional texts to understand the processes by which institutional public subjectivities are given voice.

As explained in Chapter One, I take my own institutional home, Wayne State University, as a case study for such a reading. My focus is on Wayne State's urban mission as a lens through which to understand the University's own discourses about its role as a public subject. In this chapter thus far, I've narrated several key moments from Wayne State's history through extensive summary of Hanawalt's 1968 history of the University, *A Place of Light*. This history has included the establishment and histories of Wayne State's precursor institutions; the 1933 merger of those institutions into one University structure; the University's continued expansion into Detroit in the middle 1940s; and the 1956 turnover of the University from municipal to state control. The history traced thus far suggests much about Wayne State in its role as a public subject.

First and foremost, for my interests, this history shows that Wayne State and its precursor institutions have long been conscious of a unique relationship to the city of Detroit and its citizens. As I note above, Hanawalt's focus was not the history of that relationship; nevertheless, as my summary above shows, such a thread is evident all the same. Each of Wayne State's precursors defined their own mission in part in relationship to the city: the Medical College's administrators spoke of public service to the city and of contributing to the city's prestige; the Normal School and the Teachers College, created by the Detroit Board of Education, were explicitly established to serve the city's schools' need for well-trained teachers and educators; the Junior College, and later the City College, were likewise established to meet Detroit employers' need for trained and credentialed employees. Similarly, the moments traced here from the 1930s, 40s, and 50s speak to ways the University has acted as a public subject in

(somewhat) more recent historical settings. The establishment of the university structure in 1933 answered a call for a Detroit-based institution of higher learning that had been in circulation at least since the late nineteenth century. The expansion of the University in the middle 1940s likewise made conscious effort to respond to the city's own plans for expansion and growth; so too did the short-lived School for General Studies attempt to respond to the city's need for vocational training. Finally, the campaigns for state control in 1945 and 1956 were supported in part by claims about the University's service to metropolitan Detroit.

It is worth noting as well the often reciprocal nature of this relationship. This historical sketch shows not only that the University has historically been motivated in part by its service to Detroit, but that the city writ large recognized its relationship to the University. In the history offered here the University's most obvious relationship has been with the Detroit Board of Education. As the overseer of the University's finances and administration for much of the University's history, the Board, and by extension the city's municipal government more broadly, determined in complex ways how the University fulfilled its various purposes. The relationship between the University and the Board was often a contentious one, as we have seen. But beyond the necessary relationship between the University and the Detroit Board, this history also reveals moments when the city and its citizens turned their attention to the University, such as the pastoral support for the 1932 student rally against planned budget cuts; the 1936 public committee on University expansion; the 1944 city plan's reservation of land for University growth; or the involvement of local press, citizens, and business groups in support of the 1956 campaign for state control.

These relationships—between the University and other public subjects like the citizens of Detroit, the members of the local press, and especially here the members of the Detroit Board of

Education—are important to understanding the way the University fashions itself as a public subject. As I argued in the previous chapter, both Warner and Rice emphasize that publics are fundamentally relational; they are sites in which subjects find themselves entangled together in network of discursive circulation. In turn, from within these processes of engagement, we can trace the emergence of public subjectivities as they define and are defined by the public discourses they generate. In this history, we can see the University in continual engagement with other public subjects; the University, while acknowledging its service to Detroit, also repeatedly makes account of its own interests and its own ambitions. At some moments, these accounts are in reactive response to perceived threats to its own well-being—like, for example, the ever-present threat of budget cuts. At other moments, the University proactively advocates for its own interests—as we see here in the University’s campaigns for state adoption. In so doing, the University proves itself as capable as other public subjects in exerting agency through its engagement in public discourses.

We also see in this history that the University relies on a variety of different kinds of texts when it acts as a public subject. As I describe in Chapter One, I refer to these texts as institutional texts in order to distinguish them from vernacular texts composed and circulated by individual public subjects; these institutional texts are those texts created by or on behalf of large institutions like Wayne State. In the history I’ve summarized from Hanawalt, there are references to a number of different institutional texts, references that give some sense of the scope and variety that such texts might encompass: committee reports, course catalogs, financial reports, publicity campaigns, statements made to the Detroit Board, internal communiques, admissions policies, appeals to the state legislature, architectural plans, curricular plans. *A Place of Light* itself, commissioned to celebrate the University’s centenary, can be included here as an

institutional text; it speaks effectively to the University's changing sense of function and purpose. To be clear, I do not claim that all of these documents are addressed to the same audience, nor that all of the audiences invoked by these texts are all specifically public audiences. Rather, the important point here is to note that this roster of institutional texts points to the relative difficulty and complexity of understanding how an *institutional* public subject emerges. While the institutional texts cited by Hanawalt point to some of the ways Wayne State has historically worked as a public subject, they do so in aggregate, not individually: no one institutional text defines the nature and character of the University's public subjectivity. We must instead read these texts collectively, archivally; our work is to trace out not just the relationships between the University's texts and those to which they respond, but to begin tracing out the relationships that exist among these institutional texts themselves. We will see more such work in the following chapter.

Thus far, in looking at Wayne State's first hundred years, we've seen the University develop from its precursor institutions into a major public research university. That development also saw the University's service area expand, from the confines of Detroit, to the broader Wayne County region, to the State of Michigan. In this history however, we have not yet seen the full emergence of the University's urban mission. While the history traced here certainly points to ways that the University has seen its function in part be service to Detroit and its citizens, this history doesn't depict the purposeful, deliberate urban mission that we see in later institutional texts. That intentional urban mission has not yet been articulated in the history covered thus far. In order to best understand that urban mission, and the way it has shaped Wayne State's role as public subject, I now turn from Hanawalt's institutional history to a different kind of institutional text: the University bulletin.

The University Bulletin

Most readers are probably familiar with the university bulletin or course catalog.¹⁸ Issued annually or every two to three years, these documents organize and report on the missions, policies, course offerings, and degree programs of the university and its various constituent colleges, schools, and programs.¹⁹ By way of example, I want to offer a brief look at a sample table of contents from one of Wayne State's university bulletins in order to better explain my approach to these documents. Below, Figures 7 and 8 show the table of contents from a typical Wayne State undergraduate bulletin; in this particular instance, we are looking at the table of contents from the university bulletin for 1997-99; this example is fairly typical of the contents of the bulletins since 1974-75 and represents a midway point in the bulletins cited in this chapter and the next. As these figures show, the university bulletin contains a large and varied amount of material. Much of this material discusses university and college policies on admissions, academic regulations, tuition, financial aid, paths to degrees—material, that is, governing how the University conducts key parts of its teaching functions.

¹⁸ As a quick note on terminology, I want to draw a distinction between the texts I'm describing here as *university bulletins* or *course catalogs*, and those documents described as *class schedules*. Though both sets of documents detail available course offerings, the texts considered in this chapter (as the discussion above about the 1997-99 bulletin makes clear) are those concerned with policy, procedure, and programs. As this chapter makes clear, I understand such texts to be complexly rhetorical. In contrast, I understand *course schedules* to more narrowly describe a university's or college's available course offerings in a given academic period (usually on a semester, trimester, or quarterly basis). At Wayne State, the *class schedule* is updated on a semester basis while the documents I describe as the *university bulletin* or the *course catalog* are as of this writing updated biennially.

¹⁹ Wayne State's university bulletins were issued on an annual basis in line with the academic year through the 1974-75 academic year. Starting the following year, the bulletins were issued on a biennial basis; the first biennial bulletin thus covered the 1975-77 academic years. From my research, it's not clear why the change was made.

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Figure 7: Table of Contents, Wayne State Undergraduate University Bulletin 1997-1999

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Figure 8: Table of Contents (continued), Wayne State Undergraduate University Bulletin 1997-1999

In this and in the following chapter, I turn to archival material to see how Wayne State's engagement with its urban and academic publics can be traced through institutional texts. Working in this chapter with university bulletins from the 1950s and through the middle 1960s shows them to be organized much differently than more recent examples. These earlier bulletins, compiled and archived at the Reuther Library at Wayne State, were originally issued as individual bulletins and catalogs for each of the University's colleges and schools. Organized much like an academic journal, each academic year's bulletin comprises one volume, with individual college or school catalogs marked as an issue or edition of that year's volume; thus,

for example, the College of Education's general catalog for the 1956-57 academic year is issue 34.16 of the *Wayne State University Bulletin*. This numbering system is evident throughout the 1950s and 1960s, but is discontinued by the 1974-75 bulletin, the first to be published as a single issue containing material for all of the University's schools and programs.

The earlier volumes of the bulletins also show great variety in organization and content. Of course, they differ in obvious ways to reflect the emphases of each college or school. But apart from each edition in a volume sharing similar cover art and a list of key university administration officials, very little is the same between issues or volumes. The editions for some colleges and schools include historical profiles of the University or the college in question; this is often true, for example, of bulletins issued by the College of Education and the College of Nursing. Other editions, like the College of Education and later the School of Social Work, speak in significant detail of relationships between the University or College and the city of Detroit; just as often, however, the bulletins omit such information, as is often the case in the catalogs for the College of Engineering and the School of Business Administration. In addition to the bulletins for the various colleges and schools, several volumes include issues under the rubric *General Information and Faculty Roster*, which explicitly describe the purpose and mission of the University. Some volumes, in contrast, include glossy photo inserts called variously the "University Section" or the "Student Information" section; these inserts are found interpolated into the pages of the main issues of each volume. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, bulletins across the University's schools and colleges began showing more uniformity in organization and content, and often included introductory sections focused on the University's history; these sections also often contextualize the University's work as it occurs in the urban setting of Detroit—though, as we will see, not going so far as describing its setting as the foundation for an

urban mission. Even these introductory comments, however, appear irregularly throughout these editions. Indeed, not until the single-issue bulletins of the middle 1970s is there evident a common or consistent description of the University's mission (urban or otherwise) across the various bulletins issued by the various colleges and schools. Even in the middle 1970s, it is not until the 1975-77 edition, the second to be issued in single-issue format, that we find a "Foreword" articulating a common University mission. In addition to the forewords describing the University, many of the sections for individual colleges and schools include their own forewords describing the missions and philosophies of their own programs.

In this chapter, my reading of this material is focused on bulletins issued in the 1950s and early to middle 1960s; in the following chapter, I will consider bulletins from the middle 1960s through the present. In planning these sections, I had initially hoped to focus especially on the bulletin issues and sections for the School of Medicine, the College of Education, and the College of Liberal Arts (later renamed the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences). As we learned in the previous section, these three divisions are the heirs of the the three precursor institutions to which Wayne State traces its roots; these colleges descend from the Detroit Medical College, the Detroit Normal Training School, and the Detroit Junior College, respectively. Yet a focus on these sections in particular yielded far less material than I'd expected; to my surprise, of these three units, only the College of Education consistently invokes a relationship to Detroit in describing its work. The bulletins for the School of Medicine and the College of Liberal Arts often include the introductory historical comments about the University described above (in those years when the bulletin included them in all sections); the sections for these units also often include capsule histories and what we would today recognize as mission statements for their

programs. The School of Medicine thus invokes its history of service to Detroit. In contrast, the College of Liberal Arts rarely if ever describes its work as contributing to the city.

Stymied by the paucity of material under my original plan, the work presented here and in the following chapter draws instead from material across the entirety of the course bulletin: introductory material, informational inserts, and forewords describing the University's mission and purpose, yes; but also similar material from many of the individual schools and colleges. While I will have occasion to cite material from nearly all of the University's programs, it is no surprise, perhaps, that those programs which most consistently contextualize their work by reference to urban service are the College of Education and the School of Social Work (whose catalog first appears in its own issue in the 1954-55 bulletin year). Thus, while my primary interest here remains in following how the bulletins articulate the University's changing sense of its urban mission, we will also see in this chapter and the next how Wayne State's relationship to Detroit becomes represented at the level of individual schools and colleges.

1950-59: Laboratory Detroit

In the previous section, I described this era as one of transition for Wayne State: its physical plant and curricular offerings were expanding as it took on greater numbers of new students in the post-war boom in enrollments; by the middle of the decade it had at long last loosed itself from the Detroit Board of Education and successfully sought adoption by the state of Michigan. This moment of transition is made plain in many of the bulletins from this era, and the changes undergone by the University are often correlated with Detroit's own economic boom and expansion. In the bulletin for 1951-52, for example, the university's expansion is explicitly tied to the city's:

The growth of the institution, both before and after its consolidation into a University, has closely paralleled the growth of the area it serves. As the area centered around Detroit has increased in population and in industrial development, the need for better facilities for higher education has been intensified. In response to the demands of industry and the professions for college trained people and of students for the means by which they could obtain such training, the University has grown until, in recent years, it has consistently ranked among the twenty largest collegiate institutions in the United States. (*College of Liberal Arts, Catalog Issue 1951-52*, 20)

Elsewhere, the bulletins speak with pride as they describe the transformation of the University's campus. The introduction to the 1956-57 bulletin for the College of Engineering, for example, includes a section called "Wayne University—Today and Tomorrow," which notes that "landmarks of ... earlier days are fast disappearing (*College of Engineering, General Catalog 1956-7*, 5). This bulletin notes a number of changes to the Wayne campus: the construction of buildings like State Hall, Science Hall, the Kresge Library, and the Community Arts building, among others, is evidence here of Wayne State's development: "Each year new buildings rise and old ones fall, all according to a master plan for the development of the University campus." Similarly, the same year's bulletin for the College of Education observes that Wayne State's development includes the emergence of an increasingly cosmopolitan campus: "As Wayne State University is becoming known, more and more students from other lands elect to come to this metropolitan area to study in its many schools and colleges" (*College of Education, General Catalog 1956-57*, 7). Here, too, the changes to Wayne State's campus are paired with those to the city broadly: "Sharing the campus with these 'otherlanders' helps enrich the learning experience for all students and enhances Detroit's reputation as an international-minded center where forward-looking leaders in management, labor, civic and cultural agencies are helping to bring about world unity through trade and education."

This focus on the middle 1950s as an era of expansion and transition is especially evident in the *General Information and Faculty Roster* volume of the 1957-58 bulletin. This volume

begins with comments from then-University President Clarence Hilberry; as the introduction explains, in these comments “Hilberry spotlights three significant periods in the life of the University: its origin of yesterday; its transition of today; and its promise of tomorrow” (*General Information and Faculty Roster, General Catalog 1957-8*, 6). Drawn from (unidentified) addresses by President Hilberry, the text here contextualizes the University’s development against a history and future of service, to Michigan broadly but specifically to Detroit. Hilberry begins the “Yesterday” section with a sketch of post-Civil War Detroit, recounting the by-now familiar narrative of the founding of the Detroit Medical College and the Detroit Normal Training School as being fundamentally acts of service to the city: “Since these early beginnings, nearly ninety years ago, each step of the University’s growth has been prompted by this same sense of responsibility to meet its needs for higher education” (7). In contrast to “Yesterday’s” focus on responsibility to Detroit, Hilberry’s section on the Wayne State of “Today” emphasizes the University’s service to, and dependence upon, the State of Michigan: “We are now in the midst of a three-year transition to full state support. For several years the State Legislature, the Detroit Board of Education and the University have recognized that Wayne’s contributions to higher education in the State of Michigan merited a more widespread base of support than could be reasonably or logically expected from the City of Detroit” (7). This recognition, in Hilberry’s telling, provides the impetus for the Ruthven Commission and its findings in favor of state adoption. Yet despite linking the University’s present to its contributions to the state, Hilberry looks first to the city in describing its future. Invoking the contributions Wayne State’s future graduates will make to an industrial society, Hilberry asserts that

An American city such as Detroit would be impossible without these increasing numbers of college graduates, of professional people, of high specialists in many fields. Schools, social agencies, hospitals, legal offices, engineering research centers are all essential to the growth and development of our industrial life. And none of these services is possible

except as colleges and universities turn out in increasing numbers well educated and well trained young people into the life stream of our community. This is the future of higher education in Michigan and the immediate future of Wayne State University. (9)

Here, Hilberry introduces the claim that Detroit is “impossible” without Wayne State—or at least without its graduates. Significantly, this represents an inversion of the University’s historical dependence on the city for financial support under the auspices of the Detroit Board of Education. To be sure, Hilberry is not claiming that Detroit is literally dependent on Wayne State; the figure here clearly invokes instead the long history of contributions that the University and its alumni have made to the community. Yet I find this trope provocative for two reasons. First, coming as it does immediately following Hilberry’s explanation of Wayne State’s transition toward independence from the Detroit Board, this image seems to invoke a future in which the University is not only free from the city’s oversight, but in which (even if only metaphorically) the tables have turned to find the city dependent on the University.

Second, this trope stands out from the way other bulletins in this era describe the University’s relationship to the city. While the image of an “impossible” Detroit enjoying and relying upon the University’s contributions to its social and economic success is not entirely out of line with the way the University-city relationship is portrayed in these texts, the image which recurs far more often is how the city contributes to the function of the University. Though it receives greater elaboration in later bulletins, this characterization of Detroit as an asset to the University is apparent even in early bulletins from this era. The College of Liberal Arts catalog for 1951-52 explains that “[b]ecause of the University’s location in a great population center,” it has the opportunity to provide higher education to many who would not otherwise have such access. In turn, the catalog continues, “[t]he University finds ... that one of its greatest assets is its ready access to the rich resources of this great industrial community” (*College of Liberal Arts, Catalog Issue 1951-52*, 21). A few volumes later, the College of Education bulletin elaborates on

this theme, noting that Wayne State's location in Detroit's Cultural Center, gives it ready access to the Detroit Institute of Arts, the Detroit Public Library, the Detroit Historical Museum, and other institutions which "contribute immeasurably to the resources of the University" (*College of Education, General Catalog 1956-57*, 6). Moreover, the catalog continues, "Proximity to Detroit's cultural and business life offers still other advantages. The City serves as a laboratory in which students can work and study. The community offers opportunities for employment, with rewards of both wages and experience. Each year, fine productions in music, drama and art are brought to the very doorstep of the University through presentation in Detroit." The bulletins in this era largely portray Detroit and its civic cultural institutions as supplements to the University's own holdings; as the College of Liberal Arts catalog for 1957-58 puts it, because it is "[l]ocated in the heart of a great metropolitan center, the University can make use of the vast social, cultural, and scientific resources of this entire area—to enrich its programs and to spur its research" (*College of Liberal Arts, General Catalog 1957-58*, 23).

The reference to research in the passage cited above is not incidental. In addition to figuring the City as a storehouse of resources to be called upon by the University, the bulletins in this era also repeatedly portray Detroit as laboratory for Wayne State's teaching and research functions. Indeed, the Liberal Arts catalog cited above continues from that passage to say that "through its programs in adult education, through its research, and through consultive services, the University endeavors to carry out into the community the benefits of the knowledge acquired in its classrooms and laboratories." In a "Community Resources" section drawn from an address at the Detroit Economic Club, the General Information volume of 1957-58 cites President Hilberry asserting that "At the door of the classroom lies the community's wealth of scientific and technical knowledge. At the door of the laboratory lie its social and economic problems—a

challenge to research” (*General Information and Faculty Roster, General Catalog 1957-8*, 15). Yet for Hilberry, these resources are secondary to the real strength of Wayne State’s urban setting: “Above all other resources are the variety and richness that come from being on a campus in the middle of three million people, of an international as well as a cosmopolitan nature. For Wayne State is an urban university, and as such it offers its students and its faculty a particular experience.” Similar imagery is invoked by the School of Business Administration’s 1955-56 catalog: “Detroit’s business and industrial leaders contribute immeasurably to the success of the School through their interest and co-operation. ... The supervised work-experience courses offered in various curriculums of the School are further proof of the close relationship which exists between the School and Detroit’s business life” (*School of Business Administration Catalog 1955-56*, 12).

In the bulletins sampled here, the image of Detroit as a laboratory for the teaching and research functions of the University is most fully articulated in the School of Social Work’s 1954-55 catalog:

The metropolitan area of Detroit provides an exceptionally rich and fascinating laboratory for the teaching, learning, and practicing of social work. Highly industrialized urban areas are close enough to the suburban, semi-rural and rural areas to enable the student in social work to be aware of the total fabric of American community life. Social agencies and organizations operating in the Detroit scene have to do with the usual kinds of social problems but must inevitably deal also with social problems affected by nationality, by racial and minority groups, by management-labor relationships, and by other social forces inherent in this kind of setting. These agencies provide opportunities for an almost unlimited variety of experiences for the social work student. (*School of Social Work Catalog 1954-55*, 14)

I cite this passage at length because of how powerfully it addresses the University’s relationship to the city. In citing Detroit as a laboratory for the School’s, and by extension the University’s, “teaching, learning, and practicing of social work,” this bulletin clearly contextualizes Wayne State’s engagement with Detroit as contiguous with a more traditional university’s teaching,

learning, and service functions. Granted, the School of Social Work is perhaps especially suited to such engagement, but as shown here, the School is hardly unique in appealing to the image of the laboratory to explain how the city's resources serve the work of the University, and vice-versa.

Still, although such descriptions situate Wayne State's relationship to Detroit as integral to the teaching work of the University, such emphasis is inconsistent. This is especially true when reading those sections of the bulletins describing the University's purpose and function writ large; although the city does make an appearance in these sections, it is nearly as an afterthought. Drawing again from his address to the Detroit Economic Club, the *General Information* volume for 1957-58 cites President Hilberry's attempts to define the functions of the University. In this account, the University "is like a human hand. The palm of this hand represents the broad basic program of general studies out of which all the other functions of a university naturally and inevitably spring and grow, and without which no other part of a university's program would be possible" (10). Hilberry's comments identify the University's other functions (the "fingers" of his metaphorical hand) as its professional schools, its graduate programs, its adult education efforts, its consultative services, and its research. The fundamental goal of the University, in Hilberry's telling, is the humanist goal of preparing students for citizenship:

In this program [i.e., Wayne State's basic program of general education] every college and university attempts to prepare young people for citizenship in our democracy. We try to help them to know and understand the world in which they live; to give them some knowledge of the great traditions—intellectual, social, political, religious—which have shaped our modern world. We may not like the shape, but unless we know these traditions we can never reshape it. We try to get young people to explore the forces—social, political, economic—which play upon our lives.

Each discipline is thus envisioned as serving the greater end of such training in citizenship: the sciences help students "understand the scientific method and what it means in our technological

civilization;” the arts and humanities “introduce them to literature and the arts and languages so that they may come to know the best that has been thought and said and felt and recorded in the world by the greatest minds and spirits of the past and present.” Such training culminates in students capable of insight and expression: “We hope to show them how to think, how to deal with ideas, how to express conclusions in a language which is clear, even if it is not cadenced and sonorous.”

This central function is the base from which the University’s other functions extend. The first of these, the professional schools, “pour a constant stream of well-trained young minds into medicine and teaching and business and engineering, social work, nursing, pharmacy, law, and the rest of these professional fields;” while the second, the graduate school, offers studies leading to advanced degrees (10-1). While neither of these two “fingers” extend the hand of the University into the city, both the third and the fourth do, as Hilberry describes them. The fourth function or finger of the University here is its adult education program, “through which every university attempts to carry out into the community the knowledge and the ‘know-how’ which are the inevitable by-products of the very existence of a university” (11). Here, the potential benefit of University knowledge to the city is only a “by-product” of the University’s other functions, even if a “university adequately serves the people who support it only as its accumulating knowledge becomes available to those people for their use.” Yet the fourth University function described here does more fully seem to point at an urban mission: “It is the providing of all kinds of consultative services to the community.” Such services are a function of the University as a “collection of scholars” and “are available to every segment of the community for consultative services. These services are available to social and governmental agencies, to business and industry, to labor, to the professions—to every aspect of the

community and its life” (11) Finally, the University’s research function—the thumb on Hilberry’s metaphorical hand—points away from such urban concerns and instead toward the humanist mission Hilberry identifies elsewhere: “A university must increase our knowledge of ourselves, of our world, of the society in which we live. And every university worthy of the name is every day, in dozens of different ways, in different areas, undertaking intellectual expeditions up into the peaks of the unexplored and the unknown” (11-2).

1960-1965: Proper Functions

Speaking broadly, the bulletins in this era (and those of the early 1970s as well) show much greater uniformity and design than those in the 1950s. Though the bulletins for several schools and colleges continued to include sections on the college’s history or the school’s mission, these sections are rarer in this era; when they are included, they are also much more stable, staying largely unchanged, or showing only minor revisions, from the descriptions offered in bulletins from the 1950s. (This is especially true, for example, of bulletins issued for the School of Business Administration and the College of Engineering.) Most of the individual bulletins in this era begin with some version of President Hilberry’s description of University functions (which we will see in more detail below); like the descriptions of mission for individual schools and colleges, Hilberry’s description of University function remains largely unchanged across multiple yearly volumes of the bulletin.

Despite such stability and confidence in the mission of the University as described here, these bulletins exhibit a rather more conflicted stance toward Wayne State’s urban commitments than do those of the decade before. This is especially evident when traced through comments from President Hilberry presented in these volumes. For example, the *General Information* volume of the 1959-60 bulletin includes excerpts from a May 1958 address given by Hilberry to

the Physicians' Symposium. Unlike his earlier 1953 address to the Economic Club (cited in the 1957-58 bulletin), this address makes no mention of consultative service to Detroit; in fact, Hilberry seems frankly skeptical of such service. As cited in the bulletin, this address begins by asking what responsibilities are placed on colleges and universities. "Universities," Hilberry explains, "are responsible for the pursuit of intellectual excellence. They are concerned with creating minds that are rigorously disciplined, broadly stretched, analytically sharpened, imaginatively challenged and judiciously matured" (*General Information and Faculty Roster* 1959-60, 5). In itself, this is not a new responsibility for higher education, Hilberry continues, but "We have, in the twentieth century, come to ask more from our universities." These new responsibilities include the training and specialization of professional men and women; the preservation and transmission of cultural tradition; and the creation of new knowledge through research and "creative activity." Although Hilberry admits that "universities attempt to interpret this great reservoir of knowledge so that it can be applied to the specific problems which face our society," he also claims that such efforts are complicated by three developments: first, "an explosion of knowledge unlike anything in human history;" second, the development of "for the first time in history, the power to destroy ourselves;" and finally, the "prodigious" growth in world population (6). Facing these crises, colleges and universities must first "look freshly and imaginatively at the objectives of higher education and at the process we use toward these ends. Secondly, and equally important, as individual citizens we must develop a fuller understanding of higher education and its needs" (7). The role of the university in solving social problems is thus indirect at best.

Instead, Hilberry invokes the university's teaching mission as its most apt way to address social problems. The "crucial question" for the university, he writes, is how to "shape the

curriculum as to assure intellectual self-sufficiency in our graduates, men and women who have the intellectual equipment and know the necessary tools and can therefore take a complex problem in economics, or world affairs, or human relations, see it whole and reach sound conclusions” (7). It is these alumni who will discover and implement solutions to social problems, in this view, rather than the University itself. The University has its own mission to attend to: the procurement of social and financial support for its activities. Hilberry laments the money spent on material comforts such as recreation, radio equipment, television sets, movies, and automobiles, but remains confident that “we as a people do value higher education” (8). He foresees increased individual, corporate, and governmental support for higher education: “... as individuals we will greatly increase our personal gifts to the institutions of which we are alumni, public and private; that we will throw our influence behind the corporate support of higher education; and that we will earnestly seek a resolution of the tax problems which perplex and baffle us in Michigan and seem to preclude the wise and necessary support of public higher education.” Hilberry emphasizes the necessity for such support: “Higher education cannot hope to meet the pressing, justifiable and real demands that are before it today without financial support in greatly enlarged amounts.” The implication here is that while the University serves social needs through the work of its alumni, its proper mission rests in its educational and research efforts, though those are themselves jeopardized by the lack of adequate funding.

Faced with such funding crises, Hilberry calls for universities to reconsider their priorities and the activities which they choose to support. This is, in part, aligned with his call for greater social support for the work of higher education: institutions of higher education cannot meet their research and teaching responsibilities “unless the society of which they are a part understands the proper function of higher education and places a premium upon the

accomplishment of its goals” (9). Yet Hilberry also invites universities to reexamine their “incidental activities.” Some of these, he admits, “are probably not damaging if carried as incidental activities and so understood;” by way of example, he cites “the provision of Saturday afternoon spectacles for sports lovers.” Others, however, pose greater risks to the traditional missions of the university: “But if in these times we ask our universities to admit to our student bodies those who should not enter college but should seek post-high school work elsewhere; if we ask universities to train technicians instead of educate professional men and women; if we expect them to direct their limited energies into providing incidental services to the community, we shall frustrate higher education and prevent it from accomplishing the really earth-shattering tasks that lie before it.” For Hilberry, these are the hazards faced by the university: students unworthy or incapable of university work; programs training technical workers rather than credentialed professionals; and community service.

This roster of priorities seems inconsistent with Hilberry’s own identification of consultative services as part of the functions of a university. By noting this, I don’t mean to imply antipathy toward the community or community service on the part of either Hilberry himself or Wayne State. Rather, I read here an ambivalence about the degree to which such efforts should drive other functions of the university—an ambivalence which is evident elsewhere in the bulletins of this era. For example, in the same 1959-60 bulletin year from which the preceding comments were drawn, every issue included a glossy insert, called the “University Section” of text and photographs. Such inserts, as noted above, appear in several bulletin years in this era. The 1959-60 insert, however, is of particular interest as it is explicitly thematized around the relationship between Wayne State and Detroit. Against photographs of pristine new university buildings and scenes of urban life in and around industrial Detroit, the insert here

reproduces text from a Hilberry address given “on the occasion of the first conference at the McGregor Memorial Conference Center” (*General Information and Faculty Roster 1959-60*, i), itself a recent 1958 addition to the University campus:

This University—dedicated to freedom of learning and of exploration.

This City—spawning problems more rapidly than we can define them, to say nothing of resolving them.

These great metropolitan areas have become the norm for the way Americans live and work and play. They are the central stage on which are being enacted the great dramatic issues of our century.

The great treasuries of culture in the United States, the art museums, libraries, operas, theaters, and symphonies, can exist as now do only in urban settings.

Gathered together in these great metropolitan areas are all the “clinical” facilities for research in medicine and the law, social work and nursing, in government and sociology, to name only a few.

Wayne State University’s greatest accomplishments lie ahead. In research they will undoubtedly involve experimental relationships yet untried between the University and the great concentration of scientific talent in industry—and between our social scientists and observable human drama unfolding in the City. (iv-xvi)

I cite this passage at length because it so aptly illustrates the ambivalent relationship between University and city that emerges from this era of bulletins. The University here is devoted not to the resolution of social problems, but to intellectual development and exploration; the city and its problems are central to American life, but those problems are many and perhaps irresolvable. The city makes possible cultural and industrial experiences unavailable elsewhere; the University capitalizes on such resources as sites for its faculty’s research. Yet despite relying on the city’s resources, the University nevertheless seems isolated from its troubles; Detroit stands as the backdrop against which Wayne State performs its functions, but its drama, its vitality, and its problems remain its own and not the the University’s.

This sense of Detroit as setting or backdrop seems very much in line with the image of the city as a laboratory for learning and research that we see at several points in the bulletins of the 1950s. The question of service to the city might be marginalized as incidental, but clearly the bulletins of the early 1960s do see Wayne State’s relationship to the city as important to the

University's work. In many ways, these bulletins picture Wayne State's location in a major urban center as a sort of value-added proposition; not unequivocally central, perhaps, but an indelible part of Wayne State's character. This is especially clear in the *General Information* installment of the 1961-62 bulletin. There, a section called "The University—Its Urban Setting" cites an informal 1961 report from Hilberry to the University faculty. Hilberry connects Wayne State to the city's economic life and its plans for urban renewal: "In history and geography we live at the center of a metropolitan complex. More than any other university I know, ours is an urban institution, for our interaction on the metropolis is greater than most. Through the urban renewal program we will provide much of the actual dollar credits that will rebuild the heart of Detroit" (6). Being an urban institution here means something much different than we will see described in later bulletins: "We should expect something special to happen at Wayne State because our character is special. We are urban. Our graduates should become urbane. Since the liberal disciplines are central to the Wayne State programs, what particular qualities of urbanity should the citizens of Michigan expect their sons and daughters to attain at this university?" Hilberry answers this question by citing Detroit's polyglot character, the city's cultural resources, and its manufacturing capacity to suggest a sort of industrial cosmopolitanism as the outcome of studying at Wayne State: "The Wayne student studies at the center of man's most characteristic social invention—the city. Detroit's international reputation is associated with mass production and here is where the population and industries of the State are concentrated. It is in this kind of setting that Twentieth Century man is learning how to organize his political life and he can start here as an undergraduate" (7). It is students such as these, then, that the University seeks to prepare for engagement with the problems of the city and society beyond its campus.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I've surveyed Wayne State's first century, with a particular focus on how that history might have influenced the emergence of the University's urban mission. This history has been traced through some of the University's own institutional texts: Hanawalt's institutional history, *A Place of Light*; University bulletins from the 1950s and early 1960s; and Hilberry's addresses as cited in the bulletins. In addition to the traditional academic troika of research, teaching, and institutional service, these texts seem to clearly point to the University's developing awareness of emerging and complex relationships to its local urban publics, even though none of these documents explicitly invokes an emergent "urban mission." Rather, what we see here is the assertion of an understanding of Wayne State as a university with important and undeniable connections to its urban setting; from such an understanding we can begin to see how its relationship to Detroit becomes a central component in how the University defines itself as a public subject.

The readings in this chapter point to the necessity of historicizing the processes through which institutions act as public subjects. In many ways, this continues a tradition in publics scholarship of studying the historical and material foundations of publics. Habermas, in *Structural Transformations*, famously undertakes detailed exegeses of the literary and later political publics of England, France, and Germany as they emerged in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Michael Warner, for his part, intertwines his theorization of publics and counterpublics with analyses of sites ranging from the publics of Joseph Addison's *Spectator* in the late 1600s (98-114) to queer counterpublics of the 1980s and 1990s (209-23). Indeed, even though the majority of sites Rice discusses are drawn from more contemporary public controversies surrounding development, her book begins with a discussion of a controversial

development plan at Austin's Waller Creek in 1969 (1-4). Like Habermas, Warner, and Rice, I am similarly interested in how sites of public discussion and engagement can be traced through the historical exigencies around which publics emerge. In the history offered in this chapter, such publics most clearly emerge in the three historical moments visited above: the joining of Wayne State's precursor institutions into a unified university system in 1933; the University's expansion in the 1940s and 1950s; and the state adoption of the University in 1956. In each of these instances, Wayne State engaged other subjects in public discussions about the administration, growth, expansion, and even mission of the University.

In this chapter, I have made two series of complementary arguments: the first a series of methodological arguments about deploying a publics approach to institutional texts; the second about Wayne State itself as an institutional public subject. In Chapter One, I emphasized the importance of such a publics approach as part of a larger scholarly attempt to resolve issues in publics theory deriving from institutional opacity. There, I second Rice's claims about institutional opacity, which I understand as the isolation from public consideration of those processes which influence the ways institutional subjects engage their publics. Like Rice, I see this opacity as an obstacle to better understanding, and then theorizing, the role institutions play in shaping sites of public engagement. In this chapter, I build from that initial claim to argue the importance of institutional history to my publics approach to institutional texts. In particular, I argue here that one important facet of this approach is the reconstruction of institutional history with a specific focus on an institution's historical engagements with its publics. Within such a methodological frame, then, the task for publics scholarship becomes the identification and analysis of key institutional texts through which we can trace an institution's engagement with its publics.

Such historical and archival work yields especially rich material when focused on points of tension between an institution's constituent publics. This chapter thus argues for the importance of identifying and unpacking those moments in which the scope and scale of those publics are revealed as mutable and shifting. In this chapter, for example, we see Wayne State University emerge from predecessor institutions with almost exclusive engagement with local publics, to an urban public research university with ambitions to national prestige in its academic publics and a robust slate of programs and initiatives aimed at its local urban publics. That trajectory is marked especially by the three key moments discussed here from the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. Each of those moments represents, in addition to historical landmarks of the University's development, a reconfiguration of its priorities and interests as an institutional public subject. I argue, then, that following the historical trajectory of an institution's processes of public subjectivity—that is, the ways institutional structural change begets changes in the institution's disposition as a public subject—is an important task of this publics approach in its attempts to clarify institutional opacity.

This argument about the the importance of institutional texts deployed in this chapter complements this chapter's second argument, an argument about Wayne State's role as institutional public subject. The publics approach to institutional texts performed in this chapter shows that Wayne State's history is marked by friction between the two publics which have most determined the nature of Wayne State as an institutional public subject: a local urban public centered on Detroit (and especially its inner city), and an academic public centered on research, teaching, and learning and relationships with other, more traditional, institutions of higher education. The friction between these two horizons of public engagement have characterized much of the push and pull that characterizes Wayne State's history: its institutional roots and

historical ties to Detroit's city government and Board of Education speak to a tradition of contributions to the city, yet the University has just as often sought to establish an institutional standing distinct from its orientation toward Detroit. Often, it seems as though Wayne State is at its most confident when committed to its historical function as the educator of Detroit's professional classes; it is its relatively newer research functions that inspire the most ambiguity or confusion in the University's institutional texts. This is especially clear when reading Hilberry's comments about the functions of the University. As I've shown, Hilberry understands the University as a consultant to the city, but not directly as a participant in the city's efforts for community development; in fact, Hilberry notes, such engagement is "incidental" to Wayne State's teaching and research functions. Ultimately, what is key to this argument is recognizing that neither its role in its local urban publics nor its (sometimes aspirational) role in its broader academic publics exclusively define the character of Wayne State as an institutional public subject. Rather, I argue that it is exactly *the friction between these two publics that has historically defined Wayne State as an institutional public subject*. Wayne State's engagement with these two publics are mutually determinant of one another: the history of Wayne State shows an institutional public subject whose aspirations to premier research university status have sometimes been constrained by its commitment to its urban locale; at the same time, however, it is that very acknowledgement of its urban mission and of Detroit which distinguishes Wayne State in terms of its peer and aspirational institutions.

Such friction is evident too in how the institutional texts here often keep Detroit at arm's length from the University. On one hand, Wayne State often seems to want to capitalize on the cultural and technical resources of the city as a laboratory for teaching and learning. In that regard, the institutional texts in this chapter endorse Hilberry's claim in this chapter's epigraph

that being urban is what makes Wayne State special. Yet on the other hand, while Wayne State trades on the prestige of those resources, it also seems to disavow any obligation or commitment to the problems faced by its local urban publics. At best, the University can offer its services as a consultant to the city or other agencies; yet such activities are a “challenge to research” and are “incidental” to the University’s proper functions. Again, the balance sought between the University’s academic and local urban publics remains elusive and ambiguous. In this context, it is worth noting how rarely Wayne State, in the texts considered here, opts to describe itself specifically as an *urban university*: the bulletins cite Hilberry using the phrase only once, and Hanawalt’s history likewise uses that formulation only minimally (there is, for example, no entry for it or for related terms in the book’s index). These texts, then, show Wayne State as a fairly diffident subject of its local urban publics: while clearly the University acknowledges here a role for itself as a participant in the life of the city, that role is a fairly minimal and closely circumscribed one. Engagement with its local urban publics here is figured as largely reactive, rather than proactive: Wayne State may consult on urban problems when asked to do so, but otherwise its involvement is indirect and bound to those contributions made by its alumni and students individually—not, as we will see President Keast call for in the next chapter, at the level of the institution itself.

CHAPTER THREE: “‘SPECIAL OBLIGATIONS:’ WILLIAM REA KEAST, WAYNE STATE, AND THE URBAN UNIVERSITY IDEAL”

Nothing is so characteristic of the urban university as its engagement with the pressing problems of city life. Its historic involvement with the city, its educational need for the city, and the city's urgent need for its help—all these prompt the university toward immediate service, often identifying it, both to its community and to itself, as a kind of educational fire department, ready to answer every call for help. This posture is at once noble and necessary. The future pattern of relations between universities and society, we may be sure, will display more of such close interactions than of the distance and laissez-faire that have so often characterized universities and their milieux in the past.

President William Rae Keast, Inaugural Address, October 1965

In the preceding chapter, I offered an historical survey of the University's first hundred years, covering roughly 1868-1968. That survey focused particularly on Wayne State's historical relationship to the City of Detroit. Drawing from Leslie Hanawalt's *A Place of Light*, we learned that Wayne State's precursor institutions were established to serve practical and educational needs felt by the city; we saw too how the University's growth and expansion throughout that first century entailed negotiations of both its existing relationship to its local urban publics and of its relationship to a broader academic public of other research universities. In that chapter, I also presented a reading of University bulletins from 1950 through the middle 1960s. My reading of these institutional texts focused in particular on how they articulated what would much later come to be called the University's urban mission; as I argued in that chapter, these bulletins emphasized the city's resources as augmentations of the University's own. Citing comments by University President Clarence Hilberry, these bulletins clearly claim for Wayne State the mantle of an urban university. Yet as I further argued in the preceding chapter, taking ownership of such a label doesn't in these documents equate to a claim that Wayne State's urban environment is an

inherent or necessary part of its character as a public subject, nor, lesser still, that it thus acknowledges a unique commitment to the city and people of Detroit.

