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R. Douglas Brackenridge, J. Charlene Davis

Southwestern Historical Quarterly, Volume 127, Number 4, April 2024, pp. 423-448 (Article)

Published by Texas State Historical Association
DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/swh.2024.a928845

Widely used photograph in 1950s and 1960's promoting Trinity's new campus in San Antonio. *Courtesy Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas.*

Marketing Higher Education in Texas: Trinity University as a Case Study

R. Douglas Brackenridge and J. Charlene Davis*

Texas colleges and universities have competed by promoting themselves in different geographical, cultural, economic, pedagogical, and technological contexts over the past 150 years. Focusing on such efforts by Trinity University and placing them in the wider contexts of peer institutions and national marketing trends provides a great case study. Having had four campuses in three different locations, from a village (Tehuacana,1869–1902) to a county seat (Waxahachie, 1902–1942) and then a large city (San Antonio 1942–present), Trinity provides striking examples of how Texas educational institutions sought to maintain institutional integrity while responding to changing external pressures and priorities.[1]

Recent articles suggest the marketing of universities is a relatively new phenomenon, especially in terms of intention and use of consumer marketing tactics to provide messages about the product.[2] But is this a twenty-first century phenomenon? Research presented here indicates that long before terms such as branding, students as customers, marketing, target audiences, competitive advantage, and positioning became commonplace, educational institutions have been engaged in 'selling their product' in a competitive environment. This study provides a unique perspective on the practice of marketing higher education in Texas. Despite the state's size, isolation, and strong sense of independence,

*R. Douglas Brackenridge, Professor Emeritus at Trinity University in San Antonio, was a member of the Department of Religion for thirty-eight years before retiring in 2002. He is a doctoral graduate of the University of Glasgow in Scotland in the field of ecclesiastical history. His publications focus on the history of religion in the United States, with a special interest in Texas and the Southwest. J. Charlene Davis earned her doctorate at the University of Kentucky and is the Chair of the Department of Business Administration and a Professor of Marketing at Trinity University. Her research interests include consumer motivations for involvement in the arts and philanthropic organizations, service quality, service failure and recovery, branding, and pedagogy.

[1] For the history of Trinity University see, R. Douglas Brackenridge, *Trinity University: A Tale of Three Cities (*San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 2004).

[2] Paul Clark, Chris Chapleo, and Kati Suomi, "Branding Higher Education: An Exploration of the Role of Internal Branding on Middle Management in a University Rebrand," *Tertiary Education and Management* 26 (Nov. 2019): 131–149.

Texas institutions of higher learning are no different than those of other states. All faced similar pressures of enrollment, fundraising, and relevancy. Analyzing primary source materials, this research exams the phenomenon across time and across disciplines with the dual perspectives of history and marketing being brought to bear. Such an interdisciplinary approach may be unique, and it has certainly proved useful.

Frequently, writers express concern and dismay that the application of marketing terminology to higher education reduces it to a market commodity that may not align with the ideals and purpose of an academy. What is marketing and what might make it objectionable to those involved in higher education? Marketing involves a variety of activities designed to make products appeal to consumers by providing unique features, advertising messages, availability, and a price point that supports the organization while satisfying marketplace wants and needs.[3] Given that these elements are deeply entrenched in communicating effectively, perhaps some of the objections to the use of marketing tactics is also based in whether all marketing is good and whether certain sensibilities regarding the nature of the university warrant special handling.

Nineteenth-century college and university presidents were reluctant to advertise the merits of their institutions, deeming such publicity to be an inappropriate way to communicate their lofty educational ideals and goals. Some feared that advertising generated unfavorable associations with companies that exaggerated or misrepresented the efficacy of their products. Others thought it attracted ill-prepared students to occupy seats in the weakest courses with small enrollments. One president summed up his misgivings by saying, "Advertising, so far as the student is concerned, has been almost wholly bad." Another solemnly intoned, "true scholarship is modest and avoids publicity."[4]

Some far-sighted college administrators recognized the need to inform the public of the values, goals, and needs of higher education. Most notable was Charles Eliot, president-elect of Harvard University. In his inaugural address on October 19, 1869, Eliot urged fellow university presidents to "seize opportunities to get money, to secure eminent teachers and scholars, and to influence public opinion toward the advancement of learning." He added, "The University must accommodate itself promptly to significant changes in the character of the people for whom it exists."[5] Adopting similar views, educator Alexander J. Baird used blunt language in 1876 to challenge denominational educational institutions to mimic the tactics of secular businesses to call attention to their products. He proclaimed, "Let our educators do like our merchants and businessmen—go to work and drum for students. Let the world know what you are doing, what it is

[3] "American Marketing Association's Definition of Marketing," https://www.ama.org/ the-definition-of-marketing-what-is-marketing/ [Accessed April 2, 2022]. For a more nuanced definition, see "Kotler Marketing Group.com," https://www.ama.org/the-definition-of-marketing-what-is-marketing/ [Accessed April 2, 2022].

[4] Scott M. Cutlip, "Advertising Higher Education: The Early Years of College Public Relations, Part One," *College and University Journal* 9 (Dec. 1970): 23, and Scott M. Cutlip, "Advertising Higher Education: The Early Years of College Public Relations, Part Two," *College and University Journal* 10 (Jan. 1971): 32.

[5] Charles W. Eliot, *Educational Reform: Essays and Addresses (*New York: The Century Company, 1901), 12–13.

worth, what it will cost, all about it… Are we too modest, too dignified? God save the church from such modesty and dignity. You may not like my word, *drum*. No matter."[6]

Historians of higher education cite the 1870s as the starting point for radical changes in colleges and universities throughout the United States. Change occurred more slowly in southern institutions due to devastating economic, political, and social conditions, but they were aware that survival depended on their ability to adjust to the realities of new commercial and industrial environments. By the end of the century and into the next, educational institutions in all regions were expanding their classical-oriented curriculums to accommodate unprecedented demands for training in a range of technical and professional occupations. Business historian Scott M. Cutlip, who specialized in the field of higher education, viewed this time frame as the "seedbed years of higher education's evolving participation in marketing strategies."[7]

Before the Civil War, Texas had more than 200 small schools vying for a limited number of potential students, only a handful of whom survived through the nineteenth century. Founded before the rapid rise of railroads, they failed to foresee the sweeping changes that would occur in the locations of towns. In 1859, for example, the town of Marshall, with a population of 1,411, had a university and six other schools. La Grange had five schools, and Galveston ten, including a medical college. Despite their pretentious titles, most offered primary and preparatory classes, especially after 1856 when Texas legislators permitted private schools to receive state funds for their pupils. With one or two teachers and inadequate facilities, few of these schools offered any college-level classes.[8]

Cognizant of these problems, after the Civil War Texas schools employed strategies to avoid the fates of predecessor institutions. Foremost was the reality that continued proliferation of schools exacerbated competition for limited resources and retarded possibilities of success. As counter measures, they closed, merged, and moved schools to reduce competition and heighten chances of prosperity. Rather than revive three failed institutions, Cumberland Presbyterians in Tehuacana, in Liberty County, established Trinity University in 1869 and sought unified support from regional synods, congregations, and pastors. Methodist Conferences voted to merge four struggling colleges and concentrate their education efforts at Georgetown in Williamson County, which became known in 1875 as Southwestern University. Baylor University, established in 1845 at Independence in Washington County, moved to Waco, in McLennan County, where it consolidated with Waco University under the control of the Baptist General Council of Texas.[9]

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[6] A. J. Baird, "Our Schools," *Cumberland Presbyterian*, June 29, 1876, p. 4.

[7] Christopher J. Lucas, *American Higher Education* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 139–146; Cutlip, "Advertising Higher Education, Part Two," 32.

[8] Frederick Eby, *The Development of Education in Texas* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1925), 126, 155.

[9] Brackenridge, *Trinity University*, 12–19; Cecil E. Evans, *The Story of Texas Schools* (Austin: Steck Company, 1955), 311–312, 325–327. For a complete list of schools, see pp. 308–373.

