Evolution:


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hen the Board of Regents named Arleigh Templeton eighth president of Sam Houston State Teachers College, the decade of the Sixties was already in its fourth year. The new chief executive brought with him a progressive academic agenda that found a confluence with an American age beset by social restlessness and economic transformation. What resulted locally was a metamorphic synergy that produced the most sweeping changes in the school’s history. Templeton’s tenure lasted only six years, but by the time he was through, the school in many ways would have seemed foreign to the class that had matriculated when the decade was new.

His educational philosophy revolved around the belief that “students should be guided rather than shown.” He also wanted professors to extend them opportunities for independent research, let them “have their heads,” as he put it, “so they may use them to teach themselves.” The new president also believed “that the school should serve the community in which it grows.” Conversely, he held firm to the proposition that the people of Huntsville “allow the school the freedom to teach new things, new ideas, in new ways.”

Such aspirations might sound innocuous now, but at the time it represented an incendiary challenge. It ignited no small resentment in the faculty and provoked townsfolk to question his motives. Professors who demanded their students do research would be expected to gain that kind of experience themselves. Many of the 78% who did not possess a Ph.D. were sure to resist. Just as certainly, some men and women in Huntsville, unwilling to adjust to the changing times, would chafe at those “new things, ideas, and ways.”

As a member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools’ executive council, the future president in 1960 had helped prepare the report the SACS team issued. Although the institution and its mission had grown since Templeton himself had been a student of SHSTC in the mid-1930s, what he found was in many respects the same “country college” of his youth. At the top, Dr. Lowman exercised his executive duties with an almost informal style. While a committee of deans and other officials helped him run the school, he did not impose a chain of command on everyone down the organizational ladder. He was just as likely to make time for a boy representing his social club as
he was for the dean who supervised the student’s activities. Neither did Lowman set up a rigorous system of accountability. He seemed to know instinctively the capabilities of his staff and faculty, and he placed in them his abiding confidence. Once, when a professor just elevated to chair expressed his reservations to Lowman, the president’s advice was as brief as it was vague: “Go run the department.”

The rural atmosphere that pervaded the campus provided a perfect complement to Lowman’s folksy style. The average undergraduate was likely a southeast Texas native on a teacher-track degree plan with no family tradition of higher education. Many of them had found academic homes in agriculture, home economics, and industrial arts, reinforcing the school’s country flavor. Boys and girls from metropolitan Houston represented a healthy minority, about one in every four, but a minority nonetheless. Undergraduates from eleven other states and about a dozen from foreign countries called Sam Houston home as well. In all about four-and-a-half thousand students were enrolled in 1960—yet not a single African American was counted among them.

More revealing than the demographic profile was a sense of outward conformity and the impression that the students genuinely appreciated the opportunity to attain a higher education. Generally, they remained on campus during the weekends and took advantage of the many sporting events and activities organized by the student government and social clubs. They raised hardly a ripple of complaint over matters that would have sent students into orbit just a decade later. A section in the Alcalde dedicated to “Campus Beauties,” for example, segued into pages where cheery students performed variety skits in black face. In another part of the annual were group portraits, among them images of dutiful ROTC candidates standing at attention. For freshmen and sophomore boys, enrollment in the program was still mandatory.

Standing before podiums at Sam Houston in 1960 was a college faculty totally committed to classroom instruction. The school’s mission did not leave much room for conducting research, and the vast majority was delighted to focus all its energy on teaching. Of 172 professors, only forty-one possessed a doctoral degree. Moreover, the number of Sam Houston graduates was striking. Seventy-three had earned at least one degree from their alma mater, bringing criticism on the school for what the SACS team called “academic inbreeding.” Counseling, advising, and any number of committee assignments did not even begin to fill the professors’ days. Not with five classes a semester representing a normal schedule. Weekend graduate classes and overloads often compelled them to teach a sixth course as well. Such a routine left little time for attending professional meetings, but usually it did not really matter. The Board of Regents discouraged absences that pulled instructors away from their classrooms.

To gain approval to attend a conference, a professor would have to navigate a labyrinth of applications and signatures, a process that often took longer than the window of opportunity between notice of the meeting and the event itself.

