

THE COOPER UNION ALUMNI PIONEER

Post-Archival Writings

by Barry Drogin, EE '83

Abstract

A collection of private and semi-public writings by alumnus Barry Drogin since *The Cooper Union Alumni Pioneer* became a news archive on January 12, 2014.

On January 12, 2014, *The Cooper Union Alumni Pioneer* became a news archive. The final news headline was “Board of Trustees Reject Cooper Union Community Bailout” and the final editorial was “Exit Through the Gift Shop,” accompanied by a longer essay that posited that The Cooper Union would lose its PILOT and suggested that the college sell off its real estate holdings except for the Foundation Building, continue to house the Great Hall, the Library, and the Gallery, and be devoted to providing paid internships to local college students. As former publisher, I pledged future financial support to the Library.

As I exited from the conversation, I occupied myself with a few concerns: the life of Peter Cooper, the purpose of The Cooper Union Alumni Association, and preserving the history of the conflict. I did not assist The Committee to Save Cooper Union, although I had warned trustees prior to their final vote that some form of legal challenge was inevitable.

I did not anticipate the administration’s bold move to attempt to destroy the CUAA. I did not anticipate, finally, the involvement of the Attorney General. And I was fascinated by the Libeskind/Slavin conflict.

At first, I wrote e-mails to some individuals I trusted. Gradually, I started posting musings on the “Save Cooper Union” Facebook group. These e-mails and postings were not a revival of *The Alumni Pioneer*. They were not, and are not, *Alumni Pioneer* editorials. They are my personal musings.

I still enjoy engaging with Cooper Union alumni and with other members of the Cooper Union Community that I met during my work for *The Alumni Pioneer*. What follows are a public posting of my personal musings, the thoughts of a single alumnus, not representative of the alumni body as a whole or the Cooper Union Community as a whole.

Barry Drogin

I. January 12 and 16, 2014: Exiting from a Conversation

The Alumni Pioneer is now a news archive. I want to wish the best of luck to those who are choosing to continue to fight in whatever way or manner they do. *The Alumni Pioneer* was always intended to be a temporary virtual newspaper covering the Cooper Union financial crisis, with the motto, "Fighting For a Fair Risk-Free Austerity Budget Since November 2011." That fair risk-free austerity budget was presented to the Board as the Working Group Plan and was rejected.

For those fighting for free education, against student debt, for their alma mater, for governance changes, for the return of full-tuition scholarships, for Peter Cooper, for revenge or punishment or justice, I sincerely wish you no ill and the best of luck. Everyone has had their roles to play, and many will still

This PDF is not copyrighted and may be reproduced and posted elsewhere. Rev 5/3/15

have roles to play. The third Sunday of every April, I hope to see some of you at Greenwood Cemetery as we watch Peter Cooper spinning in his grave. Perhaps we will sing "Silent Prez" or invent other traditions to commemorate the occasion. I see the loss of the mission of the college as much more serious than the loss of Green Camp. I hope you will consider this to be a noble exit. I know some of you want to thank me but I really want to thank you.

I am still a Class Rep, and I will decide what my e-mail options are going to be for "official" Cooper Union communications, but I hope you will respect my feelings and keep all communications to those related to the Library, or to events which I am specifically involved in.

I am not Lawrence of Arabia (the famous line, "the trick is not minding that it hurts"), I will always care very deeply about The Cooper Union, so I need to be able to control when I choose to think about Cooper.

For two years, Jamshed Bharucha left his office and went home and played his violin and fucked his wife and listened to music and the like. For two years, I left my day job and spent almost every waking moment thinking about Cooper. I am trying to wean my brain away from that, and I appreciate your thoughtfulness in this endeavor.

Stanislavsky teaches that strong emotional feelings never go away, they can always be recalled. I have learned that the Jewish religion allows people who have lost loved ones to compartmentalize their grief; you remember the person you have lost on their *yahrzeit*, you give yourself over to those feelings once a year, and then you give permission to yourself to go back to your life. Not to stop caring, that never happens, but to continue living your life, to allow yourself hope and joy and dreams.

