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JOSEPH KINMONT HART AND VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY:
ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND THE RISE AND FALL
OF A DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, 1930-1934

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No one can follow the history of academic freedom. . .without wondering at the fact that any society, interested in the immediate goals of solidarity and self-preservation, should possess the vision to subsidize free criticism and inquiry, and without feeling that the academic freedom we still possess is one of the remarkable achievements of man. At the same time. . .one cannot but be disheartened by the cowardice and self-deception that frail men use who want to be both safe and free.ⁱ

*Introduction and Overview*ⁱⁱ

Discussions of academic freedom inevitably bring out revolutionary and conservative forces concurrently. This conflict is apparent, for example, in the 1916 report of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).ⁱⁱⁱ On one hand, the university is viewed an “inviolable refuge” from various tyrannies, including the “tyranny of public opinion.” Here, professors are part of a revolutionary “intellectual experiment. . .where new ideas may germinate and where their fruit, though. . .[possibly] distasteful to the community as a whole, may be allowed to ripen. . .”^{iv} Accordingly, no professor “can be a successful teacher unless he [sic] enjoys the respect of his students, and their confidence in his intellectual integrity. It is clear, however, that this confidence will be impaired if there is suspicion on the part of the student that the teacher is not expressing himself fully or frankly, or that college and university teachers are in general a repressed and intimidated class who dare not speak with that candor and courage which youth always demands in those whom it is to esteem.”^v On the other hand, the liberty of the scholar “is conditioned by there being conclusions gained by a scholar’s method and held in

a scholar's spirit; that is to say, they must be the fruits of competent and patient and sincere inquiry, and they should be set forth with dignity, courtesy, and temperateness of language.”^{vi} How to rectify the apparent contradiction between expressing oneself “fully” and “frankly” while at the same time being “temperate” in language is, perhaps, a key feature in the long history of and the various debates about academic freedom.

That history includes periods when there was “no desire to promote an aggressive secularism or skepticism, but simply. . . a desire to advance the cause of higher education without getting ensnared in sectarian controversy.”^{vii} That history is also comprised of specific incidents like the Scott Nearing case at the University of Pennsylvania, the faculty at the University of Utah, and the situation at the University of Colorado.^{viii} These incidents each contributed to the larger history, in part, because each case provided contexts for investigating the parameters of academic freedom. One incident that has not received attention is the case of Joseph Kinmont Hart and Vanderbilt University. It is asserted here that the history of academic freedom is better understood when as many cases as possible are explored. The history of academic freedom is already peppered with detailed, contextual, and critical accounts, but they are infrequent. The examples and illustrations used in the history of academic freedom are helpful in highlighting theoretical claims like those of Veblen, Sinclair, Thurstone, Charters, and others. Thorstein Veblen's *The Higher Learning in America* and Upton Sinclair's *The Goose Step*, for example, represent interpretations of the role of faculty that support a more “full” and “frank” posture. Veblen's concern with “captains of erudition” was that business influences standardized and reified the university structure, the curriculum, and the expectations for teaching.^{ix} Examples are sprinkled amid the analysis. Sinclair was more direct. In defending

pacifist faculty and their academic freedom, Sinclair noted the case of “Professor Foerster of the University of Munich” who denounced the German government, but still kept his job.

Sinclair went on to note that “In all of Great Britain there was only one case during of the war of interference with academic freedom. . .Bertrand Russell. . . . But in America, which understands no kind of freedom except the freedom of mobs to suppress anybody they do not like, I know of just two great universities in which some man or group of men were not hounded from their positions, for pointing out this or that unwelcome truth to the public.”^x Still, the example (perhaps especially for Sinclair) is useful primarily in making a larger point, rather than scrutinizing the specifics of the case.

More cautionary positions are represented in the editorial comments of L.L. Thurstone and W.W. Charters. In 1930, Thurstone wrote in the *Journal of Higher Education* that academic freedom needed to be guarded. He broadly referred to cases when he argued for a defense of academic freedom by involving the “Association of University Professors” and having the organization effectively censure colleges and universities that encroached on academic freedom. Within his article, however, he noted that his “plan involves no violence in speech or action, and it does not challenge the legal right of the trustees of a university to decide matters of public policy.”^{xi} In 1936, W.W. Charters distinguished between freedom of speech and academic freedom by claiming that academic freedom entails the right to present the truth.^{xii}

His point was that a professor cannot champion one position over another and expect the right of academic freedom to hold. Free speech rights might protect such “espousals,” but free speech, he warned, should not be confused with academic freedom. Importantly, however, Charters admitted that in the social sciences, controversies over the “truth” were more common

and more problematic. Still, in his view, it was the responsibility of the professor to present a “balanced case” where enthusiasm for one position over another is not revealed. In the person of Joseph Hart and in the context of Vanderbilt, there is no question but that there was a struggle over academic freedom. This essay focuses on the specific case of Hart and Vanderbilt in order to more fully investigate the competing interpretations of academic freedom and to contribute to a more complete history of the topic. While much has been written about academic freedom, a detailed account and interpretation of one case is valuable insofar as it provides a deeper understanding of academic freedom by contextualizing the theoretical understandings of academic freedom.

Hart, as will be shown, demonstrated his allegiance to the view that “full,” “frank” criticism and devil’s advocacy “candor” were essential features of academic freedom. He tested the distinctions between academic freedom and freedom of speech and may have crossed those boundaries intentionally, i.e., pressing a view of the professorate that ultimately was not widely held in an effort to shift from the more “temperate” view to the more “full” and “frank” one. Given that the 1916 AAUP report provides student respect as one criterion for teaching success, however, and given that teaching is one forum in which academic freedom is demonstrated, this essay raises questions about the shifting boundaries of academic freedom. Hart met the standard set by the 1916 AAUP report regarding student admiration, and this essay provides evidence of his lasting influence in the lives of his students. The overarching point, again, is to contribute to the larger historical debate about academic freedom by asking whether Hart was justified in pushing the boundaries he apparently pushed, given both the more “temperate” context of Vanderbilt and the general history of academic freedom.

More specifically, was Hart terminated because of his ideological stances or for personal reasons? Are these concepts easily distinguishable? Did Vanderbilt's chancellor, James Kirkland, have any personal disdain for Hart separate from professional considerations? If so, did personality and power have an impact on the final decision to fire Hart? Ultimately, this study asks what lessons might be learned as a consequence of Hart's situation. An underlying concern is the degree to which one's personality and one's politics influence a career and what role, if any, academic freedom plays in protecting contested ideas, research, and teaching practices.

The shortest version of the story is that Vanderbilt University decided to open a department of education in 1929 and brought Hart in to chair it in 1930. After four years, the department was closed and Hart was dismissed. The officially stated reasons for the closing and dismissal were: (1) funding constraints and (2) the failure of the department to live up to expectations. This paper intends to show that funding was neither a justifiable reason for dismissing Hart nor for closing the department. Further, the claim that the department failed to meet expectations will be interpreted in light of three key issues: (1) the rift between Peabody College and Vanderbilt; (2) competing educational philosophies (exemplified in teaching styles, grading differences, and diametrically opposed views on the roles of students) between the chancellor and many of the faculty on one hand and Hart on the other; and (3) an Honor Code controversy that culminated in an editorial in the student newspaper that outraged the chancellor and influential professors on campus. Several communications between Hart, Kirkland, and W.W. Cook (general secretary of the AAUP) are included to highlight the specific charges Hart made relating to academic freedom.^{xiii} Beyond the specifics of Vanderbilt and

Hart, however, this essay explores the tensions between the “full” and “frank” view of academic freedom and the more “temperate” interpretation. Not intending a simplistic conclusion based on a dualistic interpretation of academic freedom, this work nonetheless raises questions regarding the professorate and any lessons Hart’s case might reveal for those in the academy who hold more “full” and “frank” stances and any academic freedom implications that might follow.

The Rising Star from Cresco County

Hart was born and raised in Columbia City, Cresco County, Indiana as one of five brothers and three sisters.^{xiv} He went to Franklin College in Franklin, Indiana, and interrupted his studies to serve in the Spanish-American War in 1898. Hart earned his A.B. degree in 1900 and immediately went on to the University of Chicago for graduate study with William Rainey Harper, William I. Thomas, and George Herbert Meade. Hart interrupted his studies to teach mathematics and history in Ottumwa, Iowa in 1902. After two years, and after marrying Lulu Calvert (in 1903), he returned to the University of Chicago as a “Fellow” in 1904.^{xv} Hart graduated in 1909 and his dissertation, *A Critical Study of Current Theories of Moral Education*, was published by the University of Chicago Press in 1910.^{xvi}

After Chicago, Hart taught at Baker University in Baldwin, Kansas. It was at Baker that Hart found an eager young student named George S. Counts. Hart’s influence on Counts is left to some speculation, perhaps as it must be with any teacher-student relationship. Nonetheless, Counts, like Hart, studied Dewey and earned his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. As Potts points out, “both [men] were strong, outspoken theorists of social and educational reform, both close followers of Dewey, both editors, and both voiced their program as strong public

speakers. In the end, however, Counts' influence . . . rose steadily in later years, while Hart's star faded from view."^{xvii}

In 1910, Hart left Baker for a position at the University of Washington. In Seattle, Hart demonstrated the connection between his ideas and practice by becoming involved in community activities. He worked with the YMCA, the Seattle Playground and Recreation Association, the Municipal League, and the Central Council of Social Agencies (a council he helped organize). Hart also served as chairman for the State Conference of Charities and Corrections, an organization that dealt with immigration concerns like exploitation and discrimination in the Seattle area—issues considered critical in the Northwest at the turn of the century. Hart argued for equality, inclusiveness, and labor rights.^{xviii} He occasionally published harsh reports about area businesses and manufacturing interests, giving rise to his being named a liberal or radical crusader. At Washington, Hart's rising star plummeted in 1915, five years after coming to the university. Strife within the department of education and uncertainty at the university^{xix} became so bad that interim president Henry Landes fired the entire department.^{xx} The *[Seattle] Star*, in reporting on Hart's ultimate demise at Washington, regarded him as "a leader of the movement for social and industrial justice in the state, and [as a result] reactionary members of the legislature at one time threatened to cut off the appropriations of the university if Hart and others of radical tendencies were retained."^{xxi} Hart initiated one of the earliest AAUP cases arguing that he was unfairly dismissed. He lost. His departure, however, did not detract from the fact that Hart was very well regarded by his students and the broader Seattle community.^{xxii} He left Washington to go to Reed College in Portland, Oregon in 1916.^{xxiii}

Reed, too, proved to be the setting for a battle over Hart's radicalism, perceived or real,

by community leaders, legislators, and members of the board of trust.^{xxiv} In this case, Hart and Reed College president William Foster were in the center of the controversy. World War I became the problem in two ways: ideologically and practically. Both Foster and Hart were outspoken critics of the war and Portland residents became increasingly upset by what they perceived to be anti-patriotic rhetoric. In fact, Foster and Hart had questions, like many other academics, regarding the reasons for the war and whether democracy was the actual and/or justifiable reason for committing the country to a world war. Because Hart served in the Spanish-American War, he used his veteran status to undercut charges that he had no standing to make anti-war claims. In fact, Hart (with others at the time) was arguing for using democracy as a litmus test to justify U.S. participation in World War I.^{xxv}

In 1919, Hart requested a one year leave from Reed College in order to broaden his experiences and further his research and writing. With Foster, his ally, as president of Reed, it was assumed that all would be fine, but Foster was not only battling over ideology, he was also battling over finances and *his* future. The war wreaked havoc at Reed. Faculty left, student enrollment dropped, and Foster (considered a luminary as president) was forced out. When Hart tried to return, Foster was not there to let him in. Instead, there was a faculty governing board that was charged with reform and with “looking ahead.” Given Reed’s background and the goal of “looking ahead,” it is somewhat of a perverse irony that Hart, considered a progressive and one interested in reform and perpetually “looking ahead,” was not allowed back at Reed.^{xxvi} It was 1920 and he was out of work again, forcing him to the retreat to which he repeatedly escaped in Seabeck, Washington. He considered his time in Seabeck part self-imposed exile and part sanctuary, referring to Seabeck in Thoreau-like terms as going “to the woods” to write

and read. In 1922, Upton Sinclair published *The Goose Step*. In that book, Sinclair defends Hart in both the University of Washington and Reed College cases. Noted Sinclair about Hart's firing from Washington, "A great many people thought this was a trick and Hart's students protested bitterly, but in vain."^{xxvii} Concerning Reed, or what Sinclair considered a college of the lumber trust, "Professor Hart, who was away doing war work, was authorized to stay away!"^{xxviii} Sinclair essentially concluded that Hart's "frankness" and "candor" were "out of step" with increasingly traditional and reactionary administrations.