In this chapter, in the papers of former University President William Rea Keast, we will see a much fuller articulation of what an urban university could, or should, become. President Keast, who led the university from 1965 to 1971, is a key figure in the history of Wayne State's urban mission. His papers, archived at Wayne State's William Reuther Library, reveal a scholar and administrator preoccupied by the idea of an urban university. Indeed, the epigraph to this chapter is taken from Keast's inaugural address in 1965: from the very beginning of his service to Wayne State, Keast sought to articulate an understanding of what an urban university should be and how it should serve the needs and interests of its community. As we will see, Keast saw Wayne State's relationship to Detroit as being essential to the University's character, and as president his public addresses often focused on the question of how best Wayne State should serve its urban public. Clearly, earlier University presidents (like Keast's immediate predecessor Hilberry) no doubt understood the importance of Wayne State to Detroit (and vice versa), but Keast seems to be the first to make that relationship integral to his vision of university leadership. Through Keast, we can see the emergence of an urban research university as an ideal toward which Wayne State should strive.

Following this reading of Keast's papers, I turn to *Wayne and the Inner City: A Survey of Urban Concern*. This report, commissioned by President Keast, offers a snapshot of the university's various attempts to serve inner-city Detroit in the era immediately following the 1967 riots. Keast described this document in a report to the university faculty as "an attempt ... to provide an inventory of the major forms of the University's 'involvement' with the inner city" ("Report to the Faculty [4 Dec. 1968]"). This text, my reading below will suggest, is a central

text in understanding the development of Wayne State's urban mission. It reflects President Keast's preoccupation with the nature of the urban university, and presents Wayne State occupying a number of roles in relation to its urban public.

Yet while Keast's papers and (to somewhat lesser extent) *Wayne and the Inner City* urge Wayne State toward the urban university ideal, this vision, curiously, did not necessarily carry over into other institutional texts. Resuming my analysis of University bulletins begun in Chapter Two, I show here that, despite Keast's preoccupation with such an ideal, the bulletins of his era and those immediately following offer little comment on the urban university as an ideal or how such an ideal might bear upon Wayne State's own sense of its mission. Indeed, not until the middle 1970s did Wayne State even offer a mission statement at the University level in its bulletins. When it did so, however, it offered a University mission that seemed more often than not to resurrect old divisions between Wayne State's urban publics and its academic publics, rather than Keast's vision of an urban university mission which might bridge that gap. Here, reading bulletins issued during Keast's presidency, through those issued in the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and up to the present day, we will see that Wayne State University's description of its mission quickly stabilizes from the middle 1980s into a form still recognizable today.

In turning to Keast, *Wayne and the Inner City*, and these later bulletins, I hope in this chapter to accomplish two main objectives. First, through Keast and these bulletins, I trace the history of Wayne State's urban mission up through its contemporary articulations. Where Chapter Two focused roughly on the University's first one hundred years, this chapter focuses on its past fifty. Keast's papers and *Wayne and the Inner City* here posit an urban university ideal to which, as the later bulletins show, the University descriptions of itself never fully committed. Thus, my second objective in this chapter is to make sense of this disjunction between the urban

university ideal as described by Keast and the urban mission as actually articulated in the institutional texts represented by the University bulletins. My question is not whether Wayne State “lived up” to Keast’s ideal; that is, I am interested neither in asserting the inherent desirability of Keast’s vision of the urban university, nor in chastising Wayne State for not clearly fulfilling it. Rather, I am interested in asking what it means for Wayne State to have chosen a different way of articulating its place as a public subject than that defined by Keast’s ideal.

William Rea Keast and *Wayne and the Inner City*

Before looking more closely at how Keast’s papers point to the University’s urban mission, I offer a brief introduction to Wayne State’s fifth President. William Rea Keast, born 1914 in Illinois, already had an impressive career as a scholar and administrator before coming to Wayne State. After completing his bachelor’s degree at the University of Chicago in 1936, he continued into graduate studies in English at Chicago. His doctoral work was interrupted by the Second World War, and Keast served in active duty in the Army from 1941 to 1946; after the war, he returned to the University of Chicago on a Rockefeller Postwar Fellowship and completed his doctoral degree in 1947 (Garrison, Carver, and Bertelson; Wartner; Hanawalt 438). Keast served in the Department of English at Chicago until joining Cornell in 1951, earning the rank of full professor in 1957. A scholar of English literature, Keast specialized in Restoration literature and the work of Samuel Johnson, and his scholarship in these areas won him a Ford Fellowship in 1955-6 and a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1958-9. At Cornell, Keast also revealed himself a talented administrator, where he became chair of the English Department (1957), dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (1962), and vice president for academic affairs (1964). In 1965, Keast was invited to accept the office of president at Wayne State.

Keast's leadership at Wayne State is remembered as a stabilizing force in an unstable era. In 2007, Wayne State's alumni magazine wrote that Keast served "during an era of student protests, strikes, and sit-ins over the Vietnam War, the 1967 Detroit riots, and civil rights protests. Keast was known as the 'students' president' because he engaged them, listening to the positions of militant student groups, maintaining free speech on campus, fighting racism, and even joining students in certain protest events. In 1969, he personally led an anti-Vietnam War march down Woodward Avenue in Detroit" (Freeman 35). He was the first of Wayne State's presidents to come from outside the existing faculty or administration (Freeman 35). Yet even amidst such tumult, Keast oversaw a university which continued to expand and grow: "Enrollment jumped from under 30,000 students to more than 35,000. General fund expenditures more than doubled from \$34 million to almost \$70 million. There was a building boom that included the Law School, Matthaei Physical Education complex, Physics Building and the Palmer Avenue Parking Structure" (Wartner). Under Keast's leadership, the University launched its Center for Urban Studies and celebrated its 1968 Centennial with a symposium focused on the urban university. On the occasion of his death in 1998, the University of Texas at Austin—where he served as professor of English after leaving Wayne State—noted that Keast faced the difficulties of this era with "courage, conviction, and grace" (Garrison, Carver, and Bertelson).²⁰

William Rea Keast's 1965-71 tenure as the president of Wayne State also marks a turning point for the University. As we've seen, previous leaders understood that Wayne State's relationship to Detroit was part of what defined the character of the University. Yet few leaders

²⁰ The same memorial statement also notes that despite his seeming liberal credentials, Keast was not a favorite of more radical or militant constituencies: "That such a view was not popular in all quarters may be gauged from a novel of the period, *Them*, by Joyce Carol Oates, in which the Wayne State president is proposed by one character as a target for assassination. It is said that Rea later queried Oates about this: 'What made you imagine that?' The story goes that she replied: 'Imagine it? I heard it.'" (Garrison, Carver, and Bertelson).

so clearly articulated the relationship of the University to city as Keast. From his inaugural address in 1965 to his final report to the faculty in 1971, Keast's addresses, reports, and papers represent an attempt to define what a public urban university could be, and how such an institution—an institution, that is, like Wayne State—might best engage both its local city publics and its regional, national, and international academic research publics. More concretely, the 1968 report commissioned by Keast's office, *Wayne and the Inner City: A Survey of Urban Concern*, outlines the programs and initiatives underway at Wayne State that sought to operationalize something like Keast's vision of how an urban university might intervene in the problems of the urban public. My publics approach reading here looks to this report and Keast's papers as institutional texts to see how they inform the University's urban mission. This publics approach reading reveals two broad sets of questions that emerge from these texts. First: What is the purpose of a university broadly? What is an urban university, and what marks it as unique from other institutions of higher education? What is the nature of its service to urban communities? Second: What does an urban university do? How does it balance its commitments to urban service and university research? What is Wayne State's specific mission as a public urban university? What local publics does Wayne State serve, and how can it best serve them?

Keast's comments on the work of the university broadly reveal a complex conception of these institutions, their service to society, and the limitations they face. Referencing earlier claims by Sir Eric Ashby of Clare College, Cambridge, Keast in his inaugural address saw the university in the mid-twentieth century facing three missions for the coming century: "The first task of the university ... is to cultivate excellence within the framework of mass higher education. The second is to create a common core of general culture, offsetting specialization, as the basis for dealing with our human problems. The third is the preservation of the university's

traditional right to be different and its traditional right to be dangerous” (“The Urban University”). The documents in his archived papers admit above all a great confidence in the university’s ability to take on both these missions and to address myriad problems afflicting society. In an early 1965 address to the Wayne State community, for example, he speaks of the university “rapidly emerging as the most influential institution in our society: the greatest source of talent, the most powerful influence on social change, the major source of new ideas, the principal conservator of our most valuable, scrutinized traditions, and potentially, but not yet actually, the most powerful influence on the quality of our lives” (Address to WSU Community [20 Jan 1965]). Such an institution finds itself called to answer “the greatest need in American education today,” the need for “fresh thought about our social, cultural, political, economic, and moral life—for a body of ideas and practices which can serve as the basis for a constructive revolution in our general culture as profound as the revolution in our technology” (“The Urban University”).

In identifying this call, Keast is not, however, giving over the university’s purpose exclusively to working for the betterment of social welfare. Instead, Keast understands the university’s commitment to social problems as being irrevocably tied to its research mission and to its historical place standing slightly apart from society. In remarks given to the Centennial Symposia committee in 1967, Keast observes that “the universities’ engagement with urban problems ... should satisfy the conditions of university inquiry into any problem whatsoever and that includes first, the obligation to make explicit the principles, value judgments, assumptions, and objectives underlying the activity or the inquiry, and the development of a plurality or variety of approaches, methods, and analysis” (Centennial Symposia Dinner [23 May 1967]). Indeed, at points in these texts, Keast seems skeptical of direct university intervention in social

problems. In the same Centennial Symposia remarks, he calls for “deliberate encouragement of the largest possible number of various ways of attacking problems, the solution to which no one has any confident answer,” while in the same sentence insisting on “the deliberate abstention from projecting upon society a priori models or theories or schemes of social improvement or betterment.” Keast thus seems to envision a university as an incubator of ideas, an engine of possible solutions to social problems — but not necessarily the executor of such plans: “the university, even as it helps society cope with its immediate problems, must keep itself free to engage in the reflection, scholarship, and experiment from which these fresh ideas can emerge” (“The Urban University”).

Despite such misgivings about taking direct action to resolve social problems, Keast recognized that attempts to address these problems in part defined the traditional mission of the university. The real difficulty, he writes, rests in the same disparity that Michael Warner notes about academic publics (Warner 97): such publics move slowly, contemplatively, disputatiously, in ways not always well-adapted to the urgency of social questions. Here, Keast justifies the tradition of university engagement with social problems while insisting too on the university’s need to commit to such engagement in its own time:

I think the community has to see that in the long run it will be deeply prejudicial to the vital pluralism of our society if we go on eliminating functions which can and should be performed by many different agencies and piling them all on the university. The community lives with a time scale very different from that of the university. Many of the problems that confront urban society must be dealt with tomorrow. The university can, of course, help with the immediate problems of the community, but the major contribution of the university must be carried out by adapting a time scale of a different order if it is to develop that intellectual capital upon which society will rely for the indefinite future. (“The Urban University and Urban Society”)

As this passage suggests, Keast sees virtue in the detachment and critical focus of the university tradition; he understands these as being essential to doing the university’s work of finding and answering new questions and new problems, even if taking such care means a lag between social

urgency and academic tradition. Yet Keast is also careful to acknowledge criticism of the university's detachment, as well as its perceived relationship to authoritarian structures of power and influence. The traditional university, for Keast, thus seems to be situated in a paradoxical place in regard to the society it would help: on one hand, the traditional university is an integral, even necessary, institution for addressing social problems, even if its solutions lack the urgency of the problems themselves; on the other hand, the traditional university is itself a symptom of many such problems, tangled up in questions of existing systems of power and social organization.

In the face of such critiques, Keast sees the new urban university, in contrast, as being better and more uniquely suited to the task of addressing such social problems. Keast especially understood the emergence of the urban university as a response to past efforts to engage in community problem-solving. Identifying those efforts as “partial and incomplete,” Keast argues that “the university has been significantly committed to the solution of some social problems and not of others, to extending its help to some parts of the community and not to others” (“The University and the Community”). As we have seen, Keast clearly perceived an obligation for the university to address social problems; that in itself was not a new question. Rather, what made the urban university essential was that new problems, stemming from an increasingly urbanized society, presented serious threats to society: “What is new is the conviction that a broad set of problems, mainly arising in our cities, are central and controlling for the future of American life, and that the universities should address themselves to these and not merely to the problems it has become comfortable and expert with. There is the added note of urgency—that they must be solved quickly if our society is not to be gravely imperilled [sic].” Nor were the problems themselves new; rather, “Poverty, social disorientation, racial strife, air pollution, the delivery of

medical care ... have been there as problems for a long time. They have been largely neglected by the university—as they have been neglected by the dominant sectors of society—while the universities—and society—devoted themselves to other problems, such as highway technology, medical research, property law, and business organization.” The advent of the urban university, for Keast, thus signals a pivot away from such problems and toward the immediate, urgent, everyday problems symptomatic of widespread urbanization.

Across these texts, Keast is careful to argue that the urban university he envisions is not defined merely by its geographical situation. An urban university, for Keast, is “not merely ... a big school in a big city, but ... an institution of special significance for our time” (“The Urban University”). After all, as he notes in his Inaugural Address at Wayne State, “Great universities have flourished in cities of every size and in small towns. Excellent faculties, great laboratories and libraries, and talented students have been assembled under the greatest variety of circumstances.” Nor are urban universities characterized by the superficial features of an urban location:

The student body is largely drawn from the city and its immediate hinterland. Most students are commuters; the parking problem is apparently insoluble. Many students are employed; there is much part-time study. The encroachment of the university on the neighborhood or of the neighborhood on the university causes concern and friction. Faculty and staff live in widely dispersed locations, and community, at least in the geographical sense, is rare. There is seldom much residential housing for students; in some urban universities, indeed, almost no one but the president lives on campus. (“The Urban University”)

Nor are urban universities defined by the benefits of their urban locations. In fact, Keast seems to be gently dismissive of attempts by more traditional universities to offer “the stimulation of the city, ‘where the action is’” through the development of “theaters and art museums and ... professional concerts and repertory series”, or by offering opportunities for students to study in urban centers through internships or urban-centered variations on study abroad programs.

Although Keast cites the example of “a junior year in New York” with some incredulity, he nevertheless sees in such developments a growing recognition by traditional universities of the centrality of urban life to mid-century American society: “This process of bringing the city to the non-city students, or of sending students to the city for part of their education, is being accelerated as our models of life are increasingly affected by the urbanization of society, and as awareness of urban problems is increasingly regarded as necessary for every educated American.” Thus, however much he might otherwise tease such university programs, Keast ultimately sees them as acknowledging the impetus to claim urban life and its problems as appropriate subjects for university study.

The urban university for Keast therefore emerges from this intersection between the university’s traditional interest in solving social problems, and the need to address problems which stem from increased urbanization. Keast identifies two “major vectors” of contemporary culture: “One vector is the city or the metropolitan region—the unit within which socially, economically, politically, and culturally the lives of the bulk of our people, surely the most influential segment of our people, will be played out. The other vector is the university, the modular institution for the production of new knowledge, social change, and continuation of society” (“Report to the Faculty [20 Jan. 1965]”). This intersection—a site which Keast describes as “so strategic and so perilous and so responsible a place”—is the site occupied by the urban university. Occupying this site, the urban university is for Keast both symptomatic of larger trends toward urbanization, and situated uniquely to address the crises emerging from such trends. In his final report to the Wayne State faculty in 1971, Keast writes:

The heart of the matter is that the urban university—at any rate the *public* urban university—is precisely and uniquely the place in which to mount a massive attack on three of the most difficult problems of our time. One is the distortion of our priorities as a whole society, a distortion compounded by a persistent hypocrisy in our statements

of our ideals as measured against our actual performance—a distortion so severe that it has alienated or driven to despair too many of our most talented young people. A second is the enormous inequality in opportunity—for jobs, for education, for public service, for housing, even for simple decency of treatment—among major groups in our society. Third—most important, most difficult, and I am convinced, most crucial to our common future—is race and racism, individual and institutional. (“Report to the Faculty [26 May 1971]”)

The urban university is necessary, Keast claims, because although such problems afflict society as a whole, “they are focused most sharply in our great cities. The city is where the distortion of our priorities can be most vividly and painfully seen, where inequality is most acute, most obvious, and therefore most intolerable, where the problems of race are most concentrated and most ugly.” Facing such problems will require new forms of teaching, research, and scholarship; those, in turn, will require a new kind of institution capable of such work: “The urban university will play a crucial role in the new phase of American education now opening before us. ... Urban universities must press for appropriate instruments to fulfill their new obligations ... enabling them to bring new ideas to the community and to refine their research and teaching through contact with the real problems of society” (“The Urban University”). Addressing problems like these, Keast seems to suggest, requires an intimate understanding of how cities run, of how cities sustain themselves (or fail to do so), and of how city lives are lived. As the institutional possessors of such knowledge—knowledge that comes from occupying the intersection where the vectors of urbanization and university tradition meet—urban universities (in Keast’s telling) find themselves facing the challenge of addressing the problems of an increasingly urban society.

What Does an Urban University Do?

In his inaugural address at Wayne State, Keast added to the university’s traditional tasks four others specific to urban universities. The first of these tasks requires urban universities to devote themselves to developing the appropriate kinds of organization and resources necessary to

study and address urban problems. Such developments must not, however, sacrifice the university tradition of independence: “the metropolitan university must invent and find support for an organization that will enable it to deploy its unique resources in the struggle with the urgent problems of the city while retaining the independence, freedom, and poise necessary to develop ideas and institutions that will transform the city of today into the home of the Great Society” (“The Urban University”). Here, as we have seen elsewhere, Keast returns to his common theme that the urban university must tackle the problems of urbanization, while insisting that urban universities must do so in the context of appropriate protocols of university research—which he identifies elsewhere as “a degree of actual or presumptive detachment, a persistent critical focus, and a relentless habit insofar as universities have, in fact, justified themselves in the long run to their societies a relentless habit of generating new questions, identifying new problems, and attempting to find new answers to them” (Centennial Symposia Dinner [23 May 1967]). The first task of the urban university thus becomes an effort to develop the appropriate ways to deploy university resources to urban problems without jettisoning the rigor expected of university research.

The second task of the urban university points to at least one way such an institution might address urban problems. Keast writes that “second task of the urban university is to create a model for life in the metropolis” (“The Urban University”). This task, as Keast describes it, asks that urban universities integrate themselves into the warp and woof of their urban communities. Rather than being geographically detached, and thus socially and culturally remote from urban life, urban universities should take part in urban life—indeed, should lead by example and point toward a harmonious and diverse urban community yet to come:

In the university's architectural and physical planning, in the amenities it provides and the sense of community it inspires in its members, in its insistence on diversity and individuality in faculty and student body, in its concern for the person in the large organization, in its relations with its neighbors—in all these respects, the university must see itself, and it must be seen by all, as defining by example the form and quality possible for life in the city. (“The Urban University”)

In addition to its study and research responsibilities, this second task calls upon urban universities to be model communities for urban life. Keast's sketch here of an exemplary urban university/community implies much about the kind of urban culture for which he wishes: diverse, urban, cultured, civil. It sounds much, in fact, like he would extend the virtues of an idealized collegiate life to the urban landscape, rather than the reverse—an adoption of urban virtues to university life.

The urban university's third and fourth tasks both address its educational mission. The third task of the urban university, Keast writes, is to “lead in the development of local, state, regional, and perhaps even national systems of education, which will stimulate diversity and innovation, shelter freedom and autonomy, and encourage a genuinely cooperative address to our common educational problems” (“The Urban University”). Keast claims that this task emerges from the (then-) recent realization that universities, urban or rural, are “part of a vast educational complex.” This realization points, in turn, to the necessity of educational planning across levels and regions. Here, Keast underscores his earlier point that although the problems of urbanization are concentrated in the cities, they affect social order on a national (and even international) scale as well. Addressing problems of such scope requires not just the work of urban universities, but

the work of educational institutions at all levels. Similarly, the fourth task requires that the urban university continue the tradition of scholarship and learning: “The fourth task of the urban university is to take the lead in redrawing the map of learning.” By this, Keast means that the urban university must make its own unique contributions to the knowledge of its constituent disciplines: “The fundamental strength of any university comes from its intellectual inheritance—its inheritance of traditional humanistic and scientific disciplines, of standards of performance and criteria of excellence, of a critical sense of the possibilities of human achievement.” The “map of learning,” Keast explains, was charted in an age substantially unlike our own; those who first contributed to it “had no experience of the modern city, the modern industrial complex, the modern labor organization, the modern scientific establishment, the modern government hierarchy, nor, indeed, the modern university.” Though disciplinary boundaries may shift, may even overlap, the urban university must not forego its own contribution to disciplinary knowledge—those contributions constitute its fourth task.

Keast sees these tasks, as noted above, as serving the urban university’s purpose of addressing and solving both local and national problems resulting from increased urbanization—one of which is rapid technological change: “The overriding problem of America in our time is to create the conditions for fruitful human development and community in a time of unprecedented technological change” (“The Urban University”). Keast recognizes that universities have indeed contributed to such change—and, clearly, not always for the better. There remain problems, however, that traditional universities remain ill-equipped to change or solve, “in part at least because the educational system has not dealt with them, or has not been encouraged to deal with them, as intelligently and imaginatively as it has dealt with science and

technology.” For Keast, these are problems which deeply afflict the character of mid-century social life:

We have made no comparable progress in balancing the imperatives of the private and public sectors of American life, in improving social and community relations, in reorganizing government for more effective approach to public problems, in developing state and regional systems of education, in improving taste, in reestablishing a tradition of civility. Yet it is precisely these problems, and many others of the same order, which are the measure of our inability to subdue technological progress to the service of life in its highest terms. And these are the problems, preeminently, of the great metropolis. (“The Urban University”)

Contemporary readers might be troubled by some of the problems Keast identifies: improving taste and reestablishing civility might sound baldly elitist to many contemporary readers. Yet questions about balancing private and public life, the organization of government, and the distribution of education are all familiar questions. Regardless how they may strike contemporary readers, Keast understood all of these problems as those which traditional universities were ill-equipped to address. The work of the urban university, then, is in part to find ways to study such problems that traditional universities have been unable to attempt. As Keast writes in his final report to the faculty: “The urban university, I believe, is *the* place to show what can be done about these terrifyingly difficult problems. The urban university can, by the example of its own performance and by the force of its studies and its advocacy, can show *how* our priorities as a society can be reordered and *why* they must be.”

Keast also recognizes that the reformation of urban life will require careful, meticulous planning on the part of urban universities—planning which, he claims, has been uncharacteristic of earlier university intervention. He writes: “The university will have to rely far less upon improvisation, temporary administrative expediency, and devices for executing the kind of client-agent relationship which has so often characterized the work of universities in the last two to three decades. The university will have to find the resources to carry out new social

responsibilities on a continuing and not just on an ad-hoc basis” (“The Urban University and Urban Society”). Again, Keast ties the urban university’s new responsibilities to the traditional responsibilities of institutions of higher education: “Strong and vigorous educational institutions cannot assume such responsibilities and then abjure them. Universities must develop an institutional base large enough to take on these responsibilities without prejudice to the other and more traditional obligations and activities of the institution.” While never overlooking its traditional activities, then, the urban university must commit itself to a different way of serving its urban “clients:” first and foremost, as we have seen, is rethinking the relationship between university and urban site. Although Keast doesn’t explicitly repudiate the “client-agent” framing, his comments here and elsewhere nevertheless suggest that he is critical of it. In place of that framing, as I’ve already noted, Keast calls for an urban university to be more fully integrated into the life of its urban surroundings. Doing so, however, requires appropriate foresight: “It must undertake serious, long-range planning through which priorities can be ordered and established. It must then assemble, arrange, and commit the necessary resources for accomplishing its aims.” An urban university, then, cannot commit itself to the betterment of urban life without a plan, without priorities.

It is clear that Keast saw the responsibilities of an urban university falling not just to universities *like* Wayne State, but, indeed, to Wayne State itself. In fact, Keast’s inaugural address makes plain that he sees these tasks as an essential responsibility for the University: “Wayne State University, I am confident, will address itself zealously and critically to these tasks; it will find other tasks that we cannot now descry; it will meet them, too, with intelligence, imagination, and style. In so doing it will also fulfill its responsibility as a state and a national, as well as an urban university.” Elsewhere, in a 1969 report to the Wayne State faculty, Keast

invokes Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" to outline for the University a specifically urban destiny:

Our road must be the one less travelled by because our tradition and our situation place us in a vortex of social and technological revolution that is transforming America. Only the institution which finds new paths can make a difference. We cannot be content to be merely a great university in a big city. We cannot afford to be merely the Cornell, Yale, or Michigan of Detroit. We must aspire to be the nation's unique urban university, and to envisage a day when other institutions will look to us for the new patterns by which universities will help create a humane urban society. ("Report to the Faculty [24 Oct. 1969]")

Such comments recall the earlier language of one of Keast's addresses to the Wayne State Board of Governors: "We need to make and we are in a position to make a massive, and in my judgment, a nationally leading assault upon the whole range of problems connected with urbanization—all the way from planning social work to the handling of re-development education, indeed the entire immense spectrum of problems associated with the rapid and mounting urbanization of the country" (Address to WSU Board of Governors [1 July 1965]). In that address, Keast also singled out Wayne State as "uniquely situated to make contributions which are unrivaled in the nation." To be clear, Keast does not make explicit reference to Wayne State's "urban mission." However, it seems obvious here that, even though he may not have used that phrase, Keast understood Wayne State's mission to be inextricably linked to its situation as an urban university. As the report to the faculty cited above attests, Keast envisioned for Wayne State a future in which its very urbanity defined its standing among other universities. In Keast's vision for the University, it is Wayne State's work finding ways to improve urban society in Detroit that earns the respect and admiration of other institutions nationally and internationally.

The urban mission Keast implicitly articulates is one which he sees emerging from the University's long and complex history with the city. In his final report to the faculty in 1971, Keast exhorts the University to "have the courage of its history and its unique achievement," and

to be “confident in the conviction that its history and its achievement have fitted it to play a special and exemplary role in our society” (“Report to the Faculty” [26 May 1971]). It is Wayne State’s position, enmeshed in the life of the city, which has “given us our greatest power to help shape the future. The ‘street-car’ college whose students came here because they couldn’t afford to go anywhere else is the ideal place for students who have to work, or who want to work, or who want to come here because here you can be an adult in an adult society.” Keast positions the University and its history as resources which might inform its ongoing mission to revolutionize urban society for the better. Alluding to Wayne State’s proud support for “student radicals like Walter Reuther,” Keast calls upon the University to be a place where others can pursue such “opportunities to develop their ideas and to combine reflection and action—such a place, if it is faithful to its best traditions, ought to be the ideal source for new generations of practical idealists and reformers of the social order.”

Still, even while Keast saw an urban mission emerging from Wayne State’s history of service to Detroit, he was mindful that such a mission threatened a diminishment of the University’s work as a research institution. In his first report to the faculty in 1965, he sounded a note of caution on this question: “There surely must be proper concern lest our necessary and advantageous involvement with Detroit and with the metropolitan region should produce an undesirable parochialism in our view of ourselves and of our responsibilities” (“Report to the Faculty [20 Jan. 1965]”). Rather than conceiving the nascent urban mission as one looking only toward Detroit, the urban mission as Keast would have it looks not only toward the city as a site of service and intervention, but also sees such efforts as fulfilling the University’s research mission: “It seems to me that the remedy for this is not to try to detach ourselves from our environment but to treat our environment in a special way, to identify in our particular

metropolitan region urban problems and opportunities that are generally relevant and hence appropriate to university study and concern in the true sense.” In this framing of the urban mission, service to the city’s needs and research of the city’s problems exist reciprocally alongside one another. Keast is careful too to insist that the urban mission can only be fulfilled with the cooperation of all disciplines represented in the University: the “problems and opportunities” to be studied “are by no means limited to, even though they may from time to time be concentrated in, the social sciences, natural sciences, and technology. The arts, the humanities, and the other liberal studies are fully involved and must fully contribute to the life of the metropolitan region.”

Keast observed a similarly complex dynamic when considering what relationships were to define Wayne State’s urban mission. “The University,” Keast wrote in 1969, “is intimately related to many communities. Some are primarily geographical—the immediate neighborhood, the City of Detroit, the metropolitan area, the State of Michigan. Some are based on associations of other sorts—the alumni community, the communities of lawyers and doctors, the community of educational institutions ..., the Black community” (“Report to the Faculty [24 Oct. 1969]”). In this description, Wayne State enjoys both immediate relationships with its local and regional geographic communities as well as relationships with communities bound more by common purpose or common interest. In the theoretical terms I’ve rehearsed elsewhere, I read Keast here pointing to Wayne State’s local urban publics (the immediate neighborhood, Detroit, the metropolitan region) as well as its broader academic publics (alumni and professional communities, the community of educational institutions). Keast sees the emergence of these complex community relationships as something novel in the history of the university: “Every university has found in recent years that the list of communities to which it stands or should

stand in some special relation is growing rapidly. This is a way of saying that universities have tended to take a rather narrow view of themselves; it is also a way of saying that universities are being seen as more and more critical to the whole of society and not just to those parts which have long been the chief beneficiaries of the university.” Wayne State, as a potential exemplar of the urban university, thus holds for Keast the promise of serving these emerging and sometimes competing constituencies in uncharted and undefined ways.

To note that Keast understands Wayne State’s urban mission as undefined does not mean that Keast offered no ideas as to how the University’s urban mission should guide its priorities—far from it. For example, in the same 1969 report, Keast has much to say about how Wayne State might work toward a reformation of urban life in and around Detroit. Keast notes that although the University has much to learn about working with its academic and professional communities in ways that will serve its urban mission, “in these cases we are at least on somewhat familiar ground; we have had some experience; the communities are well-organized and their problems, if complex, seem tractable.” Keast instead urges attention to those communities whose problems are, by contrast, ill-defined, massive, and possibly overwhelming:

In arranging our priorities as a University, we ought to concern ourselves most with those communities with whom we have least experience in working, those whose problems are most acute, those which have traditionally had least access to the assistance of the university, those for whom the university will make the most difference, for good or ill. That means, in my judgment, that two communities ought to have priority for us: our immediate neighborhood and the city as a whole, but especially the inner city. (“Report to the Faculty” [24 Oct. 1969]”)

While we can assume that Keast intends for the University’s neighborhood and the rest of the city to become the site both of direct intervention and of long-term research, in line with his earlier comments, here he also describes what an urban community led and guided by an urban university might look like. Keast foresees a vibrant urban cityscape with the urban university at its center, the project and product of a “big partnership” between the University, “the City, other

institutions, non-profit groups, private citizens, and investors” called “to put their efforts and their money into a diversified model community”:

I believe we should commit ourselves to the creation, in what is now called University City and in the area immediately beyond and stretching over to the Medical Center, of a vibrant, diversified, and exciting “New Town.” It should provide good housing, at appropriate rentals, for present residents, students, faculty and staff, others of many occupations who wish to live in what should be the best part of town, for poor, low-income, middle-income, and upper-income families, for black or white. New University Town already has a university, cultural institutions, a remarkable Theatre. It should have better and more diversified shops, restaurants, and cinemas; it should have more parks and green areas; it should have better schools and a range of medical and social service installations not now available. It should be model of urban life and of a future urban society. (“Report to the Faculty [24 Oct. 1969]”)

The vision offered here of a future urban society seems both utopian and nostalgic: utopian in its hopes for a radical reimagining of how Detroit’s urban spaces might be used, and in its vision of the lives occupying such spaces; nostalgic in the bittersweet knowledge that such utopianism has yet to be fulfilled.

My point here is not to chastise Keast or the University for not fulfilling such grand ambitions. Rather, I am interested in the promise of “New University Town” for what it shows us about Wayne State’s urban mission. Above, I quote Keast characterizing Wayne State as a place of “practical idealists.” The vision of New University Town above is certainly idealistic, though we might question its practicality. In the Keast texts cited here, the urban mission more often invokes the kind of practical idealism voiced elsewhere than the kind of utopianism suggested by New University Town. Throughout Keast’s papers, then, the urban mission serves to characterize Wayne State itself as a kind of “practical idealist:” ambitious, hopeful, even potentially visionary, but tempered by its historical knowledge of, and pragmatic need for, realistic intervention into its local urban communities. The urban mission implicitly described by Keast thus points to the kind of public subject Wayne State might become: eager to engage its local

urban publics on matters of common concern; idealist yet pragmatic; committed both to urban service and to the research commitments expected by its academic publics.

I thus see Keast's vision of Wayne State as a paradigmatic urban university as key to understanding the University's urban mission and how the University functions as a public subject. Reading Keast now, I admit my admiration for him: he voices in these texts much of what I hope Wayne State might yet achieve. In a 1968 report to the faculty, he expresses his own hopes for the future of the University and its City: "All of us feel, I am sure, because we are an urban university and because we are a vital part of this city, both a general obligation to mobilize our resources to help create a better urban society everywhere and a special obligation to help create a better Detroit. We are doing, I am convinced, far more than most of us realize. We are doing, I am also convinced, far less than we can and must" ("The Object of the University is Not Power, But Truth").

In a 1968, Keast announced the publication of a report surveying the extent of Wayne State's efforts to fulfill its special obligation to Detroit, titled *Wayne and the Inner City: A Survey of Urban Concern*. Keast, in this announcement, described the purpose of this report thusly: "This publication is an attempt—no doubt incomplete—to provide an inventory of the major forms of the University's 'involvement' with the inner city. Its basic purpose is to provide, by helping us see what we are now doing, a rough index to our current performance in this critical area of University responsibility and, more important by far, to stimulate us to move farther, faster, more imaginatively, and in new directions" ("Report to the Faculty [4 Dec. 1968]"). Keast's description of the report as an "inventory" is apt: though brief, the report describes over three dozen research studies, outreach programs, and educational initiatives undertaken by the University in its efforts to contribute to the betterment of life in Detroit. As the

report's introduction makes clear *Wayne and the Inner City* unmistakably depicts the University identifying with urban Detroit life: "The 'inner city' to the general population of the United States is otherwise known as 'the black ghetto,' the 'culturally deprived neighborhoods,' the 'decaying urban core,' the 'impacted metropolitan area.' But to Wayne State University and to the residents of Detroit's inner city, the inner city is where we live" (*Wayne and the Inner City* 4).

Although some of these terms sound problematically dated if not blatantly insensitive to modern readers, the language used here is important for three reasons. First, the identification of Wayne State with the "inner city," the "decaying urban core," and especially with "the black ghetto" seems to imply an intensification of the relationships implied by the somewhat less emphatic term "urban university:" Wayne exists in relationship not merely to an urban center, but specifically to a city beset by gross economic disparity, racial tension, and infrastructural decay. The identification of Wayne State with a troubled city like Detroit marks the University's (still implicit) urban mission as urgent and even desperate. Second, the use of such terms underscores the centrality of questions about urbanism, race, culture, and opportunity to the report. Broadly speaking, the report focuses on those programs which bear most directly on the intersection of those questions. As the introduction explains, the report takes the form of a "somewhat less than systematic survey" intended to provide the answer to "a question the University community has been asking: how has Wayne contributed in Detroit's search for solutions to the problems of its urban setting" (*Wayne and the Inner City* 4). Third, and finally, these descriptions hint at the ways the fresh memory of the 1967 Detroit riots hang over this report. The report only explicitly cites the riots twice: once to note the Medical School's role in treating "riot victims" during the "civil disorder in July, 1967" (10); and once to mention a half-

dozen different efforts by Wayne State researchers to study “the most violent domestic rebellion since World War II” (54). Yet this report, unlike Hanawalt’s history of the university (also published 1968, yet making no mention of the preceding year’s riots) and Keast’s papers, is intimately preoccupied by race. Whereas earlier depictions of the University’s relationship to Detroit are, in retrospect, either naively quiet or suspiciously circumspect on the question of race, here the focus is explicitly and frequently on how the University can better serve African American communities in its urban environs.

Also of note is the way this report characterizes the many roles the University plays within its urban setting; the report explains that Wayne occupies the roles of “educator, counselor, employer, consultant, social worker, medical practitioner, legal advisor ... even as neighbor. ‘Involvement’ turned out to be far more common and diverse, and far less easy to describe in a document to be kept manageable in size, than anyone expected.” The scope of the University’s involvement with urban and inner city concerns is impressive, but the report, to its credit, remains pragmatic and refuses to laud the the University for a task not yet complete:

On every problem that confronts inner city residents, from fair consumer practices to quality education and parent interest in public school policy, someone from Wayne is almost certainly at work seeking insight or putting acquired insight to work. But if Wayne contributes its expertise to to the resolution of urban problems, this expertise is too often solicited or applied only during crisis situations. The problems themselves remain, seemingly unmanageable and steadily worsening. (5)

Wayne and the Inner City, though largely hopeful about the prospects for progress on urban issues, is clear-eyed about the partial and incomplete nature of the University’s efforts to date: “When measured against need, Wayne’s involvement appears contradictory: laudable but inadequate; high quality but parochial; extensive in breadth but insufficient in depth; penetrating but not widely applicable” (5).

As I noted above, the report describes some three dozen or more efforts and projects undertaken by the University in its efforts to address the problems of urbanization and inner city life. The efforts reported in *Wayne and the Inner City* extend from nearly every college, department, and division of the university and address an array of issues including access to medical care, teacher training, unemployment, consumer rights, racial bias, educational access and achievement, and labor leadership. Given the breadth and scope of these efforts, I will not try to catalog them all here. However, in order to better understand how the University was enacting its urban mission in the late 1960s, it is important to offer here a brief summary of these projects. Broadly speaking, I identify the university's urban projects, as described in *Wayne and the Inner City*, as falling into three categories: research studies, educational initiatives, and community outreach programs. Though there exists some overlap between these categories, this grouping provides a useful heuristic for my purposes here.

The research studies described in *Wayne and the Inner City* include a number of planned or in-progress works examining the causes of and possible solutions to long-term problems of inner city urban life. The studies described in this report often focus on questions of unemployment and labor. For example, the report introduces the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations (IL&R), a joint effort between Wayne State and the University of Michigan. The IL&R was undertaking a "systematic examination of 'low-income, marginal, and hard-to-employ workers,'" to be conducted in four phases of research: study of existing literature; research development to lay groundwork for project development; the development and implementation of specific projects; and the formulation of policy statements (29). The IL&R, in partnership with the American Arbitration Association, was also launching a Ford Foundation-sponsored study to examine the application of "labor-management negotiation techniques to inner city problems"

(30). Elsewhere within the University, two programs through the Department of Psychology were studying 350 “hard-core unemployed” hired by two utility companies, mostly focused on questions of socialization into the company (32-3). Similarly, the Department of Economics reported the launch of a new Urban-Regional Economics program to “concentrate on the economic aspects of ... cities and their inhabitants” (43). In addition to these studies about employment and labor, *Wayne and the Inner City* mentions two events presenting scholarship on race relations. The first, a workshop called “Understanding Race Relations Through the Study of Negro History,” was held at Northern High School and jointly administered by the University’s Inter-Group Relations Center, History Department, and Division of Urban Extension (15); the second, the History Department’s two-day “Convocation on the Black Man in America,” was planned as “a forum for the work of scholars who are ... investigating the black man’s part in the development of America, not the white man’s response to him” (58). Still further studies took up questions relevant to inner city education. Kenneth Goodman, professor in the College of Education, described a Dialect Study “to work out a technique of training teachers to understand the dialect problems and to appreciate that children with divergent dialects, such as those in the ghetto, are at a disadvantage because the teachers are attempting to change their language and teach them literacy at the same time” (45-6). In addition, Wayne State psychologists were partnered with colleagues at the University of Michigan in a study of the causes of poor achievement by black students in inner city schools (46).

It is not surprising that a number of projects described in *Wayne and the Inner City* should take up questions of educational achievement and access. The report is especially concerned with the University’s relationship to the Detroit Public Schools system: “It goes without saying that Detroit has major problems in its public schools: that the schools in the inner

city especially are far from what they should be” (14). While acknowledging that “Wayne’s role as teacher of teachers makes it a vital cog in the education system of Detroit,” the report also describes the problematic dynamic between the University and the Detroit schools. As the report puts it, this dynamic extends both to the schools and to the city’s social welfare programs:

Wayne trains many of Detroit’s teachers and social workers. On and off the campus there is a great deal to be learned about urban education, about ways of educating “culturally different” children, about the mechanics of achieving racial equality. The inner city schools to which Wayne sends teachers and from which it gets students have not been producing graduates who could compete with graduates of suburban high schools. Detroit social service and public assistance agencies are understaffed and underfinanced; neither Wayne nor anyone else is training enough social workers. (5)

A little more than ten years after severing its formal relationship to Detroit Public Schools, in this report the University seems to recognize a special obligation to the city’s inner city students. For example, the introduction observes that although Wayne State at the time served more black undergraduates than any other American university with total enrollment over 15,000, these numbers remained proportionally inconsistent with the “black college-age population in and around Detroit,” a “serious paradox of rising demand for higher education for young Americans who systematically have been denied a preparation adequate to profit from that education” (5). Unsurprisingly, therefore, a number of the projects described in the report are aimed at improving the quality of instruction in inner city schools, or are designed at improving access to the University for inner city students.

