
FROM THE ASHES OF THIS DESTRUCTION: A CONVERSATION ON BLACK STUDY AND THE POSSIBILITY OF THE BLACK UNIVERSITY

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Jared Loggins: I feel compelled to open this discussion with Palestine and the failure of our higher education institutions on so many levels. There are no words to adequately capture the weight and scale of cruelty, destruction, suffering, and death at the hands of Israel's despotic government. It is genocide.¹ There are no universities standing in Gaza. It is epistemic violence and scholasticide.² We are talking about complete decimation of Palestinian life and institutions. We are talking about the razing of libraries, schools, and heritage sites.³ Whole families wiped out.⁴ We have failed to "face the worst" as George Kateb once put it.⁵ Higher ed institutions are far from blameless.⁶ Students, staff, and faculty alike

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¹ Press Release, United Nations Hum. Rts. Off. of the High Comm'r, Israel Has Committed Genocide in the Gaza Strip, UN Commission Finds (Sep. 16, 2025), <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/09/israel-has-committed-genocide-gaza-strip-un-commission-finds>.

² See *Scholasticide in Palestine*, AAUP, <https://www.aaup.org/event/scholasticide-palestine> [<https://perma.cc/CAV5-3PKT>] (last visited May 26, 2026) (describing how Israeli forces have routinely raided Palestinian universities in the West Bank).

³ *Id.*

⁴ See Sarah El Deeb, *The War in Gaza Has Wiped Out Entire Palestinian Families*, *AP Documents 60 Who Lost Dozens or More*, ASSOCIATED PRESS (June 17, 2024), <https://www.ap.org/news-highlights/spotlights/2024/the-war-in-gaza-has-wiped-out-entire-palestinian-families-ap-documents-60-who-lost-dozens-or-more> [<https://perma.cc/C2L2-3T7R>].

⁵ See George Kateb, *The Adequacy of the Western Canon*, in *WHAT IS POLITICAL THEORY?* 30, 32 (Stephen K. White & J. Donald Moon eds., 2004).

⁶ See Shirin Sinnar, *Campus Protests and the Rule of Law*, 87 *LAW & CONTEMP. PROBS.* 117, 118 (2025) (recounting how universities adopted new restrictions on student speech in response to student protests calling on universities to divest from businesses with ties to Israel).

have been subjected to a nasty campaign of intimidation and censure.⁷ Every word of our exchange is bloodied by complicity. What are we to make of the claim that universities are spaces of free inquiry, given how institutions responded to the encampments and divestment campaigns since October 7? Institutions harassed students for taking a stand; some institutions even handed over students' information to the federal government.⁸ What are we to make of institutions that arrest, expel, censure, and malign students, faculty, and staff because of the positions they take? What is the nature of institutions that allow for the conflation of anti-Zionism and antisemitism?⁹

Andrew Douglas: It's also a failure of institutional analysis: a failure of our role as critical thinkers and teachers to apply our lenses of analysis to the conditions of our labor. We work, live, and learn in institutional settings that are deeply integrated into the circuits of capitalism and empire,¹⁰ but so many in our ranks fail to reckon with this. Thanks for starting us off with these sober observations about genocide and empire and this question about our responsibilities as academic workers. Maybe I can ask you to reflect a bit more

⁷ See Tesfaye Negussie & Nadine El-Bawab, *Doxxing Campaign Against Pro-Palestinian College Students Ramps Up*, ABC NEWS (Oct. 20, 2023, at 06:06 ET), <https://abcnews.com/International/doxxing-campaign-pro-palestinian-college-students-ramps/story?id=104141630> [<https://perma.cc/JZV5-W5N3>].

⁸ See Sinnar, *supra* note 6, at 133 (describing "draconian measures" taken by university administrators against students); Aarya Mukherjee, *UC Berkeley Turns Over Personal Information of More Than 150 Students and Staff to Federal Government*, DAILY CALIFORNIAN (Sep. 10, 2025), https://www.dailycal.org/news/campus/uc-berkeley-turns-over-personal-information-of-more-than-150-students-and-staff-to-federal/article_a4aad3e1-bbba-42cc-92d7-a7964d9641c5.html [<https://perma.cc/D4M5-SSQM>].

⁹ See Mathias Risse, *Antisemitism on American Campuses? Reflections on Recent Developments at Columbia University*, CARR-RYAN CTR. FOR HUM. RTS. (Mar. 11, 2025), <https://www.hks.harvard.edu/centers/carr-ryan/our-work/carr-ryan-commentary/antisemitism-in-american-campuses-reflections-recent> (discussing how campus dialogue during Palestine protests collapsed definitions of antisemitism and anti-Zionism); Jonathan Feingold & Isaac Kamola, *MAGA's Blue State Strategy: How Democrats and University Leaders Helped the Reactionary Right Weaponize Antisemitism Against Higher Education*, 106 B.U. L. REV. 1127, 1143-45 (2026) (arguing right-wing actors and liberal institutions helped ratify conceptual slippage between criticism of Israel and antisemitism).

¹⁰ Such integration has been documented in a vast body of literature, much of which is now associated with the field of critical university studies. See generally CLYDE W. BARROW, *UNIVERSITIES AND THE CAPITALIST STATE* (1990) (making foundational Marxist contribution to critical university studies); CHRISTOPHER NEWFIELD, *IVY AND INDUSTRY: BUSINESS AND THE MAKING OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY, 1880-1980* (2003); DAVARIAN L. BALDWIN, *IN THE SHADOW OF THE IVORY TOWER: HOW UNIVERSITIES ARE PLUNDERING OUR CITIES* (2021) (exploring impacts of higher education institutions' for-profit influence on host cities); SHARON STEIN, *UNSETTLING THE UNIVERSITY: CONFRONTING THE COLONIAL FOUNDATIONS OF US HIGHER EDUCATION* (2022); CHARLIE EATON, *BANKERS IN THE IVORY TOWER: THE TROUBLING RISE OF FINANCIERS IN US HIGHER EDUCATION* (2022); MAYA WIND, *TOWERS OF IVORY AND STEEL: HOW ISRAELI UNIVERSITIES DENY PALESTINIAN FREEDOM* (2024); and the articles collected in *UNIVERSITY KEYWORDS* (Andy Hines ed., 2025) (critically analyzing American universities' place in society).

on this notion of vocation as it grows out of the Black Studies tradition, which anchors so much of your work.¹¹

