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RISD Paper March 23, 1970

Students of RISD
Rhode Island School of Design

RISD Archives
Rhode Island School of Design, risdarchives@risd.edu

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WE DEMAND:

1. That the board of trustees and the administration be responsible for creating a scholarship fund of \$500,000.00 in addition to the current financial aid program, to be used for the following:

- a) to increase all scholarships at RISD in proportion to the increase in tuition over the past five years.
- b) to create full scholarships for young people from all parts of the country who, without financial aid, would not be able to attend RISD.

And that thirty of these scholarships be FULL SCHOLARSHIPS FOR YOUTH FROM RHODE ISLAND.

That these scholarships be guaranteed for four years.

That in so far as RISD is a school of art and design, creative ways be worked out to discover talent without using grades, class standing, SAT or IQ tests.

- c) to create scholarships for students currently attending RISD, who need scholarships and aren't getting any financial aid.

2. That there be a moratorium on increases in tuition and room and board fees for the next four years.

3. That a brochure advertising the availability of full scholarships at RISD be ready by May 1, 1970, for sending to high school and general distribution. That this brochure be subject to the approval of the undersigned students.

4. That these demands be put into effect for school year 1970-'71.

5. That a signed, written statement regarding the demands be available at the clearing house (Dean of students office) by 9:00 AM, April 15th, 1970.

Please read the following articles and consider supporting the demands by signing petitions, which will be circulated to the school and the community.

Suzanne Simon
Judi Lee
Starzetta L. Newsome
Nadine Fore
Stan Yaria
Gary Miller

Janna Longacre
Ann Souza
Abby Gould
Meg Liebttag
Jerry Meadows
Mary(Toots) Zynsky
Brian Murphy

Judy Grunbaum
Barbara Gilman
Chris Johansen
Carlos Maynard
Lawrence James Philp
Nora Crain
Gail Seavey

