

QUIXOTE IN THE CLASSROOM

The Rise and Fall of KU's Integrated Humanities Program

by

Levi Daniel Grieser Cromwell

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Approved by:

Dr. *Jonathan Hagel*, Thesis Coordinator

Dr. *Nathan Wood*, Committee Member

Dr. *Sean Seyer*, Committee Member

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Abstract

The University of Kansas in the 1970's played host to a singular experiment in the world of higher education, the Integrated Humanities Program (IHP). The IHP promoted a unique style of learning, a study of the Great Books founded upon the "poetical mode". Students in the program had mandatory stargazing hours, memorized poetry, and were forbidden from taking notes in class. Alongside the uniqueness of the program's educational style was the unique fervor with which people protested it, and the IHP would last only nine years, from 1970-1979. Despite its relatively short lifespan, the IHP has left a long memory in the vibrant Classical Education and Catholic intellectual communities. Few books have been written about the IHP, and the few that have are from graduates of, or men associated with, the program. My research into the IHP interrogates the origins and development of this novel educational movement, discourses of academic independence and free inquiry, and how IHP reveals the relationship between the humanities, education, and asking questions and finding answers old and new at a time of great transformation.

Introduction

On first appraisal, the small monument on the grounds of the St. Lawrence Catholic Campus Center does not seem particularly notable. A jutting limestone slab, the monument may have been erected in memory of the center's titular saint, or a particularly generous donor. Upon further inspection, the top of the monument is adorned with a seal with the slogan, "*nascantur in admiratione*," or "Let them be born in wonder." Traveling down the monument's face, there is an image of Cervante's great fool Don Quixote, and further down a bronze plaque displaying his famous call to action, "those are giants." At the bottom of this visual narrative is an epitaph, reading, "In Memoria: The University of Kansas Integrated Humanities Program, 1970-1984 / Capt. Frank Nelick, Dennis Quinn, John Senior / The light of wonder led their students to the door of faith" Therefore, the resemblance of a tombstone is no mere coincidence. A grave too large for one man, the Integrated Humanities Program's (IHP's) memorial commemorates the death of an entire academic program.



In order: the quotation from Don Quixote, the monument itself, and the epitaph.¹

Though the memorial, funded by donations to the IHP Memorial Fund, credits the program’s lifespan as fourteen years, in reality the IHP was an official program for only nine, from 1970 to 1979.² Founded by Professors Dennis Quinn, Franklyn Nelick, and John Senior, the Pearson Integrated Humanities Program was an academic program for freshman and sophomore students that provided a distinct curriculum and culture, loosely modeled on the so-called “Great Books” movement of the 1950s and 60s.³ The three professors brought a unique pedagogical approach to their instruction. One such example is the mandatory

¹ Integrated Humanities Program, Digital collection of photos from the IHP Memorial dedication ceremony, Facebook, September 11, 2019, <https://www.facebook.com/share/15HCTYWDgq/>.

² “The IHP Memorial,” IHP Memorial Fund, accessed April 1, 2025, <https://fundihpmemorial.org/blog/>; Robin Smith, “Assembly votes to terminate IHP,” *University Daily Kansan* (Lawrence, KS), 11 April 1979, copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 1 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

³ The IHP was founded as the Pearson Integrated Humanities Program, so called due to its location in Pearson College, but is now generally referred to as the IHP because Pearson College was dismantled halfway through the IHP’s time at KU. PIHP will be used when chronologically appropriate.

stargazing hours each student had per semester, times scheduled outside of class times to look at the sky and learn the constellations and the myths behind them.⁴ Though there were and are colleges around the nation with Great Books curriculums, in method the IHP was a unique experiment in the world of public higher education.

While reporting on a new program at the University in November, 1971, a writer for *Kansas Alumni* magazine described the PIHP as, “To some extent...proposed as a new approach to recent campus disorders.”⁵ Lawrence and the University of Kansas entering the 70s were a town and campus divided, and at the very least, the PIHP brought new divisions to the foreground of local conversation. Opponents of the program “charged that the classes are nothing more or less than indoctrination sessions,” and not of a piece with the goals of a public university.⁶ The fact that the IHP’s professors taught from a unified perspective was met with the charge that they taught with the goal of converting students to Catholicism. The professors repeatedly and vehemently denied such accusations. However, it is undeniable that many students in the IHP did convert. Father Francis Bethel, a former student who participated in the program, gave the following estimate in his biography of John Senior, “An unofficial count numbers some two hundred among its students who entered the Catholic Church, as well as dozens who returned to the Catholic Faith they had abandoned.”⁷ More

⁴ James S. Taylor, *Poetic Knowledge: The Recovery of Education* (State University of New York Press, 1988), 149-150.

⁵ “140 Students + 3 Professors + Great Books = The Pearson Experiment,” *Kansas Alumni* (Lawrence, KS), November 1971, copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 2 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁶ Bill Hock, “PIHP methods, content generate criticism,” *University Daily Kansan*, Jan 27, 1975, copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 1 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁷ Francis Bethel, *John Senior and the Restoration of Realism* (Thomas Moore College Press, 2020), 2.; Father Bethel is prior, master of studies, teacher of dogmatic theology, and oblate master of Our Lady of Clear Creek Abbey, a monastery in Hulbert, Oklahoma founded by graduates of the IHP.

enlightening than the intention of each professor is the response to the program, understanding why and how the program they started elicited such a polarizing response from students and the general public.

The Integrated Humanities Program came into existence during an alienating period of American history. Beyond institutional turbulence and academic free inquiry, the life of the IHP is the story of young adults searching for meaning in a deeply divided society. It is both the story of a moderately successful, short-lived academic program, and an attempt on the universal quest to carve out meaning and fulfillment from life. As such, an investigation of the IHP's history provokes several questions. Was the IHP an attempt to democratize society through education, or an attempt to create a separate society unto itself? How did the arguments made for and against the IHP reflect contemporary understandings of academic freedom and free inquiry? In what ways did the Catholicism and broader Christian culture of the IHP affect the reaction to the program?

I argue that the IHP, like the Great Books movement before it, developed from a desire to democratize society. However, after consistent pressure from institutional and outside criticism, the program's professors and students turned inward, attempting instead to grow an independent intellectual culture. Therefore, the Integrated Humanities Program fits into the broader 1970s trend of fracture and countercultural subgroups, but as a particularly religious manifestation of those forces.

