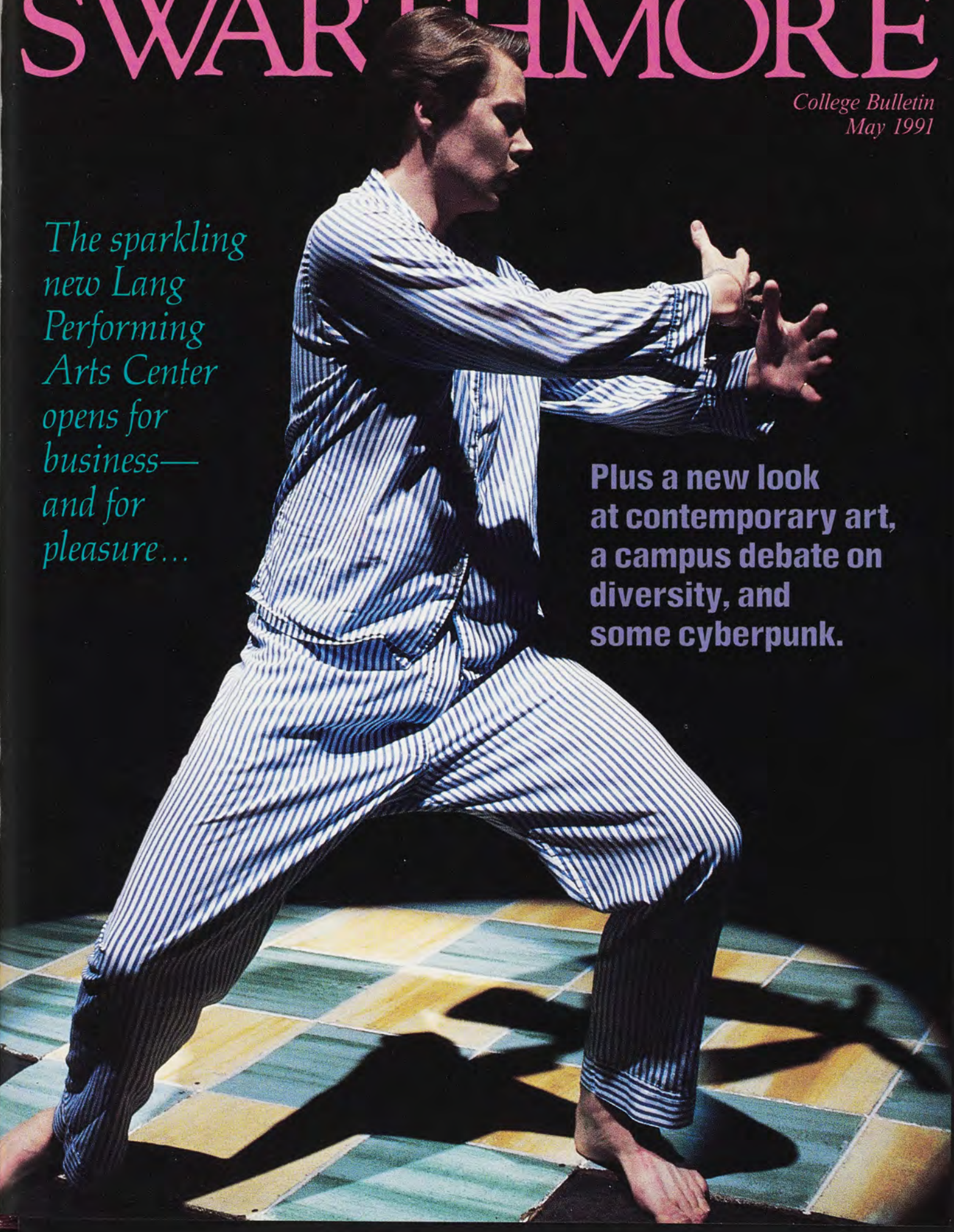
SWARTHMORE

College Bulletin
May 1991



The sparkling new Lang Performing Arts Center opens for business—and for pleasure…

Plus a new look at contemporary art, a campus debate on diversity, and some cyberpunk.

Our trees, like our traditions, need constant care. See page 20.

SWARTHMORE

COLLEGE BULLETIN • MAY 1991

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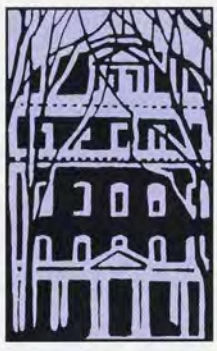

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Cover: Dedication ceremonies for the Eugene M. and Theresa Lang Performing Arts Center included a performance of *The Day Room*, a play by Dan DeLillo featuring Thomas Lincoln '93 as Budge/Arno Klein. Photo by Deng Jeng Lee.

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REINVENTING MODERNISM

Robert Storr '72 calls himself a cultural radical—and he's bringing his controversial views to the Museum of Modern Art

by Jeffrey Lott

Modern art is like a globule of mercury in your palm. Shiny and remarkably dense, it seems to quiver with life, to cohere to itself. Its movements are delightfully slippery and unpredictable, yet if you squeeze it, watch out. It splits into dozens of equally shiny, equally dense little droplets—and putting them back together isn't easy. They have a surface tension of their own, and, once separated, they resist coherence because of the very qualities that make mercury so intriguing to begin with.

At New York's Museum of Modern Art, Robert Storr '72 doesn't worry too much about putting the droplets back together. He loves the quicksilver caprice of contemporary art just as it is. And, as one of four curators in the museum's Department of Painting and Sculpture, he is at the center of a reassessment of the meaning and scope of modernism that challenges our comfortable definitions of art and Western culture.

In the annual Lee Frank Lecture on campus in late January, Storr asked more than 200 listeners to set aside the notion that modernism is merely the history of Western culture. "Modernism is an evolving phenomenon that defines a social epoch and a range of aesthetic possibilities, not a geographical region," he said. "If the overwhelming preponderance of 'modern art' has *been* out of the West, that does not mean that it will necessarily continue to *be* out of the West."

The debate in the art journals, where Storr's voice has been heard as a critic for the past decade, and in the museum establishment, which he joined only last September, is part of a broad reexamination of the canons of culture that is sweeping academia and the arts. The movement toward a new cultural diversity is finding its way into everything from history classrooms and political discourse to symphony performances and art galleries, forcing a redefinition of the sources of Western culture.

In his lecture, in his writings, and in a recent *Bulletin* interview, Storr has called for "shedding a lot of intellectual baggage"

Black artist David Hammons' 11-foot sculpture Hifalutin' *(far left) was the first major work purchased by the Museum of Modern Art on the recommendation of new curator Robert Storr '72 (left). Ilya Kabakov, whose colorful constructions fill entire galleries, is, like Hammons, only now receiving recognition after decades of work. At right is a portion of a recent Kabakov installation entitled,* He Lost His Mind, Undressed, Ran Away Naked.

HAMMONS: COURTESY JACK TILTON GALLERY
STORR: DAWOUD BEY/MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
KABAKOV: D. JAMES DEE/RONALD FELDMAN FINE ARTS

Right: *Elizabeth Murray makes shaped paintings in a biomorphic manner reminiscent of surrealism. Big, organic works like* Tangled, *nearly 7 feet tall, are finally earning this midcareer artist wide notice, including a recent* New York Times Magazine *cover story.*

GALERIE MYKAI, TOKYO/PHOTO: D. JAMES DEE/PAULA COOPER GALLERY

Below: *Philip Guston's 1969 painting* The Studio *shows an "American culture at war with itself," according to Storr. "The Klanlike artist is not a refined person looking at an alien world, but rather a rough personality still unknown to himself." Storr's first book was a study of Guston's work.*

ERIC POLLITZER/DAVID McKEE GALLERY

in order to overcome "the exclusionary situation that now prevails" in the visual arts. He argues that the predominance of "School of Paris" art in our museums has resulted from a too-narrow view of culture: "For most of the time we have been studying art history in this country, we have been discussing only that which we can see in the axis between Paris and New York."

The attempt by Storr and others to reinterpret Western visual culture calls into question long-held assumptions about the history and nature of modern art. Traditional scholarship dates the birth of modern art from the emergence of Impressionism in mid-19th-century France and follows it in linear fashion, "ism" by "ism," right down to the present day. Each of the "isms" is seen as a natural outcome of that which came before. According to this tradition, art has a linear evolution not unlike the capitalist ideal of the inexorable march of material progress.

The linear-development premise, Storr argues, is false. "In terms of the actual flow of ideas and the evolution of aesthetic objects, there is constant doubling back, picking up of loose threads, renewal of lapsed ideas—completely transforming what was thought to be the logical conclusion of the previous period." And while certain categories are a necessary part of any discussion, they are, in the end, "nothing but sets. The sets are open, and it is the task of the artist to keep them open."

Storr's thinking about art is essentially dialectical rather than linear. He examines "sets of terms that are in active tension with each other. They don't produce *thesis-antithesis-synthesis* but rather *thesis-antithesis-new thesis* and so on."

Using this dialectic as a guide, Storr urges us to go beyond the "isms" to the art itself. "I look at the artists and ask, are the definitions that I'm using ones that I'm imposing on them, or are they a product of the art-making? The tendency in criticism and art history is to think that what the artists do is an almost involuntary response to their talent and circumstances, when in fact what most artists do is highly voluntary. Artists are not necessarily predestined by history to do what they do."

By focusing on the art and artists rather than on a set of preordained categories, Storr wants to clear away many of the intellectual barriers that have narrowed the definition of modernism. "I'm much more interested in work that pops open categories and defies ideological constraint. You don't begin with your conclusion and then argue. You begin with the argument and find out what the conclusion is at the end."

His empirical approach often clashes with established notions of the cultural mainstream. "I don't believe in the mainstream," he says. Storr looks outside the established canon for other artists and influences that merit attention and force a broadening of the idea of culture. Thus, his strong interest in Latin American artists is not limited to the Mexican triumvirate of Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and José Orozco, all of whose work is fairly well known and established. He points in addition to Frida Kahlo, wife of Rivera and a haunting artist in her own right, as an example of someone who until recently has been left out of the canon, calling her "the minor figure who may turn out to be the best of them all."

In his lecture Storr acknowledged a debt to what he called "the methodology of feminism," arguing that "the answer is not to create a countercanon, but to question the source of the canon in the first place." Thus, the historical dearth of women artists is not due to lack of talent, but to lack of opportunity. Rigid patronage systems and restrictions on education and artistic training for women made it virtually impossible for them to pursue their art.

Storr feels that the same limited opportunities have most often kept non-Western art and artists out of the modernist canon, even though established European and American artists have long drawn heavily from other cultures for ideas and spiritual energy.

In America, says Storr, "culture has been mixed from the beginning. What is remarkable is not the fact that it has been mixed, but how easily people forget that it has been mixed. African Americans have not just contributed to jazz, but to theater, literature, dance, and the visual arts."

He rejects the idea that art is the "history of geniuses—that there is a genius that makes culture, and that there are a string of geniuses that make the canon." Looking at culture as a matter of simply finding out "who got on first first" is a "misrepresentation of what actually happens," he says.

Please turn to page 56

COLLECTION ELI BROAD FAMILY FOUNDATION/COURTESY JOSH BAER GALLERY

Leon Golub's paintings, such as Mercenaries I *(above), deal with political violence from an insider's point of view. They implicate us without telling us what to think. "You're forced to wonder, are these guys ours?" says Storr.*

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK/GIFT OF EDGAR KAUFMANN, JR.

Once denied established recognition, Mexican artist Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) is now considered one of the best painters of her generation. In this self-portrait, done in the style of a retablo, *or altar painting, she calls into question her own femininity. The painting takes a macabre revenge for the infidelities of her husband, Diego Rivera. The Spanish text reads: "Listen, if I did love you, it was because of your hair. Now that you are hairless, I no longer love you."*

Some of the "isms" of Modernism

Impressionism
Postimpressionism
Cubism
Fauvism
Futurism
Constructivism
Suprematism
Neoplasticism
Dadaism
Expressionism
Surrealism
Social realism
Abstract expressionism
Formalism
Minimalism
Conceptualism
Superrealism
Neo-expressionism
Deconstructivism
Postmodernism

Wonderful

Swarthmore's new performing arts center opens for business—and pleasure

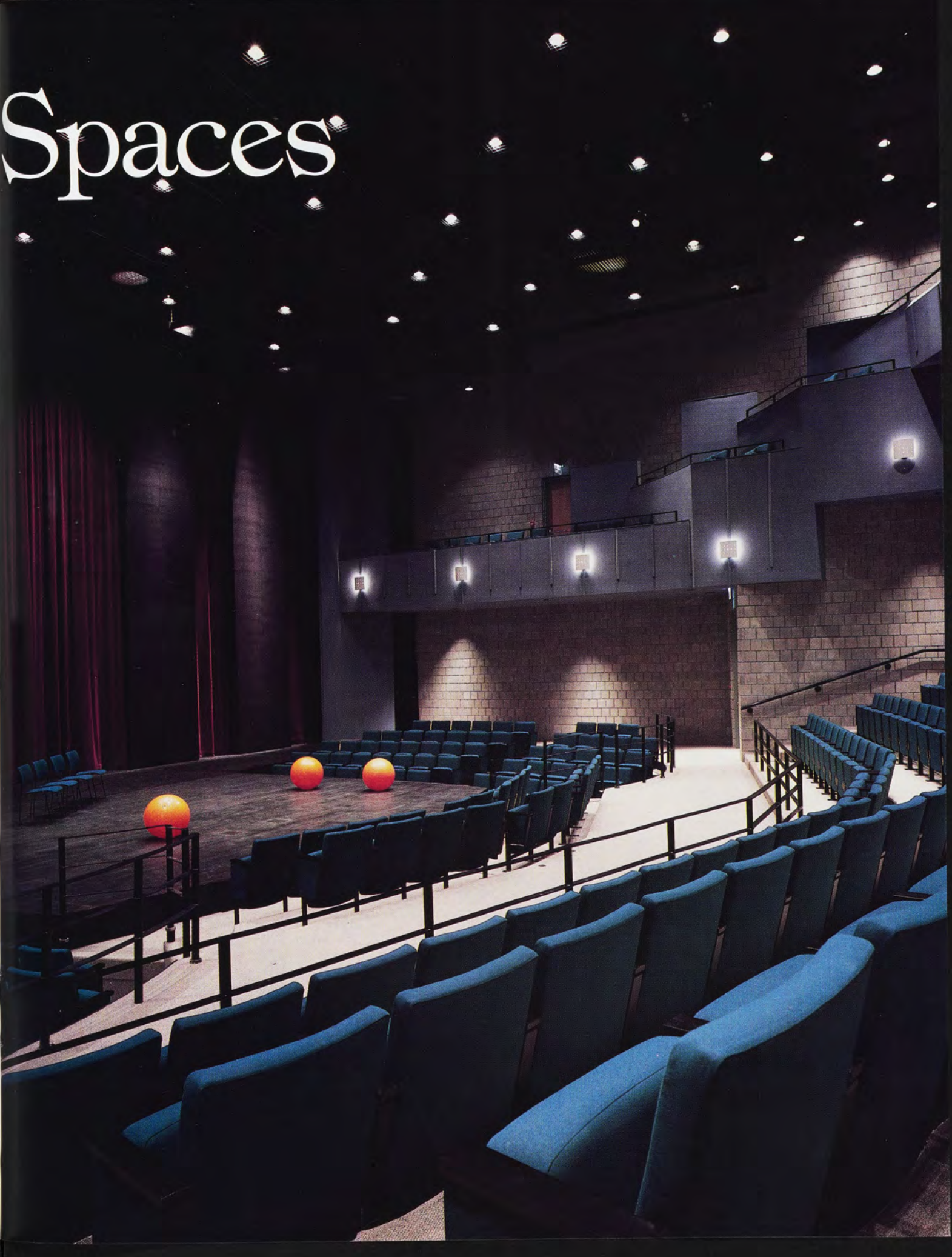
The Eugene M. and Theresa Lang Performing Arts Center has been called the crown jewel in The Campaign for Swarthmore, a sobriquet that no one who has explored its many exciting spaces will refute. Housing two theatres, dance studios, an art gallery, classrooms, offices, and workshops for design, set-building, and costumes, the center went "on line" at the beginning of the spring semester in January. We share some of the sights with you on these pages and invite you to campus for a complete tour.