II. April 16, 2014: Art of the Possible

I have been thinking that perhaps too many alumni have been thinking, planning, and acting too grandiose, effectively believing that they would be able to take over the Board of Trustees, the administration, and the college through various efforts. As part of that effort there has been discussion of changing the CUAA (as per, notably, *The Way Forward*), and this naturally leads to related discussions of the governance and the MOA.

I've been thinking, if the CUAA can't even take over the CUAA, then how can it even think of taking over Cooper? I propose the following concrete goals:

1. Take control of the *cualumni.com* website
2. Take control of the alumni mailing lists (e-mail, snail mail, telephone)
3. Take control of the alumni donation database
4. Take control of all communications to alumni
5. Take back direction of alumni office employees, including their number, positions, etc.

This does not mean no communication between the CUAA and the alumni office employees and the college, but that processes would be reversed - the college would have to request to post info on *cualumni.com* or provide blasts to the CUAA for approval, not the other way around.

I have specifically not mentioned the Annual Fund which is part of the general topic of fundraising for the college. But it creates a framework where fundraising activities have to pass through the CUAA for approval, and if the frequency or nature of the fundraising appeal is considered unacceptable, then it is rejected or altered.

There is some extent to which the CUA A has already progressed through the accomplishment of these goals, but I think their full realization is necessary before any further independent actions (although actions in sync with the unions, students, and local community are a separate matter).

III. July 6, 2014: Draft Resolution for the CUA A in re: Committee to Save Cooper Union lawsuit

WHEREAS, the Alumni Council of the Cooper Union Alumni Association was first informed about the financial crisis of the college at its October 4, 2011, meeting; and
WHEREAS, elected Alumni Trustee John Huddy submitted a letter of resignation to the Board of Trustees on November 13, 2011, because his views on charging tuition at The Cooper Union did not agree with the views of the majority of the members of the Cooper Union Alumni Association; and
WHEREAS, the Executive Committee of the Alumni Council sponsored "Free Cooper Union: A Community Summit" in the Great Hall on December 5, 2011; and
WHEREAS, on February 8, 2012, the Alumni Council unanimously passed a resolution to "unequivocally support" the college's mission to "award full scholarships to all enrolled students;" and
WHEREAS, on April 4, 2012, the President of the Cooper Union Alumni Association, without the support of the Executive Committee, the Alumni Council, or the Cooper Union Alumni Association, endorsed a "hybrid model" to preserve full-tuition scholarships for the undergraduate programs in engineering, art and architecture and the introduction of new tuition-based programs; and
WHEREAS, on April 23, 2013, the Board of Trustees announced that The Cooper Union would reduce the full-tuition scholarship by 50% for all applicants starting in September, 2014, providing additional scholarship funding only to students with need; and
WHEREAS, on May 21, 2013, the Alumni Council announced that the Cooper Union Alumni Association had rejected a nominated Alumni Trustee who did not support the college's mission and instead elected Kevin Slavin by write-in to the Board of Trustees as well as twelve candidates endorsed by Free Cooper Union; and
WHEREAS, on July 11, 2013, the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees agreed to set up a Working Group to explore ways in which the college may revert to providing full-tuition scholarships for all enrolled students; and
WHEREAS, on December 4, 2013, the Working Group presented to the Executive Committee and, on December 11, 2013, presented to the full Board of Trustees, a Working Group Plan to preserve full-tuition scholarships; and
WHEREAS, on December 17, 2013, the Alumni Council unanimously passed a resolution endorsing the Working Group Plan; and
WHEREAS, on January 10, 2014, the Board of Trustees announced that it had reviewed the Working Group Report but could not restore the full-tuition scholarship; and
WHEREAS, on May 27, 2014, the Committee to Save Cooper Union filed a Petition to the New York County Supreme Court against the current Board of Trustees, including the current President of the Cooper Union Alumni Association and the four elected Alumni Trustees, seeking an accounting of the college's financing by a Special Master, seeking the creation of the Society and the Council of the Associates of Cooper Union, seeking the removal of trustees who voted for tuition and/or rejected the Working Group Plan, and seeking preliminary and permanent injunctions preventing the Trustees from charging tuition.
BE IT RESOLVED, on this the xx day of July, 2014, the Council of the Cooper Union Alumni Association urges the Board of Trustees to direct its attorneys to expeditiously negotiate a settlement before September, 2014, with the Committee to Save Cooper Union.