The professors did not enjoy tenure either, but according to the SACS report, “by custom, practice, and policy [they] have little to fear.” Nothing in the outwardly smooth-running institution the investigators observed contradicted that assessment. Yet standing at the switch in places where the cogs and wheels of human machinery turned, a tiny cabal of Huntsville’s archconservatives, including a number of professors, assured that society would run at the pace and direction they dictated. The local John Birch Society, for example, seemingly achieved perpetual motion, sending “spies” into classrooms, spreading rumors, and hounding those who failed to pass their ideological litmus test. In their estimation liberal professors, independent-minded college students, and African-American activists represented a subversive force that threatened the American way of life.

They saw a particular menace in the activities of Dr. Rupert C. Koeninger. The clique labeled him a radical for his enlightened views on integration and even accused the professor of being a communist sympathizer, evidenced by the groups that invited him to lecture. The Midwestern-trained scholar came to Sam Houston in 1947 and headed a sociology department that by its nature provoked conservative hand wringing. Several years of speaking on behalf of Civil Rights, manning tables to boost poll taxes, and backing liberal politicians finally reached a point of critical mass during the fall of 1960. Showing up at a campaign rally for incumbent Congressman John Dowdy, Koeninger recoiled...
as he watched the “Primitive” Democrat warm up the Huntsville crowd by boasting of his support for a popular bill. The professor openly challenged the candidate, pointing out correctly that he had actually voted against it. Dowdy was enraged. Shortly afterward gossip reached local Red-baiter William H. Kellogg that Koeninger had made light of his screening of an anti-communist propaganda film at the local high school.

The liberal firebrand had provoked some powerful enemies. To Huntsville’s John Birch Society and kindred right-wingers, the Democratic establishment, and even to members of the Board of Regents, it was clear that Koeninger had to go. Regent C. S. Ramsey of San Augustine engineered a simple, but effective solution. He threatened Dr. Harmon Lowman that if he included the controversial professor’s name on the list of recommended faculty for the 1961–1962 academic year, the Board would refuse to approve Sam Houston’s salary budget. Lowman was able to hold back the wolves that year, but sapped by the recent urban renewal flap and weakened by his lingering illness, the president was not able to join the fight effectively.

Koeninger was long gone by the time Arleigh Templeton arrived in 1964, having taken a position at Texas Southern. Yet his ghost haunted the Board of Regents, and the ratling of his chains still resonated in faculty lounges across the campus. Eventually the embattled sociology professor won a protracted battle to clear his name, leaving Sam Houston State to bear much of the blame for his troubles. The cloud that formed over the college lingered most notably in the form of a censure issued by the American Association of University Professors. The new president’s administration operated under its shadow until a scant month after Templeton’s tenure ended in May 1970. Koeninger, by the administration’s own admission, was “studying the matter.”

When it came time for summer enrollment in 1964, such local activists as Wendell Baker and Jerry Jones were determined to force the issue. Jones, Huntsville’s NAACP president, believed he had found the perfect candidate in Annie Kizee, an honor student who had just graduated from the black high school at Trinity. He prevailed upon Baker to accompany her to the Sam Houston campus, where registrar Reed Lindsey explained the school could not accept her, because of its charter. According to Baker, “he called me later that afternoon to see if we could meet with him.” If the local delegation of NAACP leaders came expecting good news, the registrar quickly dashed their hopes. “He showed us some test scores and said that [Kizee] did not score high enough…to enter college.” After a second attempt failed, this one by registering another candidate by mail, the group traveled to Houston and filed a lawsuit in federal court.

Five hours before the suit was filed, however, the Board of Regents issued an announcement that went into effect for the entire Teachers College system: “A student is not going to be refused admission solely on the basis of race.” Four days later John Patrick, the most recent valedictorian of Huntsville’s Sam Houston High School, became the first African-American student admitted into the 83-year-old institution. Th ere were no speeches to mark the occasion, but neither were there protests or angry mobs. Rather, a

from towns like Floydada, Troup, Hereford, and Corsicana. They also brought with them the sophistication of business experience and educational backgrounds from the country’s topflight colleges and universities. The penalty also laid bare the fractured fairy tale spun by little-souled men and women who had used fear to galvanize support for their war on imagined communist bogeymen and liberal nihilists.

