
Remembering Indiana University in the 1960s: Perspectives on *Dissent in the Heartland*

Dissent in the Heartland: The Sixties at Indiana University. By Mary Ann Wynkoop. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002. Pp. xi, 214. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. Clothbound, \$49.95; paperbound, \$19.95.)

Editor's note: *More than three decades later, the student protests that erupted at Indiana University and other college campuses across America continue to provoke conflicting interpretations. The IMH invited three active participants in the story Mary Ann Wynkoop tells (one was an administrator and two were student protesters) and one well-placed observer (a former faculty member) to reflect on the book and on the period it analyses. A response from the author follows.*

A View from the Faculty by Martin Ridge*

The first few chapters of Mary Ann Wynkoop's study brought back vague memories of Indiana University students singing "Where have all the young men gone," mobilization meetings, pickets, marches, and even the sweet aroma of burning grass. It also recalled graduate students seeking advice about what to do when they were called up for military service (advice in good conscience I could not give) and colleagues who gave all draft-eligible males students "A" grades because they did not want to send them to die in the rice paddies of "Nam." It also revived images: a student shot dead at Kent State and a naked Vietnamese child, burned by napalm, running in the street.

In this book Wynkoop examines the history of student activism on Indiana University's Bloomington campus. Although a few student leaders were not native Hoosiers, there were no "genuine" outside agitators, and the role of the faculty was nil. The roots of dissent were deeply imbedded in the culture of a pre-World War II state university struggling to achieve distinction. President Herman B Wells had used his considerable talent for persuasion to move the institution away from its parochialism and had built a liberal university that could defend the sex research of Alfred Kinsey. Wells even won support from a tight-fisted legislature that looked for any excuse to cut the university's budget. His nonconfrontational approach was so successful that he earns praise from Wynkoop; otherwise she has

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almost nothing but scorn for most university administrators, who fought even minor changes in the institution's archaic rules. Wells's successors were often slow to grasp both the depth and the nature of the social changes taking place across the country.

For radicalized students, Wells's liberal university was inadequate. They committed themselves to confronting what Wynkoop describes as the administrative hierarchy and to challenging both paternalistic policies and university governance. The social upheaval of the sixties, Wynkoop argues and puts in a national context, was more than a protest against the war in Southeast Asia; it was also a moment in American life when many voices previously silenced were heard.

Wynkoop points out somewhat defensively that the universities on the east and west coasts were not the only places where students demanded to be heard. Indiana and the other Big Ten schools had powerful student movements, and the Bloomington campus proved a microcosm of the turbulent crosscurrents that brought lasting changes in American society. To make her point, Wynkoop combed the *Indiana Daily Student* and local newspapers, read the scholarly literature on the radicalism of the 1960s, and interviewed many student activists, both men and women, as well as some faculty to explain not only what happened but why. This is the primary strength of her work.

The book is partly chronological, with chapters tracing the rise of activism, the role of the New Left, the antiwar movement, the different agendas within the activist leadership, the African Americans' struggle for equality, the women's movement, and the misperceptions about the counter culture in southern Indiana. In each instance there is a sense of struggle. But the changes in the draft law, the end of the university's parietal rules, the greater openness of the university to women and to blacks, plus the recognition by the most radical students that Bloomington was not Saint Petersburg on the eve of the Russian Revolution (although they may not have put it that way) resulted in the gradual fading of activism. But the 1960s, Wynkoop argues, were not a false dawn. Real changes in civil and students' rights occurred, especially for women and blacks. Yet, despite the changing cultural context, their goals of equality remained only partially attained. The means of reform changed—confrontation gave way to litigation and the exercise of agency within the establishment. Changes in national policies also played a major role.

Wynkoop's is an interesting history of what I recall as a linked chain of minority movements. Each—the protests against the draft, women's hours, governance, and others—elicited responses from a distinct constituency. The largest mass demonstration, in my memory, followed the Cambodian invasion, but it did not enlist a majority of students. Wynkoop emphasizes throughout her work that personal physical violence and property damage were minimal. There was always dialogue. As the university's policies changed, the more romantic among the radicals gave up on Indiana.

