DoreWays

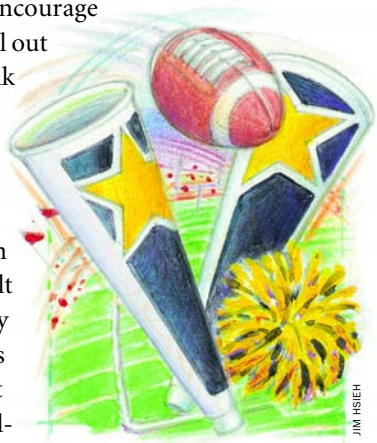
A forum for exchanging ideas

From the Editor

Did You See Us?

If you were on campus the second Friday in October to attend Reunion, chances were good that you ran into someone from the *Vanderbilt Magazine* editorial staff. It's a big campus, I know—330 acres. And we occupied a small percentage of the grounds—a table under the hospitality tent. But we were interested in finding readers, and once we found them we wanted to hear their thoughts about the magazine.

That's part of what drove us to, for the first time ever, set up a *Vanderbilt Magazine* presence at Reunion. But we had a secondary agenda, one not directly connected to hearing from our readers. And in the interest of full disclosure, here it is. We owned a beautiful piece of art that was created for the "Greetings from Vanderbilt" feature that appeared in the summer issue. GayNelle Doll, our associate editor, and I had been debating what to do with the art; it just seemed too good to use only once. We settled on T-shirts and on using the T-shirts as the carrot to encourage Reunion revelers to take a break from the celebration, fill out a survey, and perhaps sit down and tell us what they think about *Vanderbilt Magazine*.



JIM HSIEH

I won't pretend that our survey was by any stretch scientific. Our methodology was loose ("tell us what you think"—well, maybe a little more rigorous than that), and our respondents were self-selected. What do I mean by that? First, they were committed enough to Vanderbilt to have returned to campus for Reunion. Second, they wanted a T-shirt. I'm sure that any reader who makes his or her living in marketing will agree wholeheartedly that our approach bore little resemblance to the scientific collection of data.

Scientific or not, however, we had a chance we rarely get: to talk face to face with readers about what we do. Many of the comments were gratifying. Readers—at least those at Reunion who wanted a T-shirt—seemed to have noticed and to have appreciated the effort that went into the magazine's redesign four years ago. It was exciting to hear story ideas from so many readers. The suggestions were varied, and I'm sure many will find a place in our editorial lineup. A story on food allergies was one suggestion. "Joe B. Wyatt: Where is he now?" was another. One wild-eyed optimist suggested a story on Vanderbilt's winning football season. That suggestion, we thought, deserved a couple of T-shirts.

But the issue you hold in your hands was developed before Reunion. So you won't find a story on food allergies. Nor will you find one on Joe B. Wyatt. I'm sad to say that you won't find a story about our winning football season, either. That's for next year. But we're listening to your suggestions, and you'll see some of them in the future. And for those T-shirtless readers who want to be heard, write me. Or write GayNelle. We want to hear your thoughts about *Vanderbilt Magazine*. Who knows? You may find a T-shirt in the return mail. No promises, though.

Ken Schexnayder

From the Reader

Library Allegations

There are two reasons why traditional libraries are dying: the American Library Association and librarians themselves [in reference to the feature article "The Infinite Library," Summer 2005 issue, p. 38].

In the '60s the ALA promoted the oversupply of recycled liberal-arts graduates who became librarians. These graduates soon learned there were too many librarians and too few openings. The graduates also noticed that the ALA promoted alternative politics and lifestyles. Success was not Darwinian, as the best-connected rather than the fittest saw their careers advance.

Librarians who waited for the field to open up were further deceived by ALA propaganda, which downplayed the closing of schools of library science all over the United States. Now middle-aged librarians must retrain to make a realistic adjustment to the job market.

Joe Roberts, M.C.P.
Psychologist and former librarian

Fair and Balanced?

In the Summer 2004 issue, Mr. Carl Conner first suggested that *Vanderbilt Magazine* is not politically fair and balanced. In response to my protestations [which ran in the following issue], he asserted in the Summer 2005 issue that this does not involve freedom of speech issues, but rather "is a matter of the goals and objectives of your magazine, which reflects the goals and objectives of Vanderbilt University." Finally, he suggests that I have called for a "far-left political bias" to be maintained by the magazine.

I reiterate what I wrote in my previous letter, that *Vanderbilt Magazine* should not attempt to be ideologically neutral, because there is no such thing. I never called for a "far-left political bias" to be maintained by *Vanderbilt Magazine*.

I simply object to the suggestion, even when couched within an appeal for fairness, that any public information entity should be compelled to provide content in support of any particular ideological point of view. I subscribe to the concept that educated people of good will can view, read, make up their own minds, and respond accordingly with constructive criticism to the editorial content proffered by any publication or entity. Publications are accountable for their offerings. But to suggest, as Mr. Connor has, that certain content should not be printed because it does not serve the goals and objectives of Vanderbilt University is, in my opinion, going too far.

Permit me to illustrate by quoting a letter from another alumni publication I receive, the *University of Chicago Magazine*. In the December 2004 issue, the *U of C Magazine* published an article highlighting the contributions of several lesser-known alumni to the war in Iraq (better-known Chicago alumni involved in the Iraq war include Paul Wolfowitz, Ahmad Chalabi and John Ashcroft). In the February 2005 issue, one antiwar alumnus responded to the December article: "I seriously question if the Magazine well serves the interests of the U of C by highlighting the importance of graduates in the conception and management of this tragic Iraq adventure."

I believe that this writer, who appears to use the same rationale as Mr. Connor, goes too far. He suggests that the *U of C Magazine* should not print certain content because it fails to serve the interests of the university itself. Is this not a freedom of speech issue? What could cause an alumni publication of a major university to consider *not* writing an article about the wartime contributions of its own alumni? Perhaps threats of the withholding of annual gifts by the antiwar alumni? This would be a travesty. The university and its students would suffer.

Fair and balanced? I believe in a fair day's pay and a balanced federal budget. But to suggest that an alumni magazine, or any magazine, could be "fair and balanced" suggests that this abstract concept can be operationally defined in print. I maintain that it cannot. There are thousands of publications, and each has its own editorial identity and its own goals and objectives. *Vanderbilt Magazine* exists to provide us with the gift of a self-congratulatory aura that keeps on giving, and keeps us giving. But I believe it has another role, too.

The original intent of the First Amendment was to neutralize political self-interest through the provision of rights ensuring a free marketplace for ideas. In my opinion, the goal of the University, as well as *Vanderbilt Magazine,* should be to serve as such a marketplace. I hope the magazine continues to print an ever-wider range of ideas. And I hope that Vanderbilt alums, like Mr. Connor, will continue to provide constructive criticism of the content of the magazine. The quality of our University is reflected in the quality of our discourse here.

PATRICK FEEHAN, BE'72
Columbia, Mo.

Chocolate Deficiency

YOUR ARTICLE ON THE TRUFFLES MADE by Katrina Markoff [Summer 2005 issue, "One Chocolate at a Time," p. 32] mentioned nothing about what cacao she uses, what percentage of chocolate she prefers for her truffles, and why she did not simply allow the chocolate flavor to identify itself as chocolate, without adding all the other superimposed spices.

After all, good chocolate is good, just by itself. Isn't it?

RAYMOND AND EMILY HOCHE-MONG, BA'55
Montara, Calif.

Pain of a Ph.D.

THIS IS IN RESPONSE TO AN ARTICLE BY Vanessa Valdes [Summer 2005 issue, "Laughter in Pain," p. 7].

Get a job, have a family, live a life. When Nora Chafin was dean of women, Vanderbilt women were taught to be ladies, not feminists and crybabies.

Also, hooray for the Tennessee Court of Appeals. History should not be rewritten.

MARY WILLETTS DAVIS, BA'50
Columbus, Ga.

continued on page 82

Life and Death Choices

The worlds of good and bad choices collide nightly in the trauma bay.
By Kevin High


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY NEIL BRAKE

I was tired. It was 2 in the morning on a hot July night. We responded to a motor-vehicle accident in a nearby rural county. I was inside the car with a young man. He was pinned by the dashboard and steering wheel. As I leaned over him trying to gain access to his airway, I smelled beer and bad body odor. I was sweating, and as the rivulets of sweat came off my forehead, they made little splotches in the white powder that covered the inside of the car. The powder had come from the deployment of his airbag. That was about the only thing this guy had going for him. No seat belt, drunk, and in a bad wreck.

As I look up I see the volunteer firefighters working hard to cut him out. After a few minutes, one of them passes out from exhaustion. The firefighter is taken to an ambulance and treated; I stay with my patient. Shortly thereafter we get him out. He is combative and attempts to spit at one of the paramedics helping us. I smile inwardly because I know that shortly we will overcome all his brain-injured and alcohol-induced behavior with drugs.

We move him to the running helicopter. My partner and I begin the flogging we both know so well. She and I have worked together many years; no need to talk. I know what she is thinking and anticipate her needs by making eye contact. Simple hand gestures and mouthing a few words make the complex and dangerous task of securing his airway almost effortless. Giving him drugs to sedate and chemically paralyze him, inserting an airway, and ventilating him take two or three minutes. We accomplish this with less than 10 words between us, insert a central IV line into his groin and start infusing blood. Tubes and lines are quickly inserted into almost every orifice of his body.

Our pilot lets us know we have an eight-minute ETA to the trauma center helipad as we continue to polish, buff and "massage up" our patient. Our goal is to have him packaged well and ready to meet the awaiting trauma team. We land at the trauma center, and I exit the aircraft to get our stretcher. As we unload him I quickly glance back at the interior of our aircraft. It is covered in trash and looks like the floor of a butcher shop. After unloading we ride the elevator 14 floors to the ER. It takes about 90 seconds. In that time we don't talk; we know what to do. She is pulling off equipment, and I'm doing a quick reassessment. When the elevator doors open downstairs, we are out and moving quickly to the ER.

We pass by an administrator, nicely dressed, carrying a clipboard. She frowns as she smells the beer and sweat and sees blood dripping on the floor. As we move closer she backs up as if some invisible "trauma patient force field" is pressing her against the wall. We pass quickly without speaking. Her look follows us through the doors of the Emergency Department.

As we approach the trauma bay, I guide the head of the stretcher into the room and give a brief report to the awaiting trauma team. The trauma attending physician is there along with the junior and senior residents. This is a familiar place with familiar faces. Several of them I've known since they were in medical school. The attending physician has been here even longer. All of them look tired but attentive to what is going on.

The nurses move into action. One looks up and smiles at me with her eyes. Everything else is covered up with gowns, gloves and masks to prevent body-fluid exposure. The trauma bay can be a dangerous place. I've had colleagues suffer needle sticks and blood splashes that can cause hepatitis, AIDS and other nasty illnesses.

For those of us in this business, the repetition, sense of team integrity and familiarity are comforting. The resuscitation follows a specific order with everyone using a systematic approach. The patient is very sick, his blood pressure dangerously low and his brain swelling. There is a great chance he will die.

I step outside and go to find his family. My partner does some quick cleaning of equipment while our pilot refuels the aircraft.

I find his mother in the waiting room. I tell her what happened, and a few details about the wreck and his condition. I try to soothe her nerves. She weeps; I sense it is not just for this time but for all the times she has bailed

continued on page 83

1,000 Words

One image frozen in time

Golden September

There was much joy on West End Avenue this fall as Vanderbilt won its first four football games, a feat unmatched since 1984. The team received national coverage during its winning streak and played before wildly enthusiastic Vanderbilt crowds, but the spell was broken by Middle Tennessee State University in Vanderbilt's fifth game of the season. Pictured here, the 'Dores celebrate their third consecutive victory on Sept. 17 against Ole Miss. Photo by Neil Brake.

The Campus

"This requirement amounts to forced speech, *which*

STEVE MCALISTER/GETTY IMAGES

Constitutionality of Constitution Day Debated at Forum

When Vanderbilt's administration contacted Vanderbilt Law School Dean Ed Rubin about a new federal requirement that every educational institution receiving federal funds must celebrate Constitution Day, Rubin initially considered submitting a list of constitutional law classes currently in session.