By the time integration at Sam Houston State Teachers College appeared imminent, the superpatriots had been pushed into the background, leaving the field to the forces of moderation. According to acting president Elliott Bowers, supporters for the overdue measure had long been bracing for a fight. “We talked to the students, faculty, dean councils, admissions, and the community at large to try to get set,” he insisted. Unfortunately, they failed to engage the NAACP, which was working toward the same end. What should have been a smooth transformation unfolded in a clumsy series of missteps. Complicating the matter was Sam Houston’s charter, which specifically restricted enrollment to white students. Of course, the regular matriculation of a handful of Tejano and foreign students only magnified the hypocrisy. After a full decade since the U.S. Supreme Court had issued its landmark Brown Decision, clearing the path for integration, the Board of Regents was still “studying the matter.”

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When Arleigh Templeton arrived that fall of 1964, he ascended to the presidency of an institution beset by subtle tensions. Over the course of the decade the anxiety grew less palpable, yet whatever uneasiness that remained spread to students themselves as campus unrest then beginning to sweep the nation's colleges and universities infected a vocal minority at Sam Houston State. For the most part, however, the agenda the new chief executive put into motion left the grumblers standing in their tracks. Everyone else was too busy to pay much attention. "Arleigh shook us up," declared one of the deans, "but we needed it."

From the outset Templeton strived to expand the school's mission by promoting new degree fields outside of education. Sam Houston State would become, in his words, a "multi-purpose institution" that "offers broad undergraduate programs and selective graduate programs in the fields of teacher training, the sciences, the fine arts, business and applied arts, and the humanities." Reflecting the president's lofty goal, the school dropped "Teachers" from its title at the end of the 1964-1965 academic year—the last of the old normals to do so. When students enrolled for courses the next fall, they matriculated at the newly designated "Sam Houston State College."

Nineteen sixty-five also marked a division in the way the old normals were governed. During the two previous years, action on establishing new degree programs was suspended while the Governor's Committee on Education Beyond High School reviewed the academic conditions of the state's public colleges and universities. Significantly, Arleigh Templeton had been the committee's executive director. At the same time he was ascending to the presidency of Sam Houston State, the legislature was acting into motion left the grumblers standing in their tracks. Everyone else was too busy to pay much attention. "Arleigh shook us up," declared one of the deans, "but we needed it."

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An almost top-to-bottom reorganization laid the foundation for transforming Templeton's vision into reality. The president began by assembling a triumvirate of capable administrators who established an efficient chain of command for running every facet of the college. As Comptroller, DeWitte C. Holleman conducted the school's business operations. Elliott T. Bowers became Vice President for College Affairs, a position whose chief responsibility was presiding over matters concerning the student body. Templeton named W. E. "Brick" Lowry as Vice President of Academic Affairs, who in turn directed a council of deans composed of the heads of each academic program. In addition, Lloyd D. Vincent moved into the administration building from the physics department, filling the newly created position of Assistant to the President.

The administration refined the curriculum by organizing the academic departments into six schools. There was the School of Business and Applied Arts that embraced business administration, economics, journalism, photoengraving, printing, and military science. Later it added accounting, general business, and marketing and management. In the School of Science were biology, chemistry, physics, agriculture, and mathematics. Fine Arts included art, music, and speech and drama. The departments of English, history, foreign languages, government, and briefly, sociology, fell under the rubric of Humanities. The School of Education provided an umbrella for education and psychology, industrial arts, agriculture, library science, physical education, home economics, health, and library science. Particularly significant was the creation of a School of Graduate Studies. During the decade, masters programs offered students new opportunities to earn graduate degrees in the existing fields of arts, education, science, and business administration. Afterward, Vice President Lowry and the council of deans constantly reviewed the configurations, swapping and adding programs that made the curriculum more logical and effective.