Jared Loggins: I am inspired by Vincent Harding. His essay *The Vocation of the Black Scholar and the Struggles of the Black Community* is a signal contribution to thinking about the relationship between vocation, study, and the moral responsibility of intellectuals to be in community with the dispossessed.¹² Harding talked about Black study, to be distinguished from *Black Studies* as a departmental project within the university. Black study makes a moral and ethical claim about a commitment to the wholeness of Black life and being.¹³ Black study advances an epistemological critique of Western civilization, with the understanding that Black critique drives toward an emancipated future.¹⁴ It would follow that the vocation of Black study is a vocation that involves an analysis of the conditions delimiting critique and vision within the Western academy. Harding thought that Black critique needed to find “liberated grounds on which to gather” precisely because of the ways that the Western academy compels alienation from the soul of human problems.¹⁵ He was not sure that formal institutions ought to be the nucleus of Black study. The other idea is a political horizon drawn from the legacy of Black radicalism inside, but most often outside, of the academy.¹⁶ Black radicalism, at its best, demonstrates a profound concern regarding the self-authorizing capacities of ordinary people.¹⁷ I am talking about people like Toni Cade Bambara, Vincent Harding, W.E.B. Du Bois, June Jordan, Walter Rodney, and C.L.R. James.¹⁸ They concerned

¹¹ See, e.g., ANDREW J. DOUGLAS & JARED A. LOGGINS, *PROPHET OF DISCONTENT: MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AND THE CRITIQUE OF RACIAL CAPITALISM* 77 (2021) (noting how marginalized pedagogical work of Black working people pushed for “group centered” cultivation of ideas throughout twentieth century).

¹² See Vincent Harding, *The Vocation of the Black Scholar and the Struggles of the Black Community*, in *EDUCATION AND BLACK STRUGGLE: NOTES FROM THE COLONIZED WORLD* 3, 3-29 (1974).

¹³ See *id.* at 21 (“When we ask what it means as a black scholar to live the truth of black struggle and black hope, . . . [e]xamples are far more to the point[,] . . . a significant number illustrating an impressive integrity and wholeness.”).

¹⁴ *Id.* at 19-21 (emphasizing “inadequacies of the truth-speaking traditions of the West” for “vocation which seeks to be faithful to the long struggles of the black community to maintain and renew life”).

¹⁵ *Id.* at 25.

¹⁶ See, e.g., ANDY HINES, *OUTSIDE LITERARY STUDIES: BLACK CRITICISM AND THE UNIVERSITY* 6-7 (2022) (introducing “Black radical tradition”).

¹⁷ See Harding, *supra* note 12, at 27 (“Each of us must find the place in the struggle where he or she can best stand—or admit that we cannot stand.”).

¹⁸ See *id.* at 11, 27-28 (describing W.E.B. Du Bois’s, C.L.R. James’s, Walter Rodney’s work); Toni Cade Bambara, *Realizing the Dream of a Black University*, *OBSERVATION POST* (Feb. 14, 1969), reprinted in “REALIZING THE DREAM OF A BLACK UNIVERSITY” AND OTHER WRITINGS PART I, at 13 (Makeba Lavan & Conor Tomás Reed eds., 2017); June Jordan, *Black Studies: Bringing Back the Person*, *EVERGREEN REV.*, Oct. 1969, reprinted in JUNE JORDAN, *CIVIL WARS* 45 (Touchstone 1995).

themselves with freedom as a practice built at the level of communal organization.¹⁹ The modern university is not concerned with grounding in the community, let alone with the kinds of principles that Black radicals take to be of paramount importance: a commitment to the free development of all, the rejection of imperialism, and free and open inquiry.²⁰ I find Cade Bambara's notion of the Black University concept so richly suggestive. I want to come back around to a discussion of it, but let me pause here and ask you to reflect on the stakes of this conversation about the future of higher education. What are you thinking?

Andrew Douglas: Your comments raise for me a question about the framing of this conference. This notion that "universities are meant to be guardians of democracy and bulwarks against authoritarianism" and that "our most powerful universities" have let us down.²¹ Maybe we ought to scrutinize that possessive grammatical construction. Whose universities are we talking about? Has Columbia University—"King's College," as it was once called—ever been a guardian of democracy?²² Has Harvard ever been a guardian of democracy?²³ Today's most celebrated universities, the agenda-setting institutions that dominate media coverage of the higher education sector, have been some of the most efficient, effective, and durable inequality-producing machines of the modern era.²⁴ I think it's important that we not delude ourselves. Bulwarks

¹⁹ See, e.g., Bambara, *supra* note 18, at 8 (emphasizing necessity to build Black schools, Black children, Black minds, Black love, Black impregnability, and strong Black nation).

²⁰ See *id.* at 15-19.

²¹ *Fall 2025 Law Review Symposium: The University and Democracy*, B.U. SCH. L. (Nov. 14, 2025), <https://www.bu.edu/law/engagements/fall-2025-law-review-symposium> [<https://perma.cc/5RDJ-T6RH>].

²² *The History of Columbia College*, COLUM. COLL., <https://www.college.columbia.edu/about/history> [<https://perma.cc/6VX8-EKPW>] (last visited May 26, 2026); see Brian Mann, *NYPD Breaks Up Pro-Palestinian Protest at Columbia University*, NPR (Apr. 18, 2024, at 17:33 ET), <https://www.npr.org/2024/04/18/1245642588/nypd-breaks-up-pro-palestinian-protest-at-columbia-university> [<https://perma.cc/4SDS-Y52D>] (detailing how former Columbia University President Minouche Shafik asked New York Police Department to help clear protestors from pro-Palestinian encampment).

²³ See Samuel A. Church & Cam N. Srivastava, *Free Speech, Punishable Conduct: As Harvard Clarifies Protest Policies, Some Lines Remain Blurred*, HARV. CRIMSON (Mar. 7, 2025), <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2025/3/7/harvard-protest-discrimination-policies> [<https://perma.cc/YWZ3-JCSK>] (recounting repression of pro-Palestine protestors at Harvard as affront to liberal democratic freedoms). See generally RONALD STORY, *HARVARD AND THE BOSTON UPPER CLASS: THE FORGING OF AN ARISTOCRACY, 1800-1870* (2d ed. 1985); HOW HARVARD RULES: *REASON IN THE SERVICE OF EMPIRE* (John Trumbour ed., 1989); JEROME KARABEL, *THE CHOSEN: THE HIDDEN HISTORY OF ADMISSION AND EXCLUSION AT HARVARD, YALE, AND PRINCETON* (2006).