After Reed, Hart did not seek out another academic position. As he then wrote about his life in *Light from the North*,

I had taught little children and high school youths, and college men and women. I had worked for years helping prepare teachers to be educational leaders of their communities rather than mere mechanical drudges in classrooms. When denied the opportunity longer to do work of this sort, I had taken up the teaching of adults on new lines.^{xxix}

Hart's "new line" was as associate editor of *The Survey*, a weekly periodical dealing with social reform.^{xxx} At *The Survey*, Hart seemed to find his niche. He wrote a regular column called "Social Studies," dealing with a variety of issues that were expected to "stir up" readers. He was still interested in being an agitator, in the sense that he wanted people not to take questions as an affront, but as the key feature of a free and democratic society. His articles, at first only a few paragraphs in length but growing to two pages by the time he left the journal, typically began with a specific topic. He would outline, define, and clarify the issue before raising a series of questions (much like the Socrates of Plato's dialogues). Perhaps the arrangement with *The Survey* provided Hart with the kind of security from which he could explore his questions

without serious risk of being run out of town. *The Survey*, after all, was interested in debate and inquiry. Hart wrote for *The Survey* from 1920-1926, after which time he went to Europe to recapture what he considered the dwindling hope of true progressive reform of American schools. Hart's travels took him to Denmark where he came upon Danish folk schools and, as though in an epiphany, Hart saw in Denmark what, in part, he had been arguing for all along.^{xxxix} Upon returning to New York from Europe in 1926, Hart had what became his most productive year. Between 1926 and 1927, he published four books.^{xxxix} Three of the books articulated a vision of education that Hart frequently advocated, but with the success of his recent trip, he wrote with a justified satisfaction that the ideas not only *could*, but *did* work in practice.

Schools were not to be places where crowds of children are herded together to have information passed to them. Where is the freedom of inquiry in that? Indeed, if the Danish folk schools indicated anything at all, they symbolized humane interactions of individuals eager to participate in their own learning. Cooperative in nature, devoid of a restrictive and imposed hierarchy, schools were to be extensions of democratic, active social communities--not holding pens for the preparation of unquestioning beings.^{xxxix} Hart felt that the usual questions about structure, grading, and the bookishness of required curricula missed the more general, but also more difficult, goal of developing a "whole person." As Hart wrote in 1927,

. . .the greatest task of the school to-day is that of escaping from its scholasticisms, and of finding how to help people to discover for themselves real shares in the life of history and contemporary undertaking; how to release their own curiosities, and inquisitivenesses, and how to transform their momentary musings upon difficulties into permanent methods of dealing with those difficulties effectively and honestly. It is in this way that "mind" will come to its full fruition--as "knower," as "critic," as cultivator of wide relationships and meanings.^{xxxix}

Said another way, Hart wanted variety and a lack of restriction which would allow young people,

and adults,^{xxxv} to reach potentials and go beyond formulaic and procedural “coverage” of material. In the words of Maxine Greene, Hart wanted people to recognize the difference between “having more and being more” and to find meaning and value in the latter rather than unthinkingly accepting the former.^{xxxvi}

Hart’s contacts in the publishing world, combined with the contacts he made at *The Survey*, came in handy when he decided to try his hand again at university teaching. This time, Hart was headed for the University of Wisconsin. At Wisconsin, Hart was well known for his views on adult education and became associated with the Extension Division at the university. He was brought in, as in previous years, by the university president. In this case, Wisconsin’s president Glen Frank, much like Reed College’s president William Foster, sought to change the “standard mold” of traditional college life.^{xxxvii} Seeing the role of extension campuses in much the same way as agricultural extension offices, i.e., closely linked to the community and its needs, Frank’s disenchantment with the university’s Extension Division came to a head in 1927. The Division had, according to Potts, “diminished from its former vigorous public service work and fell back upon an unexciting program of correspondence courses.”^{xxxviii} Frank brought Hart in to work with the dean of the division, Chester Snell, and to plan and implement the new Milwaukee Extension Center. Unfortunately, Hart repeated the pattern he seemed to have set up in Washington and carried over to Reed. He was an inspiring teacher, with very strong support from students and select faculty. He was an instigator of change, often speaking out “fully” and “frankly” against traditional schooling and “bookish” educational plans. In the process of accomplishing excellent teaching, close advising, and community action, Hart

nonetheless alienated many of his colleagues. In 1929, the dean of the College of Education, C.J. Anderson, argued to Frank that Hart should not be reappointed. Only with Frank's persuasion did Hart get another appointment, and when word leaked that it was debated whether Hart should stay or go, people lined up in familiar ways: administrators and many faculty colleagues on one side against Hart, students, select faculty, and liberal members of the community on the other side in favor of Hart. Even those who admired Hart admitted that he had turned himself from a "gadfly" to a "hornet."^{xxxix}

In Cronon and Jenkins' *The University of Wisconsin: A History, 1925-1945*, the authors characterize Hart this way:

Joseph K. Hart soon emerged as another important figure in the Wisconsin effort. Appointed acting professor of the philosophy of education in 1927, Hart was a much-published advocate of adult education. His arrogance soon alienated many of his UW faculty colleagues, but he nevertheless functioned as [the] Extension's equivalent of Alexander Meiklejohn, whose views he shared and lauded.^{xi}

Recognizing the return of his controversial standing and the entailing struggle to keep his job, Hart must have seen "the writing on the wall." It was a coincidence that James Kirkland, Chancellor of Vanderbilt University, contacted Hart in 1929 for his advice on a suitable candidate to head a new department of education at Vanderbilt. Hart nominated himself.

The Vanderbilt-Peabody-Hart Nexus

Hart's national reputation (versus his personal reputation) was likely what propelled him to be Kirkland's choice.^{xli} Hart and Kirkland also exchanged a variety of letters leading up to Hart's appointment.^{xlii} In those letters, Kirkland made it clear that he was interested in establishing a department of education around the liberal arts. Hart put forward a series of claims that clarified his position in relation to Vanderbilt. The three-page commentary that

provided the foundation for such a department apparently impressed Kirkland so much so that Hart was offered a senior faculty position that paid \$5,000 per year.^{xliii} Kirkland wanted a liberal arts approach to the study of education, as opposed to a “professional” approach that would emphasize methods courses and teacher training seminars. Recall that Hart’s position, like Dewey’s, was against “traditional” schooling and his ideas about liberal arts paralleled his ideas on “moral education.” That is, Hart saw the study of history, philosophy, and sociology as foundations for critically questioning social ills. While Hart and Kirkland used the phrase “liberal arts,” it could be argued that Kirkland emphasized an elitist interpretation of the phrase whereas Hart emphasized a more broad and general interpretation. Hart noted,

It seems to me. . . as a student of the more intimate educational processes and influences, that if Vanderbilt—as a modern university—is to do the work of education as well, these days as it did its work forty years ago, we, of today, must undertake to find out how to relate our efforts to the actual interests of the students and the realistic needs of the age as intimately as the efforts of forty years ago were related to the needs and interests of forty years ago; and we must find out how to do these things, even in this difficult time, so that the results we achieve will still, for the best of our students, at least, be a “liberal education.” Maybe it will not be exactly the same “liberal education” in content, as was the old. But, fortunately, the word “liberal” does not imply a specific content: it implies a result—the man who has achieved freedom of mind and of action in the midst of the world.^{xliv}

Hart also outlined four competing lines of “educational leadership:” (1) traditional and classical schooling that had an order to it that chafed modern educational realities; (2) “teachers college” thinking which injected method and procedure into the older order; (3) the progressive approach which was more laissez-faire and student-centered (and, in Hart’s view, less than successful); and (4) an integration of all of the preceding, using Socrates and Plato and Aristotle and exemplars of intellectual virtue insofar as they acted and demonstrated the processes that were both academic and timely.^{xlv}

As though anticipating that his ideas might be misinterpreted as derisive of tradition, Hart noted that “none of this is contemptuous of the past.” Still, “the wheels must be kept going around. Young people must pay some price for having been born in this age. Our schools and colleges are caught-between two worlds, one almost dead, the other seemingly powerless to be completely born. Too much talk is not good-nor is too little. We must go slowly, lest we lose vital values out of the past; but we must *go*, lest we stagnate and the world gets clean away from all interest in cultural things.”^{xlvi} Perhaps more speech than academic treatise, Hart’s overview of education nonetheless apparently appealed to Kirkland. By balancing his critique of the “old” with an even more clear critique of the “new,” Hart may have appeared to Kirkland to be a moderate or “more objective” figure than he actually was. His national reputation as an author and speaker could have also been a key reason for bringing Hart to Vanderbilt. Regardless, Hart was hired to start the new department for academic year 1930-1931.

Even with the characterization of turning from a “gadfly” to a “hornet,” Hart could not have been prepared for the “hornet’s nest” he was about to encounter. Peabody and Vanderbilt represented competing interests regarding education and the history of their disputes provides an important context for understanding Hart and his case. Kirkland had been interested in duplicating Columbia University and its Teachers College from as far back as 1898.^{xlvii} In 1867 George Peabody, the Massachusetts industrialist and philanthropist, donated \$1 million to aid the reconstruction of the post-Civil War south by means of schooling. In 1889, Peabody donated another \$1 million and thereby fully established the Peabody Trust. The University of Nashville was the largest recipient and its normal school, re-named Peabody Normal, was targeted to become a new teachers’ college for the southeast region of the U.S. Such a change was a large

one and the lofty goals for the region were made even more grand by suggesting Teachers College as the model to emulate. Conkin notes:

From his first secret plotting in 1898, [Kirkland] worked to duplicate the experiment at Columbia University. This meant, to him, a separation of Peabody from the old University of Nashville, the transfer of the college from south Nashville to an area on, or adjacent to, Vanderbilt, and some mode of affiliation with Vanderbilt that would allow a sharing of teachers and courses but permit a nonsectarian Peabody to accept both state and Peabody funds. In brief, he wanted to add a Peabody College to the educational resources of Vanderbilt without assuming any responsibility for its funding.^{xlviii}

Some complex issues converge here. At the turn of the nineteenth century, Vanderbilt was undergoing a painful split from the Methodist church at the same time Kirkland was attempting to bring Peabody closer to the Vanderbilt campus. At the same time, however, another powerful Nashville figure, James D. Porter, a former governor of Tennessee and then-president of the University of Nashville, was working hard to secure the Peabody funds and keep the new teachers' college on his campus in south Nashville. Porter, in fact, engineered an \$800,000 "matching funds" campaign and, in 1903, promoted the legislation that cleared the way for Peabody—presumably on the south Nashville location.