Bob Steiner
Linda Kearney
Warren Dreher
Richard James
Melissa Koch
Karen Lahn

CHART OF R.I.S.D. TRUSTEES

NAME	POSITION AT RISD	BACKGROUND	BUSINESS	ADDRESS	OTHER INTERESTS	NAME	POSITION AT RISD	BACKGROUND	BUSINESS	ADDRESS	OTHER INTERESTS
Bayard Ewing	Chairman of corporation Life trustee (1947) Executive committee	Born 1916 Yale grad 1938 Harvard law 1941	Partner -- Graham, Reid, Ewing and Stapleton (15 Westminster St)	1220 Ives Road Greenwich, R.I. 02818	Old Stone Bank (trustee) Title Guarantee Co. of R.I. (director) Boston and Providence Railroad (director) Providence Institute for Savings (director) Meehan Fund Inc. (director) Hillside Realty (Incorp., treas., attorney).	Jens Risom	Design Committee	Born 1916 University of Copenhagen	President and Director Jens Risom Design 444 Madison Ave. New York City 10022	Chichester Road New Canaan Conn. 06840	Risom Manufacturing Corporation (President and director) Jens Risom Design (California) Inc. (president and director)
Robert Leeson	Secretary of corp. Term Trustee (-'72) Executive committee	Born 1907 Harvard grad - 1929 Harvard School of Business Administration 1931	Chairman of Leeson Corporation	333 Strawberry Field Road Warwick, 02887	Brown and Sharpe Manufacturing Co. (director) Citizens Savings Bank (trustee) Business Development Co. of R.I. (director) United Fund of R.I. (dir., executive committee member) American Textile Machinery (director) Impact R.I. (trustee)	John J. Cummings (jr.)	Term trustee (-'70) Architecture Committee	Born 1923 St. Mary's University - 1944	President and director of Industrial National Bank of R.I.	40 Roslyn Ave. Providence	
Thomas Black	Life Trustee (1942)	Born 1898 Brown U. grad-1919 Harvard Law - 1922	1212 Industrial Bank Building	34 Irving 12906	Providence Mutual Fire Insurance Co. (director) Providence Journal Co. (director) Title Guarantee Co. of R.I. (director) Narragansett Electric Co. (director) Keystone Provident Inc. (director).	Norman M. Fain	Vice-Chairman of corporation Term trustee Executive Committee Ex-officio ('66)		President of Teknor-Apex Corporation 505 Central Ave. Pawtucket		R.I. Hospital Trust (director)
Harry B. Freeman	Life trustee (1953)	Born 1896 Yale grad - 1916	Chairman and director of R.I. Hospital Trust Co. (retired)	100 Alum Ave. 12906	Providence Gas Co. (director) Fields Point Manufacturing Co. (director) Providence Mutual Fire Insurance (director) Textron Inc. (member of executive committee and director) Providence Gravure Inc. (chairman)	Frederick Lippitt	Term trustee (-'72) Executive Committee Education Committee	Yale grad-1939 Yale Law - 1946	Edwards and Angell 1109 Hospital Trust Building	108 Prospect St. Providence	R.I. Hospital Trust (director) R.I. State Legislature (Representative) Brown University (trustee) R.I. Hospital (trustee)
Morris L. Levinson	Term trustee (-'71) Development Committee	Born 1914 University of Penna. - 1934 Yale Law - 1937	President and director of Associate Products Inc. 445 Park Ave. 1002 New York City	48 E. 65th St. New York City 10021	Rival Pet Foods (chairman) 5 Day Laboratories (director) Associated Products (England) Limited (president and director) Pabst Brewing Co. (director) Hygiene Manufacturing Co. (chairman) Heidenberg Textiles (director)	Russell W. Field (jr.)	Term trustee (-'70) Executive Committee Investment Committee		President of Brownell and Field 119 Harris Ave. Providence		Citizens Savings (trustee)
Erskine N. White (Jr.)	Budget and Planning Committee Term trustee (-'72)	Born 1924 Yale grad - 1947 MIT - 1949	Gorham (Division of Textron) 333 Adelaide Ave. Providence Vice President -- Textron 10 Dorrance St. Providence	216 Nayatt Road Barrington	Dixon Corporation (director) Congdon and Carpenter Co. (director) Keystone Provident Life Insurance Co. (director) R.I. Hospital Trust Co. (director) Taft-Pierce Manufacturing Co. (director)	Joseph H. Ross	Life trustee ('67) Development Committee Investment Committee			P.O. Box 6567 Providence	Citizens Trust Co. (director)
						Houghton Metcalf (jr.)	Term trustee (-'72) Executive Committee Museum Committee Development Committee Budget and Planning Committee		Assistant Vice President R.I. Hospital Trust Co.		
						Howard R. Lewis	Term trustee (-'72) Education Committee Development Committee Budget and Planning Committee Design Committee		Vice President Brier Manufacturing Co. 222 Richmond St. Providence, R.I.		
						Richard D. Godfrey	Term trustee (-'70) Education Committee Museum Committee Fine Arts Committee		Vice President Investments Industrial National Bank 111 Westminster St Providence, R.I.		
						John A. Horton	Term trustee (-'70) Museum Committee		Horton, Church, and Goff Inc. 800 Turks Head Building Providence, R.I.		
						John W. Wall	Term trustee (-'70) Library Committee		Senior Vice President R.I. Hospital Trust Co. 15 Westminster St. Providence, R.I.		
						Murray S. Danforth (jr.)	Treasurer of Corporation Life trustee ('52) Executive Committee (His mother is on				

I FEEL YOUR REASON
 PUSHING WITHIN, WITHOUT,
 UPON MY SPLITTING HEAD;
 STABBING DIRECT
 THROUGH THE FLINNY CASE
 OF YOUR MADE-UP LIBERALISM;
 KISSING APATHY IN PUBLIC LIGHT
 WITH GUILTLESS SHAME-
 WITH SHAMELESS GUID;
 HIDING YOUR FACE
 BEHIND A FADING MASK;
 OFF WHITE, BLIND SIGHT
 WITH TRUE COLORS SHOWING,
 YET THERE ARE THOSE,
 FEW, SINCERE, CONCERNED,
 WRAPPED IN THE ARMOUR OF COALITION,
 CARESSING, MENDING SICK MINDS-
 SURVIVING, REVIVING A DYING WORLD.

GEORGE LEADOVS

WE INVITE YOU: TO AN OPEN DISCUSSION ON THESE
 ISSUES IN THE REFECTORY ON TUESDAY EVENING MARCH 24
 AT 7:30, AND TO THE FILM "STRIKE AT SAN FRANCISCO STATE"
 TO BE SHOWN IN Mem Hall ON TUESDAY EVENING MARCH 31,
 AT 8:30

WHO RUNS R.I.S.D.