²⁴ See, e.g., Raj Chetty, David J. Deming & John N. Friedman, *Diversifying Society's Leaders? The Determinants and Causal Effects of Admission to Highly Selective Private Colleges*, 141 Q.J. ECON. 51, 141-42 (2026) (concluding "Ivy Plus" colleges admit students from high-income families at disproportionate rates and grant matriculating students

against fascism are not built in the halls of the Ivy League.²⁵ Antifascist organizing calls for the dissolution of a certain model of the university—one that is subservient to capital and empire, that belongs to their logic, that is literally owned as property by trustees who are legally bound to protect asset value.²⁶ The irony, of course, is that this very model of the university is now being destroyed by the world it has ushered into existence.²⁷ And while this implosion is not how we would have drawn up any phase of a transition to a freer and more sustainable world, we have to seize the opportunity to reimagine the university, to build something new from the ashes of this destruction.

Jared Loggins: “Build something new from the ashes of this destruction.” That is powerful. We have to struggle constantly against resignation to the future that neoliberalism projects. I have to invoke Cedric Robinson here. “If we are to survive, we must take nothing that is dead and choose wisely from among the dying.”²⁸ What seems to be at stake in the emergent forms of struggle is the claiming of some kind of collective shaping power—not just over the system of higher education but over our lives and worlds more broadly. “Another university is possible” and “another world is possible” go hand-in-hand.

Andrew Douglas: Right. This question of capital accumulation is something I want to think more about. The university that was built by and for capital is now being destroyed by the evolution of that very logic.²⁹ The university as an engine of accumulation seems to be confronting a series of systemic limits—and is perhaps being willfully abandoned by a new class of governing oligarchs. We really do seem to be embarking on a new, far more precarious and uncertain role

substantial socioeconomic benefits); Jonathan P. Feingold, *Ambivalent Advocates: Why Elite Universities Compromised the Case for Affirmative Action*, 58 HARV. C.R.-C.L. L. REV. 143, 153-54 (2023) (citing, inter alia, ADAM HOWARD & RUBÉN GAZTAMBIDE-FERNÁNDEZ, *EDUCATING ELITES: CLASS PRIVILEGE AND EDUCATIONAL ADVANTAGE* (2010)).

²⁵ See generally Feingold, *supra* note 24 (arguing elite universities’ brand, budget, and risk-management interests disincentivize robust defenses of race-conscious admissions).

²⁶ See *id.* at 183-97 (detailing universities’ perceived conflicts between support for affirmative action and capitalistic interests). See generally TIMOTHY KAUFMAN-OSBORN, *THE AUTOCRATIC ACADEMY: REENVISIONING RULE WITHIN AMERICA’S UNIVERSITIES* (2023) (explaining how American universities are legally chartered and governed as property corporations).

²⁷ Cf. Charlie Eaton, Sabrina T. Howell & Constantine Yannelis, *When Investor Incentives and Consumer Interests Diverge: Private Equity in Higher Education*, 33 REV. FIN. STUD. 4024, 4046-50 (2020) (showing detrimental effects on student outcomes after private equity buyouts of for-profit colleges); Kara Miller, *‘Not Something that We’ve Ever Seen Before’: As Trump Takes Aim at Higher Ed, Private Equity Could Wreak More Havoc*, BOS. GLOBE (Mar. 26, 2025, at 05:57 ET), <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2025/03/26/business/private-equity-higher-ed-trump-universities> (describing private equity’s prioritization of profit over quality of education).

²⁸ CEDRIC J. ROBINSON, *BLACK MARXISM: THE MAKING OF THE BLACK RADICAL TRADITION* 316 (3d ed., Univ. of N.C. Press 2020) (1983).

²⁹ See sources cited *supra* note 27 (documenting private equity’s detrimental effects on education).

for institutions of higher education.³⁰ For most of the twentieth century, the university was regarded by capital as an incubator of productive labor power.³¹ Into the neoliberal era, into the age of financialization, that view was coupled with a sense of the university as a site of extraction.³² Private equity interests and the like would put both students and schools into spirals of debt dependency and gut them from the inside out.³³ We're still suffering through this, of course. But investors now seem to be growing increasingly wary of higher education. A majority of Gen Z now views college as too expensive, not worth the debt bondage, and a losing bet for whatever one might make of an increasingly precarious labor market.³⁴ At the same time, in what seems to be a real head-scratcher for much of the liberal commentariat, the second Trump Administration appears quite eager to destroy the American university research apparatus, which throughout all of these phases of capitalism's evolution has

³⁰ See, e.g., THE AMERICAN VANDAL: *Philanthrocapitalism U*, at 1:17:05, 1:18:18 (Substack, Nov. 13, 2024), <https://theamericanvandal.substack.com/p/philanthrocapitalism-u-a-tale-of> (describing abandonment by private equity interests and broad austerities threatening very survival of non-elite institutions).

³¹ See sources cited *supra* note 10 (showing link between capitalism and universities); see also GARY S. BECKER, HUMAN CAPITAL: A THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO EDUCATION 7-9 (3d ed. 1993) (introducing "rates of return" from college education).

³² See, e.g., Ben Williamson, *Big EdTech*, 47 LEARNING MEDIA & TECH. 157, 157 (2022) ("[M]ore than 30 private EdTech companies have become 'unicorns' with a value of more than \$1 billion US dollars."); Annie McClanahan & Louise McCune, *Ed Tech*, in UNIVERSITY KEYWORDS, *supra* note 10, at 175-87 (detailing private equity's incursion into university sector via education technology products); Matt Seybold, *Against Techno feudal Education*, AM. VANDAL (Jun. 10, 2025), <https://theamericanvandal.substack.com/p/against-techno-feudal-education> [<https://perma.cc/94TL-E2D3>] (detailing deleterious effects of private equity-backed rent-seeking); Eleni Schirmer & Jason Wozniak, *Debt*, in UNIVERSITY KEYWORDS, *supra* note 10, at 136, 139-47 (detailing impact of both institutional and student debt in age of financialized capitalism). See generally COAL. AGAINST CAMPUS DEBT, LEND AND RULE: FIGHTING THE SHADOW FINANCIALIZATION OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES (2024) (detailing debt financing system behind modern public university).