But, according to Rubin, the new mandate, enacted as part of the appropriations bill of 2005 and sponsored by Sen. Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., carries an implicit threat. Institutions that fail to comply with the mandate to "celebrate Constitution Day" by teaching the Constitution risk losing their federal funding, and Vanderbilt receives millions of dollars of federal funding each year, mostly grants supporting medical research.

"This requirement passed without hearings and without any discussion," Rubin says. "It amounts to forced speech, which means that we're required to celebrate the Constitution by violating it."

Rubin chose to comply with the requirement by organizing a forum to debate its constitutionality. The forum, held Sept. 21 and recorded by C-SPAN, featured Rubin and law professors Rebecca Brown, Tom McCoy and Suzanna Sherry.

McCoy said that deliberate interference with freedom of speech is unconstitutional, but indirect or accidental interference is not unconstitutional. "One has to argue in this case, this is not accidental," he said.

Citing a recent survey of more than 100,000 high school students in which only half said newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of stories, Brown said, "We need Constitution Day." The requirement would be unconstitutional, Brown noted, if the government dictated content of the program. "What they've asked us to do is hold an educational program," she said. "The question is whether the government required us to adopt any point of view, and they didn't. We are simply required to provide an opportunity for speech to be given by anyone."

Sherry offered a historical perspective, noting that the Constitution had two serious flaws—an unworkable electoral process and the fact that "the Constitution not only permitted, but encouraged, slavery"—which were subsequently corrected. "That suggests that we haven't caught them all," she said. "It's important we remember that the Constitution is not perfect."

Vanderbilt Responds to Hurricanes

Gulf state license plates are easy to spot around campus this fall as approximately 100 students from colleges and universities displaced by Hurricane Katrina have continued their classes at Vanderbilt. Most of the displaced students are from Tulane University, but a few had planned to attend Loyola, the University of New Orleans or Southern University this semester. A number of faculty from Gulf Coast institutions also are being hosted by Vanderbilt departments so they may continue their research.

Vanderbilt Medical Center treated more than 70 Gulf Coast evacuees, hospitalizing more than 20, and its LifeFlight reserve helicopter and fixed-wing aircraft and their medical teams assisted in disaster relief and patient transport out of the region. Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center provided cancer treatment to hurricane evac-

Fall 2005

means that we're required to celebrate the Constitution by violating it. —LAW SCHOOL DEAN ED RUBIN

uees, and the School of Nursing opened a special clinic within the Vine Hill Clinic to treat hurricane disaster evacuees in Middle Tennessee. Many Medical Center faculty and staff volunteered in the disaster area through the National Guard, the Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMAT), or the Urban Search and Rescue teams (USAR).

DANIEL DUBOIS

Tulane student Brandon Yarberry enrolled at Vanderbilt this fall

The Middle Tennessee Medical Reserve Corps (MTMRC), created by the Vanderbilt School of Nursing, recruited more than 1,500 volunteers to help in the hurricane aftermath, opening a warehouse at Nashville's Municipal Auditorium to receive donated medical supplies. The MTMRC and Vanderbilt nurses also staffed a shelter at a Nashville church.

Students gathered for a Katrina prayer vigil Sept. 7 at the Bishop Joseph Johnson Black Cultural Center. Students, faculty and staff also collected food and items to be provided to evacuees, and Vanderbilt students on the meal plan traded side items for non-perishable items. Vanderbilt Dining Services matched the students' donations. Campus groups also held a number of fundraisers for hurricane victims, including a September benefit concert and car wash. Special collections at home football games have gone to victims through the Red Cross.

More than 100 students spent fall break helping Katrina survivors. Most traveled by bus to work in rural Louisiana townships of Washington Parish, clearing debris and conducting a needs assessment among residents. Other small groups volunteered in Mississippi.

Vanderbilt has established a fund by which alumni and others may contribute to the education expenses of displaced students and Vanderbilt students from the Gulf Coast affected by the storm, as well as a fund to provide support of Vanderbilt University Medical Center disaster-relief teams

{Details}

Where the Green Fern Grows

Workers renovating Buttrick Hall last year unearthed a botanical treasure—original plates used for the 1954 book *Ferns of Tennessee* by Peabody College professor Jesse Shaver. More than 40 of the book's elegant drawings—the handiwork of Peabody biology students more than 50 years ago—have found new life in a poster recently produced by Vanderbilt Campus Planning and Construction with the aid of University Creative Services. For information about purchasing the poster, contact the Vanderbilt Bookstore at 615/322-2994.

{Inquiring Minds}

Mean and Green


DOUGLAS C. WOODHAMS

Investigators at Vanderbilt University Medical Center reported in the October *Journal of Virology* that compounds secreted by frog skin are potent blockers of HIV infection. The findings could lead to topical treatments for preventing HIV transmission, and they reinforce the value of preserving Earth's biodiversity. "We need to protect these species long enough for us to understand their medicinal cabinet," says Louise A. Rollins-Smith, associate professor of microbiology and immunology, who has been studying the antimicrobial defenses of frogs for about six years. Frogs have specialized granular glands in the skin that produce and store packets of peptides, small protein-like molecules. In response to skin injury or alarm, the frog secretes large amounts of these antimicrobial peptides onto the surface of the skin to combat pathogens like bacteria, fungi and viruses.

Brain-Tumor Treatment Showing Promise

Glioblastoma multiforme is the medical name given to a very rare brain tumor that doctors often say is incurable. In the past, patients with the aggressive tumor were given little chance at any length of survival, but now, experts at the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center say they've uncovered what could lead to a promising new way to target and fight glioblastomas.

The new weapon is Gleevec, a molecularly targeted cancer drug made by Novartis that has been used to treat several other types of cancer. Drugs such as this zero in on molecular targets or specific cancer cells, thereby sparing surrounding normal, healthy tissue. They have been used to treat breast cancer, colon cancer, lung cancer, gastrointestinal stromal tumors and chronic myeloid leukemia. Pre-clinical trials using mice showed Gleevec inhibited the growth of glioblastoma.

Gene Identification Could Help Prevent Vision Loss


KATHLEEN WAYT/KRT

Investigators at Vanderbilt and Duke University have identified the first major gene that increases a person's risk of developing age-related macular degeneration (AMD). The progressive eye condition affects as many as 15 million people in the United States and is the leading cause of vision loss and legal blindness in people over age 60.

Researchers reported in March in *Science Express,* the online version of the journal *Science,* that a common variant of the gene for Complement Factor H accounts for up to 43 percent of age-related macular degeneration. The finding "opens the door toward the possibility of pre-symptomatic testing and potentially even pre-symptomatic treatment," says first author Jonathan L. Haines, director of the Vanderbilt Center for Human Genetics Research.

Vision loss often occurs late in the progression of AMD, and current treatments help stabilize the disease but do not reverse its course. The toll of AMD is expected to mount as the U.S. population ages. The disease affects nearly 30 percent of people over age 75.

assisting hurricane victims. For more information visit www.vanderbilt.edu/katrina.

Med Students Open Free Clinic

Vanderbilt medical students have opened Vanderbilt's first student-run free clinic to address the acute and chronic health needs of uninsured patients. Opened in September, the Shade Tree Family Clinic operates on a walk-in basis one weekday evening per week and on Saturday afternoons. Located near Dickerson Pike, the clinic serves the East Nashville, Bordeaux and Belshire neighborhoods, all of which are communities with limited health-care access.

In addition to providing health-care services, tests and screenings, the clinic offers health education and social services. In the clinic's first year, students hope to provide approximately 1,000 walk-in patients with free, non-emergency medical services.

File-Sharing Programs Blocked

eDonkey has been kicked off campus. DirectConnect has lost its connection. And Gnutella is not available.

In October, Vanderbilt blocked the three peer-to-peer file-sharing programs used for illegal downloading of music, films and other intellectual property. Internet traffic from Gnutella, eDonkey and DirectConnect is no longer transported through Vanderbilt Information Technology Services, according to Matt Hall, assistant vice chancellor for ITS. "We've been monitoring this traffic for months," Hall

says. "It uses up more than a third of our bandwidth, and even more than that at times. We can't have that kind of traffic interrupting the legitimate needs of the University, such as patient care and research."

Vanderbilt in Top Tier of National Research Universities

Vanderbilt University ranks 24th in the value of federal research grants awarded to faculty members, according to the National Science Foundation. The ranking, published in August and based on fiscal year 2003, advances Vanderbilt one position from last year, when the University broke into the top tier of the nation's research universities by jumping from 31st to 25th.

The rankings are based on reports filed by federal funding agencies. Because nearly all federal research grants are awarded on the basis of scientific merit, the value of federal research and development awards a university receives is one of the yardsticks used to gauge the quality of its research.

The list shows Vanderbilt is competitive with research powerhouses such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (ranked No. 21) and 26th-ranked University of Califor-

The Shape of Things to Come

Lauryn Langhorne (left) and Amanda Thompson take their turn at the wheel in the new E. Bronson Ingram Studio Arts Center on Garland Avenue. Completion of the $13 million center coincides with Vanderbilt's addition of a studio arts major.

NEIL BRAKE

nia, Berkeley. Vanderbilt's steady rise is the "result of careful and aggressive junior- and senior-faculty hiring" accompanied by "significant institutional investments" in research and associated infrastructure, says Dennis G. Hall, associate provost for research and graduate education.

According to the report, the total value of federal R&D grants awarded to Vanderbilt in 2003 grew to $235 million, a 9-percent increase over the previous fiscal year. Eighty-nine percent of the total was granted by Health and Human Services, home of the National Institutes of Health. This reflects the research strength of Vanderbilt University Medical Center and its large NIH research budget, combined with the widespread emphasis on health-related research throughout campus. At $9.4 million, the next largest source of research funding was the Department of Defense, followed by the NSF at $8.3 million.

MBA Program Focuses on Health Care

Responding to demand for health-care leaders with advanced and specialized education, the Owen Graduate School of Management has announced a health-care MBA program in collaboration with Vanderbilt University Medical Center and health-care companies. The inaugural class began studies this fall.

Students will earn a traditional MBA with a concentration in a discipline such as finance, management, operations or marketing, but with a curriculum requiring more health care-specific courses than any other program of its kind in the nation.

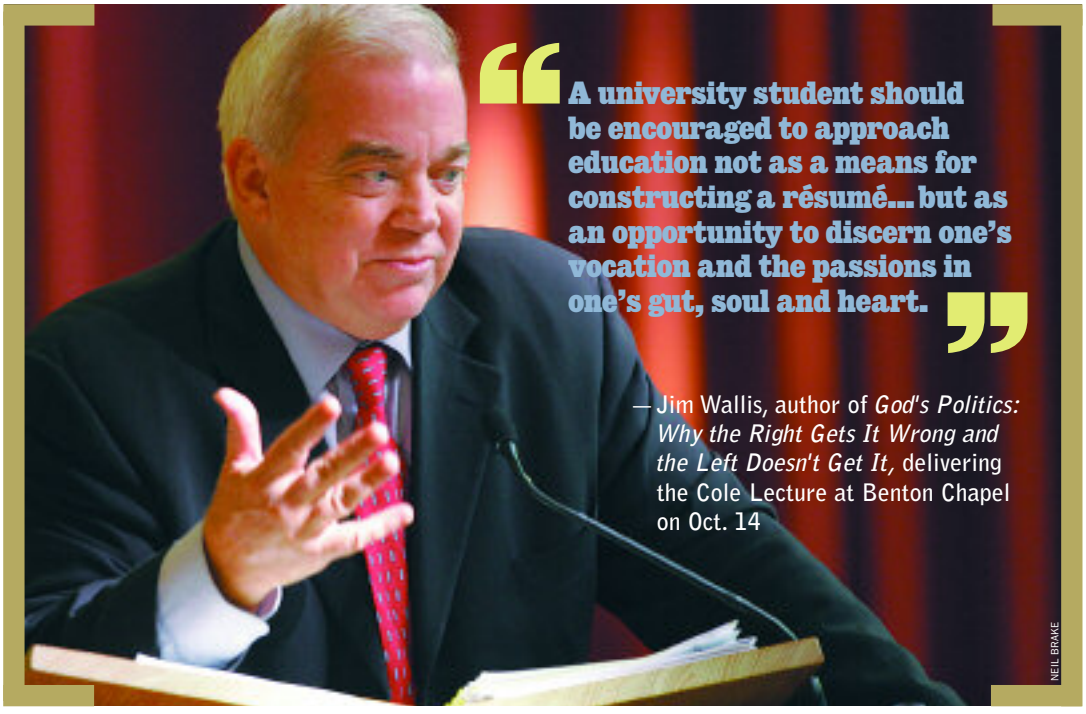
"Health-care executives told us that, because of the unusual and complex nature of their industry, graduates who will have immediate impact will need not only an MBA, but one that has exposed them to considerably more about the way that industry operates," says Owen School Dean Jim Bradford. "The demand for employees who can really make a difference is growing. Health care now represents 15 percent of our nation's gross domestic product, and costs are rising unabated. One out of 12 Americans works in the health-care industry. Yet the quality of our health-care system overall continues to decline."

