“FAIR HARVARD” AND HISTORY

I was greatly surprised to find my name prominent in the lead sentence of “Puritans’ Passé?” (The College Pump, July-August, page 68), citing my initiation of a change, years ago, to the wording of the first line of “Fair Harvard.” I did that, of course, because I thought the original wording had become exclusive. In those days, entering classes were evolving toward 50 percent women, each of whom would soon become a daughter of Harvard, though Harvard sang only of its sons, its diminishing 50 percent.

I write my thanks for this mention from the City of Brotherly Love, where I have lived happily since 1956. Do you know that we have not had a Quaker mayor here, nor even a Quaker city councilor, to my knowledge, for many a long year, yet Philadelphia does not wince at all when referred to as the Quaker City? It respects the seed from which it grew. Instead, we should emulate an illustrious governor. The membership is as follows: Stephen J. Bailey, AMP ’94; Jeffrey S. Behrens ’83; William I. Bennett ’62, M.D. ’69; John T. Bethell ’54; Peter K. Bol; Fox Butterfield ’66; A.M. ’64; Sewell Chan ’98; Jonathan S. Cohn ’91; Philip M. Cronin ’93; J.D. ’96; John de Cuevas ’52; James F. Dwinell III ’52; Anne Fadiman ’74; Benjamin M. Friedman ’66; Ph.D. ’71; Robert H. Giles, NF ’66; Richard H. Gilman, M.B.A. ’83; Owen Gingerich, Ph.D. ’92; Adam K. Goodheart ’92; Philip C. Haughey ’57; Brian R. Hecht ’92; Sarah Blaffer Hrdy ’68; Ph.D. ’73; Ellen Hume ’68; Alex S. Jones, NF ’82; Bill Kovach, NF ’83; Florence Ladd, B.l. ’71; Jennifer B. Lee ’99; Randolph C. Lindell ’65; Anne Marie Lipinski, NF ’90; Lars Peter Knoth Madsen, John P. Reardon Jr ’60, Bryan E. Simmons ’83.

Certainly it is up to Harvard’s own historians to defend Samuel Gilman’s stirring 1811 alma mater, “Fair Harvard.” But I am curious why there is pressure to erase the word “Puritans.” They were fundamental to Harvard’s founding and the founding of so many New England towns. Why deny history?

Instead, we should emulate an illustrious Amherst, New Hampshire, minister, Josiah G. Davis (Yale 1837), who said in 1874, in his “Historical Discourse” delivered at the centennial celebration of the construction of Amherst’s Congregational Meeting-House: “Each age gathers wisdom from the labors and researches of the preceding age. In every science, and in every art, we are constrained to acknowledge our indebtedness to the genius and industry of departed generations.”

KENDRIC PACKER ’48 Philadelphia

Cambridge 02138

Liberal arts, apolitical agendas, the middle class
It’s Academic

A presidential search (see page 14) is a courting ritual: the Corporation tries to figure out what it wants (continuity or change), and the candidates try to figure out what Harvard is and wants to become (and whether there is a good fit). Their iterative conversations, if fruitful, generate a common understanding about an agenda: think of it as a prenup. Ignoring the intimate details, here are three Big Ideas for the Harvard of 2018-2030 (being both optimistic and realistic about the duration of the likely marriage).

**Students: stay the course.** The marquee item is undergraduate financial aid. Let the Corporation and its anointed leader agree that the current deal is plenty sufficient (no cost for families with incomes below $65,000, and a graduated 1 percent to 10 percent of income as their earnings scale up to $150,000)—further liberalization of terms is not needed. Aid spending should increase, for reasons ill (the term bill now rises about 4 percent yearly, or $2,500) and good (the College ought to vigorously pursue enrolling as many more lower-income students as possible). Aid is also sensitive to the economy: during recessions, family incomes suffer, so need increases. From a budgeting and fundraising perspective, it would be a sensible near-term goal to get, say, 75 percent of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences’ undergraduate-aid outlays endowed; today, when such spending is about $80 million per year, it is about two-thirds defrayed by endowed funds and gifts.

