Studio Art Thrives
Black Students at Vassar: A History
Alumnae from South Africa

Margaret Lee '89, painting student
HOLD YOUR CONFERENCE AT VASSAR!

Estée Lauder Inc., the cosmetics company, held a series of six one-week training conferences for their field sales force during June, July, and August of 1987 on the Vassar campus.

The many organizations which have held meetings at Vassar include the Society for Values in Higher Education, the IBM Corporation, the National Humanities Faculty, and the Country Day School Headmasters.

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“Check it out! That raisin we hoofed with last month was Mary Jane Pritchard from ’74.”

Turn this tab for information
Let us hear from you

News about class notes newsgathering

For the next two years, the Quarterly will be testing a new method of collecting class notes and changes of address. Instead of sending out cards from the office, we’ll be binding them into each issue of the magazine. Four times a year, the cards we receive back will be mailed to the appropriate class correspondents. It’s our hope that this process will encourage more readers to contribute news more often. Please remember, the information doesn’t need to be earthshaking or marked by unvarying cheer. We want to know how you’re faring in the ways that seem most important to you when you sit down to write. We want you truly to keep in touch.

Salve,

Mindy Aloff ’69, editor

P.S. These cards can be mailed directly to your correspondent. For address, see Class Notes.
FEATURES

3 A Historical Overview: The Black Experience at Vassar
From the turn of the century, when a Black student "passed," to the complex passages of Black students today. A comprehensive and personal account by college trustee June Jackson Christmas '45-4.

16 Alumnae Voices from South Africa
Three White Americans discuss why they were drawn to the country and why they stay. By Karen Petersen '76. (Also included: a Petersen photographic portfolio.)

24 Campus Social Life in the Age of AIDS
College students nationwide are being educated about this deadly disease, but what are they learning? A look at Vassar by Eric Marcus '80.

26 The Vassar Connection: Paul Rosenfeld, Edna Bryner Schwab '07, and Alfred Stiegitz
Dennis Anderson of the college art gallery looks at the "291" wing of the 20th-century collection, and at the collectors who first understood its aesthetic value.

32 Studio Art Matters
Crafting a new major, by Yona Zeldis McDonough '79

DEPARTMENTS

2 Letters
34 AAVC Newslines: DC. Books, 1987 Class Presidents and Club Leadership workshops
37 Books
40 Person Place & Thing
41 Class Notes

The Last Page: Thirteen by Tom Asher '86

Cover: Photograph by Robert Maass '79
LETTERS

The Quarterly welcomes letters to the editor, preferably typed, double-spaced, and no longer than 350 words. We reserve the right to edit letters for style and length.

In Memoriam: Fliss Wislocki ’26

Vassar College has lost one of her true greats. Florence Clothier Wislocki, M.D., “Fliss” to hundreds in the Vassar family, died of a stroke on October 29, 1987. While I lack the eloquence to do justice to her in a letter, I care too much not to try. How I wish that Sarah Gibson Blanding, who chose Fliss as assistant to the president of Vassar College, could say a few words from that great campus in the sky; but in this letter I can at least quote some of the things that she wrote about Fliss in one of her letters.

Fliss and Gert Garnsey, our AAVC leader for so many years, were in the class of 1926. In a recent letter about Fliss, Gert refers to their 66 years of steadfast friendship. Words like “steadfast” come to mind when we speak of Fliss, and I find those I have talked with of different ages use the same words and share a common understanding of her special qualities. Words that come tumbling out are valiant, stalwart, strong, and courageous. Universally admired were her good sense, her balance, and her complete and absolute integrity.

I knew Fliss for only 30 years, mostly in the Vassar context, and while I recognized immediately that here was a person of distinction, she was so unassuming that only gradually did I learn of her professional accomplishments. Since she never dwelt on these things herself, I think that a selective summary of this aspect of her life will help us all to realize how fortunate we were to have her at Vassar.

Fliss was born in Philadelphia in 1903 and after graduating from Vassar in 1926 went on to Johns Hopkins Medical School in the class of 1930. At her memorial service in Little Compton, an elderly, but still active Dr. Bezan, who was ahead of Fliss at Hopkins, suggested that we should think of her as “a genius” as her teachers there had. This distinguished doctor also said that the nurses who knew her and are still around still ask about her, because they loved her the most of all the medical students. A tribute that doesn’t surprise us.

Fliss took postgraduate training in pediatrics, neurology, and obstetrics, which took her to London and Dublin. In 1931 she married Dr. George Wislocki, a renowned professor who became head of the department of anatomy at the Harvard Medical School. Then, with apparent ease and equanimity, she produced a family of four children and followed a full medical career in psychiatry. Her children, Lewis (a physician), Joan, George, and Edith, all live in New England.

Her work at the Child Guidance Clinic of Massachusetts General Hospital and at Beth Israel Hospital, and her 25 years as staff psychiatrist of the New England Home for Little Wanderers in Boston, attest to her devotion to child psychology. During those years she published 22 articles in professional journals and bulletins under her professional name, Dr. Florence Clothier. This tells us something of her scholarly achievement. Many of her articles dealt with adoption procedures and problems. One of the eloquent speakers at her service was Dr. Barten, who felt she had saved his life by adopting him into the Wislocki family when he was a 13-year-old at the New England home.

Fliss had many professional honors and served on numerous boards and councils related to her specialty. When she retired from Vassar in 1969 and moved back to her beloved Little Compton, she immediately resumed her professional life as a staff psychiatrist at the Corrigan Mental Health Center in Fall River.

And what of her Vassar connections? She was naturally one of the outstanding members of the class of 1926, and when we look at her career as a student we see the same breadth and balance that characterized her whole life. Her special extracurricular activities were hockey, debate, and dramatics, and in all three areas she was formidable. She was interested both in acting and writing, and under Hallie Flanagan, who had come to Vassar in 1925, she wrote a play based on her experiences with the Grenfell Mission in Labrador. Grenfell had visited the college in the 1920s and had recruited 250 students, among them Florence Clothier. It is exciting for me to recall that when the Powerhouse Theater opened, one of the plays performed was written by Fliss. She was clearly a person who responded to all the stimulating intellectual and cultural possibilities that Vassar offered.

I will quote from a letter that Miss Blanding wrote in 1956 in order to describe her service as an alumna to the college. “Mrs. Wislocki was elected to the board of trustees by the alumnae of Vassar College, the highest tribute that the 19,000 graduates and former students can pay to any one of their members. She served on the board from 1944 to 1953. . . . The alumnae hold Mrs. Wislocki in such high regard that upon expiration of her trustee term she was immediately elected as president of the alumnae association.” Later in the same letter Miss Blanding says, “She is a forceful person and is never afraid to put herself on the line. She does, however, have the rare ability of listening sympathetically to the opinions of those who differ from her, and her courage never outstrips her wisdom, her kindliness, her understanding, and her practical, clear judgment.”

Fliss served as assistant to Presidents Sarah Continued on page 38
HAD you asked me, in the decade after the first acknowledged Black student entered, to chronicle the history of Afro-Americans at Vassar, it would have been brief, with few characters. There were seven graduates in the 10 years between 1940 and 1950. In fact, for nearly 25 years, until 1964, Vassar had never admitted more than three Black students in any year. In some years, none were admitted. In most, a single student entered to live the demanding life of being the “one and only,” a life many remember as lonely in an atmosphere which was unaccepting and, at times, hostile. Administrators and faculty who might have provided support and guidance or served as role models were lacking. For most of those early students, the college community did not provide a sense of being valued or belonging. Yet many of those students accomplished their task. Their inner resources, motivation, and

This article is adapted from the keynote address given by Dr. Christmas at Vassar’s Black Alumnae/i Forum II, April 12, 1987.
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The Unknown Past

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The Rev. Robinson asked students and the college to take a stand and erase its color line. The students responded by saying that they did not know any colored high school students. Since a majority of them came from all-White private schools, this was probably true. He offered to find a student who would be of Vassar caliber and, he thought but did not say aloud, able to withstand the pressures of being first and only, at least for a year.

In his congregation at the Church of the Master he found Beatrix (Betty) McCleary, a top-notch student at her high school in New York. She applied, was accepted, and in the fall of 1940 entered Vassar as the first openly acknowledged Negro student in Vassar’s history. In an article she wrote for the Vassar Quarterly two years after her graduation in 1944, she recalls that she was accepted as a person rather than as a Negro. But she notes also that questions about “the Negro problem” were frequently directed to her as though she had all the answers. She states that she learned more about Negroes than she had known before. Involved in many activities, she was an outstanding student academically, elected to Phi Beta Kappa in her junior year. She was the first person of color who was asked to be a member of the Daisy Chain. In those days, Daisy Chain members had to be both beautiful and bright; she was both. She was also so light in complexion, and the student body so unused to the varied shades of Afro-Americans, that she was generally mistaken for any ethnic background other than Black.

About the time that Betty came to Vassar, I learned of Vassar’s willingness to admit “highly qualified and outstanding Black students” from a senior, the older sister of a high school and church friend in Cambridge, Massachusetts. To my skepticism, she replied that there had been a change of policy. She described the stimulating academic environment, with strengths in the areas of my interest—science, languages, and psychology.

My plan had been to go to Radcliffe, a short walk from my home. But I knew that there I would have to compete with the history of my aunt who had been a cum laude graduate in 1919, an achievement that still inspires me and which was a source of pride in our family. Going to Vassar would give me the chance to live on campus. My family wondered about the snobbery they had heard about. Betty McCleary was asked to reach out to me after my acceptance, with scholarships, at both colleges, as I was trying to make a decision. Her positive views of Vassar helped persuade me. When the Vassar Club of Boston and Vassar College each offered me more generous scholarships, between which I had to choose, there was little hesitation on my part; I chose Vassar.

It was disappointing when, after being personally assured by the president of the Boston Vassar Club that I would be treated like everyone else, I received a letter from her at the behest of the college. In response to my having checked the box that indicated that I wanted a roommate, in a genteel but firm manner, she suggested that I would be happier, she was sure, if I didn’t have a roommate that year. The college had been courageous enough to increase its Black student body by doubling the number of us admitted. It did not want to appear to segregate the two Black freshmen, but it was not yet ready to integrate a dormitory room.

Betty had described a positive experience for her first year. As two of us entered in 1941, we came to a school where issues about Negroes were discussed occasionally, but where the people themselves were scarce. In my three-and-a-half years (our class accelerated), except when the Fisk Jubilee Singers or a similar group performed on campus, or we had dates (not so easy in the midst of World War II), there were not more than six Black human beings on campus at any one time. That included speakers in 1941 and 1942, such as Max Yergun, discussing minority rights; James Robinson, keeping up the pressure for the admission of more Negroes; and Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, the father of Pan Africanism, speaking on the future of Africa in America. On that occasion, Dr. DuBois suggested that Vassar work toward a goal of 100 Negro students...
among its 1,200 student body. Dr. DuBois died on the eve of the march on Washington in 1963. At that time, Vassar had 23 known Black alumnae. The college had not reached the goal of 100; that absolute number of Black students on campus was not reached until 1972. By that time the total student body was much larger.

Although people would sometimes confuse us, three very different looking people, and assume that we were in constant communication, we were individuals, Betty

Advocacy

Carole Merritt '62. After graduation, she went to the South in search of her identity as an Afro-American and in search of her own family's history. In 1977, she helped to found in Atlanta the African-American Family History Association, at that time one of only a handful of such groups in the United States. A grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities allowed her to interrupt her doctoral studies at Emory University to mount "Homecoming," a comprehensive exhibit of Black Georgian life, through photographs, documents, artifacts, and oral histories. She continued to be an advocate for our wherence and from whom we have come. Currently, she is the curator of the Herndon Foundation Museum and Archives in Atlanta. (Businessman and civic leader, Angelo Herndon was born into slavery. He became a barber and owner of barber shops, and used the proceeds to found Atlanta Life Insurance Company, the largest Black-owned stockholder insurance company in the nation.) Ms. Merritt states that a course on African heritage at Vassar, and the Southern student sits, "gave me a handle on my history for the first time," and "suggested a channel for my commitment."

Earnestine Clark Boone '73. A participant in the 1969 demonstrations and takeover at Vassar, she continues her interest in Vassar College as a citizen of Poughkeepsie and as a community organizer. She still believes "Vassar can be a role model for other colleges."

Craig Harris '81. As he works with the Minority Task Force on AIDS under the auspices of the National Institute of Mental Health, he seeks to influence health policy and to draw attention to the increasing incidence of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome among Black men and women, both homosexual and heterosexual, and the inadequacy of services and funds for this particular group of AIDS patients.

Gregory Mitchell '82. As a 13-year-old high school student, he founded a track team in Queens, New York City. For over 15 years, the Equus Track Club offered youngsters tutorial assistance, college guidance, and track instruction. Although receiving limited corporate support, the urban neighborhood program often operated close to the financial brink. The efforts of this committed Vassar graduate kept it alive, for he saw his service to inner city youth as his contribution, his "pride and joy."

J.C.

Mc Cleary, Camille Cottrell '45-4, and I. It was our own personalities that influenced how we responded, as students related to us through the filters of their own past exposure, prejudice, and naiveté. At different times assimilationist, integrationist, or activist, we each tried to focus on both academic and social life when major attention was directed toward World War II. While one of the personal outcomes was the impossibility of finding dates among the lily-white Army or Navy officers-in-training, we were caught up in the need to support this "good war" against Fascism. A Miscellany News article in late 1941 reminds me that one of my first public speeches at Vassar included a call for fairer treatment of Negro soldiers and for the elimination of Jim Crow in the armed services. Another clipping indicates that in my senior year I spoke at a collegewide program on the transition to peace. I questioned whether the war would be won only for us to lose the peace, as Negroes continued to be lynched, denied the vote, and excluded from many jobs.

During my first years, Betty McCleary and I seemed to be part of a campaign, for which we had not volunteered but in which we were willing participants, to "educate White folks." At times it was tiring to ask the same simplistic questions, to be told that I didn't speak like a Negro, or to be complimented for being more literate than someone's maid.

At the same time, however, there were efforts on the part of some to move beyond this to friendship and understanding and, equally as important, to grapple with the incidents of racism on campus and in the neighborhood. They occurred with regularity. Being unable to rent a room nearby for my prom date (until my sophomore year roommate—who was White—went for me on her own), and being refused admission to a nearby skating rink were both reminiscent of situations we had tried to fight when I was a member of the N.A.A.C.P. Youth Council in Cambridge. I knew when to deal with such situations directly and when to save my energies for other important tasks, such as doing well on my next zoology exam. But being told by a professor that she just couldn't believe that I had written a paper that I had labored long over because "it didn't sound like a Negro's writing" was something I had never experienced in high school.

Sometimes my personal pain at racist incidents was so deep that I could not share it with my new-found White friends until a greater sense of trust had developed. Prejudice imposed early and often and sanctioned by society can result in the victim's assuming blame which ought to be placed elsewhere. When there are others of your own life experience, culture, and identity, group support and understanding can heal, strengthen, and empower. How lucky the present Afro-American students are to have this opportunity!

But at a college with an interracial student body, identity and exchange are both important for majority and minority. This was particularly clear to me as I lived my last two and a half years in a wonderful cooperative on campus, Palmer House. Twenty of us lived, studied, cooked, ate, and socialized together. Although I was the only Black girl there, and one of two persons of color, this was a place where I belonged. Two of my close friends today, Susi Berg Waldman and Vivian Halpern Hall, were Palmerites. We have remained friends through the years.

Fortunately, there were others able to accept Black students as human beings without denying our race. Some of these were the nucleus of the Race Relations
Group which we started in the fall of 1942 "to break down indirect prejudice through meetings with clubs, churches, and community groups." We listened to speakers from our own body and from outside. Experts spoke on subjects such as contributions of the Negro to America (Frank Wood), democracy's unfinished business (James Farmer), and, closer to home, discrimination in Poughkeepsie (Marie Lawrence '45). Marie was the only Black admitted in 1942: coming from an old Black Poughkeepsie family, she was one of the few day students. Her younger sister, Stradella Lawrence '47, entered two years later.

The leadership of President Henry Noble MacCracken was placed behind efforts to improve intergroup relations. Proxy and I were panelists on a number of radio programs sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews, in which he was quite active. In several years we were on Brotherhood Week programs on campus and in town. I remember participating in a student panel that opened a Vassar College Social Museum exhibit on brotherhood. (The Social Museum was established in Blodgett Hall in 1937. It operated until 1951.)

The local newspaper shows a photo of six of us sitting in front of a map of the U.S.A. Seeing that old picture reminded me of something that troubled me. Each of the other girls is identified by her national background; I am called Negro. Where is Negroland? An identification with Africa was still far in the future.

The Black community in Poughkeepsie reached out to us in hospitality; Betty and I spoke at several churches and visited in homes. Besides inviting me for her mother's delicious home-cooked meals, Marie Lawrence guided me toward the then necessary parlor, for services that could be provided only in and by the Black community.

In those days the philosophy of the "melting pot" was espoused. I was often urged by majority students or faculty to think of myself as an American, not a Negro. I was trying to be both. There were speakers in the Forties, most of them Black, who did draw attention to the unique situation of Black Americans and to its causes. They pointed the way to solutions as they tried to educate the majority students about topics not contained in our curriculum. They did not know how much they lent moral support to the small number of Black students. They did not know how much they encouraged the few courageous White students who were subject to criticism for being too interested in Negroes.

Several of the early leaders of the Interracial Group (the new name for the Race Relations Group) were Jewish. The criticism they received was sometimes tinged with anti-Semitism. At times they were joined in leadership positions by forward-thinking and -behaving White Southerners.

Among these speakers were Dr. Channing Tobias of the Y.M.C.A., who spoke on low Negro morale in the armed forces; the artist Jacob Lawrence, whose powerful series, "The Migration of the Negro," illustrated the sensitivity he ascribed to Black artists; Buell Gallagher, one of the last White presidents of Hampton Institute, who related the race issue to the outcome of the war; Margaret Walker, reading her poetry rich in the Black experience of oppression and survival; the great orator, educator, and scholar, Dr. Benjamin Mays, who spoke in chapel, conducted seminars and lectured in classes about the dilemma for democracy of segregation and discrimination; and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., describing his people as no longer quiescent, in his talk entitled "Race, Riot, and Reform." Quite an array of leadership!