Texas schools in this era publicized their availability through personal contacts and print advertising. Pastors carried significant influence in helping families make educational decisions and were deemed to be important recruiting tools. At Trinity, presidents and faculty members were expected to speak in churches and other venues during recesses to recruit students and collect unpaid pledges. The primary communicators, however, were salaried financial agents, usually clergy, who traveled throughout the state to promote the educational attributes of their respective institutions, raise money, and recruit students. Southwestern University praised its "most efficient" financial agent, Rev. W. M. Hayes, and commended "him and his cause most heartily to the friends of Christian education."[10]

Annual catalogues were the foundational documents employed to present their respective institutions in a favorable light. Schools mailed catalogues to churches, clergy, potential donors, newspaper editors, and anyone who expressed interest. These publications usually contained a brief institutional history, a list of faculty and trustees, tuition and boarding expenses, description of course offerings and facilities, rules and regulations of student life, and names and hometowns of students. By the end of the century, they included photographs of buildings, laboratories, faculty, and student groups to attract potential enrollees.[11]

Trinity's financial agents broadened their outreach by submitting upbeat articles to denominational newspapers describing their activities and asking for funds.[12] Recognizing that most church members lacked cash, Trinity financial agent J. H. Wofford wrote a series of articles requesting donations of grain and livestock. "There are a great many who could give from one to five hundred head of cattle to this enterprise," he said, "and hardly know that virtue had gone from them."[13] Another Trinity agent, E. B. Crisman, related how four young women raised a small amount of money for the endowment by picking cotton. Lauding their efforts, Crisman commented, "Imagine, will you, the hand of beauty pulling the locks of cotton from the boll, and every now and then that hand is pricked by the burr of the boll. But with an indomitable will they persevered to the end, and paid the sum promised."[14]

In addition to catalogues and religious publications, Texas schools submitted articles and paid for advertisements in local and regional papers. Trinity relied heavily on *The Cumberland Presbyterian Magazine* to reach its constituents, and

[10] E. B. Crisman, "To Preachers in Texas," *Cumberland Presbyterian*, Oct. 12, 1876, p. 1; *Austin-American Statesman*, Dec. 29, 1895, p. 9.

[11] For examples, see *Trinity University Catalogues*, 1869–1900, Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, TX [henceforth TU Archives]. They are also accessible online as *Trinity University Course of Study Bulletins* at https://trinity.starter1ua.preservica.com/ [Accessed Dec. 30, 2022]. The designation of *Catalogue* is to avoid confusion with other publications from the same time period with the title of *Bulletin*.

[12] Brackenridge, *Trinity University*, 25; E. B. Crisman, "Finances of Trinity University," *Cumberland Presbyterian*, Apr. 8, 1886, p. 5.

[13] J. H. Wofford, "Trinity University," *Banner of Peace*, Apr. 12, 1870: p. 2 [microfilm at Trinity University Archives].

[14] E. B. Crisman, "Trinity University," *Cumberland Presbyterian*, Nov. 11, 1880, p. 2.

other denominations did the same with their respective newspapers. But they also frequently advertised in the *Austin-American Statesman, Houston Post, Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Galveston Daily News,* and *Dallas News,* along with smaller presses who reprinted articles for their readers. Some newspapers devoted a full page in their Sunday editions to "Our Texas Schools," featuring articles submitted by institutional representatives detailing school activities and academic accomplishments.[15] Assuming students had little (if any) choice in selecting a college, the intended audiences were primarily parents, guardians, and clergymen. Unstated, in a segregated society, such articles targeted only white families.[16]

Advertisements during this era had commonly recurring selling points. Prominent was extolling the advantages of geographical locations. Trinity's first *Catalogue* assured readers that "no more desirable location could have been selected than Tehuacana. It is proverbial for its healthfulness, supplied with an abundance of living water, surrounded with a beautifully romantic scenery. The town is free from temptations of vice."[17] Pres. B. D. Cockrill of Trinity boasted, "The moral atmosphere at Tehuacana, Texas is excellent. The faculty is able. Students are required to study—can find nothing else in Tehuacana to do but study, since the place is void of all the disadvantages of cities."[18]

Trinity, of course, was not the only school to extol the virtues of isolation. Similarly, Southwestern University described Georgetown as located on "the high plateau of the Colorado mountains, overlooking most beautiful rolling prairie on the east and south and fringed on the north and west by growth of ash, cedar and pecan, bordering the banks of the San Gabriel River."[19] The article portrayed the community as a "literary center and has the social advantages that are thrown open to the students that are ennobling and pure…Students who attend here are not subjected to the temptations of the open saloon and its accompanying evils, but the atmosphere is moral and uplifting."[20]

Texas schools downplayed denominational ties by referring to their institutions as Christian rather than sectarian. While founded by Cumberland Presbyterians, Trinity assured readers "it is not sectarian in character. It is kept constantly in mind that a high religious culture is essential to prepare the young man and young woman for usefulness." Pres. Rufus W. Bailey of Austin College stressed that "institutions such as Austin College don't teach sectarian doctrines, but all institutions strive to teach religion in the sense of making religion the basis of its education and in that sense only." Texas Christian University (TCU) informed readers that while it was under the supervisory control of the Christian Churches

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[15] For example, *Galveston Daily News,* Mar. 25,1895, p. 3.

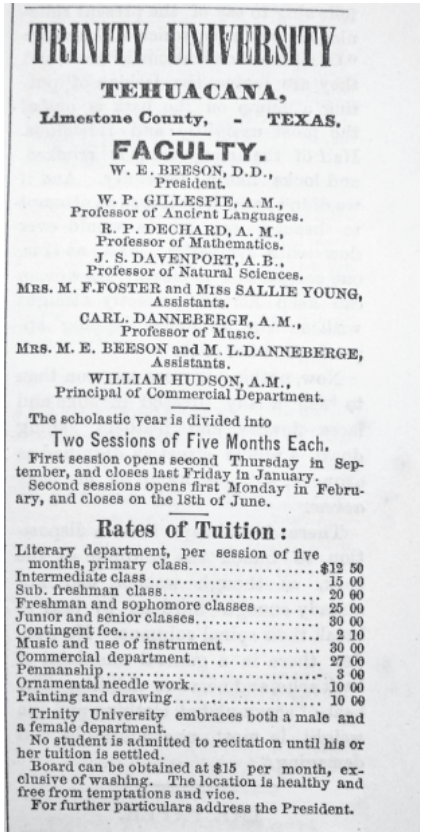
[16] Brackenridge, *Trinity University*, 188–190.

[17] *Trinity University Catalogue, 1869–1870,* p. 23.

[18] "The Synod of Texas," *Cumberland Presbyterian*, Sept. 25, 1890, p. 1.

[19] *Austin Weekly Statesman,* Apr. 18, 1889, p. 10.

[20] *Austin American-Statesman*, Aug. 13, 1899, p. 11.



TRINITY UNIVERSITY

TEHUACANA,

Limestone County, - TEXAS.

FACULTY.

W. E. BEESON, D.D.,
President.

W. P. GILLESPIE, A.M.,
Professor of Ancient Languages.

R. P. DECHARD, A. M.,
Professor of Mathematics.

J. S. DAVENPORT, A.B.,
Professor of Natural Sciences.

MRS. M. F. FOSTER and MISS SALLIE YOUNG,
Assistants.

CARL. DANNEBERGH, A.M.,
Professor of Music.

MRS. M. E. BEESON and M. L. DANNEBERGE,
Assistants.

WILLIAM HUDSON, A.M.,
Principal of Commercial Department.

The scholastic year is divided into

Two Sessions of Five Months Each.

First session opens second Thursday in September, and closes last Friday in January.
Second sessions opens first Monday in February, and closes on the 18th of June.

Rates of Tuition:

Literary department, per session of five months, primary class	$12 50
Intermediate class	15 00
Sub. freshman class	20 00
Freshman and sophomore classes	25 00
Junior and senior classes	30 00
Contingent fee	2 10
Music and use of instrument	30 00
Commercial department	27 00
Penmanship	3 00
Ornamental needle work	10 00
Painting and drawing	10 00

Trinity University embraces both a male and a female department.

No student is admitted to recitation until his or her tuition is settled.

Board can be obtained at $15 per month, exclusive of washing. The location is healthy and free from temptations and vice.

For further particulars address the President.