Projects aimed at improving instruction in the inner city schools included a number of local and national initiatives. National programs included the Wayne State chapter of the Teacher Corps project, “a federally-funded program that leads to an M.A.T. (Master of Arts in Teaching) degree and teacher certification for holders of Bachelor’s degrees who undertake a two-year internship service period under Team Leaders in public schools in Detroit’s metropolitan area” (18). Teacher Corps, funded by the National Defense Education Act Institute and sponsored at

Wayne State by the College of Education, sought to “prepare a legion of dedicated teachers to meet the greater challenges of teaching urban ghetto children and children in rural areas by exploring, testing, and applying innovative teaching methods in the public schools, and to work with the children in ways that are specially relevant to their environment” (18). Other federally funded programs included the Office of Economic Opportunity’s Upward Bound project, “an experimental pre-college program for high school students from low income families” designed to identify “‘promising but underachieving’ students” from the inner city schools and to provide to them “imaginative, provocative courses of study designed to open minds long closed by too many negative experiences” (23). More local efforts included plans from the College of Education to recruit more black students to serve as English teachers in secondary schools, and a plan for black students to dual enroll in general education and College of Education courses while serving as teacher’s aides in the Detroit schools system (14). A similar program, the Summer Science Research Program for Inner City High School Students, was sponsored by the Departments of Physics, Chemistry, and Biology, and employed sixty-four Detroit Public Schools students as research assistants (40). The College of Education also launched a Developmental Career Guidance program “to improve career guidance and counseling in Detroit’s inner city schools” (38) and an Institute in Science Education, a six-week program for Detroit Public Schools science teachers (17). Elsewhere in the University, the Law School launched its own plans to increase admissions of black inner city students (27), and the School of Social Work began efforts to help set up Parent-Teacher Associations in inner city schools (42).

The most representative educational initiatives are a trio of programs designed to improve access to university study for students of inner city schools or lower income backgrounds: the Higher Education Opportunities Committee (HEOC), Project 300, and Project 50. HEOC,

founded by former Law School Dean Arthur Neef, took as “its principal aim to open the doors of U.S. colleges and universities to the urban poor” (21). As described in *Wayne and the Inner City*, HEOC dealt with “bright students who ... received good grades in high school, but who could not see a way to include a college education in their future plans.” The report goes on to note that the common denominator among HEOC students was the lack of self-esteem: “They lack self-esteem because they are poor, because they know that few of their schools have a reputation for offering quality education, because they are more often black than not, because they lack a tradition in which very much value is placed on intellectual activity, and because they learned very young that the best things of America’s materialist culture are reserved for others.” Project 300 and Project 50 had similar goals. Project 300, while “not designed specifically as an inner city project,” was a program for marginal students, and was “expected to break important ground in what the University is able to learn about the performance of students, with special help and encouragement, who fall somewhat short of the normal admission criteria” (25). Its counterpart, Project 50, was in contrast “essentially an inner city program” for predominantly black students, “an attempt to find out what happens when admission rules are relaxed and specially admitted students are given special help.” Like the other educational initiatives described above, HEOC, Project 300, and Project 50 all point to the University’s preoccupation in this report with its obligation, as an urban university, to students most afflicted by the difficulties of inner city problems such as economic disparity, racial inequality, and educational limitations.

Wayne and the Inner City also points to a number of community outreach projects, projects designed to improve life or alleviate problems of Detroit’s inner city residents. Many of these programs involve efforts made to support and improve community health. For example, the introduction to the report emphasizes the role the Medical School and its affiliated hospital

Detroit General (now Detroit Receiving) play in the city's healthcare infrastructure: "Wayne is physician to Detroit. Doctors, interns, nurses, and medical researchers on the staff of Wayne's School of Medicine and College of Nursing probably provide more treatment for more people in the city than all other practitioners, public and private, combined" (5). Later in the report, such service is connected to the historical mission of the Medical School: "Wayne State University has long been physician to Detroit's inner city residents. Indeed, since its inception a century ago, the School of Medicine and its affiliated hospitals have been charged with the responsibility for taking care of the sick poor. Today, the University and its medical school are even more heavily involved in the problems of the inner city" (14). As the report makes clear, Wayne State's medical students were also involved in such efforts: "Wayne's students, especially at the Medical School, also take a direct interest in urban health problems. These are the subject of a variety of student and student-faculty sponsored discussions, lectures, and symposia. Also, Wayne's Student Health Organization sponsors the the Jeffries Health Center at which residents and neighbors of a Detroit public housing project are offered assistance with their health problems" (12). Public health programs offered by the University also included events like Health-O-Rama, hosted at the University's Old Main building, where inner city residents could access eighteen free medical tests and more than two dozen educational exhibits (12).

Other community outreach projects addressed other problems confronted by inner city residents. Many of these were sponsored or initiated by the University's Division of Urban Extension (established 1964), which later became the College of Lifelong Learning. *Wayne and the Inner City* reports plans to establish "a complex of centers to be located in Detroit's neighborhoods" (55). Each Urban Extension center was to be developed "in cooperation with the neighborhood it will serve. Broadly based programs, utilizing University personnel and facilities,

[would] range from giving neighborhood businessmen advice to offering fully accredited courses” (56). The ambitious program would serve a number of community needs: “Wayne State’s objective is to see the Centers conduct courses and programs to upgrade the abilities and interests of high school students, graduates, and drop-outs. Additionally, it hopes the Centers will serve as community assistance agencies in the area of consumer protection, public health, and financial management, and offer training to persons seeking civil service appointments or trade apprenticeships.”²¹ Other programs focused on vocational training or professional certifications. These included projects like the Applied Management and Technology Center, designed to help students earn “certificates as Associates in management or technology” (30); the Senior Intensified Program, hosted by College of Ed and Program of Business Administration, “to streamline training of typists, stenographers, and data processors, in order to equip them with the minimum, specific skills needed for a first job” (34); and a PR Workshop offering “on-the-job training backed up by expert instruction in the field of public relations” (46). The University also offered programs like the Area Training and Technical Assistance Center, responsible for training antipoverty workers for work with community organizations and in Detroit’s neighborhoods; and the Consumer Education Project “coordinated by [Roberta] McBride [Education Chairman of the Wayne County AFL-CIO and Librarian in Labor History Archive] and sponsored ... by Wayne in collaboration with several Detroit community organizations” which sought to “arm inner city consumers with the kind of knowledge needed to cope with inner city merchants” (49).

In sum, *Wayne and the Inner City* points to a broad spectrum of efforts being made by the University to address problems of urbanization in Detroit’s inner city. As we’ve seen, the report

²¹ The report emphasizes that such centers should not be seen as an enrollment recruitment effort, nor as a substitute for a “hoped-for community college system” in Wayne County (56).

goes to considerable lengths to identify Wayne State with the inner city and, especially, with service to its residents. This is not to suggest, however, that the report is consistently sanguine about the prospects of these projects. Rather, while the report is largely optimistic about these programs' potential, it also suggests some doubts about how such programs might undermine the University's reputation and standing. For example, amid its discussion of programs like Upward Bound, Project 300, and Project 50, the report sounds a note of caution. While admitting that "Civil rights leaders and educators alike have charged that ... [admissions] requirements favor white middle- and upper-class students, and discriminate against bright students who haven't had, at home and in school, the same assistance in developing good study habits, or the same motivation or models to train for professional careers," it also poses relaxed admissions standards as a "dilemma for the university," which "wishes to make education available without racial or economic restrictions, and to compensate for deficiencies in the background of promising students, but it has established standards of intellectual performance for people it will admit as students and for people it is willing to certify as educated by graduating" (25). Admitting students from such backgrounds could pose a risk to the quality of university instruction: "Students who lack the potential or the habits can clog the processes of instruction by limiting the level and speed at which teachers can discuss class material, and by requiring extra help to keep up with the class. Such students traditionally have been regarded as poor risks because evidence is lacking that they will be able to overcome their deficiencies to carry out a college curriculum successfully" (25). The skepticism in this section sounds especially problematic to contemporary readers given the correlation it seems to draw between socioeconomic status, academic performance, and race: "There is considerable evidence—in the performance of segregated Negro colleges in the southern states, for example—that lowering

admission standards to accommodate the victims of cultural and economic deprivation can only swamp a university with students of limited capacity and promise, thereby lowering the quality of education received by everyone” (25).

The report’s Afterword voices similar reservations about how the University should address urban problems and social inequalities, though it does so without the racial undertones just considered. Instead—in a voice which surely bears the influence of Keast’s leadership, if not being the product of his own hand—the Afterword focuses on the structure of university governance and its effect on the University’s ability to act in the interest of inner city residents. “Universities are democratic communities, not authoritarian camps. Authority is vested in a variety of individuals and groups, and personal initiative and responsibility are highly regarded”, it explains, insisting that “This kind of structure is essential to a university” (64). Essential it may be, but *Wayne and the Inner City* continues, admitting that the democratic structure of the university can slow its well-meaning attempts to intervene:

A more authoritarian structure would, presumably, make it possible for the university to move more swiftly now when the need for greatly increased involvement in problems of the black community and the inner city is so urgent. A more authoritarian structure would allow a university president to call new colleges into being overnight; to abandon at the end of a day traditional but irrelevant systems, stagnated departments, backward-looking faculty. A more authoritarian structure would provide the means to accomplish summarily the equalization of black employees to black population.

Despite such obstacles, the Afterword makes clear, Wayne State must continue in its efforts to reach out to the city and to its urban neighbors: to hire more black faculty and administrators; to instill motivation for continued education in urban youth, both black and white, and to make available to them the necessary financial support for university study; to continue research into the causes of, and solutions to, urban problems; and to re-examine admissions criteria and jettison those requirements which artificially block access to higher education. Such a commitment, the Afterword, concludes, cannot be made by the University alone: “We must work

with and among the inner city residents to extend our hard-won abilities in the human services until they reach the last of society's disinherited."

The University Bulletin: 1965-2015

As we saw in the previous chapter, the University bulletin or course catalog is an institutional text that, in addition to its pragmatic purpose, does important work for the University in its public spheres. In addition to collecting and publicizing important information about the degree programs and courses of study offered by the University, these bulletins also typically include material articulating the University's institutional missions, goals, and priorities. My reading of these institutional texts in the previous chapter focused on such material to consider how Wayne State envisioned its relationships with its academic publics and its local urban publics in the 1950s and early 1960s, roughly coinciding with the last fifteen years or so of Wayne State's first century (1868-1968). The reading of these texts developed there also revealed an ongoing consideration by University President Clarence Hilberry of what it meant to understand Wayne State as an urban university in this era. In this chapter, I return to the archive of University bulletins to see how later installments, beginning in the middle 1960s and traced through the most recent (as of this writing) 2013-15 bulletin, depict these same relationships and how they reflect upon Wayne State's character as an urban university.

Speaking broadly, the bulletins in this later era show much greater uniformity and design than those in the 1950s and early 1960s. Though the bulletins for several schools and colleges continued to include sections on the college's history or the school's mission, these sections are rarer in this era; when they are included, they are also much more stable, staying largely unchanged, or showing only minor revisions, from the descriptions offered in earlier bulletins. (This is especially true, for example, of bulletins issued for the School of Business

Administration and the College of Engineering.) Such stability is, I suggest, surprising. The bulletins following the change in leadership from Hilberry to Keast, and covering as well the tumult of the late 1960s and the Detroit riots, show little of Keast's interest in the urban university ideal. Given Keast's commitment to a vision of Wayne State as a prototypical and preeminent urban research university, it is especially surprising to see that his comments on the subject are nowhere represented in these bulletins—even though Hilberry, his predecessor, is quoted at great length, in several volumes of the course bulletin, on what it means for Wayne State to represent itself as an urban university. Indeed, throughout Keast's 1965-1971 tenure as Wayne State's president, and for several years after, the only claim the bulletins make about the University's commitment to Detroit comes, nearly as an afterthought, in the Law School bulletin for 1969-70. There, describing the Law School's setting in Detroit and at Wayne State, the bulletin explains that "As a public institution located in the middle of a large metropolitan area, Wayne State University has recognized special obligations of service to urban society. The University as a whole is committed to the study of the problems of the urban laboratory which lies about it" (*Law School 1969-70*, 10). Yet there's no explanation of what those obligations constitute, or with which urban problems the University concerns itself. Despite his commitment to the urban university ideal, and despite his faith in Wayne State as the model urban university, Keast's vision for the University simply doesn't appear in the bulletins of his era or in the years immediately following.

More precisely, the bulletins from the middle 1960s and into the middle 1970s don't take up the Keast's vision of the urban university ideal at the level of the University. Several colleges and schools, though, do take up the question of what it means to conduct their work in urban settings, or specifically in Detroit. The School of Social Work, the Law School, and the College

of Education all provide especially apt examples of how some divisions invoked relationships to the city even when the bulletins didn't articulate such relationships between the city and the University as a whole. Each of these examples, it is important to note, draws on the image of Detroit as a laboratory for learning and research that we saw in the previous chapter. For example, the School of School Work section in the 1974-75 University bulletin (the first, remember, to be published as one volume containing course listings for all of Wayne State's colleges and schools), describes Detroit as a "rich and fascinating laboratory for the teaching, learning, and practicing of social work" (*University Bulletin 1974-75*, 512). Detroit's proximity to both suburban and rural sites lets social work students study problems across various modes of social life. More locally, Detroit's economic, social, and racial diversity is a boon for students desirous of real-world experience: "Social agencies and organizations operating in the Detroit area have to do with the usual kinds of social problems but must inevitably deal also with social problems affected by nationality, by racial and minority groups, by management-labor relationships, and by other social forces inherent in this kind of community." Similarly, the Law School's 1969-70 bulletin also invokes the "urban laboratory that sits around the Wayne State University Law School," which it foresees becoming "an integral part of the School and provid[ing] a vehicle through which an understanding of and solutions to the many vital social problems of the day may be achieved" (*Law School 1969-70*, 5). As this bulletin explains, "The role of the lawyer is changing today because of the continued increase in the number and scope of metropolitan problems which arise as a result of people living closer together." In the face of such changes, the Law School acknowledges that members of the bar have a leadership role to fulfill in their communities, and that law school curricula should reflect this: the Law School "should make certain that each student is challenged and prepared to relate law and legal

institutions to the key social problems of today and tomorrow so that he will not only get a sound grounding in the law but also instructions that is relevant to the realities of life in contemporary society.” Thus, both the School of Social Work and the Law School here seem to echo some of Keast’s concerns with urbanization and urban problems: while these examples both draw on the earlier image of the urban laboratory, they also make a more explicit commitment than earlier bulletins to uniquely urban social problems.

Yet the College of Education’s bulletin material from this period goes much further in articulating a commitment not just to addressing problems of urbanization, but to doing so specifically in the context of Detroit. The College of Education claims in its 1968-69 bulletin, for example, that “in a society that is essentially urban, industrial, technological, and scientific, it seems fitting that Detroit should provide the immediate environment for a teacher-education institution which reflects the dynamic attributes of the society it serves, and in which it exists” (*College of Education 1968-69*, 6). While it too calls upon the urban laboratory image, it also relies on a less-familiar image of Detroit as a border town: “It is located on the world’s busiest international waterway, three minutes from foreign soil with an imperceptible border.” Indeed, this bulletin even seems to recast Detroit not as a single urban site, or even a metropolitan region, but as synecdoche for the technological, cultural, and industrial resources it offers Wayne State students: “The Wayne State University campus, however, is not bounded by city limits or the metropolitan area; its horizons for learning are confined only by the reaches of imagination.” The following year’s College of Education bulletin continues this theme, in a section invoking *Wayne and the Inner City* called “Education and Urban Concern” (*College of Education 1969-70*, 5). Here, it is the city’s dynamism which bears the greatest influence on the College: “The complex and ever-changing nature of urban society provides the setting in which this teacher preparation

institution exists; therefore, the College reflects the dynamic character of urban problems.” The work of the College, in the face of such developments “as the knowledge explosion, technological advances and the population explosion and related mobility,” is the preparation of teachers “who have the commitment and competence to enable children and youth to achieve dignity, preserve individuality, develop democratic values, and realize self-fulfillment.” In the following year’s bulletin, the College’s mission becomes explicitly tied to the work and legacy of the Civil Rights movement. Although the College’s curriculum remains focused on the work of pedagogical training, such training is given an explicitly political cast:

Today the focus has shifted, and the major demand upon education is to develop a means and a commitment to provide each individual an opportunity to participate in a democratic society. The civil rights struggle has obviously precipitated enormous changes in our society. Greater substantive changes in our educational system must result. Schools at all levels are trying to offer a meaningful education to students from different backgrounds who are remaining in school for longer periods of their lives. The methods and philosophy which may have been acceptable for a homogeneous middle class are no longer enough. (*College of Education Bulletin 1970-71*, 5)

Detroit, this bulletin asserts, is the appropriate venue for facing such “substantive changes.” Wayne State is “fortunate in having as a setting for our work a large metropolitan complex which encompasses the same awesome problems that tear at our society. ... Problems of race relations, poverty, alienation, and apathy are rife. Paradoxically, one also finds in the urban area the creative clashes of life, the developing leadership, the opportunities for doing enormous good for people, and the fulfillment that comes from dealing with and solving real problems.” In this description of its mission, the College of Education seems ready for the work forecast by Keast and *Wayne and the Inner City*; it is hardly surprising that it borrows the phrase “urban concern”

from the latter. In so doing, the College more fully articulates the urban university ideal as a curricular force than we see anywhere else in the University bulletins of this era.²²

This isn't to suggest that topics which might broadly be considered "social issues" don't appear elsewhere in these bulletins. Rather, they do, but over the forty years following the College of Education's comparatively bold invocation of civil rights cited above, the mentions of such issues often lose much of their emphasis on being byproducts of urbanization, lose what reference they ever had to the work of an urban university, and lose the connection to Detroit. For example, in the 1987-89 bulletin, the School of Business Administration ties its function in an urban university not to questions of race or inequality, but to entrepreneurial opportunity and regional economic development: "The School of Business Administration also recognizes its obligation to community service. As part of an urban university, the School makes a special commitment to foster basic and applied research that will benefit business enterprises. Equally important is the dedication to excellence in the instructional programs that create and support the business leadership that is critical to the continuing revitalization of southeastern Michigan" (*Undergraduate Bulletin 1987-89*, 46). Likewise, the College of Medicine's foreword in the 1989-91 bulletin describes its primary mission "to provide the community with medical and biotechnical resources, in the form of scientific knowledge and trained professionals, so as to improve the general health of the community" (*Undergraduate Bulletin 1989-91*, 346), but by the 1995-97 bulletin, this mission too loses its suggestion of local urban caregiving when the earlier "community" is expanded to "the Michigan community" (*Undergraduate Bulletin 1995-97*, 312). The School of Social Work, appropriately, retained more of a focus on social issues

²² By the 1974-75 University bulletin, however, the College of Education's foreword had lost the more explicitly political reference to the Civil Rights movement, though it retained its emphasis on the dynamic character of urban problems and urban life (*University Bulletin 1974-75*, 52); that version, showing only minor changes, still serves as the College's foreword in the 2013-15 bulletin.

than other divisions. In the 1991-93 bulletin, the School's foreword claims that "the School's activities are intended ultimately to alleviate the condition of those affected by poverty, racism, sexism, unemployment, and those with emotional disturbances, or physical and/or developmental impairments;"²³ while it doesn't connect its work in Detroit specifically to these problems, the same foreword also notes that "consistent with its emphasis on serving people in the Detroit metropolitan area, the School shares with the University a commitment to recruiting students of minority ethnic backgrounds" (*Undergraduate Bulletin 1991-93*, 402). As these examples suggest, schools and colleges throughout the University found it appropriate, in describing their work for readers of these bulletins, to draw connections between their curricula and local, regional, and national social questions.

Looking at the University mission statements in these bulletins shows a similarly ambiguous legacy for Keast's urban university ideal. As we've seen, University and college bulletins in the 1950s and early 1960s often included material from public addresses by President Hilberry describing the goals, functions, and values of Wayne State. However, from the time of Keast's presidency until the middle 1970s, no such material was published in any of the bulletins as an official representation of the University mission, nor did any of Keast's own extensive writing on the urban university ideal appear in the bulletins. In fact, not until the 1975-77 bulletin did Wayne State include anything in its bulletins that resembles its contemporary mission statement. In this foreword, the University acknowledges its chief obligation "to serve in the several capacities of teaching, research, and community service" (*University Bulletin 1975-77*, 6). Its teaching capacity is dedicated to "to a broadening of intellectual horizons, to a satisfying, meaningful life and to continuing intellectual growth exemplifying a truly liberal education;" and its research commitment "places emphasis on creative scholarship, original research, and the

²³ The 1995-97 bulletin adds homophobia to this list of social ills (*Undergraduate Bulletin 1995-97*, 428).

development and utilization of research techniques.” Of more interest to my purpose here, however, is how the university articulates its community service obligation. Acknowledging that “Wayne State University has from its incorporation been mindful of its role in providing appropriate services to the local, state and national communities,” this foreword also notes that “in recent years the University has been acutely conscious of its special obligations of service to urban society and especially to the Detroit metropolitan area and its inner city.” The references here to “special obligations” and “urban society” seem to invoke Keast, and the description of the University’s instruments of community service that follows echoes many of the plans and programs described in *Wayne and the Inner City*: “Although this responsibility is inherent in the programs of all of the schools and colleges, the University has also developed an extensive and diversified College of Lifelong Learning to facilitate and coordinate its large commitments to special urban programs, to adult education, to the cultural growth of the metropolitan area, to the service of education, government and business, and to the citizenry at large.” Despite its profession of such commitments, what this foreword doesn’t include is an identification of Wayne State as an urban university or as having anything like a uniquely urban mission—something that was being acknowledged, however tentatively, in the 1950s during Hilberry’s leadership. It remains curious that, in the fifteen or so years following the tenure of a president preoccupied by what an urban university is or could be, the University’s bulletin remains quiet on that very question.

With minor year-to-year changes, the 1975-77 bulletin’s foreword would see service in undergraduate and graduate bulletins until the middle 1980s. That means that for the twenty-odd years between Keast’s inauguration in 1965 and the publication of a revised University mission statement in the 1987-89 bulletin, the University made no effort to identify itself in its bulletins

as an urban institution or as having an urban mission. That revised mission statement, however, would prove influential: with very minor changes, it would remain Wayne State's mission statement until the 2007-09 bulletin, and the mission statements that followed it in 2007-09 and 2009-11 both closely follow its template. This foreword, the first to be officially designated a description of Wayne State's "university mission," is especially telling of the ambivalent relationship Wayne State inhabits between its local urban and its academic publics.

It begins by identifying Wayne State as "a national research university with an urban teaching and service mission," and as "constitutionally autonomous ... within Michigan's system of public colleges and universities (*Undergraduate Bulletin 1987-89*, 6). The uncoupling of the University's research ambitions and its teaching and service mission is the guiding logic of this mission statement. The subsequent paragraph focuses on Wayne State's research and scholarship, those concerns which I have described as invoking its participation in academic publics:

As a national research university, Wayne State is committed to high standards in research and scholarship. In the arts, it fosters creativity and strives for excellence in performance and exhibition. Its first priority is to develop new knowledge and encourage its application. Because it is a national research university, Wayne State develops and maintains strong graduate and professional programs in many fields. To maintain its standards, Wayne State seeks to strengthen those programs that have achieved national recognition while, at the same time, fostering those programs which show promise for the future. Wayne State strives to maintain its performance ranking as measured by its funded research, the quality of its graduate programs as evaluated by national studies of graduate education, and the effectiveness of all academic programs as assessed by external evaluation.

Here, Wayne State's academic public is explicitly national, and the University's participation in this public is connected to questions of research, scholarship, creativity, excellence, recognition, performance, and evaluation. In this public, Wayne State's primary concern is the development and application of new knowledge. This description of its participation in its academic public shows Wayne State to be a responsibly status-conscious institution. However, especially read

against material from earlier bulletins (both those cited here and in the preceding chapter) the absence of the local and the urban here is striking: research, scholarship, and reputation are of clear importance here, but the question of who such work should serve, or what problems it might reasonably address, remains unasked.

Yet a similar bifurcation is evident too in how this mission statement describes the University's teaching mission. Here, the realities of service to an urban public are much more clearly apparent:

As an urban teaching university, and because its graduates typically remain to live and work in the area throughout their lives, Wayne State seeks especially to serve residents of the greater Detroit metropolitan area, although it enrolls students from across the state and nation as well as foreign lands. ... As a nationally ranked university, Wayne State holds high expectations for the educational achievements of its students and consequently maintains selective admissions standards; but as an urban university it recognizes an obligation to develop special avenues that encourage access for promising students from disadvantaged educational backgrounds. The University aspires to implement its curricula in ways that serve the needs of a nontraditional student population that is racially and ethnically diverse, commuting, working, and raising families. Its student body is composed of students of traditional college age together with many older students, and includes many who are from the first generation in their family or neighborhood to attend a university. In its teaching, the University strives to be sensitive to the special experiences, conditions, and opportunities presented by this diversity in its student body. To meet its obligations to its nontraditional students, the University attempts to schedule classes throughout the metropolitan area and during the evening as well as during the day.

In describing Wayne State as an urban teaching university, this mission statement is predominantly concerned with questions of demographics and student experience. Wayne State's urban setting here is the background to the complex lives of its students, both traditional and otherwise; it represents a challenge to the University's planning and scheduling as it attempts to accommodate its students' diverse backgrounds and experiences. This paragraph also recalls the struggle voiced in *Wayne and the Inner City* to balance academic standards with attempts to make university education more broadly available to disadvantaged urban students. Yet like this mission statement's description of Wayne State in its academic public, this description of Wayne

State in its local urban public noticeably doesn't make a claim that earlier bulletins did: that its urban setting is what makes the University unique, or that such a setting opens to students and faculty unique opportunities for study, research, and culture.

While I read in this mission statement a divide between the University's vision of its participation in its academic public and its commitments to its local urban public—a divide marked by a diminished interest in how its research ambitions and local urban commitments might be productively entangled—it would be disingenuous to suggest that such entanglement is wholly absent in this mission statement. Rather, the possibility of such entanglement is noted in a paragraph in which “Wayne State University recognizes its obligation to serve:”

Like other major universities, it strives to serve the disciplines and professions represented among its academic programs as well as public and private sector organizations and associations at local, state, and national levels. As an urban university, it makes a special commitment to the Detroit metropolitan area in three ways: first, it uses its metropolitan locale as a setting for basic and applied research and fosters the development of new knowledge of urban physical and social environments; second, it employs its locale as a teaching laboratory and incorporates metropolitan area materials into its curriculum; and third, it brings knowledge to bear to assist and strengthen the metropolitan area. In particular, Wayne State University contributes to the economic revitalization of southeastern Michigan through research programs that develop new technology and teaching programs that educate the citizens who will live and work in the region in the coming years.

Yet even here, Wayne State's service obligations are largely described as pertaining *either* to its academic publics *or* its local urban publics—not clearly to both at once. Its academic programs serve their respective disciplines, fields and professional organizations; its urban setting serves (as it did in the bulletins of the 1950s) as a laboratory for teaching and research. The kind of rich entanglement of research, teaching, and urban environment suggested in Keast's papers is perhaps best suggested here by the promise of “the development of new knowledge of urban physical and social environments.” (This paragraph also points toward the University's interest in matters of economic development, already alluded to above, and to which I will return in

greater detail in Chapter Four.) Nevertheless, the mission statement here seems to tentatively endorse some vision of commitment to Wayne State's local urban public in calling for the University "to assist and strengthen the metropolitan area."

Here, it is worth noting the likely influence of University President David Adamany on the 1987-89 mission statement. Adamany, a law scholar, led Wayne State from 1982-1997; a biographical sketch of Adamany on the Reuther Library's website notes that his fifteen years as Wayne State's president comprise the longest term of service in the office ("David Adamany, 1982-1997"). It is worth further noting here that one of Adamany's major goals was accomplished in 1994, when Wayne State won Research I designation from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching ("David Adamany, 1982-1997"). In 1992, *The Educational Record* published a special issue titled "The University as Citizen: A Mission to Serve." Among the articles in this issue, then-President Adamany contributed an essay addressing the theme "The University as Urban Citizen" (Adamany 6). In this essay, Adamany argues for a separation of the university's research and urban commitments which closely echo the similar separation evident in the 1987-89 mission statement. For example, Adamany writes here that "[a]t the center of university citizenship is the principal function of teaching" (7). Facing both economic decline and limited civic engagement, cities face "only one choice: to educate their people or to become ghettos for those unable to participate in economic activity." Adamany envisions the work of universities—especially those in urban settings—as helping cities navigate this choice. "To meet their minimum obligation as citizens of cities," he writes, "universities must broaden access to effective educational programs for the urban population." Thus, among other initiatives, universities should "at least" attempt to "[c]ontrol tuition rates so that the urban poor and members of the working class can enroll;" "[r]eplace exclusive

admissions standards ... with inclusive standards that favor all capable students;” “[s]tructure class schedules and degree programs so that students can pursue their studies in addition to working and/or raising families;” and “[o]ffer special academic support services to individuals who have been disadvantaged by previous educational experiences but who show clear potential for university work” (7-8). These obligations, similar if not largely the same as the obligations of an urban teaching university as described in the 1987-89 mission statement, constitute for Adamany the fundamental work of the university as urban citizen; or, in the terms of my own project, Adamany’s essay here demarcates the university’s relationship to its local urban publics.

Adamany’s essay continues to recall the 1987-89 mission statement in its discussion of the role research plays in the university’s life as urban citizen. While Adamany does assert that urban universities “should address urban issues in their scholarship,” he nevertheless admits several problems with such a claim (8). First and foremost, Adamany notes that a compulsory focus on urban issues would constitute a violation of the faculty’s academic freedom. Moreover, an emphasis on urban scholarship would risk alienating both “academic traditionalists and urban communities. Traditionalists would doubt both the role of applied scholarship in universities and the pertinence of urban settings to scholarship; communities doubt the relevance of pure research and demand that all institutional scholarship be committed to urban concerns.” Adamany, however, sides with neither of these (perhaps slightly hyperbolic) objections. He writes:

But these are not the horns of a dilemma. Applied scholarship cannot be significant unless it is grounded in broader theory and more general learning. On the other hand, urban settings provide the realities against which to test the theoretical work and (in many cases) the materials for the formulation of theory. The efficacy of scholarship linked in concrete ways to community betterment was demonstrated long ago by the success of the land-grant institutions.

Adamany, then, articulates a middle position between the “traditionalist” and “urban community” position that is ultimately not unlike Keast’s: scholarship has a responsibility to address urban issues, but must preserve the standards of academic rigor in so doing.

Ultimately, just as the 1987-89 mission statement seems to stake out a cautious endorsement of Wayne State’s efforts to serve Detroit, so too does Adamany end up offering a limited advocacy of university efforts to engage in civic life. While he cautions universities against using “their own resources to provide general public services” like utilities, housing assistance, or police services, he admits that a limited commitment to such services “in its immediate geographic neighborhood” are appropriate, insofar as such services “improve the quality of the university neighborhood and only secondarily are municipal services for the general public” (9). Despite these reservations and those mentioned above about the appropriateness of urban research, Adamany calls for urban universities to account for their local urban publics as a determining force in establishing their institutional priorities: “... [I]n making critical decisions that shape their future—such as organizing institutional structures (e.g., research centers or even academic departments or colleges), allocating funds, and making faculty appointments—urban universities should advance scholarship on urban subjects generally and on their own communities specifically” (8). “For universities,” Adamany writes at the end of this essay, “citizenship in the city means fulfilling—with excellence—their principal missions of teaching and scholarship within the context of urban life” (9).

I will return below to Adamany’s essay in my conclusion, but for now there is more to say about how the 1987-89 mission statement would prove influential on mission statements printed in later bulletins. As noted above, the 1987-89 mission statement would remain basically stable until the 2007-09 bulletin, with only minor edits or revisions. In the 2007-09 bulletins, as

well those that followed in 2009-11, 2011-13, and 2013-2015, the basic structure and much of the text of the mission statement remains the same: an introduction offering an overview of the material to follow; a paragraph or two each on Wayne State's research goals, its urban teaching mission, and its service obligations (as discussed above); a statement on the University's commitment to diversity and academic freedom, and a final paragraph concluding that Wayne State "recognizes that much must be achieved before the goals it holds for itself are fully attained" (*Undergraduate Bulletin 1987-89*, 6).

Insofar as these later bulletins preserve much of the 1987-89 mission statement largely verbatim, I needn't cite them in much detail. But these bulletins also introduce a key term for my project. In their opening paragraphs, they introduce a new description of Wayne State: "As an urban research university, our mission is to discover, examine, transmit and apply knowledge that contributes to the positive development and well-being of individuals, organizations and society. Wayne State University is a national research institution dedicated to preparing students to excel in an increasingly advanced and interconnected global society" ("Foreword [2007]"). This new introduction expands the description of Wayne State's research mission, tracing it through the discovery and application of new knowledge, and asserts that such research occurs in the context of an *urban research university*. Here, for perhaps the first time, Wayne State's description of its mission explicitly connects its research functions to its urban community functions. Granted, this mission statement does little to explain what such a term might mean in contrast to the 1987-89 bulletin's "national research university with an urban teaching and service mission," and the text of the later mission statements preserves the split between a "national research university" and an "urban teaching university." Yet the introduction of this new formulation—that of a university dedicated as much to research as to its local urban

commitments—is nevertheless significant. Invoking this new image of University purpose, the mission statement links the work of the urban research university to the promise and capability of “positive development” for “individuals, organizations and society.” More than forty years after the end of his presidency, Wayne State’s description of its mission finally seems to have caught up to Keast’s urban university ideal.

Conclusion

Together, the texts analyzed in this chapter—Keast’s papers, *Wayne and the Inner City*, and the University bulletins from 1965 forward—trace an interesting movement in Wayne State’s negotiation of its publics. The era of Keast’s presidency and the University report on urban engagement point to an urban university ideal in which Wayne State’s obligations to its urban publics and its academic publics might be merged; Keast’s vision of the urban university as a site of research and teaching embedded in and contributing to its urban environs is a powerfully compelling one. Yet the bulletins of Keast’s era are quiet about that vision, and those of the years following speak to that ideal only in part. While acknowledging Wayne State’s special obligations to urban Detroit, later bulletins, as we have seen, envision such obligations primarily at the level of teaching and service: addressing concerns of diversity, demographics, and varied life experiences that its traditional and nontraditional students bring to the University. Obviously, these are valid and important concerns. However, as I have shown in my reading above of the University’s mission statements from the 1980s forward, this also marks off the University’s commitment to its urban publics as being distinct from its participation in the academic public of research and scholarship.

To be clear, I don’t mean to suggest by this that Wayne State isn’t in practice committed to Detroit, or that the scholars and researchers in its employ are disinterested in the city. As I’ll

show more clearly in the next chapter, Wayne State's commitment to Detroit is evident in a broad and varied roster of programs and initiatives. What I'm interested in here, then, is how the institutional texts under review in this chapter vacillate between implying and denying a schism between the research and scholarship work Wayne State undertakes as part of its academic publics, and the service and community work undertaken as part of its local urban publics. As I noted in the previous chapter, through these institutional texts, it often seems as though Wayne State is seeking an elusive balance between its constituent publics, a balance between the clear and familiar work of teaching Detroit's aspiring professionals, and the ambiguous and sometimes confusing work of being a research university. Even if Wayne State's most recent bulletin stakes a (perhaps long overdue) claim for the "urban research university" label, it does so in a mission statement which, by maintaining a divide between the University's research work and its teaching work, nevertheless preserves a sense of the friction between its academic and urban publics that we saw in the previous chapter.

In this chapter, though, the friction between Wayne State's urban publics and its academic publics comes to hinge on a key term drawn from *Wayne and the Inner City's* subtitle: concern. This word functions across multiple levels to characterize the kind of institutional public subject we see emerging from the texts considered here. *Concern* marks Wayne State as an engaged participant in public discussions about race, education, and inequality throughout its history, but especially in the middle and late 1960s. By committing itself to programs and initiatives addressing these issues, the University leverages its institutional prestige to frame these questions as important subjects of public discussion: a different slate of programs could easily result in a completely other way of framing these problems, or could dictate instead a completely different set of problems as being more important. Instead, by identifying these

questions as typifying “urban concern,” the University commits itself to a stance as as a participant in such discussions. Similarly, *concern* comes to characterize Wayne State as a benevolent actor in its urban public: Wayne State is revealed here to be *concerned about* the city and its people. The “urban concern” of *Wayne and the Inner City*’s subtitle serves here to characterize the University as the city’s benefactor, in ways that might arguably be considered condescending or paternalistic. While such skepticism about the University’s motives might be appropriate, I think resorting to such a response is premature. Rather, I am more interested in thinking about how the University is depicted as an institutional public subject capable of the kind of affective orientation suggested by *concern*: paternalistic such concern may be, but an institution concerned about its city is an institution capable of *feeling for* its city too.

Yet even while *concern* becomes a key term in understanding how Wayne State positions itself in relationship to its urban public, it is important to not lose sight of the other concern it is preoccupied by here: its standing and reputation in its broader academic publics. Throughout Keast’s papers and in several places in *Wayne and the Inner City*, we’ve seen how this concern delimits the University’s orientation toward the city. Keast seems to say: *We must address the problems of the city and of urbanization, but we must do so in ways native to and appropriate for a research university*. Likewise, *Wayne and the Inner City* seems to say: *We must continue to contribute to the city—even expanding our efforts—but those contributions must have their limits, for the good of our reputation*. Importantly, there seems to be no question of *whether* Wayne State should contribute to the city. Rather, the question seems instead to be how Wayne State’s legitimate concern about its function in one public determines its place in another. In the institutional texts considered in this chapter, Wayne State presents itself as occupying a public subject position defined by paradox: on one hand, its relationship to Detroit presents it with

opportunities to distinguish itself from other institutions of higher education; on the other, its relationship to other institutions of higher education means, in these texts, necessarily imposing limits on the scope and scale of its engagement with Detroit. This paradox points to the difficulty of Wayne State's engagement with its urban public: in many ways, these texts point to the University's attempts to fulfill Keast's urban university ideal through its embrace of Detroit, but find it still bound enough to academic tradition to be wary of holding itself too close.

Instead of a full embrace of Keast's urban university ideal, what emerges from the bulletins during Keast's tenure and after is a continuous negotiation and renegotiation of the relationships between a set of key terms used to articulate the changing scope and scale of Wayne State's involvement in its local urban and academic publics: *public*, *urban*, *research*, *service*, and *university*. Across the texts here, but especially in the University bulletins and their varying University mission statements, these terms, both singly and in their various configurations, become key to how Wayne State has attempted to articulate its role as an institutional public subject. Keast, for example, emphasizes *urban university* or the *public urban university* most forcefully; the University mission statement from 1987-89, conversely, emphasizes Wayne State's function as a *research university* first and foremost, with *urban service* and teaching being secondary; the most recent bulletins surveyed here offer yet another option by introducing the *urban research university*.

These permutations suggest that the key to understanding Wayne State's role as an institutional public subject hinges particularly on the relationship between the terms *research* and *urban*. In the preceding chapter, Hanawalt's history of the University and the Hilberry excerpts cited from the bulletins described Wayne State as an urban university whose relationship to Detroit was founded on teaching and developing Detroit's professionals, with direct community

development largely incidental; in this context, the University relied on and capitalized upon the city, both for its cultural and technical resources, and as a laboratory for teaching and research. In this chapter, Keast's papers and the *Wayne and the Inner City* report push that term further, establishing the urban university as an ideal, a center for the research, study, and resolution of problems rooted in urban life and patterns of mass urbanization. Yet as we see here, that ambition for the convergence of the University's research and teaching missions around a unified goal of community enrichment never clearly took root in how Wayne State portrayed itself in one of its most public institutional texts, the course bulletins. Instead, by the time its official mission statement was first printed in the course bulletin in 1987-89, Wayne State had seemingly opted instead to preserve a divide between its research and teaching missions, describing itself as a research university with an urban teaching mission; while admitting special obligations to the city and its citizens, this mission statement situates those obligations as primarily bearing upon the University's teaching mission rather than its research mission. Yet the most recent bulletins examined here, while largely repeating the language of the 1987-89 mission statement, also come closer to Keast's ideal by invoking for Wayne State the new and as yet untested epithet of an *urban research university*.