"Control of America's leading universities by members of the American business aristocracy is more direct than with any other institution which they control... Upper-class control of major universities is achieved through such financial support as family endowments (e.g. Duke, Stanford, Vanderbilt), personal gifts, foundation gifts, and corporate gifts, and through service on the boards of trustees. These mechanisms give the upper class control of the broad framework, the long-run goals, and the general atmosphere of the university."

From Who Rules America? by G. William Domhoff, p. 77.

This general statement concerning the control of major universities in the United States holds true for the Rhode Island School of Design as well. The School of Design was founded and maintained by funds supplied by a few wealthy families who have continued to exert their influence over the school through contributions and representation on the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees, in turn, is controlled by businessmen and corporation lawyers, most of whom are prominent members of the Rhode Island establishment.

Of the thirty-six (36) members of the corporation-- which is self-perpetuating (two more members are appointed by Brown University)-- twenty-one (21) are businessmen or corporation lawyers (other categories: educators-5; women of wealth and status-4; alumni-6). All five life trustees and nine of the eleven members of the Executive Committee, the center of power in the Board, are also

in this category. The State of Rhode Island's largest bus, its major industries, along with "public" utilities and and the Providence Journal are represented in RISD's Board of Trustees. These men, who control great wealth and power in the state, are the people whom the School of Design according to the following charge:

The Board of Trustees shall, except as may otherwise be required by law, have full control and direction of the property, business, organization and all other affairs of the corporation.

From the Rhode Island School of Design By-laws
 In short, these people have final say about everything that goes on at this school. The major role of the president of the college, along with other administrators, is to execute the policies and decisions of the trustees.

The chart on the next page illustrates the interests of some of the trustees:

These people, who volunteer their service and money to the school, also have certain interests at stake in RISD. For one, they are guardians of the institution's finances, their major preoccupation being the maintenance of the fiscal stability of the school. But they also feel responsible for the final product which RISD turns out, namely, well-trained graduates who will serve society's needs in the realms of art and design. These areas of interest obviously follow the pattern of profit-oriented United States corporations. The trustees, by definition, are concerned with the returns of the RISD corporation.

The nature of these vested interests of the trustees tends to determine their priorities along the lines of property

management and the reputation and status of the school. These goals may be achieved without expending large amounts of money for financial aid. Consequently, a new branch for the museum, for example, tends to be a more appealing project in their eyes than scholarships for poor and lower-middle class students. A building is an investment which lasts, while enough qualified students from the upper classes may be found to preserve RISD's cherished reputation. In thinking this way, however, they tend to ignore a fundamental need and a moral obligation of this and every other school of higher learning (see article on "Who Goes to RISD?").

An imbalance of power exists at RISD and most other colleges. Trustees hold encompassing policy-making powers while they are divorced from the actual life of the schools they serve. There is a dangerous schism between the interests and priorities of the trustees and the needs and priorities of those who want RISD to be open to all people from all ethnic and economic backgrounds. The trustees' interests and aloofness from the school create a situation in which visible, publicized demonstration is the only way to attract their attention. (Students who tried to talk to the Executive Committee in January were turned away with the statement that the Board of Trustees is only concerned with the broad policy of the school.) The trustees will only shift their priorities when other members of the RISD community voice their commitment to a fair admissions policy which gives all young people a chance to receive the kind of education this school has to offer.

R.I.S.D. AND PROVIDENCE

APR 20 1972

One of the problems of R.I.S.D. which has been the focus of much concern is the relation of the school to the immediate community of Providence, Rhode Island. Both Presidents Bush-Brown and Rantoul have stated this matter as one of their major areas of concern.

Students who walk beyond Benefit Street know that relations with the people of Providence are bad. The citizens of Rhode Island clearly feel alienated from the School of Design and people who are associated with it. Gordon Allen blames the "creeps" whose dress and mannerisms give R.I.S.D. a bad image. If that matter is an issue, it is not significant. The truth of the matter is that R.I.S.D. is clearly a school which draws its students from out-of-state and

upper class backgrounds. The museum, furthermore, is the hobby of the wealthy East Siders. Rhode Islanders are aware that the school does not welcome their children as students so it is natural for them to resent the students who go here. R.I. children sense this alienation when they are funnelled through the museum and are told not to touch or talk in normal voices. People from Fox Point, Federal Hill, Camp Street, the West Side and South Providence simply avoid the school and its museum as symbols of the wealthy establishment.

