

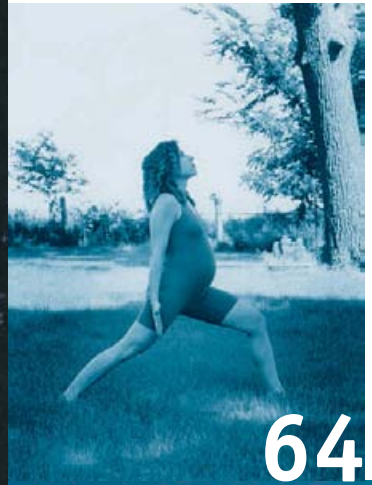
# SWARTHMORE



COLLEGE BULLETIN

DECEMBER 2000

STICKS  
SUBLIME



64



32



72

56



12



ON THE COVER:

ARTIST PATRICK DOUGHERTY WOVE HUNDREDS OF SAPLINGS INTO A 50-FOOT ENVIRONMENTAL SCULPTURE IN FRONT OF TROTTER HALL. SEE STORY ON PAGE 8. PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREA PACKARD '85

# SWARTHMORE

COLLEGE BULLETIN

DECEMBER 2000



## Features

### The Quiet of a Spinning Top 12

*Alice Paul and the Women's Center at Swarthmore*

By Alisa Giardinelli

### Biotech Questions, Swarthmore Answers 18

*Swarthmoreans explore the implications of genetic engineering.*

By Jeffrey Lott

### Just for Laughs 24

*Some very funny people went to Swarthmore.*

By Andrea Hammer

### The End Zone 32

*Controversy surrounds Board decision on athletics.*

By Jeffrey Lott

## Departments

### Letters 3

*Credit and clarification*

### Collection 4

*News of Swarthmore*

### Alumni Digest 36

*Your Swarthmore connection*

### Class Notes 38

*The place you turn to first*

### Deaths 47

*Swarthmore remembers*

### Books & Authors 52

*Poetry and more*

### In My Life 64

*Yoga off the mat*

By Leslea Haravon Collins '89

### Our Back Pages 72

*In 'toon with campus life*

By Carol Brévar-Demm

## Alumni Profiles

### Discovering the artist's life 45

*Mary Dunning Harper '40 helps to start an art gallery.*

By Cathleen McCarthy

### In search of a better life 56

*Jane Lang '67 produces a play on African-American migration.*

By Audree Penner

### The good life 60

*Margaret Thomas Redmon '79 serves her land and community.*

By Carol Brévar-Demm



This issue is an extraordinary one for the *Bulletin*. In the days before publication, we have rewritten and redesigned a half-dozen pages to accommodate a breaking story about the Board of Managers' decision to revamp the athletic program. Yet while we have worked overtime to do this, the story itself has been constantly changing, so that what readers see here is but a snapshot taken on Dec. 7.

There's a lesson in this about information. On campus—and for those off campus who have the tools and desire to access it—the drama of the past week has been available in an entirely new form. *The Phoenix*, which is almost 125 years old as a newspaper, has printed two special editions this week, but its on-line version has probably been more widely read. And the *Daily Gazette*, a rival student news source distributed each morning by computer only, has competed with *The Phoenix* like an upstart

*For those with the tools and desire to access it, the drama of the past week at Swarthmore has been available in an entirely new form.*

Hearst paper 100 years ago.

Those of us on campus—and those far away who care to be involved—have relied more on electronic sources than on the news we have received on paper. I read the excellent Dec. 5 *New York Times* article about Swarthmore on-line before I ever saw a paper version. Even venerable WSRN got into the act with audio feeds on their Web site from rallies and meetings where their microphones were present. When I got to work Monday morning, I found several staff members sitting around their computers, listening to “broadcasts” of debates that had happened a day or two before. Can you picture a family listening to FDR in the 1930s?

What does it all mean for a magazine? First, it tells us that accurate reporting is essential because some of our readers have already heard President Alfred H. Bloom speak or have read the latest *Phoenix* editorial. The Internet forces us to go deeper, to provide analysis and background that readers won't find on-line.

As an editor, I both love and loathe the Internet. When I want instant information, it's there on my screen. But when I want the heart and soul of a college, I think these pages will fill the bill for a while to come.

—Jeffrey Lott



SWARTHMORE  
COLLEGE BULLETIN

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**ELEMENTARY, MY DEAR WATSON**

As an English major and, for many years, a college-level English teacher, I was naturally interested in "From the Bard to *Beloved*" (September *Bulletin*). I am more than slightly appalled by the sheer number of courses offered in the English Department. Without having seen a catalog, I wonder whether Swarthmore is offering too much of a multicultural cafeteria with not enough delving into the truly great writers.

The list of current authors was bemusing. I wonder greatly about including writers such as Raymond Chandler, Conan Doyle, Susan Glaspell, Sue Grafton, Dashiell Hammett, Felicia Hemans, Alfred Hitchcock, Kipling, and Jules Verne. Kipling and Doyle are good, but who needs to study and discuss them? Darwin, Queen Elizabeth, Claude Levi-Strauss, Marx, Thomas Merton, Nietzsche, and Max Weber belong in other disciplines.

In my day (as we all say), there were fewer courses, but all of them probed deeply into the required texts, and most of them were so stimulating that graduate school was a big let-down. But we obtained a solid and thorough basis for future study and teaching, plus the ability to read critically. I can read Sherlock Holmes on my own, thank you.

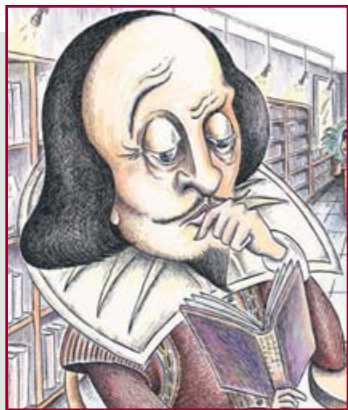
LOUISE ZIMMERMAN FORSCHER '44  
Exeter, N.H.

**AS GREAT AS ... LAGERLÖF?**

One of the things I learned at Swarthmore was a respect for the meaning of words. One that I found particularly misused in "From the Bard to *Beloved*" was "great." Surely, in describing writers, it is a word that should be used with the greatest discrimination—and, to be safe, hardly at all. To call Toni Morrison, talented and seductive as she is, "great" is really stretching things. Her greatness seems to be based primarily on the fact that she was awarded the Nobel Prize, which puts her in the exalted company of Sinclair Lewis, Selma Lagerlöf, and Maurice Maeterlinck, among others—all of them great?

I thought Swarthmore might somehow, with its Quaker background, have evaded the worst of political correctness and the vagaries of fashion, but I find it a proud ringleader. Oh dear (sigh)!

STANLEY BARON '43  
London

**DISTURBING THE PEACE**

Reading about Professor Emerita Kathryn Morgan ("Disturbing the Peace of Racism," September *Bulletin*) was truly inspirational. Her courage and spirit are exactly the ideals that Swarthmore should hope to embody.

What a shame, then, that the article did not recognize how Swarthmore has failed to embody those ideals. Beyond honoring Morgan's life, the article implicitly congratulates the College for its emphasis on diversity. If we are to be proud of Kathryn Morgan's triumph as a professor, however, let us not forget that the only reason Morgan was able to build a legacy at Swarthmore was because she won a lawsuit against the College to gain tenure. Surely this is not something worthy of self-promotion or congratulation.

The recruitment and granting of tenure to minority professors has not been pushed enough by the student body or pursued earnestly enough by the administration. Swarthmore's percentage of minority professors is still below any level to be proud of noting in an alumni magazine article.

Perhaps the greatest good that can come out of the article is that alumni, students, and administration will heed Morgan's example by "disturbing the peace of racism" to push for more minorities on the faculty.

JOHN DOLAN '01  
Swarthmore

**COLOR BLIND**

I went through Swarthmore color blind, as only a middle-class white man is allowed to do in our society. In only the last decade has my own racism and privilege become apparent to me. Swarthmore taught me many things, but seriously thinking about racism was not one of them. I'm very glad to hear that this is less the case now than when I was a student.

RONALD DIAMOND '68  
Madison, Wis.

**GENTLENESS OF CHARACTER**

Dean Janet Smith Dickerson is one of the few Swarthmore administrators I remember by name. She was very kind to me when I was struggling for purpose and direction during my college years. I was pleased to hear about her appointment at Princeton (September "Collection") and to see her portrait. It captures her gentleness and steadiness of character.

SHIRLEY KATHRYN HOLMES WOODS '87  
Sewanee, Tenn.

**CONSORTING WITH THE DEVIL**

A few weeks ago, we received a call from a telemarketer for MBNA [Maryland National Bank Association]. I would have told her we don't respond to telephone solicitations had she not also made the arresting statement that Swarthmore College asked her to call. For that reason, I cooperated—until she requested my Social Security number and my mother's maiden name. Because such information provides access to private financial accounts, I refused to answer. She promised an application through the mail, and, a few days later, a credit card came—with my name spelled incorrectly.

In the meantime, I called the College and learned that Swarthmore has indeed made its name available to sell credit cards through telemarketing, providing that the College share in the profits. We strongly regret and protest that decision.

In addition to Swarthmore's many other assets, it was founded on spiritual values, including a special commitment to social conscience and ethics. Through the years, these values have played a major part in Swarthmore's leadership in American education. Surely those values should not be abandoned now. Swarthmore's decision to participate in the growing evil of telemarketing is much like consorting with the devil. This ethical point alone would seem adequate reason for Swarthmore to abandon this method of fund-raising.

Swarthmore has such loyal supporters that it has thrived without need of commercial telemarketing. One must question whether it is needed now. More important, should it be introduced at the risk of losing a significant part of this loyal support? Swarthmore can never know how much alumni contributions are

Please turn to page 70



# in A hotel Swarthmore?

THE COLLEGE MAY TRADE SOME ATHLETIC FIELDS FOR AN 80-ROOM INN AS PART OF A PLAN TO REVITALIZE THE VILLAGE OF SWARTHMORE.

Future visitors to Swarthmore may be able to stay within walking distance of campus, if the College and borough can work out the logistics of a proposed inn on College-owned land. As anyone who has visited Swarthmore knows, the nearest hotels—in Media or near the Philadelphia International Airport—require at least a 15-minute drive.

The impetus for developing an inn came out of a report from the borough's Revitalization Task Force last year. The report was influenced by a 1998 talk on urban decay by Chris Leinberger '72, real estate analyst and former member of the Board of Managers, to College and town residents.

Leinberger's speech apparently led to a rumor among local residents that the College was trying to mastermind the revitalization effort, a perception that Maurice Eldridge '61, vice president for college and community relations and executive assistant to the president, worked to dispel while serving as a member of the task force. "A

lot of my time and effort was spent making clear that the College had no agenda we wanted to impose and that we would be willing to collaborate to the extent we could," Eldridge says. "I think that succeeded."

Indeed, College and borough officials say that the proposed inn, to be built west of Chester Road, would benefit both town and gown constituencies of the borough. "From the College's perspective, not being able to provide space for families and alumni is bad," says Larry Schall '75, vice president for facilities and services.

Construction of an inn is linked to the larger goal of revitalizing the borough's business district, which has suffered a serious decline during the past 50 years and will continue this downward trend unless something is done to stop it, according to Schall: "Unless everyone is continually proactive about it, I think the Ville will decline and face greater pressure."

According to those close to the project, making Swarthmore's down-

town more economically healthy is essential both for the borough itself and for the College. "What's good for the town is what's good for the College, and what's good for the College is what's good for the town," says borough council member Anne Seidman.

Neither the College nor the town would actually build or operate the inn. Rather, the College would lease land to a developer who would construct and run the inn. The College would have control over the design of the building, however, and the town would have input into the building's size and appearance.

Preliminary plans for the inn call for a 3-story structure with approximately 80 rooms, a restaurant seating up to 200 people, and conference space. A separate but adjacent building would have retail space for the College bookstore and a café. A multi-level parking garage with approximately 220 spaces would be built next to the hotel, and another 60 or so spaces on grade would be provided. The

# Casino event sparks controversy

Stacey Wagaman '01 knew that starting a campus group—Swarthmore's first Native American Student Association (NASA)—in her senior year would absorb a huge chunk of her time and energy. What the political science major and co-captain of the tennis team did not anticipate was the controversy she was about to spark with her choice of an opening celebration: Casino Night.

Wagaman, who is Eastern Band Cherokee, says she first discussed starting NASA with Visiting Instructor in English Literature and Minority Scholar in Residence Michelle Hermann, whom she met during Hermann's Native American autobiography class (see "Native Voices," March 2000 *Bulletin*). "I felt no Native American voice on campus," Wagaman says. "When you don't even have 10 Native American students, you need a chance to talk about what that means."

The decision to play card games and bingo—albeit without the actual exchange of money—was deliberate. "We wanted to get people to come and have fun," Wagaman says. "But we also

wanted to put



PHOTOS BY GEORGE WIDMAN

a spin on something and say, 'Hey, you might not know as much about Indian gaming as you think you do.'

Because the College's Intercultural Center (IC) houses NASA and served as the October event's venue, Assistant Dean of the College and Director of the IC Anna Maria Cobo sent the campuswide e-mail that announced Casino Night.

Although some responses were positive, others were not.

According to Cobo, a typical example of the latter likened the event to the Hispanic Organization for Latino Awareness staging a "border-jumping and California grape-picking workshop" and to Swarthmore Queer Union, which represents gay, lesbian, and bisexual students, holding a "promiscuous gay bar night."

"It saddens me that people were not more open-minded and did not attend the NASA Casino Night before condemning it," Cobo says. "It's OK to be curious and to ask questions, but it's also important to listen to the students and learn about the educational aspects of their program."

Those aspects included a history of tribal gaming and a fact sheet that addressed many of the myths surrounding it. Wagaman had prepared these materials before the event was announced and presented them to the almost 30 students that ultimately attended. "Casinos are a big part of native culture," she says. "They are representative of tribal sovereignty and how tribes relate to mainstream society."

Raising awareness of these and other indigenous issues is just what Wagaman hopes NASA will do, and she says the group's organizational meetings are open so that everyone on campus can have a place to discuss them. "We are a support group in some ways, but there's an education component to our group as well," she says. "We could have a closed group, but we decided to open it up to increase our outreach."

Wagaman is sanguine about the reaction to NASA's inaugural event. "I feel like some people imposed their stereotypes on our group," she says. "But that's why we're here. Now we know what we're up against."

—Alisa Giardinelli

south entrance to the College would be renovated completely and substantial roadwork done to create a smoother traffic flow and to minimize the impact of additional vehicles.

According to Schall, "to help the developer and the College conceptualize the footprint of what the inn would be like," this initial design was created by Haverford Hotel Group, a developer that the College selected this spring after a nine-month search. "We sought someone who wanted to do the project, who was able to do it financially, and who had a vision similar to ours," he says. If the project continues to move forward, Schall says the College would begin serious conversations with the developer about the proposed development.

Excluding the parking garage and road rehabilitation, the hotel would cost slightly more than \$10 million and would be paid for by the developer. It has not been determined who would pay for other components, but Schall says some state and federal grants might be available for the roadwork and that the College could decide to cover part of the project.

Plans for an inn face several hurdles before they can be made a reality. First, because the College would lose the use of several acres of institutionally zoned property if it were to lease that land for an inn, the borough must agree to rezone some College property for institutional use that is currently zoned for only residential use. Moreover, for an inn to be economically feasible, residents would have to vote to change the borough's liquor laws, which currently do not allow businesses to sell alcohol. Finally, the College would have to reach an agreement with its developer on exactly how the project would be carried out.

How likely are we to see an inn built in Swarthmore? College and borough officials say it's too early to tell; there are too many variables involved. But Schall says, "As long as we're having conversations about it, as long as it's progressing and people maintain their good will, it could happen."

—Sonia Scherr '01

Editor's Note: Scherr, in-depth editor of *The Phoenix*, recently received second place in the Reporter of the Year awards from the Associated College Press.

# Soviet dissident speaks out again

Widow of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Andrei Sakharov and famous Soviet dissident Elena Bonner looked tired as she took the stage at Lang Performing Arts Center in September. Bonner, 77, was fatigued by travel and possibly by the prospect of another recounting of her long battle for a democratic Russia. It's a battle that, she admitted, is not yet won.

Speaking in Russian as an interpreter struggled to keep up, Bonner instructed the audience in her opening remarks to "please address your questions to today's situation in Russia, not to the past." Yet she spent most of her speech recounting just that. Her parents were arrested when she was 14, her father executed, and her mother imprisoned for 17 years.

But what Bonner seemed to want students to understand was the nature of the dissident movement, led mainly by writers like herself, and particularly by Sakharov, a renowned physicist and opponent of Soviet human rights abuses. The movement began as an underground protest, she explained, evolving into an increasingly vocal and international one in the '70s and '80s. Like many dissidents, Sakharov and Bonner were punished by the Soviet government for speaking out, banished in the early 1980s to Gorky, and cut off from all means of contact with the outside world.

"It was these two decades of dissent in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe that brought about change," Bonner said. "The end came without blood or violence, even with some promise and hope for the future. Unfortunately, that hope has been not much realized in these countries.

"In Russia, there has been what I would call a zigzag of history," she continued. "How can a country that suffered so much during World War II be unable to put over an antiwar movement? How can a country that survived the Gulag elect as president a man brought up within that very system?" She suggested that "the 'new' Mikhail Gorbachev, who has experienced a great deal since he was ousted, may have been a better president."

As evidence of her country's zigzag, she offered the reinstatement of con-



COURTESY OF ELENA BONNER

stitutional order, the struggle with terrorism, and the continuing war in Afghanistan. "It is very hard to find myself trying to explain things when I see that I can't even explain them to myself," she said. "For me, personally, losing my father, and also my mother for a long period, the hardest thing was not these events but the constant all-embracing official life. In today's Russia, I'm ... distressed by the constant official life all over again."

She stressed, however, that although true democracy has yet to be realized in Russia, the battle to which she and her husband devoted their lives was not in vain. "I think the dissident movement achieved its goals," she said. "People became free of the inertia of fear, more engaged in the civic life of the country. You have to remember that the dissident movement never set itself a political goal. For most of the dissidents, it was a way of living in accordance with one's own conscience."

She ended with an appeal to the students. "Inviolability and self-determination are not in accord with each other, so we have to choose," she said. "It remains the largest, most profound question for you and your grandchildren: Will it be altruism or greed?"

Students and faculty rose in a standing ovation, and Bonner waved them back down—but couldn't help smiling.

—Cathleen McCarthy

ELENA BONNER AND HER LATE HUSBAND ANDREI SAKHAROV (IN PHOTO ON WALL) LED THE FIGHT AGAINST SOVIET HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN THE '70S AND '80S.



DENG-JENG LEE

## Pasternack honored

Robert Pasternack, Edmund Allen Professor of Chemistry, has won the American Chemical Society Award for Research at an Undergraduate Institution. The award—\$5,000 and a grant of \$4,000 to the recipient's institution—is given annually to a professor at a non-Ph.D.-granting college who contributes significantly to chemistry and to the development of undergraduate students.

Pasternack is being recognized for his work in the relatively new field of "supramolecular chemistry," which examines the behavior and properties of arrays of molecules—in this case, those that form on biopolymer templates such as proteins and DNA. Pasternack will accept the honor in April.





# The House turns 30

Conversations about Kwanzaa, a celebration of the African heritage of African Americans, are not new at Swarthmore. Opportunities to learn and talk about the seven-day festival's development and significance have occurred in December for the last several years.

But when faculty and staff members joined students earlier this month for this year's discussion, it was more than a traditional chance to explore this aspect of African-American culture. It also helped mark 30 years of the Black Cultural Center (BCC)—part of a yearlong series of events celebrating the anniversary of one of Swarthmore's most successful student organizations.

An open house at the BCC kicked off the celebration this fall. Lectures will continue throughout the spring semester with special activities planned for Black Alumni Weekend in March.

Kwanzaa is a joyous time, but it was not joy that created the BCC. After President Courtney Smith's death in 1969 during the occupation of the Admissions Office by black students, tension and grief on campus were palpable. James Michener '29 and the William J. Cooper Foundation were among those who gave money to the College specifically to improve relations on campus. The 1970 conversion of Robinson House, a women's

A PLACE FOR LONG TALKS AND COOL JAZZ, THE BLACK CULTURAL CENTER HAS LONG SERVED AS THE HUB OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENT LIFE. A YEARLONG CELEBRATION IS UNDER WAY.



LEANDRE JACKSON '75

dorm, to the BCC was perhaps the most tangible result. Popularly known as "The House," the BCC has remained the hub of African-American student life ever since, changing from a hangout with fishnets on the ceiling and stereo blasting to a space that can hold meetings as easily as parties.

According to Assistant Dean of the College and Director of the BCC Timothy Sams, there are several hundred black cultural centers at colleges and universities around the country. Although many share common goals of encouraging their students to be leaders, Sams says Swarthmore's BCC offers its students something unique: "None of our peer institutions tells their students that they have a huge responsibility to be not just the smartest but also committed to the black community and the larger world. We have a clear directive from the administration to promote ethical intelligence, so we direct their talent and intellect back to the community in order for them to become highly constructive members of society."

Sams wants the students he advises to see themselves as part of a unique political and social tradition and to be comfortable with it. Achieving that goal is the BCC's challenge for the next 30 years and beyond—and keeping the party going.

—Alisa Giardinelli

Sticks  
sublime

What is that leaning against the tree by Trotter Hall? Is it a bird's nest? Is it a giant insect pod? No, it's the latest sculpture to grace Swarthmore's landscape—the College's first foray into environmental art. It's about 50 feet high and called *Abracadabra*—a name that captures the way it seems about to float away on the breeze.

It's the creation of Patrick Dougherty, a North Carolina-based artist who has spent the last dozen years traveling the world, weaving site-specific sculptures from saplings and branches. The Art Department and the Scott Arboretum joined forces to invite Dougherty here, supported by a Cooper Foundation grant.

For three weeks in September, the College community had the opportunity to watch art in progress. Some even lent a hand. Dougherty proved one of the most accessible artists ever to preside over a 50-foot tree fort. He even paused frequently to allow about 400 visiting school children to climb around inside his sculpture.

*Sept. 15*

We find Patrick Dougherty presiding over piles of saplings scattered around the lawn outside Trotter Hall. He's difficult



© KAREN MAUCH

to distinguish from the legions of jeans-clad volunteers sifting through the piles, stripping branches. "The help I've been getting from the Scott Arboretum staff has been unbelievable. We collected all this material in two days from Tyler Arboretum," he says. "We had 23 people

working on it at one point. It's very unusual to have this much help. There is a kind of esprit de corps here." About 150 people turned out for his opening lecture—"mainly gardeners," Dougherty says.