These speakers raised issues that only a few were talking about on campus. It was rare that these topics were heard in the classroom. When they were raised, most students did not participate in the discussion, as if the topics had no relevance to their lives or to subjects such as economics, political science, or psychology. Thus, intercollegiate conferences, club meetings, presentations by outside speakers, and the lively exchanges that followed were both cathartic and informative. They helped us appreciate our similarities and differences, but they also emphasized the gulf between what should be and what was, even at Vassar.

One of the events that served this dual purpose was the exchange program with Howard University. Initiated in the early Forties, it was the forerunner of other exchanges between Vassar and traditionally Black colleges. It was started by the Rev. Howard Thurman of Howard. He was a much-admired speaker at Vassar; his daughter, Olive Thurman Wong, graduated in 1948. I took part in the second year of the program. For me, going to Howard for a weekend was almost a more exciting prospect than going to Vassar had been. I had gone to a high school with a predominantly White student body and all White teachers.

To go to a college with a great reputation academically, with a predominantly Black student body, and, especially, with Black faculty—that was and remains one of the high points of my college years.

Unfortunately at that time—and it is still true—I could say sadly that I had never had a Black teacher. There were none in my grammar school or high school, my college, or medical school. Think of the implicit message that is communicated to Black students: no one who looks like you can engage in the intellectual inquiry, critical analysis, or cogent presentation essential to academic pursuits. No one who looks like you can lead you forth in the process of learning. Think also what impediments to teaching and learning such a viewpoint presents. Vassar might learn from historically Black colleges which have made an integrated faculty work successfully.

Memories remain of friendships with Howard students, of barriers crossed, and of deepened understanding among us Vassarites: Southern rural White, New

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African Studies to Mark 20th Year

Plants are currently being made to celebrate, in academic year 1988/89, the 20th anniversary of Vassar's multidisciplinary program in African Studies. Joyce Bickerstaff, director of the program and associate professor of education and African Studies, calls the Vassar program "a model of excellence and distinctiveness among Black Studies programs at predominantly white liberal arts colleges." Among the features taking shape for the year-long celebration are a special senior colloquium on the history of African Studies in America, art and library exhibits, special lectures, residence by a distinguished Black scholar, and a field trip to Zimbabwe. African Studies has a permanent faculty of six and lists 39 courses under its rubric in the 1987/88 catalogue. Further details of anniversary events will be published as they become established.

Being told by a professor 'it didn't sound like a Negro's writing' was something I had never experienced in high school.
In 1954, Vassar hired its first full-time Black faculty member, Dr. Henrietta Smith, in psychology.

England Black, Southern Jew, suburban and midwestern White Anglo-Saxon Protestants. The exchange benefited students in both schools.

Our concern was not limited to Blacks. A group of us went to Prexy MacCracken with a request that Vassar set up scholarships for Nisei students, those Americans of Japanese ancestry who had been driven from their homes on the West Coast and forced to go to America's version of concentration camps, with their property confiscated by the American government. Prexy told us, directing his remarks to me as the only Black in the group, that it would be racism in reverse to offer scholarships specifically to people of one ethnic group or race. Fortunately, we were creative enough to give him an out. We urged that Vassar set up scholarships for any student who had been forced to leave college because he or she had been removed to a relocation center. Since the real racism was in the United States policy which singled out the Japanese and did not treat Germans or Italians in the same manner, Vassar was soon able to offer scholarships to several Nisei students the next year. This was a widely supported issue. The group of Nisei students came in the fall of 1943, released from internment camps because of Vassar's taking a stand and backing it with funds.

The years were filled with efforts to make the war we were fighting bring about democracy at home. With the war's end, there were differences and disappointments. The Interracial Group conducted a letter-writing campaign, joined by the Student Liberal Association, to urge the Senate to support the Fair Employment Practices Commission (F.E. PC.). The beginning of postwar apathy appeared in the response of students who wrote that "our Senators were elected to represent us and, therefore, we should let them do their own thinking," Kurt Lewin, an influential American psychologist, said in 1945 that "We cannot solve the economic problem without solving the Negro question... Prejudices are easily established and cannot be changed by education alone. [There is a] need to change the group atmosphere."

A major change in the atmosphere of the college came in the fall of 1945, when Sterling Brown was appointed a visiting instructor in English, the first Black faculty member (too late for me, alas). Poet, scholar, folklorist, and authority on jazz, America's classical music, he came from Howard for a number of terms over the next few years. He lectured on American folklore, Negro spirituals, and secular literature. He held lecture-demonstrations with work songs, jazz, and blues. But he also spoke out on discrimination against Negroes. Over the years his largest audiences were at lectures on the spirit of American literature and at the jazz sessions. Fewer people came to hear him speak of "efforts to undo institutionalized racist practices." It was 1946 when this concept first appeared.

Although the Interracial Group kept active in the mid-Forties, the emphasis of speakers in other settings moved from earlier efforts to educate Whites about understanding the plight of the Negro and dealing with their own prejudices to international issues. The war was over and we faded into the background, with some notable exceptions. An article on the need for more public school students (27/47 Miscellany News) stated: "More encouragement should be offered to girls of certain minority groups, especially Negroes, in the form of scholarships... A larger number would increase their sense of security as well as contributing to the community as a whole." Concern was expressed at a conference of 40 colleges on racial democracy about concrete action to recruit Negro students and faculty.

But a year later, Vassar delegates Bennett's the failure of the college to increase the number of Black applicants; they called for the resumption of exchanges with Howard.

During this period, Ralph Bunche, the future Nobel laureate, spoke on Palestine; his daughter, Joan Bunche, was a 1953 graduate. The Rev. Howard Thurman posed the choice between lamentation or shielding one's self from evil (quite different from his later activism). The Peckskill riots to prevent Paul Robeson from singing were protested. But the overall impression was one of increasing apathy, alternating with withdrawal, in the Fifties. By then, the McCarthy hysteria had affected not only the political left, but also anyone speaking out for racial justice.

Whereas the war and the expectations it stimulated in many Black Americans may have contributed to the level of activism I have described for the first half of the Forties, I sense that Black students at Vassar in the late Forties and early Fifties received a different message. Even though they were few in number, they were by now expected to be here. It could be said that Vassar did admit Negroes. The implicit message was one that fostered assimilation and denial of differences, as expressed by "We don't see color," or, "I never think of you as Black." This imposes a different burden, that of denying a part of your identity even though consciously acknowledging your race. This dilemma was recognized by the writer of the editorial in the Miscellany News during Brotherhood Week, 1953: "We must do away with the concept of the melting pot. Cultural groups cannot 'melt' without losing some of their most sacred values. It is not for assimilation that we hope but for a deep feeling of brotherhood."

The landmark May 17, 1954, Supreme Court decision outlawing "separate but equal" education received scant mention in the Miscellany News until 11 months later, when the N.A.A.C.P. timetable was criticized as being too short. The Misc said, "There must be psychological readiness on the part of most Southerners if it is to be peaceful and effective; this is not attainable in the timetable of Thurgood Marshall." Apparently the Misc had "the word" about the minds of Southerners; presumably they meant White Southerners, whom they described as "Americans too." When Thurgood Marshall spoke at the college in October 1955, he said it was inevitable that progress toward desegregation would continue.

In 1954, Vassar hired its first full-time Black faculty member, Dr. Henrietta Smith, department of psychology. She has remained at Vassar, serving as chair of the department during some of those years.

The next few years saw increasing interest in the changing South, the nationalist movements in African colonies, African literature, and South Africa. In regard to South Africa, speakers appeared who represented both "sides" of the struggle.

The Sixties

By the Sixties, Black people had tired of waiting for Whites to change their hearts, minds, and, perhaps, their behaviors. They moved to take their lives into their own hands. The Civil Rights Movement was a revolutionary struggle for social change. Student protests, led by Black college students in the South, began in 1960 and gained national prominence and support. Although there were very few Black students
on campus, Vassar students, White and Black, joined in picketing and demonstrating on campus for an end to discrimination locally. They participated in conferences whose main theme was the fight for freedom at home.

Marian Gray (Secundy) ’60, wrote: “We have taken up the struggle for freedom without counting the cost.” Joan Goodwin (Goodman) ’60 recalls that the civil rights group which she, Marian Gray, and others had established, picketed Woolworth’s in Poughkeepsie. They first sought permission from the warden, Elizabeth Moffat Droulieth ’30. She told the group: “In my day, when we wanted to protest, we did. You don’t need to ask permission.”

Students set up a student aid fund for those arrested in the South for civil disobedience while protesting legal segregation and violence against Blacks trying to vote. By 1963 editorials and letters appear in the Misc. questioning whether the activity should extend to the North, to fight discrimination and de facto segregation. Many individual Vassar students of both races were actively involved and committed. In the South, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and C.O.R.E. exemplified the new militancy. The N.A.A.C.P. continued to fight through the courts.

A new thrust developed in the Northern Student Movement, a counterpart to student organizations in the South. It asked students to provide community service and work for community-based change. In Poughkeepsie, Vassar students were asked to go downtown to tutor Black children to help them overcome deficiencies of a poor public school system. When many students signed up and brought the school children to campus, the college administration raised questions about the degree of college involvement.

At a symposium a month after President Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963, Dr. Kenneth Clark emphasized the importance of civil rights legislation, proposed after much pressure during the Kennedy years, but not signed until Lyndon Baines Johnson, a Southerner, was forced to give it strong support. Dr. Clark and his wife, Dr. Mamie Clark, both psychologists, had done the seminal research on the effects of discrimination and segregation on Black children. Their work was one of the foundations on which the N.A.A.C.P. had successfully built the case that led to the landmark Supreme Court decision in Brown vs. Board of Education.

In early 1964, Carole Merritt ’62, working with S.N.C.C. on voter registration, was arrested in Canton, Mississippi, for distributing announcements. There was strong feeling among some groups on campus, and in the AAVC, that the college should take a stand. At an emergency meeting called by the Vassar Committee for Civil Rights, President Blanding was quoted in the Miscellany News as saying: “The college cannot take an official stand on this issue. Any individual may, but we are made up of hundreds of individuals, and we have people in this college who are not in favor of integration. I cannot say that Vassar College goes right on down the line.” She was then asked about Carole’s situation in jail. “The worst that could happen on our side would be that a person in jail would fall ill and die, or that someone would be maltreated. But I seriously doubt that anyone will experience this. The human frame can take a good deal.”

There is more to the story. In a February 1964 memorandum apparently drafted by the president, she mentioned that a mass meeting had been called by a “small but very vocal group of students” on Monday, January 27th. Only 23 students attended.” She went on to write that she, nevertheless, called an open meeting to present the facts of the case and to suggest that contributions be made to the N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense Fund, and that letters be addressed by members of the college community to the Congress concerning the national issue of civil rights legislation.

A few weeks later, a check for $400 was sent to provide bail for Carole Merritt. The transmittal letter pointed out that these were not Vassar College funds, but came from AAVC’s emergency aid fund for
alumnae. Even though this critical assistance was provided, many view the president's initial response as insensitive and biased.

This was one of the kinds of experiences which students of that day recall as being frequent, the kind of expression which would later cause concern on campus in the Seventies and Eighties and lead to protests of a quieter nature.

It was this atmosphere at college and in the country that led Afro-American students to set up the Students Afro-American Society (S.A.S.) in 1967. In contrast to the focus of intergroup relations and organizations years earlier, S.A.S. was not devoted primarily to educating White Americans, nor to persuading them to deal with their individual prejudices. It was organized as an effort in Black solidarity. Among its goals were structural changes in the college that would include a Black presence in the educational experience, through curriculum content and relevance, faculty, and students. Beginning in 1964 our numbers had increased. The support that came from a greater number of students reinforced what became demands for change.

Vassar decided in 1968 to pursue complete coeducation. In April 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated. He had remained vocal in opposition to the Vietnam War and sought to unite poor people of all colors in a fight for justice. Anger, grief, and a sense of unfulfilled expectations combined to produce riots, patchwork remedies, resignation, and efforts at reform. Student protests on issues of accountability and against the Vietnam War spread among White youth and to a lesser degree among Blacks, as they pressed for change, not by peaceful marches in the South, but by takeovers of buildings, violent demonstrations, and nonnegotiable demands.

In April 1969, S.A.S. moved beyond its previous emphasis on informal seminars and bibliographic materials as a means of introducing African-American perspectives into formal courses. S.A.S. continued to press for the expansion of Black Studies beyond its status as an equivalent of a minor into a degree-granting department. A position paper, "A Search for Relevant Education," set forth a number of demands: for an urban center of Black Studies, an on-campus Afro-American Cultural Center, Black cooperative housing, a Black counselor, and a budget for activities. The college agreed and faculty endorsed these demands in principle. Discussion, compromise, and reformulation continued over the next months.

The Urban Center opened in September 1969 with a Black educator, Milfred C. Fierce, as its director. It offered six new courses to Poughkeepsie residents and Vassar students. Among its early faculty were Albert Vann, a teacher and administrator in the New York public school system, who had been active in the crisis over school decentralization. In later years as an assemblyman, he was to head the New York State Black and Puerto Rican Legislative Caucus. A course on Black music, traditional and jazz, was taught by James McPhee, the musician; Charles Hobson taught another on the Black press.

But the overall pace of implementation was too slow for students who saw little happening. By October their demands accelerated. Proposals, discussion, and meetings reached a critical state. Eight days after President Alan Simpson received the latest paper from the students, discouraged by what they perceived as a failure to make a clear commitment to a continuing Black Studies program, 33 of the 59 Black women students began a three-day peaceful occupation of Main building. Support came from the wider student body. By the end of the negotiations on which trustees and administration worked closely, a settlement was reached. According to the president, it "violated no principle so far as the judgment of the minority was concerned. It regularized some features of the Black Studies program, clarified others, and accelerated, at a heavy cost in human strain, the continuing process of decision."

As President Simpson said, "We should always remember that deep despair . . . will grip the hearts of many Black students in America until they are surer of racial equality and justice than they are now. These

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**Government**

**Vickie Miles LaGrange '74.** In her first bid for a political office in 1986, she was elected to the Oklahoma State Senate in a run-off election with a record voter turnout. A former assistant district attorney in Oklahoma City, Senator LaGrange defeated the incumbent of 22 years, who had been the first Black elected an Oklahoma state senator but who had lost much of his political power owing, in part, to his high rate of absenteeism. She saw her election as the first Black female elected to the senate as a mandate for "more vigorous, forthright leadership."

**L. Patrick Mellon '78.** An attorney with the Federal Trade Commission, he is involved in communications law and public policy in the areas of broadcasting and cable. Previously staff counsel to the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications, he was selected for inclusion in the 1983 edition of Outstanding Young Men of America. These men were selected from nominations made by members of both houses of Congress, by governors, mayors, state legislators, and college presidents and deans, as well as by civil groups.

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**Business and Industry**

**Lynn Carter Hutcheson '69.** The first president of the Student Afro-American Society at Vassar, she earned an M.B.A. at the University of Hawaii. She has held a variety of managerial positions in computer services and telecommunications. Her most recent position is manager of product administration with GTE Telenet Communications.

**Karen Winfrey '83.** Vice-president, Shearson Lehman Brothers, Inc. An independent major in international political economy, she began her career in finance in 1982 in an internship under the auspices of Sponsors of Educational Opportunity (S.E.O.), a program providing opportunities for minorities to enter business. Her efforts quickly moved her from traders' assistant, to assistant trader, to trader. In February 1986, she was made vice-president/institutional trader, corporate bond department. She is the only Black woman vice-president in this department.

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10 PQ SPRING 1988
students believed we had either broken our word or were laggard in keeping it."

Although Black Studies (later Africana Studies) was now able to provide the equivalent of a major, and Norman Hodges and the well-known scholar, C. Eric Lincoln, had been hired, faculty were part time. S.A.S. and others continued to press for fulfillment of the other agreements, including full-time Black faculty. The frustration that led to the takeover of Main building in November 1969 was not dissipated by the relative success that followed the negotiations, confrontations, and compromises.

The Seventies

The college was shaken by the way in which students had expressed the depths of their frustration, but dismay over the confrontation did not blind the trustees to the validity of their complaints. Early in 1970, the board called for the formation of a committee of students, faculty, administrators, and trustees to study minority student issues. The committee was to develop and recommend "a statement of philosophy in relation to minority student education, policies, and implementation for submission to the college faculty, the student senate and, finally, to the board of trustees for action." At the end of the year, the Catlin Report was adopted.

In making recommendations for change, the report made a clear statement of board policy: "Vassar College supports the national role of educational opportunity for all people and intends to do all it can within its ability as a liberal arts college and its resources to further that goal. Among the several minorities in this country whose educational opportunities have been neglected, the Black minority at Vassar College shall have priority over all minorities for the foreseeable future." Recognizing the worsening economic status and the continuing disparity in education, employment, and income between Afro-Americans and other groups, the board reaffirmed this policy in 1985.

The early Seventies saw an increase in the number of Black students admitted as well as a broadening in their backgrounds. Whereas most of the Black students applying and accepted in the first 30 years had been middle-class and upper-middle class, many of the students recruited in these years were working-class or lower-class; a few came from poor families. For some, the transition was difficult. Efforts had to be directed both to strengthening academic and study skills and to coping with administrative attitudes that alternated between overindulgence and hostility, two sides of the same coin of unconscious racism.

No matter what their background, many students spoke of the need for a place where their cultural identity could be strengthened through living and studying together. The Urban Center, which had been established in response to their requests, filled some needs. Both service to the Black community of Poughkeepsie and education about the African-American experience were provided. The Africana Studies program, though not yet a department, met other educational needs. But students hoped that they could maintain a sense of identity and of commitment to the Black community by having the choice to live in close association with other Black students. Kendrick Cooperative House provided an atmosphere in which, contrary to any dormitory on campus, Black students were in the majority, in contiguous but not exclusive housing.

The Catlin Report had stated that "separate housing is an option which must be open to Black students coming to Vassar, as a means whereby pluralism can strengthen the common community." The report also specifically pointed out that "no college residence for students can be occupied solely by members of one race." In actuality, few White students chose to live in Kendrick. Kendrick was designated as the Afro-American Cultural Center; as such, it was the scene of many activities that enriched the knowledge and sense of identity of Black students.