Some readers may find this minute attention to the configurations of particular terms to be of little consequence; others may find that institutional texts like the histories, addresses, and course bulletins analyzed in this and the preceding chapters make up a rather mundane, or unexciting, corpus of texts for such analysis. In the face of this latter objection, texts like university course bulletins are admittedly, well, unglamorous; read on their own, they might even be frankly boring. However, I think such reservations are misplaced: they are rooted in a misunderstanding of who such texts address, and why. I have argued that such texts most clearly

address two publics often cast as incompatible with one another, if not in outright opposition: the academic public of research and scholarship, constituted by Wayne State's peer and aspirational institutions; and the local urban public, made up of the University's fellow inhabitants of Detroit and its metropolitan region. Such texts do important work for these audiences. Addressed to the University's academic public, bulletins, reports, and presidential addresses stake a claim for the vitality and relevance of the scholarship and research undertaken by its faculty. In this public, Wayne State articulates a mode of institutional public subjectivity centered on a community of scholars and researchers. Addressed to the University's local urban public, such texts make invitations to prospective students and make commitments to the community. In this public, Wayne State articulates a mode of institutional public subjectivity centered on its work in and on behalf of Detroit and its citizens. To be clear, such a reading neither expects nor requires that members of either public have necessarily read through an admittedly dry text like a course bulletin. Rather, what my reading suggests is that, regardless of actual readership, such institutional texts embody existing tensions between the University's constituent publics. In the institutional texts read here, and especially in the bulletins, commitments to both Wayne State's local urban public and its broader academic public are inscribed as the grounds on which the University's framing of its mission are based. Understood as addressing these publics, such institutional texts have much to teach us about how institutions articulate their commitments as public subjects.

Yet even more importantly, institutional texts can be read as a discourse addressed to the institution itself. That is, in addition to the work they do as texts addressing the University's publics, they also do important work for the institution's own members. To read texts such as these is, in a way, to eavesdrop on an institution's own interior negotiation with itself of what its

commitments should be to its various publics. In the specific case of Wayne State, such a reading of its institutional texts points up its institutional anxieties about how its different modes of being a public subject stir uncomfortably against one another. *What is Wayne State*, we might hear these texts ask. *Is Wayne State a research university? Is Wayne State a teaching university? What does it mean to be urban? What can we do for Detroit? What should we do for Detroit?*

Hearing these anxieties emerge from the admittedly mundane and unglamorous texts analyzed here requires scholarship that takes seriously these texts, and (to answer the first objection above) that is attuned to the sometimes small variations between texts which signal sites of particular interest—indeed, moreover, scholarship which rigorously seeks such changes as indicative of moments where the relationship between key terms is rearticulated and reconfigured. The institutional texts in which I am interested are not the place for pronouncements, manifestos, diatribes, or jeremiads—that is, they are texts which do not mark themselves as immediately of interest to publics scholars or rhetoricians. They outline instead the policies and procedures which govern the everyday, the mundane, the ordinary. Moreover, they give voice to a particular form of public subject, the institution, which is slow to act and resistant to change (as Warner shows us) and whose motives are occluded or opaque (as Rice shows us). Indeed, the analysis of any single institutional text yields little depth or complexity to an attempt to analyze an institution's processes of public subjectivity. Rather, as my work in this chapter suggests, the complex understanding of institutional public subjectivity I seek here in the context of Wayne State only fully emerges when institutional texts are read across years, decades, eras. A single institutional text—a single year's course bulletin, say—might best be thought of as a snapshot of a single moment in the life of an institution: *here is how Wayne State articulates its public commitments in 1987*. Attention to that moment can perhaps produce interesting readings

or analyses. But seeing that text as successor to earlier texts, and as predecessor to still later texts, is like moving from a snapshot to a film: by investigating and analyzing how institutional texts change across time, we make possible scholarship that narrates the changing configurations of institutional public subjects.

At the start of this chapter, I asked what it meant for Wayne State to have chosen a vision of itself as an institutional public subject which differs from the urban university ideal articulated by Keast. The readings offered here suggest two complementary answers. First, my attention to key terms above is inspired by an argument common to Michael Warner and Jenny Rice: publics emerge from the interaction of public subjects and the public texts they create. In Warner's account, "[a] public is a space of discourse organized by nothing other than discourse itself. ... It exists *by virtue of being addressed*" (Warner 67). Warner underscores this claim even more pointedly when he writes: "Publics do not exist apart from the discourse that addresses them" (Warner 72). Similarly, Rice explains her use of the term *publics* as a reference to "the active exchanges of discourse that are happening in ordinary spaces of encounter. ... These are not simply spaces in which publics meet together, but the discursive exchanges that happen here are actually (re)creating publics with every moment" (Rice 19). Like Warner and Rice, then, I understand publics as spaces of engagement which emerge from the circulation of texts and discourses. As such, the boundaries and functions of publics are themselves subject to processes of negotiation and articulation; they do not pre-exist the complex interplay of subjects and texts.

I argue that if this is the case, then how the subjects of any given public envision its limits will of necessity bear upon the kinds of commitments they understand as appropriate and feasible within its boundaries. Rice invites us to ask these questions in the context of public debates about urban development and environmental sustainability by drawing our attention to the processes of

public subjectivity. As I explained in Chapter 1, however, I extend and rethink Rice's method to offer instead a publics approach to institutional texts. Here, Rice describes her approach:

A focus on discourses about place can prompt us to rethink public subjectivity, or the way people are encouraged ... to imagine themselves in the public sphere. By examining the discursive makeup of public subjectivity, we can see how people are encouraged to read themselves into the rhetorical act How do people "read themselves" in relation to publics that change, undergo, and populate material realms? More specifically, how do people imagine themselves as actors (or not) through common patterns of public talk? (Rice 18)

Like Rice, then, I am interested in how texts and discourses construct available forms of public subjectivity, in how public discourses make available some ways of being a public subject while foreclosing others. Yet in my project here, I argue that such processes of public subjectivity are not unique to individual persons but can in fact be attributed to institutions as well. Thus, where Rice reads public discourses to understand the forms of public subjectivity available to individuals, I offer a way of reading institutional texts to understand the available forms of institutional public subjectivity.

As we have seen, Wayne State's special obligations to Detroit have come to center largely on its teaching role rather than on its research role. While *Wayne and the Inner City* described a number of roles the University plays in connection to Detroit—and while Wayne State in practice still fulfills many of those roles—at the level of its current statement of its mission it is as an urban teaching university, rather than as a research university, that Wayne State primarily attempts to participate in its local urban public. In that regard, Wayne State's idea of its mission as a public subject is in many ways little changed from the teaching and service

missions it might have articulated in the 1930s and 1940s, when it was still a municipal teaching university. In prioritizing its teaching mission over its research one, then, the University makes an argument both about its role as an institutional public subject and about the publics in which it operates. Within the scope of Wayne State's urban mission, such a prioritization suggests that the University first and foremost envisions its work as an institutional public subject as being educational: it best serves its urban public and best fulfills its urban mission not through research but through its function of teaching and training the students and citizens of Detroit.

Second, this thus informs in turn a somewhat more implicit argument about Wayne State's urban mission as an articulation of a claim about its publics. By viewing its urban mission primarily through the lens of its teaching and training functions, Wayne State seems to admit a certain kind of resignation about the boundaries of its constituent publics. Although as an institutional public subject it must of necessity participate in both academic publics and in local urban publics, the friction between those two publics means that the kinds of engagement valued in one are not always, or at least not consistently, reciprocally valued in the other. In light of this, it seems that Wayne State's continued insistence on envisioning itself caught up in the friction between these two publics is not a failure of institutional policy but a failure of institutional imagination.

The divide between Wayne State's academic public and its local urban public is effectively encapsulated by David Adamany in the essay cited above. Writing about the urban university tradition in American higher education, he observes that at elite institutions, "scholarship and teaching rarely were concerned with the population and conditions of their host cities, and there was little sense of obligation to them" (7). Adamany contrasts this tradition of elite disinterest with the tradition typified by municipal colleges, religious universities, and state-

created urban universities: “These institutions have always been ‘of’ rather than simply ‘in’ the city” Wayne State’s history, as we learned in the previous chapter, is much more that of a municipal college than the kind of disinterested elite university Adamany critiques here; but as we see in the institutional texts considered in this chapter, its ambitions situate it amongst its more prestigious peers and rivals. As a public subject, then, it is in effect stranded in the gulf between its academic public and its local urban public. I wonder, though, whether perhaps the new “urban research university” phrasing evident in Wayne State’s most recent bulletins is the invocation of a new public in which the choice between being committed to *either* its academic public or its local urban public is revealed as unproductive; such a new public might make room for both the University’s research work *and* its obligations to Detroit. Such a public would have no room for the “in the city but not of it” formula to which Adamany alludes. Rather, such a public could instead work to legitimize a vision of the urban university as being fundamentally *for the city*: both an institution of teaching and training, of access to higher education for those otherwise left behind; and an institution whose research and scholarship would, as in Keast’s ideal, work for the enrichment of urban lives.

CHAPTER FOUR: “‘A UNIVERSITY OF OPPORTUNITY:’ WAYNE STATE, TECHTOWN, AND THE ENTREPRENEURIAL UNIVERSITY”

Wayne State University is dedicated to the renewal, prosperity and well-being of Detroit and Michigan. We are a powerful catalyst for the local economy, improving the quality of life in the region and across the state. Economically, socially and culturally, no other university in Michigan has the ability to benefit so many people so directly and immediately. We work diligently to create productive partnerships with business, industry, government and cultural institutions, and Wayne State has been a driving force in the renewal of Midtown Detroit.

President Irvin D. Reid, *Strategic Action Plan for 2006-11*

Chapters Two and Three, taken together, track nearly one hundred and fifty years in the history of Wayne State, from its roots in the founding of the Detroit Medical College in 1868, to the contemporary University’s mission statement as reproduced in the 2013-15 volume of its undergraduate course bulletin. This excavation of the University’s history was undertaken through a method I’ve described as a publics approach to institutional texts, which reads texts created by, within, and on behalf of institutions to better understand how institutions envision themselves as public subjects and how they understand the publics in which they participate.

In Chapter Two, for example, I traced the history of Wayne State through much of its first century by relying on an institutional history written by Leslie Hanawalt, focusing on how the University’s precursor institutions established a legacy of service to its local urban publics. That chapter also inaugurated the turn to the course bulletin as a paradigmatic institutional text, focusing on the course bulletins of the 1950s and early 1960s. In particular, my reading of these texts centered on comments about Wayne State’s relationship to Detroit as drawn from program descriptions and (especially) from papers and addresses offered by then-President Clarence Hilberry. This chapter concluded by arguing that through its first hundred years, Wayne State’s role as a public subject was defined by a tension between its obligations to its local urban public

and its ambitions to participate more fully in the research and scholarly goals of its academic publics.

In Chapter Three, I continued the historical work of Chapter Two, this time focusing on the more recent period of 1965 through 2015. Once again, this chapter drew on institutional texts to continue my study of Wayne State as a public subject; here, the institutional texts were the papers of former University president William Rea Keast and the university bulletins from his era through the present. Keast's papers revealed a preoccupation throughout his presidency with Wayne State's potential as an urban university to intervene through both research and community engagement in problems arising from urbanization and urban life, an idea which I described as Keast's urban university ideal. Turning from Keast's papers to the course bulletins, I argued that Wayne State, rather than embracing this ideal, had instead preserved in its mission statements a division between its constituent local urban and academic publics, conflating its commitments to its urban publics into its traditional pedagogical mission as an institution of higher education.

I closed that last chapter on an open question: whether Wayne State's historically recent description of itself as an "urban research university" might suggest an initial move to once again renegotiate its relationships to its local urban and academic publics. In this chapter, I take up that question in more detail in an attempt to analyze how Wayne State's processes of public subjectivity are taking shape in the early twenty-first century. This chapter thus marks a turn to the University's more recent history, starting in the late twentieth century and into the present. Along with that turn to a more familiar era, this chapter also marks a turn from discussing the University writ large to a focus on one particular program sponsored by Wayne State: TechTown Detroit, a technology and retail business accelerator and incubator (a screen capture of

TechTown's current website is visible below in Figure 9). Since the early 2000s, TechTown has supported entrepreneurs and start-up firms by providing financial, managerial, and organizational assistance through a variety of programs and initiatives. These programs range from a Venture Accelerator program designed to help technology entrepreneurs "navigate the path to commercialization" ("Venture Accelerator"); to a technology commercialization program which serves as an "outsourced incubator, educational resource and critical path to technology commercialization for the region's academic institutions and health care systems" ("Technology Commercialization"); to its neighborhood-retail development program, SWOT City,²⁴ which "combines economic development and start-up acceleration strategies to transform historically underserved neighborhoods into vibrant and dense communities" ("SWOT City"). In addition to programs like these, TechTown is also partnered with Detroit-based organizations such as Bizdom, Invest Detroit, and the Detroit Creative Corridor in regional projects like the Detroit Technology Exchange (DTX), which is "designed to recruit and groom talent for tech entrepreneurship opportunities and convert innovative technologies into Detroit-based startups" ("DTX D-Venture"); and with Ann Arbor SPARK, Automation Alley, and the Macomb-Oakland University INCubator to form a regional network of business accelerators and start-up incubators, each offering "programming that facilitates the commercialization of technologies developed within private enterprises, universities and health systems" ("Network").

²⁴ The name is borrowed from the work of organizational analyst Albert Humphrey; the acronym stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. For more on SWOT and its applications, see Humphrey, "SWOT Analysis;" Work Group, "SWOT Analysis;" and Quincy, Lu, and Huang, "SWOT Analysis."

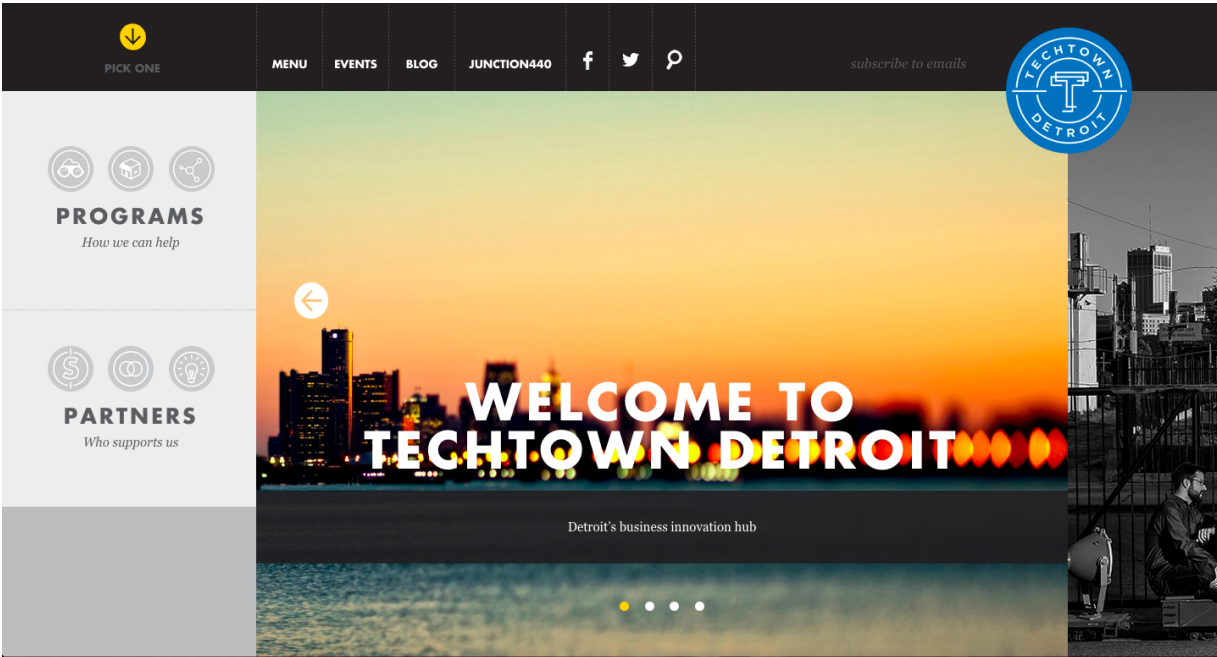


Figure 9: TechTown Detroit Webpage (April 2015)

To be clear, my interest in TechTown is not in the substance, operation, or success of its programs or that of the businesses and entrepreneurs it supports. Rather, I am interested in TechTown for what it represents as a contemporary instantiation of the same questions about Wayne State’s urban mission and its processes of public subjectivity that occupied the preceding two chapters. More accurately, I am interested, therefore, in what a study of institutional texts of and about TechTown might reveal about the ways Wayne State enacts its public subjectivity at this point in its history. As we shall see in more detail below, in TechTown’s earliest phases of development, it was represented as an extension of Wayne State’s research commitments and as an extension of its community engagement efforts—that is, TechTown was originally situated as being a site where Wayne State was in conversation with *both* its academic public and its local urban public; these early texts, then, seem to point to TechTown as site where the University’s local urban and academic research commitments coalesce around its urban mission. However, by

tracing how TechTown's mission has been articulated in more recent texts, we find in fact that the urban mission has been once again rearticulated: now, with an emerging "culture of entrepreneurialism" supplanting research as key to how the urban mission is operationalized.

TechTown, thus read as a central component of how Wayne State's urban mission is put into practice, is the central point around which the three main sections of this chapter turn. In each section, this chapter analyzes the way TechTown has been portrayed by key stakeholders in its development and administration; these analyses extend my interest in institutional public subjectivity to TechTown itself, which in such a reading becomes a proxy for Wayne State's own ongoing negotiations of its publics. In the chapter's first part, "Opportunity, Outreach, Engagement," I contextualize the work of TechTown within Wayne State's claims about its mission and purpose in the early twenty-first century. As we will see, the documents cited in this section figure TechTown and similar university initiatives as fulfilling an array of University objectives: the commercialization of research, an investment in the local community, and a response to Detroit's economic crisis and bankruptcy. While I focus here specifically on TechTown, the documents and texts addressing both TechTown and its related programs are the focal point of an emerging University discourse about Wayne State's legacy of community engagement and how it should be enacted in the twenty-first century. This section draws on a number of institutional texts to support its analysis, focused on communiques from the offices of four different University presidents. Across these institutional texts, *entrepreneurialism* becomes a key term around which Wayne State's activities as a public subject revolve; entrepreneurialism comes to take on special significance as the conceptual territory where the tensions between Wayne State's academic and local urban publics are being renegotiated.

Having established the context for understanding TechTown's importance to Wayne State in part one, this chapter's second part, "Welcome to TechTown Detroit," offers a brief history of the incubation hub. In this section, I trace TechTown's roots to the efforts of former University President Irvin Reid, who initiated the establishment of TechTown. Drawing from institutional texts like the current and archived versions of TechTown's websites and from local and national reporting on TechTown, the history of TechTown assembled here is an attempt to understand the University's initial hopes and ambitions in developing its entrepreneurial hub. In addition to assembling this history, this section also pays particular attention to how the existing histories of TechTown, as sparse and limited as they are, nevertheless do significant work in characterizing TechTown as both part of Detroit's local history of industrial innovation, and as a break away from Detroit's historical association with heavy industry in favor of new economy businesses focused on high-tech and life sciences development.

"A Community of Opportunity," the third section of this chapter, focuses on TechTown's own institutional texts and the claims they make about TechTown's relationships to Wayne State, Detroit, and its own clients. Here, as suggested above, I read and analyze these texts with a focus on how they position TechTown, and by proxy Wayne State, as a participant in efforts to revitalize Detroit's economy. Such programs, including TechTown as well as a diverse slate of similar initiatives, are overseen by Wayne State's Office of Economic Development (OED). In this section, I trace the changing scope of TechTown's mission and slate of programs through analysis of archived and current documents, including both the OED's and TechTown's websites, electronic press kits, and press releases. The trajectory of these changes follows TechTown from its initial mission incubating technologies emerging from university research to its current diverse slate of programs ranging across technology incubation, entrepreneurial

support, and neighborhood retail development. As noted above, my interest here is not in the efficacy of such programs, but rather how their depiction in institutional texts portrays TechTown and Wayne State as public subjects in multiple spheres of public engagement. If, as we have seen, Wayne State's role as public subject has in the past been defined by the friction between its academic and local urban public, TechTown might represent a new configuration of those processes of public subjectivity, a configuration that nevertheless shows some of the same tensions between publics.

As such, a key question for this chapter becomes what function the programs of TechTown serve within the larger context of Wayne State's urban mission. This chapter thus asks how programs like TechTown fit into Wayne State's history of contribution to its local urban publics, as well as how such contributions invoke the University's sometimes strained commitments to its local and academic publics. As we will see, two key terms come to represent the ways Wayne State figures itself as a public subject in these texts: *legacy* and *opportunity*. *Legacy* gestures toward Wayne State's longstanding commitment to Detroit and to the local urban publics in which the university participates; yet *legacy* also points to questions oriented toward an uncertain future: how can Wayne State enact its role as public subject today in order to make a lasting, beneficial impact on its constituent publics? How do programs like TechTown enact Wayne State's legacy of community contributions while at the same time pushing that legacy in new directions? *Opportunity* similarly invites parallel questions, in this case asking questions relevant both internal to Wayne State itself and externally to the work done by programs like TechTown. How does Wayne State recognize and build opportunities for its community, and how does it communicate those opportunities to the publics in which it participates? How do programs like TechTown expand upon or build from the notion of

opportunity evident elsewhere in Wayne State's urban mission? It is questions like these that this chapter attempts to answer.

Opportunity, Outreach, Engagement

As explained above, this first section of the chapter offers a narrative to show the institutional context in which claims about TechTown emerge. In this section, I will turn to addresses and other communications issued by four University presidents: Irvin Reid (1997-2009), Jay Noren (2009-2010), Allan Gilmour (2011-2013), and M. Roy Wilson (2013-present).²⁵ As we've seen in preceding chapters, such communiques are important institutional texts; the University president enjoys a uniquely privileged position in voicing and guiding the priorities and values of the institution. That is certainly true in the documents and texts considered here. In this section, I turn to such texts to track how University leaders over fifteen years have articulated Wayne State's programmatic goals related to questions of opportunity and access to both educational and entrepreneurial support; of outreach to both at-risk students and partner institutions; and of engagement with urban, academic, and business communities. Reading through these presidential communications, I demonstrate how these documents draw on these themes that, when read together, point to the emergence of a "culture of entrepreneurialism" as the most recent articulation of Wayne State's attempts to bridge the gaps between its various publics. In these documents, TechTown is repeatedly invoked as a key site in the creation of this new entrepreneurial culture.

²⁵ Not included here is Phyllis Vroom's tenure as "deputy president" during Gilmour's tenure. Vroom, a retired dean emerita of Wayne State's School of Social Work, was asked to serve in the position while Gilmour recovered from cancer treatment; she had previously served as an acting president following Jay Noren's resignation from the office. The University, however, does not list Vroom in its official roster of university presidents; if she were listed, she would be both the first woman and the first woman of color to lead Wayne State. For more on Vroom, see Jesse; Wheeler; "Profile;" "Ford CFO to Head WSU;" and "Phyllis Vroom Named."

In order to show how these themes become the basis for the emergence of a nascent “culture of entrepreneurialism,” the following subsections are arranged chronologically, based on the succession of University presidents beginning with Irvin Reid. In each subsection, I begin by presenting a reading of relevant presidential documents, followed by a discussion of relevant material from SAPs covering the same period. I have thus divided this section into the three following subsections: the first focuses on the presidency of Irvin Reid (1997-2009); the second covers the comparatively brief presidencies of Jay Noren (2009-10) and Allan Gilmour (2011-13); the final subsection here considers the presidency of M. Roy Wilson (2013-present). Across these three periods, I will show how these University leaders work to configure themes of opportunity and access within the larger context of Wayne State’s institutional moves as a public subject.

The Enabling Spark: Irvin Reid, 1997-2009

From the available sources, it is clear that TechTown was the brainchild of former Wayne State president (and now president emeritus) Irvin Reid. Reid, who holds advanced degrees in business, applied economics, and psychology, was president of Wayne State from 1997 to 2008. Prior to coming to Wayne State, Reid held a number of positions at the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, as well as positions at Howard University, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Drexel University, the Philadelphia College of Art and St. Joseph’s University (“About President Reid”). Reid also served as president of Montclair State University in Montclair, New Jersey, “where under his leadership 17 new facilities were built or initiated and the institution’s first capital campaign was begun and completed.” At Wayne State, Reid’s term as president was marked by campus expansion (including an expanded Welcome Center, Law School, the University’s Recreation

and Fitness Center, and three residence halls). Reid also oversaw major increases in University fundraising, including the launch of the Wayne First capital campaign, which raised nearly \$800 million dollars for the University (“Biography”).

As president, Reid often spoke in his addresses of Wayne State as the center of a complex array of programs and initiatives dedicated, each in their own ways, to pursuing and expanding opportunity and engagement. In his inaugural address to the University community, Reid described Wayne State as the catalyst for transforming Detroit; the University here is “a conduit of skill, talent and ideas, the intellectual and enabling spark for the rebirth occurring all around us” (“Inaugural Address [18 Sep. 1998]”). Wayne State’s deeply embedded role within the life of the city made such a role a necessary task for the University: “The urban experience is literally part of the air we breathe. We understand that Wayne State depends upon Detroit, and that Detroit draws strength from us. Our fate is reciprocal in both practical and symbolic ways. We understand, too, that as an urban institution we have a unique opportunity, if not an advantage, and we have distinct responsibilities.” For Reid, these responsibilities included an obligation to improve student achievement, a call for greater investment in research and research funding, and a commitment to Detroit and its revitalization. In what follows, I want to look closer at how Reid figures each of these responsibilities before turning to his treatment of TechTown as a nexus of these three tasks.

Reid was especially aware of how Wayne State, as an urban university, was populated by a non-traditional student body that sometimes requires extraordinary considerations in support of its members’ success. In his 2005 State of the University Address, Reid identifies several such considerations: “As an urban university, we accommodate students with distinct needs. Despite our addition of a significant on-campus population, most of our students will remain commuters.

Many will attend part-time. Many will have jobs. Many will require financial assistance. Many will be minorities. In everything we do, we demonstrate an awareness of the special requirements of students in those populations” (“State of the University [12 Sep. 2005]” 9). This address continues to identify low four-year graduation rates as one of the main challenges facing the University, especially for its African American and Hispanic students. Yet Reid is careful not to lay the blame at the feet of Wayne State students; instead, he marks their struggles as indicative of an obligation to better serve all students:

Every time we lose a student we not only lose a graduate who would have contributed to our economy; we also lose a potential advocate. We lose a part of our community and a part of our strength. But most importantly, we have failed to make a positive, long-term difference in someone’s life.

We readily take in students more at risk than those in most institutions. This is a part of our mission and it will continue. So what we are doing, and what we must do even better, is give students the tools they need for academic success. (9)

Supporting such students, however, would require the necessary resources to do so. As Michigan, like other states, faced budget and revenue crises in the middle 2000s, funding to Michigan’s institutions of higher education came under review. Speaking before the State Senate Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee in March 2006, Reid voiced his administration’s concern “about our ability to serve our students properly while both growing and meeting necessary expenditures. Already we have had to expand class sizes, and some student services and on-campus activities have been reduced” (“Testimony [3 Mar. 2006]” 5). Despite these financial difficulties, Reid cautioned the subcommittee that “we cannot simply hold the line; we must move forward and continue to improve what we do. We have a great responsibility to prepare the men and women who will lead Michigan into the future, and on no account should we compromise our ability to do that with excellence.”

Reid put particular emphasis on preparing students for life in a technology-driven global economy. His inaugural address, in fact, identifies “the importance of our global presence” and

“the implementation of new technologies for fulfilling our tripartite roles in teaching, research and public service” as two of the three pillars of his vision for Wayne State (the third being “the strength of our urban experience” (“Inaugural Address [18 Sep. 1998]”). In this address, Reid cautions the University community against letting “global education be a term so overused that it threatens to become an empty cliché.” Rather, he posits, “we have to decide what it really means, how to integrate it into our curriculum and research agenda, and how it can truly enrich education” Embracing a global mindset takes on an ethical cast in Reid’s description. “Global education is built on the bedrock of our common experience, but it must be approached with care and good judgment. We must prepare our students well, making sure they appreciate and respect people of diverse cultures and conditions.” Reid understood this new global emphasis at least in part driven by advances in technology, noting that “[d]ecisions made in Bonn, Tokyo or Moscow impact life in Lansing, Detroit, Kalamazoo, and Flint, in Wayne or Macomb or Oakland County.” Thus, Reid also sees in his inaugural address a need for Wayne State to embrace new forms of technological connectivity to “complement the learning process and enhance the quest for knowledge,” citing as examples technology-assisted opportunities like “using multimedia to help teach physics or philosophy, to virtual geological or geopolitical field trips, to the development of an online medical or musical library.”

The second responsibility Reid saw Wayne State undertaking was a call for greater investment in research and research funding. In fact, in his State of the University Address in 2000, Reid identified “the effort to extend Wayne State’s capacity to conduct cutting edge research” as an “essential principle” for the University’s future (“State of the University [12 Sep. 2000]” 5). He returned to this theme throughout his presidency. In his 2002 State of the University Address, for example, Reid observed that “Excellence in research and in the

discovery and application of new knowledge are ultimately what most determines our national reputation” (“State of the University [9 Sep. 2002]” 3), and in support of those goals announced a new initiative, the School and College Research Investment Opportunity Program, which promised to make nearly two million dollars available to support research across University units (5). Reid was justifiably proud of his administration’s support for the University’s research mission. By the end of his presidency, he was able to claim in a 2007 address that research funding had more than doubled under his leadership:

Despite deteriorating fiscal conditions, my administration began two innovative programs to support research. While the Program Enhancement Fund targeted specific doctoral programs for special support, the President’s Research Enhancement Funds targeted specific faculty, or more often faculty working in groups, to broaden research areas across disciplines. Annual research expenditures have grown every year for the past decade and now exceed \$225 million, up from approximately \$120 million 10 years ago. (“Presidential Transition”)

Reid understood supporting research not merely as a function of improving Wayne State’s national standing, but also as a necessary component of the scholarly community fostered on the University’s own campus: “The very best environment for learning is one in which education is enlivened not only by industrious scholarship but also by research. And we continue to have lively and productive research activity across the entire campus” (“State of the University Address [12 Sep. 2005]” 2).

Reid was a vocal proponent of the economic importance of Wayne State’s research mission during several appearances before the Michigan state legislature. In his testimony on behalf of the University before the State House Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee in May 2004, he claimed that “Our university generates almost \$220 million a year in research support — funding brought in that adds to Michigan’s economy through technology transfer, new jobs and the purchase of goods and services” (“Testimony of Wayne State University [12

May 2004]” 2). Such research, he continued, “results in new knowledge, innovative technologies and practical applications that benefit Michigan industry and our entire nation.” Similarly, in a 2005 appearance before the same subcommittee, Reid singled out the School of Medicine for its research achievements, noting its standings in both National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health rankings (“Testimony [23 Mar. 2005]” 1). Reid took particular care in his testimony before the state legislature to emphasize the impact of university research on the lives of Michiganders and of society at large. “University research,” Reid explained, “remains this society’s primary means of increasing knowledge, productivity and ultimately the quality of life. We produce a steady flow of ideas and products that are put to use throughout the state and national economies. By involving students at all levels, university research also supplies a skilled, motivated and knowledgeable workforce accustomed to teamwork, hard work and the pleasures of discovery” (“Testimony [28 Feb. 2007]” 2). In Reid’s testimony, then, university research binds the institution to its community through economic impact, technological development, and workforce training.

Yet Wayne State, as I’ve shown in previous chapters, has always been especially bound to Detroit, and Reid spoke extensively about the University’s commitment to the city. As we’ve already seen, Reid’s inaugural address invoked a practical and symbolic reciprocity between Wayne State and Detroit, what he elsewhere described as a “symbiotic relationship” with the University’s “positive, vibrant urban environment” (“State of the University [12 Sep. 2000]” 9). More than just a symbiosis, Reid, as had Hilberry and Keast before him, understood urbanity as a fundamental component of life at Wayne State. In his inaugural address, he equates the University with the “soul” of the city, explaining that “Wayne State University is an institution rooted in its urban experience. This is not simply our mission or our decision, it is our definition

and our destiny” (“Inaugural Address [18 Sep. 1998]”). Indeed, Reid would later attest in his 2004 State of the University Address that Wayne State’s urban character multiplied its potential for impact, making it unique among Michigan’s universities: “No other university in this state has the ability to affect the quality of life of so many people so directly and so immediately. We are intrinsically attached to our community” (“State of the University [13 Sep. 2004]” 6).

Reid also saw such intimacy between the University and the city imposing challenges that the institution must face. Beyond the obligation to support the non-traditional students of an urban university (as discussed above), Reid realized that Wayne State’s urban character made it unique when compared to Michigan’s other research universities, Michigan State in East Lansing and the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor; and that its uniquely urban character could complicate its relationship to the state government and access to state funding. “As the prime urban institution of higher education in Michigan,” Reid explained in his 2000 State of the Campus Address, Wayne State “must continue to dramatize for state legislators and public officials the special challenges inherent in providing excellence in educational programming and a full delivery of university services to what is largely a part-time student population” (“State of the University [12 Sep. 2000]” 9). At stake were the University’s “diversity, its urban and global mission and its commitment to a top quality education at an affordable price. The state’s current focus on grouping institutions of higher education into funding tiers does not facilitate a focus on the unique circumstances and needs of an urban, research university like Wayne State. Conveying our accomplishments and our critical needs within the framework of the funding tiers represents a significant challenge for this year and for the foreseeable future” (9-10). Here, Reid is describing what we’ve seen as a fundamental preoccupation for Wayne State: whether its commitment and connection to urban life in Detroit, so integral to its character, comes at the

cost—in this case, literally—of its ability to participate fully in the research work of its peer institutions.

Nevertheless, despite the difficulties faced by an urban university, Reid spoke extensively about the importance of Wayne State's urban setting to both its educational and research missions. Reid saw students from southeastern Michigan, from other states, and from other countries being “drawn to Wayne State because they desire the dynamism and diversity of a big city. They understand that Wayne State will provide an education that will prepare them to contribute and to excel” (“Inaugural Address [18 Sep. 1998]”). The appeal of an urban campus to such students, in Reid's description, is the opportunity to make pragmatic contributions to the city as part of their educational progress: “They know that they will have opportunities to contribute through the work in our medical clinics, through research into environmental health problems in neighborhoods, through teaching in the Detroit School system, through participation in cutting-edge research in our many centers and institutes, and through countless community outreach programs.” Such efforts, Reid argued, help “the city of Detroit to realize its full potential. We are also helping our students to be imbued with the unique essence of its urbanity.”

Similarly, Reid saw the possibility for extending the University's research mission to encompass the needs of the city: “Through the enhancement of our research centers and institutes, Wayne State can become the national expert and resource for urban communities throughout the country and indeed throughout the world.” Such efforts, Reid wrote elsewhere, would make Wayne State and its neighborhood “an exciting part of this city and the bustling nucleus of its revitalization” (“State of the University Address [11 Sep. 2006]” 6). In making such claims, Reid is not far off from William Rea Keast's vision for Wayne State's potential. Both saw the opportunity for Wayne State to become, as Reid would put it, “the premier center

of learning in an urban setting” and “the model urban university campus” (“Inaugural Address [18 Sep. 1998”). Like Keast, Reid saw in the University the potential for making positive impact on the city; however, in emphasizing the work of “research centers and institutes,” Reid seems satisfied that such contributions might be made through specialized units of the university, rather than Keast’s more wide-ranging ambition for an entire campus devoted to urban problems.

Thus, it is perhaps not surprising that Reid should often talk about one of his signature achievements, TechTown, as a site where Wayne State’s teaching, research, and community responsibilities converged. In an early reference to TechTown in his State of the University Address in 2000, Reid described Wayne State’s new research and technology park as “a nexus between industry, government, and universities in order to generate technological and educational developments as well as business investments” (“State of the University [12 Sep. 2000]” 5). Wayne State’s own such park, still under development at this time, promised “unrivaled learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students, programs and facilities for research faculty, a foundation to attract technology-based businesses, and a thriving residential community,” according to Reid. Similarly, two years later Reid’s State of the Campus Address identified the Research and Technology Park (TechTown’s original name) as marking a turn from “service to our community” to an “engaged university;” such a turn, Reid explained, marked a shift from thinking of the University as “the givers” and “the community ... the receiver” (“State of the University Address [9 Sep. 2002]” 6). Instead, a newly engaged Wayne State saw the community as a partner “because we are interacting with our community in a number of mutually advantageous partnerships. We still serve, for we are an unparalleled repository of knowledge and skill; but in serving we also gain increased opportunities for learning and the discovery of new knowledge.” The address continues, identifying the

Technology Park that would become TechTown as part of such engagement efforts. “Part of a continuing initiative among the university and its partners, the park will create a vibrant and productive neighborhood north of our main campus.” Two years later still, Reid’s 2004 State of the University Address once more cast TechTown as part of the broader effort to revitalize Detroit. Citing the recent grand opening of TechTown’s first building earlier that year, Reid foresaw TechTown becoming “an important link in the chain of revitalization and development activity occurring throughout Midtown” (“State of the University Address [13 Sep. 2004]” 6). (A map of TechTown and Wayne State can be viewed in Figure 10 below.)

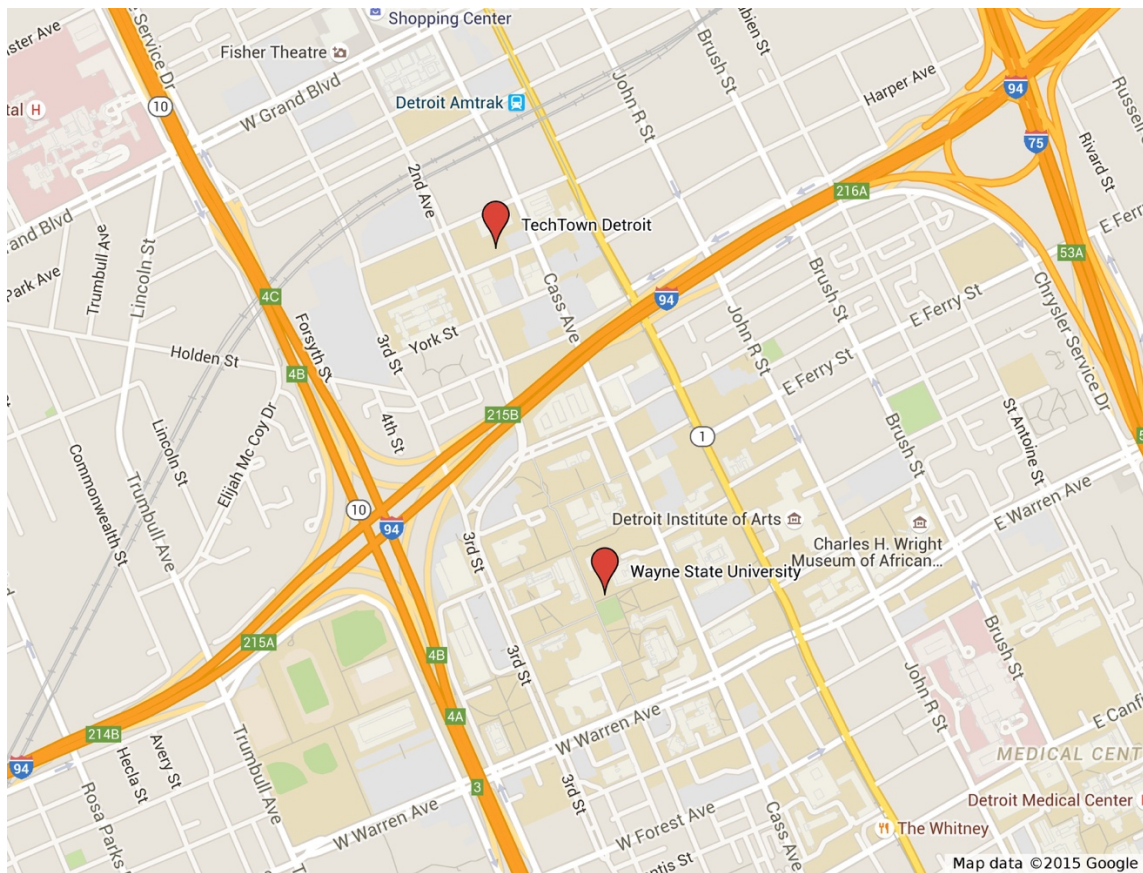


Figure 10: TechTown Detroit and Wayne State University

Whatever his hopes for TechTown as a driver of new residential development or as a site for expanding the University's educational mission, it is especially clear in Reid's papers that TechTown's contribution to the renewal of Detroit was always intended to be primarily economic and entrepreneurial in nature. In his 2005 testimony to the Michigan House Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee, Reid promised that TechTown and its affiliated companies, like NextEnergy, would "position Michigan as a global leader in the development of alternate fuel sources;" "contribute significantly to the university's research capital;" "strengthen and diversify the entire region's economy;" and "generate an incremental 1,600 jobs and create more than 60 new businesses in our area" ("Testimony [23 Mar. 2005]" 3). On the anniversary of TechTown's opening, Reid celebrated its success, noting that it had welcomed fifteen tenants to date and that its "community of entrepreneurs, investors, mentors and corporate partners" were successfully "providing the support and access to capital needed to nurture high-tech companies in Detroit" ("State of the University Address [12 Sep. 2005]" (4). Reid especially emphasized TechTown's role in diversifying Detroit's economy into life sciences and alternative energy, areas which also promised to capitalize on research emerging from the University. For example, in his 2006 testimony to the Senate Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee, he described the creation of a "National Biofuel Energy Lab to be located in NextEnergy's new building in TechTown. Faculty and graduate students from our College of Engineering will conduct research designed to build a solid technical foundation for the development of biodiesel fuels" ("Testimony [3 Mar. 2006]" 2).