© IMAGES.COM/CORBIS

Health-care MBA students will study under the Owen School's faculty as well as instructors drawn from the health-care industry, examining strategic, economic, ethical and operational aspects of health care. Elective courses will allow students to tailor the degree to prepare for careers in health services, medical devices, biotech, consulting, pharmaceuticals and managed care.

Veteran health-care executive Jon Lehman has been named associate dean for health care and will have responsibility for the new Health Care MBA program, while continuing to conduct research and teach health-care information technology strategy classes as professor for the practice of management.

"Nashville is a dynamic health-care capital, home to organizations that are world leaders in hospital manage-



ment, outpatient services, disease management, pharmaceutical services, academic medicine, medical technology and health-information technology," says Dr. Harry Jacobson, vice chancellor for health affairs at Vanderbilt and chairman of the Nashville Health Care Council. Jacobson, who also teaches a health-care entrepreneurship course at the Owen School, was instrumental in the creation of the Vanderbilt Health Care MBA program.

"Our intent is to design a program that will produce graduates with the skills today's public and private health-care providers need most: cutting-edge management expertise and an in-depth understanding of the complexities of the health-care sector."

Databank to Be a Trove of Anonymous DNA Information

The successful sequencing of the human genome several years ago opened the door for treatments tailored to fit an individual's genetic profile. Crossing the threshold of this doorway requires large-scale research efforts to find key links between genes and disease, and between genes and drug response. To help investigators uncover those links, Vanderbilt University Medical Center is beginning to build an anonymous database of genetic and clinical information.

"The establishment of this database will allow researchers to conduct important genetic research more effectively and efficiently, which in turn will help improve care for patients," says Dr. Gordon R. Bernard, assistant vice chancellor for research.

The database resource will use blood that would otherwise be discarded to obtain anonymous genetic samples. Computer algorithms will remove all identifying information from the medical record and link the remaining anonymous clinical information to the DNA sample. Patients who do not wish to have their discarded blood used for research, even anonymously, will have the option of not being included.

Investigators will use the resource to look for patterns and parallels among patients with similar diseases or those who have taken similar medications. "We're most interested in finding the genes that predict common, complex diseases, like diabetes, Alzheimer's disease, cancer and heart disease," says Jonathan L. Haines, director of the Vanderbilt Center for Human Genetics Research.

GETTY IMAGES

"These kinds of diseases have multiple genetic and environmental contributions, so statistically we need many, many patient samples to have a hope of finding the links. Having access to more detailed clinical information will also help us find these genes."

Finding patterns and parallels among the billions of "letters" of DNA—to narrow in on genes that influence drug response or cause disease—requires large numbers of samples. VUMC hopes to build the database at the rate of 50,000 samples per year, with an ultimate goal of more than 1 million samples, says Jill Pulley, director of the DNA Databank resource.

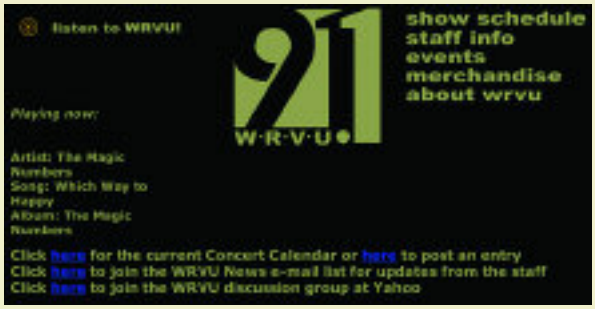
Medical Center Ads Reach Out to Gay and Lesbian Community

Vanderbilt University Medical Center is launching a series of print and television ads in an effort to reach out to Middle Tennessee's gay and lesbian community. The ads are designed to let members of that community know that Vanderbilt is not only an accepting environment in which to work, but it's also a great place for the gay and lesbian community to receive medical care, explains Joel G. Lee, associate vice chancellor for Medical Center communications.

"It's the right thing to do," Lee says. "It expresses our philosophy and values to this unique and diverse group."

The gay and lesbian market is also one that is growing, willing to express preferences, and has expendable income. Surveys have shown that on average, a gay or lesbian household has nearly double the median income of other households in Tennessee, based on the last census data. It's also a mar- »

{Virtual Vanderbilt}



http://www.wrvu.org/

Not Your Father's Radio Station

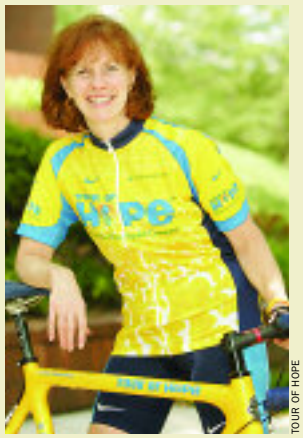
If you can't find anything you like on WRVU, you're just too picky. Among dozens of program offerings on Vanderbilt's student-operated alternative radio station are "Camera Obscura" (classical), "Out ov the Coffin" (goth and dark music), "Out of the Closet" (gay and lesbian news), "91 Montmartre" (French music), "Sacred Hymns" (Orthodox liturgical music), "Morning Masala" (South Asian/Indian), and "Reggae Rush Hour." The station that has given students a chance to be deejays for 50 years is now attracting cyberlisteners to its Web site, where you'll find a program calendar, concert schedule, a WRVU discussion group and more.

{Top Picks}

Yoo Testifies in Supreme Court Chief Hearings

Christopher Yoo, professor of law, testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee at the confirmation hearings for Supreme Court Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. Yoo, who was called by the Republicans to testify, worked for Roberts at the Washington, D.C., law firm of Hogan & Hartson in the late 1990s. At Vanderbilt Yoo's work focuses primarily on how technological innovation and cutting-edge theories of economics are transforming the regulation of telecommunications and electronic media.

Nursing Professor Rides with Lance Armstrong



TOUR OF HOPE

Joan King, a cancer survivor and director of the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing's Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Program, was chosen to ride alongside seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong in the Bristol-Myers Squibb Tour of Hope. The tour began in San Diego Sept. 29 and ended in Washington, D.C., Oct. 8. King, along with 23 other teammates, covered 3,300 miles in nine days. The team was broken into groups of six, who took turns pounding the pavement 24 hours a day. "The ride itself, in many ways, is meant to correlate with having cancer," says the breast-cancer survivor. "It's a team approach, you need experts there to help you, and you don't always know what's ahead."

HIV Work Garners Award

Steven P. Raffanti, associate professor of medicine at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, has been recognized by the HIV Medicine Association. Raffanti, who is also chief medical officer of the Comprehensive Care Center in Nashville, received the association's 2005 Emerging Leader in HIV Clinical Education Award in October during the annual meeting of the Infectious Diseases Society of America in San Francisco. As director of AIDS services for Metropolitan Nashville, Raffanti forged a coalition of business and civic leaders to establish the Comprehensive Care Center, now Tennessee's largest out-patient HIV treatment facility. During the past 10 years, it has enrolled more than 5,000 patients. Raffanti also spearheaded development of a statewide AIDS Centers of Excellence program, which cares for two-thirds of the state's HIV patients. It is considered a national model for comprehensive and cost-effective primary care for people with AIDS.

ket Lee says has been underserved by the corporate community and the media.

The ads are currently set to run in gay and lesbian media only, but Lee says they also may be placed in the mainstream media. A print ad ran in the October issue of *Out & About Newspaper*, a statewide GLBT newspaper. A television ad will run on the GLBT news and information show "Out & About Today" on NewsChannel5+ on Comcast cable channel 50.

It isn't the first time Vanderbilt has reached out to a specific community—advertising campaigns have run in Hispanic newspapers—but this marks the first time the Medical Center has marketed to an emerging market like the gay and lesbian group.

Vanderbilt has offered domestic partner benefits to its employees since 2000, and since that time has also included sexual orientation in its nondiscrimination policy.

Vanderbilt Kennedy Center Celebrates Banner Year

The Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development has plenty to celebrate this year. Besides observing its 40th anniversary, the Center has acquired a couple of major recent grants.

The federal Administration on Developmental Disabilities has awarded the Kennedy Center a $2.5-million, five-year grant and designation as a University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service. Only 61 such centers exist nationwide. The Vanderbilt Center for Excellence will address four areas of emphasis: education and early intervention, individual and family-centered supports, health and mental health, and recreation and the arts.

The centers of excellence have played key roles in every major national disability initiative over the past four decades. Issues such as early intervention, health care, community-based services, inclusive and meaningful education, transition from school to work, employment, housing, assistive technology and transportation have directly benefited from the centers' model services, research and training.

"We will now be able to expand existing training and outreach programs and develop new initiatives, with an emphasis on serving Tennessee's poor and underserved minority and rural populations," says Pat Levitt, Vanderbilt Kennedy Center director.

The Vanderbilt Center for Excellence will be directed by Elisabeth Dykens, professor of psychology and human development and the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center's associate director. The Center will work with Tennessee's other Administration on Developmental Disabilities partners: the Boling Center for Developmental Disabilities, the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities, and Tennessee Protection and Advocacy Inc.

The Vanderbilt Kennedy Center and the Vanderbilt Center for Human Genetics Research also have been awarded a $980,922 grant from the National Institutes of Health


Kennedy Center Director Pat Levitt

DANIEL DUBOIS

Roadmap Initiative to support postdoctoral training in understanding and treating developmental disabilities.

"This new program brings together various fields that have a stake in better diagnosis and treatment of developmental disorders that impact cognition and mental health," says Levitt, who will lead the new program with Dykens. "We at Vanderbilt University are fortunate to have outstanding researchers who believe in the value of training a new generation of scientists who will become facile at moving across behavior and biomedical disciplines."

Vanderbilt faculty representing 15 various departments from the School of Medicine, Peabody College, and the College of Arts and Science also serve on the grant team, providing an interdisciplinary approach.

Vanderbilt Dominates List of Top Doctors

Forty-nine Vanderbilt University Medical Center physicians are recognized as being among the top 1 percent in their respective fields of practice in *America's Top Doctors 2005*, which is recognized as an authoritative guide to finding top medical specialists.

The Vanderbilt group collectively represents 82 percent of Nashville doctors recognized by their peers—49 of 60—and nearly two-thirds of the total of 76 doctors listed in Tennessee.

The guide identifies more than 5,000 top specialists in more than 60 medical specialties and subspecialties for the care and treatment of more than 1,700 diseases and medical conditions. The physicians collectively are affiliated with nearly 600 hospitals across the United States, which represents less than 10 percent of the nation's total.

The book's physician-led research team surveys more than 10,000 physicians in medical-leadership positions and private practice when compiling its list of specialists and subspecialists.

"It is especially important for our medical center because it indicates that our medical students, residents and fellows are training with many of the top physicians not only in Tennessee, but also in the country," says School of Medicine Dean Dr. Steven Gabbe, who made the list for his obstetrics and gynecology work.