TOM CRANE

DENG JENG LEE

Left: A light-filled stairway leads from the lobby of the Frear Ensemble Theatre and the administrative offices to the upper lobby.
Above: Julie Lange Hall '55 speaks at the dedication of the Lang Performing Arts Center on March 1. Taking part were (left to right) Barbara Pearson Lange Godfrey '31, J. Parker Hall III '55, Eugene M. Lang '38, Theresa Lang, Neil Austrian '61, and President David Fraser.
Opposite: The 70,000-square-foot Pearson-Hall Theatre, designed by George Izenour, Yale professor emeritus of acoustical engineering. The building itself was designed by Dagit-Saylor Architects of Philadelphia.

Spaces

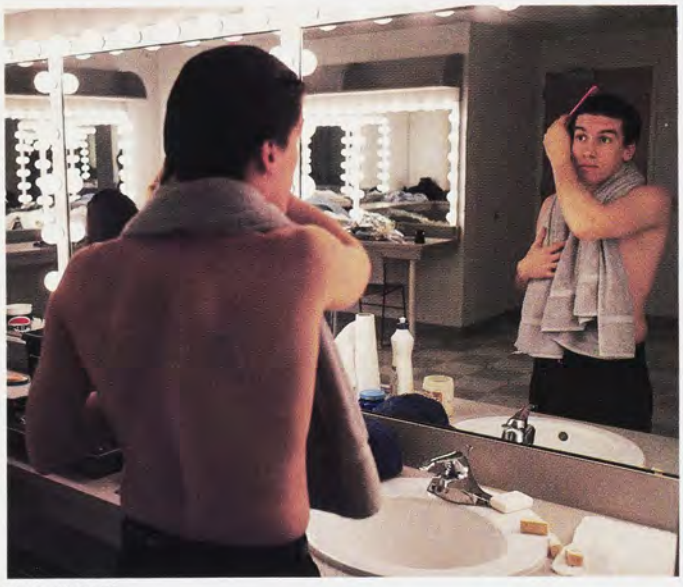


Wonderful Spaces

Below: Members of the Class of 1938 and a friend gather around the plaque that honors the class's donation of the main lobby. They are, from left, Theresa Lang, Peter Kaspar, Eugene Lang, Marjorie VanDeusen Edwards, Carolyn Hogeland Herting, and, seated, Barbara Wetzel Kaspar.
Right: Sharon Friedler, associate professor of dance and director of the Dance Program, oversees a rehearsal with Charlotte Rotterdam '91 and Brian Kloppenberg '93 in the spacious new Dance Lab, used as studio and informal performance space. Adjacent to it is the smaller Pat Boyer Studio, named in honor of Swarthmore's first director of dance.

DENG JENG LEE

J. MARTIN NATVIG



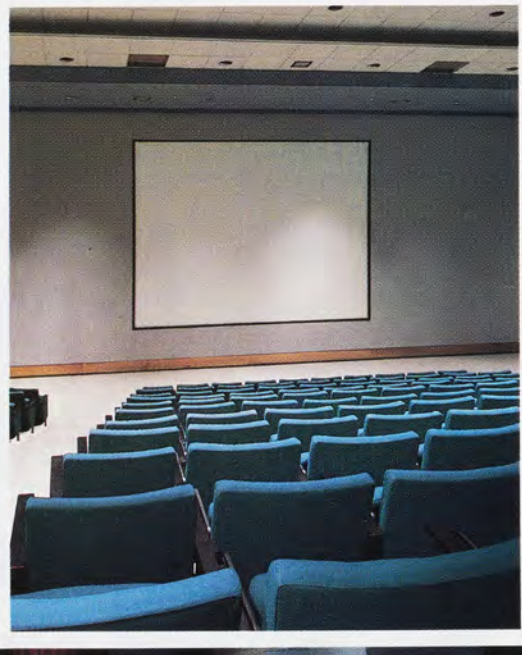
DENG JENG LEE

Above: John McCauley '91 prepares for the Pearson-Hall Theatre's inaugural performance in one of the new dressing rooms.
Right: Guests enjoy the opening exhibition of Benjamin West drawings in the List Art Gallery located off the building's main entrance.

J. MARTIN NATVIG

DENG JENG LEE

Members of the Drama Board presented Dan DeLillo's play *The Day Room* as part of the dedication of the Lang Performing Arts Center. Actors included (left to right) Tom Borchert '91, Micheline Murphy '93, Thomas Lincoln '93 (in bed), and Sonya Hals '94. Because of the new facilities in the Performing Arts Center, the Theatre Studies Program is being adjusted to offer expanded production and design courses. A new theatre history sequence will also be added.



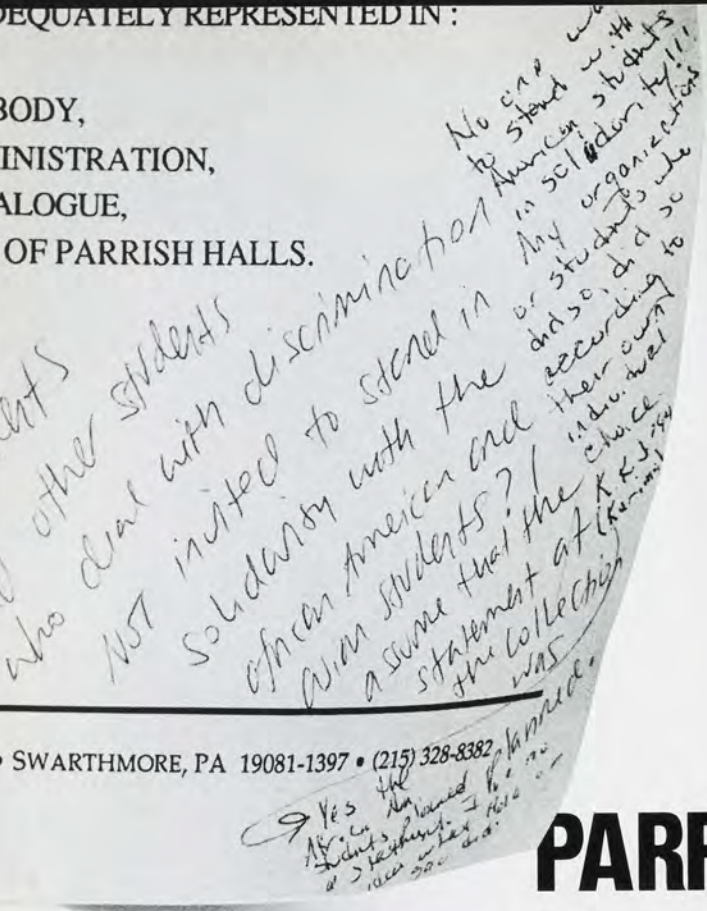
TOM CRANE

TOM CRANE

The Pearson-Hall Theatre is three performing spaces in one: a large auditorium (above) and—when the concrete partition is in place—a drama theatre and a cinema (inset) that seat 369 and 284, respectively. The auditorium is equipped with movable seats, orchestra pit turntables, and hydraulic lifts that provide the flexibility for both thrust stage and traditional proscenium performances. One of the largest tension wire grids ever built hangs above the stage and orchestra and allows flexibility in lighting design for performances.

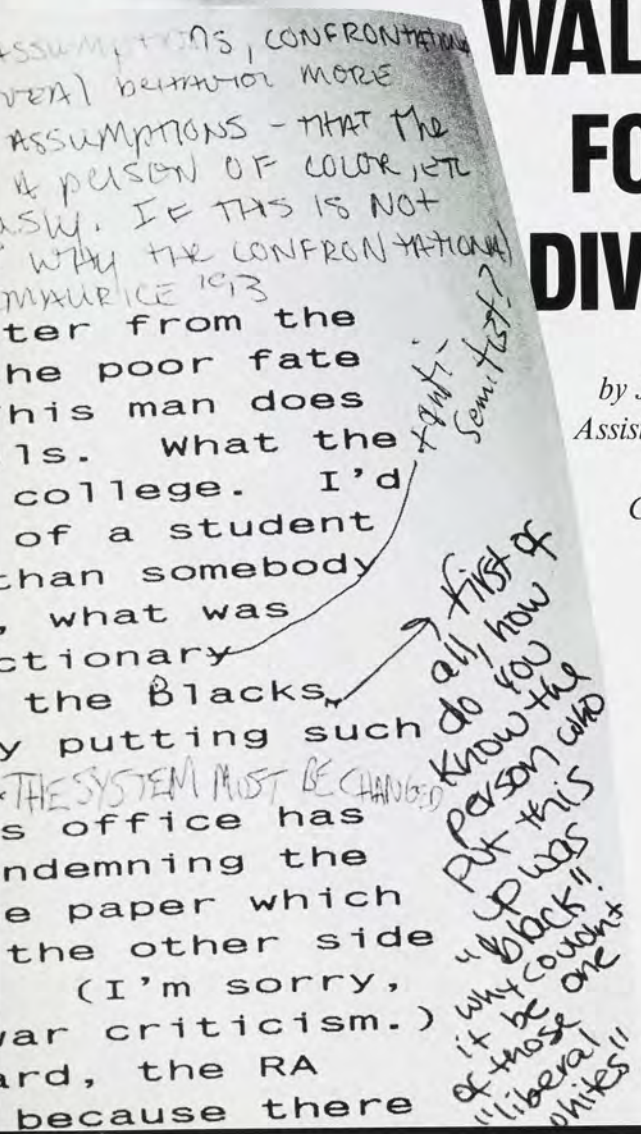
PARRISH WALLS & THE STRUGGLE FOR DIVERSITY

by Joseph A. Mason
Assistant Dean/Director
of the Black
Cultural Center


EQUATELY REPRESENTED IN :

BODY,
INISTRATION,
ALOGUE,
OF PARRISH HALLS.

SWARTHMORE, PA 19081-1397 • (215) 328-8382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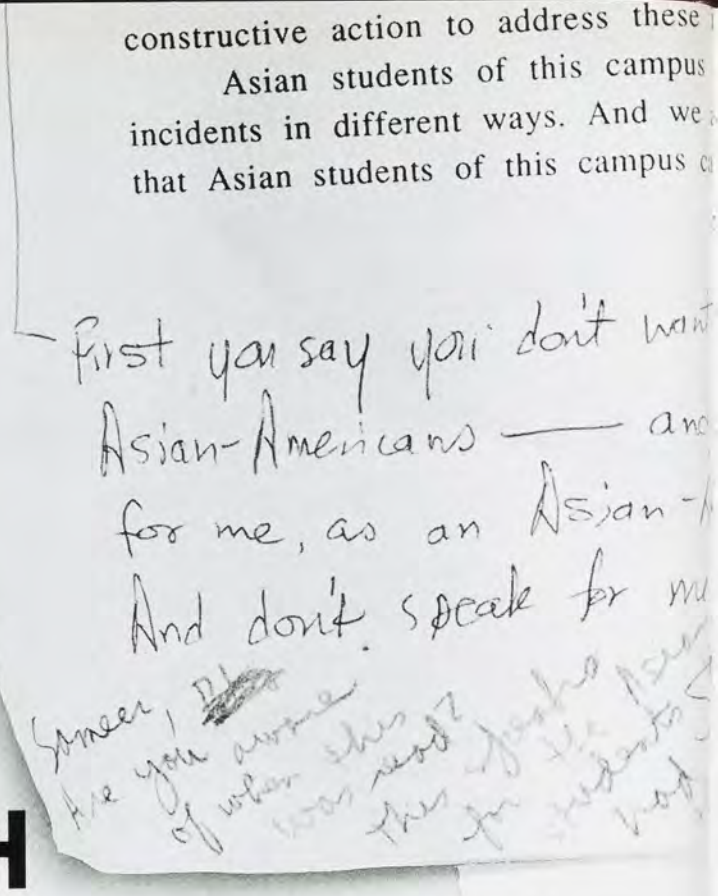
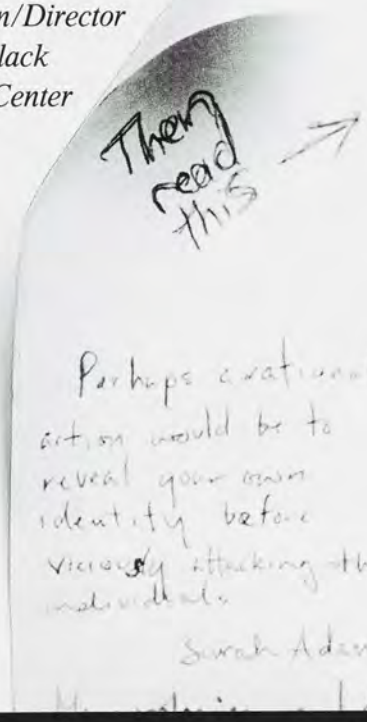

constructive action to address these
Asian students of this campus
incidents in different ways. And we
that Asian students of this campus

First you say you don't want
Asian-Americans — and
for me, as an Asian-
And don't speak for me


They read this

Perhaps a rational action would be to reveal your own identity before viciously attacking these individuals.

Sarah Adams

Give me a break! A
chastizing the poor fate
man does not even belo
has he done for this col
picture of a student wh
somebody who has no
Malcolm X? A violent re
What are Curtis Nance
or implying by putting

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letter condemning the
paper which had been
of the Admission's door
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heard, the RA deadline
were not enough minor
just Robert Henderson
pampering Janet Dicker

J. MARTIN NATVIG

Recent racially sensitive experiences at Swarthmore College are not isolated from the experiences of many other colleges and universities. Within the past two years, racial slurs, anonymous notes directed to students of color, and confrontations between black students and security personnel have occurred on most local campuses.

The primary difference between the incidents on other campuses and the Parrish walls dialogues—including the slashing of the Malcolm X portrait—is that the activity at Swarthmore has been symbolic. There have been no attacks directed toward individual students.