Underscoring all of these hopes for TechTown, though, was Reid's interest in fostering new forms of entrepreneurial activity growing out of the business incubator program. In 2004, in comments delivered before the Michigan House Higher Education Appropriations

Subcommittee, Reid spoke of as a site where “students and faculty will work alongside entrepreneurs in partnerships designed to refine new generations of high-tech businesses” (“Testimony [12 May 2004]” 2); he would echo this claim before the same subcommittee a year later, testifying that “TechTown houses a long list of entrepreneurial companies. At TechTown, students and faculty work alongside entrepreneurs to refine new generations of high-tech businesses” (“Testimony [23 Mar. 2005]” 3). Further, Reid’s 2004 State of the University Address similarly emphasized entrepreneurialism; here, Reid writes of being “confident that TechTown as a whole will nurture the kind of entrepreneurial activity that will establish it among the nation’s foremost urban technology centers” (“State of the University Address [13 Sep. 2004]” 6).

This emphasis on entrepreneurialism is important to note because it signals a new configuration of how Wayne State’s institutional texts address the question of its commitment and contribution to the city. Focusing on entrepreneurialism as a partnership with the city and with businesses, organizations, and other institutions involved in the TechTown venture, rather than on mere service to the community, Reid is seemingly able to commit Wayne State to the city’s welfare without subsuming the University’s research mission under its service mission. Indeed, by the end of his presidency Reid’s vision of TechTown’s promise points to the possibility of reforming Midtown Detroit as something like the idealized urban space Keast earlier envisioned, a space where the city’s cultural, economic, industrial, and academic energies all intersected to revitalize its troubled urban spaces:

Wayne State University now is a recognized leader in economic innovation. I am a strong advocate of economic development as both a vehicle for the discovery of knowledge and a direct way to benefit society. In 1998, I persuaded Jack Smith, then Chairman and CEO of General Motors, to donate a historic building valued at \$1.3 million that could become a research and technology incubator. We successfully pursued designation as a

“SmartZone,” as a result, we and our partners have created TechTown, an urban research and technology village comprising a collaboration center, startup businesses, high-tech companies, retail space and residential facilities. (“Presidential Transition”)

However similar it may be to Keast’s vision of a new University City, Reid’s vision of TechTown, focused on entrepreneurial activity as the driver of urban renewal, differs significantly from its forebear. Where Keast points to the University as being the model and architect for a new urban life, Reid instead points to entrepreneurial innovation and ingenuity. For Reid, the University’s proper role in Detroit’s renewal is not direct intercession into the economic and industrial life of the city, but rather through support of and partnership with those entrepreneurs bearing the promise of remaking Detroit’s economic and industrial base.

University of Opportunity: Jay Noren and Allan Gilmour, 2009-2013

Following the announcement of Reid’s resignation in 2008, Wayne State’s Board of Governors invited Jay Noren to serve as the University’s tenth president. Noren came to Wayne State after more than thirty-five years of research, teaching, and leadership at other universities. Holding degrees in medicine and public health, his career was distinguished by faculty positions at the University of Nebraska, Texas A&M, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison; he held leadership roles such as the Founding Dean of the College of Public Health at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, Executive Vice President and Provost at the University of Nebraska, and as Vice Chancellor for Health Sciences at the University of Wisconsin (“About President Noren”). Moreover, he brought to the office significant international experience, having served as a Winston Churchill Fellow in England and Scotland, and including “negotiated educational exchange agreements with universities in China and Lithuania and work in collaboration with educational enterprises in Africa and England” (“Wayne State University Appoints”). Noren served as Wayne State’s president from 2008 until his resignation in 2010 to support his wife

Sheri (a provost at Illinois State University) during treatment for breast cancer (“Dr. Jay Noren Resigns”).²⁶

Unlike Jay Noren, his successor Allan Gilmour did not have extensive experience in academia when he assumed the role of interim University president in 2010. Rather, Gilmour, who was appointed in 2011 to hold the presidential office for a three-year term, was better known as an executive at Ford Motor Company (“Gilmour Unanimously Named”). Gilmour served at Ford for nearly thirty-five years, rising to the position of vice-chairman, before retiring from the company for the first time in 1995 (“Ford CFO to Head WSU”). Gilmour returned to Ford from 2002 to 2005 before a second retirement, having overseen several divisions of the company including Human Resources, Corporate Affairs, and Corporate Strategy. In addition to his career at Ford, Gilmour brought to Wayne State experience serving on the boards of several other national and regional corporations and organizations, including Dow Chemical, DTE Energy, Prudential Financial, and Downtown Detroit Partnership; he also served as chairman of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan (“Wayne State University Names Allan Gilmour”). Gilmour is also noteworthy as Wayne State’s first openly gay president, having come out in 1995 following his first retirement from Ford; in addition to his other community-service projects, Gilmour and his partner oversaw a five-million-dollar Capital Campaign for Affirmations, an LGBTQ community center located in Ferndale, a suburb north of Detroit (“Ford CFO to Head WSU”). Gilmour served as Wayne State’s president until the conclusion of his three-year term in July 2013, when he left the office in part due to complications from ongoing cancer treatment.

²⁶ While Wayne State’s own press releases focus on Sheri Noren’s treatment as the catalyst for President Noren’s resignation, allegations persist elsewhere that his resignation was due more to a conflicted working relationship between Noren, the Wayne State Board of Governors, and Wayne State faculty. For more on such allegations, see Wright, “Jay Noren’s Tenure.”

Since neither Noren and Gilmour served particularly long terms of office, I've opted to combine my discussion of both sets of presidential papers. Like the other collections of presidential materials I've discussed so far, these papers, accessed through the Internet Archive organization's Wayback Machine website, comprise a number of documents written for a number of different audiences and occasions. While the collection of Noren's presidential addresses is fairly lengthy, Gilmour's is relatively minimal, perhaps because of limitation due to his cancer treatments. Combining these two sets of papers makes sense thematically too. In these documents, both Noren and Gilmour draw on a common image to describe Wayne State and its work: a university of opportunity. While I will argue that such an image is foundational for understanding the multiple ways both Noren and Gilmour envision the University, the image in its most immediate form testifies to Wayne State's legacy of privileging access to education for disadvantaged, at-risk, and non-traditional students. Here, in a May 2008 community forum, Noren explains the significance of this characterization:

Wayne State has long prided itself on being a “university of opportunity”—and this institution's most sacred trust and responsibility is providing an excellent education for students. Wayne State's claim as a “university of opportunity” rests firmly on the principle of assured access to higher education. It's essential that we return full force to the principles of Harry Truman's Commission on Higher Education, which was right 60 years ago and remains correct today; the Commission's central principle was that every citizen should have the opportunity to pursue higher education to the fullest extent of his or her abilities and energy. (Noren “Remarks [13 May 2008]” 2)

Noren in particular would consistently emphasize Wayne State's function as a university of opportunity, identifying it as one of “two basic reasons” for the existence of the University: “1) to nurture and develop students' capacity to thrive in the complex world in which they live, now and into the unpredictable future, and 2) to explore creative solutions to the problems and challenges faced by the world's population (Noren “Inaugural Address [7 Apr. 2009]” 1). Gilmour, for his part, also acknowledged Wayne State's legacy of opportunity and access, but

was careful to note that such a legacy did not mean the sacrifice of academic rigor or university standards: “Wayne State will remain a university of opportunity, but ‘opportunity’ cannot mean open access. ‘Opportunity’ must mean our doors are wide open for students with the will and the aptitude to succeed—even if their educational backgrounds are not what they should be” (Gilmour “University Address [10 Sep. 2012]” 5). Both Noren and Gilmour thus used the figure of the “university of opportunity” to invoke Wayne State’s legacy of supporting disadvantaged and nontraditional students.

Yet the image of the university of opportunity is a capacious one. As Noren would put it in his August 2008 swearing-in ceremony, “Wayne State’s character calls for continual reaffirmation of our commitment as a university of opportunity, a university of discovery and a major community collaborator in solutions to major urban and social issues” (Noren “Swearing-In Remarks [1 Aug. 2008]” 2). Noren further elaborated on these commitments in a September 2008 University address. There, Noren called on Wayne State and its fellow Michigan universities to commit themselves to the good of Detroit and of Michigan: “The well-being of Detroit and Michigan ultimately depends on the ability of the state’s public research universities to educate a skilled workforce, generate knowledge that creates and attracts new industries and jobs, prepare citizens to be seriously involved in the democratic process; and provide creative solutions to the challenges Detroit and virtually every other great American city faces today” (Noren “Universitywide Address [8 Sep. 2008]” 1). Taking my cue from Noren, then, I will embrace the university of opportunity image in this section to analyze further how these two presidents figured the work of Wayne State during their presidencies. In this reading, Wayne State is shown to be the sponsor of multiple kinds of opportunity: not only opportunity as access to higher education, but as opportunity for students, to learn the skills necessary for active

citizenship; as opportunity for Detroit, in the form of economic development; and as opportunity for other urban centers, in the form of research addressing the stresses of urban life. After working through each of these modes of opportunity, I will turn to TechTown, which is figured in these texts as a site where Wayne State, with other community partners, opens yet another kind of opportunity—entrepreneurialism.

In its primary context, both Noren and Gilmour use the image of the university of opportunity as reference to Wayne State's historical mission of making higher education available to disadvantaged, at-risk, and nontraditional students. Noren, in particular, was fond of observing that this set Wayne State apart from other regional and national research universities. As he notes in a September 2008 address to the University, "national and state public policy has not invested enough in making a university education affordable, which leads to serious problems of retention and graduation partly because so many students must work excessively to afford the cost of college. And that is exceptionally true at Wayne State" (Noren "Universitywide Address [8 Sep. 2008]" 2). Nevertheless, he continued, Wayne State would continue to "admit more at-risk students than our peer institutions, and provide an increasing number of programs and incentives to help them succeed," supported by a "comprehensive approach to improved retention including mandatory orientation for incoming students, peer mentoring and tutoring services, and improved academic advising." Such support would be especially important, Noren claimed, for "We are entering an era in which those with no college degree are simply going to be left behind economically. Public universities in particular therefore are obligated to make certain everyone has the opportunity to pursue higher education to the fullest extent of his or her abilities and energy." Thus, for Noren especially, the work of a university of opportunity was not merely about providing access to higher education, but finding

reliable and innovative approaches to support the academic ambitions of at-risk students: “An essential element in student success is admissions standards that give every student a realistic, ‘fighting’ chance for achievement. Success goes far beyond a philosophy of open admissions. Just getting admitted to college is not success, and we do no student a favor by admission to Wayne State if they simply cannot do the work and fail” (“Annual Address [17 Sep. 2009]” 2). The university of opportunity, in its educational context, is thus not content to merely settle for access; it supports student success across the curriculum with a comprehensive set of programs targeting student need.

In addition to making higher education available to a wider range of students, another function of the university of opportunity is to provide its students with an opportunity to engage critically the world they will meet after university. As Gilmour puts it in his inaugural address, “Universities don’t exist just to prepare people for the world of work. They exist to prepare people for the world. With the ability to think beyond the confines of a narrow field of study. With the ability to see connections and correlations and patterns across many subjects The wisdom to make decisions. And maybe, just when we need it, the genius to see things as they can be, rather than as they are” (Gilmour "Inauguration Address [15 Apr. 2011]" 3). Noren establishes this as a priority by linking it to both engagement with urban issues and to the practice of citizenship. In his inaugural address, Noren claims that preparation for civic engagement is essential to Wayne State’s educational mission, tying it to a larger moral imperative:

Wayne State seeks to excite in its students a commitment to lifelong citizenship through urban community activism, engagement in the public policy process, and informed leadership emphasizing urban issues. This is a long tradition at Wayne State that we consider a major educational priority Why is it so important that our students become smart about community activism? Because the future of our democratic society depends upon them. Someone recently stated the importance in somewhat edgy, but I think

persuasive language, this way: It's very expensive to make a smart bomb. It's much cheaper to make smart kids—and if you do so it's unnecessary to make smart bombs. (Noren "Inaugural Address [7 Apr. 2009]" 5)

Just as Hilberry saw the role of a university education as at least in part about preparing students for active participation in the civic lives of their communities, so too does Noren. In comments to an open community forum, Noren links "lifelong learning skills" like "critical thinking, quantitative abilities, written and oral communication, arts appreciation, environmental insights" to "an essential educational mission for the 21st century ... teaching undergraduates to engage enthusiastically in their citizenship responsibilities as a lifelong commitment and everyday part of their lives" (3). Such skills, and the citizenship practices they support, are for Noren "fundamental to the founding principles of this nation and essential to the preservation of both our form of government and our quality of life" ("Universitywide Address [8 Sep. 2008]" 5).

Of course, providing such education in both academic disciplines and citizenship practices is only one way Wayne State contributes to Detroit. Both Noren and Gilmour see Wayne State and Detroit as essential to one another. In his September 2008 campus address, Noren observes that "The city is our campus. We are connected inextricably to Detroit's people, businesses and institutions. What happens to this city happens to us. But what happens to this city depends on us, as well" (Noren "Universitywide Address [8 Sep. 2008]" 1). Indeed, the University's commitment to Detroit distinguishes it from other research universities:

Although Wayne State is a national research university, we do not follow the traditional model—rather we are a university with doors wide open to the community and swinging in both directions. The Wayne character and commitment means we like to roll up our sleeves and go to work finding solutions to real world problems. We have always done that and will continue in the future, even more intensively because the challenges are more complex and—even more importantly—the benefits to society from our successes more far reaching. (1-2)

Gilmour echoes Noren's comments about the relationship between Wayne State and Detroit in his 2011 inaugural address. For his part, Gilmour casts Wayne State not just as a leader in urban

renewal efforts, but as intricately interwoven with the city itself. “Wayne State University is in Detroit, and we are here to stay,” Gilmour explains (“Inauguration Address [15 Apr. 2011]” 7). “Our extension centers and our online programs extend the boundaries of our campus, but we are part of this city, and this city is part of us.” For Gilmour, the University and the city are (at least rhetorically) one and the same: “Our campus is diverse—it’s called Detroit. Our classrooms extend beyond our buildings and labs—to the real world around us. Our research has practical applications in healthcare and businesses. Our educational programs spill out into the community. When students leave here, they have academic credentials. But they have real world credentials, too.” In these descriptions, it is not merely that the University has a role to play in restoring and renewing Detroit; the University in turn benefits from the city, putting its research to the test and giving students credentials they couldn’t find in other settings. Noren and Gilmour thus not only see Wayne State as essential to the city, but see the city as essential to Wayne State, suggesting (like Reid) a reciprocity between the two.

Both Noren and Gilmour comment on the University’s role in Detroit’s revival. As Noren acknowledges, such a task is daunting. Here, he describes the difficulties facing Detroit to a Brookings Institute conference: “Detroit has all the issues customarily associated with America’s great urban areas, but these often appear in especially stark relief as a result of the city’s severe economic problems and the deterioration of its public services. We have the nation’s highest unemployment rate, the highest foreclosure rate, and our K-12 schools have the lowest scores on nationally standardized math and science tests” (“Comments at Brookings Institution [17 Feb. 2010]” 1). Yet Wayne State stands poised, in Noren’s account, to help alleviate many of those issues.

But Detroit has one powerful advantage over many urban areas – the presence of a thriving research university. And as our world becomes increasingly urbanized, strong

metropolitan research universities like Wayne State are well-positioned to address solutions to social challenges we could not have anticipated just a few decades ago. As have other major urban universities ... Wayne State will continue to play a key leadership role in the quality of life in its neighborhood and the city beyond. (1)

While Noren doesn't explicitly tie Wayne State's work in Detroit to the image of the "university of opportunity," such work seems consistent with his earlier comments about the work of such an institution. Rather than making opportunity simply to its students, the university of opportunity also has a role to play in opening new kinds of opportunities to the citizens of the city it calls home.

Still, both Noren and Gilmour understand that there is work to be done in renewing Detroit, and that Wayne State has a key role to play in such efforts. For both presidents, this largely means contributing to the economic transformation of the city. In remarks given at a 2008 community forum, Noren identified the "transformation of a challenged economy and its workforce" as a critical challenge "for which Wayne State has impressive capacity to confront" ("Remarks [13 May 2008]" 1). Such challenges, manifested in the region's high unemployment rate, suggested for Noren that "Detroit and Michigan have an urgent need to transform the economy and workforce in response to the global marketplace and the information age" (2). The work of executing such a transformation falls to Wayne State and Michigan's other research universities: "So Wayne State ... must become a laboratory and brain trust for innovative responses to these challenges. There exists an immense capacity for creative work in alternative energy, informatics, transportation engineering, biosciences, nanotechnology, health sciences, and other critical areas essential for transforming the Michigan economy." Indeed, for Noren, the path to Detroit's and Michigan's economic transformation is seemingly unimaginable without Wayne State and its fellow universities. "When Michigan returns to economic health," he notes, "it will be because Wayne State University, and Michigan's other research universities, act now

to commit ourselves to nurture and attract knowledge-based economic ventures in numerous cutting edge fields” (“Universitywide Address [8 Sep. 2008]” 6).

Yet while both Noren and Gilmour attest to the reciprocal value the University and the city hold for one another, they reserve special emphasis for Wayne State’s immediate neighborhood in the city’s Midtown neighborhood. Noren emphasizes, for example, the need to reconnect the relatively isolated Midtown area with the rest of the city: “So it’s essential that our contribution to rebuilding Midtown joins with rebuilding efforts for all of Detroit ... I already have had conversations with people dedicated to bringing back our downtown area, and as they work their way north, and we work our way south, we will meet in the middle with a new Detroit recapturing the greatness and beauty of Detroit” (“Universitywide Address [8 Sep. 2008]” 7). Gilmour similarly evokes Wayne State’s Midtown setting as a unique feature of the University: “For those who insist on predicting Detroit’s demise, I invite them to visit Midtown and Wayne State’s campus. There is a spirit in Detroit, and Wayne State, that gives our students an edge. We’re not surrounded by rolling hills. We’re surrounded by cultural institutions, and businesses and hospitals, and people and neighborhoods (“Inauguration Address [15 Apr. 2011]” 7). While the University’s commitment to restoring Detroit may indeed rest in helping launch a new economic base for the city and the region, in Midtown it makes a more immediate and practical impact, as Noren explains in remarks made to the Anthony Wayne Society: “At Wayne State, the mantra that has emerged to capture this growing optimism is ‘Live, learn, work and play in Midtown.’ Our relationship to this effort, and our considerable influence, takes in myriad activities including public schools, public safety, housing, transportation and economic development, local business, among others. Wayne State is deeply involved in all of these ...” (“Charter Night Remarks [21 Nov. 2009]” 10-1). Such efforts, Noren says, include partnerships

to upgrade programs in the Detroit Public Schools (11), research and development projects by University faculty centered on relieving urban stresses (11), and the launch of “a new Center for Urban Engagement, Research and Education to stimulate and lead the university’s involvement in the Detroit metropolitan community” (12). Such work, focused on Midtown’s and the city’s most immediate needs, complements the University’s more long-term efforts to help diversify the city’s economy.

Here, it’s worth noting that Wayne State’s efforts on behalf of Detroit are especially important to Noren, who in them sees a model for how other public urban universities might impact their own communities. Like Keast nearly 50 years earlier, Noren frequently portrays Wayne State as a model for such University-community partnerships. “Wayne State has a unique role to play, not only among Michigan’s research universities, but in the entire nation Serious engagement in our community makes Wayne State a distinctive institution because it ties the university’s academic and research resources to issues of immediate significance to everyone in Detroit, Southeast Michigan, and our fellow citizens throughout America’s cities (“Universitywide Address [8 Sep. 2008]” 1). This includes the educational issues common to Wayne State’s disadvantaged and at-risk students. As Noren puts it, in his 2009 inaugural address, urban universities in general share an obligation to supporting student success, yet it is “particularly important at Wayne State because we are not only an urban campus, but also because in our research enterprise we rank among the top 10 urban universities in the country. Therefore we have a special role of innovation and research on educational effectiveness across this broad student spectrum” (“Inaugural Address [7 Apr. 2009]” 2). Yet this common urban mission is not limited to educational support. In comments to the Detroit Economic Club, Noren notes that the role of an urban research university is Wayne State’s “special niche,” and filling

this role means that “Wayne State is uniquely capable of investigating and helping resolve the many issues facing America’s great cities. Our location in Detroit gives us unparalleled opportunities for research, teaching and community outreach on urban challenges” (“Detroit Economic Club [24 Feb. 2009]” 11). Wayne State and its fellow urban research universities “are essential resources to address the stresses of urban life by applying our expertise to creative city planning, alternative energy, urban workforce retooling, urban economic development, assistance to stressed public schools, and the delivery of health care and human services to underserved populations” (11-2).

Moreover, as Noren notes elsewhere, this is a role urban research universities will likely be expected to fulfill “for the foreseeable future” (“Universitywide Address [8 Sep. 2008]” 3). Although such questions were already common at Wayne State as early as the 1950s and 1960s (as I’ve argued in earlier chapters), Noren sees the question of urban outreach as especially important for the twenty-first century. In comments to a community forum in 2008, he predicts that “university outreach during the 21st [sic] century will be dominated by urban issues and increasingly by urban universities. This emphasis on the metropolitan mission is an essential trend for the future. This is the time for innovation in urban research universities and the time for major state and private investment in these institutions” (“Remarks [13 May 2008]” 2-3). Faced with such challenges, Noren elsewhere suggests, Wayne State and other urban universities should call for the institution of urban land grants on the model of nineteenth century agricultural land grants. Just as the agricultural land grant universities served as economic drivers and centers of agricultural research and development in the nineteenth century, so too might urban land grant universities spark economic revivals in America’s troubled urban centers:

In fact, a logical parallel is dramatically illustrated in Detroit. America’s urban areas all face issues of neighborhood blight— land, housing stock and business buildings in

deteriorated condition. This land, like the federal lands in 1862, has much potential value, but not unless it is revitalized. So that land and those buildings could be provided to urban universities, with the expectation that the universities will develop them, with the aid of philanthropic foundations as well as local, state, and federal government. (“Inaugural Address [7 Apr. 2009]” 8)

To be clear, Noren doesn’t specifically commit Wayne State to the urban land grant model, but I cite it here because it powerfully suggests what he saw as the possible scope and scale of the University’s commitment to Detroit. Not only would such a model point to a significant expansion of Wayne State’s involvement in the city, it would also (Noren suggests) establish Wayne State as a major role model for other urban research universities. It would transform Wayne State’s historical role in the city to something much more sweeping. It would open Wayne State’s function as a “university of opportunity” to the entire city, making literal what I am arguing here functions metaphorically in Noren and Gilmour’s portrayal of the University.

In this context, TechTown functions as a possible model for what further collaboration between a university of opportunity and other private and public organizations might look like. While the available papers from Gilmour’s presidency don’t reference TechTown, Noren’s point to the business incubator as just such a model. In an address to the Detroit Economic Club, for example, Noren cites TechTown and the University Research Corridor, a joint life-sciences endeavor with Michigan State and the University of Michigan, as the model for future community and economic developments; such collaboration “through partnerships with the business community, public and private researchers, policymakers and others contributes to revitalizing the state’s economy. Together we can speed up technology transfer and development, increase cooperation among our institutions, businesses and government, and communicate the advantages of doing business in Michigan” (“Detroit Economic Club [24 Feb. 2009]” 5-6). Citing such programs as the University of Michigan’s Ann Arbor Spark business hub and Michigan State’s Prima Civitas Foundation (which brokers financing arrangements for

technology startups emerging from university research), Noren claims that such collaborative projects foster “the entrepreneurial culture required for the development of globally competitive businesses through technology parks and startup incubators” (14-5). Indeed, perhaps even more than the particular companies or business fostered by TechTown and its peers at Michigan’s other research universities, it is this “entrepreneurial culture” that Noren emphasizes when talking about TechTown. At a Brookings Institute conference in 2010, for example, Noren describes TechTown as “a product of Wayne State’s long-term commitment to promoting an entrepreneurial culture. TechTown is becoming an ‘entrepreneurial village’ where startups receive the resources they need to become successful, from business plan assistance and market research to executive coaching and networking events” (“Comments at Brookings Institution [17 Feb. 2010]” 6). Such a spirit is vital to Detroit’s and Michigan’s hopes for economic revitalization: “Today, TechTown is giving new life to the economies of Detroit and Michigan by assisting 170 tenant companies in the life sciences, advanced engineering, alternative energy and information technology, among other fields. TechTown’s community of entrepreneurs, investors, mentors and corporate partners stays busy stimulating new businesses and jobs I’m proud of this entrepreneurial spirit on our campus, as it sparks the innovation that I believe is essential to Michigan’s future” (6-7). TechTown’s role is thus equally about promoting this entrepreneurial culture as it is supporting technology commercialization and small-business incubation. Just as Wayne State’s role as a university of opportunity is in part about serving as a role model for other urban universities, so too does TechTown serve as a model for other business incubation ventures. What matters here, to Noren, is less the specific businesses emerging from TechTown (although he cites many of them admiringly in many different texts),

than it is the example TechTown sets for partnerships between universities, businesses, and communities to ignite and expand the “spirit of entrepreneurship” on display in such ventures.

The Good University: M. Roy Wilson, 2013 to Present

Following the conclusion of Gilmour’s three-year term in 2013, the Wayne State Board of Governors appointed M. Roy Wilson the University’s twelfth president. Like his predecessors, Wilson came to the position with considerable experience. Holding advanced degrees in medicine and epidemiology, Wilson, an ophthalmologist by training, had held a number of leadership positions in academia before accepting the presidency at Wayne State, including service as “dean of the School of Medicine and vice president for health sciences at Creighton University, president of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, and, concurrently, chancellor of the University of Colorado Denver and chair of the Board of Directors of University of Colorado Hospital” (“Board Elects Dr. M. Roy Wilson”). In addition to these roles, Wilson brought to Wayne State a background in public policy development, having served as “deputy director for strategic scientific planning and program coordination at the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH),” and as co-chair of several NIH Common Fund programs; Wilson also serves on the boards of national organizations, including the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities and the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities. (“About M. Roy Wilson”). Wilson’s credentials are underscored by a long roster of awards received from institutions and professional organizations like the American Academy of Ophthalmology’s Senior Achievement Award and the the NIH Director’s Award.

Since Wilson still remains Wayne State’s president as of this writing, it is difficult to effectively summarize his vision of the University as a public subject. Nevertheless, his

addresses and speeches to the campus community and to other audiences make evident one key distinction between Wilson and his predecessors. In these texts, Wilson consistently and clearly describes Wayne State in terms that make clear an understanding of the University as a deliberate moral actor; that is, where many of Wilson's predecessors spoke of Wayne State's responsibilities and obligations to its students, to its faculty, and to Detroit, Wilson is unique among the University's recent presidents in casting those responsibilities as part of the spiritual and moral life of the institution. Speaking to the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce in early 2014, for example, Wilson contrasts postwar views of higher education to more contemporary ones:

Since World War II, higher education was clearly understood to be a public good. But the ratings, and rankings, and books, and articles focus almost exclusively on what the education provides to the individual. That's understandable. People are paying tuition. They pursue an education to better themselves. They should get a good return for the money and time invested. And the data show they do. But higher education also serves a higher public purpose. It drives the economy. It drives innovation and discovery. It serves communities, and helps build the middle class by opening access to career opportunities. But in the superheated rhetoric of today, we tend to forget these things. ("Policy Conference" [27 Feb. 2014] 3-4)

Here, Wilson calls upon midcentury figurations of education as a contribution to the public good to refute a more contemporary insistence on university education as being primarily about individual development. While individuals do benefit, Wilson asserts, the real impact of higher education is on the communal level. This insistence on higher education as having a moral, ethical, and communal value is typical of the way Wilson describes the work of Wayne State. In the section that follows, I want to take a closer look at the way Wilson portrays the University as an institution with a conscience—indeed, with a soul. I will begin by analyzing in more detail Wilson's articulation of Wayne State as "the good university" before turning to a consideration of how Wilson's describes this moral dimension as played out in Wayne State's public contributions via education, research, and community engagement. Then, I will further argue that

this vision of a moral institution figures in Wilson's texts as the key to bridging what he isolates as a series of false dichotomies, like that between Wayne State's local urban outreach efforts and its aspirations toward national research prominence.

Key to Wilson's understanding of Wayne State as a public subject is his assertion that the University has something resembling a distinct character or personality—even, indeed, a soul. In a September 2014 address to the University, Wilson asks “what is the spirit and soul of Wayne State?” (“University Address [12 Sep. 2014]” 9), and proceeds to identify three characteristics that define Wayne State. The first is a “gritty, hard-working, ‘of the people, for the people’ kind of persona;” the second, a pervasive “sense of acceptance and inclusiveness” extending to “students of all socioeconomic backgrounds, genders, ethnicities;” and third, “pride in being an integral part of the community, learning from but also contributing to its well being” (9). Moreover, Wilson asserts, “the spirit and soul of Wayne State is deeply rooted in the pursuit of Excellence” (10). This foundation in excellence marks a return to a theme Wilson had touched on in his Inaugural Address in April 2014. There, Wilson describes his initial impressions of Wayne State:

When I arrived here last summer, I found a place of relentless intellectual curiosity that is the hallmark of great research universities. I found a place that strives for excellence, from the labs and classrooms to the playing fields and community. I found a diverse campus, a mosaic of many cultures and creeds and ethnicities. I found a university not just located in a community, but connected with the community on multiple levels, through service and outreach and economics. I found a university infused with the toughness, grittiness and confidence of the city around it. I found a university whose motto is “Aim Higher,” who day-in and day-out inspires students to do just that. (“Inaugural Address [4 Apr. 2014]” 4)

Implicit in this description is an argument that Wayne State's defining virtue, its striving for excellence, is rooted not merely in institutional rankings, but rather in the impact Wayne State makes on both individuals and communities. What defines Wayne State's own excellence is not

just its own institutional strengths, but its capacity for inspiring excellence in the individuals and communities in whose lives it participates.

This emphasis on Wayne State's "spirit" or "soul" is evident elsewhere in Wilson's papers. In an address to the campus community early in his presidency, Wilson asked members of the University community to consider the following: "I have become convinced that in our quest to be great, we must be good. I think we all kind of know what it means to be great. What does it mean to be good?" ("University Address [2 Oct. 2013]" (10). Wilson draws a contrast here between being "great" and being "good." Greatness is affiliated with such institutional concerns as national standings and Carnegie classifications in research and community engagement (9). In contrast, goodness marks Wayne State's positive and beneficial impacts on the lives of individuals and communities.

- A good university cares about every member of its staff—from the custodians who keep our buildings clean, to the groundskeepers who make our campus beautiful, to the very top level of management;
- A good university is a good neighbor within the complex fabric of a community and uses its influence and decision-making authority to benefit both rather than taking advantage of one for the betterment of the other;
- A good university does not make major decisions on narrow considerations alone without also considering the broader implications of these decisions on individual people;
- A good university celebrates the accomplishments of its faculty and encourages them and supports them to achieve even more;
- Ultimately, though, it's all about the students. A good university takes care of its students. A good university makes them feel wanted when they apply, welcomed when they arrive, supported when they are here, and appreciated when they graduate. (10-1)

I cite this passage at length for two reasons. First, I admit that I find this description of Wayne State generous, compelling, and heartfelt. It speaks to the best possible vision of what Wayne State (or any university) can aspire to be. In that regard, I admit its effectiveness as rhetoric. Second, and more important to my critical purpose here, is that such a description clearly marks Wayne State as an institution imbued with a vibrant moral life. This is not just an invocation of meagre responsibility or pro forma obligation. Rather, Wilson here articulates a vision of Wayne

State as a force for good in the lives of its students, staff, faculty, and community. Moreover, this image of the University as a moral institution is drawn here to suggest a higher calling, a calling which invokes goodness as an alternative criterion to greatness.

This sense of Wayne State as possessed of a higher calling is especially clear in Wilson's descriptions of Wayne State's commitment to at-risk and nontraditional students. As he notes in an October 2013 address, many Wayne State students come to the University facing "multiple life challenges: financial, housing, family dynamics. When they arrive, many face another set of challenges simply navigating the world of registration, financial aid, and other processes" ("University Address [2 Oct. 2013]" 12). Wilson acknowledges that the University's role is not social, and that the institution has "no control over many of the challenges and barriers confronting some of our students. But we do have control of some things though and can make things a lot more student-friendly." Yet despite such limits, Wilson is steadfast in describing efforts to support such students as consistent with the goals of "the good university." In remarks made before the Michigan legislature's Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee in February 2014, Wilson invokes the same "university of opportunity" trope as his immediate predecessors Noren and Gilmour ("Subcommittee Remarks [20 Feb. 2014]" 3). However, Wilson extends that trope beyond the realm of historical obligation so that it becomes of a piece with Wayne State's calling as "the good university." Here, Wilson admits that, despite the sacrifice to national standing and research funding it sometimes means, Wayne State's commitment to these students is one that should not be refused: "We remain willing, despite the potential consequences, to accept a broader range of students that we believe can succeed, even when they don't have the financial wherewithal or preparatory background that most of our peer group universities demand. Even when they take longer to graduate. This is our history, and this

is our mission. I believe this is a noble mission, and I hope you agree” (5). Embracing such students, and supporting their chances for academic and professional success, is recast here as more than an obligation; it is a *mission*, indeed, a *noble mission*. The moral arc suggested in these comments is echoed in Wilson’s comments to the same body a year later in February 2015. There, Wilson again describes Wayne State’s commitment to such students as a “noble mission” but makes explicit the University’s moral imperative for so doing: “We do this because it’s the right thing to do for the student. Because every student with talent and desire deserves a shot at reaching their potential, no matter their backgrounds” (“Subcommittee Remarks [19 Feb. 2015]” 6). Moreover, Wilson adds, such a commitment benefits more than just the student, “Because when students from disadvantaged backgrounds succeed, society as a whole benefits. Our economy benefits. We all benefit. It must be considered as a critical societal mission” As we’ve seen in Wilson’s earlier comments about “the good university,” the support of disadvantaged students becomes a moral cause because of the way its effects ripple outward from individual students to benefit community and society; it is “the right thing to do” because in fact many more people than just the student herself will benefit.

Though not as pronounced as the moral register in his comments about Wayne State’s disadvantaged students, Wilson also makes clear that the research supported by the University comes with its own moral and ethical impact. Speaking before the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce, Wilson observes that research “drives public benefit, predominantly through its economic development potential. Since World War II, universities have borne the weight of research and development in this country. Today, the nation’s major research universities, and that includes Wayne State, are powerhouses of high-tech and scientific discovery” (“Policy

Conference” [27 Feb. 2014]” 10-11). The public benefits from research emerging out of universities in a number of ways:

Over the past 50 years, most advances in biological sciences; health care delivery; telecommunications; financial management; information technology; and the nanosciences happened in the laboratories and classrooms of research-intensive universities. Look at the phones in your pockets, the appliances in your kitchen, the technology in factories and hospitals. All the means we use to both preserve and enrich life. The chances are good that research from universities had a hand in it. (11)

It is not merely technological conveniences and medical advances by which research universities like Wayne State serve their publics. Rather, as Wilson explains in his 2015 comments to the Michigan legislature’s Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee, research universities like Wayne State “attract talent and investment. They drive new knowledge and discoveries. They support and generate new businesses. They allow students to study with professors who are at the forefront of their disciplines. They improve lives through better products and medical advances. They enrich the learning experience as well as the communities that surround them. They help drive the economy” (“Subcommittee Remarks [19 Feb. 2015]” 3). The material and practical impacts of university research may lack the clear moral register of Wilson’s comments elsewhere about the University’s “noble mission” to support disadvantaged students, but like that mission (Wilson implies), university research can be judged by the scope and scale of its impact.

While the impact of research universities broadly may be understood but the scope of their impact, Wilson reserves special praise for the way *urban* research universities like Detroit contribute to their communities. In his October 2013 university address, for example, Wilson writes of his belief that “public, urban research universities have a critical and obligatory role in contributing to the economic vitality and improved quality of life of its [sic] surrounding community” (“University Address [2 Oct. 2013]” 2). Of course, like his predecessors, Wilson sees this holding especially true in the case of Wayne State. As he put it before the Michigan

legislature in 2015, “Our urban location in Detroit demands more of Wayne State. We carry an obligation to our community, and we fulfill that obligation through tangible leadership and engagement — and investment — that has served the city for nearly 150 years and most recently has played a major role in Detroit’s comeback” (“Subcommittee Remarks [19 Feb. 2015]” 4). Like Jay Noren, Wilson evokes the idea of an urban land grant university as an ideal to which Wayne State might aspire. Such a model, Wilson observes in his October 2013 University address, “is where the 21st century is headed. This is where our revolution is taking place. It is now time to focus on an urban agenda with the many health, economic, and educational challenges confronting urban communities. And that responsibility falls squarely on the shoulders of urban universities like Wayne State” (“University Address [2 Oct. 2013]” 7-8). Thus, like Noren, Reid, and Keast before him, Wilson sees for Wayne State the responsibility and calling to devote its energies to the research and confrontation of urban problems.

Wilson returned to this theme in his Inaugural Address in April 2014: “A model public, urban research university must have a clear vision of its urban agenda and engagement; of how it confronts issues that disproportionately impact urban populations — whether it be related to health, housing or environmental sustainability — both for the betterment of its community and the education of its students” (“Inaugural Address [4 Apr. 2014]” 8). It is not enough, Wilson suggests, to blindly commit to engaging the community without understanding the character and potential of such engagement; Wilson thus calls not just for continued engagement with Detroit, but for such engagement to be bound to thoughtful reflection of its impact. One such example comes from Wilson’s address to the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce. In this address, Wilson highlights a “less glamorous, yet critical contribution to the local economy:” (“Policy Conference [27 Feb. 2014]” 17) public safety. Wayne State’s efforts in this regard, Wilson

explains, have “changed the reality and perception of crime in Midtown. The reality: crime is down by 50 percent; housing is full, and new businesses are opening every week. The perception: Midtown Detroit is a great place to live, learn, work and play – and invest. That can’t happen unless people feel safe.” It is this kind of impact, then, that best points to what “the good university” is capable of: making both positive material and affective changes in the lives of those it engages.

Indeed, in his Inaugural Address, where he approvingly cites Hanawalt’s *A Place of Light* as part of his research on the University, Wilson emphasizes that such a commitment to Detroit has long been central to the spirit or soul of Wayne State.

We have been deeply connected to Detroit since our founding, when those wounded Civil War veterans watched the carpenters working on a hot summer day in 1868. Today, we find ourselves connected during an unprecedented time in history: a time when a once great American city went into decline; a time when the city had to confront difficult truths and enter into deep self-reflection; a time of renewed commitment and of optimism for re-emergence; a time of immense opportunity to do the right things and make a difference. Wayne State will remain fully engaged in making a positive difference for Detroit. This is a part of our local mission, and our impact in this regard is tangible. But our impact extends far beyond. (“Inaugural Address [4 Apr. 2014]” 6-7)

It is tempting to read into Wilson’s description of the city of Detroit an assessment too of the prospects for Wayne State’s own future. Just as the city faced its own economic crisis (culminating in the largest municipal bankruptcy filing in American history), so too did the University face threats to its own funding (as documents here from presidents Reid and Noren attest). Just as Detroit endured a reputation for lawlessness and danger, Wayne State’s own reputation suffered under the weight of low graduation rates, its commitment to admitting at-risk students, and its perception as an also-ran to the University of Michigan and to Michigan State. Yet Wilson here seems to imply that, like Detroit, Wayne State finds itself amidst its own era of renewal and reflection, one which promises new opportunities for success and expansion.

Still, despite this commitment to the city, Wilson acknowledges that community engagement with Wayne State's local urban publics has too often been seen as being at odds with national pre-eminence and research prominence in its academic publics. However, in his Inaugural Address, Wilson calls for the rejection of this binary. Echoing the title of Hanawalt's history of the University, Wilson urges the members of the campus community not to succumb to the argument that contribution to one public means forfeiting standing in the other. "To let that light shine ever so brightly, we must not fall prey to the fallacy of false choices. My own experiences have taught me that seemingly different choices different paths need not be oppositional need not be 'either/or' propositions. Instead, that they can be incorporated and melded into a whole that is richer and deeper than either approach alone" ("Inaugural Address [4 Apr. 2014]" 4). Where his predecessors had largely been concerned with balancing the two paths, Wilson instead calls for a reconciliation between them: "We must reject as false the choice between being a university of opportunity and access or a nationally prominent research university."

