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From [Salon](#) | Original Article 4-17-15



*Henry Kissinger (Credit: Reuters/Ria Novosti)*

Ex-government officials have always occupied a particular sweet spot for members the Ivy League. Regardless of what one did while in power, regardless of how disreputable or immoral or even criminal one's actions, the elite academy has been all too willing to embrace even the most dubious of former officials.

So it was that last Friday night, Henry Kissinger spoke at Yale — to which he has donated an [archive of personal documents](#), where he occasionally participates in a course with Cold War historian [John Lewis Gaddis](#), and where he give an

[invite-only talk just a year ago](#)

. Last week's "conversation" was moderated by Harvard Professor Niall Ferguson, who is also Henry Kissinger's official biographer. As if to underscore the incestuous insider game on display, sitting in the third row was Paul Bremer, the "Administrator" of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, the man who de-Baathified the country, threw millions of people out of work, and helped destroy the Iraqi state, which spurred the insurgency, the Sunni-Shia civil war, and later the transmogrification of al Qaeda in Mesopotamia into the Islamic State. A record to proudly burnish in and around Yale University.

At least members of the Yale community would be allowed to ask questions of Mr. Kissinger, challenge him on his public record, and dispute the wrongheaded assessment of the US-Iran nuclear deal he penned in the [The Wall Street Journal](#) just days prior, right? Wrong. Ferguson was to screen all questions ahead of time, and the questions Mr. Kissinger received were the intellectual equivalent of underhand softballs. There was a discussion of "World Order," Kissinger's latest book, questions about Iran and the Middle East, ruminations on China. Every question Ferguson asked could have been competently answered by an undergraduate.