To understand the events of the past few months at Swarthmore, we must go back to the Diversity Retreat that was conducted in January 1990. Aware of levels of racial tension on campuses nationally, Swarthmore attempted to do preventive work in this area. Approximately 120 students attended a four-day session conducted by a number of professional human-relations facilitators. I would argue that the original workshop was so well-attended because something was already amiss and needed attention.

One outcome of this retreat was the formation of a coalition of students who began work to create an intercultural center at Swarthmore. A second outcome was a series of Diversity Workshops conducted on residence halls in April 1990.

Despite its ideals, Swarthmore is not exempt from the pain and ugliness of racism.

In September additional Diversity Workshops were conducted for all first-year students. These sessions proved to be quite difficult for the trained student facilitators, especially when issues of affirmative action and reverse discrimination were discussed.

In November written comments began to appear next to pictures and a mirror on the walls of the central hall in Parrish. The postings began with questions like: "Why is Nefertiti the only person of color on these walls?"; "How come there ain't no brothers and sisters on these walls?"; "Is this mirror the only way you are represented on these walls?"; and (next to a portrait of former College president John Nason) "Who is this white man?" The ensuing dialogue centered around issues of inclusion and exclusion at the College. In general, the debate was deemed healthy in the sense that these were feelings and thoughts that were not shared in other forums within the institution but that were deeply felt and needed space for expression.

Then a disturbing item appeared in the December 14 *Phoenix*. An anonymous letter contained the following: "The issue is entirely ridiculous. When will you minorities (blacks) stop feeling sorry for yourselves and shut up? You've raped us of enough already. You want to inflict your culture on our society, want to integrate thoroughly and completely, expect us to accept everything that is yours, simply because you've been discriminated against for centuries. What about us, Caucasians who could not go to certain schools or attend summer programs because such places offered only minority scholarships? Where is our culture? Do you expect us to throw it out the window?"

Coming just before finals and before students were to leave for the holidays, this letter set one of the tones for the following semester's Parrish walls dialogues. And it led to the first expressions of hurt and fear that I was aware of among black students.

The first few weeks after students returned in mid-January were dominated by discussion of the war in the Persian Gulf. For a time, most of the Parrish walls dialogues centered on the war. (And perhaps the broadest context in which to place all of these discussions is that of the conflict in the Persian Gulf. Student debates and issues seemed to have been more intense and exaggerated within the overwhelming environment of tension and concern generated by the war.)

Sometime during the first week of the semester, a portrait of Malcolm X appeared

Editor's Note

Since mid-November, an extraordinary conversation has been taking place in the halls of Parrish. It's been a mostly silent exchange, conducted on paper and canvas. An almost daily posting of thoughtful (and occasionally not-so-thoughtful) communications—handwritten notes, typewritten essays, posters, paintings, newspaper clippings—has appeared at the physical heart of the College, the walls outside the Admissions Office near Parrish Parlors.

The topics of this largely anonymous dialogue have varied, but much of it has centered on issues of diversity, race, opportunity, and strained relationships at Swarthmore. (There was also a broad, but essentially separate, wall debate about the Persian Gulf war.) Some of the words have been angry, some conciliatory. There have been humor, sadness, outrage, love, and, pervading all, a deep sense of unease about the state of our community.

Some of the things posted on the Parrish walls have led to tension and polarization at the College, and on the weekend of February 23, the debate suddenly changed. A painting of Malcolm X that had hung on the wall since mid-January, sparking much of the exchange of views, was removed and slashed in an act of vandalism that many likened to a symbolic lynching. The perpetrators of this act have not been identified, but the slashing led President David Fraser to call for "turning down the anger."

What follows on these pages is an attempt to put the Parrish walls debate into perspective for our readers. We have excerpted a history of the dialogue delivered by Joseph A. Mason, assistant dean and director of the Black Cultural Center, to the Student Life Committee of the Board of Managers on March 1. Professor Peter Schmidt's remarks, under the heading "Fighting Words—Late-Night Thoughts on the Parrish Graffiti," were delivered at an open meeting in late January. Schmidt, an associate professor of English literature, spoke again—this time in the form of a telephone monologue called "Rationalization Hotline"—at a tumultuous collection held on February 26. More than 70 African American, Asian American, and Hispanic American students walked out of the meeting, protesting that the months of debate had submerged their individuality in an atmosphere of labeling and name-calling.

During spring break, the walls were cleared by the Dean's Office, not as an attempt to silence the debate but "to create space for further dialogue and to preserve the current dialogue for history." All of the materials on the wall were copied for the College archives; a few excerpts are found on these pages. The deans' action was taken with the understanding that the debate should (and probably will) continue.

on the wall. There was no comment for more than a week. Later, a painting of Bob Marley [the late Jamaican American reggae singer] was hung nearby. Still, there was no comment for a few days, and when the comments did come, another issue became the focus of student concern.

On February 13 the Resident Assistants selection committee decided to extend the deadline for RA applications when it was found that very few minority students had applied. The committee came to the consensus that the social needs of the College community were paramount to the need of individuals to maintain the original application deadline. A student backlash to this decision was anticipated, and it came, including some very caustic language from one writer who signed himself (or perhaps herself) "a rational white." Quickly, "minorities" and "the blacks" became more central to the discussion.

It was in the midst of these discussions that the Malcolm X portrait was removed from the wall, taken to a fourth-floor student art gallery, slashed across the lower face and throat, and left there with a small piece of rope, cigarette butts, and other trash suggestive of a mock lynching. The deans responded with a memo expressing outrage at the act, and the damaged portrait was returned to the wall by students who had been participating in a war art project in the gallery. This act escalated fears on campus and changed the tone of the debate.

Student Council was concerned enough to organize a collection for the College community with hope of discussing the tensions resulting from the Malcolm X slashing. At the collection on February 26, more than 50 African American students, faculty, and administrators rose to their feet after listening to an introductory talk by Associate Professor Peter Schmidt. The following statement was delivered by Christina Bolden '92, president of Swarthmore African American Students Society: "We who stand before you are outraged by the underlying causes that led to the desecration of the Malcolm X portrait. We have chosen not to participate further because we refuse to accept the burden of explanation or education."

Each person standing then spoke his or her name individually. After all names were spoken, those standing walked out together. Some members of the community felt that too much of the dialogue on the Parrish walls had been conducted anonymously, so the African American community placed names and faces before the college community to avoid the abstractness of "the blacks."

After members of the black community left, an Asian student made a similar statement, and about 20 Asian students walked out, followed by a statement by a Hispanic student, after which several Hispanic students also left the collection. The walkout was an extremely stressful and painful experience for students of color who made that decision, but for many it was the first clear declaration of their voices at the College. White students were left to discuss among themselves the meaning of the walkout and the confusion and anger that it caused. Many tears have been shed around this action.

Racially divisive attitudes are a reality in our society, and Swarthmore—despite its ideals—is not exempt from such pain and ugliness. The struggle for diversity in our community has presented us with particular political, ethical, moral, and social lessons. We have learned that racial insensitivity can destroy whatever sense of community we might wish to share. The challenge ahead is to use our intelligence and academic prowess to deal with these attitudes in constructive rather than destructive ways.

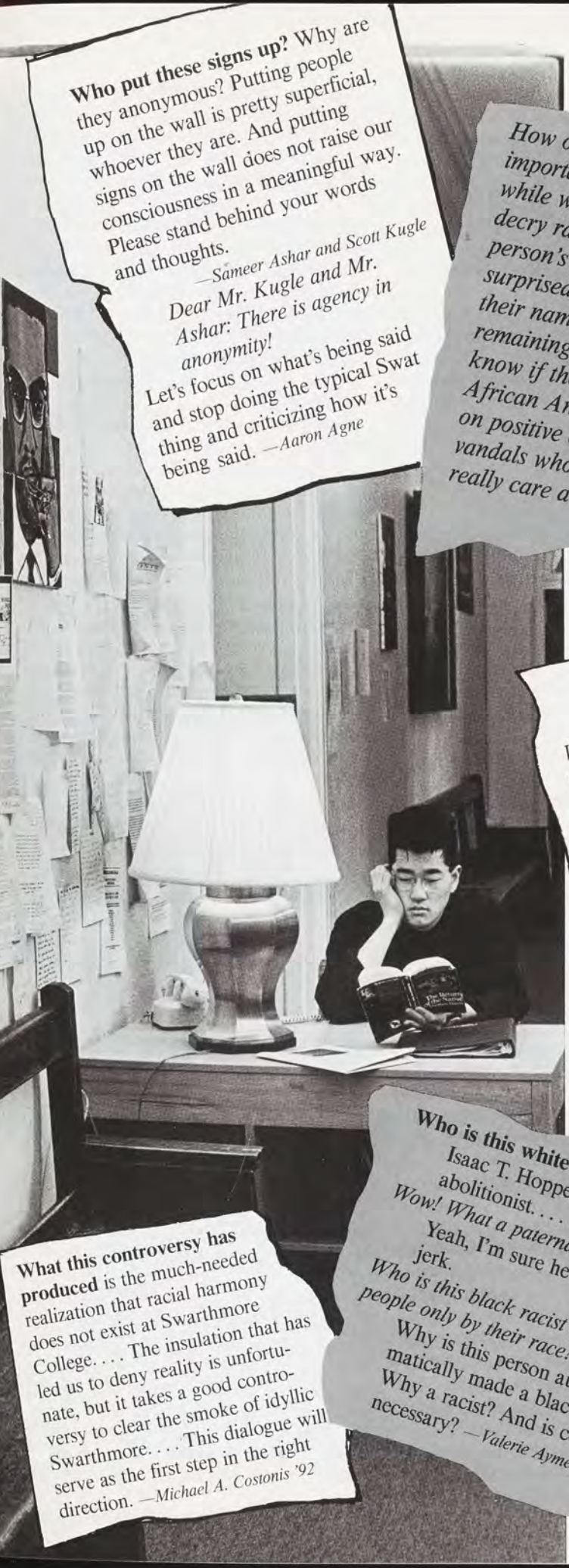
PAULA E. DOYLE

I miss you, Malcolm.
(The picture made you more than just a name to me.)
—*Sara Palmer '91*

For more on the struggle for diversity, please turn to page 14.

J. MARTIN NATVIG

Why is Nefertiti the only person of color on these walls?
Because the Quakers who established this college were exclusively white. You can't change the past with affirmative action. . . .
Is this mirror the only way you are represented on these walls? How come there ain't no brothers and sisters on these walls?
I don't see no Catholics either.
Interesting to note that no one has mentioned that the only woman on these walls is the wife of a president.
—*C. McConnell (a woman, of course)*



Who put these signs up? Why are they anonymous? Putting people up on the wall is pretty superficial, whoever they are. And putting signs on the wall does not raise our consciousness in a meaningful way. Please stand behind your words and thoughts.

—*Sameer Ashar and Scott Kugle*

Dear Mr. Kugle and Mr. Ashar: There is agency in anonymity!

Let's focus on what's being said and stop doing the typical Swat thing and criticizing how it's being said. —*Aaron Agne*

How one says something is very important. One can't call for peace while waving guns, and one can't decry racism while attacking a person's color (white or black). I'm surprised . . . that people can't sign their names. If they persist in remaining anonymous, we'll never know if they're well-meaning African American students intent on positive change or shallow vandals who talk a lot but don't really care about change. . . .

—*J. Higgins '91*

Things I need to think about:

1. When I saw a large group of African American students standing by the front door of the meeting house, I got uncomfortable and went in the side door instead. WHY?
2. I am more likely to start conversations with white workers in Sharples than with black workers, and more likely to talk with black men than with black women workers. WHY?
3. When something new is posted on this wall, I read it but I often ignore the flesh and blood people sitting ne it whose lives it affects. WHY?

What do *you* need to think abo

—*Andy Perry*

Are you implying white [vandals] here? *When I say vandals I do not imply white. I mean a lack of positive commitment. Vandals tear down, they do not build up. I would like to pinpoint the sincerity of those who began this dialogue.* —J.H.

In response to Brian L., who says that he is "unhappy with everything that's happened here", I would have to say that I am very happy with just about everything that has happened here. With the exception of one or two of the writings which are destructive in their content, I am encouraged by the fact that people's feelings are being put onto the walls – feelings and thoughts that for people of all opinions may have been kept inside or only discussed with certain 'safe' people. When these things don't get spoken about, they result in outbursts like the Malcolm X sloshing that serve no purpose but to inspire hate and anger.

How much more alive these walls are now! In a sense, we students have claimed them for ourselves, rather than blithely passing them by every day. I say, let the writings, pictures – all contributions – go on in the name of improved communication and dialogue. – Pat Egan '92

What this controversy has produced is the much-needed realization that racial harmony does not exist at Swarthmore College. . . . The insulation that has led us to deny reality is unfortunate, but it takes a good controversy to clear the smoke of idyllic Swarthmore. . . . This dialogue will serve as the first step in the right direction. —*Michael A. Costonis '92*

Who is this white man?

Isaac T. Hopper, 19th-century abolitionist. . . .

Wow! What a paternalistic dude!

Yeah, I'm sure he was a real jerk.

Who is this black racist who judges people only by their race?. . .

Why is this person automatically made a black racist?

Why a racist? And is color necessary? —*Valerie Aymer*

FIGHTING WORDS...

Late-Night Thoughts on the Parrish Graffiti

By Peter J. Schmidt, Associate Professor of English Literature

A blank space, suddenly filled with voices . . .

Do graffiti appear when there is no other acceptable public way to say what needs to be said? Apparently, the topics raised by the graffiti on the Parrish walls were not being adequately discussed in classes, dorm spaces, dining halls, College collections, or in the writing done for courses. And the graffiti appeared in the most public space of all, not bathroom walls or desktops. Graffiti at the College's center suggest that this may be the single most important event that happened at Swarthmore this year.

The Parrish walls writing belongs to an intriguing tradition: Democracy Wall in China, later parodied in the "democracy wall" of student comments about the food service in the Sharples Dining Hall. It's interesting that as a form such a wall of comments is so adaptable that it can be just right for a comparatively trivial forum in Sharples and also just right for discussing issues involving race, power, and responsibility. In fact, the best name for this sort of thing may be a very Quakerly one, a "collection"—for that is what these graffiti walls are: They are an open space collecting discussion and debate, with no end in sight.

A blank space, a space suddenly filled with voices . . .

Who laughed when they saw those first questions, with relief and admiration, with a sense that now it's out in the open? Who had the opposite reaction—sudden anxiety, self-consciousness, anger?

How many reading the wall (or this article) assumed that the first group was composed mostly of black students, the second group of white students? In my conversations about the wall with black and white students, in fact, I found no correlation between race and responses: Some students of color were clearly in favor of what happened; others were worried about what they would now have to deal with. White students' reactions, I found, were similarly unpredictable, depending more on individual personalities than on race.

How many faculty and staff members went to see the wall? How many were so involved in their jobs and their home life that they didn't go see the comments? How many didn't learn about it until they read about it in *The Phoenix*? How many dismissed the wall comments as sophomoric, not worth a second thought, or worse? How many even now don't know what happened?

Business as usual, interrupted . . .

Think of the connotations of the phrase "the writing on the wall." Think also of the Biblical source of this phrase, in Daniel. There, you remember, the writing appears to be "nonsense." It had to be interpreted. To what degree were we all playing Daniels during the time the wall was active? To what degree were we all "weighed in the balance and found wanting," as Daniel said? Are there analogies between raising the issue of race and being put in a lion's den?