Dramatis Personae

For all the unique traits that made the Integrated Humanities Program attractive to incoming freshmen, the largest reason for the program's success was the charisma of its

professors. Their interplay was essential to the classroom dynamic at play in the lectures, a dynamic several students explain in relation to the four humours. According to those students, Professor Dennis Quinn was sanguine, he acted as mouthpiece for the three and was the primary organizer of the IHP as an institution. Professor John Senior was melancholic, a Northeastern cowboy poet, and the most prolific writer of the three. And Professor Franklyn Nelick was choleric, a former Naval officer whose cantankerous nature survives in as many real as apocryphal stories told by IHP graduates.⁸

Quinn, Senior, and Nelick were brought together by students who thought their styles and ideas aligned. The three's private conversations over shared feelings about education, philosophy, and religion eventually grew into the relationship that was the base of the IHP.⁹ Quinn and Nelick had previously met at the University of Wisconsin in 1950. At UW, Professor Quinn earned his BA, MA, and in 1958 his PhD in English and Comparative Literature.¹⁰ During the course of his undergraduate studies, Quinn was taught by Franklyn Nelick, who himself received a PhD from UW in 1951.¹¹ Nelick began teaching English at the University of Kansas that same year, and the two were reunited when Quinn joined KU's English Department in 1956.¹² John Senior's 1967 move to KU's Classics Department from the University of Wyoming brought the eventual trio together, and their camaraderie would grow over time.¹³ Professor Nelick entered the Catholic church in 1972, joining Senior and

⁸ Bethel, *Restoration of Realism*, 289; Stan Cox (participant, Integrated Humanities Program), in discussion with the author, July 2024. Recording available on request.

⁹ Bethel, *Restoration of Realism*, 287-88.

¹⁰ "Obituary: Dennis Quinn," Warren-McElwain Mortuary & Cremation Services, accessed April 15, 2025, <https://warrenmcelwain.com/obituary/dennis-b-quinn/>.

¹¹ "Obituary: Frank C. Nelick," *Lawrence Journal-World*, 1996, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/31359378/frank-c.-nelick>.

¹² "Obituary: Dennis Quinn," Warren-McElwain Mortuary & Cremation Services, accessed April 15, 2025, <https://warrenmcelwain.com/obituary/dennis-b-quinn/>.

¹³ Bethel, *Restoration of Realism*, 287-88.

Quinn in the faith.¹⁴ This moment was a dual confirmation, one of commitment to the Church and the other of unity with his fellow professors.

The IHP founders shared an educational approach which drew upon the Western tradition of knowledge, what they called the “perennial” philosophy.¹⁵ In a 1972 memo to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), Professor Quinn wrote that the PIHP’s pedagogical approach, “may be found (in general outline) enunciated in Mark van Doren’s *Liberal Education*. But Professor van Doren is only echoing the traditional idea which began with Plato and survives down to our times.”¹⁶ The IHP’s founders saw in Plato’s *Republic* a method to model their work on. In the text, Plato uses Socrates to articulate his vision of a musical education (education by the muses) which was necessary for his ideal society. In Plato’s vision, children would be exposed early on to beautiful things, cultivating within themselves a personal taste.¹⁷ This personal taste inherently carried with it a moral formation, for to the Greeks of the day, beauty was intimately connected to the concepts of truth and virtuosity. In order to foster that same moral formation in their students, those in the IHP memorized poetry because, before one could truly understand a piece of writing, one must experience its beauty. Everything done in the program was in service of cultivating wonder and thereafter knowledge of capital t Truth. In Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, the Greek articulated the concept of “wonder,” a keyword for the IHP, stating it was the emotion with

¹⁴ Frank C. Nelick, interview by Calder Pickett, Oral History Project, K.U. Retirees’ Club, RG 67/745, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

¹⁵ PIHP brochure, 1975-76., folder “1976,” College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1970 - , Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

¹⁶ Quinn to George Waggoner, March 2, 1972, copy in folder “IHP: 1971-1972,” College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

¹⁷ Plato, *Republic* 401d4-402a5.

which people first began to think philosophically.¹⁸ These ideas passed down the Western-Catholic intellectual tradition, to St. Augustine and to St. Thomas, and eventually to Professor Dennis Quinn, who wrote *Iris Exiled: A Synoptic History of Wonder* on the topic.

In order to enact their pedagogical approach, the IHP founders developed a unique teaching format, which looked roughly as follows during its nine years of existence: a meeting of small discussion groups with one of the three professors, twice a week rhetoric sessions led by either graduate teaching assistants or advanced undergraduates, one poetry memorization class, perhaps one of the two or three stargazing classes that were required a semester, and two eighty-minute lecture sessions from the three professors.¹⁹ Students had the additional option of enrolling in a Latin course taught by Professor Senior, who taught Latin aloud as a spoken language. Beginning with Homer, Plato, Thucydides and the like, students finished the four semester sequence reading Descartes, Dickens, Shakespeare and others, all the while memorizing poems from Byron, Burns, Tennyson, and Wordsworth.²⁰ For a brief time in the program's history, students were selected via an interview process with the three professors, done less to determine academic aptitude and more to deliberate which students would be most interested and suitable for study in the above texts.²¹

¹⁸ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1.982b.

¹⁹ "Report on the Pearson Integrated Humanities Program," copy in folder "IHP:1971-1972," College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS; "IHP, An Outline," copy in folder "Integrated Humanities Program - correspondence, articles, program outline, 1978," box 1, Personal Papers of James E Seaver, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

²⁰ "Report on the Pearson Integrated Humanities Program," copy in folder "IHP:1971-1972," College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

²¹ "140 Students + 3 Professors + Great Books = The Pearson Experiment," *Kansas Alumni*.

Phase One: Formation

The Pearson Integrated Humanities Program was not born of an intellectual or cultural vacuum. The 1960s and 70s, in Lawrence and across the nation, were a time of great turmoil and change. Professor Nelick, Senior, and Quinn's decision to create the PIHP developed within this turbulence, therefore the "why" of the PIHP was both a response to, and manifestation of, contemporary cultural discord.

In 1970 the violence in Lawrence, Kansas could not be missed. Tensions over the Vietnam War and the Black Power movement left physical scars upon the city of Lawrence, KU's campus, and the city's people. On April 20th, the Kansas Memorial Union was severely damaged by a fire, suspected by police to be arson, and Lawrence was placed under a three-day curfew.²² On May 8, KU Chancellor Laurence Chalmers called a meeting of the student body after two days of high tension on campus. On the sixth, nearly a thousand students participated in a rally against the ROTC, and on May 7 some 200 attacked the Military Science building, which housed the organization. At Chancellor Chalmers' May 8 meeting, around 15,000 faculty, staff, and students gathered in the stands of David Booth Memorial Stadium and voted that the semester finish early, grades given on currently completed work.²³ However, violence didn't stop with the end of the semester. On July 16th Rick Dowdell, a black 19-year old former KU student, was shot in the back and killed by a Lawrence police officer, sparking four days of turmoil in the city. This unrest culminated on July 20, when police responded to unrest on Mount Oread. A group of nearly 60 people had been "opening

²² William M. Tuttle, Jr., "KU's Tumultuous Years: Thirty Years of Student Activism, 1965-1995," in *Embattled Lawrence Kansas: The Enduring Struggle for Freedom*, ed. Dennis Domer (Allen Press, 2022), 246.