IV. November 8, 2014: CUA A Questions

Who should run reunions, the CUA A or the college?
Should the CUA A become the Associates?

This PDF is not copyrighted and may be reproduced and posted elsewhere. Rev 5/3/15

Should alumni trustees be forced to sign NDAs that violate the Charter?
Should CUAA assist the lawsuit?
Should CUAA continue to advocate for a "return to free"?
Should CUAA fundraising reimburse students who didn't get a full scholarship?
Should CUAA fundraise for college?
Should "affinity groups" be part of the CUAA or the college?
Should regional chapters be part of the CUAA or the college?
Should CUAA provide "position papers" on college actions or communications?
If the lawsuit fails, should CUAA advocate to rename the college?

V. December 20, 2014: CUAA Fundraising

I think it would be extremely helpful if some decisions going forward were presented as position papers, with one person writing about the advantages of one side, and another person writing about the advantages of the other side. My personal opinion on the 501(c)7 vs. 501(c)3 issue is that if the college wins the lawsuit, then CUAA should go back to 501(c)7 and the college should change its name, and if the college loses the lawsuit, then CUAA should go 501(c)3 and position itself to be (or contain) the Associates.

I am very unsure where I stand on setting up a fund to directly compensate students who did not receive a full-tuition scholarship, but I have gone through the thought-experiment of how such a fund might operate. Some options are (1) Provide across-the-board financial scholarships to all students who did not receive 100% scholarships so that the CUAA could claim it increased the 50% scholarship to 60%, or the average 70% scholarship to an average 80% scholarship; (2) Have accepted students provide transcripts so that the best who were not provided 100% scholarships are provided with additional merit scholarships; and (3) Set up some form of "adopt-a-student" so that an individual alumnus (or group of alumni) can provide 100% scholarships to enrolled students and receive report-backs (Tau Beta Pi fellowship receivers are described on receipt and report back at the end). Of course, the administration of these three options differs greatly, and each must be vetted legally.

Such a fund does not move the college towards free, and the idea of an escrow fund that Cooper would receive if it returned to free is much more agreeable. Of course, funds for the CUAA itself, for its rewards and events, etc., has to come first.

VI. April 26, 2015 (modified from version first created on February 22, 2015): The Cooper Union Society of Associates

Mission Statement

The Cooper Union Society of Associates (CUSA) is a charitable, not-for-profit institution which upholds the ideals and principles of Peter Cooper and ensures that a union for the advancement of science and art will be open and free to all with a thirst for knowledge.

Objectives

- **Thirst for Knowledge:** Attract students of all ages, religions, economic backgrounds, genders, and ancestries who possess a thirst for knowledge, and provide life-long learning opportunities.
- **Public Good:** Promote the idea that wealth comes from the public and must be returned to the public good through dis-interested philanthropy.
- **Advancement of Science and Art:** Through access to learning materials, thought leaders, and forums for debate, provide for the advancement and appreciation of science, art, manufacturing, and commerce

This PDF is not copyrighted and may be reproduced and posted elsewhere. Rev 5/3/15

in all its manifestations.

- **Equal to the Best:** Strive for excellence and professionalism in all endeavors, so that quality and innovation are always evident.
- **Political Economy:** Seek to educate and empower the working classes, so that all may live productive lives and not be enslaved to financial institutions, undemocratic powers, or promoters of misinformation.
- **Open and Free to All:** Ensure that education, economic opportunity, and social mobility flow as free as air and water to the people of New York City, the citizens of the United States, and throughout the world.

Key Strategies

- Ensure oversight over and transparency into the institute founded by Peter Cooper and his heirs as delineated in its founding documents.
- Recruit, attract, and maintain connections and interactions with any and all who share a thirst for knowledge.
- Provide recognition of productions, inventions, improvements to useful employment, increase of trade, meritorious works of fine arts, discoveries, and riches and honor of the city, the country, and the world.
- By lectures, papers, discussions, and other suitable means, assist in the advancement, development, and practical application of knowledge in connection with the arts, manufacture, and commerce of the city, the country, and the world.
- Through ceremonies, publications, and promotions, disseminate knowledge about Peter Cooper's life, words, ideals, and principles.