Business as usual, interrupted . . .

The original Parrish comments were partly inspired by the scene in Spike Lee's film *Do the Right Thing* in which the black youth named Buggin' Out asks Sal, the white pizza shop owner, why there aren't any pictures of blacks on the wall. (Of course he doesn't quite put it that way, but you know what I mean.) Sal, who is Italian American, has only pictures of Italian Americans—Frank Sinatra, Joe DiMaggio, etc. Sal, of course, replies that it's his wall because it's his pizza parlor, and that if Buggin' Out ever gets a place of his own, he can put pictures of whomever he wants up on his walls. (One of Sal's many implications here is that Buggin' Out will never get a place of his own because he's too busy causing trouble rather than working.)

But does Buggin' Out really "do the right thing" when he confronts Sal? The genius of Spike Lee's film is not to allow us to come up with easy answers to questions like this; many things in his movie, from Buggin' Out's name to the fact that he is eating Sal's pizza when he shouts his question, suggest that the movie's perspective on these events may hardly be the same as Buggin' Out's.

And does Sal do the right thing when he turns Buggin' Out's question into a question of pride, property, and power—i.e., it's my space and I can do what I want with it? That's a typically American answer, of course: I own the property so I can do whatever I like with it; you get property and then you can express yourself too. We laugh, but to what degree are the portraits of Swarthmore's founders and past presidents in Parrish about just the things Sal says his portraits are about: pride, property, and power? To what degree, however, do the portraits (or the people they represent) symbolize something different, the creation of a public space (such as a college) where a conversation can occur in spite of the claims that power and property make upon us? Or is such a distinction illusory?

Just some questions, a handful of questions . . .

Why did the student comments so quickly focus not on the issue of representing race but on the question of the "anonymity" of several of the original writers? One student replied to a comment questioning the validity of anonymous comments by suggesting that "there is agency in anonymity." That's true. The absence of a name meant that the questioner couldn't be identified and singled out, and it was interesting that some students immediately assumed that this implied a threat to "community." Other students—even more revealingly—immediately assumed that this "threatening" voice must be

| MARTIN NATHAN

from a black student. Others asserted that if the comment was from a black student, it must therefore be "well-intentioned." Still others assumed that the issue would be resolved only if we "knew" who wrote the comment.

Do we really assume we know each other's intentions more easily when we can determine the name or the race of a person? What unites all these very different readings of what happened is the following assumption: If we knew the race and, better yet, the name of the writer, we would automatically understand how to interpret what he or she says. Is this really what we are teaching and learning at this place? I find this the most disturbing thing of all about the wall's comments: that anonymity is necessarily a threat, while what is publicly known about you is assumed to be unthreatening. Couldn't the reverse be just as true, or even more true—that the conclusions people automatically draw from your public appearance, name, etc., may be a threat to the community, while your protected private space could be a healthy antidote?

Just some questions, a handful of questions . . .

What about the founders' and presidents' paintings themselves? Why didn't I see any comments about the fact that, unlike most of the other paintings hung in the building, some of these paintings were "anonymous," without identifying signs? Particularly that portrait in the center hall, across from the Admissions Office. Why wasn't that portrait's anonymity threatening, if the students' comments were taken to be? Is the portrait unlabeled because its label was removed by someone a while ago or (as I think most likely) because when the portrait was hung the man's name went without saying—"everybody" knew who he was?

Why is it so difficult to understand that what goes without saying can be threatening enough so that someone else who wasn't part of that consensus—who represents today's Swarthmore rather than the Swarthmore of the past—has to ask a question about it? Note that many students here assumed that his anonymity not only wasn't threatening but didn't even need to be discussed: He was on the wall; he was part of the "tradition." The questioners, however, were not, and their anonymity was taken by some to be threatening. All anonymity is not created equal, apparently.

Time out. I did a few minutes of detective work—i.e., calling Bob Barr and sleuthing in McCabe—and found out a little about who that man is. His name is John Nason, and he was the president of Swarthmore after Frank Aydelotte and before Courtney Smith—from 1940 until 1953. He taught in the Philosophy Department and published several works now stored in McCabe, including *The Nature and Content of a Liberal Education*, *Education for Living*, and *Leibnitz and the Logical Argument for Individual Substances*. After leaving Swarthmore, he worked for the Foreign Policy Association in New York. He later became the president of Carleton College and now lives in retirement in Chester County, Pa. Think of how hard it must have been for the portrait to keep a straight face, staring straight ahead, while people were talking about it right in front of it. Think of the self-control it took to remain silent. . . .

It was lonely for Mr. Nason up on that wall, no one to talk to, just a blank wall to stare at. All that changed recently. Someone put a portrait of another person up on the opposite wall, to give Mr. Nason someone to talk to. This man's name goes without saying too. His first name is Malcolm; his last name was mysteriously crossed out. You might say that Malcolm is also a philosopher, good company for Mr. Nason. In fact, you could say that he too was very interested in "logical arguments for individual substances." No doubt Mr. X and Mr. Nason have a lot to talk about.

Are there people here at Swarthmore

Please turn to page 27

Hello, Rationalization Hotline...

You need 'em, we give 'em! To hear a rationalization right away, press 1. To have a rationalization repeated, press 2. To hear a new one, press 3.

This is the Rationalization Hotline. Go ahead, please. . . . You responded to writing on Parrish walls by circling some of the words and inflaming the authors? That's OK, they asked for it, they shouldn't have been so stupid in their choice of words . . . . You're welcome!

Rationalization Hotline . . . Well, that's OK—you don't have to get involved. You're damn right it's interfering with your education. Back to the Great Books. . . .

Hello, Rational White Hotline . . . Someone stole the portrait of Malcolm X, ripped its throat, and dumped ashes and a rope on top of it? . . . Whew! The ways of some whitefolks sure are strange! . . . OK. The first thing to do is question whether that was a symbolic lynching or not. You can spend endless time arguing about whether we have enough proof about what the vandal's "intention" was—after all, maybe there just happened to be ashes and a piece of rope in the garbage can. It was a coincidence.

Also, it must have been an outsider who did this, right? A *Swarthmore* student wouldn't do such a thing! . . .

This is the first act of outright racism you've ever really seen, right? This sort of thing doesn't happen where you come from. And you've *never* been involved in anything like this when you interact with people of color or talk about them when they're not present, right? Keep what happened to the painting as separate as you can from the everyday. Stress that it is new and extreme. . . .

Since you're still anxious, I'll give you another rationalization free of charge. It's airtight: Violence begets violence. Malcolm X advocated violence, and it was a violent act for the student to put an unauthorized painting of him on the walls. So it's no accident Malcolm X was assassinated and the painting was defaced—they both asked for it. The person who put up the painting wanted this to happen. . . .

Rationalization Hotline . . . There are three students of color on your hall, out of 25 students? And what happened? You made derogatory puns out of some of the students' first names. That's no big deal, is it? Oh, it was *only* the students of color who got the nicknames? Well, they didn't mind, did they? . . . You didn't ask them how they felt about it, you just did it? What else did you do? Crossed out one student's name on her door and in the hall's phone directory and wrote in your mocking nickname. . . . Is this a true story? It is—Swarthmore, 1990-91.

Well, this is a hard one. I'm not sure what to tell you. After all, what you did is kind of a defacement too. But here's a rationalization that works every time: "Can't they take a joke?" . . . You're welcome!

Associate Professor Peter Schmidt
February 26, 1991

J. MARTIN NATVIG

Rudy Rucker '67 on the trestle over Crum Creek. Conrad Bunger, Swarthmore student and protagonist of Rucker's novel *The Secret of Life*, proves to himself that he has special powers when he flies from an oncoming train on the trestle.

Boppers, Bazookas, & Babs the Sex Sphere

by Rebecca Alm
Illustrations by David Povilaitis

The year is 2020. The baby boomers are senior citizens, and the state of Florida has become a giant old folks' home. On the moon robots live and work, having evolved past being obedient machines and into intelligent "boppers." They've revolted against the tyranny of humans, but now humans and boppers together face a new threat—the big boppers, with their insatiable appetite for software (brain-tapes of human and bopper thought patterns). Cobb Anderson, creator of the boppers, leaves Florida for the moon to seek immortality, which has been promised him by his robot double. Some of the boppers want Cobb's software—but what will happen to his software and his hardware (body) once they are separated?

This is the future as imagined by Rudy Rucker '67, mathematician, teacher, computer scientist, and writer, in his 1982 novel *Software*. The book won science fiction's Philip K. Dick Award and helped start a new science-fiction subgenre: cyberpunk. *Software* was followed in 1988 by a sequel, *Wetware*, in which the boppers find a way to combine their software with human DNA (wetware). This time, the status quo is menaced by Manchile, a combination of

man and robot who is planted in a woman's womb, gestates in nine days, and ages about a year every day. His mission is to impregnate as many women as possible while preaching the gospel that there "ain't no difference between people and boppers NO MORE!!"

Behind its high technology, wild speculation, and raucous adventure, cyberpunk is about a very big question: What does it mean to be a human being in a world where machines are approaching the capabilities of humans? "Cyberpunk deals a lot with computers that are almost like humans and humans that are almost like computers," Rucker explains. "It's people reacting to the impact of computers invading their lives and becoming much more lifelike. Cyberpunk explores all sorts of extrapolations and pushes things. I just push humans and robots together and try to blur the boundaries."

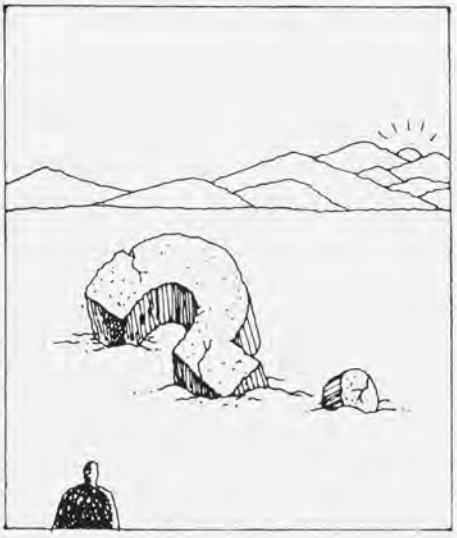
That's the "cyber" part of cyberpunk; the "punk" part is a liberal sprinkling of "lots of sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll," adds Rucker as an afterthought.

In *Software* the boppers seem like people—they talk, act, and deal with each other like humans do, arguing, forming relationships, and trying to protect their "hardware." And the people become like boppers: human Cobb Anderson becomes "immortal" by having his software put into a bopper body. Before the transformation he wonders whether the new creature will really be him, but after living in his new body, he concludes, "A person is just hardware plus software plus existence. Me existing in flesh is the same as me existing on chips."

Rucker attacks such big scientific and philosophical ideas through funny, racy, and sometimes stomach-churning adventures involving things like robots named for Edgar Allan Poe characters, drugs that turn people into pools of liquid with eyeballs floating on top, murder, sex, and cannibalism. There are the "pink tanks," where human organs are grown, and there's the son of Manchile, Bubba, who roasts and eats a man, "nibbling a whole leg right down to the bone, both thigh and drumstick." Cobb Anderson, when he's been turned into a bopper, has to access his robot body's library of functions by singing, "Be-Bop-A-Lu-La, she's mah baybee. . . ." And though his bopper body is not susceptible to alcohol, he can emulate the feeling of drunkenness by breathing through his left nostril once for each step of drunkenness he wants to experience. Sex is another possible subroutine.

There's also a lot of science in Rucker's science fiction. The idea of robot evolution, for instance, is something he explores from a scientific perspective in his nonfiction

Science-fiction writer and mathematician Rudy Rucker '67 asks the Big Questions: What is time? What is space? And what is the secret of life?



book *Infinity and the Mind*, published the same year as *Software*. Though we can't write the program for a machine that can think as we do (or better than we do), it may someday be possible to set in motion an evolutionary process, based on Darwin's principles, that could lead to such a robot. Thus, the bizarre worlds of *Software* and *Wetware* are "plausible," according to Rucker.

Rucker's background is in mathematics. He earned M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in math from Rutgers University, where his dissertation dealt with logic and set theory. He now teaches half time at San Jose State University in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science. In addition, he works for a computer software company called Autodesk, located in Sausalito, California. His title there is "mathenaut," from a book of short stories he edited called *Mathenauts: Tales of Mathematical Wonder*.

His current project at Autodesk is programming for cyberspace, also known as virtual reality—a way of "entering" a computer world and interacting with what is on the screen. The first application will be for architects, who could use the software to help design, for example, a factory. "The idea is to take the file that has all the blueprints and load that into the machine, put on special goggles we call 'eye phones,' and walk around inside the computer-generated factory. Say you don't like where that door is—you just reach out with your 'data glove' and grab it and move it."

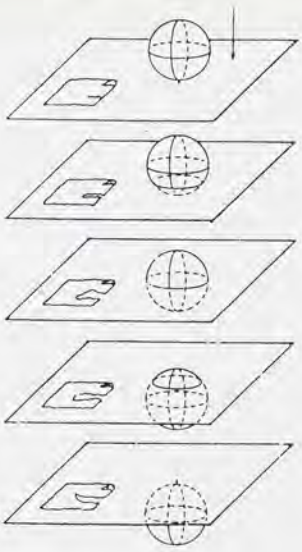
Rucker has published 16 books, half of them novels. Not all the novels could be classified as cyberpunk; some of the novels are more fantastic, like *Master of Space and Time*, which explores time travel and alternate universes. In addition to the novels, Rucker has written two collections of short stories, a Kerouac-like fictionalized autobiography, a volume of poetry, and four books for the general reader on complex mathematical and scientific concepts like infinity and the fourth dimension. A movie of *Software* is in the very early stages of development, and Rucker is beginning to think about a sequel to *Software* and *Wetware*, to be called *Limpware*.

His most recent novel, *The Hollow Earth*, set in the 1830s, is about a journey to the inside of an Earth that is hollow as a tennis ball. The book stars Edgar Allan Poe and Rucker's dog, Arf. That novel is perhaps his most ambitious project to date: "I was trying to write the great American science fiction novel," he explains.

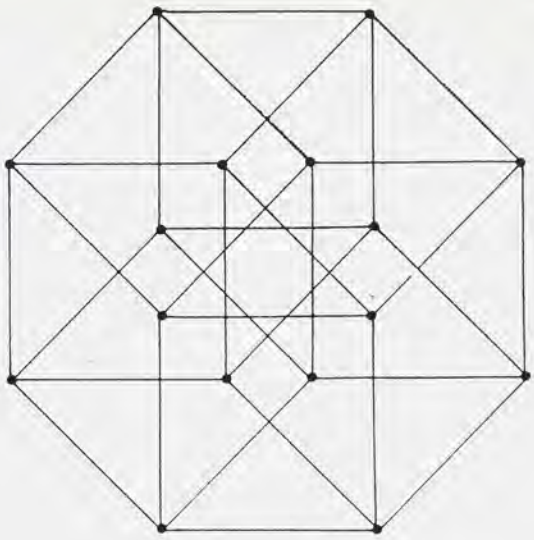
In all his work, Rucker asks the big questions—not just about the nature of humanity but also about the nature of space and time, for instance. In his nonfiction book *The Fourth Dimension*, Rucker introduces the problem of the nature of space with tremendous enthusiasm: "What entity, short of God, could be nobler or worthier of man's attention than the cosmos itself? Forget about interest rates, forget about war and murder, let's talk about *space*."