The rejection of this schism between Wayne State's historical legacy of contribution to the community and its aspiration to national research prominence is echoed in other "false choices" Wilson urges the University to resist. Wayne State "must reject as false the choice of serving a local mission or a broader national, even global, one;" and it "must reject as false the insidious choice between embracing and advancing racial/ethnic and socioeconomic diversity or academic excellence" ("Inaugural Address [4 Apr. 2014]" 5). Such choices even call for reconsidering the priority given to subjects across the curriculum: "We must reject as false the choice between offering a broad liberal arts education or a more skills-oriented education that is responsive to the specific workforce needs of the state" (4). This last point is especially key to

understanding how Wilson seems to envision the work of “the good university.” While acknowledging in several texts the importance of developing and supporting majors across the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, Wilson also emphasizes the importance of education in the arts and humanities. In a September 2014 address to the university, for example, he attests to the economic impact of STEM fields: “The nation needs more graduates in the STEM disciplines in order to maintain our global leadership position in science and technology. For states such as Michigan, graduating more students in the STEM disciplines is a strategic necessity for fulfilling workforce demands and for economic development” (6). However, he also voices concern that “Humanities and Arts are becoming an afterthought.” Calling such oversight “shortsighted” (“University Address [12 Sep. 2014]” 6), Wilson proceeds to call for greater support for study in the arts: “I believe firmly that leading institutions of higher education, and Wayne State specifically, must reaffirm its commitment to the Humanities and Arts How we respond will determine whether or not we are recognized as a great university or one that is merely pedestrian. When the time comes, I hope you will take the example of Detroit and the Detroit Institute of Arts, rise to the challenge, and declare definitively the value of the arts to our institution and to higher education more broadly” (7-8). Wilson marks this reconciliation between STEM fields and the humanities as especially important for “the good university” as it is key to the institution’s most important possible contribution to society:

More than ever, the workplace needs people who can evolve with the rapid pace of the world—people with nimble minds, and curiosity, and the ability to look beyond what there is to what could be. The greatest public contribution we can provide to the state of Michigan is graduating well-educated students who are critical thinkers, able to function effortlessly in an increasingly diverse world, and who are good civic citizens. That’s what Wayne State University is and that’s what it does. (“University Address [2 Oct. 2013]” 6)

The greatest contribution of the good university, then, depends not on how it educates its students, allocates its research resources, or contributes to its community. Rather, it emerges at the intersection of all three, in the student as “good civic citizen,” whose education has prepared her to contribute to her own community and to think critically about the world she inhabits and how she can best contribute to it.

What, though, do the figures of the good university and the good citizen have to do with TechTown under Wilson’s presidency? The answer here is admittedly ambiguous, and, as of this writing, Wilson has yet to explicitly mention TechTown in any of the documents archived on the website for Wayne State’s Office of the President (<http://president.wayne.edu/>). However, I think we can point to Wilson’s articulation of Wayne State as being both good *and* great to help us better understand the University’s relationship to TechTown. We have seen that past presidents, especially Reid, have cast TechTown as the meeting point of Wayne State’s local urban commitments and its national research aspirations; by commercializing cutting edge technologies and products emerging from University research, TechTown becomes a major player in efforts to diversify and revive Detroit’s economic base away from heavy industry. Thus, TechTown is one answer to the question of how the divide between Wayne State’s local urban publics and more distant academic research publics might be bridged. Wilson, in his emphasis on refusing and rejecting similar false choices, is in essence extending the logic behind TechTown to the the entire University structure itself. With TechTown as an implicit precursor showing that apparently contrasting choices can be reconciled, Wilson’s good university accepts the challenges of both its local urban publics and its distant academic research publics. The question for such an institution becomes not which of those choices to prioritize, but rather how to serve both publics in a mutually reinforcing fashion.

Like Reid and Noren, Wilson points to the emergence of “entrepreneurial cultures on our campuses and in our communities” as indicative of a paradigm shift in University priorities (“Policy Conference” [27 Feb. 2014] 14). While the entrepreneurs fostered by such cultures may not exactly resemble the good citizens Wilson lauds elsewhere, they are nevertheless close relatives. Both entrepreneurs and citizens serve the communities they inhabit; citizens participate in the civic life of such communities, while entrepreneurs (like those Wilson discusses in his Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce address) help build and diversify the economic lives of their communities. They are both supported by the good university; citizens develop habits of critical thought and analysis, and entrepreneurs are supported by emergent entrepreneurial cultures surrounding business centers and technology hubs like TechTown. I underscore these resemblances in order to draw attention to the way that the figures of both the good citizen and the entrepreneur are consistent with the good university’s interest in breaking down binary choices between service to one public *or* another. In Wilson’s telling, both the good citizen and the entrepreneur can emerge from the good university; the good university can foster both civically-minded alumni as well as entrepreneurial ones.

I want to conclude this first section by attempting to tease out what these three conceptions of Wayne State might suggest about the way its urban mission and its role as an institutional public subject has metamorphosed under its recent presidents. These images—Reid’s enabling spark, Noren and Gilmour’s university of opportunity, and Wilson’s good university—all point to differing conceptions of how the University might participate in its publics. The image of the enabling spark is a complex one. On one hand, as described above, it points to ways that initiatives like TechTown might be figured as attempts to bridge the gap between Wayne State’s local urban and academic research publics; on the other, by outsourcing

the work of bridging that gap to programs like TechTown, the University, at least rhetorically, distances itself from direct involvement in such efforts. The enabling spark points to an institutional public subject whose involvement in efforts to revitalize its local publics is at best indirect; it sponsors and supports such efforts, to be sure, but does so at a remove rather than through direct involvement and investment. The university of opportunity, in comparison, suggests a public subject more closely involved in its community. Its involvement in its local urban publics takes place at multiple levels: at the level of the University's traditional academic mission; at the level of supporting local economic development through programs like TechTown; and at broader regional and state levels through its partnerships with other institutions, communities, and governmental agencies. Moreover, its research mission bends toward the study and resolution of urban concerns; its ideal is the urban land grant university invoked first by Noren and later by Wilson, and which is not too distantly removed from Keast's urban university ideal. The most recent of these figures, the good university, bears a close resemblance to the university of opportunity. Yet where the university of opportunity suggests an institutional subject whose local urban engagements are the result of good policy, the good university's public subject is unmistakably a moral actor whose commitments to its local urban publics are not merely good policy, but are a moral good as well.

Yet in the texts described here, what these varying conceptions share is also what marks them as distinct from earlier figurations of Wayne State's institutional public subjectivity: the emphasis, beginning with Reid and continuing through Wilson, on entrepreneurialism as key to the University's processes of public subjectivity. Figured variously through the image of the entrepreneur or through that of a culture of entrepreneurialism, these competing ideals of how the University enacts its public subjectivity all rely on some idea of the entrepreneur as the

fulcrum on which Wayne State's future ambitions as public subject turn. It is the entrepreneur who can commercialize university research or bring a new business to market; it is that catalyst which will drive the economic revitalization of Detroit; it is that economic change which will open opportunities for better lives for the city's residents. Where fifty years earlier Keast might have hoped for the University's urban mission to fulfill its contributions to both its local urban public and its academic research publics, the emergence of this new "culture of entrepreneurialism" seems to be supplanting the university's research commitments in the context of its urban mission. The entrepreneur is positioned here to leverage the University's research mission in the service of its urban mission; while University research is clearly still important to Wayne State's urban mission, it is through the work of the entrepreneur—not the institution itself—through which it gains its significance. Thus the importance to all three of these images of university involvement of the entrepreneur or the culture of entrepreneurialism: the entrepreneur, quite frankly, can do what the institutional public subject cannot.

In other ways, though, the emergence of this entrepreneurial culture is very much of a piece with earlier instantiations of the University's urban mission. While I've focused here on this entrepreneurial discourse for its historical novelty in this institutional context, I do not mean to suggest that Wayne State has abandoned its earlier missions of educational access and support for at-risk, underprivileged, and nontraditional students. Indeed, as I've shown, Wayne State's commitments to such students—many, but certainly not exclusively, matriculating from the urban public schools of Detroit—are still major components of the way these presidents speak about the University's relationship to Detroit. What is new in this "culture of entrepreneurialism," however, is that educational access is now just one component of a University mission focused on opportunity as an overarching ideal. Opportunity to access higher

education is one part of that equation, but not the only part; entrepreneurialism, too, is a key function.

I see too themes of technology and globalization, here voiced most clearly by Reid, as part of this equation. Globalization changes the nature of the post-collegiate job market Wayne State students will enter, and adapting to it means recasting the ways students understand their future roles as workers and citizens and adapting curricula to prepare them for those roles. Globalization too means new institutional opportunities for Wayne State to recruit international faculty and students, and to establish not only a national but international reputation as a research university. Technology is even more important to this vision of Wayne State as a university of opportunity, especially in the assumption embodied in TechTown that the best way to restore Detroit's economy is through the development of innovative technologies in communication, industry, and life sciences. Opportunity thus emerges from these texts as a key watchword under which themes of globalization, technology, and (especially) access and entrepreneurialism are woven together as different ways of fulfilling the urban mission. More pointedly, a focus on opportunity—and the key figure of the entrepreneur, heroically poised to exploit it—suggests a commitment to different kinds of urban need. The urban mission's historical emphasis on access to educational opportunity is met here through TechTown and the entrepreneurs it supports, answering too a need for access to technological and professional expertise, start-up and sustaining funding, and practical and financial resources. Rather than seeing TechTown here as a turning away from the urban mission's emphasis on access, the culture of entrepreneurialism and the university of opportunity suggest instead an intensification and expansion of that emphasis, from beyond just Wayne State's underprivileged students to Detroit's would-be entrepreneurs

and the moribund economy they pledge to revive. Understood this way, TechTown represents an expanded role for Wayne State as an institutional public subject.

Welcome to TechTown Detroit

While there is yet no comprehensive history of TechTown, brief accounts of its origins are available across a number of sources. Some of these accounts, like those on the current and archived versions of the TechTown website, constitute institutional texts; while others, like those in the popular press, fill in important details missing from the institutional narrative about TechTown's development. Here, my goal is not to draft a comprehensive history of TechTown, but to develop instead a brief historical sketch to contextualize its relationship to Wayne State. Such context will help better explain TechTown's roots as an extension of Wayne State and clarify my interest in it as part of the ensemble of practices through which Wayne State enacts its public subjectivity.

In addition to the other accomplishments described above, Irvin Reid is credited with the original idea for TechTown. His biography on the Wayne State website describes the establishment of TechTown as one of Reid's "most far-reaching achievements" ("Biography"). The initial idea for TechTown was launched in 1999, when President Reid "identified an unmet need for a special kind of business accelerator and incubator—one that could bring the university's extensive pool of research expertise, business insight and student talent to bear on diversifying the city's economy, fostering spin-outs and serving local technology businesses" ("History"). From the start, TechTown was envisioned as meeting several needs: to capitalize on research emerging from Wayne State; to support entrepreneurs and small businesses in southeastern Michigan; and to help kickstart the economic redevelopment of Detroit and the surrounding region ("History;" "History [23 Apr. 2009];" Vachon; Archambault). In 2000, in

partnership with Henry Ford Health System and General Motors, Wayne State incorporated TechTown. As reported by Paul Vachon in *Pacific Standard* magazine, start-up funding for TechTown came from “a public/private coalition” including funding from local interests like the Detroit Economic Growth Corporation, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the Kaufmann Foundation, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; in addition, the City of Detroit contributed start-up funds and arranged for tax incentives for businesses in the TechTown area. Later financial supporters included the Kresge Foundation and Herbert and Grace A. Dow Foundation (“History [23 Apr. 2009]”).

TechTown’s early years were supported by gifts from Henry Ford Health System and General Motors. General Motors donated the former Chevy Creative Services Building to serve as Tech One, the eventual home of the new enterprise (a picture of Tech One is visible in Figure 11 below); the Health System, for its part, donated support in the form of office space and supplies for a year prior to the opening of TechTown’s headquarters (“History [23 Apr. 2009]”). In addition to this support, Wayne State also committed two of its holdings, a former Criminal Justice Department building and the defunct American Beauty Electric Iron Building,²⁷ to serve as Tech Two and Tech Three, respectively.²⁸ Although currently centered in Tech One, original plans for TechTown described the business incubator as the driving force behind a wider renovation of the New Amsterdam neighborhood it calls home:

TechTown was designed as a research and technology park to stimulate job growth and small business creation by developing companies in emerging high-technology industries

²⁷ Based on the available sources, it’s unclear what became of plans for the expansion of TechTown to the Tech Two and Tech Three sites. In 2012, Wayne State controversially demolished the American Beauty building, a 1908 industrial space designed (like Tech One) by renowned architect Albert Kahn. As reported in Wayne State’s campus newspaper, *The South End*, and elsewhere, the American Beauty building was demolished as part of Wayne State’s planned biomedical research center. For more about the demolition of the American Beauty building, see Krueger (2012), Cox (2012), and Gallagher (2012).

²⁸ Vachon (2011) mentions plans for a possible Techs Four and Five, but I find no mention of such plans evident on Wayne State’s website, the current TechTown Detroit website, or the archived TechTown WSU website.

including advanced engineering, life sciences and alternative energy. An overall plan for the 12-block area was produced that envisioned a mixed-use community including schools, renovated and new housing, shops, lofts, an entertainment complex and dozens of small technology-based start-up and early-stage enterprises. (“History [23 Apr. 2009]”)

Tech One opened its doors in 2004, with Reid and then-Michigan governor Jennifer Granholm among the attendees assembled to celebrate the opening (“History;” “History [23 Apr. 2009];” Vachon). Early clients included companies like Asterand, which “serves the pharmaceutical and biotech industries by providing tissue samples necessary for advanced research;” Next Energy, “which develops long-term solutions to replacing fossil fuels with clean and renewable energy;” and Rivers Conservation, which “operates a laboratory devoted to the preservation of artwork, photographs, and written documents” (Vachon, “Incubator of Creativity”). TechTown’s current roster of clients goes beyond technology-driven businesses like these to include support for neighborhood retail ventures, like the Motor City Java House in Detroit’s Brightmoor neighborhood.



Figure 11: Tech One, TechTown’s main office and the former site of GM’s Chevy Creative Services.

The details of TechTown's history since the opening of Tech One in 2004 are obscured by a lack of detailed sources, and the incubator's mandate and vision have changed significantly since its initial founding (as I will discuss in more detail below). Since 2002, TechTown has been led by Howard Bell (2002-2007), a venture development director at Wayne State, appointed by President Reid ("New Executive Director"); Randal Charlton (2007-2011), the founder and former CEO of early TechTown client Asterand ("TechTown Executive"); Leslie Smith (2011-2015), the former general manager of TechTown under Charlton ("Leslie Smith Assumes Leadership"); and, as of this writing, Ned Staebler, who also serves as the University's vice president for economic development ("WSU Economic Development Leader"). Thus, leadership of TechTown has throughout its history been drawn from both the University community and the entrepreneurial one. Without belaboring this claim, the history of TechTown's leadership points to the way that it, like Wayne State itself, serves the interests of multiple publics: it is both a partner Wayne State and serves the University's research mission by commercializing the products of university research; and also an independent business incubator participating in local and regional publics invested in discussions of economic and entrepreneurial development.

Indeed, TechTown's current leadership seems especially aware of these joint objectives. Ned Staebler, in an interview with Detroit's NPR affiliate WDET (itself a service supported by the University), describes an early "paradigm shift" from TechTown's initial focus on supporting technology and life sciences startups to filling more local "place-based" entrepreneurial needs (Batcheller). In the same interview, Staebler describes TechTown as a key partnership of Wayne State and one of the major ways in which the University contributes to the "local economic ecosystem;" in return, Wayne State's association with TechTown generates "a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation around the University." Asked by WDET reporter Pat

Batcheller about TechTown's future prospects, Staebler answers that "now is the perfect time for the University and TechTown to have a closer relationship." Describing new hires in the University's Office of Technology Commercialization and new entrepreneurial initiatives in the College of Engineering, Staebler envisions TechTown as "a place to ... centralize a lot of the efforts of the University around tech commercialization, around entrepreneurship, around innovation," becoming the University's "one-stop shop" for entrepreneurial and business start-up support.

As Staebler's interview comments above suggest, the nature of the relationship between Wayne State and TechTown has not been consistent throughout the incubator's history. Early references in presidential communiques and University planning documents to what would become TechTown, as seen above, refer to the University's "Research and Technology Park," implying a relatively unambiguous understanding of TechTown as an office of the University. So too does its inclusion as one of the programs identified on Wayne State's Office of Economic Development website. Yet other references to TechTown complicate that assumption. In Vachon's 2011 *Pacific Standard* profile of TechTown, for example, President Reid's initial conception of TechTown characterizes the incubator as an initiative which "drew from the university but wasn't part of it." Similarly, looking at the history of TechTown's web presences suggests the complexity of this relationship. Using the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine, users can access archived versions of *TechTown WSU* (techtownwsu.org), TechTown's original website; as the name suggests, in the 2003-2012 period in which this site was active, TechTown's website clearly identified TechTown as a division of the University (below, in Figure 12, the home page for TechTown circa 2003 clearly connects TechTown to the University). However, later versions of TechTown's website seem to obscure its connection to

the University. By mid-2012 the *TechTown WSU* was inactive, replaced first by a *TechTown Detroit* blog on Tumblr (techtowndetroit.tumblr.com), and later in 2012 with a new, redesigned *TechTown Detroit* site (techtowndetroit.org). The shift from *TechTown WSU* to *TechTown Detroit* also roughly corresponds with the launch of new “Blocks” initiatives to support neighborhood-based retail entrepreneurialism—that is, it corresponds with the paradigm shift described above by Staebler.



Figure 12: *TechTown WSU splash page, circa 2003, via the Internet Archive (April 2015)*

While TechTown’s web presence may only recently make explicit investments in Detroit, its economy, and its publics, it is worth observing that histories of TechTown have often explicitly sought to contextualize TechTown’s development as continuous with Detroit’s own history of industrial success, decline, and renaissance. An archived version of the original *TechTown WSU* website from 2009, for example, focuses on the midtown Detroit neighborhood which hosts Tech One: “The area of the New Center known as the New Amsterdam historic district was once the heart of innovation in Detroit. The neighborhood teemed with industry and invention” (“History [23 Apr. 2009]”). This history continues, highlighting the histories of the

Burroughs Adding Machine Company and the American Electrical Heater Company, both former residents of the neighborhood, as TechTown's forebears of innovation in informational and industrial technologies. Several histories thematize TechTown's own history through reference to the history of the building which later became Tech One, the former Chevy Creative Services Building. Both the archived TechTown website and Vachon's profile of TechTown seem to offer the history of this building as synecdoche for the midtown area's economy and the larger Detroit regional economy as well. Early in Vachon's article, he alludes to a 1961 *Time* magazine headline warning of "Decline in Detroit;" Later, Vachon turns to the future site of Tech One:

Constructed during the early years of the auto industry by Detroit businessman George Richards, the structure first served as the headquarters of Oakland Motors, later known as the Pontiac division of General Motors. After being sold to GM in 1930, the building became a storage facility and a design center for Chevrolet. The early editions of the iconic Corvette were conceived in the studio on the top floor.

By the late 1950s, however, the building had been abandoned and became one of a growing number of eyesores in midtown. Its renovation as Tech One represented Tech Town's first phase (Vachon, "Incubator of Technology")

Indeed, the archived *TechTown WSU* website makes explicit the theme of disuse and renewal in its acknowledgement that "Starting in the 1960s, the New Amsterdam area began a long and steady economic slide, mirroring the downward movement of the entire city of Detroit" ("History [23 Apr. 2009]").²⁹

Similarly, the more recent version of TechTown's website, *TechTown Detroit*, situates TechTown within Detroit's history in a series of interviews with key members of its leadership team. For example, in response to the question "What brought you to TechTown and what is your favorite part of working here," several TechTown leaders invoke Detroit as a historical

²⁹ Jeff Rice's *Digital Detroit* makes a compelling argument about resisting this familiar narrative of neglect and rebirth. See especially pp 20-6, as well as pp 48-51, where Rice discusses TechTown as part of this narrative.

center of innovation and industry. Leslie Smith, then-CEO of TechTown, offers Detroit as a model American metropolis: “Detroit can lead other American cities to a new, powerful and shared reality. By having hard discussions, facing the truth and eliminating the structures and mindsets that divide us, we can create one Detroit where there is economic and social justice for all of her residents and a future rich with potential” (TechTown Detroit, “Leadership”). Regina Campbell, the managing director of TechTown’s place-based entrepreneurship initiatives, describes entrepreneurial innovation as key to civic renewal: “TechTown’s focus on including historically underserved populations in Detroit’s neighborhoods pulls at my heart! I love so much at TechTown, but my favorite is the innovation and risk-taking that takes place in order to lean toward solutions that change cities block by block.” Diana Goode, the managing director of finance and administration, waxes nostalgic and invokes her hopes for a renewed Detroit: “My favorite part of working here is the staff, and the joy of seeing the city of Detroit recover to be the city that I remember as a child.”

Texts like those discussed in the preceding paragraphs work to characterize TechTown as part of Detroit’s industrial economic history and as part of ongoing discourses about its renaissance and renewal. In this setting, while TechTown may be new, it is nonetheless continuous with the local history of industrial and technological innovation; indeed, in its occupancy of Tech One, it embodies that legacy in a real and material way. Yet even while such documents portray TechTown as contiguous with the legacy of industrial Detroit, they also work to mark out TechTown as something new and novel, a driver of innovation and change. While Detroit’s history, in these texts, is marked by innovation in industrial and manufacturing settings, TechTown is often situated as not just innovative, but as a new *kind* of innovation—a move away from Detroit’s historical heavy industry and manufacturing economy. For example,

materials on both the current and archived versions of the TechTown website invoke imagery of change and transformation in describing TechTown's mission. On the archived *TechTown WSU*, visitors can read that the initial plan for TechTown was an "idea for an economic catalyst that would galvanize local business while also turning around the state's flagging economy" ("History [23 Apr. 2009]"). Elsewhere on the same site, readers may learn that "TechTown stimulates job growth and small-business creation by developing companies in emerging high-technology industries including advanced engineering, life sciences and alternative energy" ("About Us [6 Sep. 2009]"). Meanwhile, on the current *TechTown Detroit* website, a section called "Catalyzing Communities" claims that TechTown's goals include "diversifying the city's economy, fostering spin-outs and serving local technology businesses" ("History"). On the same site's "Who We Are" page, TechTown is described as "catalyzing entire communities of entrepreneurs best poised to energize the local economy." There, TechTown also presents its mission in attractive, if tautological, terms: "As Detroit reinvents itself, so TechTown works to reinvent Detroit."

This sense of TechTown as being a significant break from Detroit tradition is especially clear in Vachon's profile. While Vachon's piece does, as already noted, support the common "decline and renewal" narrative described above, it also works to mark TechTown as a divergence from Detroit's manufacturing and industrial legacy. As in the websites described above, Vachon's article emphasizes TechTown's focus on new economy start-ups: "To further this economic diversification beyond metal bashing, Tech Town's initial emphasis would be on advanced engineering, life sciences, and alternative energy." Moreover, beyond this turn away from Detroit's "metal bashing" roots, TechTown itself is situated here as an innovation in the way such technology hubs are developed. "Unlike many other innovation-driven incubators,"

Vachon explains, “which usually brought new technology to an untouched area, Reid’s Tech Town would be a ‘brownfield’ incubator, building up in region closely associated with heavy industry.” Like other histories of TechTown, Vachon’s depicts TechTown as both continuing Detroit’s industrial legacy and overturning it.

In reviewing these histories, it is striking to note how TechTown is positioned as a pivot between the old, moribund Detroit bound to heavy industry and manufacturing, and a new Detroit premised upon the emergence of new technologies and new economic opportunities. Repeatedly, TechTown is figured as a *catalyst*, a crucial element which can provoke change, innovation, and transformation. These depictions thus portray TechTown as a public subject possessed of considerable potential, a public subject capable of profound impact upon the local Detroit public. Read in these terms, I find these portrayals of TechTown fascinating because they seem to stand in stark contrast to the ways the Wayne State portrays itself in its mission statements. At least since the mission statements of David Adamany’s time as University president, as we saw in the previous chapter, Wayne State has conceived of its role in its local urban publics as primarily tied to its educational mission. While not downplaying the powerful rhetoric of opportunity and social advancement tied to that educational mission (as we’ve seen in the presidential texts analyzed in this chapter), the University’s mission statements have been far more cautious about positioning the institution itself as a driver of change in its urban publics. Yet TechTown, as an extension of Wayne State, has been consistently portrayed as a credible and powerful agent of change—change not just of Detroit’s economic base but also of the city’s broad social and economic inequalities. As former TechTown CEO Leslie Smith is quoted as saying above, TechTown holds the promise to make possible “economic and social justice for all

of [Detroit's] residents.” In comparison to such claims about TechTown’s potential for social and economic transformation, the University’s claims for itself seem comparatively modest.

Part Three: A Community of Opportunity

In the two preceding sections, I have sought, first, to explore the institutional context in which TechTown emerged and operates; and second, to provide a brief history of TechTown from its founding in 2000 through the present. In both sections, we have seen that TechTown has been positioned both as part of Wayne State’s legacy of community involvement, and as representing an innovative break from the University’s traditional forms of engagement. More pointedly, TechTown has been cited as one of the key drivers of Wayne State’s efforts to spark or reignite a “culture of entrepreneurialism” in Midtown Detroit specifically, and the metropolitan Detroit region broadly. So far, I have generally been tracing claims made about TechTown by others. In this section, I now turn to TechTown’s own institutional texts to see what claims it has made on its own behalf. As we’ve already seen in looking at texts from Wayne State’s recent presidents and at TechTown’s history, Wayne State’s own depictions of TechTown have perhaps overburdened its one-time research and technology park with grander aspirations and ambitions than TechTown has yet been able to deliver. In saying that, though, I don’t mean to sound critical of such hopes. Rather, I point to such observations as a launching point for the work to come in this section.

The presidential and historical texts detailed above suggest that the University has invested hopes in TechTown that are perhaps unrealistic—or, maybe more kindly, immodestly ambitious. Here, then, I’m interested in turning to TechTown’s own texts to understand what kinds of claims TechTown has made for itself. How do these texts portray TechTown’s relationship to Midtown and to Detroit? How do such documents position TechTown in

relationship to the University? What claims do TechTown's own institutional texts make about its mission and impact? In this section, I draw upon a number of different texts in my attempts to explore these questions. The documents discussed here include TechTown press releases, impact reports, program overviews, and websites. As in Part One of this chapter, where I used the Wayback Machine website to access presidential documents and addresses from the Internet Archive's collection of earlier versions of Wayne State's Office of the President website, I here rely on similarly archived earlier editions of TechTown's websites to better understand how such texts have changed since the earliest TechTown website in 2006.

This section is divided into three subsections. In the first section, I offer a brief discussion of Wayne State's Office of Economic Development, the institutional unit which oversees TechTown and several similar programs. Here, my purpose is to further contextualize TechTown as part of an ensemble of initiatives undertaken by Wayne State which share similar goals of supporting economic development and revitalization in Detroit. Then, in the second section, I turn to archived and contemporary versions of the TechTown website and to TechTown press materials to look more closely at how TechTown has described itself and its mission since the middle 2000s. Here, I focus particularly on related pages common across these websites, which focus on explaining TechTown and its operations. Finally, in the third section, I turn to descriptions of specific TechTown programs and their impact. As I note above, I'm not interested here in evaluating the effectiveness of any particular programs. Rather, this final section will focus instead on making sense of how TechTown's slate of programs has changed from their earliest descriptions, and from examining those changes to better understand the relationship between how TechTown works and how Wayne State operates as a contemporary public subject.

A Catalyst for Growth

Wayne State's Office of Economic Development (OED) is a relatively new unit in the University. While many of the programs it oversees, the OED itself dates back only to 2011, when it was established to "to help leverage the assets of the University to be a catalyst for growth on our campus and throughout the community" ("Welcome"). As the unit's homepage explains, the OED supports the University's commitment "to being a good neighbor in a good neighborhood." Such a commitment is played out through a number of different programs and initiatives:

Located in the heart of Midtown Detroit, Wayne State has a wealth of talent, expertise, technology, and resources. The Office of Economic Development works to leverage these assets to be a catalyst for growth in our neighborhood and our city. Whether it's partnering with private developers to add new residential and retail space to Midtown, leasing core research equipment and facilities to outside researchers, incentivizing our employees to live in the neighborhood, or providing policing services throughout Midtown, we seek opportunities to use the University's resources for the benefit of the community. ("What We Do")

The OED, then, is responsible for guiding programs across multiple levels of scale, from those that directly impact life on campus and, such as bringing new retail ventures to campus or bringing Zipcar service to Detroit ("Welcome"), to those that seek to capitalize on technologies and other intellectual properties developed by university researchers ("Innovation"). As the OED website explains, such programs divided into four themed areas: innovation, business, campus, and community; I will look at these in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Innovation and Business are the first two areas on which the OED focuses. Its Innovation programs include the University's Division of Research and Technology Commercialization, which works "to translate technologies ranging from cancer-fighting strategies to efficiency boosters for automotive engines from the research lab to the marketplace" ("Innovation"). A similar program, The Front Door at Wayne State, "is a one-stop shop that helps identify and engage corporate partners for licensing, sponsored research, and other opportunities at the University. The Front Door also helps companies access talent at Wayne State, whether connecting researchers and faculty members to corporate partners or helping companies find student interns." Where these programs focus on leveraging the commercial potential of Wayne State research, the OED's Business programs focus instead on supporting entrepreneurial efforts in the city more broadly. As the OED's "Business" site explains, "Wherever you are in the business life cycle, the Office of Economic Development can help connect you with all thing business in Detroit" ("Business"). Such resources include Blackstone Launchpad, a program intended to support student entrepreneurs "through individual and group sessions, workshops, and networking events;" BizGrid, "designed to help Detroit entrepreneurs navigate the landscape of organizations providing business assistance within the city;" D2D, which "connects Detroit companies with quality local suppliers who understand the local market;" and TechTown itself, here described as "Detroit's business growth center," and the place to start for those interested in "Looking to start or own a business, or support business development in Southeast Michigan."

In addition to these programs focused on technology commercialization and entrepreneurial support, the OED also hosts programs themed around Campus and Community. Campus programs include those dedicated to enriching and expanding life on Wayne State's Midtown campus; as the OED website notes, "Over the last 10-15 years, the University has

tripled the number of students living on campus. We've invested more than \$1 billion into maintaining, improving, and expanding our campus and its facilities" ("Campus"). Such efforts include investment in neighborhood transportation options like Zipcar, a campus shuttle system, and the M-1 light rail system; support for local retail through student discounts and events like the Wayne State Farmer's Market; and contributions to local cultural events like Art X Detroit (a neighborhood arts and music festival hosted at various sites across the city) and Noel Night (an annual holiday season festival). Similar efforts under the Community rubric focus on enriching and developing the Midtown Detroit neighborhood; as the OED website puts it, such programs support a vision of Wayne State as "the heart of a revitalized neighborhood with vibrant, walkable urbanism. These efforts include expanding residency options in Midtown and supporting initiatives like Live Midtown; improving public safety through the work of the Wayne State Police Department, which serves not just the University campus but also the Midtown, New Center, and Woodbridge neighborhoods; and fostering community development efforts like the Richard C. Van Dusen Urban Leadership Forum, "which brings together national experts with existing and emerging local leadership to demonstrate new ways of thinking, sharing and problem-solving" ("Community").

I'm interested in this slate of programs for what they suggest about Wayne State's work as a public subject. While I'll return to this question in more detail at the end of this chapter, here it is enough to observe that the programs described here differ significantly from the kinds of community outreach efforts envisioned by Keast and surveyed by *Wayne and the Inner City* in the middle and late 1960s (see Chapter Three). Those earlier efforts largely focused on attempting to mitigate the urgent and immediate ills of inner city urban life: public health issues, educational inequality, and the effects of poverty and unemployment. Here, though, the programs

described by the OED website are oriented instead toward long-term economic and neighborhood development; the OED's Innovation and Business programs drive investment capital into Detroit and regional businesses, while the Campus and Community programs foster neighborhood and community growth. This is not to suggest that the University has abandoned efforts to alleviate the problems of inner city Detroit, but neither should it be taken to suggest a blindness to critiques that the Midtown area is being gentrified by such efforts. While such critiques are worth further investigation, they are outside the the scope of this dissertation. More to the point, though, is the way these programs draw on Wayne State's legacy of community engagement, while approaching such engagement in new ways. The OED programs described here seem to suggest, then, a turn from addressing, as though in triage, the problems of urban life, to long-term investment and development.

We Are TechTown

The OED's description of TechTown as part of its Business-themed programs is comparatively modest when read against the ways TechTown has described itself through the years. As we will see in this section, by looking at archived and current versions of TechTown's website and several press documents, TechTown's own descriptions of its purpose, vision, and mission have changed in their details through the years, but they generally all retain one constant: in these documents, TechTown is consistently represented through some configuration of *community*, *business*, *Detroit*, and *entrepreneurialism*. While these terms don't necessarily appear in every "About Us" page or mission statement, these remain the four key terms that TechTown has called upon to explain the work it does. All of the texts considered here offer some description of what TechTown is and of its primary functions; some of the texts also include aspirational claims about TechTown's vision and mission. In looking at these documents,

then, I hope to trace how the four key terms listed above are used in various configurations to see what claims TechTown makes about itself. I am particularly interested in what such configurations might indicate about how TechTown, as a proxy for Wayne State, represents possible modes of contemporary institutional public subjectivity.



Figure 13: TechTown WSU website, circa 2004, via the Internet Archive (June 2015)

TechTown’s first website was launched in 2004; as explained above, in its initial instantiation, TechTown’s website highlighted its relationship to Wayne State in its URL (techtownwsu.org). On the archived version of this site (seen above in archived form in Figure 13), the initial hopes for TechTown as a driver of economic revitalization are clear; TechTown, “the Wayne State Research and Technology Park,” is a site “Where minds and means intersect” (*TechTown WSU* [5 December 2004]).³⁰ Much of the language on this version of the site is

³⁰ The images in this section (like Figure 3 above) were generated via screen captures of versions of the sites archived by the Internet Archive’s Wayback Machine. In some instances, as in Figure 3, image files

aspirational, promising great things for the future of TechTown: “It's a place where ideas will become realized, and technology will take shape. A place where large businesses will thrive, and new businesses will triumph. A place that will help bring back the entrepreneurial spirit of the City of Detroit.” This early TechTown site also makes plain TechTown’s mission as a driver of Detroit’s economic renewal, explaining that TechTown’s mission “is to contribute to the economic renaissance of downtown Detroit by creating an internationally recognized entrepreneurial village that revitalizes an urban commercial and residential neighborhood” (“Mission [6 Dec. 2004]”). Even on this early site, TechTown is more than just an economic driver; it is also a neighborhood and a community like others in the city: “TechTown is more than a group of buildings. It is a business hub that revitalizes an entrepreneurial legacy. It is a residential neighborhood with schools, shops and services. TechTown, like GreekTown, CorkTown and MexicanTown, fits within Detroit's jewels with its own distinct identity and energy” (“Community [6 Dec. 2004]”). It is worth noting that the neighborhoods listed here would be recognized by citizens of metropolitan Detroit as attractive destinations with popular consumer attractions including restaurants, casinos, and shopping; the comparison of TechTown to such neighborhoods thus suggests that the early hopes for TechTown included similar attractions that would bring to Midtown the same kind of consumer spending. It seems clear on this version of the site that TechTown is not yet fully operational; as we see in these examples, the site promises much for both TechTown’s business incubator and community development goals but has little to say about actual impact yet.

that would have been visible to the site’s original visitors are no longer available, accounting for the missing pictures and logos in several examples. I have noted in captions both when these images reflect archived versions of the site and when the images were captured.



Figure 14: TechTown WSU website, circa 2005, via the Internet Archive (June 2015)

A year later, an updated and redesigned TechTown website (seen above in Figure 14) could confidently speak to how some of those early hopes and promises had been fulfilled. Visitors to the 2005 version of the TechTown website were greeted by a letter from its then-executive director, Howard Bell. Bell’s letter begins by identifying TechTown as a “community of entrepreneurs, investors, mentors, service providers and corporate partners” working together to “provide the support and access to capital needed to build high tech companies in Detroit” (“Welcome [10 Dec. 2005]”). Bell writes that this community’s “ultimate mission is to contribute to the economic renaissance of Detroit by creating an internationally recognized entrepreneurial village”—and, what’s more, “It’s already happening.” Bell points to TechTown’s

impact in several business sectors to demonstrate how its early promise is being fulfilled: “TechTown is nurturing emerging high tech companies, creating new jobs and spurring development. Our tenants’ innovative products and services are accelerating medical research, expanding technology access for students and positively impacting people’s lives in myriad other ways.”

Beyond Bell’s introductory letter, this 2005 version of the site shows TechTown fulfilling several complex purposes. First and foremost, echoing Bell’s letter, this description highlights TechTown as a convergence of stakeholders invested in entrepreneurial development: “TechTown is a community of entrepreneurs, investors, mentors, service providers and corporate partners creating an internationally recognized entrepreneurial village in the city of Detroit. We provide the support and access to capital needed to build high tech companies. We empower entrepreneurs to build successful technology businesses that improve the quality of life for people across the country and around the world” (“What is TechTown [10 Dec. 2005]”). This early description of TechTown also emphasizes that TechTown is more than just the technology incubator; it is “also a neighborhood encompassing 12 city blocks and acres This community is an exciting place to live, work and play.” This description recalls the early hopes, mentioned above, that TechTown would anchor a revitalized Midtown neighborhood on the north side of Wayne State’s campus. Finally, this site emphasizes the role of the TechTown nonprofit organization and its founding partners: “TechTown is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization founded by three strong strategic partners, governed by a dynamic board of directors and managed by a dedicated team of professionals.” The 2005 TechTown site folds these elements together in its explanation that “TechTown is creating an entrepreneurial village with global impact. As an incubator, we provide the support and access to capital needed to build high tech companies. The

TechTown organization also serves as a developer, facilitating commercial and residential projects.” This description is by far the most complex of the various depictions TechTown’s websites have offered. It is also the least focused on TechTown’s promised impact on the city of Detroit itself. It emphasizes instead TechTown’s role in facilitating the development of technology businesses; even though it goes to some length to describe TechTown as a neighborhood, there is little sense here, despite what Bell’s introductory letter claims, that its business incubation functions and its neighborhood development functions necessarily intersect.

That disjunction was seemingly short-lived, however. In the 2009 version of the TechTown website, TechTown’s business and community functions are much more clearly aligned with one another.³¹ Notably, the 2009 TechTown site is the first which clearly marks TechTown not as Wayne State’s business incubator, but as “Detroit’s research and technology park” (“About Us [6 Sep. 2009]”). In the description offered here, TechTown’s founding partners Wayne State, Henry Ford Health System, and General Motors “convened to create an engine of economic growth with both local and statewide impact. TechTown stimulates job growth and small-business creation by developing companies in emerging high-technology industries including advanced engineering, life sciences and alternative energy.” TechTown’s function as a key player in local and regional economic development is especially clear here: “TechTown has developed into an epicenter of high-tech business creation by equipping new companies with the services, support and resources they need to grow and thrive. The 12-block park is poised to become a critical source of job growth in Michigan.” While this version of TechTown’s site says less about the development of TechTown as a neighborhood and

³¹ While I have tried to document the changing designs of the TechTown website in several illustrations, the 2009 version of the site as archived by the Internet Archive’s Wayback Machine shows far more extensive formatting problems than other archived versions of the site. I have opted not to include a screen capture here because I do not believe it accurately reflects how the site would have looked to its visitors in 2009.

community than its predecessors, it goes further in explaining that TechTown's economic impact will be driven not just by entrepreneurial development but by driving the creation of new high-tech jobs for perennially underemployed Detroit.

The 2009 version of TechTown's site is also notable for being the first to include a statement about the organization's "vision." As offered here, TechTown's vision—a long-range aspirational goal—is "to become the world's foremost business incubator, leading to an economic renaissance in the city, state and region" ("Vision/Mission [23 Apr. 2009]"). This vision statement, like the "About Us" page on the same version of the site, clearly ties TechTown to economic revitalization in Detroit and Michigan, but situates such impact against aspirations for possibly global influence. However, the same page's description of TechTown's mission is, in contrast, much more clearly bound to the city and the state; the mission statement is also clearly focused on more short- and near-term goals than the vision statement. Here, TechTown's mission is to "help create and strengthen a culture of entrepreneurialism in Detroit and Michigan, leading to vigorous and lasting economic growth." This culture of entrepreneurialism, and the economic growth it promises, are to be achieved through "the development of emerging companies through sustainable business operations, exemplary programs and services, and a comprehensive infrastructure, all integrated into Detroit's broader economic development goals;" moreover, this mission can be achieved by efforts to "leverage community partnerships required to deliver effective programs and services to emerging companies." While these claims about vision and mission have clear echoes of President Noren's references to TechTown, what I find particularly striking here is the way the vision and mission statements here suggest a deepening integration of TechTown into broader community planning. Where the examples cited above from earlier TechTown sites clearly reflect hopes that TechTown would have a beneficial

economic impact on Detroit, the statements of vision and mission here are both broader and more strategic. These statements are broader in that TechTown here is figured as doing more than just creating jobs, but instead is presented as poised to inspire a new wave of local and regional entrepreneurs; they are more strategic in that they tie TechTown to the larger economic goals of the city and to collaboration with other stakeholders.