**Relax on real estate.** Harvard has spent a lot on its physical plant, from House renewal and the Allston science complex, both very much (and very expensively) still under way, to the Kennedy School’s campus makeover to the Business School’s new executive-education residences and conference center. There is further work to do at the Medical School and elsewhere, but it is possible to become too enamored of bricks and mortar. The fix-up of Holyoke Center, and its transmogrification into Smith Campus Center, for example, will cost many tens of millions of dollars—not staggering, in the scheme of things, but enough, even at Harvard’s price point, to endow 15 to 20 professorships.

Which brings up the final idea:

**Focus on the faculty.** After a gigantic capital campaign focused on shoring up the University’s balance sheet and investing in engineering and applied sciences, it seems essential to address Harvard’s other academic priorities head-on. What are the things the world most needs to know? (Perhaps: how to feed itself; how to integrate arts and humanities into an era seemingly obsessed only with apps; how to adapt to an altered climate; how to conceive of work when too few jobs are being created; how to address inequality; how to deepen comprehension of the East and the Global South in the blessedly developed, higher-income regions, and vice versa; what’s up with the brain?) And how can Harvard make the greatest contributions to knowledge and education—and where, accordingly, ought the faculty to grow after a static decade? That comes squarely back to the University’s role in creating what the economists and financiers might call intellectual capital—understanding and learning. (Worry not, fundraisers: the resulting themes can be plenty appealing—witness MIT’s campaign, just down the street.)

Of course Harvard must secure its financial future and its infrastructure. But in balancing priorities, it’s time to be academic.

—JOHN S. ROSENBERG, Editor

The church itself just celebrated the 275th anniversary of its founding, when Daniel Wilkins (Harvard 1736) was ordained as the first minister and wrote the first church covenant, signed on November 22, 1741: a simple statement of beliefs to sustain the 14 families living in the wilderness settlement. Church and town government were one in Colonial America, where one church denomination was the established church and the minister was paid through local taxation.

Wilkins served as minister for 42 years, until 1783. Jeremiah Barnard (Harvard 1773) was engaged in 1779 to serve with Wilkins in his declining years and stayed until 1815. So for 94 years Harvard graduates led, served, and influenced the folks of a little New Hampshire town. Please honor these tough pioneer families who endured the New England wilderness under the wise and tenacious leadership of two humble Harvard graduates who devoted their entire careers to serving these rural families. Thanks to our “departed generation’s” collective stamina, faith, and hope, (please turn to page 74)
America and Amherst survived. Hopefully “Fair Harvard” will, too!  

Anne Krantz  
Historian, Congregational Church of Amherst 
Amherst, N.H.

Liberal Arts  
John Rosenberg’s “An Educated Core” (July-August, page 47) makes me wish I were starting college today under the Minerva model. Stephen Kosslyn’s “radical redesign” of the core addresses every weakness of “Gen Ed” as I knew it. Probably there is much tinkering still to be done.

To expect 18-year-olds to find their way among 10,000 course possibilities over four years is unrealistic and naive. I managed to stumble my way to an A.B. (English lit) and am still enjoying it. Today’s students, I believe, are ripe for the Minerva model and its flexibility. Thank you for an encouraging piece about “flipping” the liberal arts.

Bert Waters ’60  
Brookline, Mass.

How can Harvard, given its recent history, be serious about this? Will they present an honest course in the glories of what we used to call Western Civilization, and the contributions to freedom and intellectual development/culture it produced? Or will it wallow 90 percent in the evils of the West and capitalism? You know exactly what I am talking about. Go to Middlebury College and find out; go to Berkeley. Harvard is not known for courage in this area.

Michael J. Brady, L.L.B. ’67  
Menlo Park, Calif.

Editor’s note: The article erroneously described the Yale-NUS curriculum’s space for concentrations, alongside students’ required 10 term-length common courses. It should have read: “Concentrations require a minimum of eight courses plus the capstone project; students are free to take more courses in their field, but not required to do so; in many U.S. colleges and universities without a core curriculum, major fields require 10, 12, or more courses.” We apologize for our error.