Information for parents in Cumberland Presbyterian Magazine, 1876. *Courtesy Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas.*

Trinity University Building, John Boyd Home, Tehuacana, Texas, 1869–1871. *Courtesy Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas.*

of Texas, "the spirit is by no means sectarian. Christian character is demanded but sectarian is a discount."[21]

Personal attention to students was another prominent theme. Trinity frequently compared the benefits of small colleges in contrast to large public universities, where students often were just names and numbers. The 1916 catalog boasted that "Trinity offers the great advantage of close personal touch with mature Christian men and women who are their teachers." Seven years later, the public message remained clear: "The management is deeply interested in each student personally and individually and is sincerely desirous of rendering every assistance in maintaining a high standard of scholarship and conduct." Southwestern University informed parents that students "can come to know individually the faculty and other members of student groups."[22]

Institutions gave high praise to faculties for their intellectual and pedagogical talents and their ability to produce students with stellar academic records and high moral standards. Trinity ranked its facilities "and the scholarship and experience of its faculty high among the best institutions in the South." Southwestern proclaimed its standing as "second to no institution of Higher Learning in the South or West. Splendidly equipped with every modern educational aid." Add-Ran College, the predecessor of TCU, "invited a critical comparison with the best schools in the country."[23]

Coeducation gradually became an important element in advertising and marketing. Prior to the Civil War, Texas had no co-educational colleges or universities, but after 1865 the practice became more common as attitudes on the role of women in society began to change. Progressive educators contended that the formation of intelligent relationships between the sexes prepared them for later life and guaranteed all persons, regardless of sex, their democratic right to be taught all branches of knowledge. Financial considerations played a prominent role as well. Four-year college administrators recognized that the proliferation of women's colleges removed many students from their recruiting efforts and limited interests of potential benefactors.[24]

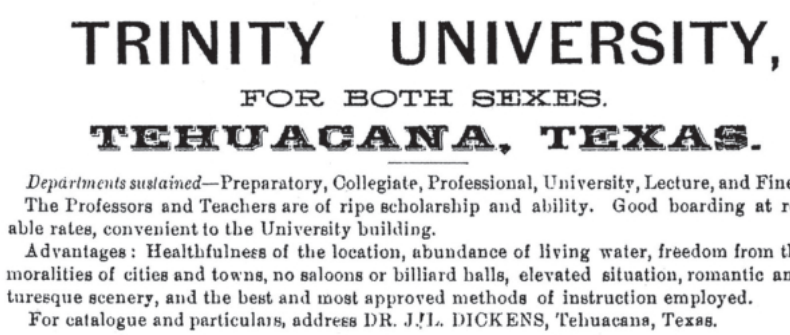
At the urging of Pres. Rufus C. Burleson, Waco University became coeducational in 1865, and others soon followed. Trinity was founded in 1869 as a coeducational institution and Southwestern introduced coeducation in the 1870s, although it did not fully integrate the sexes until the first decade of the twentieth century. By 1918, there were only two all-male collegiate

[21] Eby, *Development of Education in Texas,* 126, 128; *Trinity University Catalogue, 1869–1870,* p. 21; *Fort Worth Register and Record,* June 19, 1910, p. 5. See also John R. Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 91–92.

[22] *Trinity University Catalogue, 1916,* p. 4; *Trinity University Catalogue, 1923,* p. 23; *Austin-American Statesman,* Aug. 12, 1931, p. 18.

[23] "Trinity University," *Saint Louis Observer,* July 16, 1896, p. 4; *Austin Weekly Statesman* Aug. 15, 1889, p. 8; *Fort Worth Daily Gazette,* Sept. 10, 1887, p. 3.

[24] John S. Brubacher and Willis Rudy, *Higher Education in Transition: An American History 1636–1956* (New York, Harper & Brothers, 1958), 66–68, 126–131.



TRINITY UNIVERSITY,

FOR BOTH SEXES.

TEHUACANA, TEXAS.

Departments sustained—Preparatory, Collegiate, Professional, University, Lecture, and Fine Arts. The Professors and Teachers are of ripe scholarship and ability. Good boarding at reasonable rates, convenient to the University building.

Advantages: Healthfulness of the location, abundance of living water, freedom from the immoralities of cities and towns, no saloons or billiard halls, elevated situation, romantic and picturesque scenery, and the best and most approved methods of instruction employed.

For catalogue and particulars, address DR. J. L. DICKENS, Tehuacana, Texas.

Brand elements of coeducation, location, quality of instruction, and price are key to early marketing efforts in *Cumberland Presbyterian Magazine*, 1882. *Courtesy Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas.*

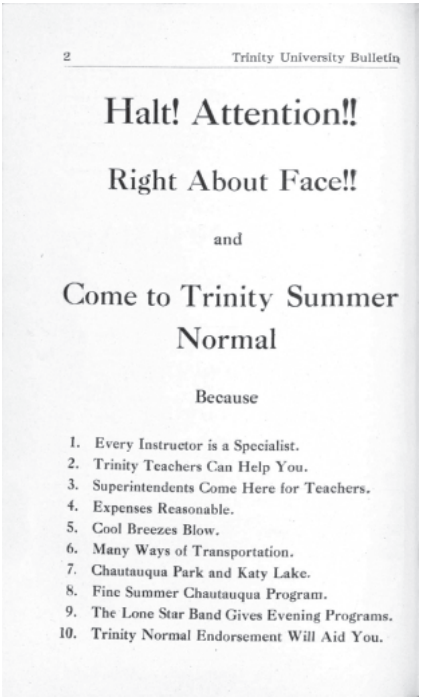
institutions in Texas: Texas A&M University and Austin College. In the same year, Austin College became coeducational. Trustees cited the financial benefits of coeducation and noted that "women have become in every sense of the word the fellow citizens of men, with complete entrance into the professional and business life of the country, as well as into political affairs."[25]

Apart from competition with peer institutions, Texas private schools faced challenges on other fronts. One was the growth of public education. As previously noted, antebellum schools had relied on state grants to teach primary and other preparatory classes. By the 1890s, those funds were drying up due to improvement in the quality of state grade schools and high schools. Moreover, competition from newly created state colleges and universities, including the flagship University of Texas in Austin, had a negative impact on private school enrollments. Opened in 1883, the university attracted students with a wide range of courses staffed with outstanding faculty and facilities unmatched by any private school. In 1900 the University reported that it had almost a thousand students enrolled and noted that "Texas parents are coming to recognize the advantages of their home institution and are keeping their children within the state for their higher education."[26]

Though not proscribing any religious belief, the University of Texas assured the public that it maintained a high moral atmosphere on campus. In his inaugural address in 1897, Pres. George Winston stated that the University "was neither irreligious nor non-religious. It is a part of and a forcible factor in American

[25] Eby, *Development of Higher Education in Texas*, 284; William B. Jones, *To Survive and Excel: The Story of Southwestern University 1840–200* (Georgetown: Southwestern University, 2006), 140; Light Townsend Cummins, *Austin College: A Sesquicentennial History* 1849–1999 (Austin: Eakin Press,1999), 200–220.

[26] *Fort Worth Record and Register,* Aug. 5, 1900, p. 4. See also Charles R. Matthews, *Higher Education in Texas: Its Beginnings to 1970* (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2018), 29–58.



2 Trinity University Bulletin

Halt! Attention!!

Right About Face!!

and

Come to Trinity Summer Normal

Because

1. Every Instructor is a Specialist.
2. Trinity Teachers Can Help You.
3. Superintendents Come Here for Teachers.
4. Expenses Reasonable.
5. Cool Breezes Blow.
6. Many Ways of Transportation.
7. Chautauqua Park and Katy Lake.
8. Fine Summer Chautauqua Program.
9. The Lone Star Band Gives Evening Programs.
10. Trinity Normal Endorsement Will Aid You.

Trinity Normal School Advertisement in 1918 combines timely military language with ongoing brand emphasis on quality instruction and pleasant location. *Courtesy Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas.*

civilization." He continued: "Ours is a Christian nation and ours is a Christian State, and ours is a Christian university. To all the colleges in Texas, whether denominational or private, the university extends the right hand of fellowship… Let there be no rivalry between us…We are all doing the Master's work."[27]

The establishment of state normal schools for teacher certification was another source of competition. The two-year programs were designed to prepare mature students to apply modern teaching and learning methodologies in their classrooms. By 1890, seven state normal schools had been established. Facing declines in enrollment, private schools offered two-year programs that awarded a Licentiate of Instruction Degree. In 1886, Trinity advertised a normal school for students who "had familiarity with the common school branches, one year of Latin, and a thorough mastery of the elements of algebra." In addition to methods courses, students studied a range of courses that included chemistry, physics, biology, literature, history, and philosophy. Austin College approved the creation of a "summer normal school" in 1894 that consisted of students from the North Texas area. By the end of the second decade of the twentieth century, the success of state normal schools made it unprofitable to continue the summer program. In 1920 Trinity offered courses in public school teaching but admitted

[27] *Houston Post*, Feb. 14, 1897, p. 14. See also Arthur Lefevre, *The Organization and Administration of a State's Institutions of Higher Education* (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones Co., 1912), 54–55.

that "no claim is made to offer the complete curriculum of a regular Normal school."[28]