But it did more. When I spoke there in 1973, I was struck by the ability of many of the residents to move in both worlds. Kendrick gave them social support, a feeling of being cared for and valued as part of a group, a feeling that invigorated them and allowed them to function better. These were the days, and this the campus, where White students could dress up as Ku Klux Klansmen for Halloween, and where White faculty could tell Blacks to work alone on a science project so that they would not slow the work of potential White partners. As one who had fought for open housing in New York and who had been denied it so many times, including my first year at Vassar, I had to bridge the generation gap and hear what our young people were asking for. In spite of their numbers, they still experienced the desire for a community in which they could comfortably address their needs for self-interest, social relationships, and cultural identity as other groups had done. Even my generation could readily see that the emotional and social environment of the predominantly White colleges did not support and sustain Black students as the historically Black colleges did.

When the New York State Regents decided in 1974 that Kendrick House was a segregated facility and thus illegal, the trustees decided to abide by this decision but also to continue to address the broader concerns of Black-White relations. They recommended changes in admission and financial aid, Black Studies, Black faculty recruitment, and affirmative action in employment and investment policy. They reiterated the need for a pluralistic community where all would feel comfortable and where violators would be sanctioned.

The board also approved three major recommendations: 1) that Vassar retain its traditional pattern of freedom of choice in the selection of rooming assignments; 2) that Kendrick House not be available as student housing after July 1, 1975; 3) that the house adjacent to the Hallie Flanagan Davis Powerhouse Theater be renovated and designated as the non-residential Afro-American Cultural Center and provided with an appropriate organization, staff, and budget.

In the second half of the Seventies, these issues continued to be in the forefront. Major increases in financial aid benefited recipients of all races. Although little improvement was made in faculty recruitment, there was a modest increase in the number of Black administrators in this decade. Important as it was for students of all races to relate to Afro-Americans in new roles, and for Black students to have administrators knowledgeable about the Black experience with whom they might speak, there were difficulties. These staff frequently had administrative responsibilities in two areas as well as their part-time faculty duties. Because of the paucity of Blacks in any roles, they were sought out, no matter what their job titles, to be mentors, counselors, and advisers to students coping with this

'Among several minorities in this country whose educational opportunities have been neglected, the Black minority at Vassar College shall have priority over all minorities for the foreseeable future.'
stressful environment. The administration turned to them for understanding of and communication with this new breed of student.

The double-bind in which they were placed had mixed consequences for them. Responsive to student needs and to day-to-day demands of administration and teaching, they tended to shortchange their scholarly research. The all-too-inevitable tenure denial was another reason for student unhappiness. Unlike White students protesting about tenure, Black students saw few others of their own remaining on campus to provide the continuity of service and caring.

Even those administrators who did not also hold faculty appointments experienced problems. Some were asked to do jobs that were clearly well-nigh impossible for anyone and then blamed when the inevitable occurred. Others were chosen, even when their lack of experience was apparent, and not provided adequate supervision, but allowed instead to sink or swim. To Vassar's Black community this was another example of programming for failure that is typical of Black experiences in White organizations.

On one occasion, the situation became so critical that several Black faculty threatened to resign to protest what the Black community perceived as biased administrative decisions by President Alan Simpson. One respected Black scholar did resign in frustration at a continuing pattern of insensitivity. Black students brought their issues to the attention of both trustees and contributors with picketing on the occasion of a fundraising dinner. Recognizing the validity of their complaints as well as their right to peaceful protest, a Black trustee refused to “tell them to call off their demonstration,” as she was requested to do by the board chair.

In the late Seventies, there was also strong discontent about the college's failure to provide the promised Afro-American Cultural Center—or a Third World Center as later recommended by Black faculty. These topics, discussed in meetings of the Committee on Minority Students, reflected increasingly prevalent views of students that the college was lessening its commitment to minorities. In its fifth year, John Blassingame became the first Black chair, serving from 1975 to 1978. Although not a Vassar graduate, this eminent Yale historian gave Vassar and his fellow Afro-Americans a valuable perspective in this difficult period in race relations. Marian Gray Secundy ’60 chaired the committee from 1978 to 1983. She played an important role in raising issues of retention and in letting students know that their concerns were understood, whether or not they gained what they wanted when they wanted it.

At times, as a trustee meant being a vehicle for positive communication between students and administration, as opposed to quieting dissent. One event took place in the late Seventies. A particularly vicious racist act (as well as robbery), followed by indifference on the part of White security personnel, was reacted to by nonviolent protest, including a sit-in outside President Virginia Smith’s office and a demand that she meet with outraged Black student representatives or remain barricaded within. In meetings with S.A.S., the Vassar Student Association (V.S.A.), and other student organizations, with other students of all backgrounds who were upset at the resurgence of racist behaviors on campus, and with equally concerned administrators, Mrs. Secundy established an atmosphere of trust that allowed both students and administration to develop greater communication and to set in place some mechanisms for fostering intergroup sensitivity.

**Recent Years**

But such mechanisms need to be reviewed from time to time and modified to meet changing needs. There has been an upsurge in racially-biased behaviors and attitudes since 1980, encouraged by the Reagan administration’s active efforts to weaken civil rights legislation, its massive assaults on social programs, and its denial that there is a problem of racism. Vassar has not been immune. As we return to campus, Black alumnae/i hear firsthand accounts of racial slurs, attitudes, and behaviors. Of course, we are concerned that individual and institutionalized racism persists throughout this country. We are particularly disheartened when our college is slow to change or when a few prejudiced people—students, faculty, or staff—act on their prejudices.

Fortunately for the whole community, President Frances Fergusson has been forthright in stating that there is no place at Vassar for such behaviors and in developing mechanisms for changing behaviors and attitudes. At present, there are two collegewide bodies working on solving this serious problem. The faculty have made a strong statement of principles. The leadership of the president can set the tone and the limits, but each element of the community has a shared responsibility. The Black alumnae/i, through African-African Alumnae of Vassar College (Triple A VC, a committee of AAVC), will maintain strong interest in the direction of and pace of improvement.

The Minority Affairs Committee of the board of trustees (formerly the Committee on Minority Students) continues to address these issues critical to the quality of student life. Under Billie Davis Gaines ’58, its chair since 1983, the committee has also focused on the need to increase the number of Black men at Vassar and to attract more Black applicants of both sexes. Fruitful discussions have supported the creative techniques of James Montoya, the new director of admission, and the active role of the Triple A VC in bringing high school students to campus and in outreach to new schools and organizations. The results of Mr. Montoya’s efforts have been very encouraging in regard to Black, Hispanic, and Asian students as a whole. An increase in the number of men has occurred in each of these groups. In 1986, ten Black men entered; the number increased to 17 in 1987.

There was a significant decrease (from 47 to 37) in Black women, as well as a slight drop in the total number of entering Blacks (57 to 54), however. This may reflect a lasting situation, or perhaps discouragement, expressed by Black Vassar women, at the disproportion; or it may be only a temporary setback as efforts increase to attract students of other ethnic backgrounds. The diversity we seek should not be at the expense of any group.

In another area, 20 years after the establishment of the Students Afro-American Society, with its call for Black Studies, and a short time before the same anniversary of the founding of Africana Studies, that program still has the largest number of Black faculty. Other programs and departments have not been as quick as it has to open their doors to people of other ethnic backgrounds. Most of the Black faculty in other departments are there because they have joint appointments with Africana Studies. With one recent ex-
Religion

Sandra A. Wilson ’75. In 1982, after her graduation from Union Theological Seminary in 1980, the Rev. Wilson was ordained as the first Black female priest in the Episcopal Diocese of New York and the fourth in the nation. She celebrated her first Eucharist in the Vassar chapel, where she was acting chaplain during 1981/82, the first woman to hold that post. The following August, she became the first full-time Black woman rector of the Anglican Communion in the world, when she was appointed as rector of St. Mark’s Episcopal Church in Bridgeport, Connecticut, where she served for four years. During those years, she was on the faculty of Yale University Divinity School. She is currently rector of St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, Asbury Park, New Jersey. The Rev. Wilson is the only woman priest on the executive council of the National Episcopal Church. She is currently a Vassar trustee.

Petero Sabune '77. The Rev. Sabune received his divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary. Ordained as an Episcopal priest in 1981, he became rector of Sts. John, Paul, and Clement Episcopal Church, Mt. Vernon, New York, in 1982. In his five years of stewardship, he was actively involved in serving this urban community. He was instrumental in assisting the first Haitian refugees, and his efforts stimulated other Black clergy to provide assistance to these “boat people.” He established immigration resettlement services to assist other undocumented aliens. Under his leadership, his church established a community larder to address the mounting problems of hunger and homelessness. In the summer of 1987, he became rector of the Church of the Incarnation, Jersey City, New Jersey.

J.J.C.

Science and Technology

Marie Lawrence ’45. Having received her master’s in social work from Smith College, she worked for many years in social agencies in New York City. After achieving significant status in the field of youth counseling services, she decided in midlife to fulfill a dream she had held since her years at Vassar, and pursued advanced study in zoology. She has been involved for a number of years in research at the American Museum of Natural History, where she is senior research mammalogist.

Marsha Findlay Borque ’74. Staff production geologist, Mobil Exploration & Producing Southeast, Inc., she is one of a small number of Black women who make their living as exploration geologists. A geology major at Vassar, she received an M.S. in geology from the University of South Carolina. She serves on the Minority Participation Program Scholarship Committee of the American Geological Institute, a mentoring project which has had a major impact on geoscience students, including a Vassar geology major who received one of its awards in the early ‘80s.

J.J.C.
in Asia (A.S.I.A.) as they press for a multicultural center, the fulfillment of the promise made in 1975. Although student response to sexist and racist literature has brought together people from a variety of backgrounds, in some instances Black students are not well represented in activities related to social and political events that affect them. Few participate in the struggle for freedom in South Africa; at teach-ins against apartheid or demonstrations for divestment, Black faces are few. Although some Black students do field work in the Black community of Poughkeepsie, student organization links to the inner city are not strong. Though the apathy of the Eighties has involved Blacks as well, it is important that we, students and alumnae/i, not neglect our responsibility for informed social involvement.

It is essential that, in spite of the intense pressures of being Black in a predominantly White institution, students take advantage of all that Vassar offers to stretch their minds in this intellectually stimulating atmosphere. It is important also to have a reasonable balance between social and academic life, and between in-group and wider group relationships. To do all this, often while working to stay in school, is not easy. It is distinctly difficult to do in an environment in which, as Billie Gaines often says, there is lacking a comfort level conducive to successful functioning. This reinforces the importance of greater numbers of Black faculty with strong awareness of the need for equity and of the role they can play.

Life after Vassar
For many Black alumnae/i there have not been strong ties to bind them to Vassar. Although individuals participate in Vassar clubs, their numbers are not many. Ambivalence about their Vassar experience, uncertainty about the relevance of club activities to their lives, and the small number of others of color are some reasons given for nonparticipation. Others are so busy making a living as heads of households or as co-heads of families dependent upon two salaries that they find other priorities for their time and money. The old Afro-American pattern of giving to churches has not carried over to our financial contributions to our alma mater.

We have been more generous in informal networking, mentoring, and career counseling. The Career Days conducted by the college and the Black alumnae/i forums in 1984 and 1987 brought many back to the campus for the first time; they have helped to see the important role we can play. As a component of AAVC, Triple A VC began at the initial forum. It grew out of the desire of those present to play a more supportive role to the college and to Black students. Besides continuing in recruitment, Triple A VC has plans to encourage accepted students to come to Vassar and to offer assistance to families in the mechanics of enrollment. Marian Secundy and Claudia Thomas Carty '71 were the first co-chairs of Triple A VC. Current chairs are Joan Goodman Goodwin '60 and Paula Williams Walker '74. The observer position on the AAVC board, first held by Dr. Carty, is now held by Joan Goodwin.

For those of us who have made our contributions to Vassar in service, the demands and personal satisfaction have been considerable. AAVC committees and board have included several of us. Richard Roberts '74 is a current AAVC board member. The position of second vice-president has been held by Marian Secundy and Billie Gaines. Other directors have included Sylvia Drew Ivie '65 and James Mitchell '75.

Marian Secundy, the first Black member of the Vassar College Board of Trustees, served from 1971 to 1983. Currently, there are three Afro-American trustees: Billie Davis Gaines, Sandra Wilson '75, and me.

The celebrations of the college have included a number of Black graduates. I was a departmental fellow in psychology at the college's centennial in 1960. I was pleased to lecture in several classes, including one with Dr. Henrietta Smith, the first full-time Black faculty member. The AAVC centennial celebration in 1971 brought five Afro-American alumnae to campus as part of a group of 39 distinguished graduates. They were: Sandra Browne Hart '68, Sylvia Drew Ivie '65, Carolyn Atkinson Thornell '62, Marian Gray Secundy '66; I was honored to be included as well.

Vassar has provided a strong educational base for Black alumnae/i, and they have used it well. Some have achieved the outward manifestations of success, advancement in one's career, recognition by one's peers, financial security. Success has also meant satisfaction in efforts to fulfill one's potential, to seek knowledge to practice, to remain true to one's principles. For most of us it has been a struggle to move beyond barriers.

Some of our graduates are more than résumé people. Over the years I have had the opportunity to work professionally with a number of Black alumnae/i. It was a pleasure to see how well they applied the intellectual curiosity, diligence, and analytic skills developed at Vassar to solving real life problems. After I was graduated from Boston University School of Medicine in 1949, I worked with Marie Lawrence '45, who was then a social worker at Bellevue Hospital, where I did my psychiatric residency. When I was in private practice, we worked together in foster care. When I was New York City Commissioner of Mental Health, Andrea Delgado '67 was my deputy for a year before she joined the New York State Mental Health System. As a community psychiatrist, she was president of the Black Psychiatrists of America. At her untimely death in 1980, she was director of the Children's Psychiatric Center in New York City.

When I worked on President Carter's transition, Patricia Stubbs Fleming '57 was one of my volunteers in educational policy. She later became a special assistant to H.E.W. Secretary Joseph Califano, and is now with the department of Health and Human Services. Her son, Douglas Fleming '82, is one of our few Black alumnae/i; Vassar children, certainly the first son! As director of studies for the President's Commission on Mental Health, Betty McCleary Hamburg '44, on leave from the National Institute of Mental Health, thought my work in psychiatric rehabilitation in Harlem might be relevant to programs for chronically mentally ill people nationally. As a volunteer, I worked with her as I coordinated the task force on community support systems.

After leaving city government in 1980, I became medical professor of behavioral science at City College, C.U.N.Y. Medical School. Because I was a number of years away from the hands-on practice of medicine, Marian Secundy generously lent me the curriculum she had developed for the Howard University College of Medicine. It stimulated my thinking about helping medical students develop as well as the science of medicine. Most recently, as a visiting professor of mental health services at Brandeis University, I selected Christine Robinson '79 as my teaching assistant. She had received her master's in psychology.
Billie Davis Gaines '58. Twice named "Georgia State Russian Teacher of the Year," and four times STAR teacher of Booker T. Washington High School in Atlanta, she has made significant contributions to both secondary and higher education. A winner of Vassar's Helen Kate Furness prize in English, her college major, she made a decision "on a dare" to minor in the difficult language of Russian. After working for a short time as a reporter and as a copy editor, and earning a master's in English, she first taught English at Booker T. For 18 years she established and directed a program in Russian there, which was to become a four-year curriculum reaching over 1,500 students. The trips to Russia which she organized for several years broadened their understanding of the language, of the Soviet people, and of the students' own roles as "citizens of the world and not just citizens of the neighborhood." Recently, after serving for several years on the program staff of the National Humanities Faculty, she has written a film on the great Russian writer Alexander Pushkin, one of whose ancestors was an equally great African general. She is currently a Vassar trustee.

Marian Gray Secundy '60. After receiving her M.S.S. in social work from Bryn Mawr and a Ph.D. in medical humanities from the Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities, she moved into the critical and burgeoning area of medical ethics. She is currently associate professor at Howard University College of Medicine, where she has responsibility for the curriculum on health and human values. Her work draws upon her background in social work, as applied to teaching and administration; she has also worked extensively as a grief therapist. In 1973 she was named an "Outstanding Young Woman of America," and in 1975 she received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to study medical ethics. She was the first Black trustee of Vassar.

Josephine A. V. Allen '68. In 1986, Dr. Allen became the first tenured Black woman professor at Cornell University, where she holds the rank of associate professor in the department of human service studies in the New York State College of Human Ecology. She is a specialist in public policy, social welfare administration and planning, and social work education. Concerned with the lack of Black faculty at Cornell, she has been active in the university's Black Action Movement; she has also served on the Women's Studies Program board and on the Minority Education Committee of the Faculty Council of Representatives. Among her research interests is that of the survival strategies of women who head households.

Brad G. Williams '77. The recipient of Fulbright-Hayes (1977/78) and Maguire (1978/79) fellowships for study at the University of Strasbourg, he has specialized in French literature and history. He is currently a visiting assistant professor of French at Vassar.

Iris Mack '78. With an M.A. from the University of California at Berkeley and a Ph.D. from Harvard, she became, in 1976, the first Black faculty member of the department of mathematics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Her field is applied mathematics. In 1980, she was one of six graduate students selected for the Bell Laboratories Cooperative Research Fellowships on the basis of scholastic attainment and other evidence of ability as research scientists or engineers.

J.J.C.

from Cornell and was pursuing a doctorate in social policy in the Heller School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare.

I am lucky to have had these professional links with our Black alumnii, as well as the bonds of friendship that have developed as we have become more involved in Vassar today and in the future. As I read the clippings, letters, and reports which I used to profile only a representative few of our number, I was impressed with the variety of worlds in which we live and work. From science to religion, from business to the arts, from healing the disorders of mind and body to righting societal wrongs, the range of our involvement has been great.

The realities of Afro-American life, identity, and struggle have affected the liberal arts education provided by Vassar and experienced by each of us. It is a fine education, indeed, despite the problems. For some, the ways in which Vassar mirrored the racial attitudes and behaviors of the wider society were constraining and inhibiting. For others, this atmosphere, though distressing, was no better or worse than one expected in this country, and so one did one's job—in study or in work—and kept on keeping on. For many, Vassar was another challenge to be faced, to succeed at in spite of difficulties, with the awareness that more would be expected of us, not only, as our forebears used to say, because Black people have to be twice as good as other people to succeed, but because so much more is expected of anyone, Black or White, who has earned a Vassar degree.