²³ *Ibid.* 251

small fire hydrants, setting small fires, and even tipping over a Volkswagen and setting it on fire.”²⁴ As a line of police advanced, the officers fired live ammunition into the retreating crowd and killed another young man, 19-year old KU student Nick Rice.²⁵

The conflict in Lawrence was a manifestation of broader cultural turmoil, what historian Daniel Rodgers termed an “age of fracture.”²⁶ The collaborative societal narratives of America during World War II had disintegrated, the most obvious symptom of society’s splintering being the divisions around the US’s role in the Vietnam War. Deaths at Kent State and Jackson State brought violence abroad to college campuses at home, positioning college students as a national concern and point of contention. It was those young Americans, in their disillusionment and search for personal meaning, that helped to shape the fracture and inward focus of the ‘70s.²⁷

The PIHP’s professors planted the program in response to the turmoil of the 60s, rooting the PIHP in the Great Books movement, a phenomenon whose life prior to the program illuminates the broader state of public and higher education the program was created in. In a previously mentioned memo from Dennis Quinn to the Dean of CLAS, Quinn mentioned Mark van Doren and his book *Liberal Education* alongside Plato.²⁸ Mark van Doren had a personal connection to Professor John Senior, having formed a lifetime relationship with the PIHP founder after teaching him at Columbia.²⁹ In van Doren’s time

²⁴ Ibid. 252

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Daniel Rodgers, *Age of Fracture* (Harvard University Press, 2011), 3.

²⁷ Bruce Schulman, *The Seventies* (Free Press, 2001), 80.

²⁸ Quinn to George Waggoner, March 2, 1972, copy in folder “IHP: 1971-1972,” College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

²⁹ Bethel, *John Senior and the Restoration of Realism*, 22.

teaching at the Ivy League school he was a key player in the early history of the Great Books Movement.

Columbia University People's Institute left an indelible intellectual effect on its participants and laid the groundwork for the Great Books movement that followed. The People's Institute was an experiment of the University in the 1920s, a series of public reading groups with around fifteen working-class New Yorkers in each group, led in discussion by Columbia men like Mark van Doren and Mortimer Adler (perhaps the most famous figure of the Great Books movement).³⁰ The Institute "included teaching philosophy, psychology, biology, and literary criticism."³¹ In other words, it offered an integrated form of teaching, described at the time by director of the program Everett Martin as a way to "reorient the individual, to enable him to take a richer and more significant view of his experiences, to place him above and not within the system of his beliefs and ideals."³² Mortimer Adler moved to the University of Chicago in 1929, and through the growth of his fame at that institution, the Great Books movement would reach national attention.³³

Adler's fame came after the institution of a Great Books, General Honors curriculum to the undergraduates of UChicago.³⁴ Out of this success, Adler and several others in his intellectual cohort collaborated with Britannica to produce the *Great Books*, a set of the great works of western literature, first released in 1952.³⁵ The Britannica set and reading groups which formed around it were popular enough to carve out their own cottage industry, but as

³⁰ Tim Lacy, *The Dream of a Democratic Culture: Mortimer J. Adler and the Great Books Idea* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 23-24.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Alex Beam, *A Great Idea at the Time: The Rise, Fall, and Curious Afterlife of the Great Books* (PublicAffairs, 2008), 40.

³⁴ Lacy, *Dream of a Democratic Culture*, 24-25.

³⁵ Beam, *Great Idea at the Time*, 95.

the age of fracture began in the 1970s, sales of the *Great Books* diminished.³⁶ Historian Tim Lacy argues that the Great Books were founded on ideas from the institute of democratizing culture, lifting up each person through education so that they might become a more articulate and positive participant in society.³⁷ It is interesting, then, that as the *Great Books* fell away during the turmoil of the late 60s and 70s, the PIHP began at the University of Kansas, sharing a fundamental concern about democratizing society.

The PIHP was born partially because KU was, at the time of its inception, uniquely predisposed to approve experimental programs. This institutional attitude came in large part from George Waggoner, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences from 1954-1975. Professor Nelick, in an oral history interview about his life and career at the University of Kansas, acknowledged Waggoner's key role in the formation of PIHP, recounting, "It got started by George Waggoner...[he] was interested in forming residential colleges."³⁸ Without Waggoner's "Colleges-within-the-College" system, the PIHP would have had no home on campus, literally and metaphorically.

Colleges-within-the-College were founded from the principal concern that students were isolated, and that this new system would allow closer, lasting relationships between them.³⁹ Assisted by funds from the Carnegie Corporation, Dean Waggoner sought to radically reorganize the administrative and advisory systems for the CLAS. According to a CWC pamphlet, the organization was strongly motivated by the growth of "specialization" within the university. As the University sought to maintain small class sizes, it became possible, and

³⁶ Lacy, *Dream of a Democratic Culture*, 129.

³⁷ Ibid. 10-11.

³⁸ Frank C. Nelick, interview by Calder Pickett, Oral History Project, K.U. Retirees' Club, RG 67/745, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

³⁹ "College Communication," November 9, 1965, folder "1965," College within the College Records (1960 - 1968), Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

indeed extremely likely, that freshman and sophomore students would have little to no outside contact with their classroom contemporaries⁴⁰ The same CWC pamphlet articulated a broad education philosophy in its curriculum section: “Each of the five freshman-sophomore colleges will have a high degree of academic autonomy...The key-note of the colleges will be educational experimentation and the attempt to make underclass liberal education a more meaningful experience.”⁴¹ In the fall semester of 1966 Centennial College served as a pilot college for 450 of the incoming freshmen, and in the following fall Corbin, North, Oliver, and Pearson Colleges were established, with Pearson College placed under the oversight of Dennis Quinn.⁴²

Quinn, Senior, and Nelick needed more than institutional permission, they needed money, and the language they employed in order to receive said funding demonstrates how the three initially rhetorically positioned the PIHP. In 1969 the three professors applied for a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to assist in growing the PIHP from a small pilot course planned for 1970 into a full-fledged academic program. The proposal began, “It is widely assumed that the causes of student unrest are external to the university – the war, social problems, etc. The authors of the present proposal contend, to the contrary, that such causes are basically internal.”⁴³ Here they aligned themselves as both a reaction to the turbulence of the day and as one of the few to have identified an antidote. In the PIHP’s conceptualization of learning, the humanities were connected to each other major

⁴⁰ Colleges within the College brochure, n.d., folder “1966,” College within the College Records (1960 - 1968), Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² “College Communication,” March 13, 1972, folder “IHP: 1972-1973,” Spencer Research Library.; College within the College Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁴³ “Report on the Pearson Integrated Humanities Program,” copy in folder “IHP:1971-1972,” College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

discipline, everything grounded in the perennial philosophy, beginning with the experience of wonder. Later in the proposal, they would say they wanted the program, “To demonstrate the relevance of older literatures and of the humanities to present problems.”⁴⁴ The three professors articulated that a goal of the program was to increase and mold student participation in society through a study of the Western tradition, correcting what they saw as the disordered manner students were approaching present conflicts. The PIHP received funding from the NEH, with the grant totaling \$30,000 (to be matched by the University), and it began its pilot course in the fall semester of 1970 with twenty specially selected honors students.⁴⁵