Commercial business schools also competed with private schools for students. They offered students sufficient skills to secure employment in business without having to attend traditional four-year institutions. In response to the challenge, Trinity opened a commercial college in 1887, advertising it as "The Model School of the Southwest." Trinity administrators claimed that "Our graduates are employed by the best business firms in almost every city in the State." Noting demands for female accountants were increasing, the program was "peculiarly adapted to ladies" who could work alongside male counterparts. Graduates of the shortened course received diplomas rather than degrees. Other schools took similar steps. In 1895, Southwestern University announced the opening of a Commercial College due to "the exigency of the times and an increase in demand for business courses, and for shorthand and typing."[29]

By the closing decades of the nineteenth century, progressive educators were questioning the wisdom of locating schools in isolated villages. Urban environments were more accessible, and they offered cultural and social opportunities unavailable in remote settings. Moreover, donors were not willing to invest substantial funds in schools that failed to adjust to changing times. Austin College relocated from Huntsville in 1876 to a more accessible and healthier environment in Sherman. After resisting several efforts to leave Tehuacana, Trinity trustees voted in 1901 to move to Waxahachie, a county seat and thriving commercial center with 7,500 inhabitants. Geographically, the move covered only seventy-five miles, but sociologically, it represented a quantum leap into a new cultural environment.[30]

Marketing strategies shifted from extolling isolated villages to praising towns that offered social amenities but remained insulated from the negative influences of larger cities. Trinity situated its Waxahachie campus in a former cotton field overlooking the town. Surrounded by established residential neighborhoods, Trinity retained an atmosphere that harkened back to its village roots while enjoying the benefits of an urban setting. A typical Trinity advertisement assured parents that "Waxahachie is only an hour's run from Dallas and less than two hours from Fort Worth. Away from distractions of a large city, yet conveniently nearby for the finer things afforded by the city. In 1910, TCU moved from Waco to Fort Worth and built a new campus, which it described in advertisements as "removed from the 'smoke and bustle' of the town center to a placid setting on the outskirts of town." Even so, it noted that students were not living in an isolated village: "Yet through its connection by electric car, it is a matter of only

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[28] Matthews, *Higher Education in Texas*, 113–126; Cummins, *Austin College,* 124–125, 219–220; *Trinity University Catalogue, 1886–1887,* pp. 12, 24–25; *Trinity University Catalogue, 1921*, pp. 22, 45.

[29] Brackenridge, *Trinity University,* 47–48; *Austin American-Statesman*, Dec. 29, 1895, p. 9.

[30] Cummins, *Austin College,* 79–82; Minutes of the Synod of Texas of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Sept. 12–16, 1901, p. 15, TU Archives.

Downtown Waxahachie in 1905 (Note horse in foreground). *Courtesy Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas.*

a few minutes to reach the business center of the city. It is a location that cannot be surpassed."[31]

Early in the twentieth century, the issue of accreditation injected a new element into advertising and marketing. Previously, Texas did not have common state standards for schools and colleges, and local regulations and requirements for degrees were not uniform. The chief agencies in elevating and codifying educational standards were the Association of Texas Colleges, the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, and the state board of examiners. To be fully accredited, colleges had to discontinue pre-collegiate classes, require fifteen units of high school work, and offer a four-year curriculum leading to degrees that would be accepted in recognized schools for advanced degrees. Other requirements related to faculty credentials, library and laboratory facilities, and fiscal security.[32]

Texas school administrators sought accreditation knowing that it solidified their academic standing in the eyes of clients and aided graduates seeking admission to prestigious universities. Schools that met the standards emphasized their status in articles and advertisements. Trinity reported compliance with

[31] *Trinity University Bulletin, Vol. 6* (July 1909), 4; *Trinity University Bulletin, Vol. 8*, (Aug. 1911), 4, TU Archives; *Fort Worth Register and Record*, June 19, 1910, p. 5; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, Aug. 15, 1936, p.18.

[32] Eby, *Development of Education in Texas,* 298.

various accrediting institutions, including the National Council on Education, the Presbyterian Board of General Education, the Association of Texas Colleges, and the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. In a similar vein, Austin College emphasized that it offered courses "leading to degrees which are recognized not only by other institutions in the State but by leading universities of the North and East."[33]

To accommodate the changing needs of an increasingly commercial society, Texas colleges and universities also increased the number of practical subjects in their curriculums. Journalism became a popular choice among students who wanted to craft writing skills to attain positions in newspaper and magazine offices. Inclusion of journalism courses in curriculums added an element of academic respectability to the profession and to the field of public relations in general, but it attracted more students as well.[34]

The growing number of journalism departments in turn encouraged the formation of national and regional organizations to promote interest in the subject. The American Association of Teachers of Journalism, founded in 1914, began holding meetings on college campuses in the 1920s that featured lectures, discussion groups, and film presentations. A Southwest Journalism Congress meeting at TCU had eight other participating schools: Baylor, Southern Methodist University, Texas A&M, Texas Tech University, Texas Woman's University (TWU), Trinity, University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, and the University of Texas. The speakers included college presidents, professors, and newspaper editors. The Southwestern Student Press Club met along with the Congress. Their topics included "The Responsibility of Journalism to the Public, Our Changing World and its Newspapers, and What's Right with Tabloids." The head of the journalism department at TWU gave an address on "Journalism of the Future for Women." A symposium, entitled "If I were Teaching Journalism," discussed how schools of journalism should contribute to the ethics and ideals of the profession.[35]

Increased academic interest in the broader field of college advertising and public relations led in 1917 to the establishment of the American College News Bureaus Association (ACNBA). The organization changed its name in 1930 to American College Publicity Association (ACPA), and in 1950 adopted a new name, American College Public Relations Association (ACPRA), to reflect the growing power and scope of an organization that focused primarily on publicity. Its founders included college presidents, publicity directors, and newspaper executives who sought to address "the growing problem of the public relations of educational institutions" by writing a code of ethics to guide college and university officials and news directors. The organization grew in stature, holding

[33] *Trinity University Bulletin, Vol. 13* (Sept.1916), 2; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, Aug. 14, 1921, p. 20.

[34] Roger L. Geiger, *The History of American Education: Learning and Culture from the Founding to World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 545–551.

[35] *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, Apr. 20, 1930, p. 2; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, Mar. 30, 1930, pp. 1–2.

annual national meetings and establishing regional organizations that brought representatives from Texas and surrounding states together to discuss methods of advertising and marketing.[36]

Early twentieth century publications and advertisements reflected the growing influence of these new organizations. Annual catalogues were supplemented by informative bulletins published quarterly, monthly, or bi-monthly. In 1903, Trinity published a quarterly *Bulletin* which was mailed to clergymen, churches, former students and alumni, benefactors, and anyone who had shown interest in the university. By 1910, the university was printing 10,000 copies of the *Bulletin* and had "mailed a copy to every address we have in the state." Other schools had similar publications. A TCU advertisement encouraged readers to write to the president's office "for an especially attractive Bulletin of the University School of Music and Fine Arts."[37]

Noticeable in these publications and advertisements was a shift from targeting parents as the primary audience to addressing students as decision makers in college choices. At Trinity, an article in 1910 entitled, "Why Go To College?" featured a section containing group photographs of male and female literary, religious, and athletic organizations, as well as images of campus life designed to appeal to younger audiences. The next year, President Hornbeak announced that each month one article in the *Bulletin* would be "adapted to young people, especially to those high school students who are looking forward to a college course."[38]

Subsequent bulletins were more explicit. In 1912, an article for prospective students concluded with a challenge in large bold type: "WHERE SHALL I GO TO COLLEGE? WHETHER YOU TAKE THE ENTIRE COURSE OR ONLY A PART OF IT, YOU CAN MAKE NO MISTAKE IN COMING TO TRINITY UNIVERSITY." An article in 1917, addressed to "the High School Graduate," stressed the importance of making informed choices regarding vocations and the type of institution in which an education should be pursued: "The critical moment has arrived, and you must decide what kind of a man or woman you are going to make."[39]

Another early twentieth century advertising innovation was the introduction of athletics as a prominent feature of campus life. Previously, athletics were student led and operated with little or no administrative oversight. Now college presidents were rethinking the appropriateness of intercollegiate sports in academic settings. The *Houston Post* in 1904 attributed the growing interest in college football to the fact that "the prejudice that has so long existed against the game is rapidly disappearing, and people are learning to look upon the game

[36] Waldo E. Reck, *The Changing World of College Relations*: *History and Philosophy, 1917–1975* (Washington, DC: Council for Advancement and Support of Education, 1976), 104, 134–136.

[37] *Trinity University Bulletin, Vol. 7* (Nov. 1910), 11; *Fort Worth Record-Telegram,* Aug. 17, 1919.