The fact that we grow in number means that there is a greater opportunity to grow in strength, to provide the foundation of social support that empowers us as a community within the wider Vassar community, and to affect that wider community by our proactive involvement. There are so many on whose shoulders we stand, those who opened the doors that we were enabled to enter, those who provide the emotional, financial, and social support that sustain us. But there are those also to whom we must give a sense of history and of belonging to the Vassar family. We have a responsibility to them.

As Afro-American alumnii of Vassar College, we have a responsibility to use our energies for constructive social change and to provide opportunities for those who remain outside and behind. Because of the positions of relative advantage which we enjoy, thanks to the excellence of a Vassar education, our responsibility in the world is even greater.
WHEN I returned to South Africa this year, I thought that it would be interesting to look up some of the Vassar alumnae living there to see what they had to say for themselves. Quite a bit, I soon found out from the three alumnae who agreed to speak with me. When I finally got back to New York, I decided to transcribe the interview tapes as they were, because each woman's very singular voice brought out a different dimension of that extremely complex and beautiful country.

K.P.

Karen Petersen is a photojournalist who recently spent five months in Africa and the Middle East on various assignments. Her work has appeared in the *German GEO*, the New York Times, Rolling Stone, the Times of London, and the Associated Press. Ms. Petersen is currently based in New York and is affiliated with the agency Picture Group.

Doreen Kossove '64 Pietermaritzberg, Natal

majored in chemistry and minored in physiology at Vassar. It was a place that always accepted and encouraged creativity and tolerance of other drummers. I went to medical school in San Diego, where I met my husband, Owen, while I was taking a graduate course in physics and math. He came back to South Africa in 1977. I moved over two months later. It's a different tempo here. There are wheels within wheels. This is somewhat true in the States too, but the wheels are different here, and there are more of them. It's a difference between authoritarian and democratic—even before the Emergency Regulations. Culturally, we're in the 1950s, and as much as I wouldn't want to again go through that racism and sexism which was blindly accepted in America—you know, the way God intended things to run: White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, and male—here I am in it!

In South Africa, the man holds the property unless you are married by antenuptial contract or by tribal law. The rights of women change from tribe to tribe, but generally it's a sexist society, and generally it's an authoritarian society. The way problems are dealt with is they're swept under the rug, and the rug is nailed down.

I had my child when I was over 36. I had wanted an amniocentesis, which was no problem. It was done skillfully, and the blood bank here was very professional. They did their job and counted the chromosomes, but they would not release the sex of the child. As I wanted to know, I called up the head of the genetics division, and the excuse was given to me, that my gynecologist had also given to me—he had known it was claptrap, was that the test wasn't reliable for determining the sex of the child. In ninth grade, you counted chromosomes, and you knew that if you look for the trisomes, 321, you also have to look for the X and Y! As a pediatrician, I had been receiving reports on children in the course of my work and I knew they bloody well did report 46,48,47,xyy or xy—whatever the problem was. There was no question about it, and my gynecologist knew that. The head of the genetics division also realized I was a doctor, but I was supposed to subscribe to this idiocy because everyone must subscribe to it!

The amniocentesis rule occurred because there were one or two patients with four or five children of the same sex, who, upon hearing the results of the amniocentesis, rejected the unborn child. The South African reaction to this was, therefore, nobody shall know her child's sex. The American reaction to this would have been get the psychologist in there, get the psychiatrist in there, get the family into counseling, social workers, whatever. I said to the South Africans, won't the mother reject the child when it's born, if it's the wrong sex? Oh no-o-o, they said, of course the mother will see the child and then love it, which is bloody nonsense. It may have happened in one or two cases, but it certainly is an absurdity. It's the old question of putting things under the rug instead of examining them. This is a fairly innocuous example, because it's medicine, but this thinking runs throughout the whole society. There are certain things that everybody agrees to agree because the authorities want it that way.

However, one of the nice things, medically, about being in South Africa is that if you know the right people, two doctors can, for an entire country, lay down conditions of care. That was very surprising. Ann Raynal, another doctor, and I wrote an article in 1981 for the *South African Medical Journal* which laid down the requirements for treating victims of rape and sexual assault. We also did the lay publications for the patients, which were available free of charge. I had also written an article on that topic for *Fair Lady*, a magazine similar to an upmarket *Redbook* here, and given many talks to all sorts of different organizations at that time. This was very satisfying.

Generally, the medical system in South Africa is much more authoritarian, reflecting the society as a whole. In Natal province, where I live, it is more English than Afrikaans, but it is still much more authoritarian than in the United States. I don't know any American nurses who would put up with what the South African nurses go through...the structure, the hierarchy. But, again, it's not a situation where people are taught to think, but to accept. You may find...
people who are capable of thinking within their given profession, but outside of that, they drop it. If I make an offhand comment about religion or government around the people I work with, who are very good at what they do, you can actually see the shutters come down and their faces close up. I'm not even talking about people who are afraid [that] if they say something the police will come after them, but people who just refuse to think beyond certain confines, because to do that would set up certain conflicts about this country which would be overwhelming. The patient confidentiality situation here is also very bad—doctors are not protected by law. But neither are reporters, and they will protect their sources, while the doctors won't.

Here, people listen to the BBC to find out what's going on. SABC is a state-run organization which will talk endlessly about unrest in other countries, while mentioning nothing about what's going on under our very noses. The kind of attention paid to the government in South Africa is very different in quality from the United States. People really don't feel they have a voice here—they don't even write to their member of parliament. And the White South Africans have the vote; they could unseat the government, but they don't.

It's difficult for Whites to disagree when they are afraid of the police, afraid of the Blacks—because that's been used as a weapon: Would you want your daughter to marry one, would you want one to live in your neighborhood? White people have no experience with the Blacks; they're completely separated from them. They are strangers, except for the maid, the tea girl at work, or the gardener. You don't meet Black people of your own education and class. I know one Zulu doctor, and I don't know him well.

I've been politically active in the States, but I've been politically inactive here. I'm an American citizen and I feel it's the proper thing. . . . I didn't like it when the Iranian citizens, people who were not Americans, demonstrated in New York. It's not their country. When you're raised in the United States, you're dealing with American problems, and you're trained to think from an American perspective. Many of the situations in the United States are fairly easily remedied, given time and money. You have a literate population and you can always find people who are willing to work and who have skills, despite our 20 percent illiteracy! On the other hand, probably about 20 percent of South Africa is literate, and it makes a tremendous difference in planning the immediate future of the country.

The national party has been in power for over 40 years. Remember power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely, and they're going for absolute power. One of the very important things that was done here was to limit the term of the president, and even then the right-wingers had problems. You can see what people like Nixon and Reagan do to keep power. Nixon showed no respect for civil rights, and he had the election in his bag! Can you imagine if that type of right-winger in the United States could stay in for 40 years? People get very power hungry, and the right-wingers here have a certain kind of arrogance—in America, too—that they feel places them above civil rights. The left-wingers get into money corruption, but power games happen to everyone. It's just dangerous to have power for that long.

It's a church state, and it is a very rigid church state. Everybody gets religion in school—that's a problem for me. They are taught about Jesus Christ, only the Lutheran version, and my daughter is already asking me about God. There are a lot of people in America who believe in religion, too, but there are also some really religious people who don't push it on others. When raising children you always have to tread the line between breaking their will and being their servant. What we have tried to do with our daughter, Natasha, is to give her as much support and confidence as we can. To have the courage to be different here—or any place—is lonely, except that here it can actually be dangerous.

They separate the sexes here—there are no coed private schools. I want my daughter to go to a coed school, because without boys you can't measure yourself; the beliefs of bigger, stronger, smarter, that cultural understanding, you adopt without any real evidence to abrogate it. At some point you need to say, hey man, people may say that, but it's not true. I am afraid of Natasha going to a girls school because of the way they're going to socialize her. I don't want her to be a nice young lady; I want her to be a vital, effective human being, which she is so far. Her father roughhouses with her, which is important. Developmentally, for girls, this makes them confident, and gives them permission to be physically active. I don't want her to lose that. We're already in trouble because a lot of people are emigrating. She's lost friend after friend after friend. This is having an effect on her.

The main need that South Africa has is not sanctions, but education. The Soroptimists, a women's organization I work with, is like the Rotary Club, except that it is not a subsidiary of a male organization. One of the things I want to do is get books, any books, into this country. The price of books here, especially with the rand dropping in value daily, is hellishly expensive. Blacks who have trouble making ends meet certainly can't afford to buy books. The Soroptimists will take any donations of books and place them at a Black university, where they are needed most.

If you're going to have sanctions, you would like to be able to use them as a paintbrush rather than as a club—to get certain things done without destroying the whole painting. How much further sanctions will help is really doubtful, because the Afrikaaners have a long history of going into the laager [circling the wagons]. They will just dig in. The women I know think nothing of carrying guns in their purses, women who are basically nonviolent, and excellent mothers.

I had one woman who fainted after I had sewed up her child. I picked up her purse and it was heavy. There was a gun inside, and I almost fainted! I'm just not used to seeing mothers and nice middle-class young people carrying guns around. But this won't be a Rhodesia. Doreen Kossove '64, physician
The Afrikaaners, if necessary, will eliminate everyone. They have no place to go and they won't give it up. As far as they see it, the Blacks here are asking for what happened in Mozambique and Rhodesia, where everything was theirs overnight. But look what happened. People have to be taught. You can't have unskilled, illiterate people inheriting this country overnight and expect it to work.

Margaret Hiza Ardington '69
Mandini, Kwazulu

I have wanted to be a veterinarian since I was nine, since I could think about a career. I was a biology major at Vassar, and I had a wonderful person and teacher, Sue Lamb, who taught me how to think and not be afraid of my own thoughts. I went on to the University of Pennsylvania for graduate school because of their liberal attitudes toward women, especially in medicine. At that time, I was the second woman from Vassar ever to go on to veterinary school. I had the idea of studying equine medicine, until, in my senior year, I met my husband, Peter, who was an intern in bovine medicine. I was very much taken with him, and with bovine medicine. When I graduated, I practiced in Maryland and Pennsylvania, where I worked on horses and cows, which is what I had wanted to do. I practiced for two years, and then, when my husband asked me to marry him, I was not allowed to answer yes or no until I came to Zululand to see this country. I came in 1974 at the worst time, during the summer, when it's really hot and horrible. I contracted Rift Valley fever from doing a post-mortem on one of the calves on the farm, and I was ill the rest of my stay here, but it didn't deter me.

We went back and got married in the States. Having come visit had been his mother's idea, because she was quite concerned that I would have no idea what was going on. She was right. Peter had written me a long letter describing the problems that one would meet living in the sticks. We're on a farm in a rural area, and we're isolated. One really feels out of the mainstream; there isn't the variety of goods and services, and the telephone system is absolutely horrendous.

My first year here was really sink or swim, but I think that is true for any marriage—everything's so different. It was a hard year when I look back, and it was an unpleasant year, in certain ways. All of a sudden, here I was in the wilds of Zululand. I had a lovely family to come to but everything was so new, it was very awkward and difficult for me. There was no way I was going to leave America with my training and all the years I'd put in and not be a veterinarian. We built a practice together—the initial building by ourselves, and in two years we were adding on. When we started out we had a kitchen table, and we operated in the garage for a couple of months before everything was all organized.

I love my work here, I really do. I see quite a few cancers, and dogs with rabies and biliary—in contrast to vets cleaning out ears and anal and clipping nails in the States. Biliary, our most common disease, is extremely challenging because it is life-threatening. In the case of rabies, we have a tremendous responsibility to protect the public and tell people when they must get shots if there is a rabid dog in their area.

I've found foreign bodies in animals a challenge. I've taken out squash balls, rocks, and rubber baby bottle nipples, fishhooks. I've got a cape eagle owl in the hospital now, with a broken wing I'm setting. We've got a marsh owl, which was slightly concussed, snakes, ugh—they come in with fungal conditions in their mouths. If you want to handle one you put it in the fridge; it cools down and then you can handle it. I've treated duikers, these wonderful little antelopes, like miniatures, the size of a small dog; but they don't survive very well. We had a mongoose with gastroenteritis the other day; we're not sure what happened to him. He died. The stress of hospitalization often finishes these little animals.

I think one of my roles living here as an American citizen is to show an example of how an American treats other people as equals. In my surgery we have myself, an American; Sara, who is of British extraction; and Leah, who is a South African Indian; and we have had working for us over the years different tribal people. We have all gotten along very well together, and I think that is the sort of example that should be set.

I can vote in this country if I want to, and I have South African citizenship, not really wanting it; it has been foisted upon me. But I will not vote, because that is a way of losing my American citizenship. I have worked for the Progressive Federalist Party; I was a cell leader here in Mandini. I do believe political parties, even if they are opposition ones, still work with the government. We need an opposition party in parliament hammering away at the government. My husband and I support the PFP and contribute money every month, but I'm basically not a political person; I'm rather apolitical.

We also give money to education—we have supported Blacks going to universities. Sometimes you get winners, sometimes you get losers. We've, unfortunately, had mostly losers, but we keep on trying. For instance, on the 21st of this month, a lady named Melisiwe that we helped to go to a Black educational training school in Eseshwe will graduate, and we hope she will go on and be a good teacher and also have good feelings toward helping others—the way we helped her.

I encourage my husband's projects, especially his cattle projects, trying to get the Black cattle farmers to raise cattle on an economic basis. Our cane and cattle farm is 1,100 acres, and in a good year we cut 21,000 tons. We have 55 married couples on the farm and about 100 children; the numbers get bigger and smaller depending on the crop. The farm is one of the pioneers in this area, which is mostly a cane-growing area. Cane has quite a bit of wastage—the stalk being used for the sugar and the green part thrown away. Our cattle
follow the cane cutters and eat the green part, the waste. Since cattle need a great deal of roughage this provides the roughage and protein for them. The cattle really need this roughage during the winter time, when the grass isn't growing. The other beneficial thing that happens with this method is that the cattle add their fertilizer to the field. There is a symbiotic relationship here that my husband is encouraging the other farmers to try.

Peter actually went out into the hills of Kwazulu, Sunday after Sunday, on his days off, cutting brack to establish pastures, trying to teach people how to properly raise cattle, and writing out all sorts of programs in Zulu. He tried, but it didn't work. There were a lot of good intentions gone astray. We did, though, help people keep their cattle alive during a drought by operating a drought feedlot. Hundreds of cattle were dying all over the Kwazulu hills. It made a difference, and it was a showing of good will, which was important on an everyday personal basis.

Ever since I came to the farm 13 years ago, we've had Christmas parties. When I first arrived, I felt there was something terribly wrong with these parties, that they were patronizing. All the farm help would be gotten together, and they would sit in our school building. It would be hot, and a minister would come in and rail at them. Somebody would start a little bit of singing, we'd hand out presents and sweets and show a movie like _Dumbo_. In the middle of the film, everyone would be walking out, nobody would be interested, and it was all extremely awkward. Under my instigation, because I really felt this was a terribly, terribly awkward culture clash—it just wasn't right—we started having Zulu dancing for the people. They have their own big drums and special music makers, and they make their own costumes, real Zulu costumes with skins and beads and spears, and they just love it. Everyone enjoys doing this tremendously—there's been such a change now that we have these wonderful dances. We also slaughter a beast and make a huge stew, which is much healthier than the sweets, although we still hand out the sweets to the kids. Everyone, whatever age, gets a present. At least now it's not such a cultural clash.

I'm lucky in that I have a few educated professional women around me that can be my friends. My husband has been a women's libber all along, and he has always boosted me and supported me in anything I've wanted to do, and his family, too. We in the farming community are the ones that live here—the rest of the community seems to rotate on through. I find it hard to keep friends—they often leave, so one tends to make one's own entertainment after a while.

I have wanted to leave, but my husband hasn't. We have two beautiful girls, ages eight and six, Julia and Jacqueline. My girls have both American and South African citizenship, and I have emigration papers for my husband sitting in the filing cabinet. I am still registered in the state of Maryland and maintain that registration yearly, just in case. But when we first came to this country we had decided that there would be two criteria for leaving: if he has to bear arms for a government which he does not support, and if there is immediate danger to our family and to us. Those things have not happened.

When State of Emergency One came, I said, "Let's go," and when State of Emergency Two came, I said, "Let's go." I went through a terrible time when I was really upright about staying. All I could think of was cleaning up the house so that we could move light: What would we take with us, and what sorts of things should we invest our money in—so we could bring it out easily. I soon found this behavior was wrecking the quality of my life here, and I saw it could injure my husband's and my relationship very badly. My marriage is more important to me than rocking the boat. That's my priority.

It's a bit of the ostrich with the head in the sand situation perhaps, but things are extremely quiet and peaceful here on the farm. We go about our daily existence without any trouble and have wonderful people living around us. This is the home where I've raised my children, my married life. If it was just for me, I wouldn't worry about leaving at this point, but I do worry about my children's future, and that's a big responsibility. As far as they are concerned, looking at the pros and cons, there are extreme benefits for them to be growing up in such a beautiful environment, on a farm where their father grew up. They have roots and a sense of identity to a place now. There is a strong sense of community here in Kwazulu. If it does come down to really having to leave, Peter and I will work something out, but it will have to be together.

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Kay Moody Bergh '49
Capetown, Cape Providence

Kay Moody Bergh '49, farmer

I first met my husband in Rome, on a bus tour; he was traveling with his mother and I with my aunt. By chance we met again in Paris, and then saw another yet again in London. About two weeks later, I went back to the States, and by then we had decided to get married. We stayed in America for a bit and then sailed back to South Africa on a boat called the _African Enterprise_. After 17 days, we arrived in Capetown, which was nice enough, although his mother was furious and his brother wouldn't speak to me. They couldn't imagine having an American in-law! So they kept me in town for four to five days and then off we went to their farm in Clem William. In those days, 1951, it took about four or five hours on a tar and gravel road.

