

IV. INTERNATIONALIZING AND DIVERSIFYING - 1975 TO 2004

The mid-1970s were an exceptionally upbeat period for the Political Science Department at Colorado College. In terms of numbers of students majoring in Political Science that were graduated, the Department ranked as one of the largest at the College. The Department's two senior members, Douglas Mertz and Fred Sondermann, were well-established as teaching and administrative leaders at Colorado College. The next senior person, Glenn Brooks, had overseen the development of the Block Plan, which was proving very workable and highly popular with the students. Three of the younger members of the Department - Robert Loevy, David Finley, and Timothy Fuller - had gained tenure and had made good starts on promising academic careers. Robert Lee was providing a Third World perspective to the Department's course offerings by teaching about the Middle East. Rodolfo de la Garza was adding sensitivity on minority issues to both the classroom and the Dean's office.

The majority of Department members were married and raising families. "Department children" ranged from Douglas Mertz's grown son and daughter, through a veritable army of school and college age offspring at the Sonderman and Brooks and Finley households, to the pre-schoolers at the Loevy and Fuller homes. The Department was famous for its collegiality and congeniality, and this was true

despite the fact the Department members belonged to both the Democratic and Republican political parties and represented a wide range of viewpoints on the liberal-conservative scale.

If there was a problem with the Political Science Department in the mid-1970s, it was the similarity of its members. All eight were males with middle class backgrounds who had trained at first-rank colleges and universities. Except for David Finley (Stanford Ph.D.) and Rodolfo de la Garza (University of Arizona Ph.D.), the entire Department had earned higher degrees at prestige East Coast universities. Three of the eight Department members had received their Ph.D. from just one well-known university - Johns Hopkins.

Some variety was provided by Fred Sondermann, who was Jewish and as a child had immigrated to the United States from Germany, and Rodolfo de la Garza, who was Hispanic and spoke strongly in behalf of rights and fair treatment for Mexican-Americans. Even these two professors, however, were regarded as mainstream in their politics and educational attitudes. Students looking for anti-establishment viewpoints and revolutionary attitudes were not likely to hear them strongly advocated in the mid-1970s Political Science Department at Colorado College.

It should be kept in mind, though, that in its apparent uniformity, the

Department resembled most other Political Science departments in the United States at that time.

There was one unexpected benefit of three members of the Political Science Department being named Dean of the College and serving collectively for twenty years. Their tenure-track positions in the Department immediately needed to be filled with younger teachers and scholars who were just finishing graduate school or had newly-minted Ph.D. degrees. This provided an opportunity for the Department to broaden both its subject-matter offerings and the characteristics of its faculty by hiring new people.

* * *

The first tenure-track faculty member who needed to be replaced was Douglas Mertz, who had become the College's first full-time legal adviser. Instead of hiring a younger person fresh out of graduate school, however, the Political Science Department took advantage of a unique opportunity. **Thomas E. Cronin**, a well-known scholar of the American presidency, had come to Colorado College in 1976 to give a major address at a mini-Symposium, directed by Fred Sonderrmann, on the presidential election being held that year.

Speaking in Tutt Library, Cronin took a position for which he had become famous. He argued that the people of the United States have too high expectations

for their presidents, demanding that the occupant of the White House be personally attractive as well as skilled at solving all of the nation's social, economic, and foreign policy problems. The result of such high expectations, Cronin concluded, was disillusionment of the people when the President, as often happens, is all too human and not able to solve every conceivable national problem.

Thomas Cronin was subsequently invited to do some replacement teaching at Colorado College. For a few years, he served as Visiting Research Professor of Political Science. Then he joined the Political Science Department in a tenured position to succeed Douglas Mertz in the American Politics field.

There was a considerable change in specialization in the shift from Mertz to Cronin. Douglas Mertz had mainly taught Constitutional Development, whereas Cronin was focused on American Politics with particular emphasis on the White House and its main occupant. Douglas Mertz, however, often articulated the hiring philosophy that justified such a major shift. "We hire the *athlete*," Mertz liked to say, "and we don't worry too much about the particular *sport*." By that Douglas Mertz meant that the College was mainly interested in hiring good teachers and not in filling particular subject-matter slots in specialized fields.