[38] *Trinity University Bulletin*, *Vol. 7* (July 1910), 7–9; *Trinity University Bulletin*, *Vol. 8* (Oct. 1911), 4.

[39] *Trinity University Bulletin, Vol. 9* (Sept. 1912), 4; *Trinity University Bulletin*, *Vol. 14* (July 1917), 1–2.

as one of science as well as genuine sport." The article applauded educational institutions that are "taking the lead in the admiration of the game and are giving it, as a rule, every encouragement, the argument being made that it not only develops the players physically, but disciplines them, and furnishes entertainment and recreation for the students in general that they could not get otherwise."[40]

In 1903, Trinity president Leonidas Kirkes wrote "that intelligent direction of this feature of college life [athletics] can be made to serve a good purpose. The faculty are endeavoring to use this record in athletics to point the moral that it pays to do well whatever the institution undertakes." TCU administrators stated that "athletics are encouraged because those in charge believe that the cultivation of the body is essential to success in life and therefore one of the features of college life." What the articles did not mention was that educators perceived the country's craze for intercollegiate football and other sports could improve enrollment, increase alumni and community financial support, and garner free local, regional, and national publicity for their institutions.[41]

Texas schools formed football conferences, increased their athletic budgets, built stadiums, and hired fulltime coaches. Established in 1909, the Texas Intercollegiate Athletic Association consisted of Baylor, Southwestern, TCU, Trinity, Texas A&M, and the University of Texas. Leading the field was the University of Texas and Texas A&M, but smaller schools embarked on the same course. In 1925 Trinity hired Barry Holton, a protégé of Knute Rockne of Notre Dame, as its football coach at a salary above that of the president. During Holton's first season, Trinity's only defeat came at the hands of a powerful Texas A&M team coached by Dana X. Bible. Texas newspapers gave wide coverage to athletic events, especially football. Readers came to know the players, coaches, and team records better than administrators, faculty, and academic accomplishments.[42]

Beyond popular press coverage, references to athletics appeared in what traditionally had been strictly academic oriented advertisements. By linking success on the athletic field with academic achievement, schools appealed to the competitive instincts of students who were eager to join an energetic and activity-filled educational institution. A Trinity advertisement in 1924 highlighted the success of Trinity's baseball team and said that its accomplishment "reflects the spirit of the institution whose students go out to win success and battle for the right." TCU writers described their school as a place where "Christian character, Christian scholarship, and Christian culture was developed…. with clean athletics and the spirit of gentility in all things."[43]

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[40] *Houston Post,* Oct. 9, 1904.

[41] *Trinity University Bulletin, Vol. 6* (Dec. 1904), 3–4; *Fort Worth Register and Record,* June 19, 1910, p. 5; Brubacher and Rudy, *Higher Education in Transition,* 126–131.

[42] Thelin, *American Higher Education,* 177–180; Brackenridge, *Trinity University,* 97–104; "Texas Intercollegiate Athletic Association," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas_ Intercollegiate_Athletic_Association [Accessed Oct. 10, 2021].

[43] *Trinity University Bulletin, Vol. 27* (June 1, 1930), 1; *The Presbyterian Advance,* June 12, 1924, p. 14 [photocopy in TU Archives]; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram,* Aug. 14, 1921, p. 20.

Support for the attention given to athletics was not unanimous. A survey of college administrators conducted by the ACPA in 1930 showed that while none were hostile to publicity, they favored "full and complete interpretation of academic and scientific information to the public, even at the expense of minimizing the news of intercollegiate sports." In the present situation, they thought that athletics were overemphasized to the detriment of institutional reputations. A few expressed hopes that when academic and scientific achievements were given their proper place in the public press, "emphasis on college athletics will disappear."[44]

By the 1920s, advertising companies were inundating college presidents with mailings and campus visits offering to help them promote their institutions. The Keeshen Advertising Company in Oklahoma City urged Trinity president John H. Burma (1920–1931) to expand his school's public outreach beyond newspapers, magazines, booklets, and direct mail advertising by sending out advertising novelties during the summer such as pennant, posters, and pencils to remind people of Trinity when deciding which college to attend. Burma received many such letters during his presidency.[45]

Burma exemplified a new cohort of administrators who saw parallels between the functioning of educational institutions and secular businesses. Trustees wanted presidents who could perform functions for schools like those provided by the captains of business and industry. Administrative duties became more specialized with registrars, vice presidents, deans, admission directors, and publicity directors. While some critics deplored the infiltration of businesslike attitudes and practices, others acknowledged that even high purpose moral and intellectual institutions needed to apply business methods in management if they were to succeed.[46]

Most revealing is an excerpt from an address from Burma to his faculty, who apparently needed some convincing.

> An institution like Trinity University, though it may serve a different purpose, is just like any business organization and what I am going to say now is not intended to place your lofty, holy work on a low plane…But just this. Every business concern is dependent for success on its salaried or employed agents. If Trinity University is to be successful, it must depend on grouping around it, men and women who will make this thing go…A clerk in a store or a cashier in a bank is worth more to that store or bank just so much as he or she can contribute towards the success of the institution. In the last analysis, each professor or the president of a school is worth to the school just so much as that person can contribute towards the success of that school. Is that putting it too low? I don't think it is."

Burma informed faculty and students that they would not see much of him

[44] *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, Apr. 20, 1930, p. 6.

[45] James Keeshen to John H. Burma, Apr. 24, 1922, Presidential Papers: John H. Burma, Box 2, Folder 7, TU Archives.

[46] Lucas, *American Higher Education,* 191–195.

during the semester because he would be traveling on behalf of the university's endowment campaign. He advised students to contact the deans if they needed help, assuring them that they would be sympathetic listeners.[47]

The most important development affecting advertising and marketing during the 1920s and 1930s was the appearance of publicity directors on college and university administrative staffs. Surveys conducted by the ACPA early in the 1930s indicated that most school presidents regarded publicity offices as essential, but many lacked adequate staff and equipment. One survey described inventories of office furniture as "an accumulation of desks, chairs, and tables, much of which was discarded from other offices." A few offices did not have typewriters.[48]

Trinity created the position of Director of Publicity in 1930 as an additional responsibility of the chair of the journalism department. Subsequently, the school hired Charles Frederick, a specialist with academic degrees in advertising from Northwestern University, as Director of Publicity. Publications produced by Frederick reflected dramatic changes in the way the university was portrayed. They were characterized by action-filled photos with minimal text, intended to portray student life and academic studies in eye-catching settings. Their goal was to attract students who wanted to be involved with an energetic and active educational institution.[49]

A brochure entitled "Trinity University Around the Campus," published in 1937, exemplified Frederick's expertise. The cover featured a student, suitcase in hand, looking down a tree-shaded path to the main university building. The associated text was unlike anything that had appeared in previous publications. It read, in part, "The freshman student, standing at the college gate, prepares to cross the threshold of a new way of life. He is taking his first step into the college world where he hopes to catch the flow and currents of life at full tide; to plunge into a world of activities—to work, to play, to love, to worship." The first inside page had attractive photographs of student life, the most prominent of which portrayed Trinity cheerleaders with megaphones leading cheers for the team.[50]

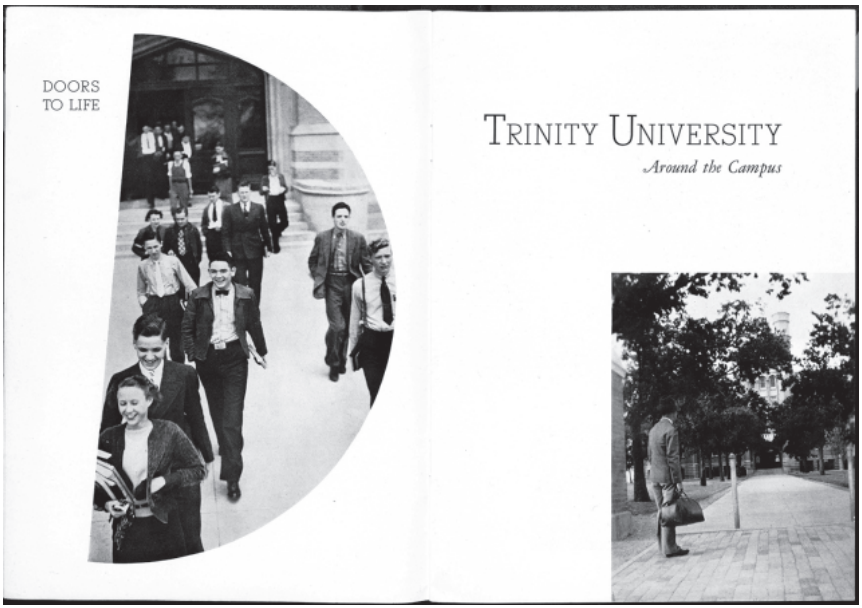
The most striking feature of the brochure was its emphasis on "Play." A section with this name had two pages of athletic-related activity photographs with text that was designed to excite and entice viewers. Potential students read about "Football helmets crashing against the rugged lines; boys and girls shooting baskets from the polished floor of the gym; hearing tennis balls sing over the nets on frosty mornings, slapping at a tiny ball with ping-pong paddles, gathering around a new game of fiddle sticks in the evening—it is all play which can be omitted from no campus life." The final paragraph expands play to other aspects of student life: "And play is creation, self-expression, found in countless activities:

[47] Burma, "Address to Trinity Faculty," Aug. 24, 1922, Presidential Papers: Burma, Box 2, Folder 2, TU Archives.