Membership

Membership in the CUSA shall be open to all graduates of the founder's institution, to representatives of all organizations compatible with the mission of the CUSA, and to all interested parties and individuals who wish to advance the mission of the CUSA. The CUSA shall elect its own officers and a Council of its members of at least twenty-four (24) members.

If and when the Board of Trustees of The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art recognize the CUSA as the entity described in its Charter, then all provisions and relations between The Cooper Union and the CUSA shall be enacted and instituted by both parties.

Operation

The CUSA shall make all rules and regulations for its own conduct and government, pass its own by-laws, and prescribe the duties and powers and annual dues of its members and officers.

VII. March 25, 2015: Countering Propaganda

If there is a better synonym, I'd be glad to use it. Of course, I wonder whether some people consider my "Mr. Misinformation" 3-part series, and Matt's "Demons of Debt" webcomics, to be a form of propaganda as well. Is there good propaganda and bad propaganda? Or is there another word for that?

Perhaps propaganda is opposed by counter-information, but, when you're countering misinformation, aren't you just providing information?

Unlike propaganda, I present inconvenient truths and point out which parts are true and which are not. The most maddening are the half-truths, which are technically correct, but not the whole story.

JB definitely uses the techniques of propaganda. I practice advocacy journalism, but I don't leave out facts which are counter to "the cause"; for example, alumni give a lot, and trustees give a lot, too. I have to spend a lot more time countering the "alumni don't give" propaganda, but I never countenance any "trustees don't give" nonsense.

Just because trustees give doesn't mean that trustees don't have self-interest, don't hate middle-class people and unions, and don't have no understanding of education whatsoever. (sorry for the double-negative) Since Cooper is overwhelmingly a college for the middle class, it would be nice to have a few middle class people on the Board. Maybe some of the alumni trustees is all we get...

VIII. March 27, 2015: CUAA President Candidates

Okay, there's protecting sources, but then there's transparency in thought and action, so I'm going to go for a little transparency. The fact is that both candidates for CUAA President, unbeknownst to each other, have asked me for research help, and I have provided that help to both. And the fact is that both candidates for CUAA President, unbeknownst to each other, have complained to me privately about some posting or other of mine on Save Cooper Union. If anyone cares for insight into my brain (and I don't think anyone should care), I find it extremely interesting that my "opinion" of the outcome of the CUAA Presidential election flip-flops from half-sentence to half-sentence every time I choose to think about it.

I'm a registered Democrat, and for decades have grown accustomed to voting in primaries and having my choices never get the nomination (then, of course, voting for the Democrat who does get the nomination in the general election). So sometimes I think that who I decide to vote for is almost a guarantee that they are not going to win. I even voted too early and ended up voting against Kevin Slavin, if you want to believe in kismet.

So I don't know if I'm neutral, scatter-brained, or fated, what I hope for is that people agree with me when they agree with me and disagree with me when they disagree with me. I mean, even Annetta Riley, who I tend to agree with on many, many things, we surprisingly reach a parting of the ways on Noam Chomsky, and I'm the Orthodox Jew who should be disgusted by his anti-Semitism.

So sometimes I agree with things, and sometimes, if you say A, I say B, and if you change your mind and say B, I turn around and say that A has some merit. I enjoy having some really, really interesting conversations, and I also enjoy a little politically-incorrect humor. I am an equal opportunity offender. I don't like truthiness, I do believe that truth exists and is not relative, but I also believe there is complexity, and every human on this planet is extremely complex. Yes, ultimately in an election, you have to put an x in this box and not in that box or put no x at all or write-in someone different. There is a moment where grey and flip-flopping has to be settled into black and white. I wanted to serve on the Working Group, I don't accept the nomination for anything else. I say I'm not going to show up for something and then I show up. I promise to keep my mouth shut and then I open it. The CUAA Council unanimously wants a return to free, and in this election we will find out whether the CUAA membership thinks that it is any of the CUAA Council's business to want that. Perhaps there will be alumni who vote on the referendum and vote for nobody on the ballot.