The Peabody College initiative was not just a local matter. At the 1905 meeting of the Peabody Fund trustees, Theodore Roosevelt, J.P. Morgan, and Daniel Coit Gilman, among others, were in attendance. Gilman had been lobbied heavily by Kirkland, but the trustees were lobbied with equal tenacity by Porter. Where Porter was public in his dealings with the board, Kirkland was surreptitious. Conkin claims that there was a "whirlwind of lobbying" and in one instance, Kirkland was meeting with trustee Wallace Buttrick when Porter arrived. "Kirkland slipped out the back door so as not to be recognized."^{xlix}

When the board voted to liquidate the Peabody Fund, it also voted to locate the new

teachers' college in Nashville. Porter assumed this meant the south Nashville site. Kirkland continued to work behind the scenes to move the location. In a confidential report drafted by Wallace Buttrick, the sum of \$5 million was estimated to be what was needed to establish the new school. At best the Peabody Fund had only \$3 million. However, if the school was located next to Vanderbilt and the two schools cooperated, Buttrick claimed that \$2 million could be saved. "The confidential committee report," notes Conkin, "left Nashville in the dark about any contemplated move of the campus. But Porter [ultimately] saw the new scheme as a betrayal of past commitments. The local publicity began in 1907 after [Porter] resigned as a trustee of the Peabody Fund to fight for his south [Nashville] campus site."¹

Kirkland was already fighting a battle to wrest control of Vanderbilt from the Methodist church. Porter used this fact to argue that Kirkland was "not only trying to steal the university from the Methodist church but that, as part of the same plot, he was also trying to steal the Peabody Fund."ⁱⁱ The only real hope Porter had was that the court case brought by the Methodist bishops would succeed and thus leave a sectarian Vanderbilt to block affiliation with Peabody. Before that final verdict, however, it was realized that the Peabody trustees had the final say such that they could withdraw their money and locate the college somewhere other than Nashville entirely. In 1909 the Nashville city council approved (after first rejecting) issuing the bonds to fund the project. Conkin poignantly writes that "one can only feel sad for [Porter] . . . for he actually did more than anyone else to win Peabody for Nashville. In 1909, before incorporation of the new George Peabody College, he resigned as president of the now doomed Peabody Normal, grandiosely suggesting Woodrow Wilson or possibly John Dewey as his worthy successors to head the new college."^{lii}

While it may appear that Kirkland won, it turned out to only be victory in the battle and not the war. Grandiose though Porter's recommended successors might have been, a surface symbolism nonetheless appears. That is, Porter missed an important irony: if one considers Wilson more like Kirkland than Dewey, Wilson or someone Wilson- or Kirkland-esque would truly prove Kirkland the winner--insofar as their "temperateness" would be complimentary rather than contradictory and "affiliation" could be seen as mutually beneficial. If Dewey or someone of his more "full" and "frank" bent were chosen to lead Peabody, Kirkland might continue to be frustrated such that Porter, southern gentleman though he was, would be able to achieve some perverse sense of justice or revenge. In fact, when Bruce R. Payne was named as the new president of Peabody, Porter should have been able to feel some sense of satisfaction.^{liii}

A student of the very John Dewey Porter suggested, Payne was a recognized expert in educational philosophy. His interest in progressivism, mass education, and experimental teaching techniques were in stark contrast to Kirkland's educational elitism. "Payne's more egalitarian social outlook also contrasted with Kirkland's staunch advocacy of law and order and of highly nuanced southern racial and class relationships."^{liv} Payne also proved himself to be a gifted leader and fund-raiser.

He eventually raised \$1.5 million to match an equal amount eventually awarded by the Peabody trustees, temporarily making Peabody a richer institution than Vanderbilt. Payne very much wanted to be his own man and Peabody to be a distinct and separate institution. He simply did not want Peabody's classrooms in Vanderbilt's backyard.^{lv}

Payne's independent stance was not at all what Kirkland had in mind and the two men were at odds from the very beginning. The relationship between Payne and Kirkland turned out to be not much more than polite and sometimes it was less than cordial. Payne was the force behind the construction and architecture of the Peabody campus, using the University of Virginia (from

where Payne had been hired) as the model for its central quadrangle. This point is only significant in that Payne used the land Vanderbilt sold Peabody specifically for dorms and residences. The rest of the land was procured from the Thompson estate and the defunct Roger Williams University and the main buildings were located on those tracts. This was not what Kirkland had in mind when he devised the deal to move Peabody from south Nashville to next to Vanderbilt. Kirkland was so furious that he demanded in a letter to Payne a return of the unused land.^{lvi} Importantly, in the land-swap deal for the south Nashville campus, Vanderbilt actually paid \$33,000 as part of the trade.^{lvii} When Kirkland failed to reach a gentleman's agreement, the Vanderbilt Board of Trust approached the Peabody Board of Trust and offered to buy back the unused land at fair market value. In 1914, Vanderbilt ended up paying \$162,000 which further soured relations between the two institutions and their leaders.

While it is true that Payne and Kirkland remained "intensely jealous and suspicious" of each other,^{lviii} Walter Fleming, the dean of Arts and Sciences, appears to have added to the strife by being even more condescending and disrespectful than Kirkland regarding Peabody's educational philosophy, faculty, students, and courses. Perhaps operating on a general contempt for normal schools, Fleming's view is partly borne out in fact. Emerging out of the common school movement of the 1830s, normal school course work generally lasted only two years. They did not always require high school graduation nor did they always include studies in the arts and sciences. The teachers of future teachers were not typically well-regarded, in part because they did not themselves always have the same degrees as college or university professors.^{lix} It is important to note, therefore, that Payne brought only one faculty member from the old Peabody Normal, intentionally setting out to find the most qualified faculty he

could for the new college. Of the seventeen new hires prior to opening the college, only four were in the arts and sciences. The rest were specialists in pedagogy, agriculture, school administration, psychology, and manual training.^{lx} This point is significant because Payne's version of Peabody College was more progressive in a practical sense than Hart's vision of teacher education and far more progressive than Kirkland's view of college work.

Peabody's success in building an enormous graduate program in education also highlighted some incongruities. While Fleming berated the quality of Peabody students, Vanderbilt faculty flocked to Peabody to teach during its very popular, heavily attended (and therefore hugely successful) summer term. Peabody students, in return, wanted to continue taking courses during the regular academic year—when the Vanderbilt faculty members were back “at Vanderbilt.” A joint graduate degree was developed as a result and Peabody students could take up to half of their course work at Vanderbilt, while required to complete their theses at Peabody. The converse would be true for Vanderbilt students. What this meant in practice, however, was that many Peabody students took advantage of the opportunity, while hardly any Vanderbilt students did. As a result, when Vanderbilt established its new Ph.D. program in 1927, it asked Peabody to deny its students access to the program. “The request struck a sensitive nerve,” writes Conkin, “for what it communicated to Peabody was a Vanderbilt effort to segregate its graduate program. Such an interpretation accurately reflected the feeling of at least Dean [Walter] Fleming and some of his faculty.”^{lxi}

Payne was furious and took his concerns to the General Education Board (GEB), the governing body established to carry out the mission of the Peabody Fund. Vanderbilt relented, but Peabody tried to inaugurate its own Ph.D. programs in arts and sciences, which were also

ruled against by the GEB. The point here is that the GEB still upheld the cooperative agreement aspects that had been worked out between the two institutions as features of getting Peabody funds and relocating the campus next to Vanderbilt. While the dream of a “joint university center” was quickly fading, affiliation and cooperation were still seen as vital to the development of the South.

Fleming suggested, as early as 1926, that Vanderbilt give up on the lost cause of Peabody affiliation. He claimed that the philosophy was wrong, the students and faculty were inferior, and the curriculum lacked rigor. Kirkland had to have been tempted, but he knew that such a move would be the sharpest rebuke of Payne and Peabody and the GEB would not be persuaded by the ideological arguments he or Fleming might put forward. Instead, Kirkland and Fleming devised a pedantic dilemma that would serve as the foundation for establishing a new department of education: scheduling. Vanderbilt students needed certain courses for certification, but the times they were offered seemed to conflict with the course schedule at Vanderbilt. The GEB bought the logic, and Vanderbilt had approval to start the new department.

Peabody and Vanderbilt are in some ways *not* unique in their struggles and strife. Even the model on which Kirkland had secretly plotted to emulate, Teachers College and Columbia, was rife with controversy. In 1882, Nicholas Murray Butler was appointed by Columbia president Henry Barnard to offer Saturday lectures for teachers. The turn-out was enormous. Over 2,000 teachers applied, but the Columbia trustees refused to authorize a department of education. When Butler organized the New York College for the Training of Teachers, in 1892, it was finally accepted as an affiliate of Columbia, but over strong opposition.^{lxii} One reason for concern might have been the peculiar history of normal schools noted earlier and their tarnished

academic reputations. Nonetheless, with a changing industrial economy and increase in immigration came an increased demand for schools and teachers to staff them. By 1875, at least 70 normal schools received state support. By 1900, the figure rose to 345.^{lxiii} Still, it was unusual to find departments of education in major universities staffed with more than one person until around the 1910s and 1920s. The University of Iowa established a chair for pedagogy in 1873. The University of Wisconsin did the same thing in 1879. Indiana and Cornell followed suit in 1886. What makes the Peabody/Vanderbilt case interesting is that Peabody was already developing into its own college and, while criticized by some for a lack of academic rigor, still “advanced professional teacher preparation in the United States. [It’s] very existence disputed the common notion that anyone could teach, regardless of their preparation.”^{lxiv} Peabody professors, like those in other normal schools and teachers’ colleges, “produced a professional literature on educational history, philosophy, curriculum, and methods of instruction. The concept of a the model or demonstration school led to the practice that prospective teachers should have a supervised clinical experience that included practice teaching.”^{lxv}

What is also interesting is that while Kirkland wanted to model a Peabody and Vanderbilt connection like Teachers College and Columbia, the histories were backward. That is, Columbia trustees blocked the initiative to establish a college for teachers. Vanderbilt trustees actually wanted Peabody. When it literally moved next door but became farther and farther out of reach (because of the ambition of Peabody’s president and the incongruity of that ambition with Kirkland’s vision), a department of education at Vanderbilt was born out of frustration. It also was partly as a slap in the face to Peabody—the very institution Vanderbilt wanted all along. With Hart as head of the new department, he would face an increasingly

successful, fully staffed, and independent college for teachers directly across the street.

Hart's Life at Vanderbilt

Once he arrived in Nashville, Hart put into practice the general outline of ideas he submitted to Kirkland, even though he emphasized critique and a kind of bold Socratic confrontation. The department, like others at the time (but in contrast to Peabody), had two teachers but only one faculty member.^{lxvi} Initially, the department offered two courses: an undergraduate course titled History and Philosophy of Education; and a graduate course titled Problems of College Teaching. As an indication of initial success, the course offerings were expanded to include two more undergraduate courses in 1931. Students may not have flocked to the new department, but the archives show classes of between 12 and 31. Classes were generally full, in other words, and Hart had students taking more than one class with him at a time.

Beyond classes, Hart established his new life at Vanderbilt by developing the kind of rapport with his students that characterized his work with students at Washington, Reed, and Wisconsin. He was open and available to his students and encouraged interaction outside of the classroom. According to Elizabeth Read, one of Hart's students, Hart "would invite students in small groups (about 3 or 4) to come to his apartment in the evening. He and his wife would serve tea and cookies and then he would encourage conversation and discussion about any subject that might come to mind."^{lxvii} Another of Hart's students, Kathryn G. Millspaugh, also recalls the gatherings. "Dr. and Mrs. Hart entertained his students in small groups meetings in their apartment on Church St. near the campus. The get-togethers were cordial and enjoyable."^{lxviii}

The courses Hart taught provided him with a platform from which to challenge his students and the status quo. The way the classes were conducted and the expectations he had for his students differed from many of his colleagues. In short, Hart's style was bold. He was argumentative and challenging in ways that contrasted with what most of the students at Vanderbilt were used to experiencing. According to Adelaide Shull Davis, a student of Hart's in 1933,

Having heard that the way to get good grades in his classes was to pick a subject (of my own choosing) and research it at the library (which, of course, always appealed to co-eds) and expound at great length upon it in class—and I would establish myself as a “student” and could relax. Consequently, I followed this course and was rewarded when I finished my exposé by the remark from Dr. Hart: “Miss Shull, I believe you have the most mediocre mind it has ever been my pleasure to come in contact with”! First semester I received a C, next a B, and next year straight As, so I must have improved!^{lxix}

The improvement to which Mrs. Davis refers is not only due to perseverance, but to a growing appreciation of the difference Hart represented as a member of the faculty. The contrast is apparent in Davis' recollection of other professors with whom she studied. She notes that

. . . some of the more conventional teachers, such as Dr. [Edwin] Mims and Dr. [D.C.] Cabeen resented the fact that Dr. Hart played “Devil's Advocate” by questioning why we were studying classics and foreign languages—actually he, himself. . . knew the classics and appreciated the importance of all forms of knowledge—but he wanted us to establish reasons for ourselves for taking courses and caring about learning.^{lxx}

Other students of Hart remember his classes and their experiences with him in a similar way.