This was all initially a bit strange for me, because I had been involved doing venture capital investment in New York. I didn't know much about plants and growing things. I had graduated in 1949 from Vassar and majored in economics—the business side of economics. My husband, being a farmer, led a completely different life, of course.

We built a farmhouse, up on the mountain, and it was very attractive. His family lived in the old house down in the valley below. I started a garden, not know-
ing anything about gardening, but I had a lot of books to read which were very interesting. As a businesswoman interested in development, I became intrigued with the idea of developing the rich plant life I was finding around me, and one plant in particular—a shrub which was made into a tea, rooiboscha tea: roo meaning red, and bossta, bush. It was a purple tea with no tannin or caffeine, very healthy, good for allergies and digestive problems. But there was no industry developed at that time. We had to do a lot of tests and figure out how to get the seed to germinate, as this type of seed was very tough and would stay in the soil for many, many years. It is usually collected by the ants, and the way to collect it was to open up the anthill. We grew about 3,000 pounds for an initial marketing, but now that we got the industry going, the tea brings in about five or six million dollars a year for us.

Through all of that we spent a lot of time in the mountains and became more and more involved in the flora and fauna of the area. We had one of the first wildflower shows, and decided we wanted to raise them. So we started to garden seriously. Of course, this was also a new industry at that time, around 1968. It was very difficult, but ultimately became a very successful project.

After my husband died, it became almost impossible not to become a South African citizen. In the first place, I had the farm and all these shares in various cooperatives, and I was also on a quasi-government board of trustees, the South African Botanical Society. You just cannot be active in this country and not be a South African citizen. People will say, "It's all very well for you to criticize; you can take your passport and leave whenever you want." I couldn't really function. I mean, I could have lived here perfectly happily, but I couldn't have taken an active part in the structure of the country, not to mention having to pay American income taxes on my husband's estate, which would have made him turn over in his grave! So, I thought, well, I don't really want to go back to the States anyway.

Clem William, where I first lived, is an unusual community. There is no friction between the Afrikaanders and the English, and there are no Blacks there, only Coloreds. The Colored area is on one side, the hospital and the saw mill and the shoe factory are next to it, and right next to that is the White area—they are on two sides of the same street. In these country towns, you don't see the same kind of petty apartheid that you see in the big towns.

When I first came here, up in the mountains, the Afrikaander women never sat down at the table. They stayed at the door, bonnet in hand, like sentinels. I, of course, would sit down with the men and be wearing slacks, which was something they had never heard of. But the Afrikaander woman is powerful in the home; the Afrikaander man makes the decisions outside the home. I don't think that the Afrikaander women ever felt subservient though. They didn't seem to want to do other things outside the house. I was the only wife who drove at that time.

There were no inside lavatory facilities or refrigeration. I had the first proper fridge in Clem William—4½ cubic feet big, and this was considered very impressive. I just looked at it and said, what do you do with it? It was big enough for making one block of ice and a tray of ice cream!

People overseas don't realize it was only seven years ago that proper electricity arrived on the farms. We actually had TV long before we had proper power—about nine years—and my husband didn't think anything of putting up our own tower, with batteries charged by the sun to create enough power to pick up the signal. What they didn't go through to get the television! But that was the Whites.

The Coloreds in those days lived in thatched reed houses—the walls as well as the roof. In actual fact, I've often wondered if they weren't better houses than today's brick ones. They had very good ventilation—cool in the summer and warm in the winter. Today, the Colored houses on the farms, and almost anywhere, have inside sanitation and lavatories. This didn't exist for the Whites until 1951. I think that's something that people overseas don't realize either—that it took 10 to 15 years before the Afrikaanders had reasonable houses, and then in the Sixties the Coloreds caught up.

The essential issue for South Africa today is that we've got to educate these people and create jobs for them. I don't care what the politics are: votes don't give people food. I think the important thing is to educate and employ them first. You can't possibly get people to vote intelligently and understand all the issues until they can, at the very least, read and write and learn to hold down some kind of job.

I'm totally against sanctions. I think, actually, in many ways they are immoral. I don't see how people who don't know the conditions of the country, who have not been out here long enough, can comment. Look at Teddy Kennedy who comes in and out for a week, and leaves knowing absolutely nothing. Live with the people, get to know the people! And I think anyone who knows this country is completely against sanctions, people like Buthelezi, Helen Suzman, who are very liberal people, and Tutu—when he was pushed a bit—and Boesak.

With regard to the withdrawing of these many American companies, well, we were in the middle of a recession anyway, they had many American stockholders, so really it was just easier to leave, politically and economically. They weren't making anything, so why not get out? It was convenient. They had done a great deal, the American companies, to bring up the living standards, to help educate these people, but I think it's a tragedy that they are pulling out now. Americans can influence this country a great deal.

By pulling out, they lose their influence; if you haven't got any investment, who's going to listen? Certainly not Mr. PW. Both! When these companies had a big investment it was important that PW listen, because it was important to the economy, But now that American influence is gone, those businesses are going to go on, one way or another, but with no American influence behind them, nothing to make them more liberal. Forty-seven percent of U.S. imports come from Korea and Taiwan and places like that; well, so do ours now—we can still get what we need. I truly feel that sanctions were in no way constructive, and I was quite shocked when I saw the Vassar photograph of the sanctions demonstration on campus.

I'll be on the last boat to leave, though. It's very exciting living here in South Africa. A tremendous amount has happened in the last 30 years. I've seen a whole country develop in front of my eyes, but we're only part way there. We've got so much to develop! If we can just turn the tables around and get these jobs going, the Black South Africans as consumers can build up a fantastic country that can actually help the whole of southern Africa. I think it's much too exciting a place to leave.
A young mother from the embattled township of Alexandre waits to be seen at the pediatric section of the local clinic.
Above: Zulu mine workers on their Sundays off have street competitions, individually and by group, testing their skills at ancient tribal war dances.

Right: Amanda is an 18-year-old woman to whom I gave a lift when driving through the Western Transvaal, still a stronghold of apartheid. She was unemployed and pregnant, and didn't see much future for herself.

Right: Two female street vendors in the market at Durban, on the Indian Ocean. Their pancake makeup is characteristic of many women from this eastern region.
These two boys in Sandton, an exclusive White suburb of Johannesburg, are only joking, but they have become friends only because they go to private school together. The White boy's father pays for his tuition. The Black boy is on scholarship. The school has only recently "integrated"; the Black boy is one of three in a student body of 300.

The private citizens of South Africa are also the most heavily armed of any in the world.

All the security guards in South Africa are Black. They work long hours for little pay. This man is at the end of his day, exhausted.

A teenage boy on his Sunday off. He works in the mines and lives a lonely and violent life in the all-male hostels of Fipsstown, near Johannesburg.
Schools nationwide are trying to teach our children about AIDS, a vicious public health problem now, potentially devastating in the years to come. But are the lessons being absorbed? This article follows up our report on AIDS education at Vassar last fall.

URING behind the protective walls of Vassar College, it's easy to selectively shut out reality. Students acknowledge this every time they refer to "the real world" out there, beyond the walls. But with so much information about AIDS in the news, only a hermit could avoid exposure to the tragic case studies, medical updates, and dire predictions that fill newspapers, magazines, and airwaves. There would seem to be no escaping implications of the clear and present danger posed by AIDS.

Several years into the AIDS crisis, AIDS awareness is making its way to the Vassar campus in the form of presentations, informal discussions, printed pamphlets, and condom dispensers recently installed at three different locations in campus buildings. Education, however, is one thing. Getting students to take heed is another. AIDS at Vassar remains largely abstract—no one on campus has shown signs of the disease, although AIDS has already killed several Vassar graduates.

College students who ignore the Surgeon General's exhortations about taking precautions against infection with HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus—commonly called the AIDS virus) are at risk, a risk that varies depending on several factors but is inescapable for any sexually active student. As in the general population, gay and bisexual male students are at the most risk. Female students who have sexual contacts with gay and bisexual male students face a significant risk as well. Heterosexual male students are the least likely to contract AIDS, but unprotected sex is still a risk.

My job, one fall weekend, was to assess what impact, if any, AIDS has had on the social life of Vassar students. Over the course of 48 hours, I spoke with a couple of dozen students, both straight and gay, interviewed a few campus student leaders, attended two weekend parties, including a campus-wide "Safe Sex" party sponsored by Davison House, and a standing-room-only showing of Disney's The Sleeping Beauty.

Students I spoke with knew about AIDS. Most were marginally informed, although some revealed serious gaps in their understanding of the disease. One student thought he could contract AIDS from a toilet seat. For students who said they were sexually active, concern did not usually translate into practicing safer sex. With the exception of the gay students with whom I spoke, most didn't believe they were at risk.

The fall weekend I visited happened to be the occasion of Vassar's first "Safe Sex" theme party. "You forgot your condom," a ticket seller called after me as I moved past the students who jammed the entrance to Davison's former dining hall. Each partygoer was issued a free condom. Scanning the two-story room, which was filled with students dancing, its walls covered with signs concerning AIDS and safer sex, I was reminded of the late Seventies, when I was a student. That was a time when herpes was the big health scare and dorm party themes ran along the lines of "Red and White" and "Moose Club" (a mock fraternity). But this is the age of AIDS. And what better party favor at a "Safe Sex" party than a free condom?

Hours before the Davison "Safe Sex" party got under way, I stopped by at the dorm to talk with students who were drawing signs, taping brochures to the walls, and hanging decorations. W. Morgan Smith, a junior and the secretary of Davison, doesn't believe most students, particularly heterosexual students, are aware of the AIDS risk or practice safer sex. "One of my friends, who is a CHOICE counselor [CHOICE is a campus organization that offers information and counseling about sex and birth control], said it would have to be an extreme case for him to practice safe sex. People are reticent about asking a partner about his or her sexual history or bringing up the subject of a condom." Mr. Smith was under no illusion that the party would educate everyone who attended about AIDS or result in changed behavior, but, "If this party does nothing else," he said, "people will be more familiar with AIDS."

Many, if not most, heterosexual students—like the heterosexual population in general—take comfort in the belief that AIDS is a disease limited to homosexuals and intravenous drug users. The fact is heterosexuals—primarily partners of IV drug users and bisexuals—are contracting the disease and spreading it into the larger population in ever-increasing numbers.

"Straight students aren't dealing with AIDS because they believe it simply does not affect them," explained Alexandra Carter '88. "They don't feel they have to worry." John Cook '88, co-president of the Vassar Gay People's Alliance, added: "But people are confused at this time of their lives. I know a guy who had a boyfriend. He broke up with his boyfriend and started going out with a woman. He didn't tell his new girlfriend about the ex-boyfriend, and he didn't use a condom when he had sex with her."

The gay students I spoke with know they are part of a high-risk group and have made changes in their lives to minimize the threat. During his freshman year, Mr. Cook traveled to New York City to go to gay bars or go dancing. Visits to the city provided an oppor-
tunity for him and his friends to meet other gay people—as they did for my friends and me when we were at Vassar. But he notes, "People are more cautious now. When I go down to the Mug [the student pub], I see lots of cruising, but not gay cruising. The gay students I've talked to don't want to sleep around. It's too dangerous. They want to stay alive."

A 20-year-old gay transfer student said that an awareness about AIDS didn't mean he had to change his sexual behavior. "I was aware and afraid of AIDS since I first started having sex, so I've always had safe sex." I asked him what he thought straight students had to learn from gay students: "Casual sex is stupid. They [straight students] should be able to see that it's not an issue of freedom or spontaneity. It's just a matter of hygiene and health. If they learn that, they'll have a better chance of living to 40." But, he explained, AIDS is not a major concern on campus. "AIDS is not a burning issue here because no one has it. It's been an issue because the gay organization has brought it up."

To all of the students I spoke with, including the gay students, AIDS is still an abstraction, as it was for me before I actually knew anyone who had the disease. In the early 1980s, during the first couple of years that AIDS was in the news, I thought that AIDS was a disease Vassar graduates did not get. At the time, the popular stereotype of those who contracted the disease was of sexually promiscuous, drug abusing, gay men. This image was reinforced by volunteer work I did with the Gay Men's Health Crisis Center in New York City—a social service organization that now serves more than 2,000 persons with AIDS. As a volunteer, I worked with two men: an IV drug user and a young man my age who regularly participated in bacchanalian orgies. Both died. I comforted myself that I was safe from the disease, as were my friends. Nice boys didn't get AIDS.

That all changed with a phone call. I hadn't seen a friend of mine, a Seventies Vassar grad, all summer, not since his master's concert that past spring. He was an accomplished pianist. "What have you been up to?" I asked, innocently. "I was in the hospital. I have AIDS." Double shock. Vassar boys did indeed get AIDS. And since he and I had been involved in an on-again, off-again relationship over the years I was forced to wonder, was I at risk?

My friend died more than two years ago. Two carloads of Vassar alumni drove to his memorial service. It was heartbreaking. Since then, several other Vassar graduates have died from the disease, still others are HIV-positive, others have lost partners to the disease. AIDS is painfully real. And safer sex isn't a party theme, it's a way of life.

I stayed for only a short while at the "Safe Sex" party. I never liked dorm parties, no matter what the theme. But I stayed long enough to be struck by a haunting image. A young man and woman in a close embrace stood at the edge of the balcony overlooking the dance floor. They kissed passionately, completely oblivious to everything around them, including the enormous sign across one wall that listed "deep kissing" as possibly unsafe in terms of contracting or transmitting HIV.

There was a time when we—my gay Vassar friends and I—didn't think seriously about the health consequences of our sexual involvements. But that was before our young classmates began showing up in the "Necrology" section of the Vassar Quarterly.
Alfred Stieglitz, K.N.R., No. 3, Lake George (formerly called K.U.R., No. 30), 1923, vintage gelatin silver print, 5-by-4-inches, Vassar College Art Gallery, bequest of Edna Bryner Schenck '07. Before 1922, Stieglitz called his photographs of Lake George clouds Songs of the Skies; those after that date he called Equivalents. In 1923, however, he created two sets of cloud photographs as abstract, almost nonobjective, portraits of two associate painters—Georgia O'Keeffe and Katherine N. Rhoads (K.N.R.). There are six photographs in each of these two series, which illustrate the effect of a storm on a tree. While Stieglitz was not the first artist to create abstract portraits, his early portraits are unlike others which contain identifiable attributes. This "portrait" relates to Katherine Rhoads's personal strength and resiliency.
Paul Rosenfeld (1890-1946) and Edna Bryner Schwab '07 (1886-1967) were two Alfred Stieglitz disciples whose crossed paths brought to Vassar a significant collection of Stieglitz-circle paintings. These prominent holdings have recently been a part of the ongoing research by the Vassar College Art Gallery for the Twentieth-Century Catalogue Project, part of the gallery's effort to make an up-to-date inventory of its approximately 8,500 to 10,000 objects of art. While Bryner's gift to the collection can be seen as the generosity of an alumna, her motives for giving Rosenfeld's collection (which she inherited after his death) remain mysterious.

Rosenfeld and Bryner were touched by the pervasive effect of Alfred Stieglitz, the vanguard dealer and pioneer of modern art in early 20th-century America, and both astutely bought works of art by the artists whom Stieglitz represented. Stieglitz was a silent catalyst bonding the art and artist with the devotee, and little attention has been paid to the effect he had on collectors and his molding of their taste for the kind of art he championed.

Of all bequests to the Vassar College Art Gallery, this is among the most important, not only because nearly every artist of the Stieglitz group is represented, but also because in some instances there are several examples of each artist's work. For instance, from Rosenfeld's collection came three John Marin watercolors, three Arthur Dove oils, and three Marsden Hartley oils, including the famous Indian Composition, among other pieces. The Bryner collection includes three Georgia O'Keeffe oils, 17 John Marin works, and paintings by Alfred Maurer, Georges Rouault, Max Weber, and Yasuo Kuniyoshi. Together, the two collections form a body of art that is both substantial and choice.

How these two personalities related to Stieglitz and how their collections came to Vassar is a fascinating anecdote. Paul Rosenfeld was a plumpish, dapper dresser, with "fair reddish hair, mustache, pink cheeks and limpid brown eyes." He was an affectionate and generous person who, though somewhat aloof, was widely admired for his gentlemanly manners and vivacity in conversation. An independent income provided him with a certain freedom and comfortable bachelor existence until the Depression seriously reduced his resources. He was no stranger to the Hudson Valley, having attended Riverview Military Academy at Poughkeepsie, 1903-1908, where he was forced by "orders from home" to study piano.

In a 1943 essay entitled "All the World's a Poughkeepsie," Rosenfeld wrote that Riverview Academy, which did offer beautiful views of the Hudson River and the Catskills, but was situated—at the greatest possible distance from Vassar College—succeeded in turning him into—"one of the twenty-five thousand
denizens of Poughkeepsie" whose appearances resembled "early-General-Grant." The school also offered a "hobbledehoy band" and a piano practice-room reminiscent of "the Nuremberg dungeon ... the sounds of murder issuing thence." In a less humorous vein, he reminisces about the two men who, with the limited means available to them, had tried to improve the cultural life of bourgeois Poughkeepsie. The first was Charles H. Hickok, who, as a young man, sought to make a cultural "statement" by converting his father's stationery store into a music shop. Twice Hickok brought the Boston Symphony Orchestra to Poughkeepsie's Collingwood Opera House (now the Bardavon), twice losing money on the ventures. The second cultural missionary, Arthur Moore Williamson, a pale and rather sickly pianist with "a gold-spectacled, infinitely sensitive, suffering young face," had come to Riverview Academy as a music master. Rosenfeld relates "once [Williamson] was smitten with a tall, soft strawberry-blond, a goddess from Bryn Mawr. Calling on her with the intention of proposing, he fainted."

In a 1939-1940 essay, "Grand Transformation Scene 1907-1915," Rosenfeld describes his own musical awakening as taking place in Poughkeepsie and continuing through his student years at Yale, his Columbia years, and into his adult life. It was in Poughkeepsie, he revealed, that the taste and insights were born that would characterize his mature musical criticism, especially his concern for the role of music in American society. Hearing the virtuoso Harold Bauer play Schumann's Kreisleriana and the Appassionata of Beethoven, Rosenfeld realized that a performance of Bauer's quality was lost on a Poughkeepsie concert audience. Nevertheless, Rosenfeld, in these youthful Poughkeepsie years, reasoned that one must commit oneself to cultural values even where and when others are unresponsive. The moral he drew for his own guidance suggests a kind of challenge to the cultural Philistine: "... if half the world is Isphahan, the whole of it is Poughkeepsie: Poughkeepsie of the past, the present, the future." Of people like Hickok and Williamson in Poughkeepsies everywhere, Rosenfeld said:

What were they all but facets of an ever-presence? Little men, making a creative effort, taking art seriously in an unresponsive environment, making the heart beat high.