Thomas Cronin came to Colorado College as an established scholar with a national reputation. He earned his Ph.D. at Stanford. He served as a White House

Fellow during the presidential administration of Lyndon Johnson in the 1960s. At the time he joined the Political Science Department at Colorado College, he had already published such major works as *The Presidential Advisory System* (1969), *The Presidency Reappraised* (1974, 1977), and *The State OfThe Presidency* (1975, 1980). Cronin was best known, however, for being the co-author, along with James MacGregor Burns and J. W. Peltason, of a famous textbook in American Government entitled *Government By The People*.

While at Colorado College, Thomas Cronin became the first occupant of the McHugh Family Distinguished Chair In American Institutions And Leadership. It was widely believed among the Political Science Department faculty that this named chair had been created specifically to keep Professor Cronin at Colorado College and give him additional time and money for research and writing.

Cronin's major publication while at the College was *Direct Democracy: The Politics Of Initiative, Referendum, and Recall* (1989). He also co-authored *Colorado Politics And Government* (1993) with Department colleague Robert Loevy. Professors Cronin and Loevy also published a number of articles on a plan they concocted to reform the presidential primaries by holding the National Conventions before the primaries rather than after them.¹

¹ Thomas E. Cronin and Robert D. Loevy, "Putting The Party As Well As The People Back In President Picking," in Kenneth W. Thompson, Editor, *The Presidential Nominating*

An activist Democrat, Thomas Cronin liked to arrange debates with Professor Loevy, who was an outspoken Republican. They worked to espouse partisan positions in more intellectual and scholarly terms. The two scheduled their debates to correspond with major political events, such as the President's State Of The Union address or the reporting of New Hampshire presidential primary results. Often the two professors would watch the State Of The Union or the New Hampshire primary on television with their students before holding their debate.²

In 1982, Thomas Cronin ran as the Democratic candidate for the United States House of Representatives from Colorado's Fifth Congressional District, the seat that included Colorado Springs and Colorado College. Professor Cronin took on a really tough challenge, because District Five was one of the most Republican U.S. House districts in the nation. A veritable army of Colorado College students went to work in Cronin's campaign by taking the One-Block internship course *Political Campaigning*. Although he piled up more votes than any Democrat had ever received in the Fifth Congressional District, Thomas Cronin lost the election to Republican incumbent Ken Kramer.

Process (Lanham, MD: University Press Of America, 1983), Volume I, pp. 49-64.

² Loevy, pp. 399-400.

In the fall of 1991, Colorado College President Gresham Riley took a one-semester sabbatical to London, England. During his absence, Thomas Cronin was named the Acting President of the College. In that role, he strove to build consensus and harmony. He became famous for walking about the campus, visiting with students and faculty and getting to know the inner-workings, and inner-feelings, of the institution.

When Gresham Riley resigned the Colorado College presidency in the spring of 1992, Thomas Cronin was considered by many observers to be a highly qualified candidate to be Riley's successor as President. The tides of College presidential politics were running in a different direction, however, and Riley was succeeded by Kathryn Mohrman, the undergraduate Dean at the University of Maryland.

Cronin's service as Acting President of Colorado College was a harbinger of the future. In the spring of 1993, Cronin was selected to be the new President of Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, a small liberal arts college (1,200 students) much like Colorado College. Upon his departure, Thomas Cronin said the thought of teaching his last class at the College was "saddening."³

The Political Science Department sought to replace Cronin with an

³ For a full description of Thomas Cronin's acting presidency, see Loevy, pp. 413-414.

established mid-career Political Scientist rather than a younger scholar fresh out of graduate school. Following a national search, Lief Carter was selected to assume the McHugh Family Distinguished Chair In American Institutions And Leadership. Formerly on the faculty at the University of Georgia, Professor Carter earned both a B.A. and a law degree at Harvard University. He gained his Ph.D. at the University of California at Berkeley in 1972. The year following receipt of his law degree from Harvard, he served in the Peace Corps in Bolivia.

The hiring of Lief Carter shifted the specialization of this particular tenure-track position away from the Presidency and back to the Constitutional Development that Douglas Mertz had taught. In addition to teaching a course in *The Politics Of The Legal Process*, Professor Carter taught *Leadership In Theory And Practice*.

Lief Carter took an active role in the academic life of both the Political Science Department and the College. He helped to organize a student discussion lunch, called "Pizza And Politics," which was held once per block and encouraged Political Science majors and other interested students to discuss current political issues. He staged a College-wide symposium, entitled "9/11, One Year Later," in September of 2002. The symposium attracted considerable attention because pro-Palestinian views were presented along with a wide variety of other viewpoints.