This particular site was chosen partly because it's visible from Trotter, Parrish, and Kohlberg halls as well as McCabe



© KAREN MAUCH

Library. "You have to be careful of your long view," he says, pointing to the traffic circle between Parrish and McCabe. "The Scott Arboretum staff suggested this American linden tree because it might have to come out. It has a lot of problems."

Indeed, the tree has lost major branches and appears to have oozing wounds—but it should last at least as long as the sculpture, which has a 1-year life expectancy.

He pulls out a preliminary sketch of stacked oblong forms. "I like the contrast of smaller branches against larger ones and the idea of putting natural-looking forms back on a tree. The tree itself is alive and growing, which will affect the sculpture. It will look considerably different in the winter than in the summer."

*Sept. 18*

The first pod is up and resembles a 20-foot hornet's nest, which appears to lean casually against the tree but is actual-

© KAREN MAUCH

ly anchored in a 40-inch hole. The artist perches on scaffolding, weaving branches into place while an assistant does the same inside the pod. Somehow Dougherty manages to form graceful swirling lines from sturdy branches.

A gray-haired man watches for a while and then ventures a joke, asking Dougherty if his oblong hollow form is supposed to be a Firestone tire. Dougherty takes this comparison of his sculpture to a flat tire in good spirits.

At ground level, the work is inspiring conversations about the dung beetle infestation in the forests of Chincoteague State Park, Va., and speculation about camping out inside the pod. Dougherty, it seems, has never slept in one of his sculptures. His workforce is down to two helpers on the sculpture itself and three people pruning the piles of branches. He is working with renewed intensity. Tomorrow, a storm with “hurricane-level winds” is predicted, a Scott Arboretum staffer reports.

### Sept. 20

After a torrential downpour, Dougherty and a helper, high above, are weaving the second pod. Dougherty & Co. managed to put the skeleton of pod No. 2 in place between gales and interviews with visiting home-and-garden journalists. So, the sculpture withstood the storm? “It looks that way,” he says, “but it was a good test. If there’s any structural weakness, it’s better to find out now than after I leave.”

### Oct. 2

Dougherty (*right*) is gone, leaving behind a four-pod sculpture that tips this way and that, as it meanders the length of the linden tree—which seems to be enjoying its moment of glory. Late in the day, light filters through the sculpture, casting interesting shadows. It seems that Dougherty has built a sort of chimney. Standing inside and looking up, you can see the sky.

—Cathleen McCarthy



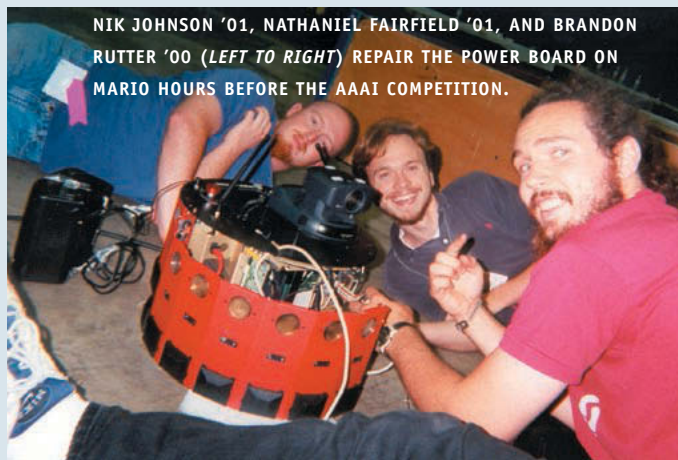
DIANE MATTIS



ANDREA PACKARD '85



ANDREA PACKARD '85



NIK JOHNSON '01, NATHANIEL FAIRFIELD '01, AND BRANDON RUTTER '00 (LEFT TO RIGHT) REPAIR THE POWER BOARD ON MARIO HOURS BEFORE THE AAAI COMPETITION.

NIJ SAKA ADDO '02

## Robotini Alfredo

Fueled by robot Alfred’s first-place victory last year, Swarthmore returned to the American Association for Artificial Intelligence (AAAI) competition in August with new-and-improved robotics—and scored even bigger. The robots—handiwork of a 10-student team led by Bruce Maxwell '91, assistant professor of engineering, and Lisa Meeden, associate professor of computer science—took another first place in the “Hors d’Oeuvres Anyone?” contest as well as the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) event and won the Ben Wegbrait Award for Integration of Artificial Intelligence Technologies.

Since last year’s contest, penguin-butler Alfred has become “Alfredo,” a restaurant owner who resembles 1980s icon Max Headroom, a talking head on a computer monitor. He has taken up palm reading and acquired two sons, Santino and Mario. Mario, the manic busboy, is a squat, speedy guy created from last year’s prize, a Real World Interface Magellan Pro robot. Santino, the surly waiter, is a small, mobile Nomad Super Scout II, outfitted with two cameras, an on-board computer, a mechanical arm that raises a tray on request, and a monitor face that smiles and frowns at responses. His comments include: “You look like you could neither hunt nor gather. Do you want a piece of food to save you from natural selection?”

More than 100 spectators turned up in the Lang Performing Arts Center lobby in September to greet the victorious robots—including three television crews and a dozen children from the local day care center. Alas, Santino’s insults had barely begun to fly when his hard drive crashed, leaving him mute as he proffered his tray of cookies. Meanwhile, Mario raced around madly, and Alfredo entertained by commenting on people’s clothing and reading palms held before his camera.

“I sense your presence. Put up your palm,” Alfredo demanded of Seeta Sistla '04.

Sistla gamely offered her hand.

“I hope your mother doesn’t know about last night,” Alfred said. The crowd roared.

Students are already buzzing with plans for three new robots that came with the AAAI awards. Competitors, beware. By next year, Alfredo may command an entire fleet.

—Cathleen McCarthy and Alisa Giardinelli

# Down Chester Road

Passing drivers peered curiously at the procession of students strolling along Chester Road last August. It's not the first time Swarthmore students have walked the 5 miles from the College to downtown Chester, Pa., but it's been several years since this many did so at one time.

The walkers consisted of 25 freshmen and 5 upperclassmen who were taking part in the new preorientation program. Led by Pat James, director of community service learning, the program aims to foster an early interest in community service, advocacy, and activism. The students were on their way to hear activists speak in downtown Chester.

Walking to Chester—then riding the SEPTA bus back—was Pat James' idea. "As we walked, I wanted to feel both the connection between the communities and the changes as we pass from one to the next," James said later. "It really brings home how close we are—and how removed at the same time."

Among the walkers was Delonte Gholston '02, a "peer facilitator" for the Chester Road Program and president of the College Democrats. He chatted with other students about the realities of life in Chester, gleaned from hours spent talking to residents about changing their vote to Democrat.

Terry Rumsey, the bearded, energetic director of development for the Chester YWCA and a longtime community organizer in his hometown Chester, met the group as they entered the city and led them to the City Team Ministries, a shelter and community center where he had arranged a panel discussion.

Muhammad Ahmed was the first to speak. A professor of sociology at Delaware County Community College (DCC), Ahmed has been involved in social movements since the 1960s, when he marched with Martin Luther King. Youthful energy and idealism are vital in effecting social change, Ahmed stressed: "I don't see one young per-



PHOTOS BY CATHLEEN MCCARTHY



CHESTER ACTIVIST TERRY RUMSEY (RIGHT) MEETS FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS AND PAT JAMES, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING, TO ESCORT THEM INTO HIS HOMETOWN.

son, 25 or less, trying to lead a social movement in Chester right now."

Annette Burton told the story of how she went from being a single welfare mother—she has raised 15 children—to putting herself through college and becoming one of the first black administrators at DCC. Hearing Martin Luther King speak in Chester in the 1960s led to her involvement with the Greater Chester Movement, Project V.O.T.E., and Jobs With Peace.

Rumsey introduced Zulene Mayfield as a "national and international hero in her fight against environmental racism." As a founding member and chairperson of Chester Persons Concerned for Quality of Living, Mayfield is another Chester native and self-taught community leader who has helped push through lawsuits involving toxic incinerators and contaminated soil in Chester. "Politics and pollution are the two things that are killing this city," she said. "We have a multi-prong solution, and our catalyst is anger over our situation. You hear all the time: 'If it's that bad, move.' I say, if it's that bad, change it."

Last to speak was Robin Lasersohn

'88, who became active in Chester while pursuing a special major in education and social change, met and married Rumsey, and ended up making Chester activism her life's work. "The experience of coming here changed my life," she told students. "I value my education, but I found Swarthmore to be a total ivory tower. It is Theory Land. Chester was an authentic experience. There's a chance here to make a big difference in this community."

Lasersohn ended on a note of caution. "Don't dabble," she warned the students. "When I arrived at Swarthmore in 1984, I was hell-bent on defeating Reagan, so I came to Chester to help register voters for the Democratic Party. After that, I did a little of this and a little of that: tutoring and building and repairing houses. I wanted to try my hand at everything. There is a tendency as a student to try a lot of things, but there are real people on the other side. It's important to remember that this community is not just an experimental playground for young activists. I suggest picking one thing that you're really interested in and committing yourself to it."

As the talks ended, the young activists rose, surrounded the older ones, and engaged in animated conversation—until the No. 109 bus arrived to take them back up Chester Road.

—Cathleen McCarthy

# Best grid season since 1995

The Garnet Tide football team defeated Washington & Lee 16-6 on Nov. 11 to finish the season with a 4-5 record, their best since 1995.

Eight players were named to the Centennial Conference All-Conference team in November, including offensive lineman Matt Rapoza '03 and running back Ken Clark '03, who both made first-team offense. Clark closed the season with a school-record total of 1,053 yards, making him the first Garnet running back to cross the 1,000-yard plateau.

"The offensive line did a great job this year. They really came together as a unit and gave me some good holes to run through," says Clark, a psychology major. "The team has been a work-in-progress since Coach [Pete] Alvanos came in, and this year we turned the corner."

Second-team picks for the All-Conference team were Rob Castellucci '01, Tony Hillery '01, Joe Corso '02, and Blake Atkins '02; Justin Pagliei '02 received an honorable mention.

The team's first win of the season, against Oberlin, was followed by three losses. Then, on Sept. 23, the Garnet beat Gettysburg, Swarthmore's first Centennial Conference victory in five years. In the key play of that game, punter Jared Passmore '04 faked a punt and passed to Rich Andres '03, who ran the 51-yard touchdown, giving the team a permanent lead.

Two weeks later, the team delighted the Homecoming crowd by winning against Franklin & Marshall, 29-21. Clark scored three touchdowns and carried the ball 52 times for 317 yards during that game, setting school records for rushing attempts and yardage.

In the final game and victory against Washington & Lee, Clark squeezed past the 1,000-yard record with the help of a 54-yard run for the first touchdown, and Castellucci intercepted a pass, setting up his own 23-yard field goal for a final score of 16-6.

—Cathleen McCarthy



SENIORS MARC JEULAND (LEFT) AND JOKO AGUNLOYE AT THE CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS

## In other sports ...

**Marc Jeuland** '01 earned All-Centennial honors, placing second at the Centennial Conference (CC) **men's cross-country** championships. Jeuland also earned Regional All-American honors with a 4th place at the Mid-East Regionals that qualified him for a trip to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III Championships. Jeuland placed 62nd at nationals, running the 8k in 26:05.9. **Sam Evans** '01 finished 13th at the CC championship and 19th at the Mid-East Regional earning All-Region honors.

**Joko Agunloye** '01 became the second woman in CC history to repeat as conference champion when she won the **women's cross-country** championship in a course record time of 18:56.20. She also became the first woman to earn All-Conference honors all four years and placed third at the Mid-East Regional, earning a trip to the Nationals in



BOB COOK

**KEN CLARK '03** (NO. 32) LED THE GARNET OFFENSE THIS YEAR, COMPILING A COLLEGE RUSHING RECORD OF 1,053 YARDS FOR THE SEASON. HERE HE CARRIES THE BALL IN THE HOMECOMING WIN OVER FRANKLIN AND MARSHALL.

Spokane, Wash. At the NCAA championships, Agunloye placed 56th. **Maria Elena Young** '04 earned All-Mid-East Regional and first team All-Freshman honors with a 22nd-place finish at regionals.

The **women's field hockey** team reached the postseason for the third time in four years with an appearance in the ECAC Mid-Atlantic Championships. **Kristen English** '01 was named CC Player of the Year. With six goals and three assists for 15 points, English was named first-team Regional All-American and second-team Division III All-American. **Kim Cariello** '02 led the Garnet in scoring with a career high of 12 goals and 5 assists and was named second-team All-CC. **Katie Tarr** '02 scored 6 goals and had 13 defensive saves, earning first-team All-CC honors. She was also named second-team regional All-American. Defender **Katie Vivalo** '01 earned second-team all-CC honors.

The **men's soccer** team struggled to a 3-12 record under new head coach Don Norton, losing four games in overtime.

**Elizabeth Fortier** '03 led the **women's soccer** team in scoring with six goals and seven assists. **Heather Marandola** '01 contributed two goals and one assist, receiving an All-CC honorable mention.

**Anjani Reddy** '04 of the **women's tennis** team won the 2000 Intercollegiate Tennis Association Southeastern Singles Championship and placed fifth at the Rolex National Small College Championships.

—Mark Duzenski

Fall 2000 Intercollegiate Sport	Overall Record	Centennial Conference	Mid-East Regional
Men's cross-country	0-3	6th	15th
Women's cross-country	4-0	4th	6th
Field hockey	14-7	7-2	
Football	4-5	2-5	
Men's soccer	3-12	0-9	
Women's soccer	4-12	1-9	
Volleyball	9-18	3-7	



She knew well the value of pageantry and spectacle. She staged her first demonstration on Pennsylvania Avenue to coincide with Woodrow Wilson's inauguration in 1913, knowing the gathered crowds—and press—would be just as interested in the thousands of women marching with suffrage banners as they would in the new president. In 1917, she organized the first-ever pickets of the White House and incurred the wrath of many who thought her actions betrayed the country in wartime. She even made a theatrical show of publicly burning Wilson's speeches on democracy abroad to protest an undemocratic system at home that prevented American women from voting.

So when Alice Paul celebrated the day on which the 19th amendment was proclaimed law, it was with characteristic flair. A crowd of women gathered outside the ivy-covered National Woman's Party headquarters in

Washington, D.C., as Paul unfurled a long, silk banner from the building's second-floor balcony.

Paul stood proudly over the banner—gold, white, and purple with a double row of stars down the middle, representing each of the 36 states that had ratified the amendment. Just days before, she had sewn on the last star—for Tennessee—herself. Among those at her side was Mabel Vernon '06, a good friend from Swarthmore and a fiery public speaker Paul had recruited to run the party's New York operation.

The date of the banner's public unfurling—Aug. 26, 1920.

Eighty years later, the 2000 presidential election marked an anniversary for women that passed with little, if any, fanfare. Alice Paul's contributions, like those of many suffragists, are now largely unknown. But Paul's legacy enjoyed a brief resurgence on Swarthmore's campus in the 1970s when some women students named the newly established women's center for her. The name didn't last, and, although feminism is alive and well among current students, the women's center is no longer its public face on campus. The reasons why say as much about the challenges confronting feminism as they do about the evolution of one of the College's long-standing student organizations.

DURING THE MANY DEMONSTRATIONS SHE STAGED IN SUPPORT OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, ALICE PAUL (ABOVE) ENDURED HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE AS WELL AS REPEATED ARRESTS AND PAINFUL FORCED FEEDINGS FROM PRISON OFFICIALS. HERE SHE CELEBRATES THE CULMINATION OF THOSE EFFORTS AT THE NATIONAL WOMAN'S PARTY HEADQUARTERS ON THE DAY THE 19TH AMENDMENT BECAME LAW.

**Alice Stokes Paul '05 devoted her life to women's rights. The story of how some Swarthmore students attempted to honor her legacy—and why the effort ultimately failed—illustrates the challenges facing feminism and women's groups on campus today.**



CORBUSIETHWANN

Founding the Women's Center Feminists in the 1970s—widely considered the movement's "second wave"—had a commitment to social change much the same as their predecessors. But rather than focus on any one issue, as did many suffragists, these activists advocated a broader definition of equality and freedom.

As a student, Christina Crosby '74 was part of the campus group Swarthmore Women's Liberation, and she wrote a column for *The Phoenix* called "A Feminist Slant." Recalling the Women's Center's origins, Crosby, now a professor of English and women's studies at Wesleyan University, says she and others saw themselves as part of this feminist social movement.

"We were not just in our moment," Crosby says. "We imagined ourselves as part of a tradition of social justice. Those aspirations and imagination are not beyond criticism, but it's very important to honor that effort, excitement, and outrage.

"Yes, outrage—I was pissed off all the time, and I still am," Crosby chuckles. "That's a very motivating emotion."

Crosby explains that the organizing efforts of the African-American students at Swarthmore preceded those of Swarthmore Women's Liberation and showed her and others that movements for social justice could have a lasting impact on academic institutions. "Perhaps it's this commitment to making a more just and equitable world that's the most important link between our youthful feminism of the early 1970s and Alice Paul's work," she says.

The Women's Center, as it was first known in the spring of 1974, consisted of two rooms on Bond's second floor when Mary Rubin '79 arrived at Swarthmore that fall. Her involvement began during her second semester.

According to Rubin, the center was run like a collective, complete with a modest but prized collection of books and articles people could drop in and use. "It's incredible to think now that there weren't any women's studies books in McCabe," she says. "The information sources were so few. It was a big deal to get a subscription to *Ms.* magazine."

Increasing the services available for women on campus is an example of the kind of work on which students at the center focused their efforts. "Maybe a gynecologist was on campus two hours every month. I'm not sure if birth control was even provided," says Rubin. "And mental health services were ludicrously sparse."

In response, Rubin says the center sponsored a survey to



## Women Organize: Somerville, Sororities, and Student Government

The Women's Resource Center is not the only women's organization to make its mark at Swarthmore. It is also not the only one that has undergone major change.

The first was the Somerville Literary Society, formed in 1871. Barred from joining the two campus literary societies for men, members of a women's baseball team organized their own and made it open to all women students and alumnae. They chose for their namesake Mary Somerville (1780–1872), an accomplished scientific writer from Scotland who supported women's education.

As more women graduated, the organization grew into an ad hoc alumnae association. Members published a magazine until 1910, sponsored speakers, and raised money to award graduate fellowships named for College founders Lucretia Mott and Martha Tyson, which are still given today.

By the 1890s, all women students were also considered members of the newly formed Women's Student Government Association (WSGA), which was run by an executive committee. The organization's main responsibility, as an early constitution states, was "to control the conduct of women students in all matters not strictly academic." This included everything from when and where they could receive callers to under what circumstances and with whom they could go off campus.

Sororities also played a large role in the College's early history. In 1931, they could count more than three-quarters of the women students as members. However, despite enjoying strong popularity, the often exclusive organizations came under fire.

Molly Yard '33 still remembers how unthinkable it seemed that anyone would be discriminated against because of their religion, especially at Swarthmore. She also clearly remembers her decision not to tolerate it. Although later famous for her years of social activism and as president of the National Organization for Women, Yard calls the fight to abolish the sorority system at Swarthmore her first political campaign.

From her home in Pittsburgh, Yard recently described the two examples of prejudice against Jewish students that prompted her action. One student was barred from Chi Omega, her older sister's sorority. Yard had wanted another to join her own sorority, Kappa Alpha Theta.

"We carried the matter all the way to the national office," Yard says. When they said no, she states, "That did it. We organized a campaign."

*The Phoenix* referred to the several months that followed as the "women's fraternity agitation." And the agitation only increased after the vote, run by the WSGA, was taken.

"When we voted to abolish the system, all hell broke loose," Yard says. "Alums descended on the College. Because of the pressure, President Aydelotte decided to put off the decision for a year. I remember how furious I was at him. I ran to his door and banged on it, and he said, 'What's the matter, Molly? Are you afraid to take a vote again next year?' And I said, 'Of course not.'"

The next year, an even greater number voted to uphold the ban. "That," Yard states, "was how it was done."

Although success did not surprise her, Yard did not expect it to be bittersweet. "I remember well the night of the vote," she says. "I thought if we won I would be thrilled. But I soon realized that some women students were very upset about losing the sororities. That realization rather took the bloom off the victory. Although we had won, we had made some students very unhappy."

Still, Yard has no regrets. "I treasure what we did and am proud of our accomplishment," she says. "Any campaign against discrimination of any kind is worth a lot and, in my opinion, strengthens the College community."

determine women students' views of the quality of what was provided. They then used the results to successfully lobby the Dean's Office for improved services and facilities.

Despite such victories, running the new center was not easy. Rabbi Julie Greenberg '79 served on the center's steering committee with Rubin. "In my early years at Swarthmore," she recalls, "feminism in the country was a divisive and tense issue, and that was reflected in the student groups working on campus. It was not a warm, welcoming place. We were allies with many groups, yet our ideological differences set up social barriers."



*The Phoenix* describes other kinds of barriers. Numerous editorials and articles from the mid-1970s chronicle the bitter fights over funding the center had with the Student Budget Committee. "There was definitely a

backlash from male students who were freaked out," Rubin explains, "especially in the initial years of the center's activities." Despite the difficulties, Rubin, now a philanthropy consultant, is proud of how much effort she devoted to the center. "We worked our guts out," she says. "There was an incredible excitement about doing this work. Our energies were focused on pushing into new territory while also honoring our foremothers."

### Alice Paul's Quaker Heritage

The foremother they specifically chose to honor was Alice Paul. A dedication ceremony for the center took place on Dec. 5, 1975, at the then-new Lang Music Building. Paul, 90 and living in New Jersey, was invited. Although unable to attend, she was reportedly very pleased by the news.



Alice Paul's Swarthmore connections predate her arrival on campus. She was raised in New Jersey, a descendant of a long line of influential Quakers with ties traceable to William Penn. Among them was William Parry, her grandfather, who shared a spade with fellow College founder Lucretia Mott for the planting of the first trees on campus. Her mother, Tacey Parry Paul, was among the College's first class of students.



Paul decided against English and Latin, then popular majors among women students, to major in biology. However, inspired by political science and economics courses with the legendary Robert Brooks, who arrived her senior year, Paul became interested in social work and earned a grant to work at a settlement house on New York's Lower East Side after graduation.

Her interest in the field took her to England, where she studied economics and sociology. There, she joined the campaign for women's rights led by the charismatic Pankhurst family. The series of arrests, imprisonments, hunger strikes, and forced feedings Paul endured as a result solidified her resolve for the suffrage cause.