The PIHP was approved on an experimental basis in 1971, fulfilling a student's English, speech, and Western Civilization credit requirements, with permanent approval dependent upon a review conducted by the Committee on Evaluation and Advancement of Instruction (CEAI). The CEAI completed and submitted their report on March 20, 1972. In their report, the seeds of conflict that defined the PIHP's tenure at KU are visible. In the “Summary and Comments” section of the report, the CEAI articulated several criticisms. First, the committee charged that students in the PIHP were being “indoctrinated rather than taught.” The committee found this accusation to be conditional, only applicable if a student experienced the PIHP as the primary provider of their humanities study rather than as one option amongst several.⁴⁶ There was also concern expressed that the educational expertise of

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Bethel, *Restoration of Realism*, 290.; \$30,000 in January of 1970 would be, in January of 2025, equivalent to \$252,119.84. “CPI Inflation Calculator” U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed April 14, 2024, https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm.

⁴⁶ “Report on the Pearson Integrated Humanities Program,” copy in folder “IHP:1971-1972,” College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

the three professors wasn't broad enough to constitute a truly integrated approach, and the large amount of autonomy afforded the program was unfair to the departments granting credit fulfillment to its students.⁴⁷ With these concerns in mind, the CEAI proposed that the PIHP maintain its current credit fulfillments, but be placed under an inter-disciplinary advisory committee. Their logic was, as the PIHP was not housed within any department, but instead within Pearson College, the program needed some form of independent oversight which the Advisory Committee could provide.⁴⁸ The CEAI approved the PIHP with these suggestions.

The CEAI's approval was not unanimous. The dissenting report penned by Professors G. Baley Price and Brower Burchill foreshadowed many of the arguments which would later be made against the PIHP (indeed, Price remained a critic of the PIHP long after his participation in the CEAI review). Price and Burchill criticised the PIHP as a program of "antiquarianism," too isolated from the rest of the university. To their minds, this was demonstrated in the PIHP's Latin program. Headed by John Senior, Price and Burchill objected to a sequence of learning they observed to be focused on ecclesiastical Latin, leaving students at a disadvantage should they wish to pursue further Latin within the Classics Department.⁴⁹ They offered an alternative proposal, that the PIHP be absorbed into the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences as a whole, no longer overseen by Pearson College specifically. Similar resistance to the PIHP was offered in a December 13, 1971 report from an ad hoc committee formed by the History Department. In their report, Professors Clifford S. Griffin, William Gilbert, and James Seaver characterized the program as "mischievous," a

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ "Report on the Pearson Integrated Humanities Program," copy in folder "IHP:1971-1972," College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

program of “advocacy teaching” that was “religious indoctrination carried on in a state university at state expense.”⁵⁰ By its first full year of teaching, the PIHP was already being condemned as an illiberal, closed off education. The professors were castigated as not sufficiently diverse in their thinking, allegedly focused more on creating Catholics than teaching broad points of view.

The PIHP was created as a reaction to the simultaneous influences of cultural turmoil, the Great Books, and institutional acceptance. The *Kansas Alumni* magazine described the program as “insisting that responsible political action can only be based upon a careful and serious study of the Western tradition...”⁵¹ Whether this opinion was truly held by the professors, or merely advertised to increase enrollment, it demonstrates an acknowledgement of contemporary forces. These forces helped to bring about the program, but it was the PIHP’s particular approach that generated interest amongst students.

Phase Two: Interior Criticism

The democratic dreams of the PIHP wouldn’t last the tumultuous 70s. While the program was quickly embroiled in controversy, at the same time it offered a unique appeal to students that spoke to a number of young people of the era. The manner in which those students publicly defended the program, the particular programming they participated in, and how the PIHP marketed itself all point towards why the program was initially successful. On the other hand, the arguments made against the program center discourses of academic

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ “140 Students + 3 Professors + Great Books = The Pearson Experiment,” *Kansas Alumni*.

freedom, and what methods and experiences are appropriate to be taught at a publicly funded university.

In early 1973 the University of Kansas's College Assembly was the staging ground to an intense debate over the future of the PIHP. The College Assembly was a body of faculty members, 60 students from Colleges within the College, and 60 students from other schools that acted as the final deliberative body on academic affairs.⁵² The PIHP's first approval had been on an experimental basis, approved by the aforementioned CEAI, and now the College Assembly had to decide what its permanent future would look like— or if it had one at all.⁵³ The College Assembly was asked to consider three questions. First, "Should the courses in the Pearson Integrated Humanities sequence be given permanent approval?" Second, "should completion of the Program continue to satisfy the English, Speech, Western Civilization, and Humanities distribution requirements?" And third, "what arrangements should be made to provide continuing review by the College Assembly of the Program's operation?"⁵⁴ The debate offered the PIHP a well-publicized opportunity to articulate a public defense and definition of itself, while affording the program's opponents a respected public square to air their grievances.

The College Assembly decided the first question quickly, voting on January 23rd, 1973, to extend the program permanent approval.⁵⁵ The real debate was over the second

⁵² Linda Doherty, "Pearson Courses Approved But Status Yet Uncertain," *University Daily Kansan* (Lawrence, KS), Jan 24, 1973, copy in folder "Clippings on Programs 1 of 2," box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁵³ "College Communication," January 16, 1973, folder "IHP: 1972-1973," Spencer Research Library.; College within the College Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁵⁴ "Report on the Pearson Integrated Humanities Program," copy in folder "IHP:1971-1972," College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

⁵⁵ Linda Doherty, "Pearson Courses Approved But Status Yet Uncertain."

question, whether the program would satisfy credit requirements. The PIHP's professors were aware of the significance of this moment, Professor Quinn, in a memo to a presumably like minded professor, wrote "we can expect a series of amendments producing a motion similar to the one now being prepared for a mail ballot—i.e, one where PIHP stands to lose but not to win." and requested he attend the meeting.⁵⁶ Dr. Quinn was correct to assume the existence of the motions, as G. Baley Price proposed to vote on the issue of credit fulfillment over mail ballot. Price cited "a lack of openness and an unwillingness to let others evaluate its courses and its procedures" as one of the reasons he "urge[d] you to vote on the mail ballot to deny this permission."⁵⁷ At the same meeting, Dr. Quinn gave a speech in refutation to Price, contending that the only reason people opposed PIHP fulfilling credits was "not academic but ideological," and contending that "any investigation of our [Prof's' Senior, Quinn, and Nelick] philosophy or beliefs constitutes a flagrant violation of academic freedom."⁵⁸ The battleground and argumentation for both sides was thus mostly set. For those opposed to the program, it was closed off and regressive while promulgating an ideology antithetical to a modern University. For supporters, their opponents pursued them on ideological grounds, to their minds for reasons outside the bounds of prosecution at a university.