³³ See generally Eaton et al., *supra* note 27 (detailing how involvement of private equity interests leads to poorer student outcomes); Laura T. Hamilton, Heather Daniels, Christian Michael Smith & Charlie Eaton, *The Private Side of Public Universities: Third-Party Providers and Platform Capitalism* (Berkeley Ctr. for Stud. in Higher Educ. Rsch. & Occasional Papers Series, CSHE.3.22, 2022) (outlining rise of third-party for-profit vendors performing university functions); Miller, *supra* note 27 (outlining combined effect of Trump Administration policy and private equity on modern university space). For a commentary on how this has played out at Historically Black Colleges and Universities ("HBCUs"), see SEYBOLD ET AL., *supra* note 30.

³⁴ ECMC GROUP, QUESTION THE QUO: GEN Z TEENS HAVE CHANGED THEIR PRIORITIES FOR EDUCATION AND WORK 4 (2023), <https://www.questionthequo.org/media/x5zdjmxu/question-the-quo-june-2023-report.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/22BX-JRKR>] ("High schoolers are moving away from the four-year path—consideration of four-year college has decreased 14 percentage points since before COVID-19 and nearly 20 percentage points since the early days of the pandemic." (emphasis omitted)).

been essential to the nation's status as an imperial hegemon.³⁵ If one looks at how Trump 2.0 conceives of today's geopolitical arms race, there is very little productive role for higher education. The Trump Administration's 2025 "AI Action Plan," for example, makes no mention of the sector, save for a passing reference to the policing of AI research support, presumably as part of an effort to prevent academic scholarship from raising doubts about a full-throated embrace of AI.³⁶ Naomi Klein and Astra Taylor have suggested that we may be confronting a kind of "end times fascism," whereby a new class of tech oligarchs, no longer invested in any real future for productive capitalism, seeks a kind of class exit from any responsibility to the masses or the public, and has captured and now wields the state apparatus toward that end.³⁷ We might ask: what is the role or function of the university in end times fascism?

Jared Loggins: Not to go on business as usual, I hope. As with all moments of profound crisis, even as we face the worst, there is always some imaginative work happening on the ground to envision things otherwise.³⁸ As you rightly suggest, we need to reorient ourselves toward a university not serviceable to fascist authoritarianism. This reorientation depends on the strength of the academic labor movement.³⁹

³⁵ See Warren Cornwall, *With Trump's Cuts Escalating, 'Fear Factor' Silences Researchers*, SCIENCE (May 12, 2025), <https://www.science.org/content/article/trump-s-fear-factor-scientists-go-silent-funding-cuts-escalate> (calculating that two major federal science funding agencies have cancelled more than two thousand grants since Trump's inauguration, totaling more than \$1.5 billion).

³⁶ MICHAEL J. KRATSIOS, DAVID O. SACKS & MARCO A. RUBIO, WHITE HOUSE, WINNING THE RACE: AMERICA'S AI ACTION PLAN (2025), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Americas-AI-Action-Plan.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/E5L5-BMHV>] (referencing importance of education in promoting "American values" and ensuring AI research "eliminate references to misinformation, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and climate change"). Note also the simultaneous gutting of allegedly DEI-related National Science Foundation research support. See Jonathan Schwabish & Judah Axelrod, *NSF Has Canceled More than 1,500 Grants. Nearly 90 Percent Were Related to DEI*, URB. INST. (July 9, 2025), <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/nsf-has-canceled-more-1500-grants-nearly-90-percent-were-related-dei>.

³⁷ Naomi Klein & Astra Taylor, *The Rise of End Times Fascism*, GUARDIAN (Apr. 13, 2025), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2025/apr/13/end-times-fascism-far-right-trump-musk> [<https://perma.cc/2PUM-FMRG>].

³⁸ See generally, e.g., ANOTHER UNIVERSITY IS POSSIBLE (Luis Alvarez et al. eds., 2010); STEFANO HARNEY & FRED MOTEN, THE UNDERCOMMONS: FUGITIVE PLANNING AND BLACK STUDY (2013) (describing development of Black study in "undercommons" of university).

³⁹ See generally, for example, the works collected in THE UNIVERSITY AGAINST ITSELF: THE NYU STRIKE AND THE FUTURE OF THE ACADEMIC WORKPLACE (Monika Krause, Mary Nolan, Michael Palm & Andrew Ross eds., 2008) (using strike at New York University as study on significance of academic labor movement); and Alissa Karl, *What Is Academic Labor Now?*, ACADEME MAG. (2026), <https://www.aaup.org/issue/winter-2026/guest-editor-what-academic-labor-now> [<https://perma.cc/9ZQX-LVGH>] (highlighting academic labor movement as "vulnerable to institutional capture by political and economic actors who seek to instrumentalize it").

Andrew Douglas: I've got to ask about how this fits into the history of the Black University concept and movement, something you and I have written about.⁴⁰

Jared Loggins: There is a version of the university compatible with enslavement, empire, capitalism, and anti-Black violence, essentially emanating from the legacy of European modernity.⁴¹ There is another far more aspirational and open concept of the university that emerged in the wake of Black struggle. This is the Black University concept, and it is part of the broader anti-colonial assemblage of insurgent knowledge production.⁴² It developed in the shadow of white supremacy, and its point of departure was its critical attitude toward Western civilization.⁴³ The Black University concept aims for an experimentally normative reconstruction of the world according to anti-colonial and non-dominating principles.⁴⁴ It is about free inquiry, yes, but it is also about the free development of all, and the holding of knowledge production in common. Much of the scholarship that presupposed and nurtured it developed in the context of Historically Black Colleges and Universities ("HBCUs").⁴⁵ But it has not been rooted only there.⁴⁶ What is especially powerful about the Black University concept is the cooperative impulse and vision at the very heart of it, which involves criticizing and organizing against the profit motive in higher education and Western civilization more broadly—both in terms of the political economy of universities and at the level of curriculum.⁴⁷ I think about W.E.B. Du Bois in this conversation as well. He wrote an essay in the *Journal of Negro Education* in 1930 titled *Education and Work* in which he argued that "higher training and vocational guidance must turn out men and women who are willing not only to do the work of the world today but to provide for the future world." This future world may come, he said, in the wake of painstaking, organized struggle against

⁴⁰ See, e.g., Andrew J. Douglas & Jared Loggins, *The Lost Promise of Black Study*, BOS. REV. (Sep. 28, 2021), <https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/the-lost-promise-of-black-study>.

⁴¹ See Bambara, *supra* note 18, at 15 (noting English Department at City College "still dipp[ed] out of the old Anglo-Saxon bag").