Poughkeepsie was also near what Rosenfeld called the "Hudson Heights," an area where he loved to take weekend hikes. To him, the Hudson was like the Rhine depicted by Goethe and other German writers; he was not the first artist in this country to superimpose a European image on an American scene.

After completing his term at Riverview, graduating from Yale University in 1912, and completing several courses at the Columbia University School of Journalism, Rosenfeld moved to New York. His career as a music critic began in 1914 at the New York Press. It was either in that year, or a year later, that he met Stieglitz at the latter's Fifth Avenue gallery, 291. Most of Stieglitz's letters to Rosenfeld, as if to commemorate this meeting, are signed "Your old friend, 291."

Right: Georgia O'Keeffe, East River No. 3, Grey Blue with Snow, 1926, formerly known as East River No. 3, oil on canvas, 12-by-32-inches, Vassar College Art Gallery, bequest of Edna Bryner Schwab '07. Alfred Stieglitz and Georgia O'Keeffe lived on the 30th floor (Suite 3003) of Manhattan's Shelton Hotel, located on Lexington Avenue between 48th and 49th streets. The suite overlooked the East River and downtown. Here, from 1926 to 29, O'Keeffe painted about 20 New York scenes, the most realistic of which are the East River ones. This painting was first exhibited at Stieglitz's Intimate Gallery in an exhibition, "Forty New Paintings by Georgia O'Keeffe," during January and February of 1927, when it was purchased by Mrs. Schwab.

Below: Alfred Stieglitz. Lunch at Lake George, 1920. vintage gelatin silver print, Vassar College Art Gallery, gift of Edna Bryner Schwab '07. Pictured from left to right are Charles Duncan (painter and poet who showed two watercolors and one drawing in the same show at Stieglitz's 291) gallery in which O'Keeffe made her debut, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Paul Rosenfeld. Photo was taken third week of October 1920—unusually warm, Stieglitz wrote to Paul Strand.
Rosenfeld, in turn, addressed Stieglitz as "Dear 291."

When they met, Stieglitz was in his fifties and Rosenfeld in his twenties. Stieglitz was reflecting on his achievements and reassessing the past as impetus for future accomplishments. Recently graduated from Yale, Rosenfeld, along with another budding young critic, Waldo Frank (1889-1967), was combing American art for excellence and excitement. In Stieglitz, Rosenfeld found a model, a mentor, and a hero; Stieglitz, in turn, found a supportive new critical voice. Their correspondence also reflects Rosenfeld's growing interest in collecting, with much discussion back and forth about his possible purchase of works by Hartley, Marin, and O'Keeffe. There are numerous references, as well, to Stieglitz's habitual suffering through painstaking efforts necessary to make fine prints of the images Rosenfeld had chosen. "I think I have finally achieved a very beautiful print of the first picture of your Cloud Series, he wrote."

Several of the paintings now in Vassar's collection can be identified in these letters. Rosenfeld's letters evidence a certain canonization of Stieglitz, whose many "saintly" qualities elicited the veneration of Rosenfeld and others. "291," Rosenfeld said, "was a house of God." But Rosenfeld's prime concern was less with Stieglitz as a patron saint than as an artist. He believed Stieglitz exemplified the Whitmanesque fusion of the highbrow and lowbrow traditions, of passion and hard facts. "[They] lie at that point where the objective world and the subjective world coincide," he wrote of Stieglitz's photographs. "They are true in fact and to the inner sense of life. . . . " Before 1917 (the year 291 closed), Stieglitz presented both European and American modernist art; afterwards, however, the group was exclusively American. This circle of worshippers was augmented by a growing number of writers (William Carlos Williams, Sherwood Anderson, Hart Crane), who also were focusing on things "American," as well as on new modernist formulae in their writing, perhaps outnumbering American artists who adopted the modernist idiom.

When it came to collecting art, Rosenfeld was to buy from few sources other than Stieglitz; even Marsden Hartley's 1914 Indian Composition, which Rosenfeld acquired at auction from the American Art Association in New York, had been originally sold by Stieglitz to John Quinn in July of 1916 (as Indian Tents). Like that of Edna Bryner, Rosenfeld's collection essentially reflects Stieglitz's taste; no evidence has surfaced that either of these collectors owned work by artists outside the Stieglitz purview.

In 1916, Edna Clare Bryner '07 married Arthur Schwab, a Harvard graduate and consultant in industrial affairs. After their marriage, they moved to New York City where she, like Rosenfeld, gravitated to the Stieglitz circle. Two novels brought her fame and success—Andy Brandl's Ark (1927) and While the Bridegroom Torried (1929). From 1920 through the 1930s, "Teddy," as she liked to be called (using her maiden name Bryner), also wrote short stories and novelettes for Bookman, the Midland, the Dial, the Stieglitz-related publications, and the New American
While Bryner moved in the Stieglitz orbit, nothing suggests that her relationship with Stieglitz approached the special, complex one Rosenfeld had with him. Nonetheless, in 1934 she contributed what she considered at the time to be her best achievement, a chapter in the book *America and Alfred Stieglitz: A Collective Portrait*, of which Rosenfeld was one of five editors. Her chapter “An American Experience” is a rhapsody:

Stieglitz stood forth, for one stirred beholder, out of a prime happy coming together of esthetic significances to remain through many consequent comings together, not a man, not even a human being; but an experience of complicated closely woven texture as American as any experience ever come through by an extremely native person.20

Most of the available correspondence from Bryner to Stieglitz deals with her interest in acquiring particular paintings and with her payments for those she purchased. Stieglitz sometimes allowed his clients to do the bookkeeping, and confusion often resulted; Bryner once had to remind Stieglitz of payments made “in April (April 1) just after I bought the 2 paintings, [O'Keeffe's] *Spring* and *Figs*, I sent you a check for $100 for *Figs* . . .”21 Many of the John Marin watercolors now in the Vassar collection are mentioned in correspondence as they were being acquired from the artist through Stieglitz.

Rosenfeld certainly knew Edna Bryner by 1925, for he portrayed her in one chapter of his book *Men Seen*.22 This book, which Rosenfeld wrote after *Port of New York* (published in that year), examines 25 men and women—among them Joyce, Lawrence, Proust, Stevens, and Cummings—“related to each other in point of time and in medium of expression.”23 About Bryner's writing, Rosenfeld says:

Her forms of expression are not always smooth. She is sometimes found in intense struggles with her medium. But what she has already expressed has strength of conception, shows first-hand knowledge of people, and is informed by a perfectly realistic attitude toward life. She takes her place among those women who, engaged in the arts, have to communicate a staunch and lovely life of feeling.24

Yet Rosenfeld rarely mentioned Bryner in his other writings. “Teddy” Bryner’s “sturdy German servant” is mentioned in a 1923 Rosenfeld letter to Stieglitz, and nine years later, in June, there is mention of visiting the Schwabs at their summer cottage in St. Hubert's, New York. Perhaps since Rosenfeld saw Stieglitz and Bryner regularly, it is not as strange as it first appears that, in the course of hundreds of letters, the intimate aspect of their friendship is not recorded more fully. It is apparent from those interviewed that Rosenfeld and Bryner were devoted friends.25 Still, the name of Bryner's future husband first appears in a letter of July 12, 1924. O'Keeffe (who would marry Stieglitz in December of that year) had invited Arthur Schwab up to Lake George for a visit. “He was a splendid guest and I believe [he] enjoyed us as much as we enjoyed him,” Stieglitz wrote.26

And just how did these important Stieglitz-circle works come to Vassar? When Rosenfeld died in 1946,
Bryner was the executor of his estate and the residual legatee. Four years later, Bryner gave Vassar what is believed to be the bulk of Rosenfeld’s collection. Important records concerning the original bequest appear to have been destroyed by Bryner’s law firm. It has been surmised by some that Bryner chose to dispose quietly of the collection at Vassar so as not to fuel further speculation that the two had been more than good friends. After Bryner’s death in 1967, Vassar was the fortunate recipient of her large Stieglitz-circle collection, which may have included some of the works owned by Rosenfeld not previously given to Vassar.

As the research for this article has brought about a new understanding of the Vassar Stieglitz collection, other parts of the gallery’s holdings are being similarly studied in conjunction with the gallery inventory and Twentieth-Century Catalogue Project. In the instance of the Paul Rosenfeld and Edna Bryner collections, we can see how both Poughkeepsie and Vassar itself have played parts in bringing the college community and city residents some of the important art they now enjoy.

NOTES

1. Although there is no record that Stieglitz ever visited Vassar, he learned a good deal about it from young relatives who attended the college. Both his niece Georgia Engelhard Cronwell ’21 and granddaughter Ann Strauss Gurltzer ’43 corresponded with him at length while they were at Vassar. Another grandniece, Sue Davidson Lowe ’43, wrote a book on Stieglitz, the most exhaustive to date on the modernist pioneer: Stieglitz: A Memoir/Biography (New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 1985), July and August 1987 phone conversations with Sue Davidson Lowe, to whom I am grateful for her reading of drafts of this article and for her enlightening editorial comments. I am also grateful to Timothy Wardell for his editorial assistance, and to Sarah Greenough of the National Gallery, Washington, DC, for information about Stieglitz’s photographs.


3. Ibid., 159.


5. Ibid., 19-20.

6. Ibid., 31.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., 21.


11. Ibid.


13. New York Times, “Paul Rosenfeld, Critic, Dies at 56” 22 July 1946, p. 21, col. 1; for a more in-depth discussion of Rosenfeld’s contributions to music and art commentary, see Corn, 159-163.


15. Stieglitz (Lake George, NY) to Rosenfeld, 11 November 1923, p. 3, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

16. Rosenfeld, Port of New York, 258.

17. Ibid., the Dial, LXX (April 1921), p. 496. Rosenfeld wrote, “Save for Whitman there has been amongst us no native-born artist equal to this photographer.”


23. Ibid., v-vi.

24. Ibid., 245.

25. Some friends of theirs felt that Bryner and Rosenfeld’s relationship extended beyond their professional interests. (July 7, 1987, telephone conversation with Sanford Schwartz). There is no documentation of romantic liaisons, however.

26. Stieglitz (Lake George, NY) to Rosenfeld, 12 July 1924, p. 7, Beinecke Library, Yale University.

HOLDING paint brushes and palette knives, a group of students are clustered around an autumnal still-life—apples tumbling from an earthenware bowl, a splayed acorn squash, several glossy dark eggplants—trying to transform the palpable reality of fruit, pottery, and vegetables into the very different but equally compelling reality of paint. These are students in Peter Charlap's beginning painting class; after weeks of working first with degrees of black and white, and then with only limited palettes, they have now embarked on their first full-color painting.

When Mr. Charlap began teaching at Vassar in 1979, there were very few studio art courses offered and no studio art major. But under his direction, the course offerings have been greatly expanded; for the first time in its history, Vassar offers a studio art major within the department of art. This is a real departure from Vassar's tradition, for, in the past, the critical and historical study of art was given far more importance than its actual application. According to professor of art Christine Havelock, the department's chairman, the desires of both faculty and students coalesced in the formation of the new major. "We have long been interested in expanding the studio program, but it was very important that such a program maintain the high standards set by the department and the college," she said. "The new program has been successful in meeting this criterion."

Before being accepted as studio majors, students must submit their portfolios to the faculty for screening by the end of their freshman or the beginning of their sophomore year. Once admitted, they are required to take a rigorous year-long drawing course that deals with such visual problems as line, form, plane, and tone. "We in no way consider this to be a 'beginning course,'" says Annette Morriss, who teaches painting and drawing. "Rather, we insist upon it as a way of establishing a common understanding of visual language." She adds that the course has been extremely popular, running to three sections of approximately 30 students each.

After the students have completed this course, they are able to go on to the more advanced 200-level courses in painting, drawing, sculpture, and printmaking. Students are also able to structure independent study projects under the guidance of the faculty in any of these media. Occasionally, a student may elect to do an independent study with sculptor Harry Roseman in photography, even though it falls outside the offerings currently available within the curriculum. Three-hundred level courses are offered in painting and sculpture, and all majors are required to complete a 300-level senior project. Each senior major

Robert Maass '79
is given a thesis show in the College Center, and, if the faculty feels it is appropriate, the work of other students may be exhibited in one- or two-person shows.

In addition to the drawing course, which is required of all students, majors or not, seeking to take upper-level courses, studio majors are required to take at least four art history courses—Art 105 and 106 and two courses at the 200 level. For many, this is a welcome requirement. Peter Rinzer, a soft-spoken senior, is inspired by the work shown in class. "It's a reminder that art matters," he says. And junior Jennifer Friedman agrees; her course in 16th-century Venetian painting, she explains, has helped her own painting enormously. Peter Charlap adds that Taylor library is a vital resource for his students, and he makes frequent assignments which encourage them to gain familiarity with its holdings.

Students are strongly encouraged to travel to New York City and Boston for museum and gallery visits, and when possible, the studio faculty tries to bring the wider artistic community to the college. This fall, a visiting artists series included Kevin Wixted, Jake Berthot, and Richard Serra; in past years, Lennart Anderson, George McNeil, Nancy Graves '61, Walter Earlbrich, Sylvia Mangold, Judy Pfaff, and Gabriel Lederman have visited the campus for slide presentations, followed by discussions of their work. Visiting artists also critique student work. "It gives the students an opportunity to break out of the relative isolation of this environment," says Annette Morris, "and that can be very important in their development.

Critiques are also a part of the program's regular curriculum. Once a month, majors bring their work together for an evaluation by the entire faculty, and other art students are invited to participate if they choose. Faculty members see this as an important way of fostering the growth of an artistic community at Vassar. Not only do the faculty members get to know the students' work through these critiques, but the students are also made aware of what their classmates are doing. Mr. Charlap notes that the students are becoming increasingly serious about their work, and, as a result, a sense of community is slowly starting to emerge.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle to the development of such a community is the lack of a unified studio art space. Faculty members say that their "chief hope and aim" is the securing of a single building in which classes can be conducted and students can work. Right now, Ely Hall houses the painting and drawing studio spaces, while the print-making shop and studios for upper class majors are in the New England building. The sculpture studio is in the greenhouse near Ferry, with the spill-over taken up by the wood shop. Not only are the spaces sometimes inadequate for their functions—the greenhouse, for example, can barely accommodate the large-scale metal and wood sculptures created in it—but even more important, it sometimes tends to undermine the sense of cohesion the faculty is trying so hard to foster. The art department is entirely sympathetic to these needs. "We can't say when it will happen," says Christine Havelock, "but the administration is committed to finding a unified space, and we are confident that the studio department will eventually have a building."

The new rigor of the studio art program has changed both the character of the art students at Vassar and their prospects upon completion of it. Ms. Havelock notes that the increasing complexity of courses and media and the high caliber of the faculty (all are working artists who exhibit their work in major cities) now make it possible for students to apply to respected M.F.A. programs all over the country. Peter Rinzer mentions Yale as a possibility, and there are others who cherish similar hopes.

Andrew Eisen, a 1985 graduate, was one of the earliest studio art majors at Vassar; in addition to pursuing his own career as a sculptor, he now works as an assistant to Harry Roseman in the sculpture studio "helping students construct their imaginations." Mr. Eisen says he has watched the program change and grow over the past few years. "Not many people realize how many committed artists there are working at Vassar. The program now offers a real challenge to the students, and challenge is essential for making a responsible work of art."

Mr. Eisen also says that the presence of budding artists on campus adds an exciting diversity to the student body. But this kind of exchange works both ways: art students can take advantage of the many intellectual resources at Vassar which might not be available to them in an art school. Senior studio major Cadence Giersbach says she chose Vassar over an art school because she wanted the kind of intellectual stimulation she knew it would offer. Peter Charlap commented on how it is precisely this kind of balance between the intellectual and the artistic that makes the Vassar student so bright and responsive. "If you make a reference to science or poetry, the students get it immediately," he says. "They have a frame of reference that is broader than that of many art students."

Students are very enthusiastic about the program. Peter Rinzer commented on its "freedom," the way students are encouraged to pursue their own visions, even within the traditional framework of course requirements. Sharon Duffy, who teaches print-making, concurs: "There is a great diversity of work being done here," she says. "While we are all concerned with solving visual problems, we understand that there is no single 'right' solution." Ms. Duffy encourages students to work at their own pace. In a sun-filled studio in New England building, her 200-level print-making students are taught the various techniques of monotype, line etching, aquatint, dry point, and lithography. While she wants to communicate a wide range of technical skills, she stresses monotypes early in the course because "the process is very direct and immediate; rather than being just a technical exercise, it accustoms them to the concept of image making right away."

This year there are 16 studio majors and approximately 190 students enrolled in studio courses. Many students see the addition of new courses as a priority; Jake Fleisher, a senior majoring in German, has taken all the sculpture courses offered in the department. Right now, he's working on an independent study project with Harry Roseman. "I love metal and flame," he says in talking of the flat, shaped, steel sculptures he makes. "Metal seems so unyielding, so there's a real challenge in getting it to respond." After graduation, Mr. Fleisher plans to move to Vermont, where he will work as a carpenter and continue to sculpt. Clearly, the arts are thriving at Vassar. More courses, more students, and the hope of a unified space have breathed new life into the discipline. Through the hard work of the studio art faculty and the continued support of the department, students now have an opportunity to blend practice and theory into a remarkable educational experience.
AAVC NEWSLINE

FROM THE AAVC PRESIDENT

Bridging the Gap

Liz Wexler Quinlan '59, AAVC President

In the year and a half that I have been president of AAVC, I have participated in numerous think-tank sessions with many members of the AAVC board and staff on ways to bridge the communications gap that inevitably exists—and wawns ever wider—in a rapidly changing and growing organization such as ours. This column is the first small step across the abyss. While we view it as a way of keeping you up to date on what’s happening at AAVC, we hope you will view it as the beginning of a two-way dialogue: an open invitation to tell us what’s on your mind and how we can make the experience of being a Vassar alumna/us as satisfying as possible.