[48] Reck, *Changing World of College Relations,* 137–138.

[49] *Trinity University Catalogue, 1938*, p. 7.

[50] *Trinity University Bulletin*, *Vol. 34* (June 6, 1937).



1937 Brochure targets prospective students with information about the role of sports and co-curricular activities beyond the classroom. *Courtesy Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas.*

sketching in art class, developing a role in a student play, going on the road as a student 'trouper,' taking biology hikes for laboratory experiments, making the annual choir trip." The text concluded by linking play to high academic accomplishments: "To assume responsibility in the student world means to prepare oneself for responsibility in later life. Trinity University trains leaders."[51]

Alongside advertisements and in-house publications, Texas schools continued to rely on personal contacts to promote themselves. Clergy played pivotal roles in promoting universities. During a fund-raising campaign in 1913, President Hornbeak emphasized Trinity's reliance on clergy: "Success depends neither upon the President, the Field Secretary, nor the Board of Trustees…. but it depends in largest measure upon the *pastors* of our churches. They are the leaders of the people." An informal survey of Trinity students taken in 1920 to ascertain the strongest influences on their decision to come to Trinity indicated that the recommendation of their pastors was foremost, followed by former students, a relative who attended Trinity, or because Trinity was a coeducational institution.[52]

Students proved to be effective in conveying positive images of their schools. Male and female quartettes and choirs were well received in the communities

[51] Ibid.

[52] *TU Bulletin*, Vol. 10 (December 1913), 1; John H. Burma, Presidential Papers, Box 2 Folder 7, TU Archives.

where they performed and generated publicity in the local newspapers. The female Trinity University Trio became an honored tradition that spanned five decades. Consisting of voice majors, the women received a full tuition scholarship and traveled extensively. An article in the *Fort Worth Record*, entitled "T.C.U. Quartet Returns from Advertising Trip," described how TCU singers under the direction of their music professor toured several counties advertising their university. The students gave home concerts and talked about the advantages of their school. Evidently, they were successful recruiters; "everywhere recitals were given new students were signed up for the university."[53]

Despite expanded marketing efforts, the Depression of the 1930s had a great negative impact on institutional wellbeing. Trinity and its peer institutions faced declining enrollments, loss of accreditation, and chronic financial exigency that, in some cases, threatened imminent closure. Unable to survive in Waxahachie and unsuccessful with efforts to merge with Austin College, Trinity accepted a bid from the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce in 1942 to relocate in that rapidly growing city of 300,000 inhabitants. The move precipitated another institutional identity crisis, this time in a setting that necessitated integrating into a diverse social, economic, political, and religious context.[54]

While continuing to struggle with lack of financial resources during World War II, Texas schools emphasized their support of government efforts to promote both democratic values and civilian morale. A Baylor advertisement stated its "programs meet the tempo of the times. Baylor's wartime program is fundamentally an all-time program with an accent on military requirements." Southwestern's advertisement, entitled "The Hope of Democracy Lies in the Christian College," assured readers that "Southwestern fosters Initiative, Courage and 'The Will to Achieve,' in her students—the Statesmen of Tomorrow who will preserve our Democratic ideals."[55]

Texas schools also devised campus activities to illustrate how students and faculty were patriotic citizens. Trinity hosted events for local servicemen and supported the Red Cross and U.S.O. It also organized a Texas Defense Guard platoon for male students, who were required to exercise three times a week in classes such as boxing, wrestling, rope climbing, and tumbling, and science departments offered courses in first aid, safety, and lifesaving. The women's athletic director taught first aid classes on a regular basis and invited the commander of Trinity's Texas Guard unit to instruct her class in commando tactics.[56]

After World War II, schools were confronted with a growing hysteria among citizens that communist and socialist influences were permeating the country. All levels of education bore the brunt of hostile scrutiny, but colleges and universities

[53] *Trinity University Catalogue*, *1946*, p. 119; *Fort Worth Record*, July 8, 1916, p. 5.

[54] Brackenridge, *Trinity University*, 147–175.

[55] Thelin, *American Higher Education*, 257–259; *Waco Tribune-Herald*, June 27, 1943, p. 59; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, Aug. 4, 1940, p. 7.

[56] *The Trinitonian*, Mar. 12, 1943, p. 4, TU Archives.

were particularly regarded as "hot beds of communism" with professors who were "all theory and no common sense." Newspapers and magazines mounted concerted attacks on academic freedom and "Red professors" who took the fifth amendment when testifying in congressional investigations. At a meeting of the ACPRA in 1953, a speaker warned about "the kind of publicity that leads so many industries to say that colleges are full of cockeyed economics, socialism, and collectivism, and are not entitled to a nickel of support." He concluded, "Get your conservatives out front to balance them and give a truly representative picture of your university. If you don't, you are going to have some rough sledding ahead."[57]

That same advice should have been followed on other points as well. Following the Supreme Court decision in 1954 that ended "separate but equal" educational practices, educational institutions in Texas and elsewhere in the South faced challenges to traditional admission policies that excluded African Americans. Changes occurred incrementally over several decades, and public relations officers did little to inform the public of integration's progress, apparently to avoid negative reactions from potential white students and their families.[58]

In 1954, Trinity trustees agreed to initiate integration rather than wait for outside pressures to develop. After prolonged discussions, by a voice vote, they agreed to admit "qualified mature non-residential African American graduate students." In addition, they specified that the admission of African Americans as residential students should "be studied carefully before making additional policy decisions." Two years later, trustees delegated their authority regarding admissions to the president and academic dean. Even then, Dean Bruce Thomas assured the trustees that neither he nor Pres. James W. Laurie envisaged "in the near future" having African American students living in dormitories or participating in intercollegiate athletics.[59]

Such slow progress reflected the mood at other Texas schools. Austin College, for example, moved slowly over several years while cooperating with clergy, faculty, and prominent civic leaders to ameliorate racial tensions. In the mid-1950s, "the college quietly agreed without public notice" to admit local black teachers to summer school education courses. In 1959, after discussions that evoked opposition and differences of opinion, trustees voted to admit African Americans as full-time students. Integration began cautiously with one student, a native African from the Belgian Congo. Within a few years, numbers steadily increased, and the college hired its first African American faculty member.[60]

The increasing sophistication of marketing techniques in radio, movies, television, and even telephones offered opportunities for other experimentation

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[57] Thelin, *American Higher Education,* 274–276; Reck, *Changing World of College Relations,* 185, 191.

[58] Thelin, *American Higher Education,* 303–306.

[59] Brackenridge, *Trinity University,*188–190. Southwestern University had a similar prolonged discussion on integration. See Jones, *To Survive and Excel,* 414–422.

[60] Cummins, *Austin College,* 304–308.

and innovation. The ACPRA urged Texas schools to use radio and television to reach local and regional audiences. In 1945 Trinity music and drama professors launched a weekly radio variety program on local AM and FM radio stations, and in 1949 students and faculty participated in a series of variety programs on a local TV station. The first program featured vocal and instrumental performances by individual professors and student groups. In 1953, for the first time, Trinity catalogues provided readers with a telephone number to contact the university to answer questions and speak to individuals. Referring to the telephone as "a major medium in public relations," the ACPRA counseled responders to present "a pleasing, understandable voice, pleasing in that it denotes personal and friendly interest in dealing with an individual and with an organization whose desire, first and last, is to serve his every request."[61] Ultimately, the widespread use of these communication tools served to normalize their acceptance as fundamental elements of operating a contemporary university.