Upon returning to the United States in 1910, Paul joined



the National American Woman Suffrage Association but soon left to form what became the National Woman's Party. Paul thought it more effective to concentrate suffrage efforts on the national level, as opposed to state, thereby limiting the number of men she and her members needed to successfully lobby for a constitutional amendment. She was also freer to stage the nonviolent protests her peers considered detrimental to their work.

Throughout Paul's life, colleagues and scholars noted her tenacity, her businesslike manner, and her ability to recall the voting records of each member of Congress and then

direct lobbying efforts

accordingly. A supporter once said of Paul, she "had the quiet of a spinning top."

Several reasons fueled the steering committee's choice of Paul's name for the center. "It was

hard to get the center started," Mary Rubin explains, "and then it was immediately under attack. By naming it, we felt like we were institutionalizing it, even though it was a tender, young organization."

Another rationale was the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). "The push to pass the ERA was front and center in the women's movement in the 1970s, and Paul was its architect," Rubin adds. Paul submitted the first version of the amendment to Congress in 1923 and campaigned tirelessly for its passage until her death in 1977.

In addition, an explosion of new scholarship called attention to the role women played in the suffrage and abolition movements. "The idea that 1970s feminism should be seen as a 'second wave' was a new concept," Rubin says. "Uncovering and rediscovering women as political actors and agents of change was terribly important, and choosing her name was a move in that direction."

But perhaps most important was Paul's connection to the College. "It's pretty damn fabulous that one of the major players in American feminism is a Swarthmore alum," Rubin says. "Swarthmore didn't think of itself as a feminist campus, and Paul was part of the heritage that had been ignored and forgotten. We wanted to make that visible to the campus and honor her for what she had done."

### Tension Builds

In many ways, their efforts worked, and the Alice Paul Women's Center enjoyed increased success. In the 1980s, the center moved to the former Kappa Sigma fraternity house

**"It's pretty damn fabulous that one of the major players in American feminism is a Swarthmore alum. We wanted to make that visible to the campus and honor her for what she had done."**

**—Mary Rubin**



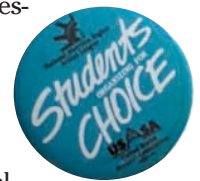
near the tennis courts. The move allowed for more space for the library as well as for a living room and kitchen. The center also obtained funding for paid interns each year and, in 1985, hosted some of the events held during the College's two-week celebration of the 100th anniversary of Paul's birth. These gains marked a high point in the center's history, given the events that soon followed during the early 1990s.

The center's efforts to reach out to other campus women's groups, for instance, were not a new priority but had varying degrees of success. Elizabeth Volz '90, who was an active member before starting a separate pro-choice task force, remembers how conscious she and others were of the need for wider recruitment.

"I can't remember how many times we discussed this, we did it so often," Volz says. "We would ask our roommates, our friends, 'Why didn't you come Sunday night?' We knew we had to better understand why we had the same 20 faces all the time."

Volz remembers these discussions as ongoing self-evaluation. "I was not aware of any outside pressure," she says. "All the pressure was coming from ourselves."

That soon changed. Elsewhere on campus, a wholly different conversation was happening in the fall of 1990. It consisted of provocative, sometimes inflammatory, messages posted on the walls in Parrish Hall that, at first, questioned the all-white male subjects of the portraits in the parlors, then quickly grew to cover race and diversity issues on campus in general (see May 1991 *Bulletin*).



Some of these discussions on race at the College carried over to an electronic bulletin board the Women's Center had recently started hosting. Libby Starling '92, a center intern at that time, thinks that through the postings to the board, the center became a lightning rod for some of the racial tensions on campus. "We became the symbol of white liberalism at Swarthmore," she says. "The conversation made us feel very defensive."

"The center was not seen as particularly open and diverse," admits Alida Zweidler-McKay '92, who also worked as an intern that year. "It was primarily white, but it was something those of us inside the center were trying to deal with."

"From our perspective, the doors were open," Starling says, "and we didn't fully understand why people of color weren't coming in."

Exacerbated by external criticism, internal conversations on the subject became increasingly tense. "For instance," says Veronica Green Ross '95, an intern in 1991, "someone had an idea and wanted to know how 'women of color' might respond, as if I were the voice for colored women on campus. That's what I resented."

Ross says she did not identify as a feminist when she was hired as an intern and did not leave any more educated

IN 1920, ALICE PAUL (ABOVE) SEWED THE FINAL STAR ON A BANNER SHOWING THE NUMBER OF STATES THAT HAD RATIFIED THE 19TH AMENDMENT. BUT WAS SHE A GOOD ROLE MODEL FOR THE EARLY 1990S? MANY SWARTHMORE STUDENTS DIDN'T THINK SO, AND HER NAME WAS QUIETLY DROPPED FROM THE WOMEN'S CENTER. THOSE WERE "PRETTY HARSH TIMES," SAYS ALIDA ZWEIDLER-McKAY '92.

about feminism. “I had thought, cool—I’ll get a job at the Women’s Center,” she says, “make some contacts, do some great things, and learn about feminism. But it didn’t quite happen that way.”

At the time, Ross says she caught a lot of flak from her friends for getting involved at the center at all. “[They] clowned and ridiculed me about it,” she says. “They didn’t know why I was there.”

Another issue complicating recruitment was the center’s history—some say reputation—of welcoming women of all sexual orientations. In trying to understand the limits of the center’s appeal, members got clear reminders that not all students were comfortable in a space where homosexuality was accepted. “I didn’t care who you slept with,” Ross says, “but for many people in the black community, [that kind of] sexuality was taboo. So if you want a black woman to go to a group that’s stigmatized for being lesbian, she ain’t going.”

In contrast were those who thought, perhaps unfairly, that the Women’s Center was not welcoming enough. Rebecca France ’93 was active in the gay, lesbian, and bisexual student organization; with a friend, she once wrote a

“nasty letter” to *The Phoenix*, criticizing the center for not doing enough for lesbian and bisexual women.

“As an adult, I don’t know how real that was,” France says today. “In the real world, women of color and lesbian women have often

been excluded from the mainstream feminist movement, and that’s awful. But at Swarthmore, I sometimes felt like we had all just read an article about some issue and then needed to play it out in our own lives.”

### Reluctant Change

How to attract and include women of color is one of many issues that has long been debated within the women’s movement. In the early 20th century, some women saw suffrage as a threat to women’s influence in partisan politics and campaigned against it.

“There has always been passionate disagreement,” says Elizabeth Volz, recently elected to her third term as president of the National Organization for Women’s (NOW) New Jersey state chapter. “It is spirited debate that keeps our movement vital and growing. Alice Paul had people who thought her actions were too extreme and who painted a negative picture of her.”

Criticism of Paul, including charges of racism and anti-Semitism, resurfaced during the center’s discussions about race. “I saw the whole women’s movement as racist,” Veronica Ross says. “Having Alice Paul’s name on the center was like hanging a confederate flag on the door.”

Zweidler-McKay says she remembers having several, often difficult discussions about the name. “If someone did a lot for a cause but was not absolutely perfect,” she recalls

“Sometimes I’m concerned about the way we treat our heroines. We can be so critical, we forget to acknowledge the good they did.”  
—Elizabeth Volz



asking, “could you still use her name? [The early 1990s] were pretty harsh times, and the answer kept being no.”

The result: Alice Paul’s name was quietly dropped, and it became simply the Women’s Center.

“Sometimes I’m concerned about the way we treat our heroines,” Volz says. “We can be so critical, we forget to acknowledge the good they did. That said, the center went with the right decision to get out of the argument.”

Ironically, Volz says one of NOW New Jersey’s strongest chapters bears Alice Paul’s name. Almost 30 years old and located in Paul’s home territory, its members named it for Paul shortly after her death.

“Members of the Alice Paul chapter are very comfortable with the name, including the minority women,” Volz says. “Paul’s house is in their jurisdiction, and there’s a certain amount of pride in that. That overrides any other concerns.”

Dropping Alice Paul’s name from the Women’s Center was one of the relatively simple remedies available to those who wanted to broaden its appeal. Another was moving the center’s weekly meetings to Monday nights to avoid conflict with those at the Black Cultural Center. More substantive change, at least initially, proved difficult.

“Some of the tensions were around different ways of being an advocate or activist for women,” Starling says. “[They] mirrored the same tensions between the historically white feminist movement and the womanist movement led by women of color.”

“The idea of not being a feminist center, and instead [being] a center for multiple points of view, was difficult for some of us to imagine,” says Zweidler-McKay. “If you recall the early ’90s, feminism was seeing a backlash. We faced dwindling participation and involvement, but many of us who were active in the center were reluctant to give up [that] feminist identity.”

Although small consolation, Starling agrees that those issues she and others dealt with were not unique to Swarthmore. “A lot of what we were experiencing was probably the growing pains of feminism,” she says. “The battles and victories of the 1960s and 1970s had been won, at least to some degree. The early 1990s were a time of feminism needing to identify new battles and restructure the playing fields.”

### Reinvention

Efforts to build new student interest in the center took time but ultimately paid off. Their culmination occurred in the spring of 1993, when



THE FAILURE OF THE EQUAL RIGHT AMENDMENT, ORIGINALLY AUTHORED BY ALICE PAUL, CAN BE SEEN AS THE END OF THE “SECOND WAVE” OF AMERICAN FEMINISM. THOUGH FEMINISTS STILL HAVE ACTIVE CAMPUS ORGANIZATIONS, THE WOMEN’S CENTER ITSELF IS DECIDEDLY APOLITICAL.

the Women's Center hosted a well-attended Collection for all women on campus. Although it included brief presentations by more than a dozen different campus women's groups, the main topic of conversation was the center itself.

"People were getting involved, so it was a good thing," says Miriam Greenwald '94, who had been an intern the previous year. "[But] people who were not involved in the center were discussing what was wrong with it. This is always frustrating."



The Collection lasted several hours. At its dramatic height, the center's three current interns—Asahi Pompey '94, Emily Walker '96, and Bethany Wiggin '94—stood up and said they thought the center was ineffective.

Then they resigned.

"It's the reason I took the job—to change it," says Pompey, now a member of the Board of Managers. "It was really not living up to its name. We wanted groups and ideas to breed and incubate there, then be disseminated to the larger community."

"I didn't know this was coming, and I don't think a lot of people knew," says Kathryn Bowman Grisbacher '94, who was in attendance. "They basically said, 'You guys take it and do something with it.'"

After the meeting, Grisbacher and a few others volunteered to form a transition team. Over the next year, they held several campuswide votes that addressed questions such as whether there should be a board and who should be on it. The process raised many of the same issues that had been stumbling blocks in the past. According to Assistant Dean and Gender Education Adviser Karen Henry '87, a proposal submitted by Women of Color, a campus group of students, faculty, and staff, suggested that making the center apolitical was a good way to ensure it could serve all women on campus.

"We didn't have racial or sexual orientation 'quotas,'" Grisbacher says. "There were political things about the language, so we had 'minimums.' The next spring, we had a week of activities leading up to the election of a board. Nine women were elected, including about three women of color and three queer women."

"I got involved out of a sense that this was important," says Eman Quotah '95, who was among those elected. "I was interested in how the center might become something bigger than what it was."

"There was a lot of division, and it would have been very easy to let it drop," Grisbacher says. "It was gratifying to see it come together. After I graduated, I was really pleased to hear there was a fresh group of women with lots of energy [and that] things were going well."

In the process of reinvigorating the Women's Center, another name change took place. The new board was elected to run the renamed Women's Resource Center (WRC). "A resource center was more accurate for what we had in mind—a space for lots of different groups to get together, share a computer, a library, a kitchen," Grisbacher says. "Changing the name was an easy change to make."

### Almost Full Circle

Today, the only apparent connection the WRC has to its former namesake is limited to a third-floor shelf with two

## Alice Paul and Race

Criticism of Alice Paul's racial attitudes was not the only reason her name was removed from Swarthmore's Women's Center in the early 1990s. But was the criticism justified?

There is no doubt Paul made decisions based solely on what would further her goals for both suffrage and the Equal Rights Amendment. For the latter, that single-mindedness explains her refusal to get involved in many of the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. In the case of suffrage, it included forming alliances with and making concessions to Southern white women who were not amenable to including African-American women in their efforts.

Was that decision pragmatic or racist? Mary Ellen Grafflin Chijoke '67, curator of the Friends Historical Library for 11 years and now head of the Guilford College Library, thinks it may be a combination of both. "I think [Paul's] correspondence shows that the reason why the strategy seemed reasonable to her is because she shared some of the attitudes she was bowing to."

The scholarship available on Alice Paul is limited but does include personal accounts of those who knew her and one book devoted to her work with the National Woman's Party. Paul herself agreed to be interviewed in the early 1970s for the Suffragists Oral History Project at the University of California, Berkeley. However, her definitive biography has yet to be written, and none of these sources examines how her personal views affected her campaign strategies.

Mabel Vernon '06, among the first group of women jailed for picketing the White House, described her friend in an interview conducted for the same oral history project. "She's very nice to individual Negro women," Vernon said in 1972. "[Civil rights activist] Mary Church Terrell was a friend of hers.... Isn't it too bad she has those prejudices? What do you do about it, darling?" But when asked if she thought Paul's views affected how she ran the suffrage campaign, Vernon replied: "I don't know. I would think not."

Paul's personal views may be regrettable. But was it reasonable for some students in the early 1990s to hold Paul to a contemporary standard in the first place? "It's probably demanding a standard of perfection that's idealistic," Chijoke says. "It's naive to think there would not be warts. If the warts are as particularly offensive as these, it's probably not a bad idea during the reorganization of the center to quietly drop the name. But she also had some remarkable achievements. It's worth noting them along with her defects, even if the latter limit her value as a role model."

framed but unlabeled pictures of Alice Paul during her heyday with the National Woman's Party. Given students' lack of institutional memory, perhaps it is not surprising that Paul's legacy is as obscure now as it was before its mid-1970s resurrection.

When told of the center's name changes, those involved in its founding sympathized with the students who made them. "Those questions about the limitations of '70s and '80s feminism and trying to rename the center are really important," Christina Crosby says. "If the students wanted something that didn't signify white, middle-class feminism, I can understand getting a name that suggests a different feminist tradition."

"It's a strategy question," Mary Rubin agrees. "What is going to draw women to the center—some set of services or useful resources or a locus for collective action? Those are very different characterizations."

*Please turn to page 71*

# BIOTECH QUESTIONS, SWARTHMORE ANSWERS

By Jeffrey Lott

FROM CAMPUS TO CORPORATION TO GOVERNMENT COMMITTEES,  
SWARTHMOREANS ARE DEBATING THE BIOTECH REVOLUTION.

**S**ome farmers call it “devil’s hair,” some know it as “strangleweed,” and to others it’s “hellbine.” From common names for *Cuscuta* spp., you can tell it’s bad news. An aggressive parasitic vine, it throws threadlike coils counterclockwise up the stems of host plants, drawing nutrients—and life—out of alfalfa, carrots, sugar beets, and other crops.

Farmers fight it with fire—a primitive defense against a primitive weed. It’s often the only thing they can do. Many conventional herbicides kill weeds by blocking photosynthesis, but *Cuscuta* (best known as “dodder”) is untouched because these parasitic plants don’t rely on photosynthesis. So farmers are looking for a better way to control it.

“Dodder seems like a perfect candidate for a biotechnology solution,” says Assistant Professor of Biology Colin Purrington, who studies parasitic plants. “It thrives on sucrose, which it gets from host crops like sugar beets, but it might not like other types of sugars as much. You could conceivably develop a genetically altered sugar beet that produces different classes of sugars that would be distasteful to the dodder.”

Purrington, who received a Ph.D. at Brown University and has been on the Swarthmore faculty since 1997, is excited by the prospect. In a growth chamber in his lab, pale spaghetti-like stems of dodder twine their coils on small sticks of controlled nutrients. Purrington is trying to figure out exactly what it likes—and doesn’t like—to eat. Yet, even as he does research that may have important biotech uses, he’s deeply concerned about the implications of what he and other biologists are doing in this, the decade of the genetic revolution.

**I**n labs up and down the floors of Martin Hall and in classrooms from biology and engineering to philosophy and public policy, biotechnology is a topic of research, investigation, and debate. In typical Swarthmore fashion, students and faculty members aren’t just considering the science but are exploring—both practically and ethically—how that science is being used. A few examples:

In an Honors seminar taught each fall, Associate Professor of Biology Amy Cheng Vollmer asks students in her Honors microbiology seminar to write a research paper in which they define a problem in a Third World setting and then outline a potential biotechnological solution. Last year, one student proposed a way to remove DDT from polluted soil in Uzbekistan; another thought that mosquitoes might be genetically altered to reduce malaria in Ecuador; a third speculated that biotechnology might attack the schistosomiasis parasite that causes blindness among residents of many

African river valleys.

Last year, Vollmer, whose own research examines the ability of genetically modified bacteria to respond to environmental stresses such as pollution, teamed up with Hugh Lacey, professor of philosophy, to offer a broader look at biotech issues. Their course *Biotechnology and Society: The Case of Agriculture* taught the basic applications of genetic science but concentrated more on the implications of the biotech revolution in society—the ethical problems, the legal and public policy issues, questions of intellectual property and proprietary technology, and the rights of consumers.

Professor Scott Gilbert, whose *Developmental Biology* is one of the most widely used college-level biology texts in the country, teaches a course in developmental genetics. Students learn the laboratory

> STUDENTS ARE NOT ONLY  
LEARNING THE SCIENCE BUT  
ARE EXPLORING HOW THAT  
SCIENCE IS BEING USED.

techniques of isolating, cloning, and expressing genes in animals, but they too are asked to look beyond the genome to the environmental factors that help determine the morphology—or form and structure—of organisms. For instance, Gilbert tells his students, the sex of certain turtles is determined by the temperature of the eggs after fertilization. “There’s a plasticity to animal development that is not only





GEORGE WIDMAN

genetic but environmental,” he says, “And it’s a mistake to see genetics alone as the determining factor in biology.”

**T**his fall, Colin Purrington taught a seminar on the risks and benefits of biotechnology. Eleven students delved into genetic modification techniques; the uses of transgenic organisms in food, drugs, warfare, and scientific research; human health effects; and environmental issues. They learned how ecologists conduct risk assessments and explored the economic and regulatory aspects of the biotech revolution.

On a Wednesday in late September, three students gave presentations at the seminar. Bryn Mawr College junior Irma Iskandar led off with an introduction to bacterial biotechnology. Using a laptop computer to project her own electronic “slides” on a screen, she quickly reviewed recombinant DNA technology—the gene-splicing method that makes possible

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF BIOLOGY COLIN PURRINGTON DOES BASIC RESEARCH ON A PARASITIC PLANT THAT FEEDS ON CROPS, WITH AN EYE TO ENGINEERING RESISTANT CROPS. BUT HE’S ALSO DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT BIOLOGISTS ARE DOING WITH THEIR NEW KNOWLEDGE OF GENETICS.

genetic engineering—then explained how industrial techniques such as fermentation make it possible to grow genetically modified organisms (GMOs) on a large scale.

Iskandar talked about important advances in biotechnology: The treatment of diabetes was made safer in the 1980s with the introduction of genetically engineered insulin, which causes fewer allergic reactions than insulin extracted from the pancreata of pigs. Modern antibiotics can be genetically engineered to be more specific in their actions, preventing or postponing the emergence of drug-resistant pathogens. In agriculture, biotechnology has produced more carefully tar-

geted strains of *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt), a naturally occurring soil bacterium that produces a toxin attacking several important crop pests. Scientists have even managed to insert the key genes of Bt directly into corn plants, producing a crop that is inherently deadly to the larva of the European corn borer, a lepidopteran pest.

Sara Cheo '02 followed Iskandar with a presentation on the use of Bt as a pesticide. After explaining how Bt worked, Cheo listed both its positive and negative aspects.

She explained how, since the 1930s, Bt has been mass produced and sprayed over crops. In recent years, it has become possible to modify Bt to target specific insect pests, and its low development and production cost and apparent lack of toxicity to humans and mammals have made it a popular alternative to more costly—and environmentally dangerous—pesticides.

But, she said, there are problems: Some research has

able over-the-counter and on the black market in many developing countries, making it difficult to control their abuse.

At the beginning of the semester, Purrington had asked the 11 students why they were taking this course. “They told me that they wanted to be better informed, not just about the science but about the social implications of this technology. In our more science-oriented classes, we don’t have time for these discussions, and students often complain about that.”

**P**rofessor Mark Jacobs, chairman of the Biology Department, says that Swarthmore biology majors learn a lot more than biology: “We try to get students thinking about the ethical questions in biology, not only about the ways that biologists do research on animals and organisms but the broader questions of bioethics and society.”

In the department, there is a range of opinions about such

questions. Jacobs asserts that genetic modification of plants is nothing new: “Today’s genetic engineering is a logical—and more predictable—outcome of thousands of years of selective breeding of crops. When old-style breeders crossed plants to produce more productive corn, they had no idea of, and no control over, the gene rearrangements. Is that better than changing one known gene and leaving the rest of the genome intact.

Amy Vollmer says she worries that a “sociological fear of genetic rearrangements has caused hysteria because of limited knowledge. Yogurt is an example of one food being modified into another by two bacteria. The production of wines and cheeses depends on the action of microbes. But somehow when a scientist takes an organism and changes its genetics, people get up in arms. Ironically, there don’t seem to be the same objections to drugs such as insulin being created or modified through similar processes.”

Hugh Lacey of the Philos-



PHOTOS BY JIM GRAHAM

shown toxicity in mice that inhale Bt. And spores from some commercial Bt strains have been shown in lab experiments to kill human cells. Better known is the widespread concern that, when engineered into crops such as corn, Bt-laced pollen may be toxic to monarch butterflies and other non-pest butterflies and moths.

Kathryn Tong gave the third presentation of the afternoon. Her topic: the growing problem of resistance to antibiotics.

One of Tong’s charts illustrated the prevalence of drug-resistant strains of *Pneumococcus*, which causes pneumonia. This is a worldwide problem, especially in developing countries, where cheaper, generic antibiotics are rapidly losing their effectiveness—and where more effective drugs are either unavailable or too expensive for widespread use.

Yet Tong also talked of solutions, including public education about the overuse of antibiotics and better government oversight through public health programs. Tong, who grew up in the Philippines, told how antibiotics were freely avail-



KATHRYN TONG '01 (ABOVE) TOLD THE CLASS OF GROWING BACTERIAL RESISTANCE TO ANTIBIOTICS.

ophy Department sees the agricultural question more broadly: “What is at stake is the character of the world’s agriculture, and this is not simply a technical matter.” He believes that asking about the risks of agricultural biotechnology should come after more fundamental questions. “The first question to be asked is: What are the problems that biotechnology is said to be able to solve? Then: Are there other ways to address these problems?”