So the school has a great deal to overcome on this score. Toward the end of better community relations, a feature article was printed in the 1970 edition of the Rhode Island Yearbook ("The book that should be in every Rhode Island home.") This article included the fol-

lowing:

"This past summer, the School sponsored a special summer program for students from minority group backgrounds. It is the first program of its kind sponsored by a design school.

This Fall, the School, firmly believing that its special kind of education should be available for all qualified students, admitted about 20 students from minority group backgrounds. And the School has pledged itself to seek out more such students so that potential designers can be recruited regardless of their economic or social background."

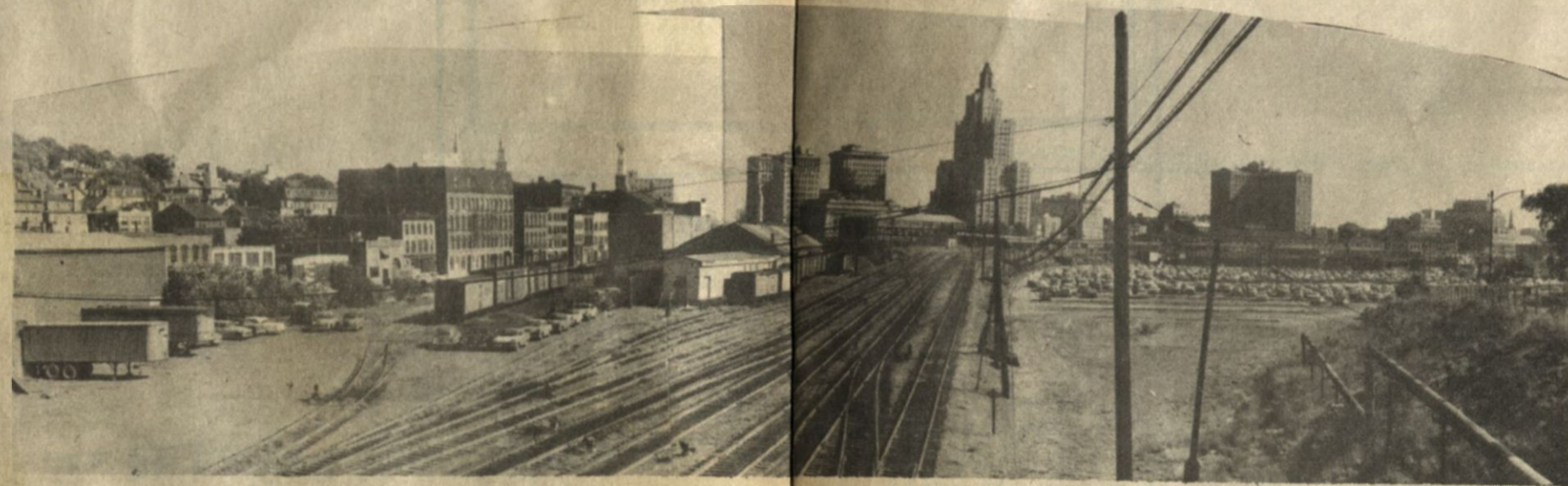
The trustees and administration

have failed to back this statement with action. The summer program will not be in operation next summer. Money for scholarships to minority students has been cut.

Lying to the people of Rhode Island is hardly the way to improve relations with them.

If this school means to stand behind its public statements to Rhode Islanders, it must take certain concrete steps:

1. Make funds available for 30 full scholarships to poor students from Rhode Island.
2. Publicize this offer and actively look for qualified recipients.



WHO GOES TO R.I.S.D.

"A comparison by family income shows that a high family income is associated with the likelihood of college attendance." This conclusion, stated in a recent study sponsored by the U.S. Department of Commerce, affirms that the higher the family income, the more likely one will be accepted in a college or university. The report gives the following statistics: "Among those graduates whose family income was \$15,000 or more, 87% went to college compared with 52% of those whose income was between \$6,000 and \$14,999, 36% of those whose family income was between \$3,000 and \$5,999, and 20% of those whose family income was under \$3,000." These statistics have particular significance in light of the fact that 40% of all families in the U.S. have incomes of less than \$6,000, while 80.5% of college students come from families with income greater than \$6,000 per year *from American Council of Higher Education study of freshman class of 1966.