During the 1950s and 1960s some Texas private institutions ended legal ties to founding denominations or downplayed their Christian orientation in advertising and marketing. Factors leading to the change were fading denominational ability to provide financial support, shifting theological trends, and concerns about loss of federal funding due to being classified as sectarian institutions. Moreover, schools were responding to the educational market by conforming to more secular intellectual and academic trends.[62]

As a Presbyterian school, Trinity followed the lead of that denomination. Austin College signed a covenant relationship with the Presbyterian Church in the United States in 1962, ending legal ties with the denomination and becoming a private liberal arts college. Pres. John D. Moseley said that this change would "anticipate and avoid future problems in church-state relationships by providing a broader base and flexibility of financial support." He retained Austin College's ties to the Presbyterian Church by describing it as "A College of the Church." During 1969, the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America advised its colleges and universities to establish non-legal covenant relationships with their respective synods. Trinity entered into such an arrangement with the Synod of Texas and became an independent institution under the control of a self-perpetuating board of trustees. Clergy leadership on the board of trustees gave way to civic and professional leaders, and subsequent presidents were no longer ordained ministers. Other private colleges and universities made similar transitions, retaining respect for historical heritage, but emphasizing their new status as independent liberal arts institutions and the professional educational credentials of their faculties rather than religious affiliations.[63]

[61] Brackenridge, *Trinity University*, 162; Reck, *Changing World of College Relations*, 129, 134–135, 177–178.

[62] Brackenridge, *Trinity University*, 224–245. For an excellent survey of the last three decades of the twentieth century, see Thelin, *American Higher Education*, 317–362.

[63] Cummins, *Austin College*, 107; Brackenridge, *Trinity University*, 124–125, 258–266; Bradley J. Longfield and

Texas colleges enhanced the role of public relations by inviting professional educational consultants to visit their campuses. They sought advice on how to modernize administrative structures and create identities that would distinguish their institutions from competitors and generate public interest. In the mid-1950s, President Moseley of Austin College retained the firm of Cresap, McCormick, and Paget (CMP) to conduct a management survey of the institution's organizational structure, especially regarding business affairs and public relations. According to Austin College historian Light Townsend Cummins, Mosley implemented almost all the CMP recommendations, thus initiating "what might be called a 'corporate' style of administrative organization." In addition, Moseley and his faculty devised a new curriculum that featured independent study and courses designed to encourage innovative teaching methods. Their efforts merited national recognition in *Time Magazine* as one of fifty top colleges "that can give a good education to a student who might not qualify for the high admission standards required by Ivy League institutions." Moseley told reporters that he did not intend to build a large university but wanted Austin College "to become a Southwestern Amherst or Swarthmore that is recognized for the quality students it produces." A decade later, Trinity underwent the same process under the guidance of CMP.[64]

By the 1950s, Public Relations Officers, most of whom had no teaching assignments, functioned as high-level administrators who reported directly to presidents and were influential participants in decisions regarding the conduct of the institution and the determination of its educational policies and methods. They assumed responsibility for developing the criteria to determine which products to market, including pricing, research, competition, advertising, planning, control, and budgets.[65]

At Trinity, Leon (Tex) Taylor exemplified the heightened role given to public relations in the 1950s and 1960s. Taylor, who came from a military background, had extensive experience in the field of public relations and was reputed to be "a publicity genius." His Trinity career began in 1947 and spanned more than four decades, during which he played a major role in shaping the institution's regional and national interface with the public. Taylor's goal was to promote "a new Trinity" poised to meet the educational challenges and opportunities of the post-war era. "Today," he said, "we of Trinity University stand on the threshold of greatness. We do not rest on established traditions and past triumphs. We face forward."[66]

Trinity's move in 1952 to a new campus, on the north side of San Antonio

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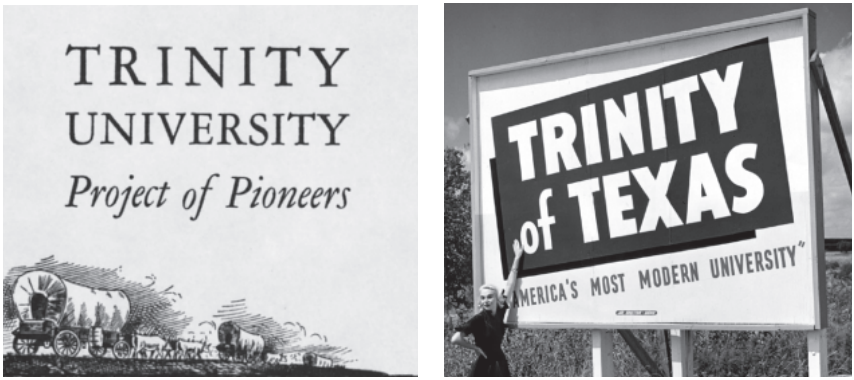
George M. Marsden, "Presbyterian Colleges in Twentieth-Century America," in *The Pluralistic Vision: Presbyterians and Mainstream Protestant Education and Leadership,* eds. Milton J. Coalter, John M. Mulder, and Louis B. Weeks (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 99–125.

[64] Cummins, *Austin College,* 283–284, 414; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram,* Dec. 11, 1960, p. 39; Brackenridge, *Trinity University*, 277–282.

[65] Reck, *Changing World of College Relations*, 134–135.

[66] Brackenridge, *Trinity University*, 150–151; Leon Taylor, *The Mirage* (1951), 4, TU Archives.



Contrasting 1950s advertisements. *Courtesy Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas.*

overlooking the city's skyline, afforded Taylor an opportunity to emphasize his modernity theme. Designed by noted architect O'Neil Ford, the campus master plan featured integrated architecture that utilized a new method of lift-slab construction. Taylor portrayed Trinity as "the most modern university in the country in a publicity campaign that got national and international attention and won several architectural awards. Seen in juxtaposition with former advertisements featuring Trinity's pioneering history, the imagery is striking.[67]

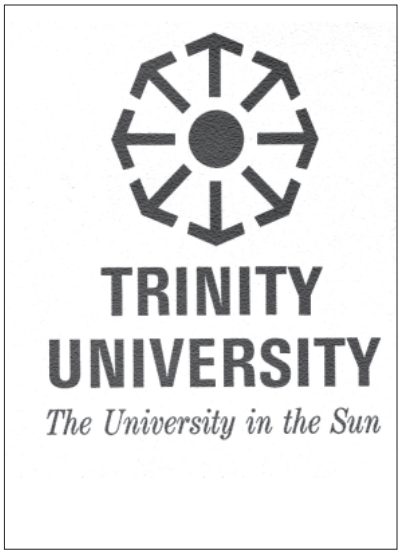
Taylor's crowning achievement, however, was his branding of Trinity as "The University in the Sun," an image woven into the university logo and photographs that appeared in virtually every university publication for two decades. According to staff member David Burkett, Taylor thought promoting Trinity as a sun-drenched campus in the southwest with the amenities of a large city would attract "snowbirds" from the Northeast and Midwest, who longed to be free from cold and dark winters.[68] This campaign raises the question of whether all marketing is good. Is effective–meaning more students applying–a sufficient measure of success or should aspects of brand identity and public image also be considered?

In 1960, Trinity produced a 28-minute color film entitled "The University in the Sun," scripted by Burkett and narrated by Taylor. First circulated in the southwest and then in major cities throughout the country and on regional television stations, the film won first prize in its category at the 1961 ACPRA honors competition. The film featured Trinity's athletic teams, the Olympic-sized swimming pool replete with closeups of feminine pulchritude, and scenic views of downtown San Antonio, including the Alamo and Riverwalk. San Antonio's military presence and the university's R.O.T.C. added a note of patriotism. Other clips showed students studying and relaxing in various dormitory settings.[69]

[67] Brackenridge, *Trinity University,* 168–171.

[68] Conversation, R. Douglas Brackenridge with David Burkett, Oct. 6, 2018.

[69] *San Antonio Light*, Oct. 13, 1960, p. 38; *The Trinitonian,* Sept. 15, 1961, p. 2. To view the film, see *Texas Archive of Moving Images*, info@texasarchive.org [Accessed Dec. 22, 2021].