Our second step in inching closer to you comes in the form of a survey of the alumnaii/ that is designed to find out more about who you are and how AAVC can best serve your needs and interests. By the time you read this, many of you will have received a questionnaire that was mailed in November to a random sampling of the alumnaei. Your answers will provide the fodder for our long-range planning and will help us strengthen, or even dramatically alter, the programs and services we provide. A full report on the survey findings will be made in these pages later this year.

The AAVC board of directors meeting was held October 10-11 after a very full and successful two-and-a-half days of AAVC’s Club Leadership Workshop and Fall Council. In addition to the alumnaei survey, among the topics discussed in our committee meetings and at the board table were AAVC’s forthcoming trip to the Soviet Union in May (travel committee), plans for “Life After Vassar” dorm discussions among young alumns and undergraduates this winter, a homecoming weekend for young alumnaei on Founder’s Day in April (recent alumnaei and undergraduates committee), and a proposed “Vassar in Washington” tour to be announced, a one-day event that will offer a program mix of faculty and student presentations, information on what’s happening at Vassar today, and sessions on how alumnaei can put their talents to work for the college (regional meeting committee).

Later this spring, you will be receiving the AAVC ballot for the slate of candidates (the slate itself appeared in the Winter ’87 VQ, page 1) nominated for positions on the 22-member AAVC board or on the AAVC nominating committee. The slate has been developed by the AAVC nominating committee with an eye toward building a diversified board of alumnaei and alumni of different generations and geographical areas, who bring the particular expertise we are seeking at a given time and a demonstrated commitment to serving Vassar.

Liz Wexler Quinlan ’59

FROM THE CLASSES

Class Presidents Workshop: An Insider’s View

September 18 and 19 were rainy and chilly days in Poughkeepsie—the kind of days we all remember with fondness. Those were also the dates for a gathering of two dozen recently elected class presidents. The depressing outside environment was in stark contrast to the optimistic and often fiery discussions going on inside Main’s Faculty Parlor, with Liz Quinlan ’59, Tassy Walden ’35, and Terri O’Shea ’76 as facilitators.

The large group easily agreed that the role of the class president is to promote pride in and respect for Vassar and classmatess. Disagreement arose on the question of how to achieve that goal. Presidents from the older classes tended to believe emphasis on class traditions—the class tree or living together as a class in Main that final year—helps tie classmatess together. The younger classes (post ’63) felt that class identity is no longer to be defined in “traditional” terms. Classmatess, now so busy with careers, families, and non-Vassar outside commitments, look for activities that bring something to them as individuals or as a group, such as increased business contacts and information on contemporary issues.

The group explored ways of increasing participation in AAVC activities, which would have the added benefit of enhancing alumnaei identification with Vassar today and Annual Fund participation. Regional informal get-togethers were unanimously supported as the perfect setting for any age class. Conversations might focus on “shared suffering” while at Vassar or the effect of the stock market collapse on commercial real estate development in New York. Whatever the topic, cohesion is bound to result.

The Quarterly’s class correspondent was thought to be a great resource for increasing class participation. It was suggested that he or she could contact a dozen classmatess who never contribute to the notes, find out how they are doing, and ask them to write about matters that are important to them. Many at the workshop felt that the class notes can be intimidating to those who do not choose to write about their accomplishments or feel they have not accomplished as much as others.

When Liz brought Saturday’s discussion to a close, everyone, including Liz, was disappointed. All wanted to keep working. The presidents and AAVC leadership agreed that the workshop was a critical success. Many previously unexpressed concerns were voiced and acknowledged, and lots of workable methods for enhancing pride in one’s classmatess, self, and Vassar were explored. Be on the lookout for innovations in your class activities.

Leslie Silver ’71

One Hundred Nights

While older classes may remember the countdown to graduation as a dreary sequence of comprehensives, theses, and final exams, recent classes have enlivened these gray days with a series of celebrations in the final year marking 100, 100, 50, 50, and finally 5 nights before graduation. It is only fitting, then, that this creative approach should be carried over to a gala, scheduled 100 nights after graduation. And so it was that September 13, 1987, found 150 newly minted graduates gathered at Byrdcliffe Mansion bar at 42nd Street and Second Avenue in Manhattan to rejoice. Under the leadership of Nancy Super, ’87’s 100 Nights chair, and Clark Woodruff, the new AAVC assistant for recent classmatess himself a member of 1987—the occasion proved wildly successful. Reveling ’87a were joined by a few old hands from the classes of ’85 and ’86. Sorry, no pictures were taken. Just as well?

Joanna Baxter Henderson ’51

Joanna Henderson, AAVC board member, is the new editor of the AAVC Newsline pages in the Quarterly.

AROUND THE CLUBS

The Dazzling D.C. Book Sale

An apartment building basement with concrete floors and exposed pipes seems like an unlikely place for Vassar alumnaei to gather, particularly in Washington, D.C. But this is not your ordinary cold and gray cellar. It is enlivened by stacks of books and Vassar graduates with a mission. It is the sorting center for the Washington Vassar Clubs annual Book Sale.

The New York Times once called the Vassar Book Sale “one of the most popular institutions” in Washington. And indeed it is. Every spring, for seven days, book lovers, collectors, and dealers converge on Washington for what has been called the best book sale in the United States. Last year, nearly 90,000 volumes were sold. Buyers line up as early as
24 hours in advance of the sale. Hundreds of people literally stampede in once the doors are opened. Other book sales try to emulate it.

"Booksellers tell us that nobody does a better job of finding, sorting, and identifying valuable books," said Bill Bergen '77, chairman of the sale's steering committee. Or, as rare book shop owner Marcia McGhee Carter '62 put it, "The Vassar book sale is the queen of sales."

While the sale itself is a gala event, its lifeblood is the countless hours of painstaking and sometimes backbreaking work by the Washington Vassar Club volunteers. The volunteers collect, sort, price, and pack the equivalent of 22 boxes of books each day.

"We take four days off, and then we're at it again," said steering committee member Barbara Butts Dunn '40, who has worked on the sale since the first one in 1949. Mrs. Dunn can be found most days immersed in note cards and reference guides in the rare book room of the sorting center, standing dusty volumes on their spines to appraise their value.

Besides their love of Vassar and books, the volunteers are motivated by the real purpose of the sale: to raise scholarship money for Washington-area students at Vassar. Last year, the sale gave Vassar $75,000, which accounted for more than one-fifth of all the scholarship money raised by Vassar clubs.

"It's an opportunity to give back to Vassar what Vassar gave to us," said Mr. Bergen.

The sale, now in its 40th year, has raised more than $1 million for Vassar, but its current success hides its humble beginning.

"It was really a venture in the dark," observed Hannah Burr Arnold '37, about the first sale. Mrs. Arnold, a member of the steering committee who has worked on every sale, recalled that the first one took place in a church basement near the White House and featured "a lot of college yearbooks." After a vote to determine whether the sale should continue, "it has grown and prospered ever since."

"However, Mrs. Arnold added, "we no longer accept college yearbooks."

The sale has changed in other ways. The number of volunteers has multiplied, from a handful who worked intermittently in the early days to a core group of 30 regular volunteers today who give at least one day every week. Last year, more than 300 Vassar graduates and spouses worked approximately 25,000 hours on the sale, the equivalent of 12 full-time people. The day the 1987 sale opened, volunteers spanned the classes of 1923 to 1991. A change just as significant has come in the sophistication of the sale.

"In the early days, none of us knew how to price books," said Mrs. Arnold, "but we've grown a lot smarter, and we've learned how to peg our prices to keep up with dealers."

Book dealers consistently praise the sale for being intelligently organized and for having fair prices. The rare-book sorters are considered as expert as any professional.

As Mr. Bergen remarked, "These are professional volunteers who taught themselves all about books."

He knows about this firsthand. When he took over as chairman of the steering committee two years ago, he assumed he could improve the sale by applying techniques from his professional administrative experience. Instead, he discovered a system that needed few improvements.

"The volunteers had figured out ways that made extraordinary sense," he said, "to the point that a professional like me could not make a single change."

Ironically, the success of the sale has spawned the problem of sustaining it as demographic changes take a toll on the volunteer pool nationwide. Because more couples are working full time, people have less discretionary time for volunteering. Some sale volunteers worry that it will become increasingly difficult to nurture the type of support and expertise needed to maintain the quality and size of the sale.

Two years ago, faced with the perennial problem of finding a chairman, the Washington Vassar Club decided to adapt to the new demographics by eliminating the position of sale chairman and replacing it with a steering committee which enables the volunteers to share responsibility for running the sale.

The steering committee concept tells someone that on his or her shoulders does not rest the entire responsibility for the sale," said AAVC President Liz Wexler Quinlan '59, who has spent years working professionally in organizations which depend on volunteers. "The day when one person can do it all is gone—and it should be gone, because volunteer organizations need to draw more people in."

Washington Vassar Club president Alix Myerson '71 conceived the idea of the steering committee as a way to entice new volunteers, particularly younger professionals, while continuing to draw strength and wisdom from an older generation whose profession has been their volunteer work.

"What we're doing with the book sale shows that it is possible to recruit and retain volunteers of all ages on a project everyone believes to be worthwhile," said Ms. Myerson.

Volunteers closely involved with the sale agree that its special ingredient of success is the wide variety of people, backgrounds, and interests it attracts.

Said steering committee member Charlotte Seward '54, "The sale has accomplished so much because so many people bring so many things to it."

Above all, they bring a commitment to Vassar.

Leonard Steinhorn '77

Leonard Steinhorn is a Washington writer who currently works as a speechwriter on Capitol Hill. He has contributed to previous issues of the Quarterly.

Art Committee—A Recent Sale Innovation

Never content, always searching for ways to raise more scholarship money for Vassar, a dozen years ago, enterprising volunteers began removing old prints from books too damaged to sell. The prints were researched, matted, and sold. That was the beginning of the Decorative Arts portion of the DLC sale which has grown dramatically over the years. In 1986 and 1987, two particularly fine works were sold at Sotheby's in New York, adding more than $20,000 to the gross sales in those years.

Once a month, the Art Committee, chaired by Lou Ellicott '52, on the lookout for unusual treasures, meets to review the latest acquisitions. These sessions, which Bill Bergen describes as "hilarious," caused one book sorter, working in another room, to comment, "I'm glad I'm not one of those paintings. Those people have no mercy."

Alix Gould Myerson '71
Club leaders, among AAVC's most treasured resources, gathered at Alumnae House last October for their biennial workshop. The theme was leadership: how to cultivate it and how to use it creatively to better serve both club members and the college.

For club leaders, the question is: How do you involve alumnae/i of all ages, develop programs and services of interest to a broad range of members who often live many miles apart, increase profits from scholarship fundraising, and still keep the rest of your life in proper balance?

The workshop offers leaders an opportunity to ask questions, exchange answers and ideas, and examine particular issues in some depth.

This year's participants spanned classes from 1937 to 1985 and represented 37 clubs in 20 states, the District of Columbia, and three foreign countries.

The workshop included panel discussions on ways to involve young alumnae/i in club activities and on club leaders' roles in admission; sessions on managing change and running scholarship benefits; a discussion of testy issues; and working groups on membership and reviving a club, scholarship fundraising, public relations and newsletters, and career development.

What did everyone learn?
• Recognize that to embrace innovation can mean revitalization.
• Pay attention to process.
• Break down tasks into small, manageable components to enable more people to do less and still get the job done.
• Offer services to alumnae/i such as career networking.
• Ask alumnae/i what kinds of programs they want and then deliver on the promise. Most important, make it fun to work for Vassar.

Alix Gould Myerson '71

Alix Myerson is president of the Washington, D.C., Vassar Club.
**CRIMEWARPS: THE FUTURE OF CRIME IN AMERICA**

by Georgette Bennett '67

Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1987

345 pages, $19.95 hardcover

**Crimes: The Future of Crime in America**

by Georgette Bennett's book of the same title is organized around six major crime patterns, each of which represents a set of major social transformations.

In a section entitled "The New Criminals," the author asserts that traditional law breakers—uneducated, young, male, poor—will be replaced by older, more upscale offenders. The number of crimes committed by women will increase. Teenagers will commit fewer but more terrible crimes, and senior citizens will become involved in criminal activities. In the section called "The March of Crime," Ms. Bennett suggests that crime will become less bound by geography. Subsequent sections deal with the increase in white collar crime and new arenas of crime made possible by computer technology. She further asserts that some consensual crimes, such as drug abuse, homosexuality, prostitution, and gambling, will be legalized; others, like pornography, will be subject to greater regulations. In the last two sections of the book, Ms. Bennett addresses the effects of the police and government on civil liberties.

**Crimes: The Future of Crime in America** is an odd amalgam of the scholarly and the journalistic. At times, Ms. Bennett offers thoughtful perceptions: "Crimes are defined in and out of existence relative to the social, economic, and political climate of the times... When you talk about crime, you are perfusing talking about politics." But she is also capable of glib, unsubstantiated generalizations. In discussing the exploitation of children, she calls it "a backlash against the women's movement. Because men can no longer dominate adult women as easily as they once did, many are turning to malleable youngsters instead." What is the basis for such a conclusion? And can't we argue that the need to exploit children might be rooted as deeply in the personal psyche as well as the larger cultural one?

Although Ms. Bennett criticizes the media for their skewed coverage of crime (violent crimes that make the news are not indicative of general trends), she is not above using such case histories herself; descriptions of murder, rape, robbery, and torture fill many of these pages. **Crimes: The Future of Crime in America** does attempt to grapple with the cultural meaning of crime, and that is no small ambition. Though solidly researched (notes and bibliography are extensive), it falls prey to redundancy, but the astute reader may still be intrigued by Ms. Bennett's predictions. She says that we can expect to experience:

...incremental changes in crime patterns...and a dialectical improvement of our prospects. We will live in a better-educated, better-employed, more integrated, more tolerant society. The shrinking birthrate will open up opportunities for those historically deprived of them, allowing many would-be criminals to enter the mainstream and develop a stake in the system. Street crime will decrease, abetted by changing demographics and powerful biochemical information technologies. White collar crimes will become easier to detect and defeat. We will inherit the best of both traditions: the conservative grounding in morality, patriotism, and economic latitude; and the liberal freedom to make personal choices while maintaining a sense of responsibility, tolerance, and compassion for the larger society.

The future, according to Ms. Bennett, looks rosy.

Y.Z.M.

**JOHN MASEFIELD**

by June Sommerville Dwyer '66

Ungar Publishing Co., 1987

120 pages, hardcover $16.95

When Robert Bridges, England's poet laureate, died in 1930, there were a number of poets from whom Prime Minister Ramsey MacDonald could select his successor. A.E. Houseman, Walter de la Mare, Alfred Noyes, Rudyard Kipling, and William Butler Yeats all would have filled the position admirably. MacDonald chose John Masefield. To anyone familiar with Masefield's work, the selection is shocking; for at best, he is a third-rate poet whose compulsive output failed to compensate for his singular lack of poetic vision and inspiration.

June Dwyer has an unenviable task in trying to make claims for Masefield's work; her book is a contradiction in terms. She does not insist on its merit. She is willing to call it "overly earnest," "vague," "repetitive;" and "mediocre." Perhaps she tries too hard to find its redeeming qualities, but, occasionally, her perseverance is rewarded, and we are presented with a line or stanza that contains a glimmer of life:

I think of the towering bird with its choking lung,
Its bursting heart, its struggle to scale the sky.
And wonder when we shall all be tried and hung
For the blue September crime when we made it die.

("The Tower")

The book is organized into eight short chapters; the first is biographical, and the next six deal with various aspects of Masefield's work—narrative verse, sonnets, plays, and novels. The presentation is dutiful if uninspired; it provides the reader with an adequate overview of the poet's life and major accomplishments. The last chapter, "Style and Reputation," is the weakest. In it, Ms. Dwyer makes unfortunate comparisons between Masefield and such modernist giants as Yeats and Eliot; in their hallowed company, his work looks all the worse. She also claims that Masefield's work is unread today because he

Continued on page 38
Blanding and Alan Simpson and secretary of the Vassar board of trustees from 1957 until 1969. She was also chairman of the central committee for our 100th anniversary in 1960-61. She epitomized what Vassar has meant to the education and emancipation of women in so many ways that this position seems appropriate.

Of course, only the really retired in 1978 she worked tirelessly for Planned Parenthood and for the “Living Will” cause and the Society for the Right to Die. All her life her efforts were directed to education, mental health, family planning, and conservation, and she inspired others along the way.

Mental health is something that Fliss knew about and had. Somehow, after all these facts, I haven't really captured her character, her strength of character both mental and moral. Mary Gesek, executive director of AAVC, said that she had never known anyone who was so completely comfortable with herself. She was, as a result, comfortable with all kinds of people. She had the confidence that is characteristic of someone who is truly competent. She was, however, never pretentious, and as you can guess, she had the sense of humor that is typical of those who have things in clear perspective.

She had great respect for all of nature and saw clearly man's place in this world and the need to preserve and nurture the best in both man and nature. Her vision and values were clear and guided her efforts to improve the quality of life for society in general and for those she reached directly.

Unselfish and without vanity, but discerning and appreciative of science, the arts, and literature, hers was a rich and balanced life. As she reached the twilight of her life, she wrote suggestions for the kind of service she would like—“if there is to be one.” She finished by saying, “My life was amply celebrated on the occasion of my 80th birthday. I truly think of death as the conclusion of life, the last great universal experience.”

On Fliss's birthday, November 1, 1987, on an Indian summer day with autumn reluctantly giving way to winter, a flock of wild geese flew past the windows of the United Congregational Church on the Commons in Little Compton in a final salute. Inside, a meeting of Thanksgiving was being held to celebrate the exceptional life of Florence Clothier Wislocki.

Frances Prindle Taft '42
Cleveland, Ohio

In Memoriam:
Marguerite Schnepel '36

Marguerite Colic Schnepel, elected president of the class of 1936 at our 50th reunion in June of 1986, died suddenly at her home in South Orange on November 8, 1987. She is survived by two daughters, Daley Evans and Ellen Schnepel '73.