I arrived on the Bloomington campus from San Diego State University on the eve of the student upheaval and was totally unfamiliar with the university's traditions. Many of the students' issues were alien to me. San Diego State had no dormitory hours for women and a very powerful faculty senate that controlled almost everything but the construction projects. Free speech for students and faculty was a given. There were many women faculty members, and salaries were governed by civil service regulations that prohibited gender discrimination. Although there were few students of color at San Diego State, President Malcolm Love insisted that departments hire qualified blacks. While the Vietnam conflict prompted heated arguments, there had been no confrontations on campus.

Indiana, therefore, was a surprise. The faculty senate, it seemed to me, had little influence in making policy. Although the history faculty was sharply divided on the Vietnam issue, most supported the changes advocated by the students. Some historians marched with the protesters; some made speeches against the war; some raised money for student bail; but, like the students, the historians' commitments and causes varied. By the time I was elected to the faculty senate, it was concerned about implementing the new rules. (I was the token male WASP on a committee concerned with remedying minority-based salary problems.)

Because I was never an insider, for me the credibility of Wynkoop's narrative rests primarily on the interviews with student activists. Although historical memory is useful, it is always self-serving. Undoubtedly, the activists told Wynkoop "a" truth about their intellectual and personal machinations, and her citations to newspapers and to scholarly studies are accurate. Professors David Thelen and James Madison, who read the manuscript, would not have it otherwise.

Most scholars write the books they want to read because they endorse a cause or condemn it. This gives much historical writing a Whiggish cast. This, it seems to me, is especially true of Wynkoop's work. She is so profoundly in sympathy with the activists that her writing about them reminded me of a few lines by Wordsworth:

Surprised by joy—impatient as the wind
I turned to share the transport—Oh! with whom
But thee—

A View from the Administration
*by Byrum Carter***

Dissent in the Heartland explores the history of political and cultural dissent in Bloomington, focusing largely on the sixties. Mary

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Ann Wynkoop lived through the drama of the boycott, the “lock-in,” and the many demonstrations against the Viet Nam War or for civil rights. She finds the results mixed but largely positive. The radical politics of the era, Wynkoop holds, resulted in an overall improvement of society. I think she is often right, but there are some features of the era that deserve greater attention or even greater sympathy.

The students at the Bloomington campus of Indiana University took many of their cues from television. Pictures from Berkeley, Madison, or other comparable universities provided tutelage in what good radicals should do. However, the Bloomington Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and its allies had initiatives of their own. It was they who kept the protest against the rise in tuition tied to the antiwar movement. The result forced the trustees and university administrators to be on the alert for eruptions from many locations. The university’s response was formal, authority-based, and designed to make both firm and fair decisions.

In the late spring of 1969, the boycott of classes had petered out, but there remained a standing threat to disrupt the enrollment process at the beginning of the fall semester. University administrators took the threat seriously. The result was an elaborate effort to forestall disruptions. This effort involved the use of the professionals in the bursar’s office, a substantial body of personnel from the dean of student’s office, and a large number of officers from the safety division (university police). The increase in the size of the latter group constituted the most notable feature of the plan.

In the past, few safety division personnel had been used to maintain the peace. Instead, the university had relied upon the local sheriff’s office, some city officers, and occasionally state troopers. Many of the sheriff’s deputies hated the student radicals and were quite ready to use clubs and other weapons. The traditional procedures were likely to produce street clashes.

The newly expanded university police force, which had received specialized training in crowd control, became a means of protecting the protesters from the “ridge runners,” so-called because they lived in the hills south and east of Bloomington. Many of them were sheriff’s deputies.

The safety division also changed its own procedures in dealing with large marches. The focus was put on assisting protesters by marching with them. The division’s officers marched in front of the demonstrators in large numbers and in nearly the same numbers on the sides. The effect was to limit heckling and also to legitimize the march. This practice characterized the demonstrations that followed Nixon’s invasion of Cambodia, as well as those organized later in protest against the killing of four students at Kent State by members of the Ohio National Guard.