Indeed, these twin themes of TechTown both supporting and inspiring local and regional entrepreneurship, and being strategically integrated into Detroit and the region, become especially pronounced in all the later versions of TechTown’s website. Both the 2010 and 2011 versions of the TechTown website largely repeat the purpose, vision, and mission descriptions of the 2009 version despite an otherwise extensive redesign (as seen below in Figure 15).

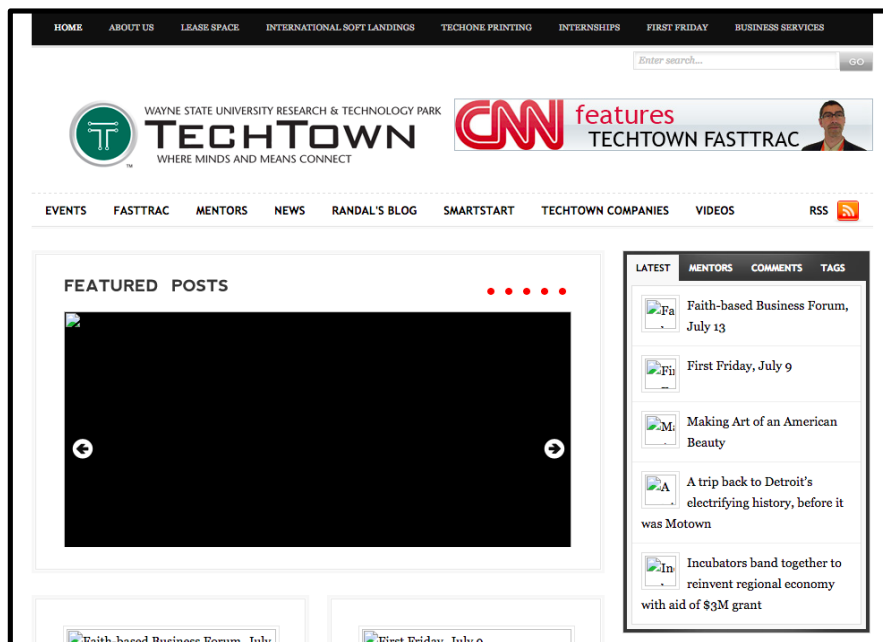


Figure 15: TechTown WSU website, circa 2010-12, via the Internet Archive (June 2015)

The key difference evident in these versions of the site is the 2011 version of the “Vision and Mission” page. While TechTown’s vision here remains the same from 2009, the 2011 mission is

comparatively streamlined here: “TechTown is reigniting Detroit’s entrepreneurial culture. It embraces core values of creativity, consistency, collaboration, commitment, community and accountability” (“Vision and Mission [27 July 2011]”). While this site’s description of mission somewhat obscures the strategic integration theme mentioned above, a TechTown impact report issued in the same period builds on that theme. This report describes TechTown as a “Collaborative Ecosystem for Entrepreneurs,” subsisting in “a community of passionate, diverse people and businesses driven by an entrepreneurial spirit to pursue extraordinary opportunities” (“Impact Report” 2). Here, I am interested in how this description integrates both people *and* businesses into the ecosystem metaphor. The community described here is not one only of people, but of businesses too; the entrepreneurial spirit mentioned here is imbued not just in entrepreneurs themselves but also in their businesses. While I will say more about this in this chapter’s conclusion, it is enough here to note that this image relies on seeing people and businesses—and maybe institutions—working in partnership to constitute a community.

This image of TechTown as a collaborative community partnership is repeated in the 2012 version of the site. This version of the site builds on that image by explaining that TechTown’s entrepreneurs enjoy a privileged relationship to Wayne State: “Entrepreneurs join TechTown to gain guidance and get connected with resources needed for success. TechTown offers entrepreneurs unique access to Wayne State University’s research, academic and technology assets” (“About Us [26 Apr. 2012]”). In addition to this relationship, the site also makes slight shift in the “collaborative ecosystem” metaphor. Where the 2011 version of the site casts TechTown itself as an entrepreneurial community, the 2012 site’s vision statement instead marks TechTown as part of a larger community working toward Detroit’s economic revitalization; here, TechTown’s vision is “To be an indispensable member of the community

committed to growing small business in Detroit.” This shift—from casting TechTown itself as a community to casting it as part of a larger community—is also accompanied by the transition from the original *TechTown WSU* site (techtownwsu.org) to the new (and still current) *TechTown Detroit* site (techtowndetroit.org). While no explanation for the change is evident on the sites themselves, the transition is worth noting for the way it suggests a move to dissociate TechTown from Wayne State. This version of the site (shown below in Figure 16), is also the first to explicitly describe TechTown as a Wayne State partner rather than as an extension of the University; here, TechTown “entrepreneurs also gain unique access to research, academic and technology assets through TechTown’s partnership with Wayne State University” (“About Us [17 Aug. 2012]”).

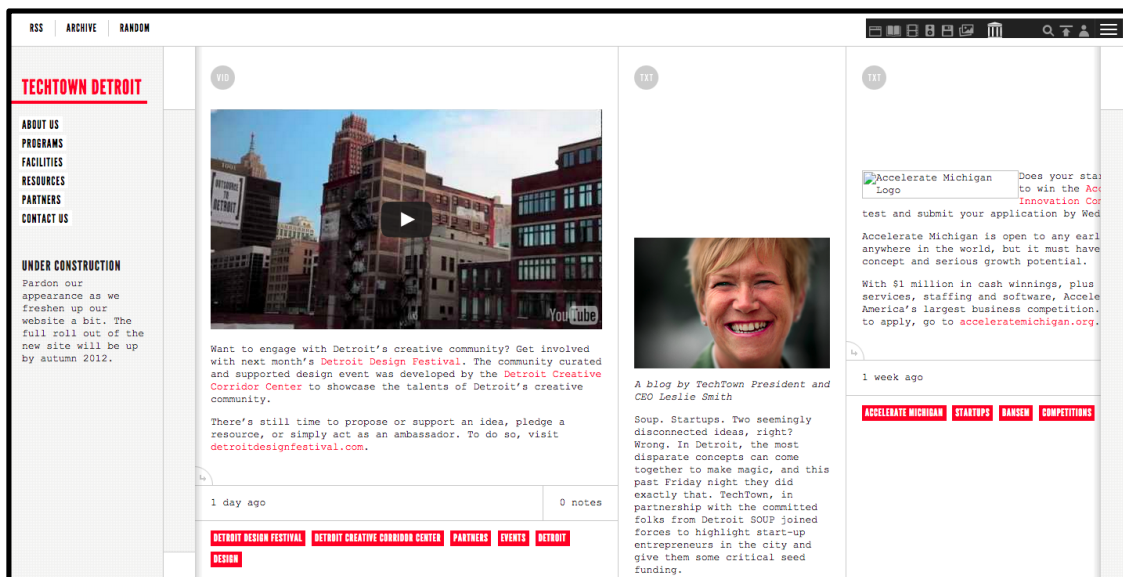


Figure 16: TechTown Detroit website, circa 2012, via the Internet Archive (June 2015)

More recent TechTown documents emphasize themes of revitalization and reinvention. A TechTown media kit from 2014, for example, includes a program overview that opens with the proclamation, in all caps, “WE MEAN BUSINESS” (“TechTown Overview [10 Jan. 2014]” 2).

The pun here is important to note: TechTown “means business” both in being equated with business development in Detroit, and in being serious about its commitment to that endeavor. As the overview document explains, “We are Detroit’s business growth center. We help create and grow companies. We incubate and accelerate technology and innovation. We are engines of economic growth and catalysts of urban revitalization. We are TechTown.” This document also further develops the sense of strategic regional integration described earlier. For example:

TechTown is the most established business incubator and accelerator in Detroit – founded specifically to develop and grow sustainable, technology-based businesses. Today our work supports industry verticals that are specific to the region’s inherent assets and address the city’s identified needs, supporting not only tech-based businesses but also retail and neighborhood enterprises for a more holistic approach to economic development.

Beneath the jargon and buzzwords here, there is an important claim being made about TechTown’s evolving priorities. Where earlier TechTown documents emphasized the incubation of high-tech businesses nearly exclusively, we can see in this example the first significant references to TechTown’s relatively recent support (via its Blocks programs) of neighborhood retail enterprise. This “more holistic approach” is also evident on the current version of the TechTown website (seen at the start of this chapter in Figure 9), where TechTown is depicted as a “community of opportunity for Detroit” (“Who We Are”). Here, the culture of entrepreneurialism invoked by earlier TechTown websites is now a force that cuts across entire communities, a force capable of driving Detroit’s economic renaissance: “TechTown is Detroit’s business innovation hub. As the city’s most established business accelerator and incubator, we provide a powerful connection to a broad network of resources, catalyzing entire communities of entrepreneurs best poised to energize the local economy. As Detroit reinvents itself, so TechTown works to reinvent Detroit.”

The TechTown Approach

While an emphasis on entrepreneurialism and an attendant culture of entrepreneurialism has long been part of TechTown's mission, the programs and initiatives it supports have put that emphasis to work in vastly different ways across its decade or so of operation. In the preceding section, I traced the ways TechTown's own narratives about its purpose and mission have changed across that time, from its initial purview supporting high-tech business start-ups emerging from University research, to its more recent focus on expansion beyond technology companies into regional and local retail enterprises. In this section, I continue my investigation of TechTown's own institutional texts, focusing here on how TechTown's specific slates of programs have changed since the middle 2000s. This section first offers a brief summary of TechTown programs from 2005 to 2011 before looking in more detail at its programs (including the aforementioned Labs and Blocks divisions) as articulated from 2013 forward. Once again, I emphasize that my interest here is in how TechTown's descriptions of these programs rests in reading these texts for what they indicate about TechTown and Wayne State as institutional subjects in their publics, not in evaluating any claims made these programs' impact or effectiveness.

In some of its earliest incarnations, TechTown's program slate was ambitiously broad, making even its most recent offering seem comparatively narrow. For example, the archived version of website circa 2005 describes the "TechTown approach" as encompassing not merely start-up support but a wide swath of educational and community-based programs as well ("TechTown Goals [10 Dec. 2005]"). This approach, the site's "TechTown Goals" explains, would include

Building and maintaining facilities especially equipped for high tech companies with wet labs, dry labs, freezers and other necessities; [n]urturing and growing companies in the

life sciences, homeland security, alternative energy and advanced automotive technology industries; [s]trengthening the economy and infrastructure of our 12-block research and technology park with new commercial and residential development; [t]ransforming students of all ages into knowledge workers through technology-centered tutoring, mentoring and internship programs, and; [c]ultivating mutually beneficial partnerships with academic, corporate, research and government institutions.

Many of these promised programs never seemed to materialize—at least based on what we can tell by their absence from later TechTown descriptions. Nevertheless, many of these goals consistently appear in later TechTown texts, especially those emphasizing support for technology startups, alternative energy enterprises, and development partnerships between TechTown and other institutions and organizations.

Perhaps the most surprising entry described here are TechTown's educational program. In the narrow window in which TechTown offered an educational program, the initiative focused on internships within TechTown and in hosting a community-led initiative which saw Wayne State students tutoring National Honor Society high schoolers in a TechTown computer lab ("Students [10 Dec. 2005]"). Such programs, the TechTown site explained, would strengthen "the urban community that surrounds [TechTown] by preparing Detroit students for technology jobs and entrepreneurship through math and science tutoring, mentoring and internship programs." Such programs would fit into the larger ensemble of technology incubation and community partnerships overseen by TechTown: "TechTown is developing an educational community initiative through which we will partner with existing Detroit organizations that help students improve math and science skills. We will link these groups to critical resources so they can better prepare students for technology careers and entrepreneurship." Given its affiliation with Wayne State, it is perhaps surprising that TechTown has not put greater emphasis on connecting students with internship or training opportunities in the companies it fostered; a more

recent program, DTX Launch Detroit (about which I will have more to say later), gives students the opportunity to launch their own technology startup.

Later versions of the TechTown website offer other glimpses of past programs. The 2009 site, for example, focuses on programs called SmartStart and Arts IMPACT. While I won't offer a sustained discussion of these programs, it's worth noting at least brief descriptions of each here. SmartStart most clearly resembles the programs offered by TechTown today. SmartStart, "TechTown's business development program" promised to help new ventures "accelerate growth and manage issues like product development, marketing, funding and basic business operations for each company to maximize revenue growth and profitability" ("SmartStart [1 Sep. 2009]") through collaboration with TechTown staff and consultants. Like many of TechTown's current start-up programs under its Labs banner, SmartStart focused on creating a "a business development process for new, high-growth innovative companies." Arts IMPACT, by contrast, seems to have no direct analogue in TechTown's current roster of programs (although Blocks program's emphasis on neighborhood retail development might come closest). This program, unlike other technology-focused offerings, was intended "to produce a transformational, cultural, economic or social impact that improves the lives of Michigan's citizens by supporting entrepreneurship in the arts and 'work' that utilizes a creative process to facilitate, produce or market new ideas, goods, services or products" ("Arts IMPACT [18 Sep. 2009]"). Where other texts considered here envision TechTown as the catalyst for a local and regional technological and industrial rebirth, the archived Arts IMPACT page foresees a similar future for Detroit's arts and cultural economies; Arts IMPACT "envisions a future where aspiring artistic and creative sector entrepreneurs can find the inspiration, support and resources within our walls to launch a

venture that contributes to a Michigan that is renowned as the world's source for culturally, economically and socially successful artistic endeavors.”

As of March 2015, TechTown could report significant impact on its website’s “Impact” page. Interestingly, TechTown’s report of its success to date is established not simply as a record of TechTown’s success but as testament to the “decisive difference” it has made to Detroit: “Where have TechTown’s efforts helped to take Detroit? The numbers are telling. Between 2007 and 2014, the organization served 1,026 companies, which raised over \$107.26 million in start-up capital. And it contributed 1,190 jobs to the local economy. Beyond education and encouragement, the numbers speak to a clear-eyed commitment to execute” (TechTown Detroit, “Impact”). Yet as this citation makes clear, for TechTown, the numbers here tell only part of the story.

Looking more closely at TechTown’s current slate of programs suggests that while such numbers are important, the real story of TechTown’s impact rests in its narratives of innovation, entrepreneurialism, and community. These themes are especially clear in TechTown’s own press releases about their current programs. For example, a press release originally from January 2014 announcing the opening of Junction440, TechTown’s co-working space, emphasizes the role shared collaborative working spaces have in fostering innovation. The release cites TechTown’s then-president Leslie Smith as saying that “This space will become a hotbed of innovation, a dwelling for serendipitous encounters and a catalyst for the redevelopment of Midtown’s broader innovation district” (“TechTown Detroit Opens Junction 440”). Smith continues: “With an open, flexible and vibrant first floor, anchored by the Junction440 co-working space, TechTown will be uniquely positioned to foster an even larger community of engaged, connected and better-served entrepreneurs who will accelerate our local economy.” Similarly, a press release

announcing the awarding of a one million dollar grant to TechTown's Detroit Technology Exchange (DTX) program highlighted the program's focus on "exploiting disruptive technologies" ("TechTown and Partners Receive Grant") and emphasized DTX's entrepreneurial and community themes: "Services in support of entrepreneurship have expanded aggressively in recent years to meet growing demand among the city's entrepreneurs. Unfortunately, organizations have moved to fill needs and build upon assets without collaborating to avoid duplication, nor effectively leveraging existing resources and potential partners." I focus on these themes because they suggest the ways that TechTown's current programs have been framed within a cyclical narrative connecting innovation, entrepreneurialism, and community: innovative technologies or retail enterprises drive entrepreneurialism; in turn, entrepreneurialism enriches the community, both literally and figuratively; and, completing the cycle, a revitalized community inspires and supports greater opportunities for innovation. It is this narrative I am interested in considering further as I look at TechTown's current programs.

TechTown's current services are organized around the themes of Space, Labs, and Blocks. Of these, Space is the newest section of TechTown's programs and focuses primarily on the co-working space called Junction440 (named after TechTown's address at 440 Burroughs Avenue). This space, described on Junction440's own website as "Detroit's co-working community," is designed as a setting to foster creativity and collaboration between its occupants ("About Junction440"). As described on Junction440's website, this space offers "entrepreneurs and small business owners an affordable, flexible, and active work environment with access to like-minded peers, educational resources, and modern meeting and event space;" it offers amenities such as parking, wireless internet access, kitchen access, storage lockers, and other conveniences. Designed by local local Detroit architects and designers, Junction440 promises, in

the words of the press release cited earlier, “a blank slate for creativity and idea sharing,” and serves as “a nod to the building’s innovative roots” (“TechTown Detroit Opens Junction 440”). This co-working space’s future expansion also includes plans to spill out beyond TechOne into the surrounding neighborhood: “By this summer, the first floor will flow into the Living Room, Midtown’s community gathering space to be located in the current parking lot just east of the building.” While a comparatively minor segment of TechTown’s offerings, Junction440 is nonetheless described through the themes of innovation, entrepreneurialism, and community, as we see here. It is not just a co-working space, but a co-working *community*, designed and planned to spark collaboration between its occupant entrepreneurs in service of sparking innovation. Moreover, it not only houses this community of entrepreneurs, but folds into TechTown’s longer-term narratives of revitalizing its Midtown neighborhood.

TechTown’s own documents devote much more sustained discussion to its other business units. Its Labs slate, which serves “high-potential, tech-centric startups,” is divided into four main programs:

- the Venture Accelerator, a “highly competitive, boot-camp style program [that] helps show entrepreneurs how to turn their early stage technology-based startups into sustainable, market-ready businesses” (“TechTown Overview [10 Jan. 2014]” 2);
- the Detroit Technology Exchange (DTX), run in partnership with Bizdom, Invest Detroit and the Detroit Creative Corridor Center, includes “a boot camp for college students and recent grads, an entrepreneur-in-residence program and a fellowship program” (TechTown Detroit “TechTown Overview [10 Jan. 2014]” 2);

- Start-up Incubation, offered for graduates of either the Venture Accelerator or the DTX Launch Detroit programs, supports technology startups which have “demonstrated customer need and a technology in the early prototype stage” (“Start-up Incubation”);
- and Technology Commercialization, through which TechTown “serves as an outsourced incubator, educational resource and critical path to technology commercialization for the region’s academic institutions and health care systems” (TechTown Detroit, “Technology Commercialization”).

Through these programs, TechTown promises it is “uniquely able to connect technologies nearing commercial viability to early stage capital. These funds are designed to support this critical stage in the development lifecycle and prepare startups for follow-on private investment” (“Technology Commercialization”). As with Junction440, the Labs programs too are part of a larger narrative about innovation, entrepreneurialism, and community. In the words of TechTown’s current website, these programs support would-be clients interested in all three of these themes: “If you’re serious about entrepreneurship, have an innovative technology, or want to play a larger role in the city’s burgeoning tech industry, you’ve come to the right place” (“TechTown Labs”).

TechTown’s Labs programs each offer slightly different services for slightly different types of clients. Its Start-up Incubation services include assistance “with identifying and mapping business goals;” “[a]ccess to TechTown mentors;” and “[a]ssistance in the navigation of Michigan’s entrepreneurial support services” (“Start-up Incubation”). Its Technology Commercialization program—ostensibly the program closest to the initial conception of TechTown’s mission—focuses on technology startups emerging from regional academic research. As described online, this program offers several options for supporting such businesses:

the evaluation of commercialization potential of technologies developed within academic or health care research, enrollment of faculty or researchers in other TechTown programs like the Venture Accelerator or DTX Launch Detroit, or the participation of a DTX executive-in-residence to oversee the nascent business (“Technology Commercialization”).

The other two Labs programs, the Venture Accelerator and DTX, are described in greater detail. The Venture Accelerator, TechTown’s website promises, “isn’t for the faint-hearted. This intense accelerator will show you how to turn your early stage technology startup into a sustainable, market-ready business” (“Venture Accelerator”). The Venture Accelerator program targets startups developing technologies in a number of high-tech and cutting edge fields, including biotechnology, alternative energy, information technology, and medical devices. This program’s twelve-week course covers topics ranging from identifying a customer base, to exploring different distribution models, to analyzing the risks and rewards of business partnerships. At the end of the course, entrepreneurs participate in “a showcase, where each startup pitches to industry experts, local stakeholders, and potential partners and investors;” select startups then move from the accelerator program into the incubation program. As its name suggests, the slate of DTX programs similarly focuses on technology-based businesses; through DTX, TechTown and its partners “recruit and groom talent for tech entrepreneurship opportunities and convert innovative technologies into Detroit-based startups” (“DTX Launch Detroit”). DTX itself is broken down into three programs. DTX Fellows “places high-quality, mid-level talent into Detroit’s startups and entrepreneurial support organizations” (“DTX Fellows”). DTX D-Venture “seats selected entrepreneurial-minded professionals to mine the underutilized and/or underdeveloped intellectual property (IP) developed within our city” (“DTX D-Venture”); in this program, participants serve as entrepreneurs-in-residence to help companies

develop their IP and raise venture capital to support further growth. DTX Launch Detroit, a program for college students and recent graduates, hearkens back to the promise of educational curricula from TechTown's early days ("DTX Launch Detroit"). This program, a ten-week summer accelerator, helps students and graduates "test out their entrepreneurial dreams." Drawing on *The Startup Owner's Manual*, "a step-by-step business development guide written by famed serial entrepreneurs Steve Blank and Bob Dorf," student teams "attempt to validate their value proposition and business models;" like the Venture Accelerator, the program concludes with a showcase where teams have "the opportunity to make a pitch to potential strategic partners, advisors and investors."

While I am interested in TechTown's Space and Labs programs for how they extend the themes of innovation, entrepreneurialism, and community, I am much more interested in its roster of programs organized under the Blocks rubric. These programs, focused on "retail entrepreneurs & neighborhood enterprises" ("TechTown Overview [10 Jan. 2014]" 2) are worth further consideration for two reasons. First, their focus on neighborhood retail enterprise rather than technology-driven startups marks a significant shift in priority when read against TechTown's initial statements of mission and purpose. While the available institutional texts don't make clear *why* this shift occurred, they do speak persuasively to the importance of such enterprises to Detroit's economic revitalization. Second, and perhaps for the interests of this dissertation more importantly, these programs and the texts which describe them are the sites of TechTown's most fleshed-out and sustained discussions about its relationship to Detroit. Thus, they take on special significance in my work of reading TechTown as a proxy for how Wayne State attempts to articulate its role as a contemporary institutional public subject.

These programs are therefore compelling objects of study because they testify to an evolving institutional understanding of how change and revitalization occur in urban environments and the role that institutions might play in forwarding such change. Where TechTown's other programs, as we've seen, have been described as part of a larger effort to transform Detroit's economic center away from heavy industry and manufacturing, the Blocks programs take a more ground-level approach by trying to enact change on a more local, community- and neighborhood-based scale. As the most recent TechTown website puts it: "We know where Detroit stands tall and falls short, and we certainly see its potential. With some guidance, we can help aspiring entrepreneurs capitalize on its greatest opportunities; we can also help transform underserved neighborhoods into vibrant and dense communities" ("Blocks"). While these programs may not operate at the same level of technological innovation as those under the Labs rubric, they promise greater and more direct impact on the actual conditions in which today's Detroiters live: "TechTown and its partners work to create a new economic reality—a liveable and walkable community with the support infrastructure necessary for businesses and residents to thrive in the place they call home" ("SWOT City"). While there is certainly some aspirational hyperbole in these claims, they nonetheless attest to a belief in the power that such economic intervention promises to Detroit's embattled communities. Framed in this way, TechTown's Blocks programs seem to implicitly critique TechTown's other programs: while programs like the Venture Accelerator or DTX might very well produce innovative technologies and help develop new models for Detroit's economy, they are also largely detached from the lived experience of many of the city's inhabitants in their local communities and neighborhoods.

TechTown's Blocks slate is focused on two programs. The first of these, Retail Boot Camp "prepares serious entrepreneurs with strong retail concepts for the successful launch of their brick-and-mortar business in a core Detroit commercial district after program completion. The program enables an entrepreneur's success not only through training, but also through access to critical start-up capital, affordable space and ongoing business support" ("Retail Boot Camp"). In an eight-week program, prospective entrepreneurs learn about topics such as merchandising, branding, fiscal management, and customer service, among others. Participants are also introduced to "Detroit-specific topics ... including introductions to select neighborhoods and key stakeholders, as well as opportunities and resources." These entrepreneurs are eligible for the program if they can demonstrate "[p]revious retail experience;" a "[g]ood understanding of start-up costs and [the] ability to commit personal funds;" and have a [c]ommitment to launching [their] business within three months of program completion." They must also commit to opening their business in Detroit as a "brick-and-mortar, independent [i.e., non-franchised] retail establishment." At the end of the program, participants are placed in either short- or long-term pop-up spaces or in permanent storefronts in a local neighborhood, with varying levels of support from TechTown and its partners. Retail Boot Camp is thus in many ways similar to TechTown's Labs programs in that it focuses primarily on individual entrepreneurs and their business endeavors; support and development here is focused on the retail enterprise itself. The focus is thus more on how the business stands to benefit from placement in a given community than how the community stands to benefit from the addition of the business; the neighborhood is here largely positioned as a market, a collection of potential customers and clients, rather than an organic community.

In contrast, the other Blocks program run by TechTown seems to be based on much more deeply entangled and committed relationships to the communities it serves. According to the TechTown website, SWOT City “combines economic development and start-up acceleration strategies to transform historically underserved neighborhoods into vibrant and dense communities” (“SWOT City”). This program takes its name from a management analysis model developed by organizational theorist Albert Humphrey in the middle 1960s (Humphrey 7); the acronym describes the process of identifying an organization’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (“SWOT Analysis”). In collaboration with its partners, TechTown uses this analytic model to identify ways to support economic development in select Detroit neighborhoods. As explained in a TechTown brochure,

SWOT City is a TechTown Detroit program that works to strengthen small businesses in underserved neighborhoods through partnerships with community and economic development organizations.

The socially inclusive platform delivers TechTown’s acceleration services to neighborhoods that lie beyond the incubator’s typical reach but require access to crucial small business assistance. Together, TechTown and its partners work to create a new economic reality — a vibrant and dense community with the support infrastructure necessary for essential businesses to thrive in the place they call home. (“TechTown Overview [10 Jan. 2014]” 7)

In a more tangible way than either the Labs programs or the Retail Boot Camp program, then, SWOT City is focused on local neighborhood and community impact: it begins its work through analysis of local community needs, rather than the opportunities available to any single entrepreneur or enterprise. It is also explicitly oriented toward community revitalization in a way that the other TechTown programs described here are not. As described elsewhere in TechTown press materials, SWOT City “stems the tide of neighborhood decline by identifying and addressing the needs of neighborhood businesses through a community-centric, hands-on approach. Rather than serving businesses independent of community demand, SWOT City serves disadvantaged neighborhoods by molding their small businesses into viable enterprises that are

contributors to, rather than detractors from, neighborhood revitalization efforts” (“TechTown Overview [10 Jan. 2014]” 9). In language that evokes many of the presidential texts cited earlier in this chapter, portrayals of SWOT City in TechTown’s institutional texts has taken on a moral register. As noted in a June 2014 overview of its programs, “[r]ather than serving businesses alone, TechTown sees” in SWOT City “a broader obligation to create an enabling environment for economic development” in Detroit’s neighborhoods (4).

Such an approach has garnered support from critical sources such as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). In October 2013, a TechTown press release announced the SWOT City program had been awarded an \$800,000 grant from HHS in order “to execute full scale SWOT engagements ... beginning with the development of an integrated stabilization and growth strategy designed in partnership with neighborhood partners and community members followed by execution against the plan over the following three years” (“TechTown Receives”). This grant, the press release claims, is evidence of the federal government’s commitment to “Detroit’s revitalization in pursuit of ‘one Detroit’ catalyzed by a commitment to blight removal, transportation infrastructure and improved public safety and further advanced by the stabilization and expansion of Detroit neighborhoods.” In announcing the awarding of the grant, this release makes explicit the contrast between SWOT City’s neighborhood-level of engagement and other revitalization efforts in and beyond Midtown:

SWOT City Detroit is an essential element of a movement toward “one Detroit,” as it represents a critical effort to stabilize and enhance the Detroit neighborhoods that are often disconnected from redevelopment efforts in the Midtown and downtown districts of the city. Because the SWOT City program delivers TechTown acceleration services to underserved neighborhoods through partnerships with community and economic development organizations, the team becomes ingrained in the community in which it works.

Indeed, in this press release, SWOT City’s very conception is portrayed as a response to the disparity between development plans in Detroit’s neighborhoods and its downtown and Midtown

regions. Then-president of TechTown Leslie Smith explains here: “We have a deep legacy with place-based programs, and our SWOT City program was developed by answering the question, ‘What about everybody else?’ ... There’s a lot of economic development activity happening in Midtown and downtown, and we want to bring that energy, expertise and resource set to the neighborhoods in order to see a fully revitalized Detroit.” SWOT City (and its sister Blocks program Retail Boot Camp) are thus positioned at least in part as a corrective to an oversight in TechTown’s initial mission and project. While TechTown, as we have seen, has always been committed to the development of new economy projects in Midtown specifically and Detroit more broadly, such an approach can of necessity only be limited and partial; Detroit is, of course, far more than just Midtown and downtown, and SWOT City extends TechTown’s economic revitalization mission beyond these comparatively affluent parts of the city into the less affluent and more beleaguered city neighborhoods.



Figure 17: SWOT City engagement cycle (“TechTown Overview [10 Jan. 2014]” 7)

Currently partnered with Detroit neighborhoods like Brightmoor, East Jefferson, Grandmont Rosedale, Hope Village, and Osborn, SWOT City entails a three-year commitment from TechTown and its partners. The program begins with TechTown efforts to “ingrain itself into the community—working directly with its partners, while drawing insight from business owners and residents—to conduct a SWOT assessment on the neighborhood level” (“TechTown Overview [10 Jan. 2014]” 9); this phase is styled as “Stabilization” in Figure 17 above. In this phase, TechTown consultants enter the community to analyze its needs and establish a plan for meeting community needs; the objective is to address not just immediate needs but instead to “help the community develop the long-term foundation to properly support neighborhood businesses long after TechTown is gone.” Next, TechTown’s consultants turn to the neighborhood’s businesses themselves (styled as “Growth” in Figure 17). This phase begins with SWOT analyses of these businesses in order to generate “recommendations for change and a comprehensive milestone plan;” this phase supports business owners with coaching and training to help them implement these recommendations. The final phase, Figure 17’s “Sustainability,” brings together business owners and community stakeholders to collaborate on ways to address emerging problems and opportunities: “TechTown engages the broader community by hosting weekly or biweekly neighborhood tune-up sessions for current or prospective entrepreneurs seeking to hash out a problem, get advice on next steps or connect to resources.” Throughout this cycle, “TechTown offers additional custom services based on community needs. Examples include establishing a neighborhood business resource center, reorganizing and facilitating business owner meetings, and hosting educational workshops.” As of August 2014, TechTown could point to several measures of SWOT City’s success. It claims to have performed over two hundred business engagements, to have created or retained nearly two hundred neighborhood

jobs, to have launched eight businesses with another fifteen in the pipeline, and to have provided nearly five thousand hours of technical assistance and consultation to Detroit neighborhoods and local businesses (“SWOT City”).

In this section, I have argued that through its Labs and Blocks programs, TechTown has articulated a cyclical narrative that connects ideas about innovation, entrepreneurialism, and community. Above, I characterized this cycle as one in which innovative technologies or novel retail enterprises are the spark that powers entrepreneurial ambition; entrepreneurial investment and effort drives collaboration between communities of entrepreneurs and communities of citizens; and strong community development at multiple levels of scale establishes the fertile backdrop which fosters innovation. My analysis here of this narrative points to two important claims. First, within the cyclical narrative suggested by the depiction of its programs in TechTown’s institutional texts, the figure of the entrepreneur emerges as the hinge connecting innovation and community. It is through the entrepreneur’s efforts to introduce innovative technologies or novel retail concepts that stand to reinvigorate or transform the community; it is through the entrepreneur’s engagement with communities (whether understood as a community of fellow innovator-entrepreneurs or as a community of neighbors and residents) that innovation is inspired and empowered. All of TechTown’s programs rest of the figure of the entrepreneur in one way or another: its Labs programs rely on the entrepreneur as technological innovator, while its Blocks programs rely on the entrepreneur as small-business owner and community stakeholder. It is the entrepreneur, therefore, that is in a sense the protagonist in this narrative.

Yet that is not to suggest that the entrepreneur is here the *sole* protagonist of TechTown’s innovation-entrepreneurialism-community narrative. Rather, the second claim this narrative points to is that within this cycle, individual success and community success are deeply

entangled with one another. While the narrative rests on the assumed agency of the entrepreneur as either innovator or community stakeholder, it nonetheless also testifies to the necessity of community. On one hand, community success is dependent upon the success of the individual entrepreneur: it is the collective success of a network of individual entrepreneurs through which communities can revolutionize their economies and invest in neighborhood development. On the other hand, an individual entrepreneur's success is itself dependent on the success of the community: without communally supported resources, without a community of collaborators, without a community of potential clients and customers, the individual entrepreneur has little hope for success. TechTown's own programs might be read as being foundationally dependent on the way entrepreneurs and communities are intimately intertwined: across its roster of programs, TechTown in effect works to situate its client enterprises and neighborhoods within the community of consultants best capable of supporting their development.

Conclusion

At the end of the first section of this chapter, I concluded my analysis by pointing toward the emergence of the figure of the entrepreneur, or of a culture of entrepreneurialism, across a body of Wayne State institutional texts. There, I argued that the figure of the entrepreneur was an ironically necessary one for understanding Wayne State's contemporary processes of public subjectivity: by doing what the institution cannot, the entrepreneur points to the limits of institutional public subjectivity. Yet as the preceding section shows, through TechTown, Wayne State is nevertheless deeply involved in efforts to support cultures of entrepreneurialism through programs like the Venture Accelerator and SWOT City. In my analysis in that section, the entrepreneur emerges as the crux between innovation and community; without the entrepreneur,

the narrative connecting innovation and community cannot function. In both sections, then, it is the figure of the entrepreneur through which Wayne State's contemporary processes of public subjectivity must operate, even when that figure points out the limits of what an institutional public subject can achieve within its traditional functions.

Indeed, the figure of the entrepreneur may be a problematic figure for contemporary theories of the public sphere. As explained in Chapter One, within the Habermasian tradition of the bourgeois public sphere, publics are thought to exist *apart* from questions of the market, from the world of business and profit. In this tradition, the public sphere is the space for debate, discussion, and deliberation of state policies which govern the sphere of commerce and the market—the sphere to which the entrepreneur intuitively belongs. Yet in the texts considered in this chapter insist repeatedly on the centrality of the entrepreneur in the development and growth of communities and their publics; whether as the figure who can do what institutions cannot, or as the figure who connects innovation and community, the image of the entrepreneur that emerges from these texts is an essential one. Wayne State, as an institutional public subject, must of necessity invoke this figure in order to enact its urban mission within this milieu. Its own position as public subject is too much built up with history and institutional inertia to enact the kinds of intervention that the entrepreneur, unencumbered by such burdens, can pursue. While Wayne State may very well hope to foster a culture of entrepreneurialism, that culture is in a sense ultimately alien to the University's traditional academic mission. As Michael Warner observes, the pace of academic publics is much slower than that of other publics (97); the institutional subjects who populate such publics are not well-suited to the urgent demands of urban problems, a conflict identified by Keast in Chapter Two as being especially important within the context of Wayne State. For Wayne State as an institutional subject, then, the

entrepreneur stands as a bridge out of this morass: while the entrepreneur may draw on university expertise and research, this figure is not bound to the ruminative pace of scholarly publics. Rather, the entrepreneur can enact institutional ambitions in more immediate ways, and with greater urgency, than the institution itself.

This in turn suggests two other claims about how entrepreneurialism determines Wayne State's contemporary work as a public subject. First, reliance on entrepreneurialism requires a shift in how Wayne State envisions its involvement in its local urban publics. As I suggest above, earlier descriptions of Wayne State's community engagement efforts might be likened to triage, as attempts to address Detroit's immediate concerns about under- and unemployment, failing public schools, embattled public health systems, and other indices of urban struggle; these are the same problems addressed by *Wayne and the Inner City* nearly fifty years ago. While Wayne State still, to its credit, is committed to addressing those problems, the turn to entrepreneurialism must be read as an admission that its powers as an institutional public subject to resolve those issues are limited. Its traditional ways of engaging the community about these concerns have done little to erase them from the fabric of Detroit's community; many of these problems have only worsened. This is not to suggest, of course, that addressing these problems is Wayne State's primary responsibility, nor that Wayne State carries this responsibility alone. Rather, what this means is that acknowledgement of its limits as an institutional public subject does not absolve Wayne State from participating in these discussions or from being engaged in its community. The difficulty of meeting the demands of the urban mission do not add up to a rejection of the urban mission. What is called for instead is a realignment of priorities, from immediate relief to long-term revitalization, from intervention to investment. The turn to entrepreneurialism, then, is part of this larger shift in priorities. While the work of economic redevelopment is beyond the

scope and ability of Wayne State's public subjectivity, it can foster such work, albeit indirectly, through the development of programs like TechTown and the other programs of the Office of Economic Development.

The turn to entrepreneurialism also suggests a rethinking of the scope and scale of the publics in which Wayne State participates. To be sure, my focus on its local urban publics and its academic research publics throughout this dissertation has in some sense been a deliberate rhetorical choice, one made to highlight the tension between these two publics in a constant pull for the University's commitment. It has not been my claim that these are the *only* publics in which Wayne State participates. But the work of this chapter underscores the need to situate Wayne State and other institutional public subjects within not just one or two overlapping publics, but within complex networks of multiple publics. In Chapter One, I draw on Hauser's work to explain how such a multiplicity of publics might be theorized as an interdependent "web of discursive arenas, each spread across society" (71); Rice likewise draws on the image of the network to remind us that a publics approach, like the publics approach to institutional texts undertaken here, is an "investigation of networked relations" (168) of public subjects, texts, and issues. In this chapter, Wayne State finds itself, both directly and through TechTown, enmeshed in not just its local urban publics and its academic research publics, but in a multitude of other publics: the public of policy debate, the public of community organizations, the public of venture capital, the public of small business, the public of technological innovation, and others. What we see in this chapter is an intensification of connections between Wayne State and other public subjects; through its partnerships with businesses, governments, community organizations, venture capital, and other actors, the University finds itself becoming an increasingly public

public subject. Wayne State's commitment to a culture of entrepreneurialism, then, is attended by this intensely connected involvement with sometimes unfamiliar publics.

Yet there is still Detroit. Whatever the early promise of TechTown as a research and technology park or its later aspirations as a technology incubator and business accelerator, the creation of its Blocks roster cannot help but feel like an admission that no matter Wayne State's ambitions, it remains inextricably bound up with the city and its battle against urban concerns. Wayne State's turn to a culture of entrepreneurialism, it must be noted, is nowhere here described as a contribution to its academic research public; instead, it is through entrepreneurialism that Wayne State's institutional texts give voice to a renewed, if reconfigured, commitment to its urban mission and thus its involvement with the city. Though Wayne State may find itself participating in broader and more varied publics, its participation in these publics remains grounded in its obligation to its local urban public and its urban mission. At the start of this chapter, I suggested that *legacy* and *opportunity* would become the focal points of understanding how Wayne State performs its function as a contemporary institutional public subject. Ultimately, what the texts read in this chapter suggest is that for Wayne State, *opportunity* becomes subsumed by *legacy*. The University's legacy of contribution to the city, framed by its urban mission, remains in these texts the axis around which Wayne State seems to turn; even the new opportunities supported by the nascent culture of entrepreneurialism are pinned to the promise they hold for restoring Detroit. In the institutional texts cited in this chapter, Detroit remains inescapable; Wayne State can no less separate itself from the city than could the city from Wayne State. The real opportunity to which Wayne State finds itself continually attempting to respond is how to serve a city that needs so much. Maybe entrepreneurialism will be the answer; maybe it will not. All the same, these texts suggest that

should entrepreneurialism fail to be the right approach, Wayne State's commitment to Detroit will only adapt and be rearticulated through whatever new form of institutional engagement emerges next.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION: THEORY AND METHOD

In the preceding chapters I have argued, through a case study of Wayne State University, that institutions, like individuals, can take on the roles and responsibilities of public subjectivity. I have made this argument through readings of texts created by, within, or on behalf of the institution. Such institutional texts are the focal point of the critical method demonstrated here, a publics approach to institutional texts, in which such texts are read for what they can reveal about the ways an institution articulates and negotiates its place as a subject within its multiple constituent publics. Wayne State has proven a particularly fecund site for such a study; its history of service to Detroit, its institutional ambitions to premier research university status, and especially its articulation of these concerns through the lens of its urban mission all point to Wayne as a powerful example of the ways institutions can function as public subjects.