If the new emphasis on broadened academic diversity engendered concern among the education staff, Templeton's commitment to making the school a model program satisfied even the most doubtful critics. With his support, Dean Suler Ryan tapped state and federal funds to purchase equipment, host workshops, develop the curriculum, and fund student grants and loans. The president, a product of the education department himself, vowed that Sam Houston State College would remain well ahead of the demands placed on teachers by the evolving public school system of Texas.

Templeton also included teacher training in his three-part capstone aimed at developing "programs where we can obtain national eminence and contribute most to the State's educational system." With regard to producing topflight classroom teachers and school administrators, he was only playing to the strength of an already exceptional program that had existed as the school's raison d'etre from its beginning. In addition, the president also believed Sam Houston could establish superior programs in communications and criminology, given the growing demand for trained professionals in the two fields.
Under Hugh Cunningham and Ferol Robinson, the journalism program had turned out scores of talented writers and editors who graced newsrooms from Texas towns to New York City, many who switched to public relations as that field exploded. In the 1960s Robinson hired Houston Post staffers such as sportswriter Mickey Herskowitz and Texana columnist Leon Hale who made for entertaining as well as educational classes. In 1965 Templeton hired Roy Clark to direct a new School of Communications. Clark sought the advice of executive directors over such agencies as the Texas Daily Newspaper association and Southwest Photographers Association, inspiring Austin columnist Roland Lindsey to crow that Sam Houston's communications program would soon “be recognized as the leading school in the nation in this field.”

Of course, the state had birthed other colleges and universities as normal schools, and their commitment to the field of education remained a high priority. Some of those and others were also quick to recognize the career boom in media and technology, and they developed programs accordingly. On the other hand, no institution of higher learning could boast of a criminal justice laboratory quite like the Texas Department of Corrections, whose headquarters lay just up the street from Sam Houston State College. At a time when society was starting to place a premium on degreed men and women who could deal effectively with crime prevention and correction, it was a logical and perfect fit.

In 1963 State Representative David Crews, upon the urging of Vice President Lowry and TDC director George Beto, introduced a House Resolution—or, more accurately, a mandate—to explore the feasibility of developing a joint program. Action followed a positive report that resulted in the Institute of Contemporary Corrections and the Behavioral Sciences, which in 1965 began offering degree courses in criminal justice as well as continuing education, training programs, and technical assistance for any number of state and regional agencies. Almost overnight the opportunity for professors and students to conduct research on the problems of crime and the administration of justice achieved Templeton’s goal of creating a program that would achieve national eminence.

Within two years over a thousand students from one end of the country to the other were enrolled in graduate and undergraduate classes, inspiring a second House Resolution. This one commended the two state institutions for their stunning success, particularly the recognition it gained from the Southern Regional Education Board for “the best ‘model of university-agency programs in correctional rehabilitation in the nation.’” With a clause committing the legislature to “give adequate financial support required to develop the criminology program at Sam Houston State College,” the growth and success of the ICC&BS was assured.

To head the program, President Templeton and George Beto had hired Professor George Killinger from a similar position at Florida State. His added experience working with the U.S. Bureau of Prisons and past chairmanship of the United States Board of Parole marked him as one of the country’s leading academic criminologists. The Woods Building on Sam Houston Avenue, down the western slope from Evans, originally housed the Institute. Enrollment overtaxed the two-story facility as soon as its doors opened, necessitating the hasty addition of two extra floors. Don Weisenhorn, an Austin criminology official and frequent visitor remarked: “For reasons best known to the architects...it was not possible to go from the second floor to the third and fourth floors... without going outside and reentering the building.” Given the program’s success, the quirk made the Woods Building more a novelty than an object of derision, yet it also signaled the need for a new home worthy of the “national eminence” the Institute had achieved.

Killinger’s guiding philosophy of “bringing theory to practice” paid dividends not only in cultivating a new generation of trained professionals, but it also seeded the kinds of innovative ideas that fed skyrocketing enrollment. His interagency workshops, for example, brought to campus hundreds of peace officers and law enforcement officials for a series of two-week sessions each summer. The three college credits they received upon completing the courses encouraged many of them to become part-time students, a significant number who enrolled in off-campus locations that operated in virtually every major Texas city until other institutions of higher learning in those places initiated their own degree programs in criminal justice.