Sports

A look at Vanderbilt athletics

Never Say Never

Goalkeeper Tyler Griffin takes 'em as they come.

By Nelson Bryan

If serendipity could be anthropomorphized, you might find it in the person of Tyler Griffin, the goalkeeper on the Vanderbilt women's soccer team. She is an affable young woman who laughs easily and often.

"I was one of those kids who was running around doing anything and everything," Griffin says of her early years in Charlotte, N.C. "My best friend in fourth grade played soccer, and her dad coached a club team. He wanted me to play, so that was pretty much it. He never let me go. It was soccer throughout." Truth be told, the die may have been cast even earlier than that. Griffin recalls a boy she liked in first grade. "He said he was going to play soccer, so I said, 'Me too.'"

This is Griffin's second season in goal as a Commodore. A transfer from the University of North Carolina, she is a junior in athletic eligibility and an academic senior. She played in 16 games last season, starting the final 15, and was named First-Team All-SEC. She logged a season-high 13 saves against then-No. 14-ranked Florida. She sat out the 2003 season as a redshirt before coming to Vanderbilt.

"Our high-school team in our junior year was a lot of fun," she remembers. "We lost in the finals of the state championship. Our club team won that year, though. We went to regionals and did very well. Junior year was a good year, and that's when all the coaches were looking, so I was lucky."

Griffin received scholarship offers from numerous schools, including UNC, Penn State, Florida, Arizona and Miami (Fla.). She decided to stay close to home. Her family, after all, had close ties to the state of North Carolina. Her mother had been on the UNC swim team. Her grandmother had been a UNC cheerleader. Her grandfather had played football at Duke. "So I grew up a huge Duke fan, and swore I would never go to Carolina," she laughs. "Never say never, right?"

She attended Carolina. "Everyone who goes to Carolina loves Carolina," she says. "But I wasn't playing well. My coach sat me down and said, 'We have a goalkeeper that we're going to play. If you'd like to look around, go for it.'"

Griffin looked at a few schools and had nearly decided to stay at Carolina. Then Vanderbilt came calling in the person of Ronnie Covelskie Hill.

Hill, now in her fifth year as head coach of the Vanderbilt women's soccer team, is a graduate of Duke, where she was one of the top goalkeepers in that program's history. "Ronnie is from Charlotte," Griffin explains. "She was a club coach for the same club I played for. I was never coached by her, but I've known her since I was 12.

"It was a no-brainer," Griffin adds. "It was Vanderbilt. They didn't need a goalkeeper that year, but they would need one my junior year. So I was able to redshirt at Carolina for a year and then transfer here."

Hill was the only person Griffin knew when she arrived on campus to stay, but she found a ready-made family of teammates and friends. "One of the great things about athletics is that no matter what sport you play, or where you go to college, once you get there you have your group of friends."

Griffin won the starting goalkeeper spot after early season competition with a teammate. By season's end the Commodores had a 7-7-5 record, and Griffin had been named First-Team All-SEC. "It was unexpected," she says of the pick. "As we started getting into the conference games, I started playing more. I didn't feel like I played that great, but I guess the other coaches did."

Hill had a different take on Griffin's first season in the Commodore goal. "Tyler Griffin made an immediate impact on this program," she says. "She was the backbone of the defense throughout the season. Tyler's greatest strength as a goalkeeper is her ability to make the big save to keep her team in the

continued on page 82

PHOTOS BY NEIL BRAKE

Tyler Griffin

{Where Are They Now?}

You have to get up pretty early in the morning to keep up with **Clyde Lee**, BA'70, these days. The former All-American center teaches yoga classes at Vanderbilt's Dayani Center starting at 6 a.m. three days a week. He was introduced to yoga in the mid-'80s when he was suffering from severe back problems.

NEIL BRAKE

"When you're an aging athlete, those things happen," he says. "Today I no longer have any back problems." After getting certified to teach yoga, Lee taught several Vanderbilt athletic teams. He met the Dayani Center staff through a Vanderbilt University Medical Center-sponsored workshop and has been teaching yoga there for about a year. "I wanted to reach out and get people involved who don't normally go for that sort of thing," he says. "It's been miraculous for me."

Conner Golf Facility Dedicated

Vanderbilt dedicated its new short-game golf practice facility in honor of Cleo and Lewis Conner Sr. during ceremonies at the Vanderbilt Legends Golf Club on Aug. 26.

Cleo and Lewis Conner Sr. are the late parents of alumnus Lew Conner, BA'60, JD'63, a prominent Nashville attorney who funded the facility's lead gift and was a member of the varsity golf team from 1957 to 1960.

"Vanderbilt has a strong foundation of support for its golf programs in the community and among our alumni," says men's golf coach Press McPhaul. "No one has been more supportive than Lew Conner and his family. This new facility has already proven to be valuable to our programs as we strive to compete at the highest level of collegiate golf. We are very grateful to the Conner family."

The short-game practice facility opened in August 2004. Its variety of bunkers and greens has provided Vanderbilt's two varsity golf teams with a necessary addition in which to work and recruit.

Lew Conner, BA'60, JD'63, dedicates Vanderbilt's new short-game golf facility with his family, golf coaches Martha Freitag and Press McPhaul, and Vice Chancellor David Williams.

Basketball Schedules Offer Challenging Foes

If you have to beat the best to be the best, then Vanderbilt's 2005–06 basketball schedule offers plenty of opportunity for both the men's and women's teams. The men are set to face 12 teams that advanced to postseason play last year. The women's schedule includes nine games against teams that advanced to last year's NCAA Tournament and three match-ups against 2005 NCAA Final Four participants.

Men's Schedule: In addition to the always-tough SEC race, Vanderbilt's non-conference schedule is highlighted by visits from Oregon and Cincinnati and includes trips to Georgetown, Dayton and Georgia Tech.

"It's as difficult a non-conference schedule as we've had since I've been here," says head coach Kevin Stallings, who enters his seventh season at Vanderbilt. "As we continue to elevate the status of our program, we need to elevate the quality of our schedule."

The Commodores finished last season with a 20-14 record that concluded in the quarterfinal round of the National Invitation Tournament. Vanderbilt set a school record with 17 home wins last year and rides a 24-game non-conference win streak into the 2005–06 season.

The regular season features 16 home games, beginning with Jacksonville State and ending with Tennessee. Other SEC foes invading Memorial Gym include the usual cast of SEC Eastern Division teams along with Auburn, Mississippi State and LSU from the West.

Women's Schedule: Vanderbilt hosts 14 home games this season. The first SEC home game has the Lady Bulldogs of Mississippi State traveling to Memorial Gym on Jan. 12. The Commodores bested Mississippi State last February in a double-overtime thriller that saw Vanderbilt rally twice late in the game to win 106-98 in Starkville, Miss.

Other home games include contests against Tennessee, Ole Miss, Georgia, Arkansas, Kentucky and South Carolina.

The women's team finished last season with a 24-8 record (10-4 in the SEC) and advanced to the Sweet Sixteen round of the NCAA Tournament.

{Sports Roundup}

Men's Tennis: Duvenhage Named Head Coach

Ian Duvenhage was hired in June as the new men's tennis coach, replacing Ken Flach. He compiled a collegiate coaching record of 352–170 during 13 seasons as head men's coach at the University of Florida (1988–2001) and seven years at the University of Miami as the head women's coach (1982–1988). He coached on the professional level the past four years and was coach of the United States Tennis Association's National Collegiate Team three times, including 2004.

Cross Country: Vandy Gets First Win at Commodore Classic

Sophomore Austin Williamson led the men's cross country team to a first-place finish in the Commodore Classic 8K at Percy Warner Park in September. Vanderbilt captured the Commodore Classic's title for the first time in school history. Williamson won the race by shattering the previously held team record for the event by two minutes. "We've never had a first-place finisher in this race," says Coach Don Bailey. "Austin did a great job. I'm really proud of the team effort. They are aggressive early on, and if we can continue to race that way, we'll be OK for the rest of the season. The endurance will come with practice." Sophomore Chris Noel finished ninth overall.

PAUL J. LEVY

Women's Golf: Trio Cited by *Golfweek*

Golfweek magazine recognized three members of the Vanderbilt women's golf team in its college preseason edition. Junior Chris Brady was named to the publication's second-team All-America squad, and freshmen Jacqui Concolino and Amber Lundskog were tabbed "Freshmen to Watch." Brady was a first-team All-SEC selection as a sophomore. Concolino was Florida's high-school runner-up last year, and Lundskog earned second-team prep All-America honors coming out of San Diego.


Brady

NEIL BRAKE

Women's Tennis: Fish Earns ITA Top-20 Ranking

Junior Amanda Fish is ranked 17th in the nation in singles tennis by the Intercollegiate Tennis Association in its 2005 preseason list. She is joined on the Top 50 list by sophomore Taka Bertrand, who is ranked No. 41. The teammates also are rated at No. 20 in the ITA doubles ranking. During the summer, Fish and Bertrand teamed up to finish second in doubles play at the USTA Women's Satellite Tour of Baltimore. Fish also took second place in singles play at the event.


Fish

NEIL BRAKE

Women's Soccer: Vandy Picked Third in SEC East

The women's soccer team was predicted to finish third in the SEC East Division in a poll of the SEC women's soccer coaches. The Commodores were ranked behind Tennessee and Florida and ahead of Georgia, South Carolina and Kentucky.


Molly Wilson

NEIL BRAKE

The Vanderbilt University Sailing Club hosted its inaugural intercollegiate regatta, The Vanderbilt Cup, on Sept. 24. The regatta is part of the South Atlantic Sailing Association's fall series for the Northern Division. The Vanderbilt club finished second in the event behind the College of Charleston.

DANIEL DUBOIS

Vanderbilt Holdings

Collections and collectibles

Outside the Law

The Law School's collection of outsider art ironically places the seemingly unsophisticated within a context of order. By Reed Richards

Homer Green's painted wood sculpture "Lawyer and Client" is set out of the way on the edge of the Law School's Blackacre Courtyard, just in front of some shrubs and a wall. But, like any good art, it refuses to fade into the background. Viewers sometimes joke about it—it *is* a humorous piece. But if its apparent lack of sophistication (Green's main sculpting tool was a chainsaw) is the source of mirth among the law students, the joke is on them. When someone asked Green which of the two figures in the piece was the lawyer, he answered, "He ain't the one crying." It may seem strange that such an object should find a home in a law school, but remember that no one enjoys a good lawyer joke more than a lawyer.

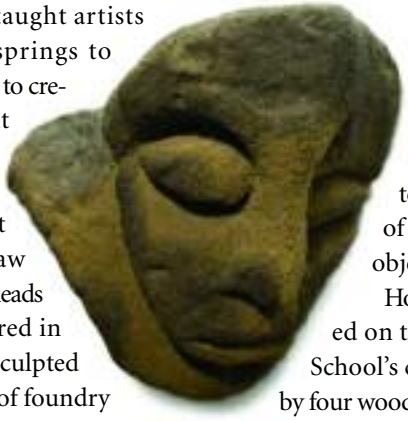
It is fitting that a work by Homer Green displayed in the Law School should satirize the practice of law. People who knew him say that beneath his curmudgeonly exterior was a dear, sweet man. But it would have been entirely against Green's nature to fall in step with anyone's expectations or agree with anyone else's opinion on just about any topic. He was a born contrarian who, much of the time, carried a gun or a chainsaw and liked to give the appearance of someone dangerous. If his opinion of lawyers was not high, it was not simple-minded. The sculpture consists of a small man standing on the head of a larger man, both with a raised arm in clear reference to swearing in. The larger man, the lawyer, smiles and his right arm is triumphantly straight up as if either signaling victory or offering someone a high-five. His eyes look downward to his right, as if planning his next exploit or appraising an onlooker bottom to top.

The smaller figure looks like a three-dimensional version of one of Edward Gorey's recessive gentlemen trampled by circumstance. He is crowning the lawyer, a feather in the lawyer's cap. His raised left arm is bent at the elbow and not triumphant. His gaze is distant. His case may be won, but he looks to be hailing a cab or waving goodbye to his money. He is missing his thumbs.