In this concluding chapter, I return to some of the major claims made earlier in this dissertation to extend and further contextualize my arguments. To that end, this chapter is divided into two main parts followed by a brief conclusion. In Part One, “Urban Mission and Public Subject,” I return to the theoretical agenda of this project. This section functions to theorize claims made in earlier chapters about Wayne State’s urban mission. As I have argued throughout this dissertation, the University’s urban mission is a focal point of how Wayne State articulates its role as an urban public research university and as an institutional public subject; by engaging the discourses around the urban mission, my dissertation has used Wayne State as a case study to examine how institutions articulate their roles as public subjects. But the urban mission itself, as the center of a complex discourse about Wayne State’s relationship to Detroit, is worthy of deeper theorization on its own merits. In this chapter, therefore, I work to theorize the claims made in earlier chapters about the urban mission and what it represents for

the ways in which Wayne State has articulated and negotiated its role as an institutional public subject. Wayne State's urban mission, as these claims suggest, is not only an appropriate site for theorization on its own merits, but points also to claims about the nature of institutional public subjectivity. In important ways, institutional public subjects are both like and unlike the public subjects that individuals become when participating in public discursive arenas. In this chapter, I point to several examples that point to the importance of institutional public subjectivity as a theoretical category.

Where the first part of this chapter focuses on the theoretical implications of this project, the second part of this chapter focuses instead on methodological considerations. I offer my publics approach to institutional texts as a possible model for how scholarship in public sphere theory and public rhetoric might further engage questions of how institutions participate in sites of public engagement. While much work remains to be done in fully interrogating such questions, my method is a starting point in critical attempts to work through issues of institutional opacity in order to document and analyze how institutions articulate their public subjectivity and frame the publics in which they participate. In Part Two, "A Publics Approach to Institutional Texts," I return to the work of the preceding chapters to more fully explain how such a reading might be performed. Drawing from my work in this dissertation, I offer a model for such readings that generates a complex account of the articulation of public subjectivity evident in such texts, offering a publics approach to institutions and institutional texts as a heuristic for future such readings of other institutional sites.

This chapter thus works to tie together the theoretical and methodological arguments I have made in the preceding chapters. While my study of Wayne State has much to teach us about institutional public subjectivity, I make no claims that it exhausts the possibilities for such

scholarly work. In the concluding section of this chapter, I suggest some ways that future scholarship might employ this publics approach to institutional texts and propose questions needing further theoretical investigation. In particular, I acknowledge several limits to the method employed here, and situate those limits as possible sites of further investigation. Such work, I will argue, might build upon this publics approach to institutional texts to investigate, for example, the processes internal to institutions through which relevant texts are drafted, designed, and negotiated, or how competing demands of various stakeholders within institutions might determine how public subjectivity is articulated. Such projects would work to extend and rethink the category of institutional public subject much as I have attempted in this dissertation to rethink the theoretical category of public subjectivity and extend it to institutional subjects.

Theory: Urban Mission and Public Subject

This dissertation has taken as its object the institutional texts through which institutions negotiate and articulate their roles as public subjects. I now focus in particular on Wayne State University's urban mission as a key dimension of its articulation of institutional public subjectivity. In this section, I argue for the necessity of understanding the urban mission and Wayne State's public subjectivity as inherently connected. This section, then, builds from the theoretical claims of earlier chapters into a more focused discussion of the significance of Wayne State's urban mission specifically, and of institutional public subjectivity more broadly. In the pages, that follow, then, I will argue for the theoretical significance of the urban mission and for what it suggests about institutional public subjectivity. Drawing from the work of the preceding chapters, I will argue the following: first, that the urban mission is, above all, the product of a public subject; second, that the discourse surrounding the urban mission is thus *necessarily* a public discourse; and finally, that the urban mission is made manifest especially at sites where

institutional priorities are in tension and under negotiation. These claims, which situate the urban mission as part of a larger argument about institutional public subjectivity, point to Wayne State as a specific example of an institutional public subject.

The Urban Mission is the Product of a Public Subject

As I demonstrated in Chapter Two, the urban mission has its roots in the work of Wayne State's precursor institutions: the Detroit Medical College, the Detroit Normal Training School, and the Detroit Junior College. These schools each took as their own missions the training and preparation of Detroit's professional working classes: the Medical College supported training for the physicians and nurses of Detroit and southeastern Michigan; the Normal School prepared teachers for service in Detroit Public Schools and beyond; and the Junior College served the professional and personal ambitions of a broad swath of Detroiters including business administrators, laboratory technicians, engineers, and people who wanted to pursue higher education for their own personal enrichment. Moreover, for much of Wayne State's history, its commitment to Detroit was more than simply curricular: the University operated under the administrative and financial auspices of the Detroit Board of Education until the middle 1950s. In pragmatic terms, then, Wayne State has *always* been a public university. Since the inception of these precursor institutions, Wayne State has identified itself with Detroit. Long before it identified itself as a research institution, it was an institution whose life in the city was closely entangled with the educational needs of Detroiters. Given this close entanglement, it is not surprising that Wayne State should profess an urban mission; indeed, given the University's history, its ambition toward research university status in the middle 1960s under President Keast, and its pursuit and attainment of Carnegie recognition under President Adamany in the 1980s, are newer commitments for Wayne State than its urban mission. Even before adoption by the

state of Michigan in 1956 its primary mission was service to the public, and specifically the urban public of Detroit.

While the nature of the urban mission has changed substantially throughout the University's history—from its precursor institutions' focus on professional training to TechTown's focus on economic development—Wayne State has remained steadfast in its commitment to Detroit, even when its ambitions toward premier research university status have conflicted with its urban mission. Wayne State's urban mission, therefore, must be understood as the product of a public subject. The urban mission codifies in specific terms an orientation toward public contribution that has always defined Wayne State. While it may not have been identified in these specific terms until relatively recently, the history of the urban mission described in this dissertation shows that it has always guided the work of Wayne State. Because Wayne State's history is the history of a university dedicated to serving public need, so too is the history of its urban mission the history of a public subject: it is through the urban mission, whether implicit or explicit, that Wayne State argues for its continued relevance to its local urban public. The urban mission, then, is not just a guiding principle for the University; it is a promise from Wayne State to the people of Detroit that it will honor its legacy of public contribution to the city.

The Urban Mission is a Necessarily Public Discourse

Wayne State speaks through its institutional texts to define its urban mission. As the preceding chapters show, such texts establish multiple sites at which the University addresses its publics. Through institutional histories like *A Place of Light*; through presidential addresses like those cited from Keast, Reid, Noren, Gilmour, and Wilson; through course bulletins; through reports like *Wayne and the Inner City*; and through websites both archived and active, Wayne

State addresses its publics about its commitments to them. In this dissertation, the urban mission is spoken most clearly when institutional texts assume an audience that is at least in part conspicuously public: presidents addressing community organizations or legislative committees; course bulletins for current and prospective students; reports looking to the city to assess the University's contributions; websites detailing initiatives like SWOT City through which TechTown and Wayne State hope to help transform Detroit's economy. The urban mission emerges in its most clearly defined form when the University argues for its institutional priorities and explains how they determine its role as a public subject.

This last point underscores an important argument about the urban mission: not only is it the product of an institutional public subject, the urban mission is itself *necessarily* public. That is, any argument about the significance of the urban mission must account for its place within larger public debates about the place of the academic triumvirate of teaching, research, and service within an urbanized society. Apart from such public debates, the urban mission has little or no purchase: it defines how Wayne State, as an institutional public subject, fulfills these traditional duties within its local urban public centered on Detroit. The profession of an urban mission is in essence itself an argument, a contribution to public debates about urbanization and urban life in Detroit. In adopting the urban mission, Wayne State stakes a claim about the importance of urban issues and how they should be addressed. The programs and initiatives that it undertakes as part of its urban mission, whether programs that support underserved student populations or programs like those at TechTown, make an argument for how Wayne State believes an institutional public subject should serve an urban public like Detroit.

While the discourse around the urban mission is most clearly centered on Wayne State's local urban public, it nevertheless addresses the University's broader academic public of peer

and aspirational research universities. Wayne State's urban mission, within this wider public, emerges as a response to questions about the value of university research. To be sure, Wayne State's answer to such questions has hardly been consistent across its history. President Keast called for an urban university ideal yoking together Wayne State's research mission and its urban mission in the study and relief of urban problems; a generation later, President Adamany insisted that the role of university research should not be circumscribed to such applications; and another generation later, Wayne State's recent presidents have increasingly pushed for university research to benefit the city through more entrepreneurial means like technology commercialization and business startups like those overseen by TechTown. Within the context of these questions about how academic research should be conducted and the ends to which it should be put, the urban mission has constituted a more ambiguous argument than it does within Wayne State's local urban public. Within Wayne State's local urban public, the urban mission, even with its many changes, remains a relatively constant admission of the University's steadfast commitment to Detroit. In contrast, within Wayne State's wider academic research public, the stakes implied by claiming an urban mission are fraught with institutional concerns about Wayne State's reputation and its aspiration to premier research university status.

Nowhere is this clearer than in the discourses surrounding TechTown. As seen in Chapter Four, initial plans for TechTown as both a way to support Detroit's efforts toward industrial diversification and as a way to commercialize technology and techniques emerging from university research have changed considerably in the fifteen years since President Reid first conceived the idea for a research and technology park at Wayne State. In terms of the interests of my dissertation, these early ideas about what TechTown might become situate it as a nexus between Wayne State's constituent publics, tying the fruits of academic research to an economic

agenda poised to revive a struggling urban public. Yet so far the development of TechTown has not clearly fostered such a nexus; even at TechTown, a bifurcation between Wayne State's local urban and academic research publics remains evident in the split embodied in its separate Labs and Blocks program slates. While TechTown's Labs programs remain focused on the products of academic research through technology commercialization and high-tech business incubation, its Blocks programs, in contrast, serve a need for local community-owned businesses more deeply embedded in the streets and neighborhoods of Detroit. University research, such a split seems to concede, will not be enough to restore Detroit.

Nevertheless, the urban mission gives Wayne State license to serve its urban public in ways perhaps unanticipated by the traditional academic triumvirate. Many of the ways Wayne State fulfills the promise implied by the urban mission seem far afield from the formulation of teaching, research, and service. While those traditional missions are certainly of relevance within the framework of the urban mission, many of the other ways Wayne State puts the urban mission to work suggest a capaciousness beyond that suggested by the triumvirate: it is difficult to argue that Wayne State's ownership of responsibility for public safety on and off campus, development of retail and housing capacity in Midtown, and incubation of technology and local businesses through TechTown are anticipated by these traditional missions. Rather, the imprimatur of the urban mission guides such efforts as part of Wayne State's commitment to the improvement of public life in Detroit; such efforts, understood through the lens of the urban mission, are a rebuke to those (like, perhaps, President Adamany) who would impose stronger limits on how Wayne State contributes to Detroit.

The Urban Mission is a Site of Institutional Tension

As suggested by the final point in the previous section, the proper limits of an urban mission like Wayne State's are sites of institutional tension. In the preceding chapters, I've shown that while the urban mission has been a constant in Wayne State's life as an institutional public subject, the specific demands of what that means for the work of the University has changed significantly throughout the University's history. During the formative years of the University's precursor institutions, the urban mission meant education and training for Detroit's professional classes. In the 1950s and early 1960s, the urban mission meant contribution to the cultural life of the city and a consulting role to "Laboratory Detroit." In the middle 1960s, it meant the amelioration of the worst ills of urban life, while President Keast urged greater confluence with the University's research mission. Since the 1970s and 1980s, it has meant expanded access to higher education and curricular support for underserved student populations. Now, as the early twenty-first century gives way to the middle of the century, the urban mission is again being rearticulated as the University commits through sites like TechTown to long-term economic development and urban renewal.

As each of these moments gives way to that which follows, Wayne State has had to negotiate its institutional priorities in defining what it means to operate as an urban public research university. Indeed, that very description is itself the product of such negotiations; as demonstrated in the preceding chapters, the mantle of an urban public research university has only recently been adopted by Wayne State, even though its constituent terms—*urban*, *public*, and *research*—have been the sites of institutional contention at many points in the University's history. How such priorities should guide the University, and how such priorities should be balanced, likely will always remain unsettled questions for Wayne State. More accurately, as this

dissertation suggests, the process through which negotiation of such terms occurs is the fabric which makes up institutional historiography.

In the case of my study, these processes are also indicative of how Wayne State articulates its role as an institutional public subject, and it is through tensions between the urban mission and other institutional priorities through which we can follow the articulation of this public subject role: To what extent should Wayne State identify with Detroit? How should University research serve the city? In what ways can Wayne State support the social and educational needs of Detroit? What can Wayne State do to revive the urban economy? The urban mission, then, becomes especially evident as such sites of institutional tension; the traces of such competition for priority are inscribed across Wayne State's institutional texts. These are all questions, as the preceding chapters suggest, that the University has had to address, again and again, throughout its history.

As the sections above suggest, the urban mission is of vital importance to understanding how Wayne State functions as an institutional public subject. In the case of Wayne State, it is through the urban mission that the University has articulated its commitments to its local urban public; moreover, it is at least in part through contrast with the urban mission that Wayne State's commitments to its other publics, especially to its academic public of peer and aspirational research universities, have been articulated. However, while my dissertation is focused on Wayne State, this case study argues further that the urban mission is an entryway for better understanding institutional public subjectivity more broadly. Specifically, this case study of Wayne State points to significant claims about the function and operation of institutional public subjects: first, institutional public subjects are aware of themselves *as public subjects*; second, institutional public subjects are historically situated; and, finally, institutional public subjects

exert real material agency within the publics they inhabit. In what follows, then, I will elaborate further on these arguments.

Institutional Public Subjects are Self-Aware Public Subjects

While I write throughout this dissertation of Wayne State as an institutional public subject with desires, priorities, and even at times an ethics (as in President Wilson's papers), this is to some extent obviously a necessary construct for my critical purposes. The institution, as an entity, does not strictly speaking *act*, *choose*, or *desire* of its own accord. When I write, therefore, of Wayne State facing competing demands from its constituent publics, I am well aware that answering such demands falls to the individuals who comprise the University: administration, faculty, advisors, staff, and students.³² Nevertheless, such individuals, especially at the levels of administration and faculty, operate *as though* the institution were a subject possessed of its own ambitions and priorities; moreover, and especially important for my purposes, such individuals themselves write and speak of Wayne State in such terms, as is clear from the texts of the various University presidents cited herein.

In that regard, I argue that institutional public subjects are self-aware. That is, at the level of institutional texts, questions of what an institution wants, how an institution functions, and how it should engage its constituent publics are answered through the necessary construct of the institution as its own entity. This institutional self-awareness is evident in the ways such texts use the tropes of individual desire or ambition to personify the institution as something greater than

³² While I won't rehearse in full an engagement with her work here, Susan Wells in *Sweet Reason* demonstrates a critical praxis inspired by Lacan and Habermas that identifies reason and desire as emerging from tensions between language, narration and action in what she calls "the discourses of modernity." I take my own publics approach to institutional texts as being consistent with such a reading, at least to the extent the texts considered here, like those analyzed by Wells, "are likely to have multiple writers, to be embedded in institutions, and to serve no single conscious purpose. To read such texts," Wells adds, "the writer needs to be configured as a point of intersection for contradictory impulses and discourses and generalized to include groups and organizations of writers" (105).

the sum of the individuals who comprise it. Consider, for example, the most current version (as of this writing) of the Wayne State “About Us” webpage. There, visitors to the site can read about Wayne State’s strategic vision and the five goals which “articulate its aspirations and provide a framework for the way in which its new plan will be translated into action” (“About” [2015]). However such aspirations and goals are determined within the bureaucracy of the institution itself, they are sustained in institutional texts by a self-aware rhetoric of institutional public subjectivity, one through which such desires are articulated and negotiated. By voicing such articulations as the wishes and aspirations of the institution, institutional texts participate in the production of institutional public subjectivity by characterizing such subjects as capable of the same kind of engaged participation in public life that we traditionally expect only of individual public subjects.

Institutional Public Subjects are Historically Situated

By focusing on the urban mission, I have been able to argue that Wayne State’s commitments to its constituent publics have changed significantly throughout the history of the institution. However, even apart from an urban mission like Wayne State’s, institutional public subjects must be understood as historically situated. This is true, at least in part, by nature of being explicitly *public* subjects. As observed in Chapter One, especially in my discussion of Warner’s work, publics are not transhistorical; they emerge in response to questions and arguments emerging from historical exigencies. They turn on their temporal demands, and as we have seen, different publics operate according to different orders of temporality. As subjects of such publics, then, institutional public subjects are likewise historically situated, and the ways they conduct themselves as public subjects are bound to the temporal expectations of their competing constituent publics. The institutional texts through which we can read the histories of

such subjects are likewise bound to the publics they engage, both in the historicity of how they circulate and in the exigencies of the arguments they address.

While institutional public subjects thus need to be situated clearly within the historical moments they occupy (as I have attempted to do in the preceding chapters), they also, of course, differ from individual public subjects in how they span across historical periods. Granted, individual public subjects may participate in many different kinds of publics and do so through many different kinds of discourses throughout their lives. Nevertheless, few if any individual public subjects can boast of a century and a half of public engagement the way Wayne State can; more accurately, institutional public subjects enjoy special access to history as a rhetorical resource through the accumulation of institutional texts.³³ This claim underscores the importance of archival material to the study of institutional public subjects (about which I will say more below): through institutional texts like the ones considered in this dissertation, institutional public subjects produce the effect of continuity across different historical eras. It is very unlikely that anyone who served or studied at the Detroit Medical College is alive today, but I can nevertheless still write about the Medical College as part of the history of Wayne State as an institutional public subject. The Wayne State of one hundred fifty years ago, or even the Wayne State of fifty years ago, is no doubt a much different institution than the Wayne State of 2015, but through the archive of institutional texts, the figure of Wayne State as an institutional public subject is made to appear continuous through all of these historical moments.

Institutional Public Subjects Exercise Material Agency

Put simply, institutional public subjects make things happen within their publics and thus have material influence on their publics. While the notion of an institutional public subject as an

³³ I am indebted to Sue Wells for the preceding framing of this point.

entity may be a theoretical construct, this should not be understood to suggest that the work of such subjects is without material consequence. Indeed, it is because institutions like Wayne State are capable of material impact of considerable scope and scale that scholars should make greater effort to interrogate how they work to argue for and legitimate the ways they operate in their constituent publics. Institutional public subjects like Wayne State exercise such agency in a variety of ways, with consequences both small and large in scale.

For example, as part of its urban mission, Wayne State has repeatedly committed itself to improving educational access to underserved student populations and to support those students with appropriate curricula and programs; such commitments have real consequences for these populations (often racial and ethnic minorities) and for the lives of the students who benefit from them. On a broader scale, institutional public subjects are often the driving forces behind massive changes to the geography and constitution of the communities they inhabit. In the case of Wayne State, its expansion throughout the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s had real consequence for the meaning of life in Midtown Detroit; likewise, Wayne State's current efforts to rehabilitate the area around TechTown (however slow such progress seems to be) will leave the area a much different neighborhood than the partially abandoned and derelict site it once was. Institutional public subjects, then, are not mere constructs, even if our critical engagement with them depends on such suspension of disbelief; they are powerful institutions of considerable influence upon the lives of both individuals and communities.

Methodology: A Publics Approach to Institutional Texts

The theoretical claims discussed in the preceding section are the product of a critical methodology oriented toward discovering, analyzing, and explaining how institutions negotiate

their roles as public subjects. Rethinking Jenny Rice's "publics approach to place" in *Distant Publics*, my publics approach to institutional texts engages texts to see how they operate within institutional attempts to articulate the role of the institution within its constituent public spheres. This approach assumes, like Michael Warner in *Publics and Counterpublics* and Gerard Hauser in *Vernacular Voices*, that publics are multiple and contestatory spaces where public subjects engage one another in discussion, debate, and, at times, confrontation. While such engagement is native to the work of publics, the claim that publics are multiple also suggests that tension is possible between publics as well as within them. Warner, for example, posits that subcultural counterpublics exist precisely as spaces in which mainstream or dominant publics can be critiqued. In the case of the present study, such tensions between publics manifest as the competing demands of Wayne State's local Detroit public and its broader academic public of peer and aspirational research universities. In this dissertation, this tension between Wayne State's constituent publics is opened for critical investigation through a publics approach to institutional texts. This methodology works from texts written within or on behalf of an institution to make plausible claims about how the institution operates as a public subject; this methodology, then, is interested primarily in the articulation and negotiation underlying institutional public subjectivity and how those processes are made legible in institutional texts. In this section, I want to elaborate further on how such a methodology works. What emerges from this methodology is a complex account of an institution's articulation of public subjectivity, anchored by a critical effort to highlight differences between texts across the history of the institution and across multiple kinds of institutional texts.

Discovery and Identification

A public approach to institutional texts begins with efforts to discover and identify texts relevant to the study. As made clear by the work of the preceding chapters, such texts may take many forms. In this study, I have included a number of kinds of texts: an institutional history, course bulletins, presidential addresses, websites, and press materials have all informed my investigation of Wayne State. As I learned in assembling this corpus of material, discovering such texts calls upon scholars to pursue multiple paths of research. While I made some use of more familiar research tools like article and library databases, I found early in this project that assembling texts appropriate for the study I envisioned would require investigating the archives at Wayne State as well; later still in the project, I made extensive use of a different kind of archive via the Internet Archive's *Wayback Machine* website. While a public approach to institutional texts is not *exclusively* an archival approach, it is perhaps *necessarily* one: a central claim implicit in such a method, as noted elsewhere in this project, is that understanding the nature of institutional public subjectivity asks scholars to engage such a question with an eye toward the historical grounding of such articulations. In the case of the present study, Hanawalt's history of Wayne State, *A Place of Light*, proved valuable for showing how the University's urban mission continues a legacy of contribution to Detroit established by its precursor institutions.

In a public approach to such texts, the criterion for gauging the relevance of a text is whether it addresses the institution's relationship to one or more constituent publics. Such a criterion might be met, as in the case of many of the presidential documents surveyed here, by clearly addressing a public audience; it might also be met, as in the case of much of the material drawn here from course bulletins, by explicit discussion of the institution's relationship to one or more publics. In still other cases, a text might meet this criterion by clearly addressing issues of

public concern; this, for example, would apply clearly to a text like *Wayne and the Inner City*. However such criteria are met, identifying relevant texts will depend on the purpose and intent of the study. For example, in my own research I discovered in the University archives a series of handbooks written by Wayne State students for the purpose of guiding new students through University procedures and customs. At several points in these handbooks, the student authors address concerns which could have been relevant to my project. In the 1939-40 edition, for instance, the handbook encourages students not to succumb to Wayne's critics: "Don't belittle our 'cement campus.' Don't blame it for any intellectual or social stimulus you believe lacking. If you catalog yourself 'intellectual,' you will find that Wayne, supplemented by the Detroit art center, provides the cultural opportunities of any university" (5). Such commentary from students about their own perception of the University, in a sanctioned institutional text, provides an interesting historical perspective on a still-lingering perception that Wayne State suffers for its urban location. However, I ultimately decided that such a text did not merit inclusion because first, it did not address a public audience outside of the University; and second, because it was not created to speak on the University's behalf. In realizing these, I was able to understand that the criteria in which I was most interested for my project were texts that spoke on behalf of the University at the institutional level and which were clearly addressed (at least in part) to public audiences.

A public approach to institutional texts will similarly draw on predictable texts as well as unpredictable texts. Undertaking such a methodology asks scholars to be able to predict what kind of texts might most commonly represent the institution as a public subject. In the case of my project, I was able to identify early on several institutional texts as predictable resources for my study: reports, course bulletins, University websites, and press materials from both Wayne State

and TechTown were among such documents. Such materials are typical instruments through which the institution communicates with its publics. They will likely form the base from which any corpus of institutional texts in such a study will be grounded. At the same time, however, the relevance of a number of texts which became important to my project could not have been anticipated in advance. Some of these I found through my own research. Discovering *Wayne and the Inner City* in the stacks at Wayne State's Purdy Kresge library led me to the University archives to discover more about the president whose office had commissioned the report; similarly, needing more background on TechTown's slate of programs, I found an extensive, if unofficial, online archive of material through the *Wayback Machine*. At the same time, however, serendipity guided me to other unpredictable texts. I only knew of the WDET interview with Ned Staebler, TechTown's current director, cited in Chapter Four, because I heard the interview in its original airing during my commute; likewise, only because I read President Wilson's inaugural address did I discover Hanawalt's history of Wayne State. While obviously serendipity's products cannot be fully anticipated in advance, scholars undertaking this publics approach should nevertheless plan for serendipity and anticipate finding, as I did, that the articulation of public subjectivity is legible even in texts whose relevance (or existence) they could not have anticipated at the outset of their work.

Tracking Differences and Explaining Significance

After identifying the relevant texts for the study, scholars interested in this publics approach to institutional texts need to carefully read and analyze across their archive of chosen documents. As suggested above, this approach asks scholars to read such texts while asking how a given document portrays the institution's relationship to one or more of its publics, how it

addresses one or more publics, and how it treats issues of public concern. Such questions are not exhaustive, to be clear; as I will suggest in this chapter's conclusion, other questions relevant to this kind of publics approach remain open for further study. Such are the questions which have guided my work in this case study of Wayne State, and they seem to offer at least a baseline from which such a publics approach might operate.

Yet just as important as what any single document might indicate about an institution's articulation and negotiation of public subjectivity is the possibility of discovering across an archive or corpus of texts signals of how and why those processes have changed and diverged. Such changes are likely to be evident in two main ways. First, archival or historical work can reveal changes to institutional public subjectivity across different periods of institutional history or institutional development. Above, for example, I've identified three major periods in the development of Wayne State's urban mission: from positioning itself as educator of Detroit's professional classes; to a more conflicted era of expanded access and ambivalence about its role as an urban university; to its more recent turn toward entrepreneurialism, economic development, and urban renewal. The shift in what the University's urban mission promises to Detroit is especially marked in my discussion of TechTown; where earlier formulations of the urban mission point toward expanded educational access and a hands-on approach to problems of urbanization, the discourse surrounding TechTown points instead toward an urban mission oriented toward entrepreneurialism and long-term investment. Such turns and permutations of the processes underlying institutional public subjectivity only become clearly evident when institutional texts are read in historical context; that is, not just contextualized by the historical moment from which a given text emerges, but also within the context of how such texts are related to others from within the history of the institution being studied. A publics approach to

institutional texts, then, asks scholars to regard such texts as being highly situated and consequential: such texts bear the mark not only of their own historical moment but also of the legacies of earlier historical moments, and likewise in turn bear on still later moments to come.

At the same time, though, this publics approach to institutional texts requires scholars to be mindful of how the articulation of institutional public subjectivity is rendered differently by different kinds of texts within a given historical moment. Such differences might be read for what they suggest about tensions between competing institutional priorities, or for what they indicate about divergent claims for the kind of public subject an institution should be. Indeed, such differences often fold together questions about institutional priorities and institutional public subjectivity; as suggested above, it is often the case that institutional priorities are the sites at which processes of public subjectivity are negotiated. In the Wayne State case study here, such tensions are apparent in the papers of William Rea Keast, who on one hand admits the inadequacy of Wayne State's contributions to the city, while on the other voices concerns that such efforts, unmoored from the University's traditional research mission, undermine the University's academic standards and institutional reputation. Keast is an apt example here too for demonstrating how tensions might emerge between texts serving different institutional purposes or drawn from different levels of institutional hierarchies; while Keast was clearly preoccupied by questions about what it meant for Wayne State to be an urban university, the course bulletins of his era are as silent on that question as on the broader question of the University's relationship to Detroit. Scholars employing a publics approach to institutional texts need to identify divergences and tensions like these in their own studies. Such sites, where institutional priorities are pulled between different demands, are sites worthy of critical analysis. They make tangible

how such conflicts serve to negotiate the boundaries and expectations of institutional public subjectivity, and are thus key to attempts to show how such subjectivities are articulated.

Scholars undertaking a publics approach to institutional texts need also to explain the significance of their chosen texts and of the differences and tensions their study analyzes. Because this approach is explicitly a *publics approach*, such explanation and analysis will be contextualized through reference to scholarship on public sphere theory and public rhetoric. While obviously the specific argument of any such project cannot be predicted in advance, this approach has developed in order to contribute to ongoing scholarly efforts to further critical understanding of questions regarding how publics work, how public subjects (whether individuals or institutions) engage one another, and how publics coalesce around shared concerns and common rhetorical practices, among others. Thus the significance of any study's findings will by necessity be explained through reference to one or more such scholarly objectives.

The significance of such studies, then, rests in creating rich descriptions of institutional texts themselves and in explaining how a recognizable institutional public subject emerges from them. Institutions do not exist untethered from their publics, and this approach offers scholarship in public sphere theory and public rhetoric a method for demonstrating the processes through which institutions engage in the work of their publics. Explaining the significance of such a study therefore means being able to cogently argue for how institutional texts make legible such processes of articulation: What do such texts indicate about institutional priorities? What do they indicate about how the institution understands its relationship to its publics (and those publics' relationships to each other)? What do they reveal about how such processes have changed historically? Again, this is not an exhaustive list of how scholars might choose to argue for the significance of such study, but they are the kinds of questions I have attempted to answer here.

Moreover, my publics approach to institutional texts generates a reading of institutional sites that promises critical complexity as one of its chief virtues. Because this method insists on reading texts both in the contexts of institutional history and of each text's own historical moment, this approach produces multiply layered readings of institutional public subjects. On the first layer, each text is read for what it suggests about an institution's articulation of public subjectivity; on the next layer, texts are contextualized within their own historical moments to describe how differences between documents make evident tensions in institutional commitments to different publics; on yet another layer, texts are contextualized within the history of the institution itself so that changes across the life of the institution can be identified and analyzed. This method, therefore, insists on the complexity of institutions and institutional public subjects. The analyses such a method calls for will account for institutions as historically situated, self-aware public subjects entangled among their own commitments and obligations to the expectations of multiple publics.

Conclusion

As promised above, this concluding section will serve three primary purposes. First, I want to point to two main limits of the present study. While I believe the analysis presented here of Wayne State as an institutional public subject has the virtue of complexity, there are nevertheless several ways that this study is not strictly comprehensive. In what follows, I note both a need for more attention to Wayne State's academic publics of peer and aspirational research universities, and a need for greater skepticism about the image of Wayne State as portrayed by University administration, as the two primary limits of the current study. Second, I want to point to ways that further research might address other, less fundamental limits to this study. Such limits are perhaps functions of the focus of this study rather than oversights, and I

suggest them here to forward ways that continued research on institutional public subjectivity might compensate for these omissions. These limits include, for example, the need for further study of how institutional texts are composed within their institutional settings, as well as further study of other kinds of institutions. Finally, beyond the opportunities for further research suggested by this study's limits, I will propose several ways that future research on institutional public subjects might proceed, noting as possibilities work analyzing how institutional public subjects respond to specific events and exigencies, and work looking closer at how the interests of different stakeholders are reflected in and by institutional public subjectivities.

One of the chief admitted limits of this study is a disparity between the coverage here of how Wayne State addresses its local urban publics and how it addresses its broader academic research publics. The work presented here devotes considerable time and attention to Wayne State's urban mission and the question of how the University articulates its role as a public subject primarily in relationship to its local urban public in and around Detroit; while I have attempted to find within the discourse surrounding the urban mission moments where Wayne State also engages questions relevant to its academic research public, I admit that attention to such issues is not as prominent as attention to issues relevant to the University's local urban public. In part, this is a result of my focus on the urban mission; as I suggest above, while the urban mission does speak to Wayne State's academic public, its primary orientation is understandably to its urban Detroit public. Yet this is also, I suggest, a question of audience. This project assumes its audiences of scholars in public sphere theory, public rhetoric, and rhetorical theory are already familiar with the demands of academic publics and the institutional imperatives suggested by traditional university missions of teaching, research, and service. There is thus less need to explain the interests and issues of academic publics than there is to explicate

Wayne State's urban mission and how it connects the University to its local urban publics. For such an audience, whose own institutional homes may or may not profess similar commitments, the urban mission at Wayne State is likely to be more unfamiliar. All the same, the comparatively modest attention given to Wayne State's research mission is an acknowledged limit of this study's comprehensiveness. Further scholarship on institutional public subjects might therefore consider the history of research support in the context of a particular institution to better understand how institutions signal their engagement with their own academic publics of peer and aspirational institutions.

The other chief limit of this study is a relatively uncritical acceptance of University administration portrayals of Wayne State.³⁴ That is, this study has been more or less willing to accept at face value the claims made about Wayne State in institutional texts without interrogating how such claims reflect upon the motives of University administration. While I will say more shortly about the need for greater study of the composition of institutional texts, here I want to acknowledge that the texts treated in this dissertation are often the products of debate and discussion internal to the institution, and the final versions admittedly do not unproblematically and transparently reflect the often fraught tensions between institutional divisions—to say nothing of how such texts participate in building public profiles of institutions as they compete among each other for federal, state, and private funding. However, in answer to such objections, it is important to note that while such reservations about my publics approach to institutional texts are legitimate, the public audiences I assume for these texts—i.e., audiences in either Wayne State's local urban public or its wider academic research public—would be unlikely to

³⁴ I am grateful to Arthur Marotti, Distinguished Professor Emeritus in Wayne State's Department of English, for suggesting this oversight in a January 2015 grant-writing workshop. Professor Marotti suggested a need for a greater hermeneutics of suspicion in treating institutional texts, and the admission of this need in the main text above is an attempt to grapple with that suggestion.

have access to such internal wrangling. Rather, while such audiences may intuit such divisions from the final public versions of these texts (consider, for example, the likely circumstances behind the voice critical of relaxed admission standards in *Wayne and the Inner City*), few audiences of these texts will have cause or interest to investigate such internal conflicts. Given that this study is explicitly about Wayne State's *public* institutional texts, then, it makes some sense not to more fully address such issues.

Nevertheless, such limits might be addressed by further research. As suggested above, one limit to this study is an inattention to the processes through which the design and composition of institutional texts occurs. I admit the potential value of such a study. Given that much of my project focuses on how institutional texts reflect tensions surrounding institutional priorities, a study that traces how those priorities are established within the context of institutional life would be especially welcome. This might include, for example, studies of how bodies like Wayne State's Board of Governors or the Office of the President mark out the relative importance of different institutional activities before communicating them to public audiences; likewise, studies focused on the creation of one or more institutional texts (public or otherwise) would help fill in this admitted gap. Such studies might also consider how other processes internal to the institution are reflected in institutional texts' articulation of institutional public subjectivity. For example, decisions about hiring, tenure, and promotion take place amid institutionally-specific debates about institutional priorities as well as amid wider discussions of the value of a particular scholar's work to her field. Analyses of how such decisions reflect, and are reflected by, the ways that institutions establish their values and priorities would be a significant contribution to understanding institutional public subjectivity.

Similarly, my study is somewhat limited by its narrow focus on an institution of higher education. While I work in this chapter to theorize institutional public subjectivity broadly, I admit that such claims need to be understood as necessarily limited because formal studies of other kinds of institutions await the attention of future scholars. All the same, I argue that my method, a publics approach to institutional texts, could be deployed in studies of different kinds of institutions as well. Applying this publics approach to institutional texts to other kinds of institutions could open up for consideration the different processes through which different institutions enact their own forms of public subjectivity; this would mean too, of course, that scholars of public rhetoric investigating other such sites would first need to identify what kinds of institutional texts are native to such sites and execute their own judgment as to which among such texts might be relevant to their work. For example, this publics approach to institutional texts is an ideal critical tool for the study of anchor institutions, those “nonprofit institutions that once established tend not to move location” (“Anchor Institutions”). In Detroit, for example, Wayne State is one such anchor institution, alongside the Henry Ford Health System and the Detroit Medical Center. Like Wayne State, anchor institutions have long histories of engagement with the communities they serve; given my claims here, then, about the archival work concomitant with a publics approach to institutional texts, such anchor institutions would be ideal sites for such scholarship.

Beyond the avenues for future research implied by the limits of this study, there are other opportunities for future scholarship to engage the topics and texts I have worked with here. First, more work remains to be done to see how institutional public subjectivity operates and is supported by institutional texts in response to specific exigencies. Future scholarship can look more closely, for example, at not just how institutions address their publics, but how their publics

speak back to them. Such studies might emerge from focused analyses of sites and episodes at which the interests of the institution and the interests of one or more of its publics are at odds or are otherwise misaligned. Jenny Rice opens *Distant Publics* with such an episode, for instance, which saw the administration of the University of Texas-Austin remove a beloved stand of trees from the banks of Waller Creek, to much public outcry, to make room for an expanded football stadium (1-4). Such an episode might be productively complicated by the application of my publics approach to institutional texts, which might seek to contextualize the action of UTA's administration within the history of the institution, or to understand how such actions are legitimated or challenged by the institution's own institutional texts. Future scholarship might work to complicate the narratives of progress and expansion which institutional texts summon to legitimate the actions of institutional leadership.³⁵

Finally, as implied above, more work needs to be done to understand how the competing interests of stakeholders within institutions influence and determine how institutions articulate their roles as public subjects. As acknowledged above, institutions are complex entities, and future critics might open for investigation the way internal debate and discussion between groups of stakeholders influence institutional texts and institutional public subjectivity. Work in this vein might couple the publics approach to institutional texts I call for here with other research practices. For example, the institutional ethnography forwarded by sociologist Dorothy Smith in works like *Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology for People* seeks to "address the textual bases of institutions and the characteristic workings of institutional discourse" (3). Such approaches, combined with my publics approach, could generate rich interdisciplinary accounts of how the

³⁵ Wayne State is not without its own history of such episodes; as Charles Hyde writes in his introduction to Evelyn Aschenbrenner's *A History of Wayne State in Photographs*, the University City plan called for by President Keast (see Chapter Three), "faced sustained and militant opposition ... from a variety of Detroit political leaders and community groups," some of whom "viewed representatives of the university as arrogant, insensitive, and racist" (10-1).

relationships between individuals and institutions determine the shape of institutional public subjectivity.

I conclude this chapter, and this dissertation, by eagerly looking forward to the studies which might follow my own. Investigating my own institutional home in this dissertation has revealed a complexity to Wayne State that I could not have anticipated at this project's beginning. Discovering that the urban mission has its roots in the founding of Wayne State's precursor institutions, and that it has guided Wayne State's ambitions as much as it has limited them, inspire both admiration and frustration. On one hand, as a lifelong resident of Metro Detroit, I admire Wayne State all the more for its continued commitment to Detroit, even when preserving such commitments also means sustaining the decades-old canard that Wayne State is a lesser university for being an urban university. I am proud of Wayne State, and proud that through such commitments it has earned the right to bear the mantle, as President Wilson puts it, of the "good university." On the other hand, my work here has left me at times frustrated with Wayne State's vacillating on the extent and scale of its commitment to Detroit. While I believe unreservedly that Wayne State should remain committed to both its urban mission and its research mission, the fact that the relationship between those two commitments remains (and will likely forever remain) unresolved is frustrating because I cannot help but envision (especially while reading Keast) what achievements Wayne State could reach if it were not so. I am likewise frustrated by implications of an emergent "entrepreneurial culture" at Wayne State and what it might mean for departments like my own whose output cannot be easily commercialized. Future studies in the vein of this dissertation will, I predict, provoke similar considerations from other scholars of their own institutional homes.

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ABSTRACT**PUBLIC SUBJECTS: WAYNE STATE, INSTITUTIONAL TEXTS,
AND PUBLIC RHETORIC**

by

MICHAEL MCGINNIS**DECEMBER 2015****Advisor:** Dr. Ellen Barton**Major:** English**Degree:** Doctor of Philosophy

Applying a public sphere approach to Wayne State, I argue that the university has defined itself as a public subject within public debates about race, educational access, and economic development in the city of Detroit, even when such commitments to its local urban public sphere have existed uneasily alongside its ambition to function as a research university with a primary research mission within a wider public sphere of peer research universities. I focus on Wayne State University's urban mission and open for consideration the ways the university has both expanded and contracted its relationships to its local and academic public spheres in the past century and a half. This argument is developed by tracing the past, present, and possible future of the University's urban mission through readings of what I identify as institutional texts—texts created by, within, or on behalf of the University which make legible the ways in which Wayne State's role within its constituent publics has been continuously articulated and rearticulated since its founding nearly 150 years ago. The work in this dissertation contributes to scholarship in publics theory and public rhetoric, first, by arguing that tensions between publics are legibly inscribed in institutional texts; and second, by demonstrating a critical methodology for understanding institutions as public subjects.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Michael McGinnis joined the graduate program in English at Wayne State in the Fall 2006 semester. An alumnus of Wayne State (B.A., 2004; M.A. 2008), he has presented scholarship on a number of topics at national and regional conferences. A member of the English Department's adjunct faculty, Mr. McGinnis regularly teaches Technical Writing I and II when he's not dissertating. He is active on Twitter both under his own name on his academic-professional account (@aliasmcginnis) and as a minor "Weird Twitter" personality under the *nom du Twitter* "Ghost Sauce."