If the problem is defined as the need to feed the world’s population, “then there are compelling arguments that biotechnology will not help,” says Lacey. In Brazil, where he is currently studying responses to biotechnology, farmer and worker movements are publicly discussing biotechnology in detail, and “agro-ecological” alternatives to biotechnology are being tried on a small scale.

Having an informed debate, says Lacey, is a matter of asking the right questions: “When we begin with risk, we are more or less taking for granted that, if there are no serious risks, it’s OK to go ahead with these methods. To me, the first issue is not about risks but about what is needed and whether biotech can contribute to that. Only then should we ask about the risks.”

Jacobs speculates that, in a sense, modern biologists are working as close to the humanities as they are to the natural sciences. There are social and philosophical questions at stake in almost everything a scientist does.

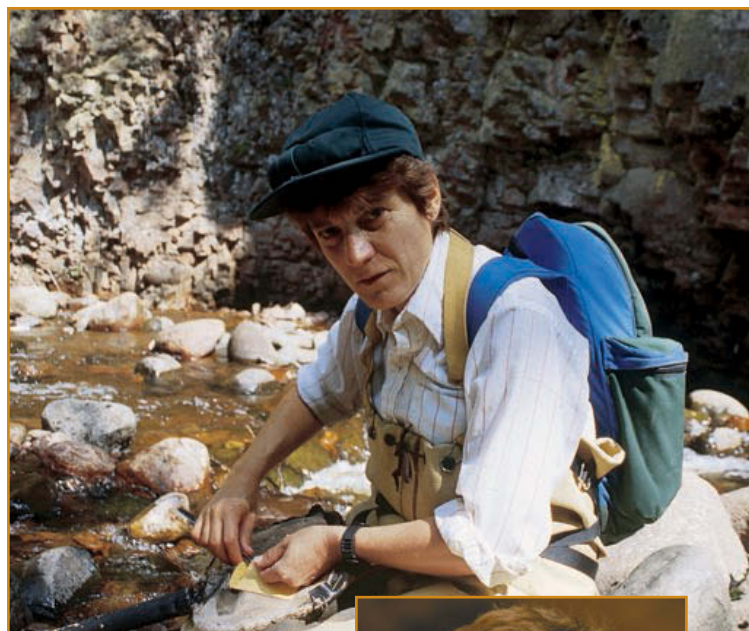
**T**he risks posed by transgenic crops have become the subject of heated international debate. A Swarthmorean at the center of that debate is Anne Kapuscinski '76, professor of fisheries and conservation biology at the University of Minnesota.

Kapuscinski, who is also founding director of the university’s Institute for Social, Economic, and Ecological Sustainability, was appointed in January by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman to the department’s Advisory Committee on Agricultural Biotechnology. She has also served between 1996 and 2000 as a scientific adviser at the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety negotiations.

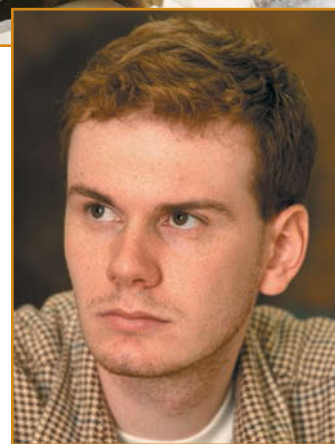
Kapuscinski’s interest in the intersection of biology and public policy goes back to her Swarthmore days. While writing a paper for Professor of Biology Norman Meinkoth, she discovered the world of aquaculture—the science of breeding and raising marine animals and plants in controlled environments for food production and other human uses—a field that she soon entered in graduate school at Oregon State University. “Aquaculture seemed like a real-world application of all the science and theory I had been learning at Swarthmore,” she says.

It was a time when knowledge of genetics was exploding, and fellow scientists were developing new ways to genetically alter fish. “I found that there were contentious issues in aquaculture, such as how to prevent harm by hatchery-reared fish to the genetic diversity of wild populations, that prompted me to ask a lot of ‘what if’ questions,” which led her ultimately to the field of genetic risk assessment. Kapus-

**> ANNE KAPUSCINSKI SAYS THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY—ESPECIALLY SCIENTISTS IN BIOTECHNOLOGY—HAS LOST THE PUBLIC TRUST THROUGH ITS PERCEIVED ARROGANCE.**



COURTESY ANNE KAPUSCINSKI



JIM GRAHAM

cinski is now an internationally recognized expert on the risks of biotechnology and co-author of the *Manual for Assessing Ecological and Human Health Effects of Genetically Engineered Organisms*.

Kapuscinski thinks that the scientific community—especially scientists in biotechnology—has lost the trust of the public through their perceived arrogance.

When she first started asking her “what if” questions, she found many other biologists didn’t want to discuss the implications of their work. “But they now realize that they have to talk about it,” she says. “There’s a legitimate role for different sectors of the public in these discussions.”

Kapuscinski is critical of the private sector’s push to develop and market GMOs as she is of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) “conflict of objectives” in regulating these products. “Individual corporations are understandably focused on making a profit,” she says. “They are not focused on protecting the environmental commons, and voluntary self-regulation does not inspire public confidence. But the USDA, with its dual mission of both promoting American

ADAM KWIATKOWSKI '02 (ABOVE) SAID “WE NEED A BALANCE BETWEEN THE COST OF RESEARCH AND THE POTENTIAL PROFIT.” FISH AND WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST ANNE KAPUSCINSKI '76 (TOP) IS A MEMBER OF THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE’S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY.

farm products and regulating GMOs, is also unable to act effectively to ensure product safety.”

As an example of the breakdown of the current regulatory system, she cites the recent contamination of food entering the global market by Aventis Company’s StarLink corn, which although it was not approved for human consumption, found its way into products including taco chips and shells.

It’s not that the USDA lacks scientific capacity, Kapuscinski adds, but most of its biotechnology regulators are agronomists, molecular biologists, and plant pathologists. “In my ideal world, you would add ecologists and evolutionary biologists to create multidisciplinary regulatory teams,” then insulate those teams from the pressure to market new crops, drugs, or technologies.

Kapuscinski is promoting a “third way” that looks to the proven safety models of other engineering industries, where the management and evaluation of human social practices, values, and behaviors are considered to be as important to safety as the design of materials.

“We need to figure out what it will take to get the biotech industry to lead in designing its own safety program, just as other industries have done in areas such as chemicals, transportation, or bridge building,” she says. “Combined with citizen participation and trustworthy government oversight, industry-led safety programs could help establish a credible process for demonstrating the safety of GMOs.”

Kapuscinski’s no Luddite. Generalized fear of biotech innovations is “too simplistic,” she says. “We should look at technology—especially applications of genetics—on a case-by-case basis.” Still, “not every technology we can develop is necessarily desirable,” and it’s “disingenuous” to claim that science is merely speeding up the selective breeding of plants and animals that farmers have practiced since prehistoric times.

“That claim’s been around for a long time,” she says. “Some changes in GMOs are new, and they can’t be done by selective breeding.” For example, fish biologists have spliced recombinant DNA from the antifreeze protein gene of an Arctic fish, the ocean pout, with the growth hormone gene of salmon. The resulting transgenic fish grows 5 to 11 times faster than normal because its growth gene, normally expressed in the salmon’s pituitary during spring and summer, is now expressed year-round by the fish’s liver.

“This is fundamentally different,” she says, “and recent experiments suggest that such fish pose ecological risks not seen in traditionally bred fish.”

**C**olin Purrington’s students sense that difference. During the discussion that followed the student presentations, Purrington is quiet, letting the students find their way through the issues. But at one point, he poses a question that seems more semantic than biological: “Why do we call Bt ‘organic’? What does that mean?”

The students take off on this point. One says Bt is organic because it occurs naturally in the soil. It’s not a “chemical pesticide,” adds another. A third student counters that “everything is chemical—even Bt. Whether a toxin is naturally produced or made in a lab shouldn’t make a difference. If you look at the chemical composition, they’re both the same.”

The students have all read an article from *The New York Times* describing research that seems to show that pollen from genetically altered Bt corn can kill monarch butterflies. The discussion turns to the sources of research funding and whether the results can be tainted by the source of money. It sounds like a discussion of campaign finance reform, only this time the candidate is a new plant, animal, or drug. Purrington tells the class that money for this sort of research—much of which is done by people like him in colleges and universities—comes from a variety of sources, including the government and the agricultural companies. There’s deep suspicion in the room, and a student asks the obvious question: Do these companies ever tell the researcher how they want the study to come out?

“No,” Purrington reassures them. “But they have been known to commission a whole lot of studies and then just report the ones that are favorable.”

The students veer off again into patents, profits, and the high cost of prescription drugs. One speculates that pharmaceutical companies might actually have a vested interest in seeing their drugs become less effective because of bacterial resistance. After all, the patents—and the profits—run out after 19 years.

This cynical view brings forth a defender. “Drugs cost a lot to develop,” says Adam Kwiatkowski ’02, “and the companies need to make a profit. We need a balance between the cost of research and the potential profit, the return on investment.”

The seminar has come a long way in three hours—from the technology of recombinant DNA and the miracles of genetically engineered insulin to a discussion of the social side effects of the potent combination of biotechnology and capitalism. Chris Bussard ’03 sums up one view: “Eventually it comes down to altruism, to people who really care about conquering a disease.” Victoria Maldonado ’03 agrees, and acknowledges that there are people in industry who do care, but “it’s individuals who care; corporations don’t.”

Kwiatkowski gets the last word of the afternoon: “You don’t need altruism to develop new drugs. That’s a fortunate side effect of the profit motive of the drug companies.”

**R**on Krall ’69, senior vice president for clinical development and medical affairs at AstraZeneca, the Wilmington, Del.–based pharmaceutical giant, agrees that industry needs both altruism and profits. A neurologist, he entered pharmaceutical research after receiving an M.D. from the University of Pittsburgh. Since 1992, when he joined what was then ICI/Zeneca as head of clinical research and medical affairs, he has been responsible not only for clinical trials and relations with government regulators but has also served as the company’s global medical director, coordinating U.S. activities with research in the rest of the world.

Krall says that pharmaceutical companies have to continue generating profits to continue to do their work, but that the work itself is in the service of humanity. “There’s a strong underlying ethos of caring for the health and well-being of millions of people around the world,” says Krall. “It’s why people are here.”

Still, it’s a balancing act, weighing the development of new drugs against their ability to generate a profit for the company. The high cost of researching and marketing new pharma-



ceuticals, when combined with the “abysmal and unforgivable” health care system, make it even more difficult. Krall believes that “we have to step up to the fundamental question and help solve the financial problem” of paying both for drugs and drug research within a market economy.

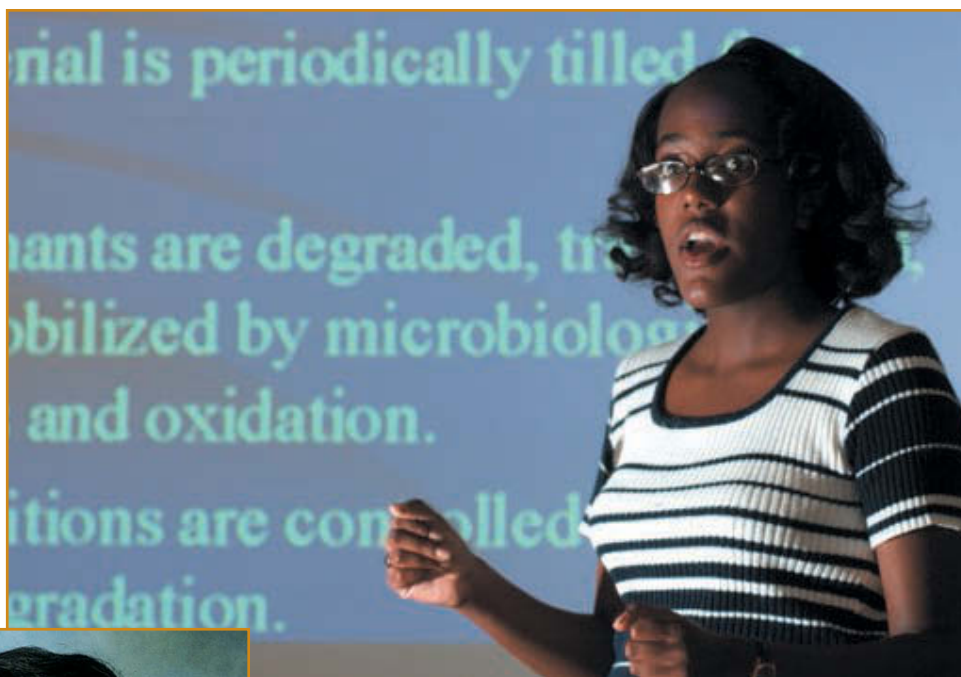
Krall acknowledges that profits made in the United States make it possible for drug companies to make less on their products in poorer parts of the world. He sees nothing fundamentally wrong with that because price controls in other countries threaten the ability to do research.

Rapid changes in pharmaceutical science, especially in molecular chemistry and biology, have driven consolidation in the drug industry. Only the largest companies can afford the enormous investment of money—and time—that are now required to develop new drugs. Yet growing knowledge of the human genome may lead to another revolution in the drug companies as they begin to identify specific molecular targets that are associated with disease. “It may become easier,” says Krall, “to go more quickly from a genetic lead to a potential drug.”

Krall sees a need not only for up-to-date scientific knowledge (“When I studied genetics in college, I was learning about peas,” he jokes) but for intellectual breadth among those who do this work. “You have to be able to think across disciplines,” he says. “It isn’t enough just to be a good chemist.” He also sees an important change in the attitude of academics toward applied research. “There’s much more collaboration. We form relationships with academe because there are so many critical discoveries being made that neither group can do them all by themselves.”

He also sees an important change in the attitude of academics toward applied research. “There’s much more collaboration. We form relationships with academe because there are so many critical discoveries being made that neither group can do them all by themselves.”

**D**uring his sabbatical next year, Colin Purrington will be working in the agrosience division of the DuPont Company. He hopes that people at the company “won’t take it personally that I’ve come out against some of this science,” but he wishes that government regulators would disagree



JIM GRAHAM



ASTRAZENECA

RON KRALL '69 (ABOVE), SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR CLINICAL DEVELOPMENT AND MEDICAL AFFAIRS OF THE DRUG COMPANY ASTRAZENECA, THINKS “WE HAVE TO ... SOLVE THE FINANCIAL PROBLEM” OF PAYING BOTH FOR DRUGS AND DRUG RESEARCH WITHIN A MARKET ECONOMY. AUDREY DORELIEU '04 (TOP RIGHT) GAVE A TALK ON APPLICATIONS OF BIOTECHNOLOGY IN ENVIRONMENTAL BIOREMEDIATION.

> “WE TRY TO GET STUDENTS THINKING ABOUT ETHICAL QUESTIONS IN BIOLOGY—NOT ONLY ABOUT THE WAYS THAT BIOLOGISTS DO RESEARCH ... BUT THE BROADER QUESTIONS OF BIOETHICS AND SOCIETY.”

with the biotech companies more often. “The regulators need to be more critical—and have the political will to be critical. A lot of the biotech companies are making statements of fact in the absence of good statistical analyses.”

In a 1995 article, published while he was a postdoctoral research associate at the University of Chicago, Purrington and Joy Bergelson criticized the Agriculture Department for its lax approach to examining applications for the introduction of genetically modified plants. They called the rarity of comparative studies of transgenic plants with their parental varieties “astonishing” and said that regulators were relying on “heuristic arguments” in approving industry petitions.

Anne Kapuscinski, who was on campus in November as part of a panel of alumni scientists talking about the future of science and science education, sees the government’s role as “essential” in monitoring the long-term effects of genetically modified organisms. Yet in the end, says Kapuscinski, the questions surrounding this new science are more than technological. “The technology has gotten way ahead of both public understanding and discussion and of the ability of government to regulate. We need to get our major institutions—religious, civic, educational, and business—to see that this is an important issue, one that will define our society. We need broad public discussion.” ■

# JUST FOR

CAMPUS COMEDIANS STILL ENTERTAIN US.



What's funny on campus? *Nothing*, most people say in a knee-jerk response.

The question actually sent one alumna into convulsions of belly laughter.

"Swarthmore was the most *unfunny* place I've ever been," she said.

Academically rigorous, the College is sometimes characterized as a humorless taskmaster. But Swarthmore has always had a funny, often unrecognized, side. Throughout the College's history, several lighthearted ventures—improv troupes, comic theater productions, and Hamburg shows—bubbled up under the surface seriousness and offered students a much-needed release from the daily intensity.

Uncovering the kernels of their comedic beginnings on campus, the following alumni have now expanded these early forays in comedy into partial or full-blown careers in the entertainment industry. A common passion for humor, nurtured at the College, unites these accomplished performers and writers—while joining us together in laughter.

AT THE COMEDY LOFT, MARTHA GAY SAYS HER JOB IS TO "ROCK THE HOUSE" AND BE A CHEERLEADER WHEN SHE IS THE FIRST PERFORMER ON STAGE. "I NEED TO BE LOUD AND REALLY GET THEM PUMPED UP," SAYS THE FORMER MEMBER OF SWARTHMORE'S BOARD OF MANAGERS.

ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

# LAUGHS

By Andrea Hammer

## WARMING UP THE CROWD

Weaving her way to the stage through the packed 80-seat Comedy Loft in Cedars, Pa., **Martha Salzmann Gay '79** grabs the microphone. "So how ya doin' tonight?" she asks the 30- to 40-year-old crowd.

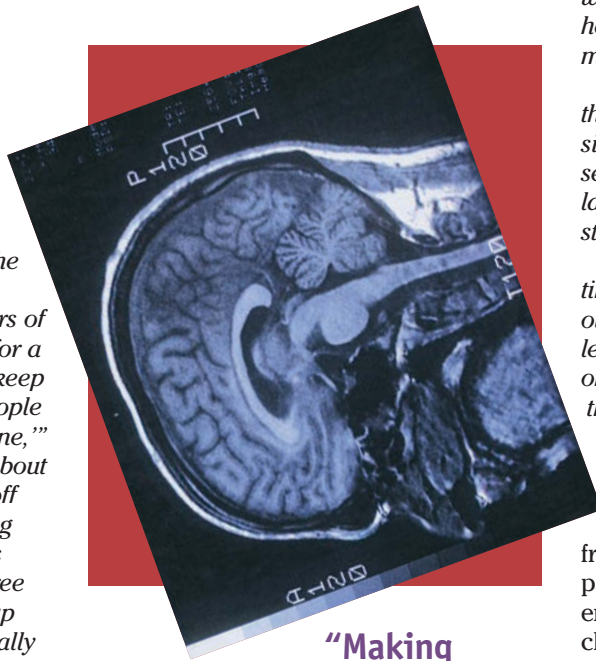
As waitresses slip drinks to clusters of couples and friends who are thirsty for a buzz and some laughs, Gay tries to keep their attention. "The only answer people want to hear to 'How are you?' is 'Fine,'" she says. "They don't want to hear about your hemorrhoids." Laughter peels off the walls in the dimly lit, nonsmoking nook. Gay, the master of ceremonies (MC) this evening and the first of three acts, has the challenge of warming up the audience. "Yep, my last name really is Gay," she says under the spotlight. "Guys are always askin' if I really am." The guys snicker.

Dressed in black jeans and a black T-shirt, Gay leans forward, the microphone stand angled like a ski pole in one hand for support. "So I lost 10 pounds on this Atkins diet," she says, twirling proudly in a circle. "But, don't you know, I always run into my aerobics instructor in the market when my 'bad' cart is filled with cookies, ice cream, and a box of tampons." The women in the audience snort, recognizing themselves in the guilt-filled scenario.

Gay pauses, rummaging in her bag of story starters: "So does anyone out there go camping?" she asks, focusing on the fellow who is almost in her lap near the stage. "I would never go camping," she says. "I only go to the Four Seasons Hotel because I have the princess gene."

Half-Jewish and half-Italian, Gay slides into a shtick about funerals. "It's sundown, and the Jews got you buried," she says. "But the Italians got you in an Armani suit and 2-inch make-up. No wonder you look so damn good."

Rolling on the laughter, Gay continues: "And then there's the three brothers,



"Making people laugh is a delight and an honor.... There's really no feeling like having a good show, having the crowd on your side, and going exciting places together," says Tom Sgouros, offering his brain scan.

Tone, Tony, and Ant'ny," she says, stressing "ant" in a gravelly South Philly voice. "They're a classic example of what happens when your gene pool doesn't have a lifeguard. Ant'ny's comin' out of the bathroom and draggin' two-and-a-half feet of toilet paper from his left shoe. 'Hey, Ant'ny,' Tony says, leaning over the casket, 'Don't he look good,

God bless him?'"

Riding the energy, Gay doesn't miss a beat.

"Then, there's my Aunt Carmella, who's been working at the Melrose Diner for 25 years," she says. "Now, there's a woman with a gift—she can dangle a cigarette from her upper lip without dropping an ash." Gay draws her lips back tightly around her teeth to mimic the pose.

After about 15 minutes of pumping up the audience for the next comedian, Gay sits in the back of the room. She observes the other comics' styles and laughs with the crowd before taking the stage to introduce the final act.

"So, after my mammogram—and getting squeezed like pancakes—I passed out and was dangling by my compressed left breast," she says. "Now I can flip one of them over my shoulder and tuck the other one in my jeans," Gay says, delivering her final punch.

Before the show starts, Gay glances quickly at the audience from back stage to read the "group psychology—are they bikers or bankers?" This evening, it was "a middle-class crowd, wanting to have a good time," she says after her performance.

When club owner Chris Carroll gives the "1-minute-to-curtain" warning, "My stomach gets a little tight because anything can happen," Gay says. "Within 5 to 10 seconds on stage, I can tell if the audience is staying with me or not. I then need to make quick adjustments.... You need to exert a lot of control over your audience. Sometimes I feel like a lion tamer."

Gay, who by day is the president of a retained executive search firm, recently completed a term on the College's Board of Managers. She transforms herself into another "persona" when performing stand-up. "I could not possibly coordinate all of this without my husband," she says, also acknowledging the support of their 11-year-old son, Jeremy, who has seen her act.

"I usually enter through the audience, and the minute they hear my name, my job is to rock the house. I am both a comedian and—especially when I MC—I must be a cheerleader. I need to be loud and really get them pumped up," she says. "Being the MC is the most difficult job but the one that you cut your teeth on."