"Lawyer and Client" is one among a group of pieces purchased for the Law School through a 1999 gift from Mickey Babcock and installed in 2001. When Babcock approached the Law School with the idea of the gift, she specified that it be used for folk or "outsider" art. The proposal was more than agreeable to then-Dean Kent Syverud, who was himself interested in self-taught art and artists. Babcock was put in contact with Eve Utley, director of building design and development during the Law School's expansion. Utley, as luck would have it, was a neighbor of Dan Prince, a widely known authority on self-taught art, a collector, dealer, writer, a self-taught artist himself, and a Vanderbilt alum (BA'73). His book *Passing in the Outsider Lane* contains reproductions of work by, along with essays about, 21 self-taught American artists, including three of the four whose work was eventually picked for the Law School Collection. Prince recently had curated a large show on campus at the University Club and in 1998 had donated his papers, with the support of Chancellor Emeritus Heard, to the Jean and Alexander Heard Library's Special Collections archive. It is a growing archive, called the Self-Taught Artists Resources (or STAR) collection, currently containing 76 cataloged boxes that are consulted by scholars, dealers and curators from around the country.

The plans for which art to use, how many pieces, and where to place them went through several changes, but, working with Prince's leads and suggestions, Babcock and Utley eventually selected nine pieces by four different artists for the Law School's permanent collection.

In addition to Homer Green, the other artists in the collection are Lonnie Holley, Alvin Jarrett and Robert E. Smith. Lonnie Holley is the youngest of the four. Holley, from Birmingham, Ala., was the seventh of 27 children and was forced by circumstances to be independent from a young age. When his sister's two children perished in a house fire in 1979, the family was too poor to buy headstones for their graves, so Holley, in profound grief, fashioned headstones out of discarded sandstone from a nearby foundry. At the end he discovered a gift for expressing his heart in workable materials. Within two years his work was included in a traveling Smithsonian exhibit of work by self-taught artists, and since then his work has been shown in New York and Europe.



Like many self-taught artists (Howard Finster springs to mind), he uses his art to create the environment of his house and yard. He uses any material at hand, but the pieces at the Law School—three small heads that Prince discovered in Holley's yard—are sculpted from the same kind of foundry sandstone as the original headstones he made in 1979. Foundry sandstone is manufactured material much rougher and more porous than natural sandstone. Exposed to the elements it can last only six or seven years before it starts to disintegrate. "In the meantime," Prince says, "it is rounded off by wind and rain and is at its best point just before it really falls apart." Knowing a bit about the tribulations of Holley's life, one can see the faces as metonymies for the artist as a survivor. Prince says Holley "takes out of everything a real deep kind of wisdom, and you can see that in those faces. They look weathered—they've weathered the storm and are still here."

Holley had a background in whittling, but he turned it into something uniquely imaginative and individual. According to Prince, "Self-taught artists are not influenced or influenceable. For artists with an academic background, it is natural to use training, to go to libraries and museums and read books, but self-taught artists pull all their resources out of themselves and their guts. It's more a visceral approach than a conceptual or theoretical approach. It's what they can touch, handle, do. The ideas kind of flow into their minds from the objects themselves."

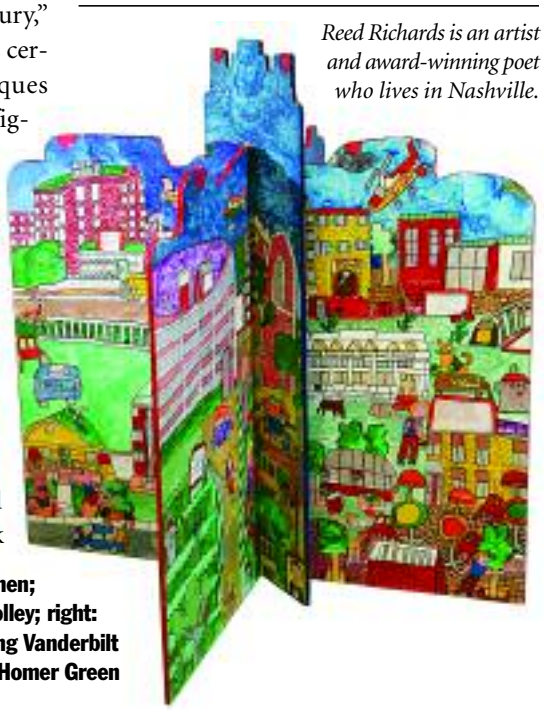
Holley's sandstone heads are mounted on the wall to the right of the Law School's café entrance. They are flanked by four wooden dancing men carved by Alvin Jarrett. The figures all have moving parts with joints made of pins and wire hoops. Prince says, "Jarrett's dancing men come from a folk-art base that goes back to the 18th century," and he explains that "folk art expresses certain cultural norms, and uses techniques inherited from that culture." Jarrett's figures express a certain style of whimsy. It's hard to look at them and not want to make them dance.

Resemblance of Robert E. Smith's hilarious piece on the second floor near the Law Library to the chaotic and colorful work of trained artist Red Grooms (who attended Peabody College in the 1950s) is hard to miss but purely accidental, although according to Prince, "Red Grooms knows Robert's work and likes Robert." It is the most complex work in the collection. Six two-sided panels radiate from an axis. All surfaces are painted with scenes of Vanderbilt campus life. It is the only commissioned work in the collection and is based on photographs Prince shot and sent to Smith in Missouri. Smith, who is easily the most eccentric personality in this group of artists, used whatever struck his fancy from the photos and added, for his own reasons, anything that would make the campus appear the way he thought it should.

"It's the whole Robert E. Smith world superimposed on the whole Vanderbilt world," Prince says. "He's got stories with all the stuff that's going on in there. If there's nothing referring to Elvis on campus, there should be since it's Nashville, so Robert tucks an image of him into one of the corners." Buildings look made of jigsaw-puzzle pieces, people are rubbery, helicopters tumble in the sky, a bluegrass band plays, a penguin lies on its belly in the sky over the stadium, and among the many other animals are turtles, a raccoon, some fish, and a couple of spotted critters of unknown morphology. In the upper left of most panels is a blood-red sun.

The Law School's self-taught artists collection is small and doesn't get much attention from busy and preoccupied law students. Nevertheless, it contains important and entertaining work from outsider artists of significance and is worth taking a side trip or a pause between books to see.

Reed Richards is an artist and award-winning poet who lives in Nashville.



Above, top: Alvin Jarrett's wooden dancing men; above: a small sandstone head by Lonnie Holley; right: a painted screen by Robert E. Smith depicting Vanderbilt life; opposite page: "Lawyer and Client" by Homer Green

Bright Ideas

"I read the bones, and the bones tell me

Mysteries of Mummies Unraveled

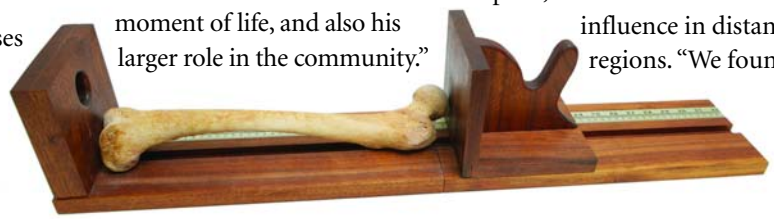
In 1994 when Tiffiny Tung was an undergraduate at the University of California–Santa Barbara, she began working in southern Peru conducting a brief archaeological survey in the region, and documented several ancient cemeteries in the Andes. "Unfortunately, a lot of the sites had been looted," remembers Tung, now an assistant professor of anthropology at Vanderbilt. "I was horrified to see this as an undergraduate. It became my goal to gather as much data as possible to recover information about these pre-Hispanic populations and to protect these sites."

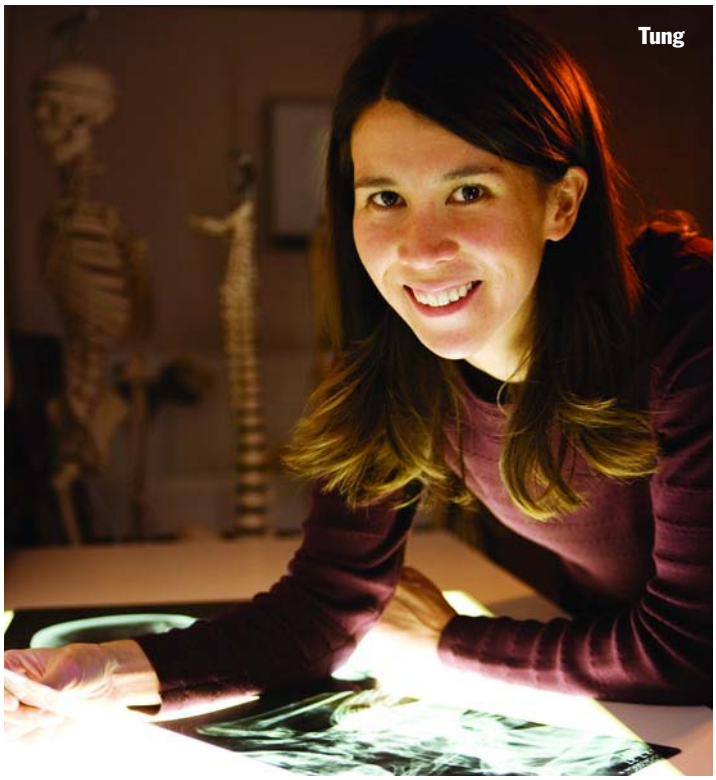
Bioarchaeologists like Tung employ a battery of scientific techniques—DNA analysis, computer tomography CAT scans, X-rays, radiocarbon dating, chemical analysis of ancient embalming fluids and strontium isotope testing—to build a detailed portrait of a person's life from his or her remains. "I read the bones, and the bones tell me a story of the individual and the community in which he or she lived," she says.

Tung's research focuses on the Wari, a warlike society that built a large empire in the Peruvian Andes from 550 to 1000 A.D. It was the largest polity in the Peruvian highlands before the Inca Empire.

One discovery at the site of Beringa in southern Peru was the mummy of a young man, wrapped in a beautiful and relatively intact feather poncho and headdress. The mummy was seated in a flexed position and wrapped in textiles, surrounded by ceramic vessels, textile bags containing peanuts and coca leaves, and a variety of weapons, including a mace and a sling for throwing stones. When Tung brought the mummy back to the lab, she noticed the textile was stained with what appeared to be blood. She continued analysis and found that the stain was near what appeared to be a stab wound. She sent a sample to scientists in Italy who can detect ancient blood proteins, and the tests came back positive for human blood.

"Judging from the wound and test results, it looked like he was stabbed in the thorax, which bled profusely onto his textile garments. He was then given an honorable burial by his community members," she says. "So from this mummy, we were able to learn about his last moment of life, and also his larger role in the community."



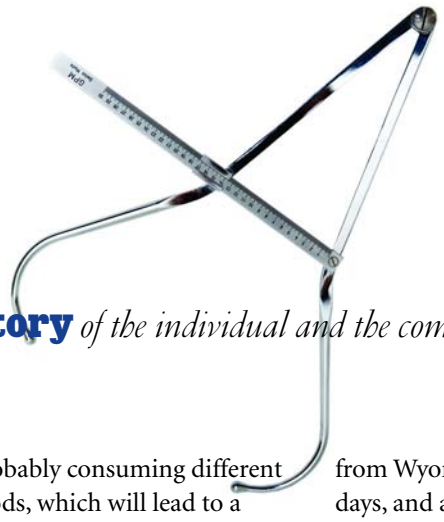


Tung

DANIEL DUBOIS

Tung's broader anthropological interests include investigating the health impact of imperial conquest on subject populations. After working extensively at a site in the core of the Wari empire in the central highland Andes, Tung became interested in settlements on the periphery of the capital and what these ancient communities could reveal about the culture and lives of those in the suburbs, so to speak, and about the Wari influence in distant regions. "We found sites with Wari ceramics and textiles 300 miles from the capital," she says. "I assembled a team and worked with the Peruvian government to get the necessary permits to start excavating cultural material and human skeletons."