I worked for Free Since 1859 because Jeff Gural asked me to. Jeff Gural has real power, as does CSCU and Free Cooper Union. At the moment, the CUAA has the power to exist, and hopefully to elect another trustee to the BoT. I have some credibility in providing information (or counter-information, as per another thread), and I have the power to persuade Green-Wood Cemetery that our annual visit there will be respectful and appropriate for a cemetery (although they are a little displeased with the title for the event, which I will change next year at their request - too late now). The ability to provide

This PDF is not copyrighted and may be reproduced and posted elsewhere. Rev 5/3/15

information leads, of course, to some persuasion, but not the kind that decides elections, I think. I think the working relationship between ExComm and the Council and the CUAA President is much more important than the working relationship of the CUAA President and me. As long as The Cooper Union is not free and I get to have my yearly visit to Green-Wood Cemetery, I am happy, and in order for that to happen, the CUAA has to exist. If The Cooper Union becomes free again, perhaps I will still have my yearly visit to Green-Wood Cemetery, which I have discovered was a CUAA event that dates back maybe a century or even more. Since the Charter says that all graduates of The Cooper Union shall have the right to become a member of the Associates, I look forward to exercising that right if the Associates are finally formed.

To paraphrase a line from the musical, "1776," I don't stand with either candidate, I stand with Peter Cooper.

IX. April 19, 2015: Working Group

I don't know if I've "posted" this before, I've certainly told many people, so I'm sorry if you've heard it before. There have been many spectacular moments in the past four years, and I don't mean to diminish any of them. A moment that has remained very special to me was the first meeting of the Working Group which, according to the report I wrote to the people I represented, lasted for 3 hours without a break. In that report, I gave an objective description of what happened, my subjective opinions, and issued some calls to action (many of which were ignored) but I didn't mention this there, so I may not have mentioned it elsewhere in print.

As part of the first meeting, we were given a "financial review" presentation by Robert Spencer of the Huron Group, a consultant we came to know and trust, although his boss at the Huron Group tore to shreds all of our work together after it was completed. In the room were two trustees, Jeff Gural and Mike Borkowsky, as well as appointees of the administration, and elected representatives of the full-time and part-time faculty, the students, the alumni, and the staff. Gural and Borkowsky had been trustees for over a decade each.

Throughout the presentation, Mr. Spencer presumed to tell those gathered the story of The Cooper Union dating back to 1970. At various times during the presentation, Mr. Spencer was stopped by a representative - by a faculty member, by an alumnus, by a staff member, perhaps by a student - and corrected. The representative would tell the entire group a story, a story about what actually happened. The two trustees - one a former alumni association president - were agog. They had no idea, they never knew. I'm sure there were other representatives of other groups who also had never heard these stories of what actually happened, including me.

I felt, very strongly, that I was witnessing a historic moment. For the first time, all of these different members of the Cooper Union Community were in the room together and, aside perhaps for a formality of being recognized by the chair, they could correct the record, show that they knew what they were talking about, and be respected for it. This was a history, as the administration presented it, as the trustees knew it, and it was missing important details and occasionally just wrong. I'm sure I heard the trustees say, "I never knew that" and "I never heard that."

The entire BoT, not before or since, has never had a chance to have this experience. The meetings of the BoT Executive Committee with the full WG, and of the full BoT with representatives of the WG, were devoted to the contents of the WG Report and to questions about it.

I dream of a day when the BoT begs to have a similar experience. I dream of a governance structure where such things are routine, where there isn't a "single point of contact" between the BoT and the rest

of the Cooper Union Community. I managed a \$12M contract where I was NOT the single point of contact for my government agency and all of its departments, and another gentleman was NOT the single point of contact for the prime contractor and his subconsultants, although we technically were. I authored that contract, and it explicitly said that communication could flow directly from any member of one to any member of the other. A subconsultant could pick up the telephone and speak directly to someone that wasn't me, and all other combinations. It is one thing to keep the people in charge informed about what is going on, it is another to have to pass messages between intermediaries, where things can be lost in translation or censored. Of course, there are decision-making hierarchies, but problems cannot be discovered, identified, and fixed under a single point system.