Housemothers in charge of supervising the dormitories during the summer workshops had not seen the likes of such students since the GI invasion following World War II. Almost
nightly the participants would return from visits across the county line to find every entrance locked. Waves of revelers beating on the doors caused the poor housemothers no end of consternation, until finally the administration worked out a tentative truce. According to Weisenhorn, “the styrene coolers that came in on the Sunday afternoon prior to the opening of the two-week workshop would henceforth be ignored despite the college policy of forbidding liquor on campus grounds.”

Within three years of its founding, the Institute initiated a graduate program at the masters level, developed a degree curriculum in military criminal justice, and began awarding credit for onsite training within the walls of the Texas prison system. While Killinger grew used to receiving accolades, an urgent summons to appear at the president’s office nevertheless caught him off guard. Walking into the chief executive’s suite, he found his wife and children standing beside a slyly smiling Templeton who “stated we were all going over to the Business auditorium for a visit.” There, Killinger found the entire faculty assembled to watch him accept the Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation Award for excellence in education. It could not have gone to a more worthy recipient. “This was one of the few times that I have ever been surprised,” Killinger reflected. Then, characteristically, he added: “The award gave further publicity to our program.”

Well beyond the wake of the Institute of Contemporary Corrections and the Behavioral Sciences, other programs navigated the swift academic currents stirred up by the deans’ council that met regularly to assess their progress. Most departments adjusted and grew to meet the expectations placed on them. Traditional curriculum in the vocational programs, for example, began dropping from the course catalog, replaced by new classes oriented toward research and the science of agricultural and domestic arts. Similarly, by the end of the decade “Home Economics” became a poor description for what was being taught. Child development and nutrition updated the traditional fare, and fashion design and merchandising were courses designed to emphasize the changing job market.

Then, there was ROTC. When freshmen and sophomore boys arrived for the fall semester of 1965, it would be the first time since 1952 that they would not face compulsory service. Templeton felt the tradition had given prospective undergraduates pause: “Many top students do not enter Sam Houston because of the required ROTC,” the president expressed. He punctuated his decision by declaring that “A&M can well supply the demands of students who wish to attend an all-military school.” When asked to comment, Colonel Raymond Kreager intoned: “I was not invited to the press conference. I have no statement to make.” The ROTC commander charted a prudent course, given the fact that the ultimate fate of the program was still to be determined. Certainly, all but the most dedicated trainees greeted the news with delight. Templeton, well aware of the students’ predominant sentiments, remarked: “There are no plans to hire extra policemen to cope with the dancing in the streets when the word gets around.”

The president, prematurely, also commented: “A complete change in international affairs since the program began in 1952 has changed the role of ROTC.” At that very time, however, the situation in Vietnam was beginning to conjure up bad memories of Korea. On other college and university campuses across the nation students would soon be hitting the pavement, but they would
Of Bearkats and Kinkajous

During the late Sixties, a general trend coordinating the antics of mascots with their teams’ cheerleaders made Sammy the Bearkat a permanent fixture at any function where school spirit presided. Since picking up his girlfriend, Samantha, in 1983, the pair has hovered at everything from Sam Houston State University sporting events to Huntsville’s Fair on the Square and the American Heart Association’s walkathon. It was in 1939, however, when Sammy took on the first of many incarnations, none that stuck until much later. He withstood challenges by backers of the raven and at times had to share the distinction as mascot with three live “bearkats” and Tripod the dog. Undergraduate Bill Bourdeaux, Jr., in 1941, created what was perhaps the most loveable Sammy. He envisioned a rakish creature outfitted in the latest fashions, and designed a kind of teddy bear head topped off with a cocked hat. A shadowy reemergence in 1948 was followed in 1952 by Richard Jones’s creation, featuring a cat’s head sitting atop a trench coat-wearing bear. Afterward eclipsed by the moody pooh Tripod, Sammy resurfaced only briefly in 1959 wearing a sweat suit and a paper-mache head. Even after a professionally constructed mascot made his debut in the Sixties, his image continued to change form.