I was appointed chancellor of the Bloomington campus, effective July 29, 1969. Fall enrollment was a little over thirty days away.

When I was appointed the trustees instructed me to establish a code of student conduct and to present it to the next meeting of the board for approval. The code was developed as requested, and it was adopted by the trustees. The code did not directly limit speech, but it did limit where and how speech was to be exercised. There was no general discussion of the code, and no special effort was made to solicit advice from either student or faculty representatives. Later the code might be changed, but for the moment we simply wanted a set of rules that would help preserve peace, which was a central objective for faculty members and for many students.

Outside of the major protests against Cambodia and Kent State, there were few demonstrations that challenged the code. These largely involved demonstrations and brief "sit-ins" against R.O.T.C. Students continued to direct verbal abuse at their targets, but few of those activities constituted clear violations of the code.

The relative quiet was in part a product of a developing faculty cohesion. Faculty members were largely antiwar, but they were also supportive of the university administrators' efforts to keep classrooms open. When the movement's effort to blockade classes developed, it was the faculty who urged the blockaders and other students to return to class. In particular, the younger faculty members of the chancellor's advisory committee were very helpful in persuading those engaged in the boycott to cease and to allow students who wanted to go to class to do so. This was accomplished without using the safety department.

The culmination of the Kent State protest came about through a different mechanism. The students, out in large numbers, threatened to close Bryan Hall unless the president and I held a public meeting in the auditorium. The president agreed to the meeting, which was held at 4:00 p.m. before a very large audience. I read a statement in which I rejected, on behalf of the university, all of the student demands. There was no real rejection of my statement by the student government leaders, Parker and King. In fact, looking back through thirty years it is hard now to remember exactly what did happen. Students on the floor objected to the classroom blockages. Somehow the meeting slipped off to the subject of grading and grading practices. It all ended quietly. We went home.

Many American universities exploded violently. Indiana did not. The basic reason for this was the nature of the student leadership, which chose more moderate ways. An equally significant factor was the solid attachment to the university by a large proportion of the faculty.

The quest for student rights continued with relative success. It was the antiwar movement that declined in impact. The Viet Nam War continued . . . and continued and continued . . . but the great mass movement on the campus ended. Perhaps this reflected the increasingly widespread public opposition to the war. Perhaps it was the end of the draft. Whatever the cause, the issue became less heated. The SDS was rejected nationally, and its allies faded away.

A View from the Activists

by Keith S. Parker and Michael J. King***

We cannot pretend to write objectively and dispassionately about a book that recalls a place and recounts an era that profoundly transformed our lives. We were Indiana University students and activists in the latter years of the period revisited in *Dissent in the Heartland*, and we appear (although not always accurately) in its pages.