Rucker's way of writing about space opens up the world of physics and math to a nonscientific reader, who can enter Rucker's scientific world through many different points of reference. In *The Fourth Dimension*, scientific and mathematical names like Albert Einstein, Kurt Gödel, Georg Cantor, and Charles Hinton mix with Salvador Dali, Immanuel Kant, E.T., and the Rolling Stones. Drawings meant to approximate hyperspheres and hypercubes (four-dimensional geometrical figures) appear next to whimsical cartoons. A skillful use of analogies helps the reader understand what the fourth dimension—"a direction perpendicular to all the directions we can point to"—must be like.

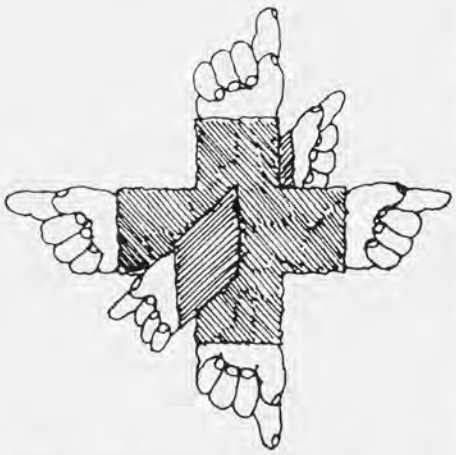
A four-dimensional sphere, or hypersphere, is the central figure in *The Sex Sphere*, probably Rucker's most radical



Rucker uses an analogy in *The Fourth Dimension* to explain what a hypersphere might look like to us. A sphere passing through a two-dimensional plane would look like a point, then a series of circles increasing in size, then a series of circles decreasing in size, and finally a point again (right). Likewise, a hypersphere might appear in three dimensions like a balloon: first a tiny dot, then a sphere increasing in size, then a sphere decreasing in size, then a dot, then nothing (below).



A two-dimensional attempt to represent a hypercube. If you stare at it long enough looking for the cubes in it, "the thing fairly seethes with activity, doing its best to get hyper," writes Rucker.



Above: The fourth dimension is "a direction perpendicular to all the directions we can point to." Below: A lucky man comes upon a hyperspace tunnel, shaped like a sphere. If he dives into it, he'll be in another universe.

novel. Babs the hypersphere gets trapped in three-dimensional space and tries to free herself. She discovers that she can get men to do whatever she wants by offering them unique sexual adventures. "I was trying to do something very outrageous," Rucker says, perhaps understating the case. "The publisher was a little uncomfortable with it. I mean, it had sex—and detailed instructions on how to build an atomic bomb." In the end, Babs turns out to be a figure in Hilbert space, space of an infinite number of dimensions. Rucker speculates on what Hilbert space is like by letting his protagonist, Alwin Bitter, enter Babs' Hilbert space through her giant vagina.

Rucker himself has tried to experience the higher dimensions, though through more conventional channels. One of his first projects when he began working on cyberspace was using a computer to simulate a hypercube that was tumbling in three-dimensional space. Watching it tumble was extremely disorienting, Rucker says. "That night I had nightmares. When you tumble a hypercube, it kind of rotates through itself, and in my dream the house was doing that." The fourth dimension isn't an easy place to be: "At first you think it's going to destroy your mind, but then you just hang on and you get used to it."

Rucker's books also delve into the nature of time, another higher dimension. In *The Fourth Dimension*, Rucker explains that we could think of time as one element of a "spacetime block universe" in which the passage of time is an illusion, since this instant has always existed and all instants are equally real and extant in the universe. This kind of universe follows from Einstein's special theory of relativity, which implies that there is no absolute way of defining a single moment in time.

So if all time exists in the block universe, isn't it theoretically possible to move through time? Einstein's relativity theory leads to the conclusion that we can't travel faster than the speed of light—or travel through time. "Sometimes people will say, why can't we go faster than the speed of light?" Rucker says. "The reason is that it appears that once you do that you could travel to your own past, and then you could create a situation that seems inconsistent with logic—where something is both true and false." To illustrate such a situation, in *The Fourth Dimension* Rucker presents time-travel paradoxes—like the one in which Professor Zone travels back in time and ends up shooting his younger self with a bazooka. (See opposite page.)

Such paradoxes defy logic—so if we believe that logic is king, Rucker explains, then we have to accept that time travel is not possible. But it's possible that logic isn't king, and then perhaps the universe *could* accommodate an "impossibility" like a yes-and-no situation.

Perhaps behind Rucker's search for the natures of humanity, space, and time lies another quest—for "the secret of life." He published a book of that name in 1985, an account of a boy growing up in Louisville, Kentucky, and attending Swarthmore in the

'60s. As the novel begins, its protagonist, Conrad Bunger, realizes that he's going to die someday, and that knowledge propels his search for the secret of life.

While at Swarthmore, Conrad discovers many things about himself—including that he's an alien sent to Earth by his race to discover the secret of life. He finds he's been given five powers that he can use only when his life is in danger. His power of flying saves him from an oncoming train on the trestle over Crum Creek. His power of stopping time saves him from a bullet shot at him as he prepares to speak at a collection at Clothier Hall. In the end, he gets a glimmering of the secret but decides to stay on Earth to continue the search rather than return to his original home.

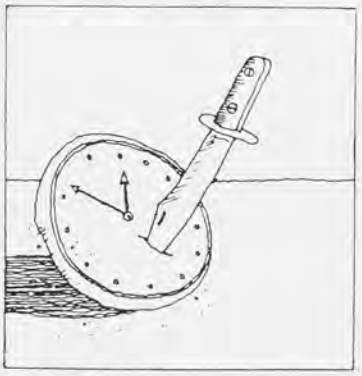
The Secret of Life has more than a few autobiographical elements. Like Conrad, Rucker grew up in Louisville, went to Swarthmore in the '60s, and met his wife (Sylvia Bogsch Rucker '65) there. (The Ruckers' connection to Swarthmore continues with their first child, Georgia,, who will soon graduate with the Class of '91.) Conrad's friends in the novel are modeled on Rucker's college friends. (You know who you are.) And Conrad's search for the secret of life is to some extent modeled on his own youthful search, Rucker admits.

The transformation of life into fiction is central to Rucker's writing. "If I was going to categorize myself," he explains, "I wouldn't use the word cyberpunk; I'd use a word I made up: transreal. A real big influence on my life was Jack Kerouac. I always liked the way he would write about his life thinly fictionalized. I write about my life, but I go beyond thinly fictionalizing it; I turn it into science fiction."

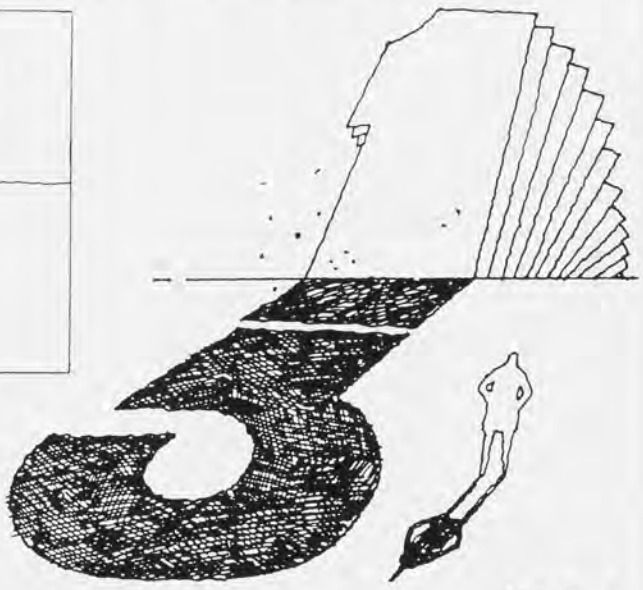
Does Conrad find the secret of life? Here's what he comes up with near the end of the novel, as he prepares to talk at the Swarthmore collection: "It's not a Secret at all, is the main thing, and it's not anything occult or unusual. It's everywhere all the time, like an ether-wind blowing through our minds and bodies, it's God, it's simple existence, *can't you see it?* . . . All is One, *All is One, ALL IS ONE.*" Or as Rucker puts it, echoing Conrad: "I believe that the universe is one big thing and that it's possible to feel yourself to be part of it. The secret of life is simply that you're alive, you're here, and you're having love and relationships."

The idea of the universe as "one big thing" draws together so much of Rucker's work. Humans and boppers are essentially the same. Space is not divided into three dimensions but is a single whole in infinite dimensions. Time is not linear, with only one moment existing at a time; rather, all of time exists as a whole. The real world merges with a computer world in cyberspace, and real life merges with fiction in transrealism. All is One.

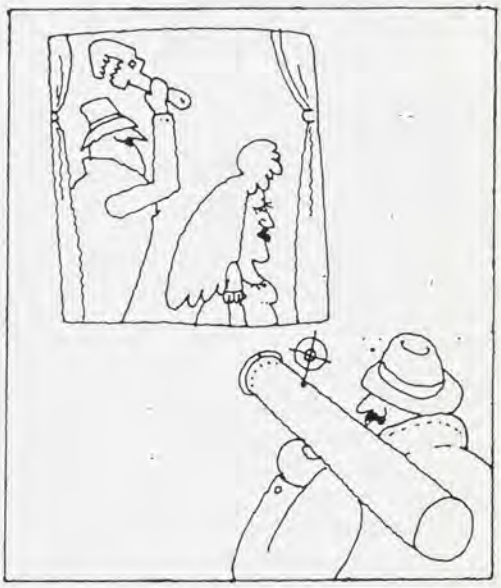
Or take part of Rucker's conclusion from *The Fourth Dimension*, where he answers the biggest question of them all: "What is reality? Take all your perceptions and all mine, take everyone's thoughts and all the visions. In an infinite-dimensional space there is room to fit them all together; each is a piece of the infinite-dimensional One, and this One is reality."



"Let's kill time," writes Rucker. "Let's reach through time and grab hold of eternity."



All is One?



A Time Paradox

At age 36, Professor Zone suffers a temporary psychosis. During his period of madness, he murders his beloved wife, Zenobia. He is found not guilty by reason of insanity, but, stricken with remorse, he decides to devote all his energies to undoing his wrong. He hopes somehow to go back and change the past. On his 50th birthday, Zone finally completes his work: the construction of a working time machine. He gets in the machine, travels back some 14 years, and goes to look in the window of the house where he and his dear wife used to live. There is his poor Zenobia, and there is that mad killer, Zone-36. Zone-50 had hoped to arrive early enough to talk some sense into Zone-36, but the crucial moment is already at hand! Zone-36 is stalking Zenobia, a heavy pipe wrench raised high overhead! Without stopping to think, Zone-50 aims his bazooka and shoots mad Zone-36 through the heart. *The Paradox:* If Zone-36 dies, then there can be no Zone-50 to come back and kill Zone-36. If Zone-36 does not die, then there will be a Zone-50 to come back and kill Zone-36. Does Zone-36 die? *Yes and no.*

THE COLLEGE

President-elect Alfred Bloom speaks to College community

"Today was an extraordinary day in a sequence of very exciting learning experiences about the College extending over the last few months, experiences that have led me to know that this is the college I want to come back to and that being its president is the kind of challenge I want to accept."

Thus Alfred H. Bloom, executive vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty at Pitzer College—and former associate professor of psychology and linguistics and associate provost at Swarthmore—expressed his feelings to the press on March 4, the day the Board of Managers named him the 13th president of Swarthmore.

Minutes later Neil Austrian '61, chairman of the Board, introduced the new president to the College community in Lang Concert Hall. After expressing his pleasure at the Board's acceptance of the recommendation of Bloom by the Presidential Search Committee, chaired by Samuel L. Hayes III '57, Austrian called upon Bloom for brief remarks. His remarks, in part, follow:

"I grew up intellectually

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and professionally at Swarthmore. It was in those moments when students and I hit upon new intellectual connections, when our relationship grew to that of intellectual companions, that I became sure of my vocation as an educator.

"It was during my years at Swarthmore, as I explored how the Chinese and Japanese choose to frame moral issues, that my research grew from an academic commitment into an intrinsic part of who I am. The study of other cultures was not only fascinating, sensitizing, and a wonderful excuse for a great meal, but it had become as well a powerful vehicle for giving strength and legitimacy to personal values that I had felt deeply but that had been de-emphasized or even marginalized by my own cultural world.

"And it has been as a result of reflecting on my Swarthmore experience from the perspective afforded by the past five years that I have come to understand how vital it is for a college to expect and enable its students to become active, productive participants in the life of the mind. How vital it is for a college to expect and enable its students to come to value the life of the mind not only for the pleasure it brings and for the contributions it can make to knowledge, but also for the impact it can have on the ways in which societies define their priorities and responsibilities. What I came to understand was, in other words, that those things that are most significant to undergraduate education are the very things that Swarthmore does so well.

"I hope that in the next few years all of us—faculty, students, staff, Managers, and alumni—whose energies combine to create this extraordinary institution will come to feel a heightened sense of ownership in it, that we will act to strengthen those curricular and community structures that support the distinctive qualities of our educational program, and that we will convey to the broader world a vision of undergraduate education that places the thrill, creativity, and impact of the life of the mind at its core.

"Finally, we must also act to ensure that Swarthmore remains a national leader by responding to the challenges of a pluralistic and internationalist world. Without jeopardizing its commitment to communicating the Western tradition, Swarthmore must lead the nation in preparing students to embrace, prosper in, and contribute to a world that gives place and respect to the identities and experiences of people who have long been expected to defer or assimilate to that tradition."

Bloom planned to spend two days on campus in late April, meeting small groups of students, faculty members, and staff. He is scheduled to assume his new responsibilities on September 1.

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Peggi and Al Bloom share a moment before Al's introduction to the College community as Swarthmore's 13th president.

Caring for campus trees is a major task—and expense

Some of the old favorites are going. The Everett Hunt sycamore at the corner of Sharples Dining Hall, a silent witness to the founding of Swarthmore 127 years ago, succumbed in January to old age, as did the Brumbaugh oak in the circle east of Parrish. A swamp white oak near the top of Magill Walk was removed, the victim of a large branch that fell from its neighbor facing it across the walk.

All in all, some 23 old or deceased trees were taken out in January and February as part of an ongoing tree-maintenance program. Jeff Jabco, director of grounds and assistant director of horticulture for the Scott Arboretum, says that the College spends some $40,000 annually for the maintenance of trees, an expenditure that the founding fathers and subsequent stewards of Swarthmore would doubtless have heartily approved. George Fox talked of gardens; Lucretia Mott, one of the founders of the College, planted a red oak on opening day in 1869; and on subsequent Founders Days, several illustrious guests of the College continued planting trees.