⁴² See *id.* at 16-18 ("To obtain a relevant, real education, we shall have to either topple the university or set up our own.").

⁴³ See *id.* at 15 (criticizing Anglophiles like T.S. Eliot who believed Anglo-Saxon traditions were superior and needed to be preserved in universities).

⁴⁴ See *id.* at 23-25 (listing possible courses such as "American Justice and the Afro-American" and "Trends in Western Thought").

⁴⁵ See, e.g., JOSHUA MYERS, *OF BLACK STUDY* 36 (2023) (noting W.E.B. Du Bois made HBCUs "base for a science" of Black life"); ALDON MORRIS, *THE SCHOLAR DENIED: W.E.B. DU BOIS AND THE BIRTH OF MODERN SOCIOLOGY* 184-94 (2015) (detailing context of Du Bois's work at HBCU Atlanta University).

⁴⁶ See Bambara, *supra* note 18, at 18-19 (calling for creation of "Center for Black and Hispanic Studies" at CUNY).

⁴⁷ See *id.* at 42 ("What is wrong with [the City College curriculum] is exactly what is wrong with other college curricula and what many student unions across the nation are attempting to cope with by setting up Experimental Colleges, Black Studies Centers or some other counter school that will offer the students a competitive ideology.").

the “owners of the world” to hold modern civilization in common.⁴⁸ This vision of the university seems quite foreign to our situation.

Andrew Douglas: And it was grounded in a very different sense of what the university can and ought to be for those whom, as we like to say, it is set up to serve. You’re right that any genealogy of the Black University concept runs through Du Bois’s pioneering work in the 1930s and 1940s.⁴⁹ And this was a time in which he grew so disillusioned with the class politics of established HBCUs that he began to experiment with “people’s colleges,” free adult education classes for Black working people. He began to experiment with alternative and independent workers’ colleges, including, with Doxey Wilkerson and others, the Jefferson School of Social Science in New York.⁵⁰ The idea, or part of the idea anyway, was to break down the gated nature of the university. And perhaps I can ask if you think there’s a broader lesson here for the present moment. To what extent have right-wing political attacks on higher education been enabled by the sector’s own abandonment of the public? The more people feel left behind and abandoned by the university, the more susceptible they are to the sorts of vilification narratives that the right has whipped up, no?

Jared Loggins: We know that neoliberalism destroys the common world and calls into question the idea of the democratic public sphere.⁵¹ We know that the neoliberal project enjoys bipartisan consensus. We know that this project depends on the structural abandonment of whole communities deemed fungible and disposable. As we have been discussing here, we know that universities play a key role in shaping neoliberalism’s unfolding horizon of enclosure. We are seeing firings of dissenting faculty,⁵² doxing,⁵³ the crushing of protests,⁵⁴ the

⁴⁸ W.E. Burghardt DuBois, *Education and Work*, 1 J. NEGRO EDUC. 60, 70-71 (1932), reprinted in 87 J. NEGRO EDUC. 202 (2018).

⁴⁹ See Andrew J. Douglas, *Toward the Cooperative University: W.E.B. Du Bois’s Membership in the AAUP*, ACADEME MAG. (2024), <https://www.aaup.org/academe/issues/spring-2024/toward-cooperative-university-w-e-b-du-bois-membership-aaup> [<https://perma.cc/WCT9-KKF5>].

⁵⁰ See *id.*

⁵¹ See generally WENDY BROWN, *IN THE RUINS OF NEOLIBERALISM: THE RISE OF ANTIDEMOCRATIC POLITICS IN THE WEST* (2019) (exploring such effects of neoliberalism); ACHILLE MBEMBE, *THE CRITIQUE OF BLACK REASON* 2-4 (Laurent Dubois trans., 2017) (identifying neoliberalism’s privatization of the world and resulting expansion of “systematic risks experienced specifically by Black slaves during early capitalism” to “all of subaltern humanity”).

⁵² See Stephanie Saul, *The Firing of Educators Over Kirk Comments Follows a Familiar Playbook*, N.Y. TIMES (Sep. 22, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/09/22/us/firing-educators-kirk-free-speech.html>.

⁵³ See Negussie & El-Bawab, *supra* note 7.

⁵⁴ See Mann, *supra* note 22.

gutting and consolidation of departments,⁵⁵ adjunctification,⁵⁶ the exponential growth of student debt and unwillingness of the federal government to take drastic action,⁵⁷ the policing of curricula, and now Trump's pulling of federal funding from universities that do not carry out his retribution agenda.⁵⁸ This is all part of an enduring campaign to continue normalizing higher education as a private thing and a privileged resource. They see higher education as a good—a diminishing good, at that—for the select, white few. To them, higher education is an evil because of the alleged leftist bias on university campuses. They do not believe in the free university. You are correct about how easy it becomes for the broader public to vilify universities. I think vilification trickles so effectively into public consciousness because progressive forces have not yet figured out how higher education fits into the broader struggle. And in the absence of alternatives, the “communist, identity-obsessed professor” feels like an easy trope to launder consent for the further divestment from the ideal of the public university. We—meaning progressives—had better get our act together, and fast. Or else, we are leaving unchallenged their vision of the university that puts the powerful interests and cultural values of the white ruling classes above all else. This is the future we are facing.

Universities, and all of our local, state, and federal institutions, must be totally reimaged as public goods made to the measure of a democratic future in human freedom. Perhaps it would be helpful to see things, again, from the perspective of those who saw the writing on the wall in neoliberalism's infancy, like Toni Cade Bambara, our proverbial prophet of the Black University. She was a Black Arts Movement poet and professor of English. In 1969, she was working at City College as director of a program called Theatre of the Black Experience. She was there at a time when student movements are exploding all over the country—calling for, among other things, a right to the university.⁵⁹ She wrote a short essay called *Realizing the Dream of a Black University* in which she says that rather than get lost in definitions of American higher education (elitist

⁵⁵ See, e.g., Sneha Dey, *UT-Austin to Consolidate Race, Ethnic, and Gender Study Programs*, TEX. TRIB. (Feb. 12, 2026, at 11:05 CT), <https://www.texastribune.org/2026/02/12/texas-ut-austin-consolidate-race-gender> [<https://perma.cc/PG69-FPWB>]; Jafari S. Allen, *The Erasure of Black Studies*, CHRON. HIGHER EDUC. (Mar. 13, 2026), <https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-erasure-of-black-studies> (arguing against ongoing dismantlement and consolidation of Black studies departments by institutions).