Samuel H. Moorer recalls that

the courses of. . .Hart. . .had a profound influence on my conception of what education should be all about. His first hand study of the “Folk Schools” of Denmark contributed to his definition of education as a necessary life-long process of learning. . . .I well remember that early on he advised us that if we expected to learn the minutia of classroom management, teaching techniques, etc., such courses were available across the street at Peabody College. . . .[Hart] was both blunt and scathing in his criticism of much that went on in the name of “education.” It is not surprising that he had a few enemies on campus.^{lxxi}

Hart did alienate some of the more conventional professors, D.C. Cabeen being one of his biggest enemies.^{lxxii} Cabeen, a Latin professor, was upset that Hart challenged students to develop reasons in support of studying classics. According to Mrs. Davis, however, Hart's point was not that classics should not be studied, but that the lessons from classics be applicable to solving social issues in the present. Cabeen became a vocal critic concerning grade distributions in the department of education, too. He became increasingly upset at having questions raised about his field and seeing otherwise successful students fail courses in a department he held in low esteem. Cabeen was only one of a small but growing number of faculty to look with derision upon Hart. It should be noted, however, that Hart established positive relationships with members of the faculty as well. Curtis Walker, of the history department, was one of Hart's defenders and closest colleagues, as was (at least ultimately) Herbert Sanborn of the philosophy department.

Further recollections of Hart's teaching shed more light on his approach. Writes Kathryn

Millspaugh,

Ben West, who was later Nashville's last mayor before [incorporation into] Metro [Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County], and Thomas Anderson, a future publisher of a conservative newspaper, were the most vocal students. They were usually poles apart on issues discussed. Students enjoyed their exchanges. Dr. Hart did not appear to notice the loss of his teaching time because of the two students' intrusions.^{lxxiii}

Given Hart's desire for student exchanges, having two students from different camps debating in class is very plausibly the exact thing Hart wanted in his classes. Far from an intrusion, the arguments between West and Anderson were likely what Hart valued most. He was not satisfied with perfunctory class meetings where lectures were the standard. It would be

characteristic of Hart not to “notice” the shift in focus from him to his students. Indeed, students as the center of inquiry, learning, and debates were consistent with Dewey’s theories and Danish folk school ideology. There is one memory of Hart that may be the quintessential illustration of his approach to teaching. Elizabeth Read remembers that

...one day there was a fairly heavy snowfall. Dr. Hart announced that he would dismiss our class if we would go outside and have a real snowball fight. We accepted this opportunity for class “cut.” The next time class met, Dr. Hart announced that was the most genuine “activity” he had seen on campus since he had been there.^{lxxiv}

What Hart likely meant by his comment was that students at Vanderbilt were far too immersed in the routines of student life. They acted in perfunctory ways and while they may have engaged in activities, they were typically school sponsored and with a long-standing tradition (dances, general lectures, Homecoming Courts, clubs, fraternities and sororities, etc.). The snowball fight Ms. Read recalls represents a less contrived event—one in which students engaged more because the opportunity presented itself and less because it was expected. While it is true that Hart initiated the activity (and thus undermined the claim that it really was genuine in the sense that it was student-initiated), compared to the rest of the life students led at Vanderbilt, Hart obviously thought it was activity of a different (and better) kind.

Grades, an Honor Code, and the End of a Department of Education

Specifically regarding grades, Hart held a very different view from many of his Vanderbilt colleagues. Hart’s students had to demonstrate inquiry by challenging assumptions, deeply held routines, and the status quo. Given that most Vanderbilt classes were conventional, problems were inevitable. Memorizing information in order to do well on exams is not what Hart had in mind. He wanted thoughtful papers, that is, papers that represented the students’ perspectives and questions. The point was less about assigning grades and more about students

engaged in a continuous process of reflection and inquiry. He had little patience for students who had “mastered the grading game” but who were uninterested and uninspired learners. Students knew how to pass classes, but that was not Hart’s point. He wanted students to have some life about them--be interested in their studies--and Hart did everything he could to shake up the comfort level of the “solid” students in his classes.

What compounded Hart’s problem on the issue of grading was that, in arguing for a more progressive stance, he was interpreted by some of the faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences (D.C. Cabeen foremost among the faction) to mean lax standards.^{lxxv} A perennial problem for education faculty, perhaps, Hart was ultimately compelled to write a letter to Kirkland explaining the general situation in which he found himself in 1932. Caught between what Hart saw as advancing critical argumentation in his classes on one hand, and being accused of what might be called the “only-a-class-where-students-talk” invective on the other hand, Hart put his case to Kirkland. He listed the grades students received in his classes and compared their grades to the grades they received in other (non-education) classes.

In my two undergraduate courses, there are 76 juniors and seniors. Thirteen of them are taking two courses in education, so that I have 89 undergraduate registrations in all.

These 76 students made a grand total of 379 grades in all their courses, last term. These grades were distributed as follows: 91 made A; 163 made B; 101 made C; 22 made D; and 1 F. . . The total grades. . .are distributed as follows: 24% are A; 43% are B; 27% are C; 5% are D. Now please consider my grades – given to these same students: I gave 15 A; 34 B; 32 C; 7 D; and 1 F. These distribute as follows: 17% were given A; 38% B; 36% C; and 8% D – with 1 student given F. . .On this showing, does it not appear that the

charge that students are earning easy credits in my classes is a bit insecurely founded?
Of course, I know there are other tests besides this of grades; but this test cannot be
ignored; at least it ought not to be ignored by those who put great emphasis [sic] upon
grades.^{lxxvi}

In 1933, Hart again had to respond to rumors and accusations regarding his grading practices and
the impression some faculty members held about his teaching. In a letter to Kirkland, Hart
writes:

Professor Curtis Walker has just told me that he has had a talk with you about certain
matters that seem to have been stirring the campus for some time. . . .The fact is that the
whole stir has been a tempest in a teapot. The whole trouble grew out of the fact that
one girl, Miss Gunster, made an F in my Education 11, whereas she seems to have made
better grades in all her other courses. But the fact that she told me that she had not
looked into the book during the whole term, nor read anything in connection with the
course, and the further fact that her written work was superficial in the extreme, – these
two facts seem to justify the grade she got.^{lxxvii}

While some students were upset with Hart, others were moved by him to reconsider grading
practices and what it meant to be a student. Ironically, Hart's success in this area contributed to
his downfall. With students examining their roles in the university, the governing pledge they
took as students became fodder for debate and led to the most explosive situation Hart would
face.

The Honor Code Controversy

Established in 1875, when the university was founded, the Honor Code holds that
“academic work carried by students at Vanderbilt is under the honor system. . . .Each student,
during registration, signs a pledge to abide by its principles and provisions. Under the honor
system each student affirms the integrity of the work performed.”^{lxxviii} The essence of the
code, in aphoristic mantra form, is that “it is better to fail the examination than tell a lie.” Such

phrases make up tradition, in many ways, so to question the Honor Code meant questioning tradition. The issues of grading, tradition, teaching, and the Honor Code all ultimately converged in dramatic form in 1934. In an editorial in the student newspaper, *The Vanderbilt Hustler*, the faculty was challenged to sign their own pledge, modeled on the Honor Code with caustic sarcasm. Excerpts from the editorial follow:

Although the faculty and administration of a school are the only permanent influences . . . to foster an eagerness for understanding, the majority of the administrative officers and faculty members have constantly sidestepped their challenge either through an inane failure to perceive it, or have voluntarily shirked with fear of opposition and failure. . . .

Tradition has its value, but this is an era of change, and we are not being educated to intelligently meet this change. You of the faculty do not seem to realize that the once hallowed tradition of culture and learning peculiar to Vanderbilt is about as alive as the Commodore's statue in front of College Hall. . . .

It is not strange that the Vanderbilt student seldom concerns himself with the ideas of liberal leaders of social and economic thought when hypocritical "dispensers of truth," pretending to be interpreters of the concepts of the ages, shove at him a dead, outlined dogma which must be recopied and spouted back in toto to receive approbation. . . .

In between the frequent expressions of criticism and contempt which you of the faculty aim at the attitude and attainments of the average student, ask yourself the following questions: 1. Do you seek to enlighten the student, or make him repeat fundamentals? 2. Do you put yourself forward as a guide to truth, or an ingratiating vaudeville actor? 3. Do you give the student all you can of scholarship, wisdom, and understanding, even when he appears immune? 4. Are you enthusiastic about your subject, and free from pedantry and dogma? 5. Are you striving to be a personal friend of the student, a guide and example?

Please don't answer "yes" to these questions unless you are ready to sign the honor pledge, since it is better to fail the examination than tell a lie. But if you are unable to answer all five questions in the affirmative, we will maintain that the Chancellor went once too often to the bargain counter when he brought you to Panderbilt! [sic]^{lxxix}

While there was no direct reference to Hart, his presence at the university had been visible.

Members of the *Hustler* staff and editorial board, including Ben West, editor-in-chief, Karl

Price, managing editor, and Nita L. Shanks, staff typist, were students of Hart and the tone and

even some of the wording were considered by some faculty and administration to be unmistakable.^{lxxx}

Kirkland was irate. Portions of the editorial appeared in local newspapers and, in Kirkland's mind, represented the worst kind of embarrassment: Vanderbilt students questioning Vanderbilt. In response, Kirkland wrote a lengthy and blistering letter to the *Hustler*.^{lxxxii} He pointed out how the questions were faulty, challenged the blanket statements that covered the entire faculty, and reminded students that all education is ultimately up to the individual. For those who liked the idea of a "new [social] order," Kirkland referenced Hitler's Germany and invited students who wanted communism to go to Russia. He closed his letter by noting, "Before I lift my hands to tear down the work others have tried to do, may my arm be palsied and sink helpless against my side. Before I use my pen or my voice to bear false witness against the Vanderbilt faculty or student body, may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth and remain silent forevermore."^{lxxxii}

Closing the Department

Conkin notes that Hart's punishment was "swift and sure. Even before Kirkland published his reply, his new committee on educational policies secretly met on April 5, 1934, and recommended the discontinuance of the department of education (and thus of Hart) at the end of the 'present session.'"^{lxxxiii} Two reasons were cited: 1) the need for economy and 2) unmet expectations for the department. The report was adopted "by unanimous vote of all members, except Chancellor Kirkland who was absent. . . ."^{lxxxiv} In his letter to Hart, Kirkland stressed that the Executive Committee (operating on the report of the Committee on Educational Policies) decided to do away with the department "rather than [make] a general reduction" in the

salaries of all professors.^{lxxxv} In the same letter, Kirkland noted that Walter Fleming convinced Kirkland that a department of education would be an asset. Noted Kirkland, “I very much regret to have to say that the expectation of Dean [Walter] Fleming and myself has not been realized.”^{lxxxvi} To be clear, the letter meant that the department would be discontinued at the end of the “present session.” In other words, Hart was given one month’s notice that his work of four years and his professorship would end. To add insult to injury, Hart was only given until June 11 to draft a reply before final action would be taken by the Board of Trustees.