Student publications during the College Assembly debate demonstrate that public discourse concerning the program wasn't limited to the faculty and administration, it had

⁵⁶ Quinn to Professor Shaw, February 23, 1973, copy in folder "IHP: 1972-1973," College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁵⁷ G. Baley Price, "The Pearson Integrated Humanities Program," n.d., copy in folder "IHP: 1972-1973," College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁵⁸ Dennis Quinn, "Against the Price Motion," delivered Feb 27, 1973, copy in folder "IHP: 1972-1973," College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

spread throughout campus. The clearest example of these student publications is “Wonderland College,” a parody handout dated to July 18th, 1973.⁵⁹ The distribution range of this satire is unclear, but what it does demonstrate is a creative, likely student, oppositional feeling to the PIHP. “Wonderland College” relies on a fair bit of Carrollian absurdism, promoting its titular fantasy college and mocking a perceived retrograde nature to the intellectual culture and teachings of the PIHP, reading, “If you ever wondered why the world looks flat, it is because it is flat! Everybody knew this until modern science, which we condemn.”⁶⁰ The joke here is clear, and that this satire exists at all points towards the controversial nature of the PIHP on KU campus at the time.

At this time, the PIHP was also being publicly litigated in newspaper columns, both in the *University Daily Kansan* and *Lawrence Daily Journal-World*. These published arguments indicate that the PIHP was a subject of public concern. Writing in to the Reader Response section of the *UDK*, one KU graduate student bemoaned the “sophistical rhetoric” Professor Quinn and PIHP supporters employed, charging that the program, if approved permanently (as it was), would “serve as a precedent for further fragmentation of the college and the entire university...”⁶¹ The public sphere was not only used by students, as various faculty members involved themselves. Calder Pickett, a Professor of Journalism at KU, wrote in the same *UDK* issue as above defending the PIHP. He argued that though the program was controversial, they received so much pushback because they were “controversial in the wrong way,” promoting a traditional understanding of Western history and culture instead of

⁵⁹ “Wonderland College,” July 18th, 1973, copy in folder 37, box 12, Personal Papers of Edward L. Ruhe, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Jim Swindler, “Pearson Program Criticized,” *University Daily Kansan* (Lawrence, KS), Feb 2, 1973, copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 2 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

something perceived as new.⁶² Another faculty member, George Worth, Chairman of the English Department, wrote in the next week decrying Pickett's column and the manner in which, "this whole messy business...tends to bring out the worst in all of us—including me."⁶³ These comments, particularly those of professors who felt the need to weigh in, show again the popularity of the PIHP's controversy at KU and in the broader Lawrence community, even at the early juncture of the College Assembly credit debates.

After tabulation of College Assembly mail ballots, it was announced that the PIHP would no longer satisfy English, Western Civilization, Speech, and Humanities credit requirements. Each course would still provide six hours of credit, but students could no longer proceed through their freshman and sophomore years with few classes other than the PIHP.⁶⁴ Additionally, a permanent advisory committee was established over the program, and students were no longer to be selected by interviews. In effect, if a student now wished to participate in the PIHP they greatly increased their academic load during the first two years of their education.

Reactions from PIHP students to the decision to limit credit hours demonstrated a program of committed participants, and the arguments they made in support of the PIHP help reveal why they found the program particularly appealing in the first place. Prior to the release of the mail ballot results, 205 of the 268 students in the PIHP signed a petition that the

⁶² Calder Pickett, "24 Hours That Should Be Kept," *University Daily Kansan* (Lawrence, KS), Feb 2, 1973 copy in folder "Clippings on Programs 2 of 2," box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁶³ George Worth, "Comments on Pearson," *University Daily Kansan* (Lawrence, KS), Feb 9, 1973, copy in folder "Clippings on Programs 2 of 2," box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁶⁴ Ann McFerren, "Limitations Placed on Pearson Credit," *University Daily Kansan* (Lawrence, KS), March 14, 1973, copy in folder "Clippings on Programs 2 of 2," box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

program was not indoctrinating them, had comparable academic standards to their other courses, and respected their personal intellectual freedoms.⁶⁵ After the mail ballot results were announced, PIHP students met with Chancellor Nichols, asking him to overturn the verdict. In an article discussing this and their future strategy, a spokesman for the group of students argued that “this program relates to the common man,” an attempt to rhetorically align the students alongside the president of the state of Kansas’s Senate, who the week prior had asked KU faculty to leave “their ivory towers and vine-covered halls...”⁶⁶ Later that month, those same students met with state legislators in Topeka and separately members of the state’s Board of Regents over the possibility of a suit in KU’s University Judiciary to overturn the decision.⁶⁷ While their efforts were ultimately futile, and no such suit materialized, these students' efforts demonstrate an intense attraction and passionate feeling about the program at the time. Further, their rhetorical attempts to align themselves with the Kansas senate president with calls to the common man prove that, at least rhetorically, students of the PIHP promoted it as an institution democratizing society.

As was the intention behind creating “Colleges-within-the-College,” the PIHP developed and advertised a unique culture amongst its students. This is evident in the annual waltz held by the program. Initiated by students, the waltz was a night of formal engagement for students and their parents, which the students had been preparing for all semester with

⁶⁵ “Students Ask Support in Pearson Petition,” *University Daily Kansan* (Lawrence, KS), February 27, 1973, copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 2 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁶⁶ Bob Womack, “Group to Lobby for Pearson Program,” *Lawrence Daily Journal-World*, March 17, 1973, copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 2 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁶⁷ “Debate Continues Over Pearson Program at KU,” *Lawrence Daily Journal-World*, March 31, 1973, copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 2 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

dancing lessons. A brochure for the program advertised this as “an expression of educational ideals,” citing the musical education of Plato.⁶⁸ Alongside the waltz the brochure also advertises the “Yankee Tank Fair,” a country fair sponsored by the program whose proceeds went towards funding a full-semester PIHP study abroad experience in Ireland.⁶⁹ These activities gesture towards a communal culture within the program, and more importantly that said culture was advertised and intentionally stressed by those in charge of IHP.

Another appealing feature of the IHP was the semi-regular opportunities it offered to study abroad. The program visited Greece, Italy, Ireland, and attempted to study abroad in France.⁷⁰ These trips were promoted as ways to discover “traditional culture, with its slower pace, its love of a living past, its handcrafts, its unspoiled countryside.”⁷¹ Such romanticism was contrasted against the modernity of America, and implicitly against the education of the day. These programs were popular, as evidenced by the attendance of 60 students on a full semester in Ireland, who experienced traditional village life.⁷² For these experiences, like many other IHP activities, a strong emphasis was placed on community culture and tradition, a feeling of something lost that could be reclaimed together. Studying abroad was often incredibly influential for IHP students, the Ireland semester producing the highest percentage of religious conversions and vocations compared to any other activity.⁷³ However, the rejection of a proposed semester in France by Dean of CLAS Robert Cobb showed that wounds from the College Assembly debate were still fresh. Reacting to the rejection,

⁶⁸ PIHP brochure, 1973., folder “1974,” College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1970 - , Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Bethel, *John Senior and the Restoration of Realism*, 301.