⁵⁶ See generally HERB CHILDRESS, *THE ADJUNCT UNDERCLASS* (2019) (describing how university reliance on adjunct professors harms both students and people in these roles).

⁵⁷ See Judith Fox, *Student Loan Debt: The Long-Term Economic Consequences*, 36 LOY. CONSUMER L. REV. 309, 311-12 (2024).

⁵⁸ See Gréta Bedekovics & Will Ragland, *Mapping Federal Funding Cuts to U.S. Colleges and Universities*, CTR. AM. PROGRESS (July 23, 2025), <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/mapping-federal-funding-cuts-to-us-colleges-and-universities>.

⁵⁹ See Bambara, *supra* note 18, at 13 (mentioning “several hundred rebellions” taking place in American colleges and high schools).

intellectual to patently utilitarian), we might think of universities in broadly cultural terms:

[W]hatever its motives, ideals, dreams, purposes, what the college does at best is to critically re-appraise and renew the cultural heritage, and what the college does at its worst is to merely study and perpetuate the idea of our cultural heritage—the idea, not what it is necessarily, but what we have traditionally believed it to be.⁶⁰

Behind Bambara's formulation is the exclusionary legacy of the university, controlled by monied interests to perpetuate competitive ideology.⁶¹ She imagines, then, modeling a community-based approach to higher education. To draw this out, she dreams of an academic center that might serve as a model for what university education should aspire to:

The Center would tap the resources in our community and use as instructors those grandmothers, those on the corner hardheads, those students, those instructors, whoever happens to have the knowledge and expertise we desire, regardless of the number of or absence of degrees, publications, titles, honors.

We have already in our student body and on our staff at the College and in SEEK people, who know how to teach instruments, dance, lay out magazines, operate radio stations or restaurants, dismantle cars, take over TV stations, read newspapers for slant, handle landlords and cops, organize committees, set up conferences. The Center could begin then, to set up a network of communications so that one person desiring to set up a course in Caribbean cookery, let's say, could be put in touch with chefs, caterers, linguists, anthropologists, etc.⁶²

Every cook can govern. Every student can govern. Every professor can govern. Every grandmother and corner hardhead can govern. Why? Because they, we, have by way of our experiences in the world the infinite capacity to know, learn, and grow in individual and collective intelligence. Cade Bambara's Black University is rooted in the cooperatively democratic ideal.

Andrew Douglas: One of the most revelatory books I have read in the last couple of years is Timothy Kaufman-Osborn's *The Autocratic Academy*, which interrogates the legal architecture of the American university and documents how, through a series of fortuitous legal decisions and historical precedents, basically all colleges and universities in the United States are now legally chartered as property corporations.⁶³ Trustees are legally bound to protect asset

⁶⁰ *Id.* at 14.

⁶¹ *See id.* at 21 (pointing out many Black experts were excluded from universities).

⁶² *Id.* at 21-22.

⁶³ KAUFMAN-OSBORN, *supra* note 26, at 43.

value and the will of donors in perpetuity.⁶⁴ Whatever else the university may say that it is, whatever else students and faculty and alumni may want the university to be and to do, at the end of the day, the university is a property corporation governed unilaterally by trustees with a fiduciary obligation to protect private property.⁶⁵ This is all something I had sensed intuitively over the years, working in faculty governance on my campus. But it wasn't until I read this book that I had the language to articulate it. And it raises some fundamental questions about campus organizing. To your earlier point about the student debtors' movement and the Palestine solidarity movement, we have seen some tremendously courageous student organizing.⁶⁶ The energy is there. We're also seeing a resurgent academic labor movement.⁶⁷ Not only faculty, but campus staff broadly.⁶⁸ Wall-to-wall organizing. But we're limiting ourselves dramatically if we organize within a paradigm of shared governance. We're limiting ourselves if we organize to persuade trustees, or the administrators whom trustees appoint, to execute their authority. The legal architecture of the university, and its corresponding political economy, render shared governance essentially meaningless.⁶⁹ There's very little point in lobbying trustees or administrators to act in good faith when they operate as functionaries with no real agency. They do what they're required to do. They protect asset value.⁷⁰ Always. No governing board will tolerate a president who does otherwise. I've come to think that we spend way too much time and energy obsessing over university presidents, trying to lobby them to do this and that. They have very little agency, very little capacity for leadership, and we ought to organize accordingly.⁷¹ We ought to focus on building movements to recharter

⁶⁴ See *id.* at 177-78 (explaining emergence of "academic charters as trusts and hence governing board members as trustees whose principal legal obligation is to ensure that the will of founders and donors be observed in perpetuity"); *Understanding Fiduciary Duties: A Guide for Today's Higher Education Governing Boards*, AGB (Aug. 13, 2025), <https://agb.org/blog-post/understanding-fiduciary-duties-a-guide-for-todays-higher-education-governing-boards> [<https://perma.cc/FDE3-X6G4>] (noting "[fiduciary] duties are legal requirements" and trustees are "responsible . . . for tangible assets such as buildings and endowments").

⁶⁵ See KAUFMAN-OSBORN, *supra* note 26, at 43.

⁶⁶ See AJLabs, *Mapping Pro-Palestine College Campus Protests Around the World*, AL JAZEERA (May 2, 2024, at 13:50 GMT), <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/4/29/mapping-pro-palestine-campus-protests-around-the-world> [<https://perma.cc/RR6X-HDTE>].

⁶⁷ See WILLIAM A. HERBERT, JACOB APKARIAN & JOSEPH VAN DER NAALD, NAT'L CTR. FOR THE STUDY OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN HIGHER EDUC. & THE PROS., *DIRECTORY OF BARGAINING AGENTS AND CONTRACTS IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION* 17 (2024), <https://research-data.hunter.cuny.edu/ncscbhpep/2024DirectoryofBargainingAgentsandContractsInInstitutionsofHigherEducation.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/PY26-UB22>] (finding, between 2012 and 2024, 7.5% increase in number of unionized faculty and 133% increase in number of unionized graduate student employees).

⁶⁸ See *id.*

⁶⁹ See KAUFMAN-OSBORN, *supra* note 26, at 163.

⁷⁰ See sources cited *supra* note 64 (discussing university trustee duties).