Tung was particularly interested in how the Wari empire obtained and processed human "trophy heads"—heads that have been removed from their bodies, dramatically modified, and displayed in a ritualistic manner. "We wanted to know if the trophy heads represented local venerated ancestors or foreign enemies," Tung says. "If they were foreign, they were



a story *of the individual and the community.* —ANTHROPOLOGY PROFESSOR TIFFINY TUNG

probably consuming different foods, which will lead to a strontium-isotope signature distinct from the local area."

With colleague Kelly Knudson of the University of Wisconsin–Madison, Tung established the strontium-isotope signature for the core of the empire by consulting previous geological studies and testing local animals found there today. By comparing this local signature to that of the trophy heads, they were able to determine that some of the trophy heads likely came from foreign victims. In addition, the artwork on the ceramics found with the heads displayed warriors carrying trophy heads. Both pieces of evidence led Tung and her colleague to suggest that these trophy heads were taken from enemies of the Wari empire.

Tung's work drew the interest of the Discovery Channel when it was putting together a team of bioarchaeologists and forensic anthropologists to study mummies around the globe for the network's series "Mummy Autopsy," which aired last spring.

Over the course of filming, Tung traveled to seven countries. The cases examined included a male and female mummy from southern Peru that may have been victims of the war between Peru and Chile in the early 1880s, a skeleton from Wyoming's Wild West days, and a Romano-British family that may have died a violent death at the hands of invading Anglo-Saxons.

"One of my goals is to bring anthropology and archaeology to the public, which is one of the reasons I agreed to do the show," she says.

Technique Produces Bone Tissue on Demand

2. An international team of biomedical engineers led by Vanderbilt's V. Prasad Shastri has demonstrated it is possible to grow healthy new bone reliably in one part of the body and use it to repair damaged bone elsewhere.

"We have shown that we can grow predictable volumes of bone on demand," says Shastri, assistant professor of biomedical engineering, "and we did so by persuading the body to do what it already knows how to do."

The research, a dramatic departure from current practice in tissue engineering, is described in "*In Vivo* Engineering of Organs: The Bone Bioreactor," published online by the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Orthopedic surgeons now repair serious bone breaks by removing small pieces of bone from a patient's rib or hip and fusing them to the broken bone. The same method is used to fuse spinal vertebrae to treat serious spinal injuries and back pain. The method works, but the removal operation is extremely painful and there is risk of serious complications.

If the new method is confirmed in clinical studies, new bone can be grown for all types of repairs. For people with serious bone disease, it may be possible to grow replacement bone at an early stage and freeze it so it can be used when needed, Shastri says.

Living bone is continually growing and reshaping, but numerous attempts to coax bone to grow outside the body—*in vitro*—have failed. Recent attempts to stimulate bone growth within the body—*in vivo*—have had limited success but have proven to be complex, expensive and unreliable.

Shastri and his colleagues took a new, simple approach. They took advantage of the body's natural wound-healing response by creating a special zone on the surface of a healthy bone in hopes that the body would respond by filling the space with new bone. The approach lived up to their highest expectations.

Working with mature rabbits, a species with bones very similar to humans, researchers were delighted to find that this zone, which they call the »

"*in vivo* bioreactor," filled with healthy bone in about six weeks. And it did so without having to coax the bone to grow by applying the growth factors required by previous *in vivo* efforts. Furthermore, they found that the new bone can be detached easily before it fuses with the old bone, leaving the old bone scarred but intact.

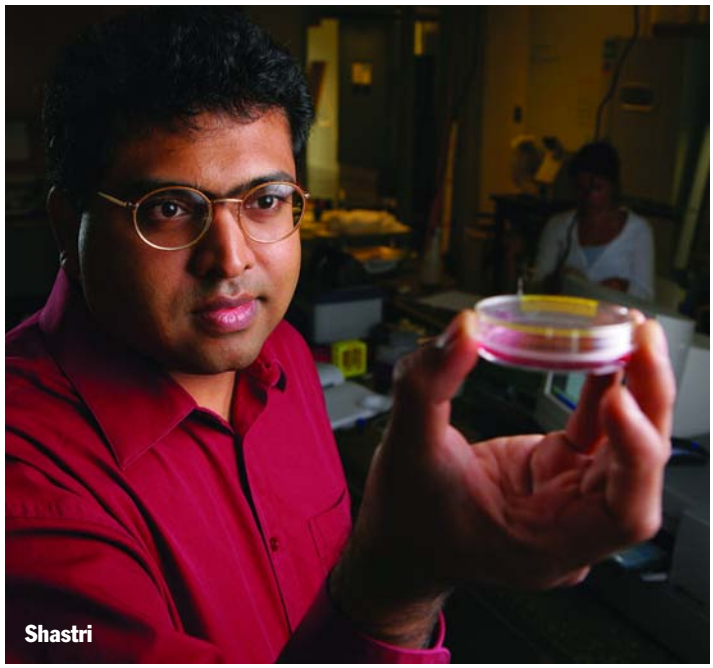
"The new bone actually has comparable strength and mechanical properties to native bone," says Molly Stevens, currently a reader at Imperial College in the United Kingdom who did most of the research as a post-doctoral fellow at MIT. "And since the harvested bone is fresh, it integrates really well at a recipient site."

Long bones in the body are covered by a thin outer layer called the periosteum. The outside is tough and fibrous, but the inside is covered with a layer of special pluripotent cells which, like marrow cells, are capable of transforming into the different types of skeletal tissue.

Shastri and collaborators created a bioreactor zone just under this outer layer. They made a tiny hole in the periosteum and injected saline water underneath. This loosened the layer from the underlying bone and inflated it slightly. When they had created a cavity the size and shape they wanted, the researchers removed the water and replaced it with a gel containing calcium, a trigger for bone growth. Their major concern was that the bioreactor would fill with scar tissue instead of bone, but that didn't happen. Instead, it filled with bone that is indistinguishable from the original.

The scientists intend to proceed with large-animal studies and clinical trials necessary to determine if the procedure will work in humans and, if it does, to get it approved for human treatment. At the same time, they hope to test the approach with the liver and pancreas, which have outer layers similar to the periosteum.

The research was funded by a grant from Smith and Nephew, Endoscopy.

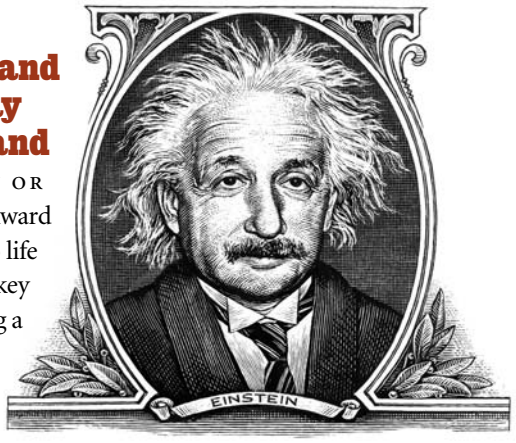


Shastri

DANIEL DUBOIS

3. Odd Behavior and Creativity May Go Hand in Hand

A quirky or socially awkward approach to life may be the key to becoming a great artist, composer or inventor.



ANTAR DAYAL / GETTY IMAGES

New research on individuals with schizotypal personalities—people characterized by odd behavior and language who are not psychotic or schizophrenic—offers the first neurological evidence that these individuals are more creative than normal or fully schizophrenic people and rely more heavily on the right sides of their brains than the general population to access their creativity.

The research by Vanderbilt psychologists Brad Folley and Sohee Park was published online Aug. 26 by the journal *Schizophrenia Research*.

Famous creative luminaries believed to have had schizotypal personalities include Vincent Van Gogh, Albert Einstein, Emily Dickinson and Sir Isaac Newton.

"The idea that schizotypes have enhanced creativity has been out there for a long time, but no one has investigated the behavioral manifestations and their neural correlates experimentally," Folley says. "Our paper is unique because we investigated the creative process experimentally, and we also looked at the blood flow in the brain while research subjects were undergoing creative tasks."

Folley and Park conducted two experiments to compare the creative-thinking processes of schizotypes, schizophrenics and normal control subjects. In the first experiment the research subjects were shown a variety of household objects and asked to invent new functions for them. The results showed that the schizotypes were better able to creatively suggest new uses for the objects, while the schizophrenics and average subjects performed similarly to one another.

"Thought processes for individuals with schizophrenia often are very disorganized, almost to the point where they can't really be creative because they cannot get all their thoughts coherent enough to do that," says Folley. "Schizotypes, on the other hand, are free from the severe, debilitating symptoms surrounding schizophrenia and also have an enhanced creative ability."

In the second experiment the three groups again were asked to identify new uses for everyday objects, as well as to perform a basic control task while the activity in their prefrontal lobes was monitored using a brain-scanning technique called near-infrared optical spectroscopy. The brain scans showed that all groups used both brain hemispheres for creative tasks, but the activation of the right hemispheres of the schizotypes' brains was dramatically greater than that of the schizophrenic and average sub-

jects' brains, suggesting a positive benefit of schizotypy.

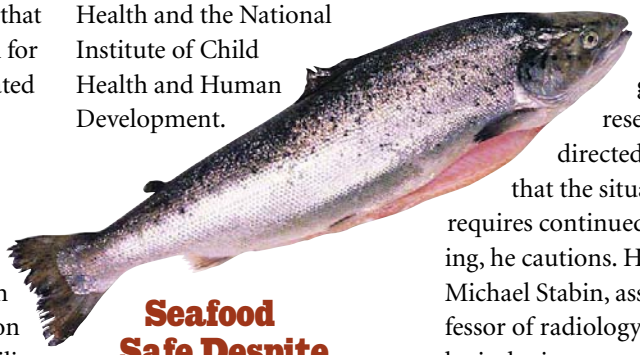
"In the scientific community the popular idea that creativity exists in the right side of the brain is thought to be ridiculous, because you need both hemispheres of your brain to make novel associations and to perform other creative tasks," Folley says. "We found that all three groups—schizotypes, schizophrenics and normal controls—did use both hemispheres when performing creative tasks. But the brain scans of the schizotypes showed a hugely increased activation of the right hemisphere compared to the schizophrenics and the normal controls."

The researchers believe that the results offer support for the idea that schizotypes and other psychoses-prone populations draw on the left and right sides of their brains differently than the average population, and that this bilateral use of the brain for a variety of tasks may be related to their enhanced creativity.

In support of this theory, Folley points to research by Swiss neuroscientist Peter Brugger, who found that everyday associations—such as recognizing your car key on your keychain and verbal abilities—are controlled by the left hemisphere, and novel associations—such as finding a new use for an object or navigating a new place—are controlled by the right hemisphere. Brugger hypothesizes that schizotypes are better at accessing both hemispheres for novel associations, enabling them to make these associations faster. His theory is supported by research showing that a disproportional number of schizotypes and schizophrenics are neither right- nor left-hand dominant, but instead use both hands for a variety of tasks, suggesting they recruit both sides of their brains for a variety of tasks more so than the average person.

"The lack of specialization for certain tasks in brain hemispheres could be seen as a liability, but this increased communication between the hemispheres actually could provide added creativity," Folley says.

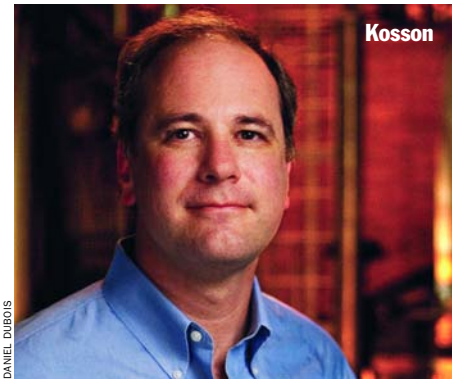
Folley is in the process of completing his dissertation at Vanderbilt and is pursuing a clinical internship and research at the University of California in Los Angeles. Park is an associate professor of psychology and an investigator in the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development. The research was supported by grants from the National Institute of Mental Health and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.