⁷¹ PIHP brochure, 1973., folder “1974,” College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1970 - , Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁷² Bethel, *Restoration of Realism*, 319.

⁷³ Ibid.

Professor Quinn gave a quotation to the UDK, saying, “The same forces that tried to suppress PIHP...over a year ago have caused rejection of the proposed Pearson semester in France.” He listed those forces as, “ideological intolerance, hostility to innovation, jealous protection of the status quo, poverty of imagination, envy of success, indifference to legitimate student interests and contempt for proved excellence in teaching.”⁷⁴ His comments paint the PIHP, though vaguely, as a positive program, one of “innovation” that is against the “status quo.” This specific Quinn quote points to a broader mode of discourse around the IHP, which was sold by the professors as being both ancient in character, and as a new (or perhaps revived) form of education at odds with the modern university.

The PIHP’s semester in Ireland was a critical moment in the lifespan of the program. Two students, Richard Mathes and Edward Moll, tragically died in the waves on the coast of Inishbofin, a small Irish island.⁷⁵ Reportedly, the two were exploring The Stags, a rock formation on Inishbofin’s coast. As the tide came in, the two men decided to wait and watch on a rock but were swept out to sea and drowned. Both bodies were later recovered.⁷⁶ The tragedy brought the students on the trip together, the trauma of the event making them a closer group, but the actions of the professors came under severe scrutiny. At the stateside funerals of the two men, “parents compared notes and realized they had all undergone similar

⁷⁴ Gary Borg, “Pearson trip to France rejected by College Dean,” *University Daily Kansan* (Lawrence, KS), October 11, 1974, copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 2 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁷⁵ Allen Torrey, “2 from KU missing in Ireland,” *Lawrence Daily Journal-World*, n.d., copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 2 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁷⁶ John Fuller, “2 KU students drown in Ireland,” unclear source, n.d., copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 2 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

experiences [regarding negative behavior of sons in the PIHP].”⁷⁷ The parents who came together at these funerals later formed the emotional core of outside pressure that eventually overwhelmed the IHP.

The years 1975 and 1976 brought several major institutional shifts that significantly weakened the relative independence with which the Integrated Humanities Program had operated. On May 1st, 1975, student records were transferred from the various colleges within the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences to Nunemaker Center, the new advising home for CLAS students, officially shuttering the College-within-the-College system of organization and advising.⁷⁸ The end of CWC forced the IHP to look for a new building to house its headquarters in, but physical dislocation wasn’t the biggest issue the IHP faced.⁷⁹ In the Spring of 1976, KU’s Office of Academic Affairs decided it would prevent academic programs from mailing any materials to incoming freshmen. Additionally, the summer orientation team decided that no academic programs would be allowed booths during activities.⁸⁰ The viability of a freshman-sophomore academic program like the IHP, which relied heavily on its brochure to generate interest in the program, became much more difficult. Jerry Lewis, associate dean of CLAS, when commenting on an article about the decision's specific effect on the IHP said, “It hurt them worse than anyone else... Students

⁷⁷ Robert W. Butler, “From K.U. to French Cloister — What Price Truth?,” *Kansas City Times*, March 31, 1977 *Kansas City Times*, copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 2 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁷⁸ Bethel, *Restoration of Realism*, 319.

⁷⁹ “Humanities program begins hunt for new headquarters,” *University Daily Kansan* (Lawrence, KS), March 24, 1975, copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 2 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁸⁰ Jerry Seib, “Publicity woes cut IHP enrollment, director says,” *University Daily Kansan* (Lawrence, KS), November 17, 1976, copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 2 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

know there is an English program, they don't know there is a humanities program.”⁸¹ The effects of these decisions bear out in enrollment data. Broken down by school year, in 1971-73 IHP enrolled 142 freshmen, 72-74 186, 73-75 129, 74-76 182, 75-77 155, 76-78 50, and 77-79 88.⁸² The noticeable drop off in enrollment demonstrates a clear causal relationship between institutional decisions and the popularity of the program.

In response to the dysfunction and chaos which divided the nation, Professors Senior, Quinn, and Nelick answered with a call to ancient wisdom, to learn in a tradition that traced itself back to the founders of philosophy. Public opposition to the program offered its faculty and students an opportunity to articulate a public case for its virtues and for their right to teach how they wish. The moment had a dual effect of clarifying purpose and encouraging unity amongst the IHP's members. Rhetorical gestures from students in the program indicate that they, at minimum, thought it profitable to promote the PIHP as a means of democratization, visible in their posturing towards the common man. On the other hand, opponents of the program saw the PIHP as retrogressive in character, incompatible with the goals of liberal education at KU and other public universities.

Phase Three: Exterior Criticism

The Integrated Humanities Program was never without opposition, but initially most of it was internal to the University. From 1976 to its death in 1979, pushback against the program suddenly became exterior, adding a new layer of stress both to the program and to

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² “IHP, An Outline,” copy in folder “Integrated Humanities Program - correspondence, articles, program outline, 1978,” box 1, Personal Papers of James E Seaver, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

KU as an institution. While the controversy surrounding the IHP pressed on, increasing pressure on the program and its professors turned it inward, leaving behind dreams of democratization while moving towards isolation.

Already suffering from declining enrollment and institutional change, a new attack on the IHP began in 1976, further pressuring the three founders. Several parents of students in the IHP felt uneasy about what they perceived to be negative changes in their children, changes they attributed to the IHP's professors. After service at a Unitarian Universalist congregation in Overland Park, two of these parents approached the new Reverend, Vern Barnet, to express concern for their son in the program. Barnet became intrigued, and after researching and giving a sermon on what he had learned, Barnet was approached by a representative of the Jewish Community Relations Bureau (JCRB).⁸³ Through the JCRB, Barnet was connected with several people who shared his negative opinion of the IHP, eventually forming the Committee for Academic and Religious Liberty (CARL), an organization dedicated to dissolving the IHP. Alongside Barnet on the CARL was "Dean Tollefson, Executive Director of the Union of Independent Colleges of Art; David Goldstein, Executive Director of the Jewish Community Relations Bureau for Greater Kansas City; [and] John Swomley, Professor at the St Paul School of Theology (Methodist) and member of the National ACLU board."⁸⁴ An overwhelming majority of those working in the CARL's leadership were involved in religious institutions of their own. Therefore, the final days of the

⁸³ Vern Barnet (minister and founder, Committee for Academic and Religious Liberty), in discussion with the author, November 2024. Recording available on request.