Hart only needed three days. In a seven-page, single-spaced letter dated June 4, 1934, he excoriated the decision and Kirkland’s letter. Hart began his reply by denying the legitimacy of the Committee on Educational Policies. He noted the lack of due process and pointed to facts not in evidence. He invoked the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) in asking how, logically, the faculty—especially the members of the very committee that closed the department—could be safe from capricious dismissal. “Was this committee given the power to decide, in secret sessions, upon questions of the life and death of departments, and the tenure of office of members of this faculty? The faculty minutes show no such grant of powers, and no faculty could ever be induced to grant such powers.”^{lxxxvii} Accordingly, the committee had no “intellectual, moral, or legal right to pass upon these questions.”^{lxxxviii} Even so, Hart went on to state that he would assume, only for the moment, that the committee had standing. What did the content of the report reveal? Five specifics were listed in the report as unmet “expectations” of the department of education: a) student desire to enter teaching was not stimulated; b) contacts with local schools were not fostered; c) department course offerings did not meet state certification requirements; d) in order to meet certification requirements, the

department would have to add courses (costing the university more money); and e) the courses that would have to be added would duplicate Peabody course offerings.

Hart ripped apart each one of the specifics. For a) Hart pointed to full classes, even in the face of more stringent prerequisites. For b) Hart wrote that

Vanderbilt has gone on, here, for twenty years watching Peabody College for Teachers build up its prestige and power in the public schools of the south, filling nearly all important administrative positions with its graduates, and giving summer courses to which these loyal alumni and alumnae have flocked. Peabody deeply resented the establishment of this department of education at Vanderbilt. Not a single member of the Peabody faculty, and not a single public school man in the South, with the exception of Mr. Srygley, superintendent of schools in Nashville, has shown me the slightest courtesy, in these four years. Yet this faculty committee expects me, in four years, to “bring the university into closer and more friendly contact with existing high schools.”^{lxxxix}

Concerning c), Hart corrected the committee by noting that the three courses offered to undergraduates *did* satisfy certification requirements, just not *all* of them. This point is linked to d): Hart pointed out the inconsistency in holding out for the department a purpose that was never the intention of the department. “Certain conditions,” wrote Hart, “were laid down for the work of this department, by yourself, Mr. Chancellor, at the very beginning.”^{xc} The four conditions included:

1. The new department. . . was not to be a professional school for the training of teachers It was to be a department of education in a Liberal Arts college, doing work of a liberal arts quality. Students were still to go to Peabody for their courses in Methods.
2. It was specifically provided that no course was to be given in this department that duplicated anything given at Peabody.
3. Since this department was to be a liberal arts department, all courses given were to deal with the problems of education in the broad perspectives of history and philosophy.
4. Two courses were. . . required. . . : a course in the History and Philosophy of Education, for undergraduates, and a course to be called Problems of College Teaching, for graduates. These two courses have been in the catalogue from the first. Two other courses have been added. . . . No courses in Methods or Practice Teaching were ever

contemplated: this faculty would not have accepted them, even if they had been suggested.^{xci}

Hart went on to criticize the idea that the department was established as a kind of experiment and that Kirkland and (the now deceased) Walter Fleming intended a probationary period. He chastised Kirkland for assuming that he was “at liberty” to discontinue the department if he felt the department did not pass the probationary time frame.

Vanderbilt University never said to me: We are thinking of making an experiment, and we’d like you to come and be used for experimental purposes: if we like the outcomes, you will be employed permanently; but if we don’t like them, you will be willing, we’re sure, to step down and out!” No: three full professors came to Vanderbilt in 1930. I was one of them and I came here as those others, I am sure, came on an implied contract that was to continue until it was voided by mutual agreement, or we were dismissed for cause, after we had had a fair presentation of the complaints and charges made against us, and the chance to defend ourselves, openly, before a jury of our peers.^{xcii}

Having dispensed with the charges that the department had not met “expectations,” Hart turned to the issue of financial exigency. Citing his salary, Hart questioned any savings that would materialize. With the department gone, Vanderbilt students who were nevertheless still interested in education would simply turn to Peabody. Given the mutual agreement between the two institutions, Vanderbilt would end up paying students’ tuition. With “the cost of paying the tuition of Vanderbilt students at Peabody,” wrote Hart, “100 students from here at \$45 per student would just eat up the saving.”^{xciii}

Aftershocks: Acrimony, Academic Freedom, and the AAUP

The news of the closing and of Hart’s firing drew a surprising response from students. Usually moderate in their actions as a student body, crowds uncharacteristically started gathering around “fraternity row” to protest the action against Hart. It took Curtis Walker and Herbert Sanborn to quell the unrest and to focus student energy into what they considered a more constructive mode of protest. Instead of mobs fully forming, students drew up a petition in

support of both Hart and the department of education. Part of the petition read: “The endeavor of Dr. Hart has been continually to develop in us a creative intelligence by the presentation of typical problems rather than attempting to inculcate dogmatic solutions of any problems. We consider this to have been of especial advantage to us educationally.”^{xciiv} One hundred eighty-three students signed. The petition, like most student petitions, however, was to no avail.

Hart was not about to let the matter pass without a fight, however. In exchanges with Kirkland, he made it clear that he would appeal to the AAUP and might take Vanderbilt to court in order to make a public spectacle out of the situation. Something of Hart’s demeanor comes through in these letters, as well. While most correspondences of the time are written in professional language and with, at times, stuffily cloying politeness, Hart and Kirkland’s last letters veer from the path of civility. After Hart responded quickly to Kirkland’s letter on June 1 with the seven-page, single-spaced response, Kirkland wrote back succinctly on June 7, 1934:

Your long letter of June 4 has been received and will in due time be presented to the Board of Trust of Vanderbilt University. I shall not attempt to discuss all the points raised in your letter. Most of it is taken up with a discussion of the statement prepared by the Committee on Educational Policies, toward which statement your attitude is one of general denial.^{xcv}

Kirkland went on to argue that the matter was really one of financial hardship and that Hart should realize the authority of the board to make financial decisions. Hart replied on June 9 by restating the major substantive point: contracts cannot be broken without cause. He also charged Kirkland with misrepresenting the truth and claimed that Kirkland never presented the full facts of the case to the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. He closed by preying on one of Kirkland’s weak points:

Mr. Chancellor, these things will not make good reading when, and if, they are made public. But, if this plan of yours is carried through, and I am dismissed, I shall protect my

professional standing, my good name, and my means of livelihood by appropriate actions: a newspaper man in this state has promised to publish this entire correspondence, if this plan goes through; I shall appeal to the Association of University Professors; and I shall carry this matter to the civil courts. These are not threats, Mr. Chancellor—any more than the coming of night is a threat.^{xcvi}

Another public spectacle, beyond the snippets of the editorial in local newspapers, would displease Kirkland greatly. The image of Vanderbilt, as well as Kirkland's own reputation, was at stake. Kirkland responded to Hart on July 2 and a resigned and bitter Hart replied to Kirkland from Blue Mountain Lake, New York, on July 22.

The substance of your letter is what was to have been expected. You have power, and you intend to use it. For the first, you have disclaimed any legal obligation to me; and, while at first, you seemed to have a slight sense of moral obligation, that has now evaporated, leaving nothing but a sordid desire to come to some sort of bargain with me: If I accept your recent ruthless acts without a public murmur, you will ask the board to appropriate a few dollars to pay me for my silence and acquiescence. But, you see, I made a bargain with you four years ago . . . I do not care to let myself in for any more bargains with you.^{xcvii}

With that, Hart turned the matter over to the AAUP. While the AAUP has never been especially concerned with securing financial redress for aggrieved professors, Hart's case turned out to be just that.^{xcviii} W.W. Cook, then general secretary of the AAUP, contacted Kirkland in September of 1934. He requested information about Hart's case, but made it clear that in cases where full professors were released, they were at least entitled to a year's notice or a year's salary.^{xcix} Kirkland responded by relating Hart's replies (and threats). He listed six points, none of which addressed Cook's request for information relating the reasons for Hart's dismissal. Kirkland noted Hart's challenge that he would take Vanderbilt to court and that he would make the issue fodder for newspapers. "If the Trustees have to defend the University in such a suit they will do so, but they can hardly be asked to furnish the financial resources through which such a suit is to be brought."^c

Cook was not satisfied. Even though he had read all of the correspondences between

Kirkland and Hart, he still was unable to pinpoint the exact reasons for dismissal. He wrote back to Kirkland asking “whether you are willing to state explicitly that the dismissal was solely because of the necessity for retrenchment in expenditures or whether, on the other hand, the dismissal was in part because of alleged professional incompetence on the part of Professor Hart or, possibly, of misconduct of any kind. I think you understand that under our rules of tenure the answer to these questions is of primary importance.”^{ci} Kirkland responded by laying out the now familiar case: relief of financial pressures, no matter how small, needed to be taken and the department had not met expectations during its four-year “trial.”^{cii}

Assured in a letter from Cook that Hart would drop any idea of a lawsuit against the university, Kirkland was willing to present a possible financial settlement to the board of trustees.^{ciii} As an indication of Kirkland’s tenacity and attention to detail, and also as evidence of his aristocratic interpretation of universities, Kirkland wrote a two-page letter to Cook in which he questioned whether the action just taken actually conformed to the AAUP guidelines. While not going so far as to contest the agreement reached, he wondered whether the guidelines specifically fit the Hart case.

I note that the document to which you refer says that “dismissal for other reasons than immorality or treason, should not ordinarily take effect in less than a year.” With this statement I am in full accord. I think, however, you can see that such action in the case of Professor Hart was impossible. After the decision of the Trustees had once been reached his retention in the University, and in our class rooms, would have been harmful in every possible way.^{civ}

By specifically noting Hart’s retention and his possible slant in the classroom, could the case be made that Kirkland was revealing an instance where academic freedom would be denied, even given the broader situation? Knowing Hart to be of the “full” and “frank” view of academic freedom, Kirkland certainly would not want Hart to remain in the classroom. Yet, this is

arguably the very point around which academic freedom revolves. Kirkland would maintain the “temperate” view of academic freedom, regardless, and he had other issues to settle with Cook.

Kirkland quibbled, for instance, with how the financial settlement was ultimately to be achieved. He wanted any income Hart might have earned subtracted from the base settlement figures and he doubted that Hart could justly claim an entire year’s salary. He went on to demonstrate a form of southern paternalism, akin to what Barrow calls a managerial conception of academic freedom, when he suggested “that college professors be advised that security of tenure could best be attained by service. He who makes himself indispensable in the college organization will never have to inquire whether he has a contract or not. I could wish that the various associations trying to protect college professors would also give this warning as to the surest means by which they would escape all need of protection.”^{cv}

In the final exchanges, Cook refuted Kirkland’s assumption regarding faculty rights and reasserted the need for academic freedom protections. He also outlined Hart’s income and urged a settlement in the amount of \$2,500. Kirkland had already written a letter containing essentially the same figures, even though his letter passed Cook’s letter in the mail. Hart received a lump sum payment and the affair was closed—almost. A final letter from Hart was sent to Kirkland in December of 1934, indicating Hart’s demeanor, commitment to principle, and vengeance against D.C. Cabeen. Gone was all pretense of politeness. Where all of the letters written by Hart in June of 1934 opened with “My dear Mr. Chancellor,” the last letter opened with a terse “Sir:.” He wrote, “Now that something in the nature of a financial adjustment has been reached between Vanderbilt and myself, I am ready to go ahead with the next step in the settlement. You, of course, must be prepared to realize that this financial settlement was merely

something that had to be got out of the way. Here is the next step:

On the 5th of June, last, Prof. D.C. Cabeen, of your faculty, sent you a letter, which is, I assume, now in your files. This letter, a copy of which has been sent to me, and which, I am told, has been rather generally published in Nashville and on the campus, contains a mass of scurrilous and libellous [sic] matter. I am now writing you to . . .ask Mr. Cabeen to produce his proofs for these libellous [sic] tales that he has broadcast, and that you publish your findings, after they have been accurately checked by me, to the world Otherwise I shall be compelled to bring suit against Mr. Cabeen for libel, and bring you and all your committee into court. I promised the AAUP that I would bring no suit against Vanderbilt University: I made that promise because I had been told by the best lawyer in Nashville that your contracts had no legal standing. But I made no promise of any other sort—to you or to the AAUP. I am moving now to get ahead with a complete investigation of the whole Vanderbilt situation, just as I promised I would in my letter of June 7. . . . I shall await your answer to this letter before communicating my intention to Mr. Cabeen. I understand he is saying that “Every man has his price!” Perhaps you will insinuate to him he may have to pay mine!^{cvi}

One can understand Hart’s bitterness. He realized that his dismissal had nothing to do with finances or unmet expectations. Cabeen and other faculty who demonstrated “temperateness” represented the *real* reason for Hart’s dismissal: he was “full” and “frank” in his teaching and his interaction with colleagues. Hart was not a southern, genteel, faculty member in the mold of Kirkland. Cabeen and others were. Hart was not interested in students learning in traditional ways. Cabeen and others were—and so was Kirkland. Order, control, projecting the “proper” appearance to the surrounding community: all of this was reinforced during Kirkland’s long tenure at Vanderbilt. Ideological differences are supposed to be protected by academic freedom, but in Hart’s case they were the very concepts that had to be side-stepped to avoid sanction by the AAUP.