There is a management style known as "management by walking around." There is another management style known as the mushroom style - put your employees in a dark corner, feed them shit, and let them struggle to grow. Perhaps you have experienced both; perhaps there are circumstances where one is preferable to the other.

This we know for a fact: Peter Cooper managed by walking around. He visited his beloved Institute every day. He sat in on classes, even ones he did not understand or appreciate, and beamed. He spoke to everyone, from directors to teachers to students to maintenance workers. Afterwards he would go down to McSorleys and hang out with the maintenance workers, because he enjoyed that. He was also extremely humble. He would occasionally make a suggestion, but always follow it up with, "but you do what you think is best." If there was a problem, despite his advanced age, he would roll up his sleeves and help fix it, often inventing novel solutions on the spot. If you wanted to speak to Mr. Cooper, there was no guard to keep you away. He loved debate. He loved to recite poetry. He loved his Institute. He loved solving problems, the more important and the more difficult, the better. Read the story of the B&O Railroad and the Tom Thumb. Read the story of the Transatlantic Cable. These are remarkable stories, and they are true.

The Cooper Union is a remarkable place, and it has been injured greatly. It is in real trouble. It desperately needs fixing. It has been damaged even further. And not by us. Anyone who thinks otherwise, anyone who knows how things are supposed to be done, is not only wrong, but dangerous. We are on the brink of salvation or of catastrophe. There may be unintended consequences of every step that is taken.

Without transparency, without facing inconvenient truths, without establishing "what is," without free-flowing communication, this all could be gone. As Felix Salmon has written, the man who has damaged our reputation and breded mistrust and division gains nothing from us coming together - he is proven "right" if we fail. We must not fail.

X. April 20, 2015: Wall Street Journal

The Onion: Jamshed Bharucha Goes Insane

After four years of living in an alternate reality of his own creation, Jamshed Bharucha went insane this month, believing he had the power to manipulate the media, the government, and the entire Cooper Union Community in order to preserve his self-regard and regime.

The break started when Dr. Bharucha, once a respected neuroscientist, walked in to the offices of *The Wall Street Journal* and informed them that the Attorney General's office was investigating the Cooper Union Board of Trustees. The AG office had been investigating the Cooper Union for months after a group of students, faculty members, and an alumnus had filed a lawsuit against the Board in a Manhattan Court. As part of the investigation, Dr. Bharucha was contacted by the Attorney General's

This PDF is not copyrighted and may be reproduced and posted elsewhere. Rev 5/3/15

office and asked questions about his role in planning and executing the installation of tuition at the free college in Manhattan.

Dr. Bharucha told a gullible reporter that the AG, a Democrat, was investigating himself and the trustees of the college for breach of their duties as board members. The story was published and had the intended affect: no one suspected that Dr. Bharucha himself was the source of the article.

As the Board reeled from the sudden media attention, Dr. Bharucha launched a second offensive, accusing the Board of scapegoating him for Cooper's financial situation, when in fact he knew he was being investigated for his own lies to the press, the Board, and the Cooper Union Community over the last four years. A few allies - Daniel Libeskind, famous architect of the Berlin Jewish Museum and the World Trade Center Master Plan; Dr. Theresa Dahlberg, a computer science professor who Dr. Bharucha had elevated to Chief Academic Officer; and Dr. Alan Wolf, a Physics Professor and lawyer who had orchestrated an "I ♥ JB" campaign using young Cooper engineering students - were asked to help in praising the president's tenure and launch attacks on a few key trustees that, in his delusions, were responsible for his pending loss of position and stature. A story was planted in *The Chronicle for Higher Education* as well.