A biology major at Swarthmore, who was active in theater productions on campus, Gay later received a master's in regional planning at the University of Pennsylvania. During her act, she describes herself as a "behavior problem" when she went to a girls' school, "Our Lady of Friggin' Aggravation," in Linden, N.J.

"I was always the youngest and smallest child in my class; so I learned at an early age that if I was making everyone around me laugh, they weren't going to hurt me," she says. "At Swarthmore, I learned to be very quick on my feet verbally. Although seminars—or even just chats over dinner—might seem to be casual events, people were always attacking your argument or views, and you needed to be able to turn things around quickly."

During the last two "concentrated" years of performing, Gay "was taken under some mentors' wings." She has also worked at other area comedy clubs as well as at private parties and fund-raisers. Comedy is a great release for the "tension that builds up from daily life," Gay says. "I have the ability to see the funny side of the most bizarre situations, and that is what has always gotten me through life."

She also realizes that attending Swarthmore "buys you nothing in this business. You need to be smart but not lord it over your audience," Gay says. "The more stage time you put in, if you are any good, you will just get better."

#### DELIVERING THE GOODS

Carrie: *I don't think we're gonna go in an R.V. for our vacation.*

Doug: *Why not?*

Carrie: *Because ... we're going to Paris! I found these great discount tickets on the Internet!*

Doug: *No, no, no. R.V. Out West. I got the video!*

Carrie: *Okay, maybe you didn't hear me. This is Paris. Pa-ris. The most romantic city in the world. It's beautiful, it's old—*

Doug: *I guess the Grand Canyon isn't old. I guess they just put that in.*

In another recent episode of ABC's *King of Queens*, creator **Michael Weithorn '78** tipped his hat to Swarthmore—where his love of comedy first flourished. One character on



"The trick is finding the humor in any situation," says Michael Weithorn, a 20-year veteran of TV sitcoms whose Hamburg Show experience was "a pivotal event."

the second-season sitcom appeared in a College sweatshirt while another asked, "You went to Swarthmore? What class?" and the first answered, "Thank you!" Weithorn, who also created the series *Ned and Stacey*, knew that Swarthmore would have no qualms about the wink of national exposure, unlike other schools that require permission for the most fleeting mention.

A 20-year television-writing veteran of sitcoms such as *Cheers*, which won a Writers Guild Award for an episode he wrote, and *The Wonder Years*, which received an Emmy nomination for his episode, Weithorn honed his early humor skills on campus. He performed stand-up for four years in the Ratskeller, better known as the Rat, then downstairs in Tarble Student Center. "At first, I was vaguely interested in comedy at Swarthmore," Weithorn says. "But the Hamburg Show in my

junior year was a pivotal event."

After the musical variety and comedy show, which "consumed his second semester and was well received," Weithorn started visualizing a career in the field. For the 1977 show, he wrote, produced, and performed in a 10-minute film spoofing *Midnight Cowboy*. The talent show featured another 10-minute film, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid Come to Swarthmore*, in which Weithorn played Sundance.

"You could always find humor on campus—like the guy getting food at Sharples, who was avoiding his lab partner but feeling panicked about finding a place to sit," says Weithorn. "The trick is finding the humor in any situation."

Weithorn, who was class president, also had a radio program on WSRN and a satire column in *The Phoenix*—one of which was adapted in *The New York Times* after graduation. In 1980, he was sent to the Democratic National Convention with an official press pass for the *Bulletin*, writing these previously unpublished impressions:

*It was a terrifying moment. I had just stepped out onto the floor of Madison Square Garden and into the 1980 Democratic National Convention. Thousands of delegates, political operatives, and journalists swarmed about in a frenzy. Suddenly, from amidst the crowd, several security men emerged and bore down upon me with frightening intensity. From all sides, they converged. I froze, panic surging through my body. What had I done, I wondered? Had I inadvertently walked onto the floor with an M-16 rifle strapped to my back? Did I match the description of a deranged psychopath? (My parents have often commented that I do.) Should I make a run for it? No, there was no escape. In a moment, they were upon me. I braced myself, expecting to be wrestled to the floor.*

*As it turned out, their interest in me had been generated only by the fact that the blue "floor pass" that hung around my neck was backward and hence not visible. Following a mild scolding, I was allowed to resume my activities.*

Weithorn's parents and others at Swarthmore also gave him "strange looks" when he decided to pursue television writing as a profession. A political science major who received his

teaching certificate, he taught briefly at a private high school in LA. But he used to rush home after work to watch *Barney Miller* and, in 1980, sold a script to the show, which he wrote on speculation. "Writing sample scripts and making contacts is one way of breaking into the business," he says. Soon, he was able to get an agent and continued working on other freelance pieces, including six episodes of *Making the Grade* in 1981.

For four seasons in 1982–86, Weithorn wrote for the Emmy-nominated *Family Ties*, "a rare and wonderful experience," he says, looking back over his career. Weithorn was involved with the show about family relationships from its inception. "The people were great, and everyone got along, which is unusual," Weithorn says.

In 1986, he developed *The Pursuit of Happiness*, a series about a history professor tangled in academia. Also responsible for *True Colors*—considered daring in 1990 because of its focus on an interracial relationship—Weithorn continued to tackle sensitive issues in *South Central*, a 1993 comedy-drama about a single mother protecting her sons from LA gangs. Staying in touch over the years with several students he met in riot-ravaged LA, he has also sponsored one with wife Lisa Todd for the Eugene Lang '38 "I Have a Dream" initiative.

"Being a mentor really excites me," says Weithorn, who reads aspiring writers' scripts when he has time. "Someone did that for me," he recalls.

Weithorn, who is not a fan of writing classes, says that those interested in the field simply learn by working on their craft. "You can see a certain fundamental talent," Weithorn says. Some young writers have a unique perspective that comes through, even if they haven't polished their skills yet."

Now preparing for "semi-retirement" from television to write and direct small films next year, Weithorn realizes that the lucrative field has afforded him a "fantastic luxury at 44." In mass media, "it's hard to find people who can deliver the goods," he says. "But there are millions of dollars in revenue for young men and women who can hack the relentless late nights."

Now that Weithorn has a 5-year-old daughter, Nina, he wants to cut back his 50- to 60-hour work week to a more reasonable 30 hours. Also thinking about playwriting, he realizes that he will have to begin at the bottom again.

"It's exciting, though, to learn something new and have a different challenge," he says.

**LEAH GOTCSIK (FAR LEFT, MIDDLE ROW), A FORMER MEMBER OF VERTIGO-GO, NOW APPEARS WITH IMPROV ASYLUM CAST MATES IN BOSTON.**

## THINKING ON YOUR FEET

A spotlight is on Leah Gotcsik '97, frozen on the *Improv Asylum's* darkened stage. In Boston's best comedy club—according to the Boston Phoenix Readers' Poll in 1998 and 1999—the audience sets the scene. Tonight, the team effort circles around the dream of selling hotcakes on the Internet.

"What's the most interesting gift you've ever received from an employer?" one troupe member asks the audience.

"A spatula," says a 20-year-old, wearing a bridal veil for her bachelorette party. Her challenging prompt for Gotcsik sends ripples of laughter through the two rows of the young woman's hooting friends. Before the show started, they had pranced across the stage with pails of beer bottles to continue a party initiated in the club's adjoining bar.

A fellow improv actor at the sold-out Saturday night show has already collected a list of authors and TV genres from the audience to shape Gotcsik's impromptu skit. When she hears "QVC," Gotcsik launches her routine on cue, flipping pancakes with an imaginary spatula.

"Dad, we could sell these hotcakes on the Internet for three easy flex-pays of \$19.95," she says.

Another improv partner calls for film noir. As Gotcsik puffs on an imaginary cigarette, she says, "I can sign on as lusciouslegs34521." The two rows of girlfriends in the bachelorette party are howling.

"Spice channel," comes the next command, right on the heels of the last. Again, Gotcsik shifts moods without hesitation, cooing, "Ooooh, baby, me and my cakes are hot to trot." The final suggestion, "Molière," sends Gotcsik on a major hamming spree. "Mai oui, ooo-laa-la, je me cala femma tou," she whispers in conjured-up French to the hysterical crowd.

The stage goes black momentarily while the actors regroup before the next scene.

Sandwiched in a North End neighborhood of Italian restaurants and outdoor cafés, the *Improv Asylum* offers five weekend performances. During the often sold-out shows, the actors spontaneously respond to ideas from the audience without a script. In improv—the spirited art form first developed during the Renaissance by the commedians



LYNN WAYNE

dia dell'arte troupes—no two performances are ever the same.

“When I moved to Boston, I looked for improv groups as a way of meeting some more people in the area,” says Gotcsik, who began performing at age 6 and first did improv at summer camp at 10. “Improv Asylum was just opening its doors, and I became one of the ‘original cast.’ Two years later, most of the original cast is still here, and we have had a really amazing growth spurt.”

During the week, she works for the Massachusetts Campus Compact, an organization devoted to promoting community service and community service learning on college campuses. But at the Improv Asylum, Gotcsik comes alive on stage. “It has been a little bit of a whirlwind for me,” she says, “going from doing something as a hobby to seeing it as my second and, somewhere down the line, potentially only job.”

Gotcsik thrives on the creative challenge. At the Improv Asylum, actors are at the mercy of the audience’s suggestions. In prewritten sketches, the

audience is subject to the group’s social commentary.

For example, in a cell phone sketch written by cast mate Kristen D’Amato, Gotcsik and three other actors mill around a pretend bus stop. Talking on imaginary cell phones simultaneously, they all hear a beep—signaling another call.

*“I am God,” booms a deep voice over the loudspeaker.*

*Looking startled but skeptical, the phone addicts all return to their other calls.*

*After a second interruption from “God,” they all cut him off with irritation.*

*A loud crashing sound fills the room.*

*Booming again over the loudspeaker, the voice now bellows: “Four fewer cell phones—just three million more to go.”*

*The guys with electronic equipment clipped to their belts roar.*

At Swarthmore, Gotcsik was a member of the improv comedy group Vertigo-Go (see sidebar) from her soph-

omore to senior years, traveling twice to the National College Comedy Festival. “I didn’t try out my freshman year—though I wanted to—because I didn’t think I was funny enough,” she says. Gotcsik wrote her sociology/anthropology thesis on the role of college women in college improv and sketch comedy groups.

In addition to weekend performanc-

**GAIL LERNER (RIGHT FRONT, STANDING), CO-FOUNDER OF THE COLLEGE IMPROV GROUP VERTIGO-GO AND NOW AN LA SITCOM WRITER, WAS HONORED BY OTHER VGG ALUMNI WHO RETURNED TO CAMPUS FOR THE 10-YEAR REUNION PERFORMANCE.**



ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

## COMIC RELIEF ON CAMPUS

Last April, Lang Concert Hall was filled to capacity for the 10-year reunion performance of Vertigo-Go (VGG), one of Swarthmore’s improvisation comedy groups. The event drew most of the 25 VGG alums back to campus.

“Even though we were meeting most of the alums for the first time, it felt as though we were hosting a family reunion,” says **Jerry Melichar ’00**, then a senior member of the group. “Everyone worked together well. Despite a short rehearsal period, we pulled off one of the tightest and funniest shows in recent memory.” According to Melichar, more than half of VGG’s alums are now working in the arts and entertainment industry as novelists, artists, stage and screen actors, and other aspects of film and television production.

For instance, **Gail Lerner ’92**, a co-founder of VGG, is a staff writer on the ABC sitcom *The Trouble With Normal*. She has also written for *Will and Grace*, *Work With Me*, and *The Brian Benben Show*. Lerner first discovered improv with a group in New Haven, Conn., near her hometown of Woodbridge.

“When I came to Swarthmore”—where she found a mentor in Director of the Theatre Studies Program Allen Kuharski—“I was disappointed that the College didn’t have an improv group,” she says. So, with **Karen Arndt ’90**, she started the VGG troupe.

Lerner later performed improv in New York with The Pollyannas, spinning hourlong, completely improvised plays based on a single suggestion taken from the audience. This experience was a thrilling next step after performing 5- to 7-minute Vertigo-Go games,” she says.

“It was a real treat to be back at Swarthmore, with an intellectual audience that gives so much to the performers,” she says of the VGG reunion. “Swat audiences are always ready to laugh—I knew all that pent-up academic stress had to be good for something.”

Another VGG alumna, **Carolann DiPirro ’91** spent four seasons doing bit parts on *Saturday Night Live*. Now an actress in LA, she considers Swarthmore “a great environment to break in your comedy shoes” because of unrestricted student productions and supportive audiences. During the reunion, DiPirro’s favorite sketch was performing

“Slo-Mo Olympics” with **Ian Rogers ’92**, **Matt FitzSimmons ’93**, and **Leah Gotcsik ’97**. “They were all so brilliant—it was just a treat. Plus it was the first time in 10 years that I could perform just for fun,” she says. “I try to remember that feeling now that I’m back in the professional world, where, when everything has such a consequence, it’s difficult to recall that the reason I do this job is simply because I love it.”

**Brent Askari ’92**—a novelist who recently landed a screenplay in the hands of Jim Abrahams of Abrahams/Zucker/Zucker, the creators of *Airplane* and the *Naked Gun* films—had a similar experience. “Vertigo-Go was just a really great experience and freed me up a lot,” says Askari, who has another screenwriting assignment with Artisan Entertainment and Marvel Films. “Nothing bonds you [with other VGG members] like having to stand in front of a crowded room with no script and trying to make people laugh.”

**Lisa Morse ’92**, another founding member and now an actress in New York, says: “Being in VGG was wonderful: a chance to ... say whatever came into your head and discover that it was

es at the Improv Asylum—which also offers colleges and corporations a training program to build teamwork and promote creative solutions—she teaches improvisation classes. Fully committed to the “anything goes” atmosphere, Gotcsik fulfills the group’s mission of “a sense of freedom that allows the actors’ spontaneity, creative impulses, and risk taking to flourish.”

## LIGHTING A FIRE FOR ACTING

*In LA, “comedy” usually means situation comedy; “drama,” hour-form episodic. Sitcom usually involves a taped public performance after a week’s rehears-*

JB FARLEY '01, PABLO MONTAGNES '02, CHRIS KEARY '03, KARLY FORD '03, SAM DINGMAN '04 (BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT), AND CHRIS GAAL '04 (SOFA) PRACTICED FOR THEIR FIRST PUBLIC CAMPUS PERFORMANCE OF THE SEMESTER DURING DISCOVERY WEEKEND. OTHER CURRENT VGG MEMBERS INCLUDE JULIO CARREON-REYES '01; RENEE WITLEN '02 AND MARAH GOTCSIK '02 WERE BOTH ABROAD DURING THE FALL SEMESTER.

entertaining. Our first show was overwhelming: We thought we might get a few friends, and instead we had a standing-room-only crowd at Mephistos. Jocks knew who I was the next morning at Sharples.”

**Jodi Sherman '97**, pursuing a Ph.D. in English literature at the University of

Texas–Austin, is still performing improv with ComedySportz. Introduced to VGG by former member and current Director of the Pig Iron Theatre Co. **Dan Rothenberg '95**, Sherman says, “Rehearsals were endlessly fun, a wonderful way to take a break from the rest of academic life and explore the world of play.”

Current VGG member **Karly Ford '03**, pursuing a special major in education and the only female member this semester in the six-member troupe, agrees that VGG is a life saver. “It’s such a healthy release,” she says. “I wouldn’t trade it for anything in the world.”

*al. It’s fun to be acting on the fly and to have an audience there. Episodic drama is filmed, single camera, no audience, much harder and more painstaking. It’s very intense: The camera is in on you; if you lie, it will show, so you have to go inside and play true. I enjoy sitcom more, but film can give you an unforgettable experience.*

As an actor performing both comedy and drama, **Steven Gilborn '58** is still best recognized today for his role in *The Wonder Years*. During 1989–90, he played Mr. Collins, Kevin Arnold’s algebra teacher, in three episodes of the show. “The first was literally my first job [in LA]—a wonderful way to break in—and the third won Emmys for writing and directing,” he says.

Gilborn did not become a professional actor until 1970 after years of teaching drama at Stanford, the University of California at Berkeley, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Columbia. His taste for the theater was stimulated by a Little Theater Club (LTC) open house early in his freshman year, when adviser Barbara Pearson

Lange Godfrey '31 made an enthusiastic recruiting speech. “Soon afterward, she cast me as the First Gravedigger in *Hamlet*, and I was gone,” he says.

“Barbara must take the blame for lighting my fire: She cared passionately about theater, she cared to do it well, and she thought it was worthy of a grown person’s time. That was a wonderful example to have.”

At Swarthmore, Gilborn was cast mostly in comedies. He has particularly fond memories of doing an Apache dance in a Hamburg Show with Heli Spiegel Meltsner '60, which he remembers as a “scream.” Gilborn says, “It was exciting and rewarding to play to one’s own community.” Despite his casting in college, he has never had a preference for comedy. “I’ve always as much enjoyed moving people as making them laugh.”

*There are two reasons for an actor to explore film and television. The first is that it is impossible for all but a few of us to make a living on theater alone... The second is that film and television have become an integral part of the profession, and one is not fully rounded as an actor unless one has mastered screen technique. Unfortunately, much of what one is given to do, especially in television, is trivial. What distinguishes the good shows are two qualities that any Swarthmorean can endorse: The words are good, and the issues are human and important.*

Gilborn’s role as Ellen DeGeneres’ father Harold on *Ellen* shines in this light. “The episodes around Ellen’s coming out were a special privilege to be part of,” he says.

“My character was not a jerk or a fool, two common sitcom types I have played but don’t enjoy,” Gilborn says. “He was simple and fond, apparently dim witted but actually merely differently intellectuated.... I loved the way his mind worked.”

Gilborn’s role as a headmaster in 13 episodes of *Teech* was his “happiest and proudest work” in a sitcom. But it premiered against *The Wonder Years* at the height of the latter’s popularity, and the second episode was wedged in at the end of a World Series game. “The remaining episodes went to that great sitcom graveyard up yonder,” he says, “where there is no room to sit down.”



ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

Ford, who now organizes the group’s two-hour practices on Thursday and Sunday, was first dragged out of the library for auditions by **Marah Gotcsik '02**, Leah’s [’97] sister and another member who is abroad this semester.

“When I saw VGG perform the fall of my freshman year, I was struck by how much fun the audience was having but also how much fun the group members were having. It’s the greatest thing to watch people progress from snicker to giggle to full-out laughing,” Ford says.

—A.H.

“where there is no room to sit down.”

*Advice? This piece I owe to Swarthmore, where theater was not in the academic curriculum. Act early and often because the stage is finally where you learn your art... [W]hen you get out there, never patronize the work you get; I've never had a job I was too good for. Finally—and this lesson I've had to learn again and again during my 30 years as a professional: Never turn down a job you haven't been offered.*

### RIDING WAVES OF LAUGHTER

“And now for my next delusion,” *Beth Littleford* [*'90*] says, spoofing a news correspondent in a parody on Comedy Central's *The Daily Show*.

“When Magician and Eyebrow David Copperfield refused to submit fingerprints for a liquor license, police considered dusting Claudia Schiffer but quickly realized that he's never actually touched her.”

Video clips of Littleford's work on *The Daily Show* are packed with funny sketches. Imitating Barbara Walters in a red power suit, she excelled at interviewing celebrity look-alike subjects. “I bonded with them,” she says.

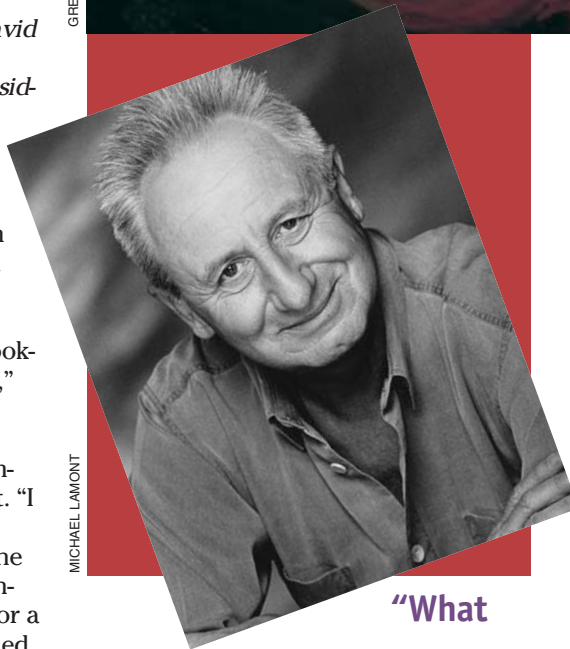
The actress first discovered her ability to make others laugh by mimicking people like idol Carol Burnett. “I was raised to be a nice girl, but the goofiness came out despite that,” she says. After her junior year at Swarthmore, Littleford went to New York for a summer theater internship and ended up staying for 11 years. “I found my people,” she says simply.

Littleford thinks the intense pressure to fit in as an adolescent—when she first discovered her love for bawdy humor—squashes freedom of expression. “Society gyps women because comedy is seen as boys' territory,” she says. “Women have to undo society's 'lady-izing.'”

STEVEN GILBORN, WHO HAD RECURRING ROLES IN *ELLEN* AND *THE WONDER YEARS* ON TELEVISION AS WELL AS PARTS IN THE FILM *NURSE BETTY* AND INTERACT THEATRE COMPANY'S *THE RIVALS*, CREDITED SWARTHMORE WITH HIS DESIRE TO PERFORM.



GREG WEINER



MICHAEL LAMONT

“What distinguishes the good shows are two qualities that any Swarthmorean can endorse: The words are good, and the issues are human and important,” says Steven Gilborn.

BETH LITTLEFORD, FROM *THE DAILY SHOW* AND *SPIN CITY*, PLAYED “A SEXLESS HOUND” WITH A FEDORA, SNORKEL, AND FINS IN A CAMPUS PLAY.

Littleford later wrote and performed *This Is Where I Get Off*, a one-woman Off-Broadway show that received industry attention and got her an agent. Executives from Comedy Central saw her performance and were taken with her “tongue-in-cheek” wit. Playing off her girl-next-door appeal, Littleford sharpened her comedic edge by developing “blue and dirty” characters.

“In the early days of *The Daily Show*, we had no rules except to push the envelope,” Littleford says. During a time of “too much fear and formula in TV,” she considers this four-year experience an “amazing time that established my career.”

Soon, though, Littleford felt increasing pressure to make her scathing satires harsher and nastier. “I didn't feel good” about that direction, she says. Even though her interviews were tremendously popular with *Daily Show* fans, Littleford began to feel like she had “sold her soul to the devil.”

So when the creators of *Spin City*—who liked her work on Comedy Central—invited her to appear as a recurring character, Littleford accepted. For two seasons, the new venue opened more doors for her “bluesy,” physical comedy style.