Part of Sammy’s identity crisis lies in the nature of the animal on which it is based. Apparently, as originally envisioned in 1923, the bearkat was a fierce, snarling critter of Deep East Texas mythology—half-panther, half-bear, and all-beast. Then, someone discovered it was a critter of Deep East Texas mythology—half-panther, half-bear, and all-beast. Then, someone discovered it was a this South American cousin of the raccoon prefers napping in trees to terrorizing its prey. The first live kinkajou made its appearance in the early Fifties. Described as “a cross between a coon, an opossum, and a big rat,” some boys kept it in a cage and rolled it onto the Pritchett Field turf during home football games. It was not long until the unfortunate varmint was last spotted heading into the Big Thicket with some pranksters from Stephen F. Austin. After another kinkajou in 1970 died shortly after its arrival on campus, a third animal reigned for six years before the student senate mercifully voted to donate it to a San Antonio zoo. What the little feller lacked in ferocity, he made up for with a surly disposition. Veterinarian Gerald Etheredge, who took care of “Sammy” between handlers, grew quite fond of him, but nevertheless affirmed that he was “a biter.” “I even pulled his canine teeth to lessen the pain...but it didn’t do much good,” he remarked.

In more recent times the idealized Sammy Bearkat has taken on a more consistent look. Students in 1996 held a referendum that considered several drawings and voted for “a stronger, tougher, meaner looking Bearkat,” reported Paul Starrock in the Houstonian. At the same time it had to be something that would not frighten the children. James Pharaon, then the man in the suit, came up with the new concept himself—“more ‘kat’ than ‘bear’”. With the eyes, whiskers, and tail of a feline. While the mascot could not be described as menacing, it did have what Vice President for Student Affairs Thelma Douglass called “an attitude.” Ever upbeat and always flirtatious, the insouciant Sammy and his girlfriend Samantha have endeared themselves to students, alumni, and children alike. So, call ‘em part bear, if you like; call ‘em part cat if you will; but please don’t call ‘em a kinkajou!

1928

1941

1952

1979

Templeton
Grace Slick. Boys’ hair grew out, and girls’ hair grew up. From the world of low fashion came such apparel as platform shoes and tie-dyed T-shirts. There was also the occasional young man in a Nehru jacket and “granny glasses,” but more plentiful were young ladies in miniskirts and go-go boots.

Woe was the girl who wore jeans or other “inappropriate” attire downtown, however. It was Bermuda shorts weather one spring day in 1967 when a Frels housemother spied one of her boarders browsing the aisles of T.G.&Y. wearing the forbidden drawers. When their eyes locked, it became a foot race for the door. The housemother finally pinched the student to the counter before she could reach freedom. “I’m going to report you,” the woman shouted. With that, the offender complained, “puffing and snorting her way up the hill to tattle to Dean [of Women Velma] McDermitt.” It was one of the last desperate gasps of in loco parentis. By the end of the decade a steady drumbeat of complaints won the young women the privilege—and most of the responsibilities—of being treated like adults.

One phenomenon that distinguished the Sixties was that the optimism so long associated with youth seemed to be offset by a mood of cynicism and distrust. Scarcely was there an American college campus during the decade that did not manifest some proportion to its numbers. If the Vietnam War was any barometer of student sentiment, support for the police action was noticeably more prevalent than condemnation. After 1966 senior class president John Hulo shipped off to Vietnam as a Marine lieutenant, his outfi t’s mailbag overfl owed with letters postmarked Huntsville. Typical was a missive from Nancy New, an Alpha Delta Pi pledge, who exhorted: “Freedom is only as secure as the love a man feels for his country, so, I pray you are all hopelessly in love!!!”

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As the day of the Vietnam War Moratorium approached in 1969, calling on protesters everywhere to unite, the Houstonian reported “rumors of wild anti-war rallies and flag burnings.” What happened instead, was that “several hundred Sam Houston students [spent] the afternoon hurling Frisbees, socializing, or heckling.” As one group busied itself burning two black armbands, and the Lowman Rifles performed a drill, the Senate President of the student body sat on the slopes of Old Main, thoroughly confounded: “Just what does all this mean?” he asked. Nearby a carload of students with a loudspeaker drove past shouting “Bomb Hanoi! Where else, where else?”