Conclusions/Interpretations

It has been argued that Hart’s dismissal was for reasons other than those claimed by Vanderbilt. Funding constraints was one of the stated reasons for closing the department and

firing Hart. The actual finances of the university tell a different story. Keeping in mind that the stock market crash of 1929 caused widespread financial hardship, one might think Kirkland was justified in using finances as a reason for closing the department of education. A closer look at the financial health of the institution, however, reveals a different reality. Vanderbilt's financial holdings were, from the very beginning, primarily in highly rated corporate bonds. "In 1933, roughly 90 percent of the portfolio of about \$20 million (face value) remained in corporate bonds, with the largest shares in utilities and a considerable number still in railroads."^{cvi} With only small percentages of holdings in real estate and common stock, "the ratings of Vanderbilt's bonds protected the university from the worst ravages of the stock market crash [and] from the numerous bankruptcies of 1932 and 1933."^{cviii} Kirkland considered cuts in faculty salaries as early as 1931 and asked the Board of Trustees to cut salaries for the 1933-34 school year. Hart's salary was reduced to \$4,500. Kirkland also took a pay cut, from \$18,000 to \$13,400. Conkin notes that the "faculty accepted the cuts, not happily, but gracefully. . . . Those with higher salaries never lived quite as well as during the depression. In fact, the cuts proved unnecessary. They relieved Kirkland and the board of anxieties, but the university, by a few additional economies, could have met its payroll each year. Even in the years of the cut the College budget began a pattern of consistent annual surpluses."^{cix}

Unmet expectations was the other reason cited for closing the department. With a very successful Peabody directly across the street, however, how could a new "one-man department" compete? Kirkland's minor vision was to have teachers be liberal arts majors with courses in education centered around history and philosophy. This vision ultimately revealed two points: (1) Peabody already had some key aspects of the liberal arts as part of their curriculum for

teachers (even though this was apparently overlooked by Kirkland, Fleming and others—including Hart). Peabody faculty, still, were less interested in traditional acquisition of information and more interested in students being able to critique and assimilate liberal arts offerings into their teaching practices and methods courses—in this way, Peabody already did at least part of what Kirkland had been advocating all along; and (2), Peabody’s long history in Nashville meant that its network for placing students with cooperating teachers in schools effectively shut out Vanderbilt. Even so, Kirkland never envisioned the department as primarily a teacher training site.

Hart’s philosophical posture in favor of non-traditional teaching and learning, not to mention his sometimes bitter demeanor, was also anachronistic in the Vanderbilt context. For faculty who have more activist approaches to teaching and interacting, for faculty who chafe at the idea of subservience to authority, and for faculty who question traditional assumptions, any university that presumes a singular, monistic notion of student and teacher roles and educational purposes is doomed to have a problem or two. The idea of a full professor being dismissed one month before the end of a term, however, goes beyond a problem or two—it underscores the need for tenure and academic freedom, perhaps especially of the “full” and “frank” variety. Notes Conkin:

Present-day professors can only shudder at Hart’s fate. The most prestigious professor in the College (comparable to a distinguished professor today) received a termination notice only a month before his last paycheck, a termination that resulted, at least in part, because one of his students wrote a critical editorial. Hart, with believable emphasis, made clear that he did not write, or encourage, or even know beforehand about the editorial. All he had done was establish a critical perspective on the part of students. The real reason for Hart’s dismissal was never concealed at Vanderbilt. For years, Dean [Madison] Sarratt rejoiced over how student agitation diminished as soon as the university dismissed troublemaker Hart.^{cx}

Barrow's treatment of this issue also provides one interpretation of Hart's plight.^{cxii} Like Nicholas Murray Butler, who autocratically argued that academic freedom was "always disciplined by the moral and political values of the status quo,"^{cxii} Kirkland furthered what Barrow calls the "managerial concept of academic freedom." To understand the concept, one has to distinguish between (1) "academic freedom" and (2) "academic license." Simply put, academic freedom here means "temperateness." Academic license means "full," "frank," candor. It was Butler who clearly outlined the five points at which academic freedom unacceptably crossed over into academic license. Irreverence for religious faith, artificial forms of equality, expressing personal views during class time, expressing views (personal or professional) on any controversial topics, and radicalism--all constituted unacceptable transitions from academic freedom to academic license.^{cxiii} Hart was not "guilty" of the first three points. The last two, however, did apply to him. Hart, however, was intent on pushing those last two points into the acceptable realm of academic freedom.

From a manager's perspective, i.e., from a controlling perspective, it is easy to see why a tight grip over faculty was desirable. One avoids embarrassing questions about the roles of students, grades, honor codes, etc. Under the managerial concept of academic freedom, controversy is eschewed. That Kirkland employed a managerial concept of academic freedom appears beyond question. Hart shone the proverbial spotlight on the very issues Kirkland ultimately wanted to control. That Hart lasted as long as he did at Vanderbilt is, perhaps, surprising. His entire career was, after all, characterized by confronting "temperate," managerial concepts of academic freedom by operating on a more "full" and "frank" interpretation. Academic license, as Butler understood it and Kirkland decried it, was a false

dualism for Hart. Academic freedom *was* academic license. Whether one agrees or disagrees with Hart that academic freedom and academic license are equivocal, the question recurs regarding the boundaries of academic freedom. How far can and should those boundaries extend? What is gained or lost by retracting and solidifying those boundaries? Are those boundaries malleable in direct relation to the degree of academic freedom one has or makes or demonstrates?

Another interpretation of Hart's plight is that it was due. On this view, being controversial and making assertions that discomfit leaders and colleagues justifies being dismissed. Hart, then, got what he deserved, in much the same way that J. McKeen Cattell got what he deserved when Butler fired him from Columbia in 1917. Cattell, like Hart, was viewed as "personally offensive" and, owing to the fact that Butler revoked academic freedom for the duration of World War I, had no cover when he spoke out in opposition to the war, to Butler, and to a variety of other issues.^{cxiv} A leading psychologist of his time, Cattell was considered "brash, tactless, and offensive."^{cxv} He sent a letter to his congressmen opposing the war and the congressmen told Butler of his "sedition." While that was the final straw, colleagues and the administration were happy to be rid of a tactless faculty member. For Cattell, perhaps like Hart, he decried their over-sensitivity as being emblematic of "the traditionalism and conventionalism, the lack of perspective and the lack of humor, which deaden university life."^{cxvi} Still, one wonders about the price one pays for standing on principle and not capitulating to the powerful forces that frequently impact the professional life of a professor—an empathic professor or not.

Like Hart, Cattell may not have been the most tactful person in his university. Given, however, that Charles A. Beard, the eminent historian, resigned in protest over Cattell, Henry

Wadsworth Longfellow Dana (a comparative literature professor), and his friend Leon Fraser (an instructor in politics),^{cxvii} gives some hope to the idea that administrative intolerance of personality and principle are worthy of the strongest acts of condemnation. That said, Cattell, Dana, Fraser, and others who faced similar fates relating to academic freedom, should have even more detailed biographical accounts undertaken in order to more fully understand the intricacies of their situations.^{cxviii} Such detailed contextual analyses may yield important nuances to counter, reaffirm, or otherwise modify our understanding of their lives in relation to academic freedom—arguably of the more “full” and “frank” variety.

The risk in not having a more “full” and “frank” version of academic freedom is recoiling from boundaries instead of pushing them. Another risk is in failing to meet the “student standard” from 1916. Recall that the report claimed that no professor “can be a successful teacher unless he [sic] enjoys the respect of his students, and their confidence in his intellectual integrity. It is clear, however, that this confidence will be impaired if there is suspicion on the part of the student that the teacher is not expressing himself fully or frankly, or that college and university teachers are in general a repressed and intimidated class who dare not speak with that candor and courage which youth always demands in those whom it is to esteem.”^{cxix} Candor and courage are not synonyms for tact, although it may conventionally preferable to modify one’s candor and to act with tactful courage. What is missing here is that tact it is not a necessary condition for either candor or courage. To be “full” and “frank” one may, in fact, have to divorce tact from the equation in order to be heard, i.e., to cut through to accepted norms so as to push the boundaries for free inquiry. This, it is argued, was the principle on which Hart stood—throughout his career—and especially at Vanderbilt.

Unwilling, or unable, to sacrifice his principles at Vanderbilt, Hart (with some irony given Kirkland's long-standing dream of having a Columbia/Teachers College-type arrangement) went on to teach as an adjunct professor at Teachers College, Columbia and at the New School in New York City. His old student, George Counts placed him as a member of the editorial board of *The Social Frontier*, along with luminaries like Charles Beard, Merle Curti, Lewis Mumford, Boyd Bode, and John Dewey. Hart eventually retired, in 1940, to Amenia, New York and died in March of 1949 at the age of 73.

NOTES

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1. Richard Hofstadter and Walter P. Metzger, *The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), 506. "Man" and "men" are in the original.
 2. This research has been carried out with the support of a Georgia State University Research Initiation Grant. The author is grateful to the university, the Department of Educational Policy Studies, Wayne Urban, Marybeth Gasman, Ben Baez, Philo Hutcheson, Susan Talburt, Darleen Opfer, and the many knowledgeable and helpful people who made this project possible. Particular thanks to: Mary A. Medlicott, Franklin College Archives; Avril Madison and Gary Lundell, Special Collections, Manuscripts, and University Archives, University of Washington; Marilyn Kierstead, Reed College Archives; Frank Cook, University of Wisconsin-Madison Archives; Kathy Smith and Jami Awalt, Vanderbilt University Archives; Sheryl Rogers, Vanderbilt University Alumni Programs; and David Ment, Special Collections, Teachers College, Columbia University. The author is also especially grateful to students of Joseph K. Hart at Vanderbilt who were very generous in their help and whose insightful, informative, and often humorous recollections of Hart and Vanderbilt made this work eminently more interesting. Special thanks to Adelaide Shull Davis, Andrew Benedict, Elizabeth Read, Kathryn G. Millspaugh, Samuel H. Moorer, Nita L. Shanks, Tom Anderson, and O.B. Hofstetter, Jr. John H.M. Jones, Jr., provided additional insight regarding his late mother, Ellen Whiteman Jones, who also studied with Hart at Vanderbilt.