“I can just ride on the waves of



where she says guys washing cars, lawyers, and even gynecologists are actors. "I was thrilled to be brought out to LA as a regular on *Spin*, with this great group of actors," she says. The experience was a "throwback to sketch days with a live audience" and set Littleford's brand of comedy free.

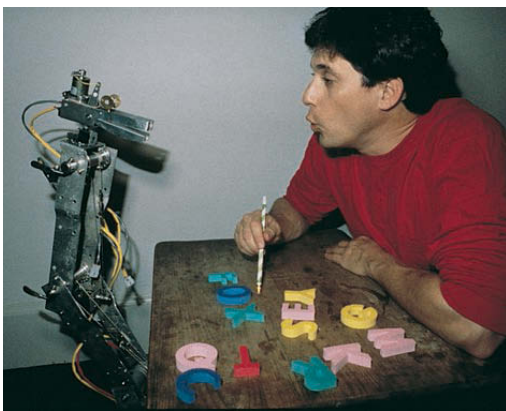
"*Stu-aaart,*" she calls, striding into the room in a little black dress.

"*Wait a minute. You're supposed to stay 10 feet away from me,*" he says.

*Littleford stretches out a tape measure after tossing him the other end.*

"*Ten feet,*" he says, with a shrug.

"*Give or take a few inches, depending on how happy you are to see me.*"



JOHN MYERS

**TOM SGOUROS, WHO STARTED JUGGLING ON STUDY BREAKS AT THE COLLEGE AND LATER PERFORMED AS A CLOWN IN *TOM THE FOOL*, CREATED *JUDY, OR WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE A PUPPET?* THE SOLO PERFORMANCE INVOLVES A DIALOGUE WITH A ROBOT THAT SGOUROS BUILT.**

As much as Littleford thrives on the laughter during live tapings, she says the career dips can be a "harsh, traumatic roller coaster. You need to have Buddha-like inner peace to keep some distance. Unfortunately, *Spin* is not really using me this year, but I'm hosting *Talk Soup* on [the *E* network]."

Littleford insists that someone interested in entering this field can't wait to be discovered. Instead, she recommends "creating your own showcase and committing yourself to making it happen."

Most of all, "when you think of something funny, lose your censor,"

Littleford urges, "to have the confidence of boys." With a different approach to comedy from women, "men always feel more entitled."

Remembering Swarthmore as a great place for "women to know they are smart and capable," Littleford says, "it is an important struggle to undertake."

## EATING FIRE

For his next comedic show, **Tom Sgouros '82** is considering having Judy the robot run for president. He envisions a long debate-prep session:

"*But what will you say when Gore asks you about military readiness?*"

Judy: "*(Beep.) That's a good question. An important question. I'm glad you asked that question. But I'd like to talk about my tax cut plan.*"

Writing and acting in "performance art" for the last 10 years, Sgouros also earns his keep as a freelance writer and researcher for computer companies, political candidates, and public interest groups. "Sadly, there is a lot of comedy in politics," he says.

His most recent show was *Judy, or What Is It Like to Be a Puppet?* A solo dialogue with a robot he built, the play opened at the Perishable Theatre in Providence, R.I., last January and had a limited engagement in New York in May. Sgouros is currently seeking touring bookings for the show.

A physics major, Sgouros never imagined that juggling on study breaks during his senior year might lead to later work as a performer. "At the time, I'd have thought anyone crazy who described to me what I'd be doing in 10 years," he says. "I really never dreamed I'd be standing on stages entertaining people by myself."

Sgouros, whose interests simply range from science to clowning, has never regretted his physics education at Swarthmore. "I've used it to analyze the tension on my circus tent caused by the trapeze rigging, to build a robot, to learn to eat fire, and to idle away hours in unproductive speculation," he says.

*When you learn quantum mechanics, there's a point at which you go, "huh?" and your teacher (in this case, Professor*

*of Physics John Boccio) says, "Well, you just gotta believe." So that became a kind of a mantra for accommodating unbelievable things.*

*In 1988 or so, I saw someone eat fire and realized how it must work—that it's a trick based on the physics of phase transitions. So I went home and made myself some torches just like his and lit them and stood in my garage, staring at this flaming thing, and thought, "Well, you just gotta believe."*

*And down the hatch it went.*

Around 1985, Sgouros started rope walking and solo clowning—"reminiscent of Buster Keaton, with a touch of Stan Laurel," according to the *Providence Journal*. He has studied with such masters of solo theater as Fred Curchack, Tony Montanaro, Avner Eisenberg, and Bolek Polivka.

Initially at fairs and festivals on weekends, Sgouros clowning in *Tom the Fool*. A feature of his juggling and rope-walking act, which he still performs about a half-dozen times a year, is creating a tug-of-war in the crowd while balancing on the rope. Many think he's just setting up an elaborate joke. But at Faneuil Hall in Boston's Quincy Market, he asked some on-leave sailors to participate. "They decided it wasn't high enough, so they swung the rope up onto their shoulders," he says. "To everyone's surprise—not least my own—I stayed upright."

Sgouros also produced and performed in the *Pan-Twilight Circus*, a small tent show that toured in Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts for a few seasons in the 1990s. Using only puppet animals, he put on a circus version of *The Tempest*, a theatrical show about Pandora after she opened her box, and *Creatures of the Lawn*, a theatrical show featuring a 16-foot grasshopper puppet, a pair of mantises doing a tango on stilts, a thirsty fly, a bumblebee who couldn't fly, and a trapeze spider.

Sgouros, who shares his life with Celia Gelfman '82 and their two young daughters Timi and Lydia, has high hopes about earning his living solely through his shows in the future. "Making people laugh is a delight and an honor," he says. There's really no feeling like having a good show, having the crowd on your side, and going exciting places together." ■

# THE END ZONE

The Board of Managers decided to reduce the number of Swarthmore's intercollegiate athletic teams from 24 to 21 at its meeting on Saturday, Dec. 2. Varsity football and wrestling will be eliminated, and varsity badminton will become a club sport as part of a plan that constrains the number of places allocated to recruited athletes in the admissions process.

The Admissions Office will limit the number of students for which athletic talent or interest is a deciding factor to between 10 and 15 percent of each entering class. In recent years, about 17 percent of each class has been composed of recruited athletes or applicants whose athletic accomplishments gave them an edge in the admissions process. The football program has used about half of the places for scholar-athletes, and its elimination will allow a reallocation of most of these places to other intercollegiate teams that now receive no recognition in the admissions process.

"We believe that reallocation of resources to a smaller number of sports will enable the College to achieve a level of excellence in athletics that we haven't enjoyed for many years, while Swarthmore maintains its academic distinction and leadership position in American education," said President Alfred H. Bloom in a statement given to the press after the Board meeting.

The proposal was presented to the Board by the ad hoc Athletics Review Committee (ARC), formed by the Board a year ago. The committee, chaired by Provost Jennie Keith, includes managers, administrators, faculty members, and student-athletes. It was asked by the Board to assess the "health of the athletic program"—in particular, the quality of experience it offers to Swarthmore athletes—and "the relationship between that program and the mission of the College."

Immediately after the decision was made, former Board Chairman Neil Austrian '61 left the Board meeting to inform Peter Alvanos, the football coach hired in 1998 to revitalize the program. Austrian, who opposed the plan, later told *The Phoenix*: "When



JEFFREY LOTT

Pete asked me if he should leave the University of Chicago and come to Swarthmore, I said yes. I told him he had the full backing of the College. I'm personally troubled now by the moral and ethical situation. The College is saying a commitment is not a commitment."

In an interview with the *Bulletin*, Austrian, a former president of the National Football League, said his "biggest disappointment" was that athletes are being "stereotyped" and "classified as second-class citizens.... They're being told, 'you must be less of an academic person than I am,' when, in fact, any measurable differences are immaterial. What does this say to prospective scholar-athletes in other sports about the way Swarthmore values athletics?"

WITHIN HOURS OF THE BOARD'S DECISION, ABOUT 200 STUDENTS GATHERED ON THE STEPS OF PARRISH HALL TO PROTEST. PETE ALVANOS (RIGHT), THE COACH HIRED IN 1998 TO REVITALIZE THE FOOTBALL PROGRAM, TOLD THE CROWD THAT HE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THE DECISION. TOM ELVERSON '65 (TOP)—WHOSE FATHER, LEW ELVERSON, COACHED THE TEAM FROM 1938 TO 1974—ALSO SPOKE AT THE RALLY.



CLAIRE WEISS/THE PHOENIX

# In a controversial vote, the Board of Managers limits athletic recruiting and cuts three sports.

By Jeffrey Lott



CLAIRE WEISS/THE PHOENIX

**As selectivity has increased in admissions, so has pressure to meet the needs of programs and teams across the College.**

According to Jim Bock '90, acting dean of admissions and a member of the ARC, the recommendation did not result from concern about the academic ability of athletes. "These are outstanding students," said Bock. He described the central problem as "trying to serve so many different needs on a campus where each and every goal, in academics, the arts, engineering, or athletics, has to be met with excellence."

The College's increasing selectivity has compounded the problem in recent years. Between 1995 and 2000, the number of students offered admission has dropped from more than 1,200 to around 900 because more admitted students are choosing to attend Swarthmore. Applications have remained relatively constant at around 4,000 per year.

As selectivity has increased, Bock says, the number of students needed to maintain various programs and teams throughout the College has also increased, putting more pressure on the Admissions Office to meet the needs of everything from the academic departments to the College orchestra to the athletic teams. Maintaining a viable football program requires about 20 new players in each entering class and "with football taking such a large percentage of the places reserved for athletes," said Bock, "we could only allow recruiting for 12 of our 24 varsity

teams. Under this new plan, we should be able to support all 21 remaining teams."

As word of the decision spread, a number of students organized a rally in support of the eliminated teams. In below-freezing weather on Saturday night, Coach Alvanos, members of the football team, and other students spoke to a crowd of about 200 from the steps of Parrish Hall on Saturday night.

Alvanos, whose team compiled a 4–5 record this year, the best since 1995, told the students, "To drop this program at this point in time—I can't even fathom it." He said the coaching staff had "done everything that Al Bloom asked us to do ... in terms of finding the right student-athlete—because they are students first and athletes second."

The next day, President Bloom, Provost Keith, and Board Chair J. Lawrence Shane '56 spoke at an open meeting in the Tarble Pavilion. They

attempted to explain the decision to a contentious crowd of several hundred students—many of them athletes—and concerned parents and alumni who had come to campus to protest the decision. Bloom repeated that strengthening the athletics program was the primary goal of the ARC's plan. He acknowledged that the decision was "incredibly painful" to members of the eliminated teams and urged them to stay at Swarthmore. Bloom said that the committee had deliberated for nearly a year and that the Board had decided any further delay would be unfair to students who were considering coming to Swarthmore next year—and to those who might seek to transfer from the College.

Pausing occasionally because of interruptions from the audience, Keith said the ARC's recommendation had been submitted to the Board with "great regret" and a "deep appreciation" for the contributions made by student-athletes to the College community. "The coaches and athletes wanted the College to recruit more players in order to be more competitive," said Keith of the committee's study. "Yet we also heard from the Admissions Office that if we followed the advice of the coaches of all sports that wanted to recruit, we would need to admit more than 30 percent of each class as recruited athletes." A separate faculty advisory committee on admissions had proposed a recruitment limit of 10 percent, but Keith said the ARC determined that a cut this deep would jeopardize the viability of many College teams.

Keith said that women's badminton would continue to be offered by the College as a club sport, a status in which the team can continue to compete with other college teams and have access to national championships. Wrestling, which will not be continued at all, had been "declining" in recent years at Swarthmore and other Division III schools, said Keith. Only three

athletes were available to wrestle at Swarthmore's first match this year.

Shane described the Board as unanimous in believing that a decision had to be made before the Admissions Office began evaluating applications for the Class of 2005. He said that after hours of debate, the Board had taken a "straw vote" to gauge thinking on the issue. When it became apparent that most Managers favored the ARC pro-



FRIENDS HISTORICAL LIBRARY

SWARTHMORE'S FOOTBALL PROGRAM WAS ONE OF THE OLDEST IN THE COUNTRY, AND IT HAS BEEN BESET BY CONTROVERSIES BEFORE. BOARD OF MANAGERS CHAIRMAN LARRY SHANE '56 SAID HE "DID NOT HAVE ANY PLANS TO RECONSIDER" THE DECISION TO END THE PROGRAM.

posal, the entire Board reached consensus to treat the straw vote as an actual vote—rare for a board that usually makes decisions by consensus. Shane declined to reveal the exact vote count but pledged Board support for all of the College's remaining sports.

Football has been played at Swarthmore since 1878, making it one of the oldest intercollegiate programs in the country—but it began sparking controversy early. A comprehensive history of the program published in the *Bulletin* in 1979 recalled that early in the last century, Swarthmore took on such powers as the University of Pennsylvania and Lafayette in games so violent that injuries to Swarthmore's legendary Tiny Maxwell '07 inspired national reform of college football rules.

For decades, control of the intercollegiate athletic program remained in the hands of an alumni-run athletic

**The action will allow more teams to recruit—and the goal is to strengthen the remaining 21 intercollegiate sports.**

association, which paid the coaches (and some say the players) from contributions and gate receipts. In an effort to regain control, President Joseph Swain suspended play for the 1908 season, but it was resumed in 1909. In the 1920s, President Frank Aydelotte laid the foundation of Swarthmore's current academic reputation by establishing the Honors program. In 1925, he incurred the wrath of many alumni by making the coaches members of the faculty and reducing the team's schedule.

In 1960, President Courtney Smith, speaking at the annual sports banquet, decried the increasing "commercialized, semiprofessional status of college sports," observing that "we are faced with the problem of whether we can be both amateur and excellent." Smith said that "we make the problem more difficult ... by the number of intercollegiate sports in which we field teams." Smith defended the athletic program in his talk (published in the October 1960 *Bulletin*), concluding that "properly conceived and properly ordered, sports have their place" in an academic college.

In 1972, Haverford College, long Swarthmore's closest rival, dropped its football program, reportedly because of lack of interest. But interest—and conflict—remained strong at Swarthmore. When the team nearly went undefeated in 1982 under Head Coach Tom Lapinski, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* reported that "Lapinski says that his team's success has spawned anti-football sentiment so strong that he might be fired." A student-faculty committee investigated the tensions, which one professor later described as "sub-rosa warfare between the football team and the rest of the campus." Lapinski left the College after the 1984 season.



ELEFTHERIOS KOSTANS

AS LARRY SHANE '56 AND SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS LOOK ON, BADMINTON CO-CAPTAIN SIOBHAN CARTY '01 QUESTIONS PRESIDENT AL BLOOM (TOP) ABOUT THE CUTS AT A SUNDAY AFTERNOON MEETING. BLOOM HAD HOPED TO TALK PRIVATELY WITH MEMBERS OF THE AFFECTED TEAMS, BUT HUNDREDS OF STUDENTS—AND THREE TV CREWS—CROWDED THE TARBLE PAVILION, MAKING ANY DIALOGUE IMPOSSIBLE. A DAY LATER, THE STUDENT COUNCIL SPONSORED A LESS CONTENTIOUS SESSION IN THE FRIENDS MEETINGHOUSE, WHERE PROVOST JENNIE KEITH (RIGHT) TOOK QUESTIONS.



CLAIRE WEISS/THE PHOENIX

The current debate began after a record losing streak led to the removal of Head Coach Karl Miran after the 1997 season. Miran was replaced by Alvanos, former defensive coordinator at the University of Chicago, and the final chapter of Swarthmore football began.

Alvanos told the *Bulletin* that he was surprised by the Board's decision to cut the sport. "I honestly didn't see it coming—I thought we were doing so well," he said. "My heart is with the players. I'm sickened because of the effect that [ending the program] has on the kids and their families. A football team is like a family, and I'm the dad. It's like I just let 55 sons down."

"It's a nightmare for him, just the same as for us," said Ken Clark '03, the team's top running back. "No one can deny that we turned the corner this year." Clark reported that 16 of his teammates have told him they expect

to transfer to another college after this year.

But Ambrose Dieringer '01, co-captain of cross-country and a three-sport athlete, thought that the College had made its goal-line commitment to football "without fully realizing the ramifications, and now they are coming to terms with them." He said he understood the rationale for the decision—that it was "not a viable option to be competitive in so many sports. It was either drop football or cut other sports in order to let football flourish."

Dialogue—and demonstrations of support for the three teams—continue on campus, both about the decision and the process used to reach it. Neil

Austrian, who is chair of the Board's development committee, told the *Bulletin* that if the decision was not reversed, he intends to resign as a Manager. James Noyes, a Board member since 1990, also said that he intended to leave the Board before his term expired.

Discussions with students, parents, and alumni are expected to continue for weeks. Several senior administrators and Board members held a second open meeting on Dec. 4 at the Friends Meetinghouse. But Board Chair Shane told the packed meeting that he "did not have any plans to reconsider" the decision. "The Board had a very thorough process ... that was strongly supported." ■

Editor's Note: *This story will be a continuing one. Members of the Swarthmore On-Line Community will receive updates from the College before the next issue of the Bulletin is published in March. Become a member at <http://alumni.swarthmore.edu>. Extensive student coverage by students in The Phoenix, which published two special issues on the decision, is also on-line at [www.sccs.swarthmore.edu/org/phoenix](http://www.sccs.swarthmore.edu/org/phoenix). Letters to the editor of the Bulletin should be limited to 300 words or fewer. They must be signed, and they may be edited for clarity and space.*

*Cathleen McCarthy contributed to this story. Thanks also to Claire Weiss '03 and the editors of The Phoenix.*

# Connections

SWARTHMORE GATHERINGS NEAR YOU

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**London:** Keiko Itoh Helsby '74 will host a faculty talk and reception in January. Thomas Blackburn, Centennial Professor of English Literature, will be the faculty speaker. Dan West, vice president for alumni, development, and public relations, and his wife, Sidney, will be in attendance.

**Philadelphia:** Bruce Gould '54, co-chair of the Philadelphia Connection, has arranged for a visit to the *Van Gogh* exhibit at the Museum of Art, which will begin with introductory lectures by Andrea Packard '85, director of the College's List Gallery, and Constance Cain Hungerford, professor of art history. In addition, alumni will celebrate the holiday season at Longwood Gardens with Claire Sawyers, director of the Scott Arboretum.

**Pittsburgh:** Alumni are invited to join Connection chair Melissa Kelley '80 at the Pittsburgh Penguins/Philadelphia Flyers hockey game in January. In February, the Connection will explore red and white Rhône wines at Dreadnought Wines.

## RECENT EVENTS

**Boston:** Sarah Willie gave a talk titled "What's Race Got to Do With It?" at the Harvard Club, followed by a reception. Connection members attended the opening reception of "Build," an exhibit at the Somerville Museum co-curated by Robin Mandel '97.

**Kansas City, Mo.:** Amy Cheng Vollmer, associate professor of biology, delivered the October lecture of this year's Linda Hall Lecture Series, titled "Bacteria! Important Indicators of Changing Environments." The November lecture "Why Ultrasound Could Kill You or Save Your Life" was delivered by Carr Everbach, associate professor of engineering.

**Metro DC/Baltimore:** The DC Book Group kicked off its fourth year with an introductory talk by Nathalie Anderson, professor of English literature, at the Politics and Prose bookstore. This year's theme is women in mystery and is titled "Compare and Contrast." The



LOIS GREENFIELD

Connection hosted a faculty lecture and reception with Timothy Burke, associate professor of history, titled "Dusting Off the Tomb: Three African Individuals, the Great Man Theory of History, and Other Miscellaneous Heresies."

**New York:** The Connection hosted Carr Everbach, associate professor of engineering, in a talk titled "Acoustic Cannons, Microbubbles, and Ultrasound," followed by a reception. The Book Group began its second year with a talk by Peter Schmidt, professor of English literature, who has chosen a series of books that "explore the consequences of forbidden border crossings."

**North Carolina:** Julia Knerr '81 and Doug Miron '81 held an election-night event in their home in Durham, N.C.

Despite a lack of electricity during the first part of the evening, the 30 attendees had a great time. The hosts took predictions for the election results as guests arrived, in anticipation of awarding a "cheap, useless prize" to the winner—but the winner turned out to be impossible to determine.

**Philadelphia:** Alumni attended a campus performance of The San Francisco Mime Troupe's "City for Sale" as well as a performance of the Paul Taylor Dance Company. The Connection Dinner Group held its first dinner of the year at Butcher's Café and its second at Penang. Alumni toured the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, including the Mutter Museum, a gallery, medicinal herb garden, historic library, portrait collection, and the C. Everett Koop Community Health Information Center. The Book Group began its second year, directed by Peter Schmidt, professor of English literature.

**Seattle:** Deborah Read '87 and Michael Martin hosted a Dessert Tasting and Recipe Swap in their home in November. Reported Deb:

"About 18 folks showed up. Desserts were delectable and conversation stimulating—ranging from politics and environmental policy to the school system and childbirth."

**Swarthmore:** The Alumni Gospel Choir debuted music from their second CD recording, *Star Gazer*, at a concert in the Friends Meetinghouse.

To arrange a Swarthmore gathering in your area, call Patricia Maloney in the Alumni Office, at (610) 328-8404, or e-mail [pmalone1@swarthmore.edu](mailto:pmalone1@swarthmore.edu).



MEGHAN KRIEDEL '97

SWARTHMORE BROUGHT PEOPLE TOGETHER IN BOSTON, PHILADELPHIA, AND WASHINGTON, D.C. THIS FALL. LEAH GOTCSIK '97 (ABOVE, LEFT) WELCOMED ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY SARAH WILLIE TO BOSTON. PHILADELPHIA ALUMNI ENJOYED THE PAUL TAYLOR DANCE COMPANY (LEFT); ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY TIM BURKE LECTURED IN WASHINGTON, WHERE HE MET GRETCHEN MANN HANDWERGER '56 (BELOW, LEFT) AND KATHY STEVENS '89.



BRUCE REEDY '88

## ALUMNI COUNCIL HOLDS FALL MEETING

The Alumni Council held its fall meeting on October 27–29 on campus. Forty-four members of the council attended, representing 20 states. The winner of the unofficial “farthest distance traveled” award was our lone international representative, Eric Osterweil '56, who came from Belgium. Among the attendees were 9 of the 14 newly elected council members, who brought an infusion of energy and ideas to the meeting.

In addition to its formal work, the council was fascinated to hear from three faculty members and three students on a panel discussion titled “Women in Science” as well as by an opportunity to hear from Professor of Classics Gil Rose.