Professor Carter served on the College committee which created and supervised the First Year Experience academic program for entering students.

* * *

The death of Fred Sondermann in 1978 created a vacancy in International Relations. The post was initially filled by **William Stivers**, who did his graduate work in Political Science at Johns Hopkins. After just a few years at Colorado College, William Stivers returned to Johns Hopkins to direct an overseas study center in Europe.

To succeed William Stivers, the Political Science Department chose a recent graduate of Colorado College. **David Hendrickson**, class of 1976, had been a History major as an undergraduate, but he earned his Ph.D. in Political Science at Johns Hopkins University. Hendrickson studied under Robert Tucker, a leading International Relations scholar at Hopkins. Tucker and Hendrickson wrote and published a number of books together, including *Empire of Liberty: The Statecraft Of Thomas Jefferson* (1990) and *The Imperial Temptation: The New World Order and America's Purpose* (1992).

David Hendrickson was something new in the Political Science Department - a younger scholar actively pursuing a publishing as well as a teaching career. In 2003, Professor Hendrickson published *Peace Pact: The Lost World of the*

American Founding.

On the lighter side, David Hendrickson once dressed up in period costume as John Adams, the first Vice President and second President of the United States. Hendrickson was debating Clay Jenkinson, a renowned historian who was costumed as Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence and the third President of the United States. All agreed that, in his 18th Century garb, Professor Hendrickson made a perfect John Adams.

* * *

To replace Glenn Brooks, who became Dean of the College in 1979, the Political Science Department hired **Andrew Dunham**. He was a 1969 graduate of Haverford College near Philadelphia and garnered his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago in 1981. His sub-field was Public Administration with a special interest in health care in the United States. His doctoral dissertation, *Health And Politics*, won the William Anderson Award in 1982 from the American Political Science Association for the best dissertation that year in intergovernmental relations.

Professor Dunham was a Congressional Fellow of the American Political Science Association in 1983-1984. He served as the Legislative Assistant to U.S. Senator Max Baucus of Montana and as Health Advisor to U.S. Senator Gary Hart of Colorado.

Andrew Dunham provided some variety to the Department where partisan politics was concerned. His views were well to the left of most other members of the Department. Dunham was immediately pressed into service as a spokesperson for the Democratic Party at campus debates and political forums, although he often confided that his own views were somewhat more liberal than the Democratic “party line.”

Professor Dunham joined Professor Loevy in teaching the *Political Campaigning* and *Governmental Participation* internship courses.

* * *

The Political Science Department did not move quickly to fill the vacancy in Comparative Government when David Finley became Dean of Colorado College in 1987. For a number of years, a series of visiting professors were recruited to teach courses on Europe, Russia, and mainland China.

In 1996, the Department took advantage of the College’s Minority Scholar In Residence Program to recruit a more permanent replacement for David Finley. That innovative program was aimed at African-American and Hispanic graduate students who had completed their course work for the Ph.D. but had not yet written the doctoral dissertation. These students were invited to come to Colorado College and teach only one or two Blocks over the academic year while finishing the

doctoral dissertation.

An African-American woman, **Vera Leigh Fennell**, joined the Political Department as a Minority Scholar In Residence. She subsequently accepted the tenure-track position in Comparative Government originally filled by David Finley. Once again the Department pursued its traditional philosophy of hiring the “athlete” rather than filling a specific subject-matter slot. Professor Fennell was an expert on women workers in mainland China whereas Finley had specialized more on Russia and Eastern Europe.

Vera Fennell did “service to the Department” by teaching a course on *Minority Politics*, a subject outside her field but one which the Department wanted in the curriculum.

Professor Fennell was born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland. She received her B.A. from Princeton University in 1980. From 1988 to 1989, she was the Legislative Assistant for Women’s Issues in the Washington, D.C., office of U.S. Representative Charles B. Rangel of New York. While beginning her professional career at Colorado College, she completed the work for her Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 2000. Vera Fennell frequently traveled to mainland China to study and conduct research on Chinese politics and government.

* * *

When Timothy Fuller was named Dean of the College in 1992, a tenure-track position had to be filled in Political Theory. The nod went to **Eve Grace**, who was born in Paris, France, but at age five moved to the Yukon in Canada. She received her B.A. degree from Harvard University in 1987 and her Ph.D. from the University of Toronto in 1996. Her particular scholarly interest was in the theories and writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau. One of her more innovative courses was *Philosophy And Politics In Post-Modernity*.