⁷¹ See KAUFMAN-OSBORN, *supra* note 26, at 148-150.

universities, to dissolve existing corporate charters and restructure universities as cooperatively owned and managed corporations. This will not be easy. In some states and jurisdictions, it may not be entirely possible. But now is not the time to reinforce a model of university ownership and governance that has put society on the precipice of full-blown fascism. We ought to think about what sort of university democracy requires and aspire to build that university.

Jared Loggins: We have a right to shape the university. Much like how the right to the city is about claiming a shaping power over the urban forms of life that make us and our futures, the right to the university means the right to hold the process of higher education in common.⁷² To go back to the earlier discussion about the mass vilification of higher education, I think antipathy loses its power when people come to genuinely believe they are part and parcel of its functioning. Democracy, in the university or anywhere else for that matter, is a practice. Recall how Cade Bambara brought the community to the classroom on cooperative terms. Recall how she did not reinforce the notion of the university as a gated community, but instead treated the people outside its walls as people with infinite amounts of wisdom. Recall how she saw them as equals endowed with the capacity to know and learn and instruct. I believe that is the kind of ethos we need: A structurally anti-authoritarian university very much in the spirit of Cade Bambara's practical and ethical vision.

Let me bring in another figure whom I regard as a harbinger for this liberating vision of education, and that is the philosopher Anna Julia Cooper. Cooper struggled her entire life against the money-getting philosophy of education which says that the aim of learning is to get rich.⁷³ In 1930, shortly after Cooper assumed the mantle of president of Frelinghuysen University, a now-defunct HBCU in Washington, D.C., she wrote a manifesto titled *On Education* in which she embraced an essentially decolonized model of education, writing in part: "Any scheme of education should have regard to the whole man—not a special class or race of men, but man as the paragon of creation, possessing in childhood and in youth almost infinite possibilities for physical, moral and mental development."⁷⁴

Hers is a powerful moral and political horizon. Cooper says we are paragons of creation. Education for all in the light of beauty, democracy, and progress. On the whole it is a cooperative assemblage of infinite intellectual potential in which all our creative capacities are trained on serving the development of each and all. Cooper is another figure calling back to us now to get organized for the new university.

⁷² Cf. DAVID HARVEY, *REBEL CITIES: FROM THE RIGHT TO THE CITY TO THE URBAN REVOLUTION* 115-40 (2013) (centering cities, as opposed to workplaces, as sites of both capitalist control and anticapitalist resistance).

⁷³ ANNA JULIA COOPER, *ON EDUCATION* (1930), *reprinted in* THE VOICE OF ANNA JULIA COOPER 248, 258 (Charles Lemert & Esme Bhan eds., 1998).

⁷⁴ *Id.*

Andrew Douglas: We absolutely need to get organized. There are no shortcuts, as the late Jane McAlevey put it.⁷⁵ Christopher Newfield has argued recently that academics must “seize the means of knowledge production.”⁷⁶ But he points out that we’re not well prepared to do this. We operate as little entrepreneurs. We carve out private agency for ourselves, and generally reproduce the pathologies of the professional managerial class.⁷⁷ I might suggest that even our attempts at private agency are belittled by a tendency to ask for permission before we do anything. We appeal to university administrators or trustees to support our resolutions. We lobby foundations for grant money. We respect to a fault the liberal proceduralism of our institutions and professional associations. But if we want to “seize the means of knowledge production,” we need to act.⁷⁸ While we need to build toward the ultimate horizon of restructuring or rechartering the university, we also need to seize opportunities for autonomous authority where possible and compel others to accommodate.

Jared Loggins: I wholeheartedly agree! Again, we must claim the right to shape of universities—without permission! I refuse to give up on the idea that the university is a collective inheritance and good for all.⁷⁹ We have a right to command that process. I totally understand why people are pessimistic. I am not pessimistic and that is because we are seeing fight all around us: graduate labor organizing, faculty labor organizing, Palestine organizing, and community organizing.⁸⁰ So the question of claiming some kind of a shaping power over higher education is not simply an imperative but a growing movement. The alternatives are being born. Andrew, you have been working out some interesting approaches to reimagining the campus community and connecting it to a democratic horizon for higher education. Could you round us out here by talking about that?

Andrew Douglas: I’ve spent the past fifteen years working at an HBCU. And I’ve been trying to reimagine university finance within that setting. So many of our problems have to do with money. We’re constantly fighting for financial resources to build our programs, carry out our research, recruit and retain our

⁷⁵ JANE F. MCALEVEY, NO SHORTCUTS: ORGANIZING FOR POWER IN THE NEW GILDED AGE 212 (2016).

⁷⁶ Christopher Newfield, *Academics Must Seize the Means of Knowledge Production*, PUB. BOOKS (Oct. 6, 2025), <https://www.publicbooks.org/academics-must-seize-the-means-of-knowledge-production> [<https://perma.cc/497T-X5GU>].

⁷⁷ *Id.*

⁷⁸ *See id.*

⁷⁹ *See* Tressie McMillan Cottom, *Why Free College Is Necessary*, DISSENT (Fall 2015), <https://dissentmagazine.org/article/tressie-mcmillan-cottom-why-free-college-necessary> [<https://perma.cc/RJ6P-V67Q>] (reintroducing “concept of public good to higher education discourse”).

⁸⁰ *See* sources cited *supra* notes 66-67 (documenting campus protest activity and growth in academic labor unionization); Rachel Leingang, ‘We’re Fighting for the Soul of the Country’: How Minnesota Residents Came Together to Face ICE, GUARDIAN (Feb. 1, 2026, at 21:30 ET), <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/feb/01/minnesota-twin-cities-ice-protests> [<https://perma.cc/3WKW-656W>].

students, maintain our campus facilities, and keep our colleagues employed.⁸¹ All the while we're subjected to all manner of perverse incentives.⁸² And we tend to assume that we have very little agency here, that we're operating at the mercy of those who control access to money—legislatures, private banks, creditors, and donors. But what if, to paraphrase my colleagues at the *Money on the Left* editorial collective, we stop trying to find the money and instead just create it?⁸³ What if we treat money and finance and credit as malleable institutions that, on a variety of levels, communities design and manage as part of an effort to provision themselves?⁸⁴ We first need to push back against the liberal conceit that money is a finite resource that has to be redistributed.⁸⁵ Money is always created, always issued, and managed under certain institutional arrangements. It is a kind of public utility.⁸⁶ Governments are authorized by the public to create money. In our peculiar capitalist world, as Christine Desan has shown, private banks are also authorized to create money.⁸⁷ There's no reason why other publicly accountable institutions can't exercise the authority to introduce and manage community or complementary currencies—to establish a fiscal circuit, as it were, and issue and redeem credits as a means of mobilizing labor. The communities that come together on and around university campuses are perhaps uniquely situated to experiment with this kind of local currency creation.⁸⁸

⁸¹ See Andrew J. Douglas, *Battling Institutional Debt at HBCUs*, ACADEME MAG. (2022), <https://www.aaup.org/academe/issues/winter-2022/battling-institutional-debt-hbcus> [<https://perma.cc/YX2D-SR9H>] (discussing financial difficulties at Morehouse College and impact of institutional debt on HBCUs).