Govs. M.G. Brumbaugh and William C. Sproul (Class of 1891) of Pennsylvania and Gov. S.M. Halston of Indiana all planted oaks in the circle east of Parrish. Another Founders Day tree in the Dean Bond Rose Garden is a scarlet oak planted by President Woodrow Wilson in 1913. Jane Addams carried on the tradition on Founders Day 1932, when she planted a pin oak below Sproul Observatory. Only the Wilson, Halston, and Addams oaks remain.

Another source of new trees on campus used to be senior classes, for it was a tradition that these classes give a tree to their alma mater. The beautiful Class of 1880 red oak still stands behind Cunningham House, now the Scott Arboretum offices.

Maintenance of this precious heritage of trees is ongoing and expensive. A crew of six men worked eight days pruning the oaks on Magill Walk and taking out the one injured tree. Dead and dying limbs and branches were removed and the outside branches thinned to conform more with the canopy over the walk itself, which has been lightened from time to time. In addition to this "detail" pruning, the crew worked another 12 days safety pruning the area between Clothier and Wharton and down the hill past the fraternity houses to Sharples and the pinetum.

The campus is divided into six areas for tree maintenance, and each area is pruned once every six years. In addition, the Scott Outdoor Auditorium, scheduled annually for detail pruning before commencement, needed added attention this winter, when a sassafras, approximately 19 inches in diameter, crashed into the amphitheater as a result of a severe January ice storm.

The tree-maintenance program also includes an integrated pest-management strategy, making use of horticultural oils, nontoxic insecticidal soaps, and the injection of elms with a chemical fungicide every two to three years. Still, all but one of the elms along the walk in front of Parrish have succumbed to Dutch elm disease, and the survivor may not last long because of the contagious nature of the disease. Other campus elms are in a similar precarious state.

Outside contractors are engaged for these major maintenance projects, while the College's grounds crew takes care of the smaller trees—collections of crab apples, magnolias, dogwoods, and hawthorns. It takes a six-man crew five weeks a year to keep up with this pruning work.

In spite of the thoughtful care given to the preservation of the notable tree collections on campus, there is more to do than there are funds to do it all. Last summer a tree consultant recommended cabling many of the venerable Magill Walk oaks, and Jabco would like to see the key trees at the top of the hill near Parrish be rigged for lightning protection.

An integral part of the overall program for trees is the replacement strategy, and Claire Sawyers, director of the Scott Arboretum, notes that some $7,000 to $10,000, generated from the Arboretum endowment, is spent annually to replace trees and shrubs. These funds are supplemented with gifts from other arboreta and nurseries and from alumni and friends of the College, frequently as memorials.

The widow of James Morton McIlvain, Class of 1890, endowed a fund for arboreal purposes in memory of her husband. In the fall of 1990, family and friends of Edward M. Passmore '30 gave a grove of silver bell trees in the circle west of Parrish in his memory. The Kathryn Bassett '35 shagbark hickory was dedicated to her by family and friends in 1986 and stands between Parrish and Clothier.

Sawyers says that a small tree costs approximately $150 but notes that this figure does not include any planting and maintenance costs. She hopes that future gifts of memorial trees, always welcome, can include appropriate funds for maintenance.

Swarthmore sets application record

At a time when many colleges and universities are reporting drops in applications for admission, Swarthmore has received 3,578 applications for the 1991-92 entering class, the most ever. Robert A. Barr, Jr., '56, dean of admissions, attributes the rise in applications to many possible factors, including recent good national

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publicity, a strong recruiting effort, and Swarthmore's need-blind admissions policy, which allows all qualified students to be admitted regardless of financial need and strives to meet all demonstrated need.

"Rising tuition is a major concern for everyone," Barr commented, "but people are willing to pay for what they consider good quality, and we hope we've done a good job of explaining the excellence of a Swarthmore education." Student charges will increase 7 percent to $22,160 for the 1991-92 school year, according to the budget the Board of Managers approved in March.

Fraser to direct Aga Khan's social welfare programs

President David Fraser, who will step down from the presidency at the end of August, has announced that on September 1 he will become head of the Social Welfare Department of the Secretariat of Karim Aga Khan, the 49th Imam of the Shia Imami Ismaili Moslems.

The Secretariat runs the Aga Khan's various development programs conducted in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Syria, Kenya, and Tanzania. It is headquartered at Aiglemont, the estate of the Aga Khan near Chantilly, 30 miles outside Paris. One of the world's richest men, the Aga Khan (the title means "great leader") succeeded his grandfather as spiritual leader of some 15 million Ismailis in 1957 and since that time has expanded the programs of social and economic development begun early in this century by his grandfather.

Fraser anticipates a great deal of travel in his new job as he directs some five hospitals, 300 educational institutions, and 200 health centers. Much of the Aga Khan's development work is done in conjunction with other development agencies, such as the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations. Said Fraser: "I will be involved in the general issue of development, because the Aga Khan sees his responsibility as serving all peoples in underdeveloped countries the world over.

"It's important," continued Fraser, "to create a health system that works in the developing world, from outreach into homes and primary health clinics to simple hospitals and medical centers where health workers can receive high-quality training."

Fraser anticipates that identifying health problems and designing the intervention will require the use of the skills and techniques he acquired as an epidemiologist as well as draw on the experience gained in the Swarthmore presidency. He sees his new position as "the most logical career progression I can imagine: health and education, in a Third World setting."

The Frasers plan to live in Paris, where Fraser's wife, Barbara, wants to continue her work as an attorney specializing in finance.

Four named to Board of Managers

The Board of Managers at its December meeting elected four new members to serve four-year terms—including two who are filling the newly created Young Alumni Manager post.

Those named as Young Alumni Managers are Barbara Klock '86, a research assistant in virology at The Rockefeller University, and Alex Curtis '89, who is enrolled in a Ph.D. program in art history at Princeton University.

Named as Alumni Managers were Victor Navasky '54, editor-in-chief of *The Nation*, and Diana Judd Stevens '63, a youth programs specialist and coordinator of the STRIVE Elementary Program/Green Circle for the Delaware Region, National Conference of Christians and Jews.

The creation of the Young Alumni Manager post was formalized at the Board's

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Celebration . . . *Black alumni gathered on campus March 22-24 to celebrate the twin 20th anniversaries of the Swarthmore College Gospel Choir and the Black Cultural Center in Robinson House. Black Alumni Weekend drew 120 people—alumni and their families—to activities that included a luncheon, banquet, historical readings, a meeting of the Black Alumni Association, and a concert Sunday (directed by Freeman Palmer '79), which featured past members of the Gospel Choir pictured here.*

Victor Navasky '54

Diana Judd Stevens '63

Barbara Klock '86

Alex Curtis '89

October meeting with the passage of a resolution for the following change in the bylaws: "One Young Alumni Manager, nominated by the Nominating Committee, with the advice of the Dean of the College, shall normally be elected each year from alumni graduating within the previous seven-year period. Young Alumni Managers may not serve as Managers for two years after the expiration of their four-year term."

Campus opinion split on Persian Gulf war

The Persian Gulf war had ended, but the discord it spawned on campus evidently had not. Three days after the February 27 cease-fire, an incident illustrated Swarthmore's divisions over the war.

After the cessation of the fighting, Matt Kennel '91 and Neel Shah '91 hung banners from their Parrish Hall dormitory windows that read, "By Land, By Sea, By Air, Bye Bye Iraq" and "101st Airborne—Death From Above—Good Job." Two days later an unknown person set fire to one of the banners, causing minor but potentially dangerous damage to the windowsill.

Shah told *The Phoenix* that the banners were merely meant "to show support for the troops and for George Bush for accomplishing the goals they set out to accomplish," but other students found them offensive. At a vigil for the war's dead held just below the bed-sheet banners, Jason Corder '91 called the signs "a celebration of death."

Such has been the war debate at the College. At a two-hour open meeting on January 21, students and faculty expressed a wide range of opinions on the morality and potential consequences of the war, but many of the more than 500 who attended were there mostly to listen. Part of the Parrish walls debate (see page 10) centered around a large poster that declared, "Swarthmore Students Support Our Troops." One student added the word "Some" to the beginning of the sentence.

Later, a group calling itself Swarthmore Students Against the War (SSAW) organized a candlelight vigil and march into the Village streets. A large Swarthmore contingent attended the January 26 anti-war rally in Washington, D.C. This demonstration, probably the high-water mark of national anti-war protests, was also the height of student participation in the movement at Swarthmore.

As the war drew toward its unexpectedly swift conclusion, the debate muted. Andy Perrin '93, a leader of SSAW, summed up Swarthmore's reaction: "There was more of an anti-war movement at Swarthmore than in the rest of the country, but ultimately most people were pretty ambiguous about it."

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This January 23 anti-war march was the most visible student protest against the Persian Gulf war. Campus opinion, like that of the nation, was divided.

College shares in grant to hire minority faculty

Swarthmore and four other colleges—Grinnell, Vassar, Davidson, and Occidental—have jointly received a $175,000 grant from the Philip Morris Companies Inc. to hire minority faculty.

The five belong to the 26-member Consortium for a Strong Minority Presence at Liberal Arts Colleges, which awards fellowships for teaching and research designed to encourage minorities to enter the field of college teaching. Swarthmore has played a pivotal role in organizing the consortium, contributing staff support and management during its first three years.

The fellowships are awarded through the Minority Scholar-in-Residence Program, which encourages African American, Native American, and Hispanic American scholars to teach at liberal arts colleges.

Three students win Truman Scholarships

Three juniors—Mary Anderson, Marc Jolin, and Nien-he Hsieh—have been awarded prestigious Harry S. Truman Scholarships. The three are the most Trumans ever received by Swarthmore students in one year. Swarthmore also, along with Arizona State, Duke, and Harvard universities, received more Trumans than any other college or university in the United States this year.

The scholarship provides money for the students to complete their senior year at Swarthmore and to pursue

graduate degrees. The nominees are chosen on the basis of public and community service rendered, commitment to careers in government or the public sector, leadership potential, and intellectual and academic merit.

Anderson, a political science major, plans to pursue degrees in law and public policy after graduation from the College; Jolin, also a political science major, plans to work toward a Ph.D. in international relations; and Hsieh, an economics major, plans to pursue a Ph.D. in economic policy.

Workshop trains mediators to smooth campus disputes

• Two freshmen dispute about loud music and TV, rowdy parties, and cluttered common space. One claims the other stole her gold necklace.
• Roommates are at odds about unwanted evening visitors, a messy room, and resulting inability to study.
• A male and a female student argue about who answers the phone on their dormitory hall and about the use of a shared washing machine and dryer. There are claims of shrunken blue jeans and missing clothes.

Each of these three highly charged situations was acted out by two angry disputants and a neutral mediator in the course of a two-and-a-half-day workshop in mediation training on campus during midwinter break. The actors/participants were 25 Swarthmore students, three faculty members, and 15 staff members. The trainers were three experienced mediators in the Friends Conflict Resolution Programs in Philadelphia.

Role-playing was a key ingredient ("The teaching rule is: Do it, review it, do it!"), and everyone had the chance to play the difficult role of mediator, using new skills

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At a midwinter workshop, 43 students, faculty members, and staff learned how to resolve conflicts through mediation.

acquired as the workshop progressed. Disputants also became more sophisticated in making the mediator's job more difficult.

Just what is mediation and how does it differ from arbitration and litigation? With mediation, disputing parties come together in a neutral setting to work through problems and reach agreement. Two or more trained volunteer mediators facilitate this meeting. They encourage angry people to speak with each other, and they guide parties toward making their own solutions.

Mediation differs from arbitration and litigation in that the impartial person has no decision-making power. Mediation usually focuses on future rather than past behavior.

Excerpts from notes taken during the sessions highlight some distinguishing features of mediation:
• A mediator must be a facilitator, not an advice-giver.
• Think about the language you use as a mediator. Make sure it is "neutral."
• Identify issues as shared problems.
• Emphasize practical and behavioral issues that can be changed instead of talking about intangible aspects.
• A mediator's survival skill: When in doubt, summarize. When disputants are heated and you don't know where you are going, you can break in and say, "Let's just sit back a minute and summarize."
• Keep the two parties talking and eventually get them to come up with their own solutions.
• Good opener for a mediator: "Describe the situation that brought you here."

At the end of the workshop, all 43 participants "passed" and were given certificates attesting that they "completed the Friends Conflict Resolution Programs' 24-hour basic training program in conflict mediation skills." Of these 43, 29 (two faculty, four staff, and 23 students) have expressed interest in serving as mediators on campus. One of the trainees, Darius Tandon '94, who had had previous mediation experience, said he would volunteer to mediate on campus because "I know mediation works."

Impetus for a campus mediation program came from a 1990 report by the Student Judiciary Review Committee that warned that the "inflexibly adversarial" nature of the College's current judicial processes was not appropriate for all types of problems. "We recognized that some disputes need to be settled without being in an adversarial setting," explained Dean Janet Dickerson.

Brian Zikmund '91, a member of the planning committee, pointed out that mediation, unlike other methods of resolution, can preserve the relationship between parties involved because it is non-judgmental.

A committee of faculty, staff, and students just finished working out the details for a mediation program that would be available to help deal with disputes on campus. Coordinators Deborah Gauck '90 (Dean's Office) and Elaine Metherall (Career Planning and Placement) said mediators are ready to accept referrals from the Dean's Office and dormitory Resident Assistants.

Winter sports recap: Men's basketball wins MAC Southeast

Men's Basketball (17-10): Exciting only begins to describe the 1990-91 men's basketball season at Swarthmore. After a one-point loss to host Washington and Lee in the opening game of a January tournament dropped them to 4-7 for the year, the Garnet reeled off eight consecutive victories en route to a 16-9 regular season, reversing their mark of just a year earlier.

Swarthmore won the Middle Atlantic Conference Southeast Section Championship with an 8-2 record that was capped off by a 98-62 defeat of Haverford. During the game both Mike Greenstone '91 and Scott Gibbons '92 eclipsed the 1,000-point plateau in career scoring for the Garnet.

As Swarthmore moved on

to postseason play for the first time in more than 40 years, the team received word of conference award recipients. Coach Lee Wimberly garnered Coach of the Year laurels, Greenstone was named to the all-section team, and both Matt Kennel '91 and Gibbons were honorable mention choices. Robert Ruffin '92 once again led the entire MAC Southern Division in rebounding.

In the MAC playoffs, Swarthmore defeated Dickinson College 76-72 in the first round but lost an emotional hard-fought contest to rival Johns Hopkins, 80-82 in overtime. Both games were played at the Garnet's home court by virtue of Swarthmore's first-place finish. The Cinderella Garnet were not extended an at-large invitation to the NCAA III tournament despite playing a strong schedule, which included Division I Yale and regional No. 1 seeds Franklin and Marshall and SUNY-Stony Brook, and despite having defeated tournament-bound Dickinson and Johns Hopkins.

Women's Basketball (1-24): The women saw a season of learning and rebuilding rewarded by a last-game victory over Bryn Mawr. Catarina Paulson '91 said it best: "We started out as a young and inexperienced team, worked our way through frustrating losses, and learned something new every game. The Bryn Mawr game represents what we were working for—to prove to ourselves that we were a good team."

A youthful team gives hope for a bright future for the Lady Garnet; Swarthmore graduates just two team members this year.