As the Attorney General's noose tightened around his neck, Dr. Bharucha finally lost his mind, returning to the Wall Street Journal for one last attempt to keep his position - or obtain a book deal - while the Board's lawyers severed ties with Dr. Bharucha. Alan Wolf launched an attack against Richard Lincer, Chair of the Board of Trustees, Thomas Driscoll, Chair of the Board's Finance Committee, and Jeff Gural, a real estate developer who had chaired a Working Group to foil the tuition plan. Dr. Bharucha launched a final attack in the Wall Street Journal against Lincer, Gural, and Kevin Slavin, an elected Alumni Trustee who had thwarted Dr. Dahlberg's attempt to take down the Working Group Report in December 2014.

Bharucha and Dahlberg returned to *The Wall Street Journal* to accuse the Board Chair of threatening Dr. Bharucha. The *Journal* reporter, attempting to confirm Bharucha's ravings, wrote a confused story with irrational shifts in timeline, accusations against Mr. Gural and the Attorney General, and repeated claims of scapegoating.

Dr. Bharucha is intending on using an insanity defense when charges are brought by the Attorney General's office against him. Legal experts contend that Dr. Bharucha may be found innocent using this defense, but that any hopes for a book deal are unlikely.

Commented Cooper Union Federation of College Teachers President Richard Stock, who had watched presidents and board members slowly destroy the college over a period of 20 years, "You can't make this shit up."

In a related story, Mark Epstein, former Chair of the Board of Trustees, known primarily for his "Blame the Alumni" campaign, attempted to remove the *Wall Street Journal* articles from the Internet. "My only regret," said Mr. Epstein, "was that I hadn't instituted tuition at The Cooper Union sooner." Mr. Epstein and other former Board Chairs Ron Drucker and Robert Bernhard are also expected to face charges from the Attorney General's office for launching and implementing a diabolical "Master Plan" which nearly destroyed the esteemed free education institution in direct contradiction to a Mission Statement provided to the Middle States Association in 2000. In 2006, the Board lied to the Attorney General's office, telling a court in a *cy pres* petition that the institution would lose its accreditation if a monstrosity designed by architect Thom Mayne was not built immediately. Several other former Board members, including William Sandholm of Rose Associates and John Michaelson, an investment advisor, are also under investigation.

This PDF is not copyrighted and may be reproduced and posted elsewhere. Rev 5/3/15

In breaking news, Dr. Sulkowicz had Dr. Bharucha involuntarily committed to Bellevue, as he had become a danger to himself and others.

"There is no stigma when a Chief Operating Officer goes insane," said Dr. Kerry Sulkowicz, a psychoanalyst and consultant the Cooper board hired late last year. "In fact, most college presidents suffer from delusions of grandeur. It's practically a job requirement."

No charges against Richard Lincer, Jeff Gural, Thomas Driscoll, or Kevin Slavin are expected.

Barry Drogin, publisher of the *Alumni Pioneer News Archive*, was expected to be interviewed on NPR's *On The Media*, but the staff found the *WSJ* saga to be too incredible.

Justin Harmon, a new Vice President for Communications at Cooper, quit early this morning. "How will I ever cover up this mess," he was heard to mutter as he rushed out the door.

And, in a final development, Peter Cooper stopped spinning in his grave.

XI. April 25, 2015: Governance Structure

With calls from many different directions to appoint an interim president, my thoughts have been focused on the desire for a change in governance structure. At the very top, I suggested following the Charter and instituting a separation of powers based on three branches: the administration, the Board of Trustees, and the Society of the Associates. This seemed obvious, although there is much work to be done on the matter of how administrators are hired, how Board members are elected or approved (and what their minimum and maximum make-up should be), and how membership in the Society of the Associates is to proceed.

As I expanded the three branch concept down to the structure of the administration itself, I initially stumbled. First I wrote about the three deans, accidentally ignoring the Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences. Then I suggested there might be three vice presidents. I returned to the organizational chart <<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.552562291491260.1073741865.391957684218389>> and tried to envision which three vice presidential positions, or newly defined ones, would be appropriate. As a member of the Working Group, the organizational chart was invaluable (especially because the administration refused to provide us with one).

I would like to share my current thinking, which is very much still a work in progress, and is open to discussion. I now see the possibility for three branches at the non-BoT/Society level.