In fact, when a group of students climbed into an oak tree with upside down, Sam Houston’s three-hundred or so pacifi sts laid low. Hanoi!” Where elsewhere, demonstrators turned their campuses upside down, Sam Houston’s three-hundred or so pacifi cs laid low. Incitement was indeed time for a “reappraisal” of the entire undergraduate program. Yet he could not resist contrasting the impractical ideals of youth with the pragmatic expectations that come from experience: “Many of these well-motivated people simply do not seem to know how much...they do not know.” Speaking more toward the gallery than the malcontents, he admonished his student critics to “find opportunities to work off their idealistic urges in constructive projects...instead of carping about the failures and inadequacies of the past.” The president then punctuated his remarks with a challenge: “Let them prove by doing.”

Within a year the HPC had spent its vitriol and died. Like the counterculture it echoed, the paper projected a voice out of proportion to its numbers. If the Vietnam War was any barometer of student sentiment, support for the police action was noticeably more prevalent than condemnation. After 1966 senior class president John Hulo shipped off to Vietnam as a Marine lieutenant, his outfi t’s mailbag overfl owed with letters postmarked Huntsville. Typical was a missive from Nancy New, an Alpha Delta Pi pledge, who exhorted: “Freedom is only as secure as the love a man feels for his country, so, I pray you are all hopelessly in love!!!”

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In fact, when a group of students climbed into an oak tree with the Stars and Stripes and recited the Pledge of Allegiance, those
who came to protest the war instead "responded with a standing ovation." There would be no flag burning in Huntsville that day.

If the war failed to turn students at Sam Houston into angry, placard-bearing protesters, just about everything else had indeed changed. The Sixties ended with an enrollment topping 10,000. Interstate Highway 45, which skirted Huntsville’s west side, provided a quick link to Houston and accelerated a demographic exchange that transformed both the town and its college. Every year entrepreneurs abandoned the metropolitan hub to start businesses in Huntsville, and increasingly, students commuted or went home on weekends to part-time jobs, families, and sweethearts. Many upperclassmen who resided in town rented apartments from one of the many complexes popping up on the landscape, away from the prying eyes of dormitory hall monitors.

Certainly, Dr. Templeton’s bold vision of transforming Sam Houston into a “multipurpose institution” had been realized in full. His job done, the president resigned in June of 1970 to accept the chief executive’s job at the newly created University of Texas at San Antonio. He left behind a faculty that had increased to 348 members, more than doubling the number who held forth in classrooms at the beginning of the decade. Those who had earned Sam Houston degrees, however, grew only by nine. The number of Ph.D.’s similarly ballooned—from 41 to 142. Moreover, the air of formality that reigned at invitation-only balls and wine and cheese receptions replaced the casual picnics and folksy get-togethers that had characterized the recent country college. By the end of the decade that institution no longer existed. On September 1, 1970, the state legislature made it official, proclaiming the re-designated Sam Houston State University. With the change of title, the “schools” of departments became “colleges,” and yet another era of development lay at the doorstep of a hopeful future.

Arliegh Brantley Templeton. In 1936 Arleigh Brantley Templeton, from the tiny Boswell community near New Waverly, received his degree from Sam Houston State Teachers College and took his first job as an educator at Willow Hole High School, just up the road in Madison County. It was the beginning of a career that would eventually lead him back to his alma mater. Like so many Americans, he faced the disruption of his life’s goals when World War II broke out. After serving in the Navy between 1942 and 1945, he entered the private sector, supervising trainees for the Pan-American Refining Corporation in Texas City. Templeton later credited his business experience with helping him better understand the needs of employees. In 1947 he resumed his career in education at El Campo, where he served as superintendent while completing his masters degree at the University of Houston. In 1954 he began a concurrent nine-year stint as president of Alvin Junior College and superintendent of the Alvin ISD. Although it took him eleven years, Templeton persisted in earning his doctorate, also from Houston. In 1963 Texas Governor John Connally appointed him executive director of his blue-ribbon Committee on Education Beyond High School. It was from this post that Templeton’s alma mater called him to duty.