

### DEBATING SILBER'S LEGACY

THE OPINION EXPRESSED in this article ("Silberado," Winter-Spring 2015) that John Silber "turned around a moribund streetcar school" lacks historical perspective. When Silber arrived in 1971, BU was not a "streetcar school" in the traditional meaning of that term. Thousands of out-of-state students attended BU and lived both on and off campus. Also, BU was not "moribund." It was a large, vibrant, well-regarded university with good students, a good faculty, and good resources.

JOEL KRAKOW (CAS'73)  
Newton, Mass.

I STRONGLY SUSPECT YOU will not be interested in hearing a dissenting voice to Tom Wolfe's lionizing of John Silber. And I am certainly deficient in the star power department in comparison to Wolfe (Hon.'00). But here is mine.

I was a sophomore at BU when Silber became president. The immediate effect of his presidency on me was the abolition of the excellent Honors Program that had initially brought me to BU and the reduction of the full-time course load of five three-hour classes per semester to four four-hour classes with no cost/benefit gain for tuition paid.

Additionally, in a time when the sentiment among many Americans that there was something horribly wrong with the Vietnam War was growing, Silber treated those of us who expressed our discontent with the war as pariahs.



I understand Boston University is considered to be a more credible academic institution today than it was at the time Silber took the helm; this is an accomplishment for others to celebrate. The legacy of Silber's reign for me was the destruction of the academic environment I chose when I decided to enroll in BU and resentment of the dictatorship I perceived to serve interests other than mine and those of my fellow BU students.

ERIC ROSENBAUM (CAS'72)  
Yonkers, N.Y.

VISIONARIES ARE SELDOM appreciated in their own time. John Silber demanded that Boston University strive for excellence. If that angered his opponents, he did not seem to care. While this article seems to damn his accomplishments with faint praise, Silber's contributions to education and to BU's legacy will never be forgotten. I am honored that he served as president of my alma mater. With that said, President Brown's tenure has been quite impressive in its own right, and I hope that he is duly recognized for raising BU's

stature even more following Silber's departure.

STEVEN MASSE (CAS'93)  
Randolph, Mass.

JOHN SILBER GAVE THE Commencement address in 1996, the year I graduated. I remember it well—I was hoping for Oprah Winfrey, and instead I got cranky old Silber. I was not a fan, though I will likely purchase a copy of Silber's book. In my older age, I can probably appreciate his wisdom much more than I did as an undergraduate.

ADRIANNE (SCULLY)  
SPENCER (COM'96)  
Moraga, Calif.

### THE DUGOUT: PART OF THE BU FABRIC

THANKS FOR THE FUN article on the Dugout ("The Little Dive with a Long History," Winter-Spring 2015). My great memories go back to 1968. After DGE midterms, we descended on the Dugout at 10 in the morning. The only song on

the jukebox was "Hey Jude." And the beers kept coming. A key part of the BU fabric.

LISA SCHMID HALPIN  
(DGE'69, QUESTROM'71)  
Buffalo Grove, Ill.

ON A COLD NOVEMBER 1956 evening I was served my first legal, but not my first ever, draft at what was commonly referred to as the "D-O." I think the barkeep's name was Ruby, as he wore a large red ring. The beer was unbranded and cost 25 cents.

In my senior year I took a night course, which the professor introduced by saying we could discuss anything and meet anywhere. You guessed it, off to the "D-O."

JACK MULKEEN  
(QUESTROM'58)  
Buzzards Bay, Mass.

WHEN I WAS IN MY DOCTORAL program, one incoming student was French—she was quite anxious to eat there during the first few weeks of school. I couldn't quite understand it until she pronounced the name of the bar as "duh goo" or literally, taste. She thought it was a restaurant serving French cuisine. Actually, if it had been, it probably would have been gone by now. The Dugout survives when so many other eateries/bars have folded over the years.

NAN BERNSTEIN RATNER  
(SED'82)  
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