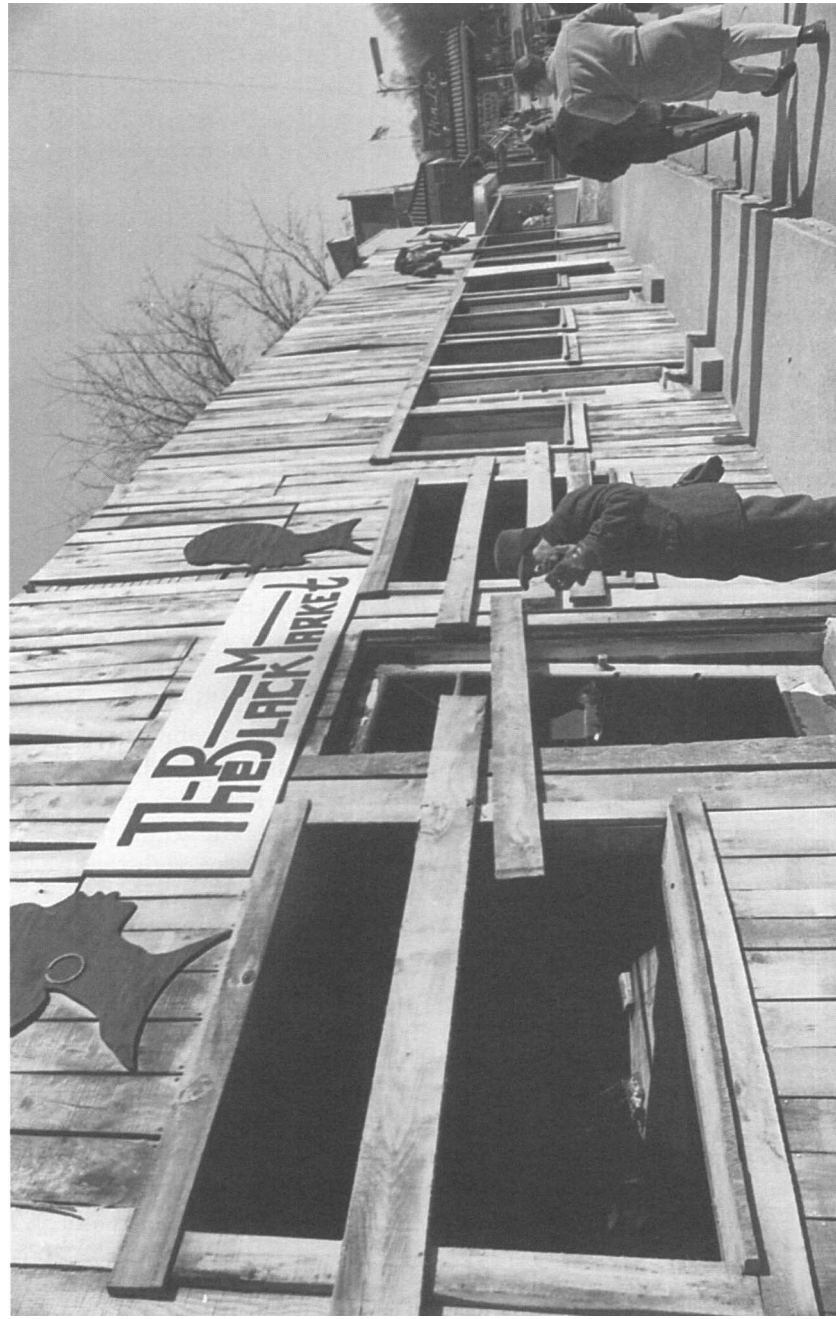
The 1960s were, for us, a time of personal as well as historical transformation. The experiences of those years continue to shape how we see the world. Hearing again in Mary Ann Wynkoop's book the voices of old friends and adversaries we are sometimes amused, occasionally saddened, always filled with emotion. Most of Wynkoop's sources and subjects were our predecessors and mentors: Guy and Connie Loftman, David and Wendy Cahill, Robin Hunter, Jim Wallihan, Allyne Rosenthal, the late Rollo Turner, Robert Johnson, and many others. What Professor Wynkoop studied, we all lived.

Our generation came of age at a time when widespread social change was not simply an academic concept, but a vital necessity. We were convinced we were right in our political beliefs and consequently that we had a moral responsibility to engage in social action. In our own case, although we are of different races, different religions, and different backgrounds, from the beginning our activism was our bond. Forged at Indiana University, this bond has lasted more than thirty years.

Wynkoop accurately captures the apparent improbability of activism in the political and social climate of Bloomington and Indiana University in the early 1960s. Bloomington was not Berkeley, or even Madison. Much of the student body was initially indifferent to questions of public or university policy, and the administrators were reflexively hostile to activists. Local authorities, including the police, prosecutors, courts, and the local media, often responded aggressively to campus protest, especially that of black students. The Bloomington *Courier-Tribune* was not above running stories and advertisements, complete with a color group portrait, about the ominous presence of the local Ku Klux Klan. In southern Indiana, the threat of violence against political activists was always present; the Christmas 1968 firebombing of the Black Market on Kirkwood Avenue was an example of the sort of home-grown American terrorism that persists to this day.