The first branch would be a Council of Deans. There would be no Provost or Chief Academic Officer. The Council would consist of managerial employees who had budgetary authority in the academic sector and include the four academic deans, as well as the other Deans (Student Services, etc.).

The second branch would be a Board of Directors. Some current Director positions would be reduced to Assistant or Associate Director positions. The Board of Directors would consist of managerial employees who had budgetary authority in the non-academic sector.

Finally, the Student/Faculty Senate could be the third branch. Although this is a non-managerial branch, the Student/Faculty Senate would be given certain powers, including, perhaps, confirmation of Directors and Deans.

An interesting question is that of the unions at Cooper: the CUFCT (full-time faculty union), CUOP (part-time faculty union), and U@CU (staff union). U@CU represents both non-managerial members of the academic support staff as well as non-managerial members of the non-academic staff. Whether it makes any sense to split U@CU in half is one matter, but it does seem to make sense to expand the Student/Faculty Senate to a Student/Faculty/Staff Senate, with elected representatives from both the academic staff as well as the non-academic staff.

As in the Constitution of the United States, there are key issues that have to be considered in terms of the responsibilities and powers of each of these branches. One critical area is budgetary allocation. Previously, the President would propose a budget, and the Board of Trustees would accept it or reject it. The power to allocate the budget was demonstrated in the budget cuts of 2012-2013, when the President used the calls for austerity to punish the academic sector, persuading the Expense Reduction Task Force to agree to an across-the-board cut in all sectors, plus additional cuts based on HEPI inflation. This did not consider at all the impacts on the primary mission of the college, to provide instruction and educational (academic) support to the students, not to preserve administrative (non-academic) bloat. This was later followed by an attempt to implement Responsibility Centered Management (RCM), a system which treats the enormous non-academic sector as overhead and makes the academic sector responsible for the entire budget. It would be useful to consider a new budgetary allocation process, one which involved the Board of Trustees approving two budgets, one for the academic sector and one for the non-academic sector, and even imagining how the Student/Faculty/Staff Senate might be involved in the budgetary allocation process itself, or have some enforcement powers (similar to the role of the court system vis a vis congressional and federal budgets).

A second critical area is the flow of information from the three bodies to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Directors would not have power over the flow of information from the Council of Deans. There would need to be care in the possibility of a Secretary of the Board and a Secretary of the Council wielding too much power. Certainly, the desire is to keep the number of Deans and the number of Directors to a minimum. Instead of "direct reports" to a single chief executive (the President), the Deans and Directors would meet as collectives. Although they often serve as silent observers, to be consulted when needed, the general community may not be aware that Directors and Deans sit in on Board Meetings. A restructuring of the Committee structure of the BoT might be needed to provide for the free flow of information from the Directors and Deans to the BoT, but keep from turning BoT meetings into chaos.

Material created since January 12, 2014:

Barry Drogin's Extraordinary Service to The Cooper Union: <<https://vimeo.com/90293559>>

A history of the conflict and of *The Alumni Pioneer*

Award Ceremony: <<https://vimeo.com/92173234>>

John Leeper's Intro and Barry Drogin's acceptance speech

CUAA Secedes from Union: <<http://www.notnicemusic.com/cuaa.pdf>>

History of the CUAA and events that led to its independence in 2014

"Ivory Tower" Errata: <<http://www.notnicemusic.com/tower.pdf>>

Some minor corrections and explanations

Good Faith Reliance:

<<http://youtu.be/TffWv7hPEsM>> and <http://www.notnicemusic.com/Reliance_customizable.ppt>

A response to "The Real State of The Cooper Union"

Cooper Union History Project Playlist:

<<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLfNtfgtpw5gwsXpcRWvN3bk6VPUGAB9J>>

A selected series of videos (not *Alumni Pioneer* content) that illustrate the financial conflict, 2011-2015

The current version of this document can be found at <<http://www.notnicemusic.com/writings.pdf>>. The original version was posted on May 3, 2015.

The Alumni Pioneer News Archive, <<http://www.notnicemusic.com/Cassandra/cooper.html>>, was a virtual newspaper with breaking news stories and links to analyses, sources and the media.