The College’s Committee on Educational Policy met with interested council members to gather their opinions on the need for more internationalism in the College curriculum. On Saturday evening, they, along with the Career Planning and Placement Office, hosted a highly successful career networking dinner for students.



### UPCOMING CAMPUS EVENTS

**Black Alumni Weekend**  
March 23–24

**Family Weekend**  
March 30–April 1

**Alumni Weekend**  
June 8–10

The council spent the majority of its time in its three working groups—alumni support, student support, and College advisory and support—plus a newly created technology group. If you are interested in learning more about council activities and on-going projects, the minutes of the Alumni Council fall meeting will be posted on the College Web site.

## PATRICIA MALONEY JOINS ALUMNI OFFICE

Patricia Maloney recently joined the College staff as assistant director of alumni relations. In this position, she will organize Alumni Weekend and other on-campus events, and she will be the primary Alumni Relations contact with Connection chairs.

Maloney comes to Swarthmore after eight years in her own communications consulting business, whose clients included law firms, marketing and publications firms, and a pharmaceutical company. She has extensive experience in organizing large events and



TRISH MALONEY

client development activities. She has developed and implemented communications and marketing strategies for clients and has also done some Web site maintenance. Maloney earned a degree in journalism from Pennsylvania State University.

Maloney is pleased to join the Swarthmore College community. “We just completed my first Alumni Council fall meeting. It was a pleasure to meet this dedicated group of people. I am looking forward to working with them—and with all of the alums at Swarthmore.”

## ATTENTION, ATLANTA ALUMNI

Amy Lansky Knowlton '87 is in the process of establishing an Atlanta Connection and is currently looking for a co-chair. She is eager to hear from alums in the area who have ideas for events or who wish to help organize activities for alumni, parents, and friends. You may contact Amy at (404) 329-1924.

## COLLEGE WILL PROVIDE REUNION CLASS WEB PAGES

This year, each reunion class that wants one will have a Web page on the Swarthmore College Web site. With the help of Lester Tran '04, the Alumni Relations Office will provide the reunion chair with a design template and will post the information sent by the reunion chair to the site. Class members will be able to see who from their class will be attending Alumni Weekend and to see any special events organized by their class before the official reunion schedule is mailed. We will also post some photographs, old and new, so if you have any interesting shots, please send them to your reunion chair.

## JOIN OUR GROWING ON-LINE COMMUNITY

Swarthmore’s On-Line Community is entering the end of its first year, and the alumni who have joined have been extremely pleased with its offerings. They have been able to use the on-line alumni directory to find classmates or to search for alumni who live in their community, and they have been able to update their own contact information instantaneously. Alumni have also taken advantage of the opportunity to set up a permanent e-mail forwarding address.

Not everyone has yet joined the On-Line Community. We encourage all of you to take advantage of the opportunity to be a part of this new endeavor. To register, you will need the six-digit identification number that was sent to you last spring. (*Hint:* It’s the same as the number on your mailing label on this magazine.) If you do not have that number, you can contact Ruth Krakower in the Alumni Records Office at rkrakow1@swarthmore.edu.



## SWARTHMORE LEGACIES

Fifty-four students who were children of alumni lined up for this photo in the spring of 1951. According to a note on the back of the picture from the Friends Historical Library, they were among the 91 “legacies” then at Swarthmore—about 6 percent of the student body at the time.

Fourteen percent of students in the 374-member Class of 2004, now in their first year at the College, are related to alumni. Only 4.3 percent of the class are actually children of a Swarthmore graduate; the rest claim aunts, uncles, cousins, or grandparents who attended.

Does being a “legacy” help a student gain admission to Swarthmore? Not really, says Jim Bock ’90, acting dean of admissions. “Although we give every consideration to alumni children in the admissions process, we don’t really give it a great deal of weight.” Bock says, however, that legacies are admitted at a slightly higher rate than the average applicant “because they’re usually such great students.”



# Discovering the artist's life

AT AGE 79, MARY DUNNING HARPER '40 CO-FOUNDED AN ART GALLERY.

She discovered painting in her late '60s, helped found a cooperative art gallery in her late 70s, and began earning money from her work just last year at the ripe age of 80. Mary Dunning Harper '40 is living proof that it's never too late to devote your life to art.

Harper began painting while living on a boat in Marathon, Fla. (about 50 miles from Key West) with her husband, Chandler, after they moved from their home near West Chester, Pa., in 1984. Oil paints proved too cumbersome aboard a boat—even a very comfortable, 50-foot power boat—so she took up watercolors. For several years, she has studied with a local artist, attended workshops with nationally known teachers, and been an active member of the Florida Keys Art Guild.

Her interest in art dates back much further, however. At Swarthmore in the late '30s, her notebooks were covered with drawings, and she took the only studio art course the College offered then. "It was not much of a course," Harper recalls. After that, she just scribbled, sending out hand-drawn Christmas cards every year. "I had a busy life," she says now. "I always said, 'When I have time, I'm going to paint.'"

Two years ago, she and two friends approached the local art guild with the idea of starting a cooperative art gallery. "They didn't really take it up, so a group of us got together—about five or six to begin with—and kicked it around."

A goldsmith (now a member of the coop) offered to rent them the building she had been using as a studio, and they moved right in. "It worked beautifully," Harper says. "We redid the whole downstairs to accommodate us, scrubbing and painting. It's an old house with a wonderful porch covered with bougainvillea, and it's right on the main drag of Marathon."

Unlike the tourist center of Key West, about 50 miles away, Marathon offers little in the way of art for sale, which makes the gallery something of a novelty. There are now 23 artists in the coop—one goldsmith, one potter, and the rest painters who work in watercolor, oil, and acrylic. The gallery



MARY DUNNING HARPER '40 (RIGHT) HELPED FOUND THE "BOUGAINVILLEA HOUSE" COOPERATIVE ART GALLERY, NAMED FOR THE FLOWERING VINES THAT DECORATE THE FRONT PORCH (ABOVE). SHE AND 22 OTHER LOCAL ARTISTS TAKE TURNS RUNNING THE GALLERY IN THE FLORIDA KEYS, OPEN YEAR-ROUND.



H. CHANDLER HARPER

is open seven days a week year-round; artists take turns working one-day shifts, running the store and chatting with customers. Although she describes herself as "the old babe in the group," Harper insists on serving her shifts like everyone else.

Her husband, Chandler, a Penn graduate and retired manager for Scott Paper Co., has proven a worthy patron of the arts. "Bless his heart. Everything has to be matted and framed, you know, and he does all that," his wife reports.

The Harpers took a break from gallery work this fall to wait out Florida's hurricane season in Gallup, N.M., where Mary had the chance to try her hand at scenes of red cliffs and turquoise skies. "In the Keys, we almost have to paint what people want to buy: water and sand—and palm trees, which are very hard to paint," she says. "I also do portraits, and I'm

pretty good at it. I'll do them anytime somebody asks."

Cooperative art galleries are an excellent way to make the work of amateur artists accessible to the public, Harper says, and the art market accessible to them. "Commercial galleries take up to 50 percent of the sale price, which means prices have to be so high—too high for my caliber of work," she explains. "This way, we artists keep everything, except for taxes. We're not big yet, but we're one of only two galleries in town. And people are coming in. They like the way it looks, which is gratifying. And they buy—not a lot, but they buy."

Every now and then, they buy her paintings. "I'm not sure I've made my rent. My prices aren't terribly high," she says. "But it's very satisfying to sell something. It tells you that you're doing pretty well."

—Cathleen McCarthy

# Ride it like a tiger

THE POEMS OF DAISY FRIED '89

Daisy Fried '89, *She Didn't Mean to Do It*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000

There's a world of inadvertence packed into the title of Daisy Fried's extraordinary book of poems—her first, just published as the 1999 winner of the prestigious Agnes Lynch Starrett Award sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh Press. "Didn't mean to" at once admits and sidesteps

dance (taught by a pair of pregnant shop girls) in a men's room papered with porn, the images "hairy, staring, brackish, slack, gleam, bluster, glister, blast, bloat, / blossom, blow." So our world's provisional, disquieting, uncomfortable: within its urgencies, Fried concludes in "Slaughterhouse Island," "we're all of us new, and scared, and rising."

Fried's poems bear abundant witness to the cruelties, the inanities, the

appalling with poignancy, urges the reader out of numbness into vigorous response.

Daisy Fried has made her living as a journalist since graduating from Swarthmore, and that observational skill is everywhere evident in her accuracy of eye and ear—an accuracy that's unconventional, outrageous, striking. She's caught a film projector's "ticky whir," a sailboat's rig "tackata-tacking," a sprinkler's "switch, switch, swatch, switch," the rhythmic "kshoong, kshoong" of boys on skateboards, the way their hair "whaps, jets." She's caught the impact of elliptical speech: a girl on prom night thinking, "does he? / do I? does my?"; or sparring lovers declaiming, "You Always! You Never!"; or bachelorettes chiding the bride-to-be with, "Eeee, Tereese!" She's caught the shock of action reduced to essence: a flirting girl "showing her teeth to a man"; kids who "two-hand their pistols"; a drunk woman and a cop facing off "like two repelling / magnets"; transit executives who "swing their arms in for crashing corporate / handbone handshakes." Fried's tone whips from jocular—a businessman's "chinks and penitralia"; to creepy—"bad kids play nasty with a rat"; to startling—a maturing daughter "boiling off the mother"; to exquisite—"wisteria / in dusk its same color." Her accumulations—"hairy, staring, brackish"; "bird, mallet, poultice"—amplify a simple premise into stunning significance. These poems go everywhere, see everything, but they're always centered in that fine observing intelligence, even when the speaker is reduced to "my shadow over the face of a sleeping flatnose drunk," or to a revealing "I think" tucked into a complicated description, or to a single "our" taking possession and thus responsibility in a cityscape. She didn't mean to do it? Sure she did.

This book's not for everyone: Its brash sexual slang could sear off your eyebrows. But if you're in love with language, here's my advice: Buy the book, read it, ride it like a tiger.

—Nathalie Anderson  
Professor of English Literature



## Steam

*City winter night the mother walks with the daughter. We see steam wavering, churning from manholes. City boiling itself underneath.*

*We throw our two shadows on the shining steam plumes; it makes tunnels, body-shaped, into thick steam, a way to see through to the other side. I think*

*my mother is turning to steam. Thinning. The muscles going off the bones. Daughter boiling off the mother.*

guilt: She didn't intend it, it just happened; she's not a bad person, just got carried away; she didn't set out to, was surprised into it—into crime, into sex, into irresponsibility, even, paradoxically, into agency or maturity. On the culpable side of this divide, a woman involved in a racist incident in Fried's extended sequence "Strike" pleads in court that "she didn't mean it"; proud of her own ethnic heritage, she "doesn't stop to think, / none of us do, what it is [she's] proud of." On the more hopeful side, a mother in "Whatever Works" reaches a hand around so that her baby, squalling in the back seat, can suckle her finger "and keeps on driving fast and crooked around that way." "Fast and crooked": the women in these poems don't let circumstance or self-doubt constrain them; they drive dangerously, live on the edge, learn to

subsidiences that we live with, don't ordinarily stop to think about. Here, a house built on fill sinks into its foundations like "a tired man who has worked all his life / sinking to his couch, one hip, shoulder down with it, other hip, shoulder down with it." Here little girls in Turkey weave rugs morning to night: "In weaving, / the hands, which have a thousand angles—bird, mallet, poultice, purse, / signal, letter, clay wad, smoke—are merely pushed by the arms; / the arms are hung upon the back. Sense of balance is required. Little girls have that." Here, one 16-year-old girl stabs another to death: "Oh pity, oh pity guys. / Guys, I cannot breathe, I cannot see the night." Fried's vibrant delivery in these poems—the unexpected metaphor of exhaustion, the catalog of subtle gestures, the slang phrase raised to tragedy—infuses the

# OTHER RECENT BOOKS

**Peter Andreas '87**, *Border Games: Policing the U.S.-Mexico Divide*, Cornell University Press, 2000. The author explores U.S. relations with Mexico today, focusing on border issues.

**William Armstrong '54**, *Major McKinley: William McKinley & the Civil War*, Kent State University Press, 2000. For those interested in the Civil War, this book adds a major dimension to McKinley's life and times.

**David Carney '94** (ed.), *To Promote the General Welfare: A Communitarian Legal Reader*, Lexington Books, 1999. This book is divided into four parts on communitarian jurisprudence, civil law, criminal law, and constitutional law.

**Tamar Chansky (Stern) '84**; **Phillip Stern '84** (illustrator), *Freeing Your Child From Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: A Powerful, Practical Program for Parents of Children and Adolescents*, Crown, 2000. The author offers practical advice on helping children afflicted with obsessive-compulsive behaviors.

**Gregory Englund '69**, *Seasons of Decision:*

*A Practical Guide to Making Life's Financial and Legal Decisions*, Estate Planning Press, 2000. A roadmap for life stages, this book is a guide to making legal and financial decisions. *Seasons of Decision* follows on Englund's previous work, *Beyond Death & Taxes: A Guide to Total Wealth Control*.

**Sandra (Spewock) Feder '73**, *Side Effect*, Thornwood, 2000. Set in the drug industry over nine days, this book focuses on a group of conspirators trying to defeat a brilliant researcher.

**Michael Ferber '66**, *A Dictionary of Literary Symbols*, Cambridge University Press, 1999. This dictionary of symbols is based on literature rather than "universal" psychological archetypes, myths, or esoterica.

**Marjorie Garber '66**, *Sex and Real Estate: Why We Love Houses*, Pantheon Books, 2000. This study explores the ways we think about our homes.

**Muriel Gillick '72**, *Lifelines: Living Longer, Growing Frail, Taking Heart*, W.W. Norton & Co., 2001. The author exam-

ines the complications people face as they live longer than ever before.

**Christopher GoGwilt '83**, *The Fiction of Geopolitics: Afterimages of Culture, From Wilkie Collins to Alfred Hitchcock*, Stanford University Press, 2000. This book addresses geopolitics and the fate of the European hypothesis of culture.

James Glassman and **Kevin Hassett '84**, *Dow 36,000: The New Strategy for Profiting From the Coming Rise in the Stock Market*, Random House, 1999. This book offers tips on investments and ways to maximize your portfolio. **Hassett** is also the sole author of *Tax Policy and Investment*, AEI Press, 1999. Part of the American Enterprise Institute's series on tax reform, it argues that tax changes can significantly stimulate investment.

**Peter Kingstone '86**, *Crafting Coalitions for Reform: Business Preferences, Political Institutions, and Neoliberal Reform in Brazil*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999. This book examines free trade, business organization structure, and economic reform in Brazil.

**Vishwanath Lingappa '75** and Krista Farey, *Physiological Medicine: A Clinical Approach to Basic Medical Physiology*, McGraw-Hill, 2000. This textbook enhances the usefulness of medical physiology for health professionals.

**Kevin Murphy '82**, *Memory and Moder-*

*nity: Viollet-le-Duc at Vézelay*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000. Original research contributes to understanding 19th-century architectural practice and French cultural history.

**Roy Parvin '79**, *In the Snow Forest: Three Novellas*, W.W. Norton, 2000. These stories are set in Montana, Wyoming, and the Trinity Alps of northern California during late fall, when blizzards threaten.

**Michael Rothberg '88**, *Traumatic Realism: The Demands of Holocaust Representation*, University of Minnesota Press, 2000. This book provides an overarching framework for thinking about depictions of the Nazi genocide in literature, philosophy, and popular culture.

**Christopher Sunami '97**, *Three Ways of Being Human*, Nimbus, 2000. Drawing on science, religion, philosophy, and educational theory, the author discusses living a meaningful life and the relationship between people and technology.

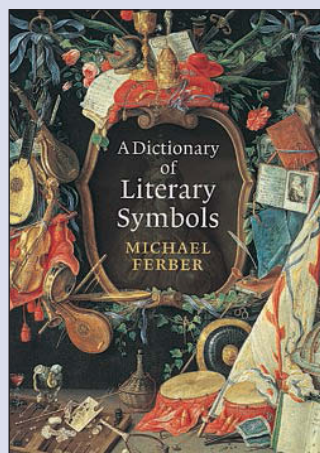
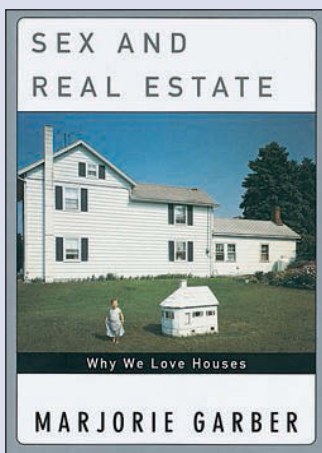
**Jon Van Til**, *Growing Civil Society: From Nonprofit Sector to Third Space*, Indiana University Press, 2000. The author argues for a "third space," where individuals and organizations create the community and society they need.

**Richard Wetzell '85**, *Inventing the Criminal: A History of German Criminology, 1880-1945*, The University of North Carolina Press, 2000. For those interested in the attitudes toward deviant behavior, this work contributes to the study of criminology.

**Éléonore Zimmermann '51**, *Poétiques de Baudelaire dans Les Fleurs du Mal: rythme, parfum, lueur*, Lettres Modernes Minard, 1998. The author defines the development of Baudelaire's aesthetics in *Les Fleurs du Mal* and shows how he goes beyond the constraints of contemporary literary conventions.

## In other media

**Charley Parlapianides '99**, *Everything for a Reason*, Asia Minor Pictures, 2000. This film pokes fun at the roles sex, love, and fate play in relationships.



## ATTENTION AUTHORS

The Bulletin welcomes review copies of books, compact disks, and other works by alumni. (No magazine or journal articles, please.) The editors choose featured books for review, and others receive capsule reviews. All works are then donated to the McCabe Library. Send your work to Books & Authors, Swarthmore College Bulletin, 500 College Ave., Swarthmore PA 19081-1390.

# In search of a better life

JANE LANG '67 PRODUCES A PLAY ON AFRICAN-AMERICAN MIGRATION.

Jane Lang '67 found inspiration in the law and attended the University of Pennsylvania, where she received her degree in 1970. Today, she and her husband Paul Sprenger are successful Washington, D.C., litigators and operate the firm of Sprenger & Lang, which specializes in class action discrimination lawsuits.

In 1993, Lang found new inspiration in the paintings of Jacob Lawrence and has turned her attention to the world of the theater and the "class actions" of African Americans.

*Leaving the Summer Land*, which premiered in June, is the first play with music produced by Lang, through, Tribute Productions, a division of the Sprenger Lang Foundation. The play was inspired by a series of 60 Lawrence paintings collectively titled *The Migration Series*, which chronicle the 20th-century exodus of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North.

"The message in Lawrence's paintings is about struggle, about people willing to leave everything they know to find something better," Lang says. "But he also felt the migration wasn't just an African-American story but a story of freedom and the story of the growth of America. He called *The Migration Series* an American story."

The story behind the paintings is what moved Lang. Having learned little of the black migration as a student, she was determined not to have others miss this important American story.

Lawrence's paintings are grounded in everyday living and its struggles, according to Lang.

"He believed in striving for something fully that completes you as a person. Often that was found through work. The element of work is a common denominator in his paintings. He believed people should strive to experience life's dimensions and see its richness around them," she says.

Lang says the play would not have been possible without Lawrence's permission to use his paintings as part of the set design. She and Sprenger met



TONY CISEK

REPRODUCTIONS OF LAWRENCE'S PAINTINGS ARE USED IN THE SET DESIGN OF *LEAVING THE SUMMER LAND*. JANE LANG (BELOW, RIGHT) ON THE SET WITH GEORGE FULGINITI-SHAKAR, MUSIC DIRECTOR, AND SERET SCOTT, DIRECTOR.

him in March at his home in Seattle, where they "received his blessing," says Lang. The play, directed by Seret Scott, opened on June 8 at the DC Jewish Community Center's Cecile Goldman Theater. Lawrence died June 9 at the age of 82.

"That he lived long enough to give his blessing is, in retrospect, quite remarkable," says Lang. "To me, it says it was meant to be."

Written by Karen L.B. Evans, *Leaving*

*the Summer Land* follows one fictional family's move from the Mississippi Delta to Chicago in 1917. It provides audiences with insight into the racism, family, and financial issues that African Americans encountered during the northward migration.

To date, the foundation, funded by Lang and Sprenger, has spent more than \$200,000 on the full-length production. She was advised on the production by her brother, actor Stephen Lang '73. Since its premiere, parts of the script are being reworked, and she says plans are being made to perform the play in several cities where major retrospectives of Lawrence's work will be displayed, including Washington, D.C., next summer; New York in November 2001; and Los Angeles in June 2001.

"This was not a commercial venture.

This play is about art and education. My objective was to bring this story to a wider audience. Not just an African-American audience but anyone. This is a gift," she says.

Lang says her father, Eugene Lang '38, who founded the "I Have a Dream" inner-city student mentoring program, and mother, Theresa, both taught her the importance of giving: "It's just something one does. We never expected to make our money back. I love the theater. I think it's the most powerful forum for communication."

—Audree Penner



KEN COBB

# The good life

QUAKER FARMER MARGARET THOMAS REDMON '79 SERVES HER LAND AND COMMUNITY.

**T**welve-year-old Jessica Redmon was in the health food store buying her favorite granola. Peering into the granola, the salesman said, “Oh, there’s a bug in there.” “Yes,” said Jessica, “but it’s alive. So there’s nothing in there that can hurt me either.”

Jessica, the daughter of Margaret Thomas Redmon '79, isn't spooked at all by bugs in her cereal—as long as they're alive. As her mother says: “If an apple has a worm hole in it, or the corn has a worm in its end, and you want to control your intake of chemicals and pesticides, those are the ones to buy.” And she should know. After taking over her family’s farm, east of Louisville, Ky., to save it from auction, Redmon—along with husband Steve and other help—has spent the last eight years proving that sustainable and organic agriculture will produce, if not a cheaper product, then certainly a better one. The fruit of her labors is a reputation for raising cattle whose beef is sought after by top Louisville restaurants because of its legendary quality and taste.

Redmon’s success didn’t come easily. After learning to read soil tests and the fine print on seed, feed, fungicide, and pesticide packages and to research the impact of chemicals on soil and humans, she came to a conclusion: “It’s a Quaker precept that we are supposed to leave whatever we care for in better condition than we found it, and I became convinced that conventional farming doesn’t do that.” When it proved difficult to find competent managers who subscribed to the Redmon philosophy, the Redmons were faced with extensive hands-on work themselves. “But I am really convinced that we need to save our family farms,” Redmon says. “Parents want to pass a farm in good condition on to their children. Corporations don’t care.”