Seafood Safe Despite Nuclear Tests

Seafood from 4 water near the Aleutian Islands in Alaska is not significantly contaminated by radiation despite underground nuclear tests done in the area at Amchitka Island between 1965 and 1971. The news was released Aug. 1 by a study group that includes two Vanderbilt researchers.

"The results are very reassuring, not only because approximately one-third of the fish sold commercially in the U.S. comes from the broader marine region affected by the area we studied, but because our evidence showed no indications of damage to the ecosystem in the area," says David S. Kosson, chair of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering.


Kosson

DANIEL DUBOIS

Kosson directed geophysical research for the independent study, which was commissioned by the U.S. Department of Energy along with the State of Alaska, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association. The research was planned and conducted by the Consortium for Risk Evaluation with Stakeholder Participation (CRESP), an independent university consortium.

The geophysical research Kosson directed suggests that the situation requires continued monitoring, he cautions. He and Michael Stabin, assistant professor of radiology and radiological sciences, conducted much of the laboratory analysis, which revealed that the levels of radionuclides in the area are presently far below any human health food-safety standard. Radionuclides are atoms that emit radiation and can accumulate in the muscle tissue and bones.

"Our remote-sensing studies of the island's rock substructure show that any nuclear material from the nuclear test-shot cavities will actually take longer to travel through the substructure than we anticipated," Kasson says. "That means that the area should continue to be monitored well into the future."

Kosson and Stabin, working with graduate student Derek Favret and research staff member Rossane Delapp, spent a good part of the past year in their Vanderbilt laboratory evaluating samples from Alaska for the presence of radionuclides.

A significant challenge of the research was to analyze samples for a sufficiently long period of time to determine what levels of radionuclides were present, since some degree of radioactivity is always present. Researchers then had to determine whether the radionuclides resulted from the nuclear tests or perhaps came from fallout or naturally occurring sources.

"I am excited by the fact that we were able, within the very short single season of work, to add so significantly to the geophysical understanding of Amchitka and its marine department," Kosson says.

In addition to Vanderbilt, researchers participating in the study came from Rutgers University, the University of Alaska, the University of Alberta, the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, the University of Pittsburgh, and the University of Washington.

InClass

A spotlight on faculty and their work

Lost in La Mancha

Why a 400-year-old novel remains one of Edward Friedman's—and the world's—favorites. By PAUL KINGSBURY, BA'80

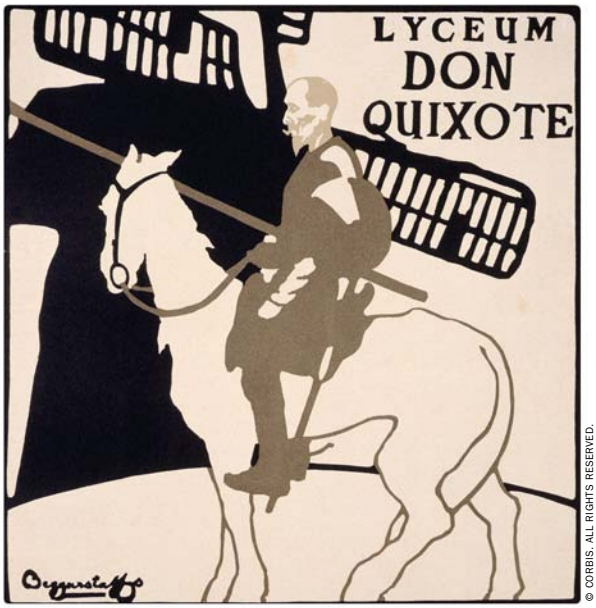
In 2002 the Norwegian Book Clubs asked 100 of the world's leading writers to name the 10 "best and most central works in world literature." Literary heavyweights from 54 nations weighed in, including Salman Rushdie, Doris Lessing, Norman Mailer, Nadine Gordimer, Milan Kundera, John Irving and Carlos Fuentes.

The book that received the most votes? By a landslide, *Don Quixote.* The 17th-century Spanish novel by Miguel de Cervantes got 50 percent more votes than any other book mentioned.

The poll results were hardly shocking to the world's literati. Next to the Bible, *Don Quixote* is said to be the most published and most translated book in the world, and new printings continue to be published. In the past decade alone, despite more than 20 previous translations, new English versions have been issued by Norton, Penguin and HarperCollins.

Don Quixote has never been out of print since it first went on sale in January 1605. An immediate hit, the book was quickly reprinted in Spain, Portugal, Belgium and Italy, with the first English translation coming in 1612. So strong was the demand that Cervantes—who was 58 when it was published and had been an unsuccessful playwright until then—published a popular sequel in 1615, a year before his death. Since then, *Don Quixote* is generally understood to comprise both parts, which are usually published together.

This year marks *Don Quixote*'s 400th anniversary. In Spain, where the book is venerated, public television has aired documentaries about it, celebrities have read the work aloud for audiences, and the government has even offered tax breaks to companies sponsoring *Don Quixote* events. In Venezuela, president Hugo Chavez printed 1 million copies at government expense to be handed out free to the public. And across the world the book has sparked new academic publications and conferences, including a November 2004 symposium at Vanderbilt's Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities.



All of this continuing attention for the book comes as no surprise to Edward Friedman, who organized the Vanderbilt *Quixote* symposium. "It's the Shakespeare of Spanish literature and of the Hispanic tradition," says the Vanderbilt professor of Spanish and comparative literature, a specialist on the Golden Age of Spanish literature from 1550 to 1700, as well as an acknowledged *Quixote* expert. "It's experimental, it's very full and rich and engaging. You never can quite get a grasp of it. It's also very, very funny."

Now 57, Friedman has been teaching it for more than 25 years and has read it more times than he can count—since he reads it anew each time he teaches a *Quixote* class, generally once a year. And yet he continues to find new things in it.

"People like me, who get to work on *Don Quixote* and teach it and hear people talk about it a lot, tend to idealize the text," he admits. "Because we sort of see everything there. And some would say that we see what we want to see. But I think it is there."

Friedman readily admits to being an unabashed fan of the book. He served as president of the Cervantes Society from 2001 to 2004. As he discusses *Don Quixote,* he talks about it in a way that is both thought provoking and down-to-earth. He also radiates a genuine enthusiasm for his subject, combined with a welcoming manner.

"[Friedman] just has a gift for capturing your imagination," says colleague Victoria

continued on page 84

PORTRAIT BY DANIEL DUBOIS

Edward Friedman has been teaching *Don Quixote* for 25 years.

Thando's Journey

What can one 22-year-old middle-class American do to change the world? Love, laugh, listen, cajole, and perform your own surgery.

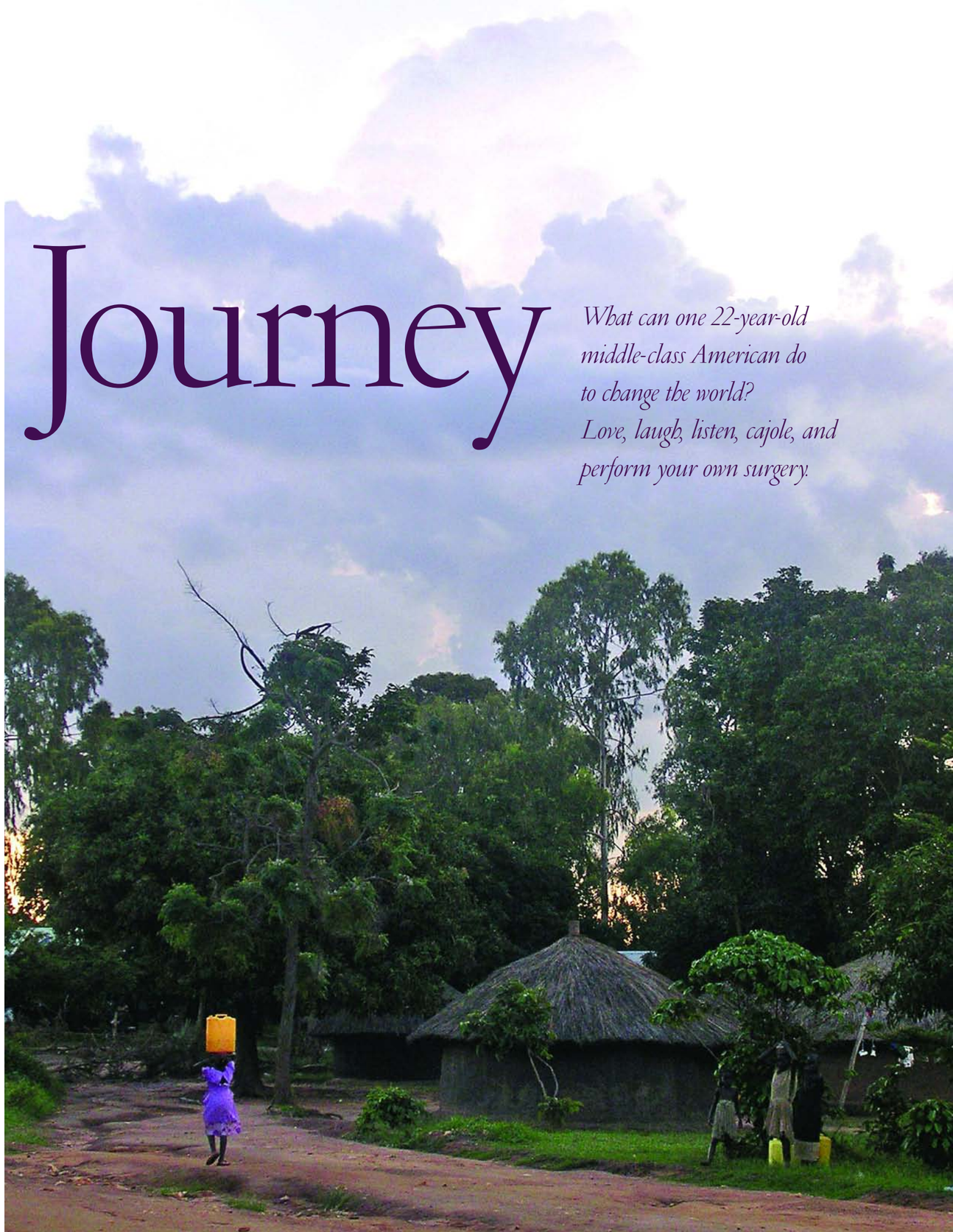
By Kristin Fleschner, BS'03

Editor's note: In August 2004, a few months after graduating from Vanderbilt, Kristin Fleschner began a year's sojourn in Africa. Aided by a $10,000 Vanderbilt Traveling Fellowship, she traveled to South Africa and Uganda to study sexual violence against women and children and the spread of AIDS.

Often alone, she encountered disease, poverty, violence, mindless bureaucracy, institutionalized oppression of women—but also hope and humanity. Twice she broke up fights between street children; twice she was tear-gassed; at least 10 times she contracted food poisoning. African co-workers gave her the name *Thando*, which means "to be loved." This article is an excerpt from the daily journal she kept during her travels.

A native of Terre Haute, Ind., Fleschner graduated summa cum laude from Vanderbilt in December 2003 with bachelor of science degrees in anthropology and human and organizational development. As a Vanderbilt student she was an intern in the Nashville district attorney general's office, serving as a coordinator in the Domestic Violence Prosecution Unit of Victim-Witness Services. As a volunteer at the Nashville Ronald McDonald House, she was trained in play therapy designed to promote physical and emotional recovery for children. She plans to pursue either a law degree with a focus on women's issues or a Ph.D. in gender relations.

To read more from her online African journal, go to www.vanderbilt.edu/studentlife/travelfellowship. You also may contact Fleschner at kristinfleschner@yahoo.com.



Johannesburg, SOUTH AFRICA

August 18, 2004

The unfamiliarity exhausts me, but I am extraordinarily happy when I am forced to live on the edge. My heart is light, and every breath I breathe is deep, filling my lungs with the African air. I love going to different social functions with my new friends. It forces me to stretch my mind to its limit and test myself. I love having to learn the tiniest but most important details of life that make every culture unique. I love wondering if I am watching a movie of someone else's life. My experience is surreal, and following a routine is no longer a comfort.