Wrestling (6-13): Although the undermanned Garnet grapplers fell short of a winning season this year, highlights included hosting a group of Canadian wrestlers during winter break and annihilating Haverford 41-6. In the season-ending MAC tournament, the team placed 10th overall (out of 18 teams). Dennis Jorgensen '92 placed second in the 177-pound division, losing only to an NCAA Division III All-American wrestler, while teammates Joe Lange '93 (167) and Tim Peichel '91 (150) took sixth in their respective divisions. Jorgensen and Kevin Wilson '92 (190) were named to the NCAA Division III Scholar All-America wrestling team.

Badminton (12-0): After a perfect regular season, Swarthmore swept the singles titles at the Northeast regional championships, hosted by the College. Karen Hales '91 won her second consecutive women's regional title, while Jeff Switzer '94 captured the men's championship. Joining Hales and Switzer on the All-Northeast Collegiate team was Elizabeth Grossman '92, who advanced to the semifinals in the women's division.

Men's Swimming (6-7): The Garnet, after a solid campaign during the regular season, steamed into the MAC championships, held at Ware pool, with winning on their minds. They took four individual championships and smashed 10 College records on their way to a third-place finish out of 14 teams.

Keyvan Amir-Arjomand '91 won the 100 and 200 breaststroke in College-record times; the former was also a pool record. His split time on the 100 breaststroke also broke the school record for the 50. Adam Browning '92 won the 100 and 200 butterfly, the former for the third consecutive year. Browning's split time in the 100 also set a College record for the 50 butterfly.

Both the 200 medley (Eric McCrath '93, Browning, Dave Helgerson '94, Amir-Arjomand) and 800 freestyle (Tim Childers '91, Helgerson, Dan Keleher '93, Browning) relay teams set College records. McCrath took second and fourth in the 100 and 200 breaststroke, and brothers Dan and Peter Keleher '93 finished second and fourth respectively in the 200 butterfly. Dan Tannenbaum '91 placed second and fourth in the 400 and 200 individual medleys. Childers swam to a third-place finish in both the 500 and 1,650 freestyle, eclipsing a 16-year-old College record, formerly held by Bob McKinstry '75, in the latter.

Garnet swimmers at the conference championships swam an incredible 32 lifetime-best times. Five men—both Kelehers, Amir-Arjomand, McCrath, and Childers—were selected for the all-MAC team.

Women's Swimming (5-8): After a competitive season, the Garnet women took to the water in the MAC championships with a vengeance. The team established a remarkable 28 lifetime-best times during the meet. "This was an incredible meet for both the men and the women," said coach Sue Davis.

Britta Fink '93 helped Swarthmore overcome the loss of two national qualifiers from last year's team with her College, pool, and MAC record-breaking (and national-qualifying) time of 2:29.77 in the 200 breaststroke. She becomes the first woman in Swarthmore history to hold a MAC swimming record. Fink also placed second in the 100 breaststroke and fourth in the 400 individual medley. Kate Moran '94 also contributed a College record en route to a third-place finish in the 100 backstroke. Moran and Dina Moretti '91 took fourth place in the 200 backstroke and 1,650 freestyle respectively. Finally, the team set a new College record in the 200 medley relay (Christy Halstead '91, Fink, Moran, Moretti).

Hood Trophy Update: The men's basketball and wrestling teams swept Haverford in winter sports events to give Swarthmore College a 5-4 edge in Hood Trophy points.

—Jeff Zinn '92

STEVEN GOLDBLATT

Johns Hopkins guard Andy Enfield turns past Swarthmore's Matt Kennel '91 in the 82-80 loss that knocked the Garnet out of this year's MAC tournament. Lee Wimberly (above) was named conference Coach of the Year.

CHANGING FAMILY ROLES AND THE COLLEGE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

To the Editor:

I enjoyed the article in the February 1991 *Bulletin* by Arlie Russell Hochschild '62, "The Woman with the Flying Hair." I found particularly interesting her observations concerning the continuing non- and underinvolvement of men in our society in supporting the daily domestic life of the family, including child care. I am proud to see fellow Swarthmoreans making contributions to the continuing dialogue on these issues.

It is thus that I find it peculiar and ironic that when the College last year adopted its very first *maternity* policy for its own staff, it did not include provision for leaves of absence for either new parents of adopted children or fathers of newborns. If, as Hochschild suggests, "we need to restructure the workplace in order to adapt it to the changed work force" and "for laggard companies the issue is to get these policies [such as paternity leave] on the books," then I would urge that Swarthmore clean its own house first.

Until the College does so, the appearance of articles such as Hochschild's in the *Bulletin* is, shall we say, merely academic.

MATTHEW WALL '87
Swarthmore

To the Editor:

I enjoyed reading your summary of the speech given by Arlie Russell Hochschild last spring at the College. The issues surrounding women in the workplace/women in the family have always been important for working women, and it is gratifying that they are gaining the attention they deserve.

I was disturbed, though, when I thought back to the speech itself. Ms. Hochschild spoke about the need for private institutions to adapt to the changed work force. She also made it a point during the speech—and then even more so in the question-and-answer afterward—to offer constructive criticism of Swarthmore's meager resources for two-career families. The material about private institutions is in the summary; the criticism of Swarthmore is not.

By expunging these words, I feel that you have misrepresented the flavor of her visit to Swarthmore. Even more disturbing, the *Bulletin* has missed a chance to inform its readers of a problem that persists within the Swarthmore community. We call ourselves "liberal," sometimes even "progressive," but our track record on day care, paternity leave, even maternity leave is far from either.

First, a three-month maternity leave for staff and faculty was finally passed last summer, after extensive work by various committees. The policy, however, only allows for time off in the period directly surrounding the birth of a child. The maternity-leave plan reads: "Leave can begin as early as one month before the anticipated date of delivery and as late as the date of delivery." A professor with a child due in April must either disrupt her semester or make a personal appeal to the powers that be (usually the department chair or the provost) for time off. In addition, no leave provision was made for adoptive mothers.

Second, establishing a paternity-leave policy occurs only in a Swarthmore feminist's wildest dreams. It appears only there for a reason: In a discussion with a College administrator (at the Hochschild reception, no less), I was informed that "women make choices" when they have children and must be prepared to either stay home with the child or put him/her in day care. As far as this institution is concerned, childrearing is still the woman's burden to bear alone.

Third, day care is similarly low on the "things to do" list at the College. At present, despite a $300,000 allocation in the budget for day-care services, there is not even a referral system available. And, with a tight College budget, many are afraid that day care will be among the first things to go. To prevent this from happening, the Women's Concerns Committee is currently working to revise and re-propose day-care plans stalled in the late 1980s.

Clearly, given its record on these issues, as well as on other issues like hiring women to senior positions (take a walk down administrators' alley and notice who controls the financial/administrative aspects of the College), the lack of a diverse field of finalists in the presidential search, and extremely slow curricular revision, this school will soon be an anachronism in the higher-education marketplace. Whether Swarthmore chooses to correct problems will determine its ability to attract top-notch women to its faculty and student body.

HEATHER HILL '92
Swarthmore

To the Editor:

"The Woman with the Flying Hair" intrigued me because I am currently researching and writing a book on the "post-suffragette" generation of my mother (A.B. Bryn Mawr College, 1922; M.A. and Ph.D., University of Chicago, 1929). She "had it all," or tried to, and I regard describing her life as one way of helping today's young women understand why it doesn't work "just like that," even in the best of all possible worlds.

I find it amusing—if a little sad—to find my own generation still labeled "prerevolutionary." I recall smoking in Commons while I talked with a classmate about our options. Both of us had had "career" mothers, and we thought we might prefer to raise our kids ourselves. To do so, we gave up some things, mostly economic, and gained others, like being our own bosses and having time for ourselves. But we did not blame our fathers, husbands, and sons for our choices. That's not equality, that's sexism, or perhaps just a replay of the ancient Amazons.

MARYAL STONE DALE '52
Chicago

To the Editor:

Having recently returned to the workplace after the birth of my second child, I read with great interest Arlie Russell Hochschild's article, "The Woman With the Flying Hair." I recognized my family throughout.

While I agreed with Ms. Hochschild's reasons for labeling women's entry into paid work an "incomplete and stalled revolution," I would like to add a crucial, additional solution. Women who have made it to positions of influence and power can use their status to unstall the revolution for those who follow. Ms. Hochschild views the "mainstreamed, corporationized" part of the women's movement negatively, claiming it only "assimilates women to a male-dominant understanding of life and work." But these female executives and managers can push for flextime, job sharing, paid parental leave, and on-site child care. They can effect change from within.

I am a social worker employed as director of recreation in a large suburban nursing home. My supervisor is the assistant executive director, and she convinced the executive director to try a job share in a department head position. A colleague (also a new mom of a second child) carries 13 hours and I carry 27 in a creative split of job responsibilities. My supervisor is attuned to the conflicting demands of workplace and home because she is a fellow "woman with flying hair." If my son is in a nursery-school play or my infant daughter gets an ear infection,

she trusts me to put in the necessary hours at another time. She will get a great deal more than 40 hours from my colleague and me—she will get loyalty and energy. And maybe, behind our "confident, active, 'liberated'" smiles, there will be . . . confidence and liberation!

As I finish this letter, my "second shift" of dishes, bottle preparation, and Cheerios sweep-up awaits me. My 2-year-old son's play kitchen, however, is totally neat: plastic hot dogs and fried eggs put away, no dishes in his sink! Noah loves to cook and clean and often does this while "talking" on his phone (even though he is male, he can do two things at once). So, if we can't unstall our own revolution, maybe we can at least raise our children to do so in their time.

PAULA MACK DRILL '81
West Caldwell, N.J.

ELLIS ISLAND'S LEGACY

To the Editor:

You've done it again! The February *Bulletin* is super. I especially loved the Ellis Island story. I have a son-in-law whose four grandparents came through Ellis Island from Russia—Bob Clark. (The Clark name was evidently given to two of them—as often happened when their Russian names were difficult.) My last immigrant ancestor came to America from England in 1753, so Bob and I represent two lines of Americans. I tell him he is nearer the stuff of which the U.S.A. is made—the determination to make a better life.

I'm sorry I'm too old to pay a visit to Ellis Island. I don't go much of anywhere anymore—a visit to Crumwald is an adventure!

ELEANOR STABLER CLARKE '18
Kennett Square, Pa.

APOLOGIES TO CAPTAIN JEN

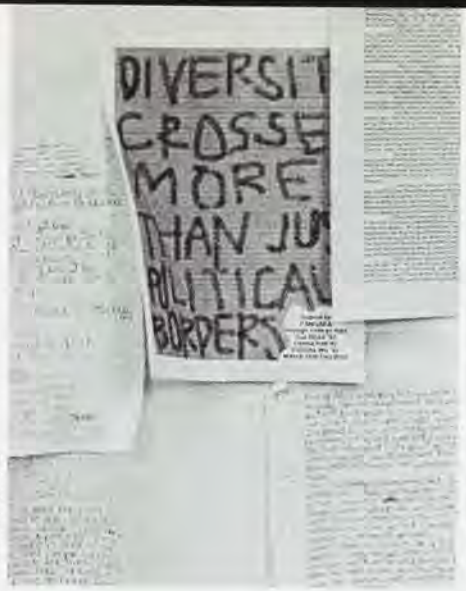
To the Editor:

This year we were particularly proud of our daughter Jennifer's efforts as sole senior member and captain of the Swarthmore volleyball team, and we have especially appreciated sports news in the *Bulletin*. In your February 1991 recap of the fall sports season, you rightfully noted what an uphill battle the volleyball team had this year, but you incorrectly identified the team captain as Jen Pizzolo instead of our very own Jen Grasso.

Would it be possible to make some sort of correction in your next edition?

RAYMOND A. GRASSO, JR.
Vernon, Conn.

Editor's note: *Consider it done. The* Bulletin *regrets the error.*



J. MARTIN NATVIG

Fighting words . . .

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who are afraid of this conversation?

Some further thoughts . . .

All the debates among students on computer bulletin boards and elsewhere about PC-ness (political correctness) are another diversion from the real issues, just like the debate about anonymity was. As several students have said very well, charging someone with being PC is often used as a shield, a way of avoiding taking their motives and their arguments seriously. Being PC can be used in the opposite way, of course, as a self-righteous conformity, going along with a crowd as a way of avoiding questioning yourself.

I don't want to get into this now, though. I want to go back to some of the original questions that were asked—those questions that were so outrageously *not* politically correct. They sure interrupted business as usual, didn't they?

"Who is this white man?" someone wrote next to Mr. Nason's portrait, and "How come there ain't no brothers and sisters on these walls?" Why were these words taken by some to be fighting words, threatening words?

Now I'm really getting into the lion's den. . . .

At first glance, the answer is obvious. It was because of one adjective, "white," that referred to Caucasians, and two nouns, "brothers" and "sisters," that were taken to refer to African Americans. Again, note the assumptions that were immediately made and then never questioned. Asking "Who is this man?" might be taken as threatening, but asking "Who is this *white* man?" was definitely taken to be threatening, at least by some, because it mentioned the man's race.

But why should it be threatening to identify a person's race? This was a rather odd response, when you think about it. The mainstream media acts as if it is "natural" always to mention an African American person's race: the first black mayor, a black mugger, etc. In the media the markings of racial difference are rarely if ever used to designate whites; 'white' or 'Caucasian' tends to be used only when racial conflict is involved or racial stratification is being measured by social scientists. Race is frequently marked when people of color are described, regardless of whether it is a positive or negative portrait of them. (This is true except in special circumstances, such as when George Bush used Willie Horton's mug shot but did not mention his race. This was coded rather than overt racism, designed to function in a racist way but to be impregnable to charges of racism.)

Such an inconsistent system of frequently naming or marking the race and ethnicity of people of color—and rarely indicating it for whites—is set up as being natural, so that white becomes the norm that doesn't need to be mentioned, while black (or other color) becomes the identity that is named and marked as 'other.' Asking "Who is this white man?" reverses this situation, suddenly drawing attention to our contradictory systems of naming and the values that they represent. These contradictions are really what that adjective "white" was about, and why for some it was anathema: It broke taboos about when it is "proper" or "improper" to mention race.

A few students idealistically objected to all this: Is it really necessary to mention color? asked one. Why can't we just be individuals and stop referring to race? But in a culture that is hypersensitive about race and has a long history of using race in a racist way, if you want to change how the terms of race are used, you first have to make people see how they are used in ways so "normal" that they aren't even noticed. You can't just ignore race and racist discourse, either open or hidden; you have to draw attention to it, to "call it out." And that's what the first questions did by intentionally violating the culture's standards for how white folks are named.

A blank space, a space suddenly filled with voices . . .

No one will have the last word unless the conversation is broken off. That, ultimately, is what diversity really means. It's more than student and professor population numbers, more than portraits on walls, more than changes in the curriculum, or even setting up a multicultural center, important as they are. It's the conversation itself.

Is it time to shift from writing on the wall to talking with each other?

Recent Books by Alumni

We welcome review copies of books by alumni. The books are donated to the Swarthmoreana section of McCabe Library after they have been noted for this column.