The Redmon farm covers 3,500 acres, about 60 percent of which is woodland. On the remaining 1,200 acres, their pastures include a mix of a warm-season grass, a cool-season grass, a legume, and plants such as black-eyed Susans and wild flowers. Crops are scrupulously rotated to control weeds and pests. Last year, their



STEVE REDMON

**“I’M REALLY CONVINCED WE NEED TO SAVE OUR FAMILY FARMS. PARENTS WANT TO PASS A FARM IN GOOD CONDITION ON TO THEIR CHILDREN,” SAYS MARGARET REDMON (LEFT) SHOWN HERE WITH HER DAUGHTER JESSICA.**

having multispecies grasslands saved the cattle during a statewide fescue toxemia outbreak because the Redmon pastures contained a much smaller proportion of fescue than most.

From the beginning, the Redmons eschewed the routine use of antibiotics and growth hormones for the animals, giving antibiotics only to sick ones.

Although, without the hormones and antibiotics, achieving market weight costs a little more and takes a little longer, and the animals have to be more closely observed for signs of illness, infection, or injury, Redmon says it’s worth it. They don’t use electric cattle prods either, which traumatize the animals. A stressed cow will not produce choice beef.

With a herd of 150 cows and 3 or 4 bulls, Redmon pays close attention to the animals’ diet and ensures that calves that are fed out for beef have sufficient feeding space. Their diet consists of hay, silage made from corn or another grain, added protein such as toasted soy beans, and vitamin and mineral supplements. Redmon has various recipes for mixing fiber and grain to achieve the ideal nutritional blend. “A lot of the mixes I use go back to long before commercial supplements and vitamin packs were available,” she says. Some of her greatest resources are elderly farm hands from before World War II, before the existence of chemical-driven farming.

The farm sells beef under its own label, Honey Locust valley Farms. One restaurant buys all the Redmon tenderloin it can get, even if it costs \$13.75 a pound. “It’s a quality issue,” Redmon says. “Between low stress, lack of hormones and antibiotics, healthy diet, and postslaughter treatment, we have some of the best beef in the country.” Steve can immediately recognize whether beef being served under the Redmon label in a restaurant is or isn’t theirs. “We have to protect our trademark,” says Redmon, who ironically cannot eat beef or pork.

“Business practices that ascribe to a high level of integrity and concern for the welfare of others can be very successful, provided you pay attention to the bottom line,” Redmon says. “Many people will pay more for a better product and compensate by being careful to avoid waste. Every farmer in Kentucky could do exactly what we do and sell their beef because it’s better beef. And if we don’t have idealists in business, we’re in trouble.”

—Carol Brévar-Demm

# Yoga off the mat

JOURNEY OF A YOGA TEACHER

By Leslea Haravon Collins '89

Life's journeys take interesting turns and show us roads—and midwestern states—we never knew existed. Once upon a time, I was a philosophy major at Swarthmore. Now, I am a Yoga teacher in Iowa. I have taught Yoga for years now, and although it was not part of my identity as a Swarthmore student, it is integral to who I am today.

For me, Yoga is not so much about postures, positions, and twisting like a pretzel as it is about how and who we want to be, particularly when stressful or uncomfortable situations arise. My Yoga teachers call this practice “Yoga Off the Mat.” According to these teachers, it is through developing posture, breathing, and meditation techniques that we learn to ride the waves that life will inevitably send us.

The aim of the Yoga practitioner is not to avoid stress or conflict but to move through life's ups and downs with openness, compassion, and equanimity. In our stress-wracked culture, where immediate gratification and efficient productivity are valued above inner peace and personal transformation, this goal is not simple to achieve. As anyone who knows me well can verify, I am far from being the serene Yogi. But I value the lesson of “being with what is” and relearn it daily, both on and off the Yoga mat.

How can Yoga postures help you ride life's waves? What does sitting in *Baddha Konasana* (bound angle posture) have to do with self-acceptance and compassion? The concept of the “edge” and a form of self-observation called witness consciousness are the Yogic links between posture and personal transformation.

The “edge” is any physical or emotional sensation that is challenging but not overwhelming. For example, suppose that as a student in my class you are sitting in bound angle posture, in which you place the soles of your feet together and allow your upper body to hinge forward with a straight back. Rather than counting the seconds as you hold this posture, eagerly awaiting the moment when I announce that we are “done,” you are invited to breathe



PHOTOS BY LINDA KAHILBAUGH/OWA ALUMNI MAGAZINE

*The lesson  
of the “edge”  
is to be  
exactly where  
we are  
and to honor  
that place.*

and to notice the feelings in your inner thighs and back. If you push beyond a gentle sensation into pain, the muscles tighten, defeating the purpose of the stretch. Conversely, if you don't go deep enough to feel any stretch at all, the body is not challenged to open and loosen. Between these two extremes lives the “edge” of sensation, where

you feel movement and openness in your muscles. The edge is the “just right” place where the body feels simultaneously safe and challenged in the posture.

In Yoga as well as in life, everyone's edges look different. In the bound angle posture, for example, one student may be sitting completely upright, whereas another has her head close to the floor. And some postures that feel easy and natural for you may be challenging for me. Off the mat, your edge may be speaking up in a group, whereas mine is learning to speak less! What is important is not how the posture looks or what the edge is but whether or not we are attuned to—and compassionate of—our body's own limits in that particular posture. For me, self-acceptance continues to be a difficult lesson to learn, both on and off the mat. It is one of my many “edges.”

I remember once sitting next to an absolutely stunning young woman in a class for Yoga teachers. Andrea was much more flexible than I, flowing into shapes that I had only seen in photographs. As I relaxed into my own postures, I could not help but notice the beautiful, twisting Andrea by my side. I felt rather despondent about my own



AFTER PRACTICING YOGA DURING HER PREGNANCY, LEA GAVE BIRTH TO HER FIRST CHILD, SERENA, THIS FALL. "IT WAS QUICK, INTENSE, AND I FEEL GREAT! SHE IS A BEAUTIFUL LITTLE PERSON," LEA SAID.

body's tightness. But measuring up to Andrea is not the goal of Yoga, I tried to remind myself. After class, I was surprised when Andrea complimented me on my Yoga. "You practiced with such integrity," she said. "It was clear that you were present in each stretch and were accepting who you are in the postures with compassion," she told me. "That is real Yoga." Her observation re-inspired me to accept who I am, tight hamstrings and all. This is the lesson of the edge: to be exactly where we are and to honor that place.

Just as we use the edge to listen to

the body, we use witness consciousness to observe the mind. Witness consciousness is the part of your mind that watches the rest of you with—and this point is important—a nonjudgmental and compassionate gaze. Yoga encourages us to develop our witness to see that we are not merely our racing thoughts and busy mind. One can practice being the witness in Yoga as well as in life's postures. As you move into a Yoga posture during my class, I might ask you not only to find your edge but to watch your mind.

Become witness to the ideas and thoughts racing through your head, and you may hear things like: "This hurts"; "I wish this would be over soon!"; "I hate my instructor"; or "I wonder what I'll have to eat after class." As witness, we can watch our minds travel at their lightning speed, trying as hard as they can to escape the moment, the now, the lived experience.

The witness responds to the busy mind's comments about pain, hunger, irritability with thoughts such as "Wow! I am really thinking a lot today," or "I seem impatient with this posture right now." Witness consciousness is not a judgmental experience. You would not be practicing it if, for example, you peppered your watchings with, "Why can't I quiet my mind?"; "I am so bad at this!"; or "I wonder if the other students are better than I am." The witness simply observes the thoughts in a detached way with interest but no judgment. And if you do find yourself involuntarily judging, then let

the witness enter here, simply witnessing the judging.

Practicing being the witness has helped me realize that my active, busy thoughts are not all of who I am. There is a part of me that is calm, centered, watching, and loving, which can steady me as I move into postures—in Yoga and in life—that are challenging or uncomfortable for me. Rather than avoiding these postures/situations, Yoga encourages me to enter the postures of life with compassion for myself and interest in my own reactions rather than with stress and judgment.

Witnessing your response to the stress of a challenging posture on the Yoga mat is practice for inviting the witness to life's challenges "off the mat." In the Andrea example, I might have become witness to my own anxiety about not being "as good as" she was. I could have listened to my thoughts and observed the insecure, competitive parts of myself. Needless to say, I was not able to do this; the witness is still a posture with which I struggle. But I learn from its edges and practice it daily.

The off-the-mat philosophy considers life to be one long Yoga practice, with each of us assuming posture after posture. The challenge in life is to find edges in each posture that we practice. We are encouraged to live in the place where growth and openness can occur, neither shying away from nor going beyond the edge of the situation. For example, perhaps one of your "life edges" is public speaking. Yoga off the mat would encourage you to find the place in the discomfort that neither avoids sensation (never attempting to speak to more than one person at a time), nor forces you beyond what you are currently capable of (making a formal speech to a large group). Instead, you might take a small step that challenges but does not overwhelm you, like making an informal presentation to a small group, all the while being witness to the experience, just like in Yoga class. By living on the edge of challenging "postures" in life and in Yoga, we grow, learn, and accept our minds, our bodies, our selves." ■

*Lea, an adjunct assistant professor of women's studies/sport health leisure and physical studies at the University of Iowa, is a Yoga teacher and aerobics instructor.*

# Letters

*continued from page 3*

reduced because of donor reactions to this commercial approach.

If one looks at the bottom line, MBNA is the only sure winner in this matter. Swarthmore itself has far too much to lose—in both its traditional principles and traditional financial support—to engage in this highly questionable, and ultimately divisive, mode of fund-raising.

VIRGINIA STERN BROWN '49

KENNETH BROWN '47  
San Francisco

*Diane Crompton, director of advancement operations, replies:* The College's decision to allow the Maryland National Bank Association (MBNA) to market a Swarthmore credit card was not driven by expectations of enormous financial gain but rather by the desire to give Swarthmore alumni an opportunity to identify with and promote the College every time they use a credit card. Only a tiny fraction of each purchase made with these cards accrues to the College, and it is being added to endowment for financial aid.

We chose MBNA because the bank shares the College's high standards regarding the privacy of alumni information. MBNA received only names, addresses, and telephone numbers—not Social Security numbers or mothers' maiden names. This information was not sold to the bank, nor may MBNA transmit it to other parties. Our agreement is solely to promote the affinity card.

More than 230 individuals applied for the Swarthmore affinity card during two weeks of telemarketing in September, and more than 200 more have submitted applications by mail. Persons who do not wish to be solicited may be taken off the list on request. Please write to the Alumni and Gift Records

Office, telephone (610) 328-8592, or e-mail records@swarthmore.edu.

## WORK ETHIC

Joanne Weill-Greenberg's ['96] letter in the September *Bulletin* sparked vivid memories of what I found most disappointing about Swarthmore: the contrast between the Quaker tradition of humility and the judgmental rhetoric of many who would invoke the mantle of "social responsibility." Weill-Greenberg feels her two-year presence in Kensington doing "good, productive work with disempowered people" gives her the right to chastise Empowered Painters (June "Collection") for mentioning that some of their employees don't have the "right work ethic." After calling this a "moralistic judgment," invoking the dreaded "middle- and upper-class values" and describing her view of the correct attitude for a Swarthmore graduate, she concludes with the hope that they will change their "characterization" of the people from Kensington. I disagree.

I agree that work ethic is a social construct, but in the United States, there really is a "right work ethic" for success in sustainable jobs. It includes punctuality, treating others with respect and fairness, doing the promised work for the promised price, and finishing the job in a timely fashion. Despite their "cultural context," most North Philadelphians are certainly capable of applying the same standard.

JAN MENEFEED McDONNELL '78  
La Canada, Calif.

## CORRECTION

The person identified in the middle photograph on page 34 of the September *Bulletin* was actually William Howard '44. Thanks to Howard Bowman '44 for pointing this out. He also identified the "lovely lass" in the top photo as Zoe Steliotes Meisenhelder '45.



# The Quiet of a Spinning Top

Continued from page 17



GEORGE WIDMAN

SOME STUDENTS THINK THE WRC IS NO LONGER A VITAL PART OF STUDENT LIFE. THE STATE OF THE WRC'S BULLETIN BOARD FOR MUCH OF THIS SEMESTER BOLSTERS THAT CONCERN. SEVERAL MONTHS AFTER PRANKSTERS TURNED THE CONTENTS OF MORE THAN 40 PARRISH HALL BULLETIN BOARDS UPSIDE DOWN, THE WRC'S BOARD WAS THE ONLY ONE WHOSE CONTENTS WERE STILL ASKEW.

Unfortunately, neither of these conceptions captures the present-day WRC. Its current mission statement describes its board as a "nonpartisan organization" that, rather than taking particular stances on issues, "initiates and facilitates discussion and events concerning women." Drawing women, feminist or not, to the WRC remains a challenge, as is determining what to draw them to.

By broadening its mission in order to attract women with a wide variety of political and social views, some students, including former board members, think the center has lost the strong sense of direction that galvanized its members in the first place. Although the WRC's mission closely resembles the center's original intent of being a place for all women on campus, the lack of a clear identification with feminism poses the question: Can a designated space for women be apolitical, and should it even try to be?

The answer depends on whom you talk to. "A lot of politics can make some students feel unwelcome," says board member Siobhan Carty '01, a psychology and history major. "I feel a board with eclectic politics and values can better serve the community."

"I think the board should have a more defined purpose and take a more political and feminist standpoint," counters

**"The idea of being a center for multiple points of view was difficult for some of us to imagine. Many of us were reluctant to give up that feminist identity."**

**—Alida Zweidler-McKay**

board member and Honors biology major Tanyaporn Wansom '02. "I think that you can have something by just being women, but it can be so much more when you have similar beliefs and are fighting for a cause."

The current state of the WRC contrasts sharply with other centers and groups at the College, most noticeably with the Swarthmore African American Student Society and the Black Cultural Center, which is celebrating its 30th anniversary with a year's worth of

events. Both centers—albeit with different origins and goals—were founded within a few years of each other, but the differences in their vibrancy could not be more striking.

"Our political dreams for a comprehensive center didn't happen, but it was a consolidation of feminism at Swarthmore," Crosby says. "That's an achievement, and it's a real triumph that it still exists."

"Nobody knows what we do or what we're supposed to be doing," says Wansom. "A lot of times, I don't have a clear idea myself and often bring it up during meetings. I think the WRC is making progress, but I believe it could have a much larger presence on campus."

Whether the WRC can achieve a presence on campus similar to or even greater than what it once had is difficult to predict. The center has proven it can reinvent itself. Can it revitalize itself as well? ■



# In 'toon with campus life

SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE: PHOENIX CARTOONS CHRONICLE STUDENT LIFE.

By Carol Brévert-Demm



NOVEMBER 1943: A DECIDEDLY WEAKENED YET STILL VITAL-LOOKING PHOENIX LANGUISHES IN THE FLAMES IN RESPONSE TO CRITICISM THAT THE PAPER HAD REACHED A "NEW LOW IN VULGARITY AND PROFANITY."

In 1754, newspapers around the country reproduced an image depicting a snake divided into eight pieces with each of its sections representing one of the American colonies and the caption "JOIN or DIE" beneath it. Generally acknowledged as the first American political cartoon, this visual commentary was intended by its creator, none other than Benjamin Franklin, to promote the idea of colonial unity. Since then, newspaper publishers have been using the skills of cartoonists to deliver editorial commentary—scathing, mocking, witty, or just plain comical—on issues of global, national, regional, or local importance.

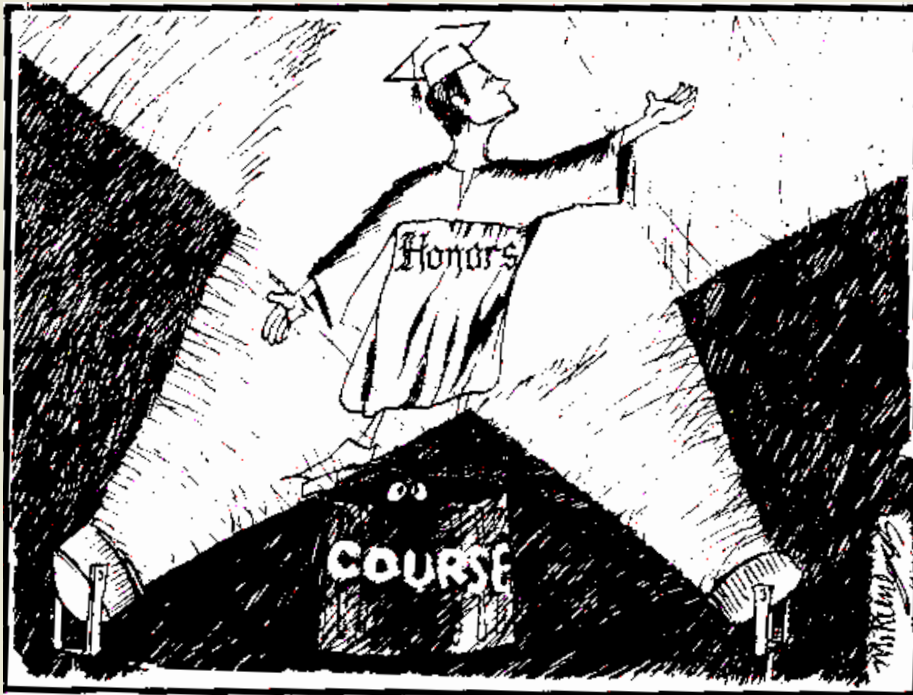
The "Opinions" section of *The Phoenix* dates back to the beginning of the last century. Its precursor was known as the "Court of Last Retort,"

where the following invitation was issued: "If you believe something is rotten in the state of Swarthmore, if you have some bone to pick with the cuisine, ... with the administration, with College politics, the courses, the coiffures, or table manners, pick it here." Swarthmore students have done just that—some of them in pictures. Because producing editorial cartoons requires not only artistic talent but also sophisticated and analytical thought, it's hardly surprising to find that, over the decades, the College community has harbored—and been the target of—many fine cartoonists.

The following selection from *The Phoenix* shows cartoons that appeared between 1943 and 2000. It's interesting to note that although times change, themes do not.

SEPTEMBER 1997: THE COLLEGE'S WAY OF PRESENTING CAMPUS DIVERSITY COMES UNDER FIRE FROM STUDENTS.

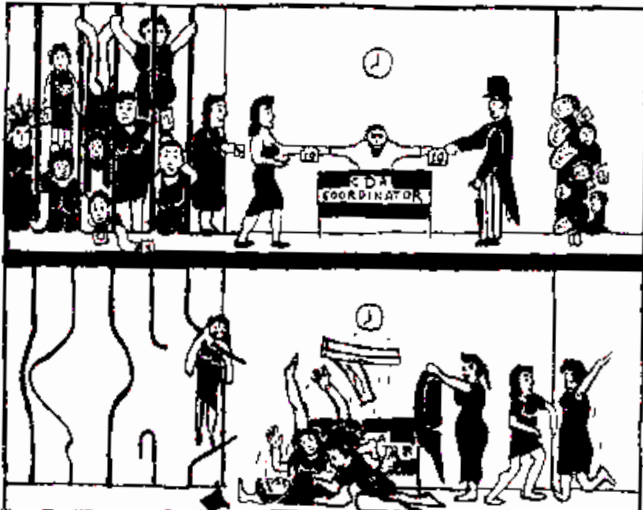




OCTOBER 1983: IN THE ETERNAL DEBATE OVER HONORS VERSUS COURSE, THE PERCEPTION THAT HONORS STUDENTS ARE FAVORED IS NOT UNUSUAL.

*Crying in Your Beer on WSGA Weekend?*

## Dating Brokerage May Bring Solace



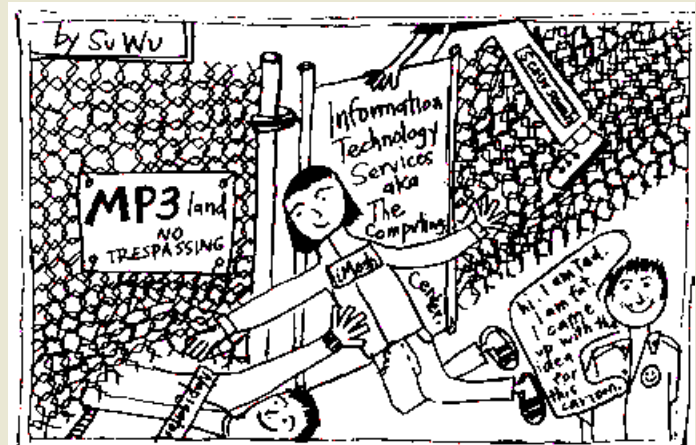
MARCH 1963: WOMEN'S STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION WEEKEND IS A HOT TOPIC, AS—WITH THE TABLES TURNED—MEN WAIT, SOMETIMES IN VAIN, TO BE INVITED OUT BY THE WOMEN.



"...AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE QUAKER HERITAGE OF FAIRNESS WHICH PERMEATES THIS CAMPUS WE WILL DEAL WITH THE SAGA WORKERS AS THE DEMAND SUPPLY CONDITIONS OF THE ECONOMY DICTATE."

MARCH 1979: WORKERS AT SHARPLES DINING HALL REQUEST A GENERAL COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT TO THEIR SALARIES AND ARE DISAPPOINTED WITH THE COLLEGE'S RESPONSE.

OCTOBER 2000: STUDENTS PROTEST INTERNET RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY THE COLLEGE'S INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES.



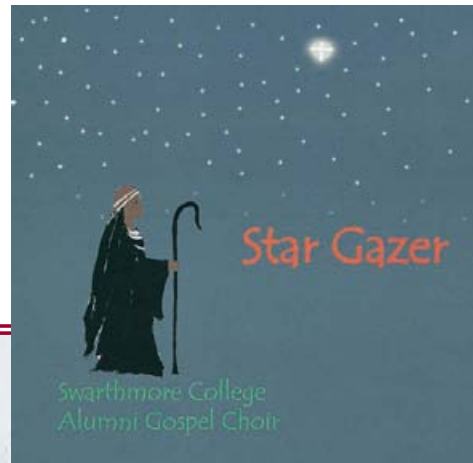
# Holiday Music from Swarthmore



## A NEW RECORDING BY THE ALUMNI GOSPEL CHOIR

The Swarthmore College Alumni Gospel Choir has released a new recording of holiday music, *Star Gazer*. The album features both traditional Christmas music and gospel selections celebrating the birth of Jesus.

The choir, founded by African-American students in 1971 and transformed into a permanent alumni group in the mid-1970s, launched the new CD with December concerts at the Swarthmore Friends Meetinghouse and the First Pentacostal Holy Church in Chester, Pa.



WAYNE WARNECKE

COPIES OF *STAR GAZER* ON CD OR CASSETTE  
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