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3. See, for instance, “General Report of the Committee on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure,” *The American Political Science Review* 10:2, part 2 (May 1916): 6-25.
 4. *Ibid.*, 18.
 5. *Ibid.*, 14.
 6. *Ibid.*, 19.
 7. Richard Hofstadter, *Academic Freedom in the Age of the College* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), 243. Hofstadter is particularly referring to colleges in the early nineteenth century, but the theme of avoiding or engaging in conflict is most pertinent to this essay.
 8. See Walter P. Metzger, “The First Investigation,” *AAUP Bulletin* 48 (September 1961), 207ff; “Report of the Committee of Inquiry on Conditions at the University of Utah” (American Association of University Professors: July 1915); and “Report of the Committee of Inquiry Concerning Charges of Violation of Academic Freedom at the University of Colorado,” *Bulletin of the A.A.U.P.* 2, part 2 (April 1916): 34-35. See, also, Louis Joughin, *Academic Freedom and Tenure: A Handbook of The American Association of University Professors* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1967). The essays in the appendices are valuable to understanding the larger distinctions.
 9. Veblen noted that the “businesslike order and system introduced into the universities. . .are designed primarily to meet the needs and exploit the possibilities of the undergraduate school; but, by force of habit, by a desire of uniformity, by a desire to control and exhibit the personnel and their work, by heedless imitation. . .it invariably happens that the same scheme of order and system is extended over the graduate work also.” Thorstein Veblen, *The Higher Learning in America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1918/1993), 73.
 10. Upton Sinclair, *The Goose Step: A Study of American Education* (Pasadena, CA: By the author, 1922), 174.
 11. L.L. Thurstone, “Academic Freedom,” *Journal of Higher Education* 1:3 (March 1930), 138.
 12. W.W. Charters, “Editorial Comments: Academic Freedom,” *Journal of Higher Education* 7:6 (June 1936):

13. The Vanderbilt Archives were used to access files on Hart. Among letters and other information, the archives included a student petition from 1934. The petition was signed by one hundred eighty-three students. With the help of Vanderbilt's Office of Alumni Programs, forty-nine surviving students of Hart were culled from the petition and contacted by mail. The mailing included a copy of the petition, a letter from Alumni Programs, a letter from the author regarding the project, and a stamped envelope addressed to the author to encourage correspondence. Of the forty-nine students identified by the Office of Alumni Programs, thirteen responses were received. Of these, three indicated that the signer of the petition was deceased. Three more indicated no knowledge or memory of Hart, the department of education, or the controversy. Together with Hart's writings and secondary sources, the seven letters from students were combined with archival material to piece together as detailed account as possible regarding the contexts of Hart and Vanderbilt University.

14. Kenneth J. Potts, "Joseph Kinmont Hart: Educator for the Humane Community" (master's thesis, Vanderbilt University, 1995). See chapter 1. Potts mistakenly notes that Hart was the third youngest of four brothers (p. 10). In a 1938 *Superior Telegram* article, Hart is pictured with four other brothers in two different photographs (one from 1906 and one from 1938). Another brother died in infancy. See "Brothers Reunited After 32 Years at Washburn Home," *Superior (WI) Telegraph*, 11 July 1938, n.p. Interestingly, perhaps the first in a series of pseudo-symbolic instances related to Hart's legacy, Cresco County no longer appears on Indiana maps.

15. Potts, 10-15. Hart ultimately divorced Calvert and married Frances Stuyvesant Uhrig in 1929.

16. By "moral education" Hart loosely meant liberal arts grounded in practice. He was particularly concerned that schooling be neither too vocational nor too intellectual.

17. Potts, 21. See, also, John Childs, *American Pragmatism and Education: An Interpretation and Criticism* (New York: Henry Holt, 1956), 213. Childs clarifies that it was Hart who introduced Counts to Dewey, in a course on ethics. As one indication of how Hart's success paled in comparison to Counts', Childs only mentions Hart once in the entire text, as Counts' teacher. In contrast, Counts is the subject of an entire chapter (Chapter 8) and is

mentioned throughout the text.

18. See Joseph K. Hart, "The Problem of Unemployment," *Welfare: The Journal of Municipal and Social Progress* 213 (1914): 18-21.

19. A new chairman, Frederick Bolton, was hired in 1912 to replace Edward O. Sisson without the consent of the faculty. Sisson brought Hart to Seattle and was a supportive of Hart. Bolton and Hart became adversaries. The university also faced resignations, state legislative politics, and campus scandals during this time that inhibited two searches for a president.

20. Landes wrote that "During the past three years, the personal antipathy, animosity, and distrust existing among and between you have increased steadily in intensity until now a state of bitterness exists between you which has destroyed the cooperation and coordination absolutely necessary for the successful administration of the department. . . . This condition of affairs has brought reproach to the institution and can be tolerated no longer."

Henry Landes to Dean Frederick E. Bolton, Professor Herbert G. Lull and Professor Joseph K. Hart, May 17, 1915, quoted in "Report of the Sub-Committee on the Case of Joseph K. Hart of the University of Washington," submitted by Harry Beal Torrey, Chairman, W.D. Briggs, and O.K. McMurray, *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* 3 (April 1917), 13; Potts, 31. Importantly, Landes was not the person who hired Bolton, Thomas Kane did. Landes inherited the problems Kane left, then left, himself, when Henry Suzzallo was hired as president for 1915-1916.

21. [*Seattle Star*], "Dismissal of Hart Will Be Given Hearing," July 19, 1916, n.p., University of Washington Archives, President's File A-M, "Hart, Joseph K." Special Collections Biography Pamphlet File.

22. Potts, 23. Potts also cites a letter to H.P. Torrey from Lydia McCutcheon, July 30, 1916 (University of Washington Libraries, Manuscripts, and University Archives, Vertical File, Folder 1775); and "An Appreciation of Joseph K. Hart," testimonial presented to Hart, Autumn 1915, signed by fifty Seattle community leaders, Reed College Archives.

23. Hart moved to Reed College, in Portland, Oregon, in part *because* of his AAUP case. William T. Foster, then president of Reed College had followed the Hart case closely. Only one year earlier Foster hired A.A. Knowlton, one of the fired professors from the University of Utah. Coincidentally, one of the investigators for the AAUP, Henry Beal Torrey, was also from Reed College. A further coincidence was the presence at Reed of former Washington colleague Edward O. Sisson (the department head who hired Hart and preceded Bolton), whom Foster had hired away from Washington in 1912 (beginning the problems which beset the department of education). While Torrey did not find facts to substantiate Hart's allegations of conspiracy, cover-up, and academic freedom infringement, he was struck by Hart's sincerity and character. Whether Foster and Torrey were in close communication about Hart is, at this point, speculative. Hart did send a letter asking Foster for a job, in May of 1916, but Foster initially refused on the grounds that there was no vacancy for Hart to fill. That changed in August 1916 and Foster ultimately offered Hart a job and Hart accepted. See Joseph K. Hart to William T. Foster, May 29, 1916, Reed College Archives; William T. Foster to Joseph K. Hart, August 17, 1916, Reed College Archives. See, also, Philo A. Hutcheson, *A Professional Professoriate: Unionization, Bureaucratization, and the AAUP* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2000), 6-9; Walter P. Metzger, ed., *Professors on Guard: The First AAUP Investigations* (New York: Arno Press, 1977); Richard Hofstadter and Walter P. Metzger, *The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), 469-506; and Burton R. Clark, *The Distinctive College: Antioch, Reed, and Swarthmore* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1970), 104.

24. In spite of this fact, or because of it, Hart's time at Reed was productive. His book *Democracy in Education* was written during this time and was considered one of his best works. See Joseph K. Hart, *Democracy in Education: A Social Interpretation of the History of Education* (New York: Appleton-Century, 1918). For more on Reed College, see Burton R. Clark, *op. cit.*, 91-119. See, also, William T. Foster, "Reed College," *School Review* 23 (February 1915): 97-104; and Merle Curti, *The Social Ideas of American Educators* (Patterson, NJ: Pageant Books, Inc., 1959), 542-580.

25. Hart was opposed to what Barrow chronicles as a use of institutions of higher education for corporate and war interests devoid of critique (and under the guise of patriotism). See Clyde W. Barrow, *Universities in the Capitalist*

State: Corporate Liberalism and the Reconstruction of American Higher Education, 1894-1928 (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990): 142-153. See, also, Carol S. Gruber, *Mars and Minerva: World War I and the Uses of the Higher Learning in America* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1975); and Merle Curti, "The American Scholar in Three Wars," *Journal of the History of Ideas* III (June 1942), 241ff; and Hofstadter and Metzger, *op.cit.*

26. See "The Case of Dr. J. K. Hart," Reed College Archives, n.d. See, also, Dorothy O. Johansen, "History of Reed College," unpublished manuscript, Reed College Archives, 121n.

27. Sinclair, *The Goose Step*, 177.

28. *Ibid.*, 170.

29. Joseph K. Hart, *Light from the North: The Danish Folk Highschools, Their Meanings for America* (New York: Henry Holt, 1927), 8. See, also, Potts, 45-74.

30. See Potts, 51ff. Potts gives a detailed account of the work Hart did during this period.

31. See Hart, *Light from the North*.

32. Joseph K. Hart, *Adult Education* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1927); Joseph K. Hart, *Inside Experience: A Naturalistic Philosophy of Life and the Modern World* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1927); Joseph K. Hart, *Light From the North: The Danish Folk Highschools, Their Meanings for America* (New York: Henry Holt, 1925); and Joseph K. Hart, *Prophet of a Nameless God: A Poem Founded on some Passages in the Books of the Kings and Rendering the Legend of Elijah into its Modern Meanings* (New York: Harold Vinal, 1927).

33. Hart regarded John Dewey highly and, as is evident, shared in much of Dewey's world view. Dewey, in fact, wrote the introduction to Hart's 1927 text, *Inside Experience*. See Hart, *Inside Experience*, xxi-xxvi.

34. Hart, *Inside Experience*, 230-231.

35. See Hart, *Adult Education*, *op. cit.*

36. Maxine Greene, *The Dialectic of Freedom* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1988), 7ff.

37. See Lawrence H. Larsen, *The President Wore Spats: A Biography of Glenn Frank* (Madison, WI: Worzalla

Publishing Company, 1965).

38. Potts, 82.

39. See (*Madison*) *Capital Times* February 11 and 13, 1930. See, also, *Wisconsin State Journal* February 8, 1930.

40. E. David Cronon and John W. Jenkins, *The University of Wisconsin: A History, 1925-1945 Vol. 3 Politics, Depression, and War* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 111. Meiklejohn was the force behind the Experimental College, which integrated liberal arts with community work in a version of “outreach” to the surrounding area. See, for example, Alexander Meiklejohn, *Education Between Two Worlds* (New York: Atherton Press, 1966). Hart is cited on page 75.

41. Hart was, indeed, nationally recognized. By 1929, his publications included 23 articles and 12 books. He had been the associate editor of *The Survey*, and was, at the time, a leading (if internally controversial) figure at Wisconsin. One of his most successful books, *A Social Interpretation of Education*, received widespread acceptance. One indication of his importance and success, as noted earlier, was John Dewey’s introduction to Hart’s *Inside Experience*, *op. cit.* See, also, Potts, 84-89.

42. Joseph K. Hart to James Kirkland, Vanderbilt University Archives, all in Chanc. Off., RG 300, “Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934.”

43. The \$5,000 annual salary is important. As Potts notes, Hart’s salary at Vanderbilt was the same as it was at Wisconsin. On one view, this should have alerted Kirkland to the question “Why would a national figure leave an already esteemed university to join a much less established faculty for the same money?” In fact, \$5,000 was an exceptionally high salary for Vanderbilt professors at the time. Whether word of his salary was known and fostered initial resentment is speculative, but only one other professor, Edwin Mims, made \$5,000 per year. See Potts, 90. See, also, Conkin, 360-362. The salary ultimately indicates the successful initiative of Walter Fleming, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (until 1927 and who was replaced by Franklin Paschal), who wanted to elevate the caliber and quality of the Vanderbilt faculty. See, also, Paul K. Conkin, *Gone With the Ivy: A Biography of*

Vanderbilt University (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 351ff.

44. Joseph K. Hart, "Some Reasons for the Current Emphasis Upon Educational Discussions," in *Chanc. Off.*, RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934." Emphasis in the original.

45. *Ibid.*

46. *Ibid.*

47. See Conkin, 166ff.

48. *Ibid.*, 166. By adopting the "affiliation-without-funding" stance, Kirkland interestingly duplicated the position of the Methodist church in 1870s.

49. *Ibid.*, 167. See, also, D.C. Gilman to Kirkland, April 8, May 13, 1905, Kirkland Papers, box 26, ff 27; Kirkland to Gilman, May 16, 1905, *ibid.*, box 24, ff 3; and Kirkland to Mary Kirkland, September 16, 1905, October 1, 1906, Merritt College Archives.