⁸⁴ Barnet to Michael Shaw, May 7, 1978, copy in folder "IHP C.A.R.L review," College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

IHP were not a debate between atheistic pluralism and Catholic teaching, rather, they were a contest between two visions of how a religious life should be lived at a public university.

Materials sent out by the Committee stressed the isolated nature of the program, one reading, “They stick to their own cultic enclave, academically, socially, and religiously.”⁸⁵ Such outside pressure joined the familiar chorus of voices within the University, and produced the largest wave of criticism the IHP had yet seen.

A significant effect of the externalization of the CARL’s anti-IHP discourse was the personalization of the controversy. Ideas of proselytization and indoctrination towards students suddenly were given names and faces in print media. The first of a two-part series of articles published by the Kansas City Times in 1977 focused on conversions and religious vocations within the IHP, in particular from the perspective of the parents of Matthew Shapiro. Born into a fairly secular Jewish family, Matthew, now a monk in Our Lady of Clear Creek Abbey, converted to Catholicism while in the IHP. His parents in the article, and other parents interviewed, articulated a concern of the “personality changes they saw in their children.”⁸⁶ The article tells a story of insularity as a program, and of radical change instituted because of it. The Committee for Academic and Religious Liberty made use of this specification in the discourse. In one of the materials they sent out to high school counselors, a photo of several former IHP students entering the novitiate of Fontgombault was included as a warning.⁸⁷ More than ever, debate around the IHP became crystallized into a church and

⁸⁵ “Special Release to H.S. Counselors: A Warning About the Integrated Humanities Program at the University of Kansas,” Committee for Academic and Religious Liberty, n.d., copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 2 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁸⁶ Robert W. Butler, “From K.U. to French Cloister — What Price Truth?”

⁸⁷ “Special Release to H.S. Counselors: A Warning About the Integrated Humanities Program at the University of Kansas,” Committee for Academic and Religious Liberty, Kenneth Spencer Research Library.

state issue rather than an academic philosophy issue. The rhetorical effect of this was that the IHP was portrayed and viewed as a program outside and separate from society, not something looking to improve participation.

Debate over the IHP didn't exist solely in the world of letters; on several occasions debates and town halls concerning the program occurred. The reporting on these public forums illustrates the fractured quality of discussion about the program, and the disintegration of discourse about the issues. The first debate was September 13th, 1977, between Professor Quinn and assistant professor of Philosophy, Arthur Skidmore.⁸⁸ The debate garnered an audience of around 400, and its main thrust was whether the IHP should continue as a program. Skidmore's contention was not that the IHP was objectionable because it was indoctrinating students, but that it should be dissolved because the CLAS was better suited to teach the humanities.⁸⁹ Vern Bernet, who attended the conversation, called it a "sham debate" and "challenged Quinn to an 'unrigged, authentic' debate. However, Quinn refused Bernet's request, saying it would be 'an intellectual lynching.'"⁹⁰ In a letter to the *University Daily Kansan*, Bernet bemoaned Quinn's lack of a proper debating candidate and submitted that there was a "subtle but powerful process of mutual selection" between the professors and the

⁸⁸ "Professors to square off over humanities program," *University Daily Kansan*, September 6, 1977, copy in folder "Clippings on Programs 2 of 2," box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁸⁹ Steven Stingley, "Debate airs IHP's faults, merits," *University Daily Kansan*, September 14, 1977, copy in folder "Clippings on Programs 2 of 2," box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁹⁰ Linda Sanderson, "IHP forum at KU stirs debate," *Lawrence Daily Journal-World* September 14, 1977, copy in folder "Clippings on Programs 2 of 2," box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

students of the IHP. Barnet contended that this process had a deleterious effect upon students' relationships outside the program, further isolating those in the IHP.⁹¹

Frustrated by what he saw as a lack of dissenting opinions, Barnet spoke at a forum on KU campus nearly a month after the debate, on October 18th, 1977.⁹² At the forum, which garnered an audience of about 75 people, Barnet called for a federal investigation of the IHP.⁹³ A year later, another public discussion regarding the IHP was set to occur, but it would go without one of its main attractions. Professor Quinn declined to appear and debate Reverend Barnet after learning the press were invited, an invitation he insisted went against his prior terms for discussion. In referring to Barnet and the Committee for Academic and Religious Liberty, Quinn said, "It's a well-known McCarthy technique... You say something often enough and the public believes it."⁹⁴ The moral judgement attached to the claim is debatable, but Quinn was correct in one aspect. The appearance of Vern Barnet and the Committee for Academic and Religious Liberty solidified the narrative against the IHP, reiterating the idea that the program was insular and removed.

Letters exchanged between Professor Quinn and Reverend Barnet demonstrate the extent to which the Committee for Academic and Religious Liberty's public narrative affected the IHP's professors. On February 2nd, 1978, Michael W. Merriam, a lawyer

⁹¹ Vern Barnet, "IHP students professors' pawns," *University Daily Kansan*, September 21, 1977, copy in folder "Clippings on Programs 2 of 2," box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁹² Steven Stingley, "IHP opponent to voice opinions," *University Daily Kansan*, October 18, 1977, copy in folder "Clippings on Programs 2 of 2," box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁹³ Steven Stingley, "IHP opponent calls for federal investigation," *University Daily Kansan*, October 19, 1977, copy in folder "Clippings on Programs 2 of 2," box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁹⁴ Mary Peterson, "IHP leader balks at open forum," *Lawrence Daily Journal-World*, January 30, 1978, copy in folder "Clippings on Programs 2 of 2," box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

representing Quinn, sent a letter to Barnet requesting a public retraction of several of Barnet's quotes in the *University Daily Kansan*, writing, "the fact that they were published in the 'Kansan' might make the case for a libel action."⁹⁵ The gist of Barnet's quotes in the January 30 *Kansan* article is that Quinn was intentionally avoiding public discourse because he was a liar. Charles Wilson, a lawyer representing Barnet, responded on February 8th that Barnet was misquoted and, regardless, his language did not constitute defamation.⁹⁶ The brief exchange ended any hints of personal legal proceedings between the two parties, but it opened a route of communication for the two parties to communicate through.