Political Agendas!  
Clearly Justin Reeves has a political agenda (research described in “Star Power in Politics,” by Jonathan Shaw, Right Now, July-August, page 1).

No mention is made by him that limiting the number of candidates by the Democratic National Committee (DNC) in the 2016 U.S. elections led to the DNC’s chairwoman resigning amid allegations of corruption.

Also, Hillary Clinton had far greater name recognition as a politician even as a “celebrity,” since she was the wife of a two-term president and was later a senator. Despite this, she lost to a virtually unknown Barack Obama in 2008. Furthermore, even after she was secretary of state for four years (becoming even more famous), she lost to businessman Donald Trump, recognized only in a certain small section of an industry. Could it be that Hillary’s “facts” and ideas, including what she is alleged to have done (or not done), played a role in a “more thoughtful outcome”—and that it is not due, as Reeves suggests, to “allowing voters to choose among smaller numbers of candidates”?

In Chile in 1970, Marxist Salvador Allende won the plurality among only three candidates, the majority wanted a non-Marxist, but the other two split the vote. A more likely theory to Reeves’s conclusion is that competition is obviously good even in politics. Instead, he allows himself to come up with a theory that appears politically biased.

Victor Felszegi ’78  
New York City

Justin Reeves responds: Thank you for reading the article and offering your thoughts. Please allow me to clarify a few things about the study that may not have been apparent from the brief Harvard Magazine write-up.

First, while the article couches things in an American context and triggers readers to consider the recent 2016 election, the study in fact originated in 2011 with the bulk of the data and findings coming out of field work that was conducted in 2013—pre-dating Trump’s candidacy. It was a positive empirical exercise focused primarily on Japan, and the only “agenda” to speak of was exploring the consequences of a particular set of electoral rules—rules that don’t apply to the U.S. general election or to the Chilean presidential race of 1970. There was no mention of Clinton or the DNC here because it simply wasn’t relevant.

There is another part of the same project that didn’t have to do with electoral systems and therefore wasn’t discussed much at the talk given at Harvard due to time constraints. That part of the study deals precisely with the issue you raise—namely, perceptions of corruption redounding to the benefit of “outsider” candidates who also enjoy high degrees of name recognition. There, another voter experiment was employed in Japan to isolate the impact that public distrust of establishment politicians has on support for celebrity candidates.

To be clear, I do argue that the mechanism highlighted by the magazine article is applicable to U.S. primary elections when there is a crowded field of co-partisans running, and I do believe it played a role in Trump’s early success against other Republican competitors. I agree wholeheartedly that Clinton’s baggage and the DNC scandal played a strong role in the outcome of the 2016 general election, but I doubt it did anything to give Trump an edge over candidates like Ben Carson and Carly Fiorina among an exclusively Republican electorate. That, I would argue, had a lot to do with mere name recognition.

If we’re going to say anything normative about the findings of the study, the takeaway is not that “more competition is bad,” but that in some contexts it poses serious trade-offs. What contexts? Well, particularly when strong informative cues like partisanship don’t allow voters to narrow their choice options.

The Middle Class  
For many years I have wondered why our leaders across the political spectrum commonly refer to “the middle class” in our country. Andrea Louise Campbell, in reviewing a new book by Joan C. Williams, includes this term in “Class Cluelessness” (continued from page 4)
RESEARCH VS. DIRECT CARE

I found it interesting but sad that your article on the genetics of schizophrenia ("Probing Psychoses," July-August, page 40) provided such a good example of the "class cluelessness" discussed elsewhere in the issue (page 60). With no disrespect to the young man the author chose as an example of a person with schizophrenia, he is a best-case scenario in that he has good physical health, the ability to research and advocate for himself, a supportive family, and the option to live with that family in what appears to be stable middle-class housing. He in no way (other than diagnosis) resembles the clients in an inner-city partial-hospital program I worked with for some years. These clients often faced multiple challenges in addition to their psychiatric diagnosis. Among these were multiple medical conditions including tuberculosis and HIV infection, as well as the more common hypertension and diabetes—the latter two often related to the significant weight gain associated with the newer types of psychotropic medications. Other challenges were coexisting substance abuse, legal concerns, lack of social supports, and inadequate or even abusive housing in poorly run group homes.