⁸² BALDWIN, *supra* note 10, at 17-51 (introducing examples of how universities' profit motives lead to apathy or even harm towards local and minority communities).

⁸³ See Scott Ferguson & Benjamin Wilson, *Stop Trying to Find the Money—Create It*, ACADEME MAG. (2022), <https://www.aaup.org/academe/issues/fall-2022/stop-trying-find-money-create-it> [<https://perma.cc/5SA4-6PNU>]; see also *The Uni Currency Project: Resource Page*, MONEY ON LEFT, <https://moneyontheleft.org/the-uni-currency-project-resource-page> [<https://perma.cc/PLD5-VDK5>] (last visited May 26, 2026) (collecting resources related to university currency issuance).

⁸⁴ See Ferguson & Wilson, *supra* note 83.

⁸⁵ See SCOTT FERGUSON, DECLARATIONS OF DEPENDENCE: MONEY, AESTHETICS, AND THE POLITICS OF CARE 36-40 (2018) (critiquing assumptions of "Liberal Money form").

⁸⁶ See, e.g., JAKOB FEINIG, MORAL ECONOMIES OF MONEY: POLITICS AND THE MONETARY CONSTITUTION OF SOCIETY 107-17 (2022) (introducing monetary design and money as "public utility that enables public works and private exchanges").

⁸⁷ CHRISTINE DESAN, MAKING MONEY: COIN, CURRENCY, AND THE COMING OF CAPITALISM 397-99 (2014) (describing development of commercial banks' ability to create currency through lending and promises of future productivity).

⁸⁸ See generally Craig Jeffrey, *Builder, Broker, Beacon and Base: Universities as Anchor Institutions*, 49 PROGRESS HUM. GEOGRAPHY 581 (2025) (describing universities as "anchor institutions" that serve as base for community development).

Jared Loggins: You and I are political theorists. We tend to traffic in abstractions. Can you give us a more concrete example of some efforts to envision the “something else” we have been talking about?

Andrew Douglas: Ha. I’ll try. At Morehouse last spring (2025), my students rolled out a small-scale classroom currency. We called it the CREDO, partly in a nod to Du Bois, who frequently used that term, but also in an effort to foreground the role that credit and trust play in any monetary system.⁸⁹ The design was simple. Students were required to pay a classroom tax in CREDOs.⁹⁰ They had to work to earn CREDOs to satisfy the obligation.⁹¹ As a governing body and currency-issuing authority, the class collectively made decisions about what kind of work could be undertaken to earn CREDOs.⁹² One stipulation was that it had to be work that is systematically underfunded by capitalist finance.⁹³ Students decided to invest in a series of nonprofits doing community development work around campus, and they earned CREDOs for hourly labor at those nonprofits.⁹⁴ Many did far more work than was necessary to pay the tax, which meant that CREDOs began to circulate among students in a kind of private sector economy.⁹⁵ The experiment had mostly pedagogical value. But it mobilized at least some community development labor that otherwise would have remained idle.⁹⁶ The challenge moving forward will be to scale the project from a classroom currency to a broader community currency, so that a broader group of stakeholders can take part in decisions about when and where to issue the currency, what initiatives to invest in, and how to use this independent financial vehicle to mobilize local labor power.

Jared Loggins: This is interesting. Could you speak to the scale of the project and what it aims to do? As we have discussed, universities are big businesses. The money relation is integral to how they function. How can this kind of grassroots experimentation with money creation shift the conversation?

Andrew Douglas: The economist Hyman Minsky once said that “everyone can create money; the problem is to get it accepted.”⁹⁷ And here again, I think

⁸⁹ See generally *The Black University & Community Currencies*, MONEY ON LEFT (May 1, 2025), <https://moneyontheleft.org/2025/05/01/the-black-university-community-currencies> [<https://perma.cc/K8ZV-E28Q>]; *The Black University & Community Currencies*, Pt. 2, MONEY ON LEFT (June 11, 2025) [hereinafter Workshop Part II], <https://moneyontheleft.org/2025/06/11/the-black-university-and-community-currencies-pt-2> [<https://perma.cc/N8NG-TAWM>].

⁹⁰ Workshop Part II, *supra* note 89.

⁹¹ *Id.*

⁹² *Id.*

⁹³ *Id.*

⁹⁴ *Id.*

⁹⁵ *Id.*

⁹⁶ As a participating student remarked, “I didn’t have a base incentive to do the labor this semester. The reason why I did accumulate the Credo was because there was that tax at the end of the year.” *Id.*

⁹⁷ HYMAN P. MINSKY, STABILIZING AN UNSTABLE ECONOMY 255 (2008).

universities are sites of untapped potential. In our case at Morehouse, more professors could work the CREDO project into their classes. Local businesses in Atlanta's West End could be persuaded to accept CREDOs for discounts on products and services. Morehouse could accept CREDOs for discounts on tuition. The City of Atlanta could demonstrate its support for local HBCUs and surrounding communities by accepting CREDOs for city tax purposes. We could partner with other HBCUs—there are more than one hundred of them nationally—to establish circuits of issuance and receivability across campuses and across regional economies. We could partner with public banking advocates and work to integrate locally administered credit-creation initiatives. These are just some of the possibilities. Each would bolster demand and enhance the likelihood that more people would be willing to accept the currency in payment of wages or services and thereby participate in the community development work at the heart of the project. The point is that some degree of local monetary experimentation may help provision communities that have been systematically underdeveloped by capitalist finance. The point is to claim collective agency over the mobilization of real resources. We don't need to wait on Congress or billionaire donors to do this kind of work. We don't need to seek approval from deans or university CFOs, either. We can build community and act. And something like this could be an opening salvo in building a new model of the university, one that harkens back to the grand promise of the Black University vision of a school that is anchored in sustainable, democratic community development.

Jared Loggins: Thank you, Andrew.

Andrew Douglas: Thank you!