Michael C. Alexander '68, *Trials in the Late Roman Republic, 149 BC to 50 BC*, University of Toronto Press, 1990. Nearly 400 trials and possible trials, both criminal and civil, from the last century of the Roman Republic are tabulated in this book for scholars working in Roman political history, legal history, and rhetoric.

Christine (Parker) Ammer '52 with Nathan T. Sidley, M.D., *Getting Help: A Consumer's Guide to Therapy*, Paragon House, 1991. Describing both traditional psychotherapies and newer ones, such as sex therapy and divorce mediation, this guide is designed to show who needs help, what kinds of help are available, how to find the right kind, and how to tell if it is effective.

Ronald G. Bodkin '57, Lawrence R. Klein, and Kanta Marwah, *A History of Macroeconometric Model-Building*, Edward Elgar Publishing Company, 1991. Focusing on the construction of mathematico-statistical models of entire economies, this book presents a history of microeconometric modeling since the 1930s.

John Cairns, Jr., '47 and Todd V. Crawford (eds.), *Integrated Environmental Management*, Lewis Publishers, 1991. An outgrowth of the Integrated Environmental Management Conference held in 1989, this handbook demonstrates that an integrated ecosystems approach is the right way to manage environmental complexity.

Robert Payson Creed '48, *Reconstructing the Rhythm of* Beowulf, University of Missouri Press, 1990. In the most thorough study of the prosody of *Beowulf* ever undertaken, the author questions assumptions that every editor and metrist has ever made about the poem. This book is considered a landmark for the study not only of Old English poetry but also of early Scandinavian poetry and other traditional oral poetries.

Philip A. Crowl '36, *The Intelligent Traveller's Guide to Historic Ireland*, Contemporary Books, 1990. Beginning with a chronology of Irish history from the Ice Age through World War II, this travel guide presents not only a historical account of the country but also a comprehensive directory of gardens, abbeys, castles, cathedrals, towers, sculptures, galleries, and more.

Steven A. Epstein '74, *Wage Labor & Guilds in Medieval Europe*, University of North Carolina Press, 1991. In this study of medieval society and economy, the author explores the growth and development of wage labor in Western Europe from the late Roman Empire through the 14th century.

J. Peter Euben '61, *The Tragedy of Political Theory: The Road Not Taken*, Princeton University Press, 1990. In this book the author argues that Greek tragedy was the context for classical political theory and that such theory read in terms of tragedy provides a ground for contemporary theorizing alert to the concerns of postmodernism, such as normalization, the dominance of humanism, and the status of theory.

Ron Goor '62, Nancy Goor, and Katherine Boyd, *The Choose to Lose Diet*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990. Focusing on all the fats in food that make us fat, this book provides a simple method to help determine your own fat budget, extensive tables of total and fat calories of common foods, two weeks of meal plans, and recipes.

Linda Gordon '61 (ed.), *Women, the State, and Welfare*, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1990. As an introduction to the effects of welfare programs on women in the United States and to the influence gender relations have on the structure of welfare programs, this collection of essays is intended for general readers as well as specialists in sociology, history, political science, social work, and women's studies.

Richard M. Harley '72, *Breakthroughs on Hunger: A Journalist's Encounter With Global Change*, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990. In his travels the author has found a quiet revolution of positive change in the developing world—the fruit of decades of experimentation and trial and error—one that could have enormous implications for the world's ability to feed itself. *Where Two or Three Gathered: The Power of Biblical Community—Then and Now*, Abingdon Audiocassettes, 1989. A combination of book and audiotapes, this group-study package explores breakthroughs in the early Christian churches and opens new possibilities for invigorating church life today.

Beth Kidder '57, *The Milk-Free Kitchen: Living Well Without Dairy Products*, Henry Holt and Company, 1991. From appetizers and soups, to main dishes with meats, fish, or poultry, to breads, pancakes, desserts, and candies, the author shows how to prepare meals and snacks without using any milk, butter, cream, or cheese.

Stephen B. Maurer '67 and Anthony Ralston, *Discrete Algorithmic Mathematics*, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1991. This textbook, intended for a year's course in discrete mathematics, presents both a central object—algorithms—and two central methods—the inductive and recursive paradigms.

Terrence J. Miller, **Robert McMinn** '57, and John Iafolla, *American Dream Cars, 1946-1972*, Edmund Publications Corporation, 1991. In addition to providing the reader with values for more than 95 percent of the collectible American cars built between 1946 and 1972, this book is intended to help both beginners and experienced collectors.

Margaret K. (Klein) Nelson '66, *Negotiated Care: The Experience of Family Day Care Providers*, Temple University Press, 1990. This book, presented from the perspective of the caregiver, explains the negotiation between child day care providers and parents in establishing a setting that simultaneously involves money, trust, and caring.

Bruce Robertson '76, *Reckoning With Winslow Homer: His Late Paintings and Their Influence*, Indiana University Press, 1990. Focusing on the late marine paintings of a man generally considered at the end of his life the most important artist that the United States had yet produced, this catalog was produced in con-

MODERNISM

Continued from page 5

"Geniuses are convenient to have around because they obviate having to change anything. . . .

"In fact, all of the geniuses we have around—including the so-called 'solitary geniuses' such as Albert Pinkham Ryder and Vincent van Gogh—had access to the system." For example, we now know that it is not true that Pablo Picasso was such a child prodigy that he caused his artist father to put down his own brushes in awe. Picasso, says Storr, "worked like a dog" to develop his talent, with his father coaching and pushing all the way.

"One of the ways of 'normalizing' radical change is to say that some special person did it and that they did it for reasons of mysterious, transcendant creativity. And therefore we never examine too closely what it is that they did and why they did it." Again the example is the revolutionary work done by Picasso, whom Storr wryly calls "the favorite genius of modern art."

"The minute people get into a serious discussion of what Picasso really did, all of the conflicts that make him so interesting come to the fore. He was full of conflicted attitudes toward women, toward politics, toward the materiality of art, etc. And when you call him a genius and march people through the museum with little earphones, telling them when this was painted and who his mistress was at the time, assuring them all the while that this is *truly great*, people don't think about what they are actually seeing. And then they don't ask what is going on today that responds to those same conflicts."

The much-vexed notion of "Quality" is another obstacle to opening up the canon, says Storr. The term is used as a trump card by what he calls "the cultural Right." If a work does not fit the established canon, these critics argue that it lacks Quality. Storr counters that art should be judged by its *qualities* rather than by a single and absolute standard of Quality, and that these *qualities* need to be examined in specific terms. He characterizes critic Clement Greenberg and other members of the neoconservative movement as "former cultural radicals fighting the last battle on behalf of the last piece of culture that they paid close attention to. They are, in some form, the God-that-failed crew, embittered valedictorians of their own particular era."

Is Storr himself a "cultural radical"? His answer is an emphatic "yes," insofar as "to be a radical means to constantly question one's working assumptions and those of the culture at large."

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND METRO PICTURES

Laurie Simmons' photographs of miniature scenes present archetypes of domesticity inherited from the "father-knows-best" era. These icons from a mundane world become artistic statements that force us to examine that world and to see how it operates.

"I don't believe in the mainstream," says Storr. His empirical approach often clashes with established ideas about modernism.

And how will he keep himself that way, stay fresh and continue to pay attention? "Part of it is just compulsive," he explains, and part is "a decent sense of fear. When you criticize people who stopped paying attention, you have to be pretty sure that you're not indulging in the same privileges that they did. And besides—ultimately there's a lot of interesting stuff to think about. . . .

"There's an inherent decline-of-the-West mood that overtakes people involved in cultural activities: 'It was always better then, it's worse now, we are the saving remnant,' etc., etc. I think that this is essentially false. Our culture may be in a decadent time, but there are always things in it of enormous interest—and in fact decadent times are often the best times for art. If something is falling apart, it is also subject to surprising and invigorating rearrangement."

Why does he think the new pluralism makes people so uncomfortable? "Because they are going to hear some things they don't want to hear, the most important of which is that they are not the center of the world anymore. There may *be* no center of the world anymore, but the assumption that a certain kind of mainstream culture exists, and that a mainstream way of life exists, has been solace to people who are otherwise besieged by realities that are beyond them.

"For example, the ideal nuclear family is a fiction, but people find solace in reaffirming it over and over. The degree to which it is a fiction has become the subject of art-making, and that drives people nuts. It means that museums, which they go to for solace, actually make them feel more intensely their discomfort."

At the same time, Storr denies that pluralism has a political agenda. "It's radical without necessarily being partisan in the sense of having a particular political point to make. The idea is not so much to rub salt in the wounds. Rather, one is acting more like doubting Thomas sticking his finger in the wound to verify for himself that it is there."

At the Modern, the museum that more than any other has defined and institutional-

ized modernism—and one which has been accused of ignoring trends in contemporary art in favor of recycling the icons of the past—Storr's approach represents a real change. He admits a certain discomfort about his new position: "Suddenly I find myself, having thrown stones at every available glass house, inhabiting a glass house and asking only for the privilege to move things around inside it."

He is interested in seeing how open a curator can remain in an institution like the Modern. "Some people believe that it's impossible for big institutions—particularly ones with established traditions—to be responsive to contemporary art. I don't see any inherent reason that this is true, although the evidence tells us that in general it is true. So the challenge is to see how flexible one could make this aspect of the Museum's activities. . . .

"The basic responsibility of contemporary art museums is to show the most active, challenging work of their time. Museums are not partisan institutions; they are not there to preach to the public. But they are there to show the public unflinchingly what is being done by the best artists. And if the best artists are making work about the worst aspects of the society we live in, then it is incumbent upon us to show it."

COURTESY SPERONE WESTWATER GALLERY

Contemporary art goes well beyond painting and sculpture. Bruce Nauman's neon installation at the University of California, Virtues and Vices *(which also flashes virtues such as faith, hope, and charity), examines our 20th-century alienation and anxiety. Is this, in fact, the subject of all modern art?*

A curator's curious path to the Modern

In the heady atmosphere of the New York art scene, where critics joust in the *Village Voice* and dominate the pages of national art journals, Robert Storr's ideas are original and provocative. It has been written of him that "Storr's theory of no theory—his comprehensive empiricism—sets him apart from the other critics."

His rise at age 41 to a position of influence at the Museum of Modern Art has come from an unorthodox direction, for Storr is a painter, not a trained art historian.

A French major at Swarthmore (at a time when you could not major in art), he credits the late Professor Hedley Rhys with being his "lifeline" while in college. "One of the things Hedley taught me," says Storr, "was that culture is a source of pleasure, and that pleasure is never a simple matter." Storr dedicated his recent campus lecture to the memory of Professor Rhys.

After graduation he worked in bookstores ("where I got most of my education"), haunted museums, and attended art classes part time before returning to his native Chicago to study painting at the Art Institute. After receiving his Master of Fine Arts degree there in 1978, he lived in Holland and in Boston before venturing in 1981 to New York, where he supported himself doing construction and art handling while he continued to paint.

His break into the world of criticism was unexpected. During his first summer in New York, Storr read a column in the *Voice* about Philip Guston, a painter he greatly admired. He wrote a long letter to Peter Schjeldahl, the writer of the column, saying that while his piece was "marvelous in its observations, it was completely wrong in its conclusions." Schjeldahl wrote back saying that although Storr's observations were very interesting, *he* was completely wrong, and a lively correspondence ensued. "Finally," recalls Storr, "Peter wrote a letter that said basically, 'Who are you? Where did you come from? You should be doing this for a living. Let's have a beer.'"

Schjeldahl sent sections of the correspondence to the editor of *Art in America*, and in 1981 Storr was invited to write show and book reviews. By 1983 he was publishing feature-length articles in the magazine, where he remains a contributing editor. As his visibility increased, he began to be invited to lecture and teach, to write show catalogs, and ultimately to organize and curate shows. Storr has written monographs on Philip Guston and (with Lisa Lyons) on Chuck Close. A new book on the sculptor Louise Bourgeois is about to be published.

At the Museum of Modern Art, Storr will work primarily on contemporary exhibitions and acquisitions. He is organizing a fall 1991 show called *DIS*LOCATIONS, which "makes you question where you are—i.e., the gallery—or where you have just been—i.e., the world that you just stepped out of." He is also curating a show of work from the 1980s at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia, set to open in October. —*JL*

SAIL THE COAST OF MAINE WITH SWARTHMORE ★ AUGUST 16-18 1991

Looking for an end-of-summer trip that combines outdoor activities, sight-seeing, and relaxation? How about joining Swarthmore College alumni, parents, and friends for a long weekend of sailing off the coast of Maine? We have reserved space on the 80-foot windjammer *Mercantile*, which sails out of Camden, Maine, for the weekend of August 16-18. Enjoy the salt air and rugged beauty of Penobscot Bay as we follow the wind for three days of relaxing sailing.

We board after 4 p.m. on Thursday, August 15, to get acquainted and learn our way around the decks. Following a night on board in the harbor, we "put on sail" and "weigh anchor" at 10:00 a.m. Besides enjoying the scenery, waterfowl, and other wildlife (including the occasional whale), passengers are encouraged to assist the crew and learn about sailing the cruise schooner. Evenings often find the *Mercantile* moored a short rowboat ride from one of the little villages on the islands of Penobscot Bay, where we can do some after-dinner exploring. Lunches are served on deck, dinner below deck or on shore (see below), and nights are spent moored near one of the many islands. Sunday, after brunch on deck, we return to the Camden dock around noon.

The *Mercantile* is one of the original ships of the Maine Windjammer Cruise fleet. Built in 1916 to carry cargo, she was converted to a passenger ship in 1942 and was totally restored in 1989 to include modern conveniences like a hot-water shower and a large comfortable main cabin. The only physical requirements are that you be able to climb the ladders from below deck. For safety reasons, all passengers must be over 16 years of age.

Reservations must be made by June 10. We have 15 of the *Mercantile*'s 29 spaces reserved, but if there is sufficient interest, we may be able to accommodate more Swarthmoreans. This is the only major announcement of the voyage, so send in your reservation and deposit right away.

Cost for Thursday night through Sunday noon is $360 per person. All accommodations are doubles, so those traveling alone will be matched up with roommates of the same sex. Meals from Friday breakfast through Sunday brunch are included, and, if the weather cooperates, Saturday dinner will be an old-fashioned lobster bake on one of the islands. Space is limited, and although Capt. Ray Williamson has agreed to hold our reservation until June 10, we cannot guarantee any space after that.

Please send your deposit of $200 (U.S.) to the Alumni Office, Swarthmore College, 500 College Avenue, Swarthmore, PA 19081-1397, by June 10. Deposit is 50 percent refundable until June 24. The balance is due by July 1. If you have questions, please call the Alumni Office at (215) 328-8404. We hope to see you on board.

Swarthmore College shall not be liable in any way for any damage, injury, or loss of life or property incurred by any person in connection with this program beyond funds for cancellations stated herein.

Name _____ Class _____

Guest(s) _____

_____

Address _____

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Phone (Day) _____ (Evening) _____

Please enclose a deposit of $200 (in U.S. funds) per person. Make check payable to Swarthmore College. Mail to the Alumni Relations Office, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA 19081-1397. We must receive your reservation by June 10.