Vivid images used in brochures and advertisements created controversy among faculty and staff with a hedonistic emphasis devoid of the academic experience. *Courtesy Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas.*

Taylor seized on the growing popularity of professional and intercollegiate tennis in the 1960s as a catalyst for more national exposure. Referred to as "Tennis Tech" by sports writers, Trinity rose to national prominence with outstanding teams and individual performances under the direction of coach Clarence Mabry. President Laurie acknowledged the importance of tennis during Trinity's rise to prominence in the 1960s. "There is no question in my mind," he declared, "but that the phenomenal success of the tennis program has helped to set a tone of accomplishment and excellence for the entire university. Trinity has a reputation of doing things well and aiming for the top. We like this."[70]

In promoting Trinity, Taylor's attempts to integrate the corresponding intellectual energy and excitement generated by an outstanding faculty failed to capture public attention. Faculty and administrative critics thought his approach did injustice to Trinity's longstanding reputation as a quality academic institution. History professor Philip F. Detweiler voiced his concern in a *Trinitonian* editorial: "This tag is the epitome of blandness…no rains, no storms, no troubled weather, and no troubled mind…A haven for some, a haven of mediocrity." Dean of Students Coleen Grissom was equally unimpressed with an image that she thought obscured Trinity's educational advantages. She remembered a summer

[70] Brackenridge, *Trinity University*, 243–244; James W. Laurie to John R. McFarlin, Oct. 17, 1963, Box 86–50, TU Archives.

bulletin in the 1970s with little drawings of Tigers lying on their backs by the swimming pool. "Our image was as the 'Country Club of the Southwest.'"[71]

The disconnect between prevailing marketing strategies and primary institutional goals forced Trinity to make major academic adjustments to remove the negative effects of its country club image. During the last two decades of the twentieth century, under new leadership, the school abandoned its university in the sun motif, hired a new public relations staff, and launched a series of astute marketing efforts. One that attracted national attention was giving scholarships to any National Merit Scholars who selected the university. In 1984 the number soared to 120, an incredible total for a school of Trinity's size. More important, the school deemphasized graduate studies and focused on being a quality undergraduate institution. It raised academic standards, hired bright young faculty with terminal degrees in their fields of expertise, constructed new residence halls to accommodate incoming students, added a three-year residence requirement, and increased racial diversity.[72]

During this same period, national publications such as *US News and World Report*, *The Wall Street Journal, Forbes Magazine,* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* began to rank colleges and universities. While critics questioned the validity of their ranking methodologies, their importance is clear as they are often featured prominently in promotional print materials and on contemporary university websites and social media platforms. A feature article in *US News and World Report* in 1989 noted Trinity's "dramatic turnaround, evolving from what was considered as an educational country club for privileged white suburbanites to one of the nation's most challenging and highly regarded regional universities."[73]

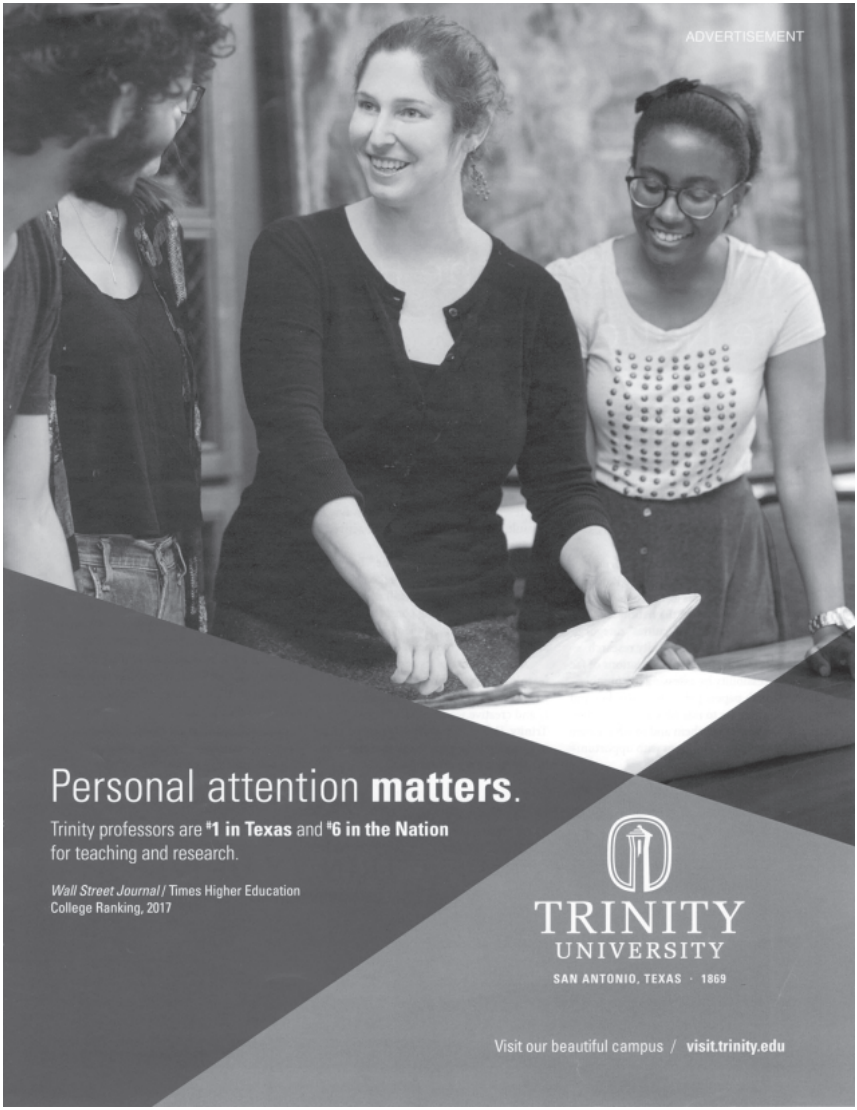
By the end of the twentieth century, Texas colleges and universities were entering the digital age in which the introduction of personal computers, and subsequently the internet, laid the foundation for schools to implement new strategies to attract students to their respective institutions. Emerging technologies created opportunities to reach more people, more efficiently than ever before, effectively disrupting many established marketing efforts. At the same time, these opportunities also existed for competitors and dramatically shortened the life span for what constituted effective marketing strategies.[74] Competitive pressures during the first two decades of the twenty-first century prompted educational institutions to be more intentional, intense, and sophisticated in their marketing. These efforts represent a paradigm shift in how institutions of higher education viewed communication efforts, moving from one-directional messages that listed

[71] Leon Taylor, "Talk to Parents," Apr. 18, 1964, Box 86–41, TU Archives; Philip Detweiler, "University in the Sun," *The Trinitonian*, May 2, 1969, p. 2; *The Trinitonian*, Apr. 28, 1989, p. 1.

[72] Brackenridge, *Trinity University,* 314–346.

[73] "We're Number One," *The Trinitonian*, Oct. 13, 1989, p. 1. For fuller coverage, see Patricia M. McDonough, Anthony L. Antonio, MaryBeth Walpole, and Leonor X. Perez, "College Rankings: Democratized College Knowledge for Whom?" *Research in Higher Education* 39 (1998): 513–537.

[74] "Trends in Higher Education Marketing, Recruitment, and Technology," *Hanover Research Academy Administration Practice* (Mar. 2014), 5–9, https://www.hanoverresearch. com/media/Trends-in-Higher-Education-Marketing-Recruitment-and-Technology-2.pdf [Accessed Oct. 20, 2019].



2017 advertisement emphasizes personal attention and student body diversity.
Courtesy Trinity University Archives, San Antonio, Texas.

majors, minors, faculty, student accomplishments, and physical resources to a two-way conversation meant to engage prospective students and families and to shape the larger public perception of the university's brand identity. They emphasized developing an effective and intuitive web site which was described as "the ultimate brand statement."[75] Use of web analytics to determine who, how, and where colleges and universities are reaching audiences led to the employment of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, and podcasts. Recent articles in the *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* present a comprehensive view of how they promote their brand and the role of social and traditional media in marketing strategies.[76]

In conclusion, this study indicates that despite an initial hesitancy, Texas colleges and universities have, throughout their histories, reshaped and refined their advertising and marketing strategies to accommodate changing cultural and economic expectations. They have maintained an exceptional vitality and a tough-minded awareness of competition and changing conditions in which they must operate. While not all marketing is authentic or beneficial, its use can provide strategic guidance to institutions, forcing them to understand themselves and the nature of their customers, their competitors, and what contemporary societies expect of higher education. What the future holds cannot be predicted, but colleges and universities that can anticipate and respond effectively to changes in national educational trends and marketing strategies are the ones most likely to survive in highly competitive environments.

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[75] "Trinity University Integrated and Marketing Plan 2016," https://marketing.trinity. edu/sites/marketing.trinity.edu/files/file_attachments/2/imc-plan-2016.pdf [Accessed Jan. 28, 2021].

[76] For a comprehensive view, see Rod Missighian and Roger Pizarro Milian, "A Day at the University Fair: Hot Brands, House of Brands, and Promotional Tactics in Higher Education," *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education* 29 (2), 153–157.