This overall situation in the U.S. is obviously true of the Rhode Island School of Design as well. Over 95% of the RISD student body is composed of middle to upper class whites. We are often reminded that standards for admissions to RISD are very demanding and that each freshman class is a select group. The sad fact is that a crucial standard in this business is a person's ability to pay the school's high tuition. Selectivity becomes based on the wealth of a candidate. It is the school's inadequate financial program which is to blame for this corrupt situation, corrupt because admission to RISD must be bought rather than earned completely on merit.

The whole school suffers from this discriminatory policy, for it degrades the general quality of education by narrowing the range of experience to an upper class ethos. The majority of

students, in other words, do not come into contact with a wider or more varied environment than the one they come from. Also, many middle-class students whose parents cannot pay the full amount of tuition, room and board must struggle throughout their four years at RISD. They must find jobs aside from their school work; they cannot always buy the materials they need; and usually they leave RISD (not always at graduation) with a sizeable debt to worry about. Furthermore, scholarship aid has been inadequate and inconsistent. There has been a history at RISD of drastically cutting scholarships for apparently arbitrary reasons. So, while there is a tendency to single out a special group as "disadvantaged" these kinds of problems make everyone at RISD disadvantaged.

Last year an attempt was made to open RISD to students of other ethnic and economical backgrounds. The five black students who were enrolled here at the time drew up a list of demands concerning recruitment of black students and faculty, the institution of courses in black culture, and the improvement of the school environment. The school administration (Dean Lay was Acting President at the time) responded favorably to these demands, and a program was set up.

The school seemed well on its way to resolving a long overdue problem, but events since then expose a lack of commitment and good faith on the part of those who make the decisions around here (see article on "Who Runs RISD?"). For one, an attempt was made late last spring to cut back the promised number of "disadvantaged" acceptances from twenty to fifteen. This move was a sign of things to come - President Rantoul, has announced that funds for this program have been cut to money sufficient for only fourteen full scholarships,

though twenty students may finally be admitted with this money for fourteen. Another indication of the administration's attitude was the cut back last summer of other scholarships soon after the "disadvantaged" students were admitted. Those students who lost scholarship money associated the cutback with the recruitment of black students, and there is little doubt that this impression was precisely the intended effect of the administration. The administration seemed to be saying that, if black students come to RISD, then the middle class whites will suffer. Instead of aiming at the goal of representing a cross-section of the U.S. population in the student body, their policy insulated the upper-middle and upper class students while allowing middle class whites and poor blacks to fight over the inadequate financial aid. President Rantoul, while talking to a group of white students in his office, voiced this outlook in saying that it is "immoral" to admit more black students because the white students will suffer. Dean Randolph answering a questionnaire on financial aid, supports this attitude by saying that the school cannot get money for the disadvantaged without effecting other students because the money comes from the same pot.

RISD administrators, in using this argument, are simply following a ploy which has been applied throughout American history and which the Nixon-Agnew administration is relying on heavily: pit poor and middle class whites against blacks while retaining wealth in the control of the powerful and rich. The fear of middle class whites is still being used to limit the gains of the blacks and other oppressed peoples, at the same time when the U.S. has the resources to feed, heal and educate all

its people. Right now, the space program and the Vietnam War come before the needs of the American people. Carl Braden, a recent guest of RISD, puts it very succinctly:

"We all need to see that there can be enough in this society for everybody--and that there is no longer need for black and white people to fight each other for scraps from the table while a few people reap huge profits.

But bringing this about will require a complete change of priorities in our society. In other words, we have to build a system where people come first."

The Rhode Island School of Design may not have sufficient funds to finance all desirable programs, but it certainly is in a position to set its priorities straight. The school is in a position to place people first and to commit itself to a truly equitable policy of recruitment and admission. Arguments which claim that buildings, objects, public relations and the interests of the trustees come first.

If the trustees and administrators of RISD deny the implications of this article, then they can take the following action: make a public statement upholding the long range goal of bringing people of all ethnic and economic backgrounds to RISD according to their proportion in society and, further, make the financial commitment necessary to back such a statement. This very feasible move will benefit the whole school.

Since there are only a few colleges like RISD in the country, it has a greater obligation to work toward a proper representation of all peoples in its student body. It would be the worst sort of hypocrisy for this school to be saying (as it does in so many ways now) that education in art and design is the possession and talent of the upper classes.