In this light, demonstrations by small I.U. groups such as the 1962 Ad Hoc Committee to Oppose U.S. Aggression in Cuba seem

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THE I.U. BLACK STUDENT HANGOUT, THE BLACK MARKET, WAS BOMBED BY KLAN MEMBERS IN 1968.

Courtesy of Indiana University Archives

simultaneously naive and heroic. Subsequent student resistance to *in loco parentis* regulations—women’s curfews and limited-access dorms, e.g.—was as much a declaration that college-age students had a right to lead independent, adult lives as it was a response to particular campus regulations. The administrators and the politicians who were apprehensive about such rational and moderate changes were essentially correct: once we began to consider ourselves adult, fully enfranchised citizens, who knew what else we might demand?

Wynkoop interviewed several older activists from the period and had access to the papers of others. We wish she had talked to a few more and at greater depth (we would have been eager to correspond, had we been asked), rather than relying so heavily on the local newspapers. Some of the book’s minor errors—“facts” we occasionally failed to recognize about ourselves—probably stem from that reliance. More importantly, those reporters seldom explored *why* students opposed the war against Vietnam, supported civil rights, or even believed in a world beyond the intellectual and social limits of official Bloomington.

Some of the book’s misperceptions may well derive from Wynkoop’s access to the Indianapolis FBI’s “COINTELPRO” files, which appear here in fleeting but intriguing glimpses and which obviously need to be read with considerable skepticism. We are amused that Wynkoop confirms, for example, what we always suspected: that the FBI was paying much (incompetent) attention—at the explicit direction of J. Edgar Hoover, no less—to a handful of Bloomington peace activists and streetcorner revolutionaries. It is entertaining to learn, too, that the dismal and short-lived “alternative” alternative newspaper, the *Armageddon News*, was in fact an FBI production. (The *News* mysteriously appeared and disappeared in a few months, and nobody paid it the least bit of attention.) And we would certainly like to learn more about the FBI informants who (Wynkoop reports) infiltrated leadership positions in I.U. student organizations. We were told by our government professors that that sort of thing was confined to the Soviet KGB and that we were paranoid to suspect otherwise.

The author recounts the seminal 1968 black student protest that shut down the fraternity bicycle race known as the Little 500 that year, eventually forcing fraternities that had racist covenants to delete them from their bylaws. Wynkoop also captures the importance of black and white students joining together during the tense May 1969 class boycott and Ballantine Hall “lock-in” of faculty negotiators that was sparked by a massive tuition increase. Those events led to the formation of the United Student Movement (USM), which became the student political voice on campus from 1969 to 1971.

The author’s treatment of Bloomington’s true alternative (at the time the preferred term was “underground”) newspaper, the *Spectator*, is reasonably accurate, although truncated. The I.U. administration believed it could kill the independent voice (originally

a university-sponsored literary project) by denying it advertising, but they failed; the staff lived on peanuts and printing costs were so low they could be paid for by direct sales at twenty-five cents a copy.

Some central voices are absent or only minimally remembered in *Dissent in the Heartland*. One crucial example is Robert Johnson, then a graduate student and lecturer in the emerging black studies program and an almost mythic figure in the Bloomington activist community, both for his historical perspective and for his modest, principled wisdom. Johnson introduced us to each other in the fall of 1969, predicting correctly that we might become friends, and he encouraged us to campaign together—the black activist and the antiwar editor—for student body president and vice president.

Especially under pressure, Bob was our wisest and most reliable friend, to whom we could turn for unblinking advice. Wynkoop reports that on May 6, 1970, following the Kent State shootings, we considered calling off a planned antiwar demonstration because of explicit threats of violence. Bob quietly but firmly reminded us that, whatever our fears for other students' lives and for our own, we owed it to those who had gone before us to act on our beliefs.

Many other stories remain untold—those of Fred Bullard, Tom Balanoff, Mimi Bardagji, Margy Baran, Bill Wiggins, Melanie Cloghessy, Mel Yancey, Tom DeWalle, among others. We thank Professor Wynkoop for those she recounts and only wish there were more.