On the 14th of March, 1978, Barnet inquired by letter to Quinn, Nelick, and Senior if they would be willing to have a private discussion. According to Barnet, their back and forth in the media was "demean[ing] both of the religious institutions we represent" and would be best rectified over private conversation.⁹⁷ The IHP professor's response was delivered on the third of April, and it was an unequivocal denial to discourse privately. Quinn, who wrote the letter, posited that Barnet and the CARL had "done us, our program, our students, our friends, and our families grievous and irreparable harm."⁹⁸ Quinn wrote his letter in the aftermath of severe budget cuts to the IHP; his curt refusal to a man whom he perceived as being an influence on those cuts is understandable. Barnet swiftly responded to Quinn's letter on April

⁹⁵ Merriam to Vern Barnet, February 2, 1978, copy in folder "IHP C.A.R.L review," College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁹⁶ Wilson to Merriam, February 8, 1978, copy in folder "IHP C.A.R.L review," College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁹⁷ Barnet to Quinn, Senior, and Nelick, March 14, 1978, copy in folder "IHP C.A.R.L review," College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

⁹⁸ Quinn to Barnet, April 3, 1978, copy in folder "IHP C.A.R.L review," College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

sixth, far less conciliatory than before. He charged that Quinn, Senior, and Nelick had “perpetrated enormous evil against a number of students,” though perhaps out of foolishness instead of malice.⁹⁹ Barnet’s was the last letter between the two camps. The enormous evil he recounts in his letter was, in his perception, the cult-like atmosphere of the IHP which turned young men and women into the arms of the Catholic church. Quinn and Barnet’s strong reactions are understandable. Each felt that the other transgressed, not only in the realm of public discourse and public education, but transgression onto personal religion and religious liberty,

After years of criticism, first largely interior, then exterior, KU administration and the IHP could no longer bear the strain. Reverend Barnet, reflecting on a meeting with KU administration, said, “they were trying to figure out a way to get rid of this program because they already were receiving a lot of complaints.”¹⁰⁰ Further elaborating “We had kind of a push and pull relationship. On one hand, they had to tell us ‘We don’t want you to go public about this’, on the other hand you have to do what you have to do.”¹⁰¹ If such recollections are accurate, 1978 is when KU administration took definitive action against the program. That year, in a reallocation of resources attributed to declining enrollment in the program, the College Assembly decided the IHP would operate with a much lower budget in 1979, the program’s funds decreasing from \$16,980 to \$4,004.¹⁰² The cuts slashed the program’s

⁹⁹ Barnet to Quinn, April 6, 1978, copy in folder “IHP C.A.R.L review,” College within the College: Pearson Integrated Humanities Program Records 1977-1979, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

¹⁰⁰ Vern Barnet (minister and founder, Committee for Academic and Religious Liberty), in discussion with the author, November 2024. Recording available on request.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² “IHP funds sliced; prof calls action ‘a reprisal’,” April 25, 1978, copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 2 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.; \$16,980 in January of 1979 would be, in January of 2025, equivalent to \$78,975.89. \$4,004 in

finances for GTAs in half; Professor Quinn called the process “death by administration.”¹⁰³

The IHP Advisory Committee, in a report to the College Committee on Undergraduate Studies and Advising, recommended that a Humanities Committee be created that would administer all humanities courses at KU, including the IHP. Their recommendations, if adopted, would list the IHP’s courses alongside other humanities listings, and dissolve the IHP Advisory Committee, as the program would no longer be a distinct entity.¹⁰⁴ Despite protests from the IHP’s founders, the program’s fate was decided, and the Humanities Committee asked to receive the IHP’s files and office keys by June 1st, the official end to the program as an independent entity.¹⁰⁵ On April 10th, 1979, the College Assembly sounded the death knell, and voted to abolish the IHP Advisory Committee and all IHP courses to the Humanities Committee.¹⁰⁶ Though Professors Quinn and Senior would teach IHP courses for some of the following years, the IHP as a truly independent, distinct entity had disappeared.

Whether or not KU administration acted in a particularly malicious manner towards the IHP, the program simply could not survive the waves of backlash it incurred from 1976-1979. The original motivations of the program, to democratize and improve societal participation, like those of the Great Books movement, suffered in the same age of fracture and unease the program had attempted to address. As a unique social and academic subculture, the IHP grated against the direction of the University of Kansas when Colleges

January of 1979 would be, in January of 2025, equivalent to \$18,623.06. “CPI Inflation Calculator” U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed April 14, 2024, https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm.

¹⁰³ Deb Reichman, “IHP head refutes recommendations,” *University Daily Kansan*, January 25, 1979, copy in folder “Clippings on Programs 2 of 2,” box 9, Personal Papers of G. Baley Price, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.; Robert Carlson, *Truth on Trial: Liberal Education Be Hanged*. (Crisis Books, 1995), ch. 7.

¹⁰⁴ Deb Reichman, “IHP head refutes recommendations.”

¹⁰⁵ “IHP loses office, authority” UDK 3/24/79 in G Baley Price PP in SRL

¹⁰⁶ Robin Smith, “Assembly votes to terminate IHP.”

within the College and experimentation were disposed of. As the University moved towards a more simplified approach to advising and education, the IHP became a relic. The IHP marketed itself as simultaneously innovative and old-fashioned, it began as an idealistic expression of old ways of learning applied to new purposes, but exterior criticism brought the IHP into a narrative of regression and turning away from society.

Conclusion

After the removal of independent status from the IHP, its role as a program now unofficial, Franklyn Nelick quickly retired. The eldest of the three professors, he confessed to severe burnout after the ordeal, and decided to step away from the University entirely.¹⁰⁷ Professors Senior and Quinn continued to teach IHP courses for several more years, forging a program from those willing who enrolled in each course. Two cardiac bypass surgeries within the same year forced Professor Senior to retire in June 1983, and by the end of 1984 the last logs of the IHP's fire lost their spark.¹⁰⁸

However, the ideas and experiences from the three professors have continued to this day, with at least two schools formed by graduates of the program, and countless homeschooling groups inspired by the IHP's method of experiential learning.¹⁰⁹ Additionally, Our Lady of Clear Creek Abbey, a monastery in Hulbert, Oklahoma, was founded by many of those IHP students who entered the novitiate. Their website proudly references the monks' time in the IHP as a crucial part of the history of the monastery.

¹⁰⁷ Frank C. Nelick, interview by Calder Pickett, Oral History Project, K.U. Retirees' Club, RG 67/745, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

¹⁰⁸ Bethel, *Restoration of Realism*, 362.

¹⁰⁹ Cair Paravel Latin School in Topeka, KS and Gregory the Great Academy in PA have sections of their websites which mention that their founders' intellectual roots come from their time in the IHP.

Though a self-made comparison, graduates of the Integrated Humanities Program are not wrong to compare it to Don Quixote. A man out of time meets a program out of time, the IHP's legacy is a complicated one. Like the Great Books movement before it, the IHP began with the goal of educating young adults to be better participants in society. Ultimately, after long public battles, the program was viewed as something totally antithetical to that idea, closed off and cult-like in its actions. The IHP's legacy continues this complication. There may be no institution more removed from society on earth than that of the monastery, but at the same time the numerous schools and educators who came from its ranks demonstrates a strong desire to bring up students in what the IHP's graduates view as the right way.

Upon hearing of the Integrated Humanities Program for the first time, most people's reaction is one of surprise. Latin and the Heartland seem odd bedfellows; Kansas is far more well known for its basketball prowess than anything else. Yet, there is something oddly poetic about the IHP's brief existence. Walking by, the images emblazoned on the IHP's memorial peak interest and excitement, calling back to a previous time. A time when Cervantes' wild knight rode atop Mount Oread, tilting at the windmills of Wonder and calling young men and women to adventure.

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