September 4, 2004

I spent the morning at Dora's Arc, an orphanage in Roodeport without sleeping facilities. It is located in an area surrounded by shacks, and many of the children come during the day to get food or find a place to study.

The first people Dora introduced me to were a mother and her 10-year-old daughter who had been raped by her father. My stomach began to turn. I was not qualified for this. The door closed, and I was left alone with the mother and daughter. The woman began to tell me about her traumatic life. The rape of her daughter seemed unimportant to her. Such trauma was a normal feature in her life. She told me that she wanted to overdose, that her life was no longer worth living, that she beat her daughter out of frustration—that she didn't want to, but she had no control. She spoke of being a bad mother, of getting her clothes cut off with a knife, of being beaten time and time again. She had a long history of abuse beginning with her father.

Suddenly, she told me she was dizzy and tired. Within seconds she was having a full-blown seizure. I was holding her head and trying to get the 10-year-old to call for help. The girl didn't speak enough English to understand, but I had learned the word for "help" in Zulu. The girl left the room to seek medical help.

The woman had been on the run from her husband with no sleep and little to eat. It occurred to me she might be having a seizure from low blood sugar. Help wasn't coming, so I decided to take action. This morning I had decided to pack a glucose gel tube with me. I had not carried one for years, but this morning seemed like a good time to start. I began putting the gel in her cheek until the entire tube was gone. The gel made the woman




conscious enough to allow her to eat without choking. No one understood why I was feeding her, but it was clear she was feeling better so they let me continue. If I had not been there, if I did not have diabetes, if I had not put the gel in my purse, she could have died. During the seizure and even afterwards, the little girl sat only a foot away peacefully drawing pictures. Such havoc did not disturb her—which helped me realize the kind of life she was living.

Mama Dora was determined to make the most of my time there and immediately sent another woman to talk to me. I was emotionally exhausted and had to force myself to begin the next session. This woman was 25 years old and had her 7-month-old child with her. The woman's beauty was astounding. I said, "*Wena umuhle kakhula,*" which means "you are beautiful" in Zulu. She could not stop laughing. She told me she never thought she would hear a white American woman telling her she was beautiful in Zulu. Her laughing gave me strength; I felt like I had done something right.

September 21, 2004

On Friday I learned that Maria, the domestic help in the house where I am living, had given birth to a baby. No one even knew she'd been pregnant. We were all in shock. Apparently, she was afraid she would not be hired if they had known she was pregnant. Friday morning she was scrubbing the floorboards and started to feel nauseated. She did not know she was having the baby. She left the house and began to walk to the nearest doctor's office. She would walk until the pain came, and then she would stop in the street until the pain subsided. When she finally arrived at the doctor's office, he told her the baby's head was already out and she needed to hold the baby in until the ambulance arrived. This was not possible.

I spent Friday afternoon with Maria and the baby. I told her it was crazy that she had worked up until the second she went into labor. She told me she had no choice; she had a child to support.

September 27, 2004

This weekend I visited Swaziland. Biko [a friend] wanted to stop by his father's grave before we left for the trip. It is a Zulu tradition to ask a parent for safe travels before leaving on a trip. Biko joked that his father would be rolling in his grave when he showed up with "the man's daughter" at the cemetery. The term "the man" was commonly used by black South Africans during the apartheid. It means "white men."

In the States when you visit a cemetery, there are a few freshly opened graves scattered throughout, but not row after row. I began to cry—it was the closest I had been to understanding the impact of AIDS and the continued violence in Africa.

The cemetery had an enormous impact on me. There were newly buried bodies everywhere. In the States when you visit a cemetery, there are a few freshly opened graves scattered throughout, but not row after row. I began to cry—it was the closest I had been to understanding the impact of AIDS and the continued violence in Africa.

After two months in Johannesburg, it was nice to fall asleep to the buzz of insects, the croaking of frogs, and the swishing of an impala's tail. Around 11 p.m. I went to the communal bathroom to brush my teeth. When I stepped outside the hut, nearly 40 impala were grazing within a few feet. They made a path for me to get to the bathroom, and I walked by without bothering them.

November 25, 2004

It is Thanksgiving in the United States. Nearly 100 of my extended family members are gathered together now for dinner. I am wishing I were home more than ever. Last night I was describing my homesickness to a friend, and he said, "This will not be the last Thanksgiving you miss." My family is still as important; I just have other important things going on in my life that cannot be accomplished in Indiana. With aspirations to improve human rights in Africa, I also doubt this will be the last Thanksgiving I miss.

I am more grateful than I usually am on Thanksgiving because I am more aware of the greatness of the United States. I am living a dream that most people will never even imagine. I am living that dream because I was fortunate enough to attend an excellent university that has enough resources to make such dreams come true.




Kampala, UGANDA

January 6, 2005

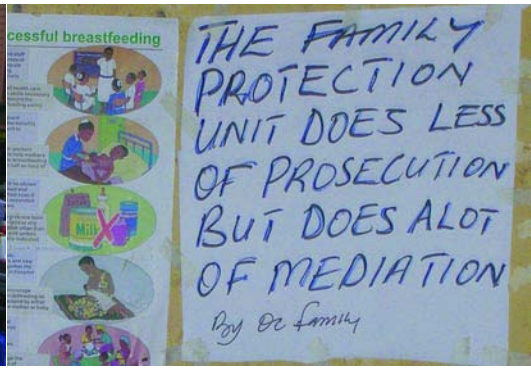
The noise in Kampala reminds me of the noise in New York City, but here the streets are much more crowded. Walking around downtown Kampala is intimidating but nothing like Johannesburg. I feel safe—just confused because of the language barrier and the hectic transportation system. Today I saw a 5- or 6-month-old baby wrapped in a dirty towel on the street. There was no mother or sibling in sight. I was unsure what to do, but knew if I approached the baby I would receive a negative reaction from people on the street. I stood around the corner and watched to see if the child's mother would come. She never came. I felt hopeless and confused and knew I must walk on.

January 19, 2005

The head of the Family Protection Unit (FPU), Oola Denis, invited me to observe the activities in his office, which is one room with two desks. All the women waiting to speak with Mr. Denis sat inside the small office and were able to listen to the counseling taking place. In marital counseling all sorts of topics emerge, including sex and HIV status. Never once did the women who were waiting try to hurry the counseling along, roll their eyes, or laugh at the pettiness of an argument. It's difficult to imagine this in the United States.

Oola had many people to see, and yet he spent quality time with each client and worked to help solve their problems. One man had continued to miss his appointments with Oola, and the woman was frustrated. After much thought and discussion, Oola decided to send a letter to the man's employer.

The women's main complaint was lack of financial support from the men. In Uganda women are dependent upon their husbands once they have children. These women said the same things over and over: Their husbands were not supporting them, their children didn't have school fees, and the family was starving. One woman had bruises all over her face and arms. In Uganda this does not require the police to arrest the man. Instead, they send him a letter in the mail informing him that he must meet with the FPU and his wife several weeks from the date of the complaint. This policy is supposed to benefit



the women because the men continue to work and support their families (if they were supporting them in the first place). But imagine what the environment in the house is like when the man receives the letter from the police.

January 25, 2005

On several occasions I believed prematurely that I finally made sincere friends who want to guide me in the right direction and share their lives with me. Being alone, I eagerly give new friends trust and confidence, but I am often jolted back into the real world of an American traveling in places of poverty. I am forced to reevaluate friendships after I am put in the awkward position of "friends" asking for financial support. These friends believe the common myth that all Americans are rich.

Yesterday a girl in line at the grocery store walked up to me and said, "You will pay for my water." I told her I would not pay for her water. For the next 15 minutes in line, she shoved the bottle into my spine. Why should I pay for her water? She was needy not only of clothes and shoes, but also of water, a necessity. When I walked out of the store, I regretted not paying for the water. I have spent my money less wisely before. I wondered when I had allowed my perspective to change. When I first arrived in Africa, I would have paid for the water.

January 27, 2005

Reflecting on my time in South Africa, I remember the week Nicole had been at the shelter where I was working. During that time I fought the temptation to make her my favorite. She was naughty, always in trouble, but her smile got her out of any situation. Most children who had been through what Nicole had been through were unresponsive, with empty eyes and empty smiles. Nicole's smile was real, and her eyes brought me closer than I had ever been to experiencing the purity of life.

One Friday afternoon the rain began to pour down. I was about to sweep Nicole into my arms and carry her inside when she ran. I was furious. I was chasing her, her arms flying wildly as if she had yielded all control to the wind. When I finally caught her, she said, "Auntie, can we stay outside and smell the rain?" I threw her over my shoulder, and we stood next to the door with our eyes closed enjoying the smell of life. Ten minutes later Nicole was sound asleep enjoying the sweet dreams of a 4-year-old.

I woke early the following Monday, ready to get to the crèche and spend more time with Nicole and the other children. I needed the energy Nicole gave me; adjusting to Cape Town was difficult and tiring. At such a young age, she had learned to forgive, to love life and to love herself. When I arrived at the crèche, Nicole was not there. She had left that weekend to visit her father and never came back.

I was devastated. Wasn't this the same father whose abuse led Nicole to the centre? I was able to capture the life in Nicole's eyes in a picture I took the last Friday I saw her. The vibrancy in her eyes assures me that Nicole is strong and fine, and gives me strength to continue on the roughest days.

March 18, 2005

Over the past seven months, numerous women have told me their stories. I feel responsible for listening to each of them and recognizing each experience as different from the last.

A few weeks ago I was talking to a young woman who had been raped by a relative and had just recently understood that rape was illegal. I suggested she get an HIV test. She was infuriated that I made such a suggestion. I explained that as a rape survivor, she would have access to important drugs she would need if she tested positive. She said, "You're a hypocrite because I know that you have never been tested." I explained that I wasn't in a high-risk category, but I realized the only response she would accept was for me to tell her I would get tested. So I made a promise to get tested.

I put it off for a few weeks. Then one week I got sick and decided to get a malaria test. This would be the ideal time to get an HIV test, too. The clinic waiting room was crowded

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with women and children. A woman sitting among the patients asked what I needed. I answered that I needed a malaria test, too embarrassed to ask for an HIV test in front of all the people. When the lab technician asked why I was visiting the clinic, I told him I wanted an HIV test and a malaria test. He explained that the malaria test would take 10 minutes and the HIV test would take an hour.

I took the test and headed off to work on some e-mail. But uncomfortable thoughts began to jog through my mind. On two occasions I have broken up street-children fights. The second was much worse than the first. Adults stood in the alley betting on who would win, the 5-year-old or the 7-year-old, and how long it would take until one delivered a fatal blow. I grabbed the smaller child. As I was walking away from the crowd with the boy in a death grip in my arms, he whipped his head around and blood flew everywhere, including in my eye. Now my memories replayed, and the five-minute walk back to the clinic felt like I was being walked down death row. What about the time I received IVs in Krueger Park? I was unconscious and could not know if the needles were sterile. What about the stitches I received in the Wandegeya market after I injured my foot?

As I walked up to the clinic, the lab technician was standing outside. He said, "We need to talk." We sat in the corner of a dark bar next to the clinic, surrounded by tables full of people. He began asking questions, the theme of which was faithfulness to God and my partner. I asked him to cut to the chase. He asked why I was nervous about the test. I mentioned several situations, but he was not ready to tell me my status. At this point I was agitated and refused to look at the man. His discussion focused on my commitment to Jesus. After 10 more minutes I could no longer hold my frustration. I told him I was going to leave and get tested somewhere else. He touched my hand, took a deep breath, paused for about 10 seconds, and said, "Praise Jesus you are negative."

I have been told by friends that I rage like a river when I am mad. I said I thought he had done a poor job and that the process was entirely out of order. Shouldn't he have done the counseling prior to the test? Shouldn't he have immediately revealed the test results and then discussed issues surrounding the transmission of HIV? Finally I had raged enough. I thanked him, and he asked for my phone number—after this lecture on faithfulness!

I walked to the taxi stage, took a seat close to the window so I could breathe, and closed my eyes. A dark bar in Wandegeya would be the last place I would