50. *Ibid.*, 169.

51. *Ibid.*

52. *Ibid.*, 170.

53. See Sherman Dorn, *A Brief History of Peabody College* (Nashville, TN: Peabody College of Vanderbilt University, 1996), 7-28 ff; and George Dillingham, *The Foundation of the Peabody Tradition* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1989).

54. Conkin, 178.

55. *Ibid.*

56. Kirkland to Payne, George Peabody College Archives, box 2109; Board Minutes, February 17, 1912 and July 2, 1912.

57. The south Nashville site was approximately sixteen acres and was already developed. The land adjacent to

Vanderbilt was only fourteen acres, thus requiring Vanderbilt rather than Peabody to pay for the land-swap deal.

58. Conkin suggests that both men acted like spoiled children. Trivial irritants like fees and special restrictions for students taking courses were almost commonplace. “Payne believed, correctly, that Kirkland had always wanted a close affiliation with Peabody, one in which Vanderbilt could determine overall educational policies. He argued that Kirkland wanted a dependent college of education in his backyard. Kirkland could not accept the fully independent and even brash new Peabody. He kept bemoaning the failure of his earlier courtship, what he once described as ‘the real disappointment of my life.’” See Conkin, 292.

59. See Gerald L. Gutek, *Education and Schooling in America* (Engelwood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1983), 346 *ff.*

60. Dorn, 20-23.

61. Conkin, 293.

62. John D. Pulliam, *History of Education in America* (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1982), 113.

63. Pulliam, 111.

64. Gutek, 345.

65. *Ibid.*

66. Hart and Thomas M. Harris (hired as a Teaching Fellow in Education in 1932). See Hart to Kirkland, May 28, 1932, Chanc. Off., RG 300, “Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934.” Hart, in essence, *was* the department, while Peabody had 17 members before it even opened. See Dorn, *A Brief History of Peabody College*, 21-22.

67. Elizabeth Read to Deron Boyles, September 21, 2000, in author’s possession. Hart’s wife at this time was his second wife, Frances Stuyvesant Uhrig. The Harts were wed in 1929.

68. Kathryn G. Millspaugh to Deron Boyles, October 25, 2000, in author’s possession.

69. Adelaide Shull Davis to Deron Boyles, October 17, 2000, in author’s possession.

70. *Ibid.* Emphasis in the original. Mims, of the English department, has already been noted, but D.C. Cabeen, of the Romance languages department, would prove to be a significant foe for Hart, resulting in Hart ultimately threatening to sue Cabeen for libel. See Hart to Kirkland, December 3, 1934, in Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934."

71. Samuel H. Moorer to Deron Boyles, February 7, 2001, in author's possession.

72. In a letter to Vanderbilt Chancellor James Kirkland, just after Hart's dismissal from Vanderbilt in 1934, Cabeen writes in support of the chancellor's action. He includes the following: "During the Christmas vacation of 1931 I attended the meeting of the Modern Language Association at Madison, Wisconsin. I secured, (through a relative, Dr. Warren Weaver, then head of the department of mathematics at the University of Wisconsin), an introduction to Dr. J.C. [sic] Anderson, Dean of the School of Education at the same institution. Dean Anderson, who gave me permission to quote him, furnished me with the following information upon [sic] Dr. Hart: That from the beginning the latter had been a disturbing factor, finding fault with everything. Asked by Dean Anderson to give his idea of an ideal curriculum for a school of education, Dr. Hart outlined one which coincided almost exactly with the three courses which he (Dr. Hart) was then teaching, and assigning little value to any other courses in the School. Finding co-operation with Dr. Hart impossible, Dean Anderson, in the year 1929-1930, asked President Glen Frank to authorize Dr. Hart's dismissal, on technical and professional grounds solely. The latter, claiming that he was being persecuted because of his liberal opinions, worked up wide support among the radical papers of Wisconsin and members of the State legislature, and thus brought heavy pressure upon President Frank. Dean Anderson, backed by his Faculty, stood firm however, insisted upon Dr. Hart's dismissal, and finally secured it. Dean Anderson told me that he had learned that when Dr. Hart was being dismissed from a former position, in the Far West, (Reed College or the University of Washington, I do not remember which), the latter stirred up such feeling against the President (Dr. Suzzallo?) that he almost succeeded in getting him dismissed and himself (Dr. Hart) put into the presidency." D.C. Cabeen to J.H. Kirkland, June 5, 1934, in Vanderbilt University Archives, Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934." Cabeen was incorrect insofar as Hart was never actually fired from Wisconsin.

73. Kathryn G. Millspaugh to Deron Boyles, *op. cit.*

74. Elizabeth Read to Deron Boyles, *op. cit.* Interestingly, perhaps more of an aside, none of the students who responded remember Hart badly.

75. In one way, Hart's stance came back to haunt him. That is, he, like many Vanderbilt faculty, derided Peabody's standards. He became the object of similar criticism, however, and found himself on the defensive in much the same way Peabody faculty might have felt.

76. Joseph K. Hart to James Kirkland, May 25, 1932, Vanderbilt University Archives, Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934." Emphasis in original. Hart added, "One additional point: five students, grades for whom do not appear in the above tables, dropped out of my classes in order not to incur low grades. If you will add in these five students – either as D's or F's, the showing of easiness will be still less sustained."

77. Joseph K. Hart to James Kirkland, January 24, 1933, Vanderbilt University Archives, Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934." "M.W.H." wrote a note regarding Hart's grading and listed "high grade students" grades to buoy the accusation against Hart that there was a problem with his grading practice. See note, initialed "M.W.H." and corresponding listing, n.d., in Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934." One of the names noted was Mary H. Gunster, who received a B in Economics 1; A in French 16; C in Philosophy 11; B in Spanish 3; a withdrawal from French 20; and the infamous F in Education 11. Thirty one students, total, have their grades listed on the small note card-size pages. While the education course grades each student received were their lowest, in three cases, Ds were received in one other class. Eighteen students who received D also had at least one C out of an average of 6 classes each. Eight students earned A or B in all classes except Hart's Education 11.

78. *The Bulletin of Vanderbilt University*, The Graduate School, Nashville, TN, 1990-1991, 33.

79. "Sign the Pledge On This Quiz, Faculty!" *The Vanderbilt Hustler* 30 March 1934, 1. In the next edition of the *The Hustler*, an errata *qua* "Quiz No. 2" appeared. "One week ago today," the editorial read, "the HUSTLER published an editorial entitled 'Sign the Pledge on This Quiz, Faculty!'," which was conveyed in poor form and to a great extent misunderstood. The several instances of bad English may be attributed partly to haste and partly to the extent in which we were engrossed in the idea which we attempted to make plain. An unfortunate typographical

error in the last word of the editorial was falsely interpreted by some readers as an intentional slap at the University.”

See “Editorial: Quiz No. 2,” *The Vanderbilt Hustler*, 7 April 1934.

80. Nita L. Shanks to Deron Boyles, September 28, 2000, in author’s possession. See, also, Conkin, 363-367. In fact, West later admitted that he had “lifted” part of the editorial from a *Saturday Evening Post* article. See Herbert Sanborn to W.T. Hale, June 9, 1934, Chanc. Off., RG 300, “Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934,” 8-9.

81. *The Vanderbilt Hustler*, 18 April 1934. As Conkin points out, some may think Kirkland’s reaction a bit extreme—particularly those who lived through campus protests in the 1960s. In 1934, at Vanderbilt, and after Kirkland spent forty-one years (out of the forty-four years he would be chancellor) cultivating his ideal university, however, the reaction might even have been tame.

82. *Ibid.*

83. Hart received formal notice of his firing in a letter from Kirkland dated June 1, 1934. See Kirkland to Hart, June 1, 1934, Chanc. Off., RG 300, “Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934.” See, also, Conkin, 364. See, also, Herbert Sanborn to W.T. Hale, Jr., June 9, 1934, p. 9. Sanborn, a professor of philosophy, wrote a scathing rebuke of the committee, the board of trust, and the chancellor in his letter to Hale, who was the Secretary of the Board of Trust. He questioned the authority of the committee, asserted that faculty rights had been violated, and claimed academic freedom infringement on the part of the university. He also severely criticized the logic entailed in the decision, drawing a parallel to a hypothetical in which the department of philosophy be closed at Columbia because certain powerful people did not like the work of John Dewey. Sanborn went so far as to state that Kirkland “himself, in a conversation held with me in his office considered the incumbent in the Department of Education [Hart] responsible [for the student newspaper editorial].” (p. 9)

84. “Meeting No. 20 (continued),” report of the Committee on Educational Policies of the College of Arts and Sciences, April 5, 1934, in Chanc. Off., RG 300, “Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934.”

85. Kirkland to Hart, June 1, 1934, *op. cit.*

86. *Ibid.* Fleming died in 1932 after retiring from Vanderbilt in 1929. While he was instrumental in a number of

ways in getting the department started, one might wonder about Kirkland's speculative *post mortem*, especially as a justification for discontinuing the department.

87. Hart to Kirkland, June 4, 1934, Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934," 1.

88. *Ibid.*

89. *Ibid.*, 3.

90. *Ibid.*

91. *Ibid.* Emphasis in the original.

92. *Ibid.*, 4. One gets the sense that Hart's past experiences at Washington, Reed, and Wisconsin helped him form the polished due process language he employs.

93. *Ibid.*

94. Student petition, n.d. (circa 1934), Vanderbilt University Archives, Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934."

95. Kirkland to Hart, June 4, 1934, Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934."

96. Hart to Kirkland, June 9, 1934, Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934."

97. Hart to Kirkland, July 22, 1934, Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934."

98. See Hutcheson, *A Professional Professoriate*, *op. cit.*

99. W.W. Cook to Kirkland, September 19, 1934, Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934."

100. Kirkland to Cook, September 28, 1934, Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934."

101. Cook to Kirkland, October 1, 1934, Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934." Ironically, Kirkland was the president of the American Association of Colleges (AAC) in the same year, 1925, as the AAC endorsed the AAUP guidelines. See Conkin, 365.

102. Kirkland to Cook, October 4, 1934, Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934."

103. Cook to Kirkland, October 15, 1934; Kirkland to Cook, October 17, 1934; and Cook to Kirkland, October 19,

1934, all in Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934."

104. Kirkland to Cook, October 22, 1934, Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934."

105. *Ibid.* See Barrow, *op. cit.*, 194-203.

106. Hart to Kirkland, December 3, 1934, Chanc. Off., RG 300, "Joseph K. Hart, 1929-1934."

107. Conkin, 352

108. *Ibid.*

109. Conkin, 353.

110. Conkin, 366.

111. Barrow, *op. cit.*

112. *Ibid.*, 195.

113. *Ibid.*, 195-196. See, also, Nicholas Murray Butler, *Scholarship and Service* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921).

114. See, for example, Hofstadter and Metzger, *The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States*, 498-506. See, also, James McKeen Cattell, *University Control* (New York: Arno Press, 1977).

115. *Ibid.*, 499. See, also, Richard Hofstadter, *The Progressive Historians: Turner, Beard, Parrington* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 285 *ff.*

116. Letter from J. McKeen Cattell to E.R.A Seligman, 8 March 1917, Cattell Papers, Columbia University Library, cited in Hofstadter and Metzger, *op. cit.*, 500.

117. Hofstadter, *The Progressive Historians*, 286.

118. Accounts beyond Hofstadter's *The Progressive Historians* include works like Thomas C. McClintock, "J. Allen Smith: A Pacific Northwest Progressive," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (April 1962): 49-59; James L. Colwell, "The Populist Image of Vernon Louis Parrington," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 49 (June 1962): 52-66; and H. Lark Hall, *V.L. Parrington: Through the Avenue of Art* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1994). These

biographical studies are indicative of the larger kind of study in question.

119. "General Report of the Committee on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure," *The American Political Science Review* 10:2, part 2 (May 1916), 19.