Margie went through Vassar as a scholar-student, and although she repaid that debt many years ago, she continued over the succeeding years to contribute most generously to the college. She worked in the alumnae fund office for many years, giving immeasurably of her time and wisdom to many Vassar classes, helping them attain or surpass their goals. After leaving her position at Vassar, she worked tirelessly for the 50th reunion of the class of 1936.

My happiest memories of Margie and her husband Herman come from the many summers we rented their spacious home on Martha's Vineyard. The first summer they met us there and stayed long enough to introduce us to their friends and the joys of island living. My daughter had the wisdom to settle in New Jersey, so I had frequent reunions with Margie over the years.

In her last two summers, Margie exchanged her Edgartown home with an English couple and shared her English "estate" with a number of old friends.

As our succeeding president, Ruth Ebling, so aptly wrote: "No member of 1936 could have contributed to Vassar more of herself than Margie did: her skills, her wit, her patience and uncanny wisdom—and her love. We share an irretrievable loss."

Mary Pullman Pace
Former president, class of 1936
Green Valley, Arizona

Jacksonville Stage
(for John Aldrich Christie, 1920-1987)

Your son meticulously harvests the hidden and wild strawberries, steadily collecting the random. His mind so full of sounds—those he will gather on paper, those he will let go from his hands like red salamanders, from his memory in the evening at the piano.

Your wife quietly ponders trillium, everything living. From her son's agile searching to the black lace of tadpoles along shore come to the rocks for heat. From those unformed, blind beginnings to the intricate mind.

You are upstairs and, like the oriole in the pine, vivid to those below, alone.

All is thriving—the trees where you rest your eyes, your young son. Each cricket, skunk and porcupine. Looking out over your lower meadow you watch them, the fireflies—a surge of white blood cells in your darkness.

A.V. Christie '85

A.V. Christie was an English major, an American literature student of John Christie, and his student assistant during her senior year. Her poems appeared in the Vassar Review and Broadsheet, of which she was editor. She currently works at the Baltimore Museum of Art.

was a Victorian writer, and the taste for the Victorians has been replaced by a preference for modernism. But it wasn't simply an arbitrary matter of taste—divorced from culture and history—that led the reading public to prefer Eliot and Yeats to Masefield. Their so-called modernism is secondary to their brilliance; it is the power and resonance of their poetic voices that make modernism matter. And Yeats's early work—lyrical, dreamy, romantic—is still held in high regard, despite its traditional structure and style. Masefield wrote prolifically—poems, novels, plays, nonfiction prose—and edited an anthology called My Favorite English Poems. He achieved considerable fame in his lifetime. Yet unable to discard, eliminate, or reject, he lacked some essential quality of discrimination. Ms. Dwyer's book may suggest such issues, it fails to come to terms with them. Y.Z.M.

Doing Words
by Katie [Webb] Johnson '02
Houghton Mifflin Co., 1987
257 pages, $15.95 hardcover

The following excerpts are from Doing Words. A book about teaching children to read and write, it also concerns their lives, minds, and cares.

Organic writing is writing from the inside out. When we Do Words we take the images that are important to a child—"Key," in the American vernacular—and give them to him to read and write. Organic words are the captions to the pictures in the mind of the child. Key Words, the child's first words to read and write, caption his most important images, images that are part of his mind and soul. When we give such a caption to a child as a Key Word, to read and write and keep and remember, a bridge is laid between the world of his own person and the outer world in which his personality must function. . . .

Ricky came to school a few days after it had started, and he didn't want to be there. He stood by the door and sobbed. The second day he stood inside the door and wept a little from time to time, watching the other children getting Words and doing other fun-looking things during Word Time. The third day he stood by the table, not speaking, as the other children went about their work during Word Time, and finally he was the only one left. It was quiet, and I ruffled his hair once and smiled at him. "Would you like a Word today, Ricky, like the other children?"

He hung away from me then, a little, and I could see that he didn't know what I meant. "You know those cards the others are reading?" I said. "Those are the words they want to read and learn." He was still there, so I chanced another downpour and asked, "Who do you love best?"

His face dissolved into tears again, but he choked out "Mom." So I briskly wrote MOM in big blue letters on a card while he eyed me and did a few of the jerky sniffs that come at the end of crying.

"This word is Mom," I said.

"Mom," he breathed, taking the card. Then he looked back at me. "This says 'Mom'?" he checked.

And the sun, moon, and stars all shone at once on his face.

Continued on page 40

J.W.
THE ARTS IN ACADEME

String Quartet by Rebekah A. Gleason '87, winner of the Jean Slater Edson Prize for music composition.

"Vassar women and men know the arts as fundamental expressions of life and culture. Art, drama, music, and creative writing are central to the development of the educated imagination within the liberal arts. Through the arts, we comprehend the world's finest aspirations as well as its realities."

Frances D. Fergusson, President

Through both the formal curriculum and the full schedule of concerts, lectures, drama productions, and art exhibits, Vassar students are opened to a heightened sense of beauty and an appreciation of the most ennobling creative endeavors that transcend space and time.

Your unrestricted dollars will ensure the rich diversity of all the arts within a Vassar education.

VASSAR COLLEGE ANNUAL FUND
Box 159, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y. 12601
PERSON PLACE & THING

Vassar faculty, students, alumnae/i, and staff are invited to submit items to Person Place & Thing. There is no charge for this bulletin board service. Submissions should be typed, 75 words or less. Deadlines are three months in advance of each issue. Please note that AAVC cannot verify the terms of ads that are unrelated to AAVC activities.

East Coast mothers-in-law needed for research study. There are many studies which investigate the experience of adult children when they marry. I would like to learn about the experience of mothers as their daughters marry and move through the earlier stages of that marriage. For this particular project I am looking for subjects who graduated from one of the following colleges between 1950 and 1960: Barnard, Bryn Mawr, Mount Holyoke, Radcliffe, Smith, Vassar, Wellesley. Further criteria for each subject are that her daughter must have been at least 20 years old at the time of her marriage, and that this daughter was the first in the family to marry. Participants will be divided into four groups: those whose daughters have been married 0-2 years, 2-4 years, 4-7 years, and 7-10 years. A summary of the findings will be made available at the completion of the study. If you are interested, please call collect: Juliet Gauchat (Boston University doctoral candidate) at 617/547-1476.

Anyone who wishes a copy of the first newsletter from the dance office at Vassar College, contact Ray Cook at Box 414, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601. Also, if you have any information on your dancing years at Vassar, or after graduation, please send it to Mr. Cook. He is collecting such information with the intention of producing a history of dance at Vassar.

Vassar dolls and bears. Perfect for any person/occasion—baby’s gift, holiday, graduation, reunion, birthday, etc. Dolls are 19 inches tall, soft, have childproof eyes. Elsewhere, $35-45. Our price, $28. Bears are 9 inches and 19 inches tall and cost $18 and $28, respectively.

Dolls wear Vassar rose sweaters with your message—up to 17 characters on each of front and back sides—in gray (e.g., “Vassar” on front, “Matthew” and “1861” on back). Boys wear gray cardyrous panty hose, girls, skirts.

Bears are gray and wear rose sweaters and caps. Your message in gray on the sweater—17 letters on each side maximum for big bear, 12 for small—and a year (e.g., “06”) on cap.

When ordering doll, choose sex (m or f), skin color (white or dark tan), hair color (black, brown, blonde, red, gray, bald), lettering on front, lettering on back, and rose preference (traditional or the new, darker color).

When ordering bear, tell us bear size, lettering on back and front, year on hat, and rose preference.

Send order and check payable to St. Louis Vassar Club to: Suzanne Chichester Fischer [63], St. Louis Vassar Club, 9900 Old Warson Rd., St. Louis, MO 63124. Include your name, address, phone number. Sorry, we can’t gift wrap. Allow four weeks.

We also do special orders in many colors of bears and yarns (e.g., other colleges, Christmas dolls and bears) and will design to your specifications. Allow six weeks for special orders and add $5 per item.

For rent: August 1988 to July/August 1989, contemporary, four-bedroom house. Large study/guest room, 21/2 baths, country kitchen, screened porch, fully furnished. Located within a 15-minute walk through lovely woods or two-minute drive to Vassar College campus. Very private. For information, contact: David Bennett, Dept. of Economics, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601, or telephone, 914/471-5265, evenings.

Sublet and hosted B&B offered in luxury two-bedroom Manhattan flat in east 50s. Ele- gant furnishings; two baths; amenities include Apple Mac and printer; modern kitchen. River views; southern and eastern exposures; 29th floor. Sublet available: January, March, April, summer through early fall ’88; $500 weekly; $1,500 monthly. No pets; no kids. Hosted B&B offered year-round; $70 nightly for singles. Garage on site. Contact Erica Kleine [73]: 400 E. 54th St., New York, NY 10022; telephone: 212/838-7626 (noon to 10 P.M. only).


Neat and responsible Cornell law student will be clerking in New York City this summer and needs a summer sublet or apartment-sit in Manhattan, end of May through August. Interested in any location and willing to share. Please contact: Stuart Kapp [85], 110 Dryden Rd., Apt. 5-1, Ithaca, NY 14850, or telephone, 607/277-2906.

Pork City, Utah: Spacious, fully equipped condo with sensational mountain views. Minutes from Park City and Deer Valley; less than an hour to Snowbird, Alta, and Sundance. Year-round recreational activities, charming old silver-mining town, half-hour to Salt Lake Airport. Gorgeous location at any time of the year. Contact Nancy Borland Aydelott [74], PO. Box 953, Marblehead, MA 01945; telephone, 617/639-0770.

Paris: Large studio, two bedrooms, kitchen, bath, elevator, central heating, quiet, sunny, top floor. For rent during summer, fall. Length of time negotiable. Mrs. F. G. Phillips (Margaret Harmsworth ’51), 15 Square de Chatillon, 75014, Paris. Telephone: Paris 45 42 57 03.

London rental. Well-appointed apartment directly on the Thames (north side) with river view and near Tower, marina, and City. Also near new London airport, access to continent. Third floor, sunny, quiet, huge reception room, huge bedroom, two baths, central heating, kitchen, entrance hall, elevator, internal garage. Historic pub (with hot meals) around corner. Rental negotiable; long lets preferred—ideal for sabbaticals. Contact Elaine O’Beirne-Ranelagh [35], 30 Long Rd., Cambridge CB2 2PS, England; telephone, 0223-247182.


Paris accommodations sought. Vassar 76 graduate will be in Paris for business and pleasure during the last two weeks of May 1988. I wish to apartment-sit or to rent an apartment/room in Paris during that time. Please call or write: Diane Stiles, 65th Eleventh St., New York, NY 10011; telephone 212/477-3000 (home) or 212/845-4500 (office).


Books Received

Continued from page 38

Nonfiction


For the Love of All Seasons by Geoff Allison and Valerie Vaughn ’70 A self-produced calendar and date book which celebrates, through words and illustrations, the infinite wonder and variety of plants.
What's New with You?

Let your friends know on the postcard enclosed in this magazine.
Apologies to Serena Perretti Benson for mislaying her April postcard. A year ago she was sworn in as a Superior Court judge, Essex County, NJ, criminal section. "Newark is a high-crime city and the quantity of cases is daunting," she writes, but she likes her work and adores husband Dick. Son Peter is becoming a chef, daughter Serena owns and operates a bicycle shop, son Thane '74 continues research at Harvard Medical School. Thane's wife won a $40,000 fellowship from MIT/Boston U. for her work in anatomy. "Red hair, very precocious," is Betsy Stewart Gray's description of her year-and-a-half old granddaughter. "All well in family—life is sweet. Hope to be at reunion."

And so we bid farewell to our shocking pink postcards and commend those pioneers who found the gray ones in their Vassar Quarterly and used them! Please follow in the footsteps (or should I say pen prints?) of these postcard pioneers.

Jacquelin Jones Sadler, having perused the fall issue, writes, "I am enormously impressed with the activity and actions of classes 10, 20, and even 30 years senior to ours. Question: Is Vassar—is anyone—producing ladies so tough and resilient in mind and body anymore (aerosols to the contrary)? Wish I could check us out but will be in Quebec..." one child will be domiciled in England, another in Japan (I think).

Anne Cammack Brewster is "delighted with everything I've read and seen about new Prexy Fergusson." This lucky grandma now has 15 grandchildren who are close enough to visit in the summer and enjoy the activities of their camp on Lake Champlain, Essex, NY.

Betty Bole Eddison has enjoyed two visits with Marcia Garbus Burnam '49. Son Jon and Linda produced first grandchild, Marie. Husband Jack is enjoying his second year as chairman of the Board of Selectmen in Lexington. Their computer company is doing well.

Word has just reached us that Nancy Nixon Cunningham died Feb. 14, 1980, and is survived by her sister, Mrs. Jack J. Powell, 2600 S. Chilton St., Tyler, TX 75701, and three children, Maston, Nancy, and Susan. They all have our sincerest sympathy. G. B. Lukacik, husband of Phyllis Hade Lukacik, Box 41, Vails Gate, NY 12588, writes that "Phyllis passed away on Sept. 13, 1987, after a short illness. She was always so proud that she was an alumna of Vassar." Our sympathy is with her husband and two daughters, Wendy and Robin. Phyllis used her Vassar education to teach for many years in New Jersey. She was a credit to her class.

Class Correspondent—Vivian Meller Valley, 5243 West Q Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49009.
Wanted: News for Class Notes
Handy postcard enclosed.
That's all the news. Should you feel inspired to share your comings and goings, please use the new gray cards in the Quarterly. I promise to faithfully report your news... // you send it to me!

Class Correspondent—Heather Sturt Haaga, 1201 Olive Lane, La Canada, CA 91011
What's New with You?

Let your friends know on the postcard enclosed in this magazine.
Two miles from the Pacific ocean and 3,000 miles from home, I caught myself in the mirror just before stepping into the shower. I squinted into my own gaze, touched the bristly whiskers on my face, and wondered where all the years had gone. I asked myself, "Am I grown up?" and noticed that I was badly in need of a haircut and I still had that junior high school slouch.

Earlier that evening, I had played basketball with the local guys underneath a deep orange sky. After the final game broke up and most everyone headed home, I stayed behind and threw up a few lazy last shots while a lanky 13-year-old boy (who had been eagerly waiting to play all evening) skipped onto the court and joined me. The automatic night lights sensed darkness and clicked on their high-intensity bulbs. The boy asked, "How old are you?" and I had to stop and think. "Twenty-three," I said, with some hesitation in my voice. He replied confidently, "Well, I'm thirteen." *Swish* went his free throw. As I bounced the ball back to him, I looked into the boy's eyes. He caught the ball and slapped it before popping up another shot. The ball went *swish* again, and the boy clapped his hands. The scene reminded me of what it was like to be 13. As I stood between the boy and the basket, he dribbled around and shrieked after he scored another two points. I remembered what it felt like to make a shot, to watch it go in, *plunk*, the sheer joy, often uncontainable, made you want to do it again and again. Everything was so sure; you made the basket, that was everything. This little 13-year-old Tom Asher, inside a still gangly 23-year-old body, pulled the ball down as it fell through the net, and ran, sprinted toward the basket at the other end of the court. The hot air blew through my hair just as it used to when I was a foot shorter. I huffed and heaved the ball up over my head as I approached the net. *Kerplunk!* The rusty steel backboard vibrated a bit. The ball fell through the chain link net. Just like old times...

After my shower, I shuffled into the kitchen, tugged at the refrigerator door, and stood in the waft of chilly air. My hair dripped water down my back and I wondered what, if anything, it had changed. The difference, I thought, seemed to lie in the sound of that little boy's basketball shot. Call it confidence, cockiness, or self-assuredness, that boy had it. He had it because he could make baskets go *swish*. I started thinking about my boyhood dream of being a professional basketball player.

Underneath the basketball net my dad put up for me, I would dribble the ball back and forth, shifting and navigating my body around imaginary seven-foot giants. Jonny Most, the popular Boston radio sports announcer, would describe my movements in his unmistakable gravelly voice. "He fiddles, he diddles, he pops!" I would shoot the ball with a high arc and watch as it seemed to pause at its peak and then drop straight down through the net and make that familiar sound. "Misssster Swish! Tommmmmmy Asher!" Jonny Most would say. I would then grab the ball on the rebound and shoot it in again. The crowd would go wild. "Little Tommy Asher," I thought, "simply unbelievable." I kicked my feet in the air and shot the ball in over and over and over, until the roar of the crowd was deafening, and we won the game; and I would stretch my arms high to wave to the thousands of cheering Boston fans and retire an old pro and get into the Basketball Hall of Fame.

I awoke from a restless sleep and headed directly outside to fix my van which had not started in three days. I popped the hood, crouched over the 1961 Ford engine, and poked the carburetor with a screwdriver. "Clogged," I thought. The smell of gasoline seeped upward as I opened and closed the choke. The sweet pungent odor reminded me of the summers I used to spend adjusting the small engine on my go-kart. It never really needed any work, but I liked to pretend that it needed to be repaired and that I was a mechanic. I would unscrew and remove some parts, clean them with a paper towel, and return them to their proper positions on the engine. I would pull the starter cord and the engine would cough and then start idling at a low hum. I was always relieved and proud.

By now, my hands were greasy and my neck was sore, and I wondered why I had spent so much time working on this old engine and why I had even bought this van in the first place, and why I drove this heap 3,000 miles across the country to settle here in Berkeley. I cleaned the engine and my hands with a faded Vassar towel, turned the key, and the engine groaned, and bucked, and started to rattle and rock, and finally settled for a garbled hum. I slammed the door shut, shifted the van into gear, and looked into the rearview mirror. I sat up a little higher in the seat and shifted to the right so I could see myself for a moment, and I grimmed. The van lurched as I let out the clutch and pulled away from the curb and onto the main street. I rested my elbow on the edge of the open window and drove by the basketball courts. *Swish* went the wind through my hair.
Reunion '88

Join Us  June 3-5, 1988

Parade
Brass Band • Balloons • Class Signs

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Picnic Lunch • Class Pictures • Campus Tours

Annual Meeting
Class Roll Call • Announcement of Class Gifts

Class Programs
Panels • Speakers • Social Hours • Class Dinners

Additional information and registration forms will be sent in April. Plan now to attend!