There is absolutely no glamor or prestige in working with people with schizophrenia, but even with our incomplete current understanding, they can be tangibly helped. For a fraction of the nearly one billion dollars already allocated to the arcane genetic and cellular research described in the article, many people could be helped in a matter of weeks or months rather than the "decades" (if ever) before the research yields usable outcomes. It is already well known that social conditions have a very real impact on the overall functioning of people with schizophrenia.

The creation of an exemplary direct-care program could provide substantial benefits to clients, especially in this time of cutbacks in public funding. It saddens me that the Stanley Center has not included a direct-care component to its costly and prestigious research activities and that the author of the article doesn’t even consider such an option. Lack of advocacy for those unlike "us" is part of what "class cluelessness" is about.

JILL BECKER, M.A.T. '65
Licensed professional counselor
Lambertville, N.J.

Editor’s note: The article was not on schizophrenia care overall, but merely on this aspect of the research. If that research does prove fruitful over time—and obviously, the people pursuing it very much hope it will; Steven Hyman was director of the National Institute of Mental Health—that will alleviate a lot of suffering. Society should pursue both research and care, and an article focused on the former was not a commentary on the latter.

THE PHILOSOPHY CHAMBER

I just encountered your article on "The Lost Museum" (by Jonathan Shaw; May-June, page 42). Fascinating story! I thought, perchance, you might be interested in an episode in 1817 pertaining to the Museum/Philosophy Chamber.

Sampson Reed [A.B. 1818], in his Biographical Sketch of Thomas Worcester, D.D., relates a story, or quotes an account by Worcester himself, which tells of a visit to that room:

Mr. Hill, of whom I have already spoken, is said to have had great hopes of Harvard University. Following the example of Swedenborg, he presented to the college library a set of the original edition in Latin of the Arcana Coelestia, and perhaps some few of the other works. Mr. Worcester had heard that these works were in the library and went to obtain them. His experience was so remarkable that I give it in his own words:

"Upon my return to college, after I had begun to read Swedenborg, I went to the library the second time to see if I could find any of his works. The librarian looked into the catalogue again, and found the above and shelves where they ought to have been; but they were not there. Then we began a thorough search. We looked through the whole library, in place and out of place, but could not find them. Then we began to think of other rooms. At that time the library was in the second story of the west end of Harvard Hall. In the east end was a large room, called the ‘Philosophical Room.’ And between this room and the library was a small room, which for the want of a proper name was called the ‘Museum.’ It was filled with rubbish, old curiosities, cast off, superseded, and obsolete philosophical apparatus, and so forth, all covered with dust. We could see no reason for hunting here, except that we had hunted everywhere else, without finding what we wanted.

“There was a long table in the room. Upon it, and under it, were piles of useless articles; and beyond it were shelves against the wall, where various things were stored away. On the under shelf, as far out of sight as possible, I saw some books. I told the librarian, and he went round and worked his way until he got at them, and found that the large books were volumes of the Arcana Coelestia. There were also several other works of Swedenborg, all of them covered with dust. I immediately got an order from President Kirkland, giving me authority to take the books and keep them in my room; and this I did for the rest of my college life.

"By what means or for what purpose these ‘Heavenly Doctrines’ were cast out of the library of Harvard College must be left to conjecture. Of the 50,000 or 60,000 volumes then belonging to the library, these were the only ones that were treated in this manner. The fact seems to represent the state of the New Church at that time" (pages 17f in the Google online scan of Reed’s book).

STEPHEN D. COLE
Assistant professor of religion and philosophy
Bryn Athyn College
Bryn Athyn, Pa.

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