Almost 150 years ago abolitionist Frederick Douglass warned that “*Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never has, and it never will.*” All of us who gathered together under the banner of “The Movement” in the 1960s believed this principle and sought to challenge the political and corporate power structure of this country by struggling against racism, sexism, poverty, and war at both national and local levels; Indiana and Indiana University were touched by and contributed to the struggle for social justice in this country—which did not begin in 1960 and did not end in 1971.

Wynkoop's is the first extended study of political activism at Indiana University in the 1960s, and she has provided a map for future scholars, perhaps even herself, to revisit. Should she do so, we hope she will take the opportunity to talk to us.

The Author's Rejoinder

Mary Ann Wynkoop****

I want to thank all of the respondents for their comments, both positive and negative, about my study of Indiana University during the 1960s.

I do want to clarify a few points. Former Chancellor Byrum Carter's statement that I “lived through the drama of the boycott,

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the 'lock-in,' and the many demonstrations against the Viet Nam War or for civil rights" is incorrect. While I often had an eerie feeling that I had been on the Bloomington campus during the 1960s after all the time I spent reading and talking about it, in reality I was in Greencastle, Indiana, as an undergraduate at DePauw University and in New York City as a graduate student at Columbia University during those years. So, while I was around during antiwar and civil rights demonstrations, they were not the ones that I was writing about in Bloomington. In that same vein, even though I was not a student at Indiana University during the 1960s, I was, like Mike King and Keith Parker, a part of the generation that was shaped by the events of the sixties. It is true that I studied what they lived, but I also had lived, in a certain sense, what I studied. That circumstance may be part of the problem—or not—depending on your point of view. I was distant enough from the actual personalities of the story to be relatively objective, but I was still close to the issues of that time.

Professor Martin Ridge's thoughtful essay provides interesting insights into the ways in which a then-recent transplant from California viewed the Bloomington scene. I have never considered myself to be a "Whiggish" historian before, but I suppose I will have to plead guilty to the charge. Chancellor Byrum Carter offers insight into the perspective of an administrator at Indiana University during the last years of the decade. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, I take issue with some of his conclusions. I wonder about Carter's statements that SDS kept the tuition increases of 1969 tied to the antiwar movement. My research led me to believe that the majority of students perceived that the Indiana state legislature's decision to raise tuition came in reaction to campus protests across the country—particularly those at San Francisco State University and Columbia University that made the nightly newscasts. I.U. students expressed frustration that their own protests, in contrast to those, had been nonviolent. In fact, I would argue that rather than student protestors taking "their cues from television," it was the legislators who had spent too much time watching the evening news and not enough observing actual events.

Keith Parker and Mike King are right; I should have talked with them. It is one of the axioms of trying to write an account of events in which so many people had a part that the greatest sin is one of omission. It is true that I interviewed a lot of student activists from the earlier years of the decade. As a social historian, I am interested in the ways that movements develop, and often the early voices of those movements set the tone for later events. Dissent is always an act of courage and especially so on a campus shaped by traditional and quite conservative values, as Indiana University was in the early 1960s. From the very beginning, student activists like Guy and Connie Loftman, Robin Hunter, Roller Turner, Allyne Rosenthal, and others approached political issues with a firm belief in nonviolence

that carried on throughout the decade. However, that does not excuse my not doing more interviews, and certainly I could have, should have, pressed on.

King and Parker wrote that they felt some of my “misperceptions” came from access to FBI COINTELPRO files, but they did not provide examples of how I was misled by this research. Frankly, I was simply amazed at how much time and energy the FBI spent on students who, for the most part, protested peacefully. I wish I could tell who the FBI informants were, but I cannot. Reading page after page of blacked-out information yielded little in the way of specific names. Sometimes I could piece together who I thought was the subject of a report by the times and places mentioned, but I was never certain enough of my suppositions to include them in the book. I am afraid that the game of guessing the informants will just have to continue until someone confesses.

I would hope that Parker and King might think about writing their accounts of their experiences and encourage others that they mentioned to contribute to a collaborative history as well. I think a collection of essays by participants would be a fascinating contribution to understanding this decade that, as we have seen here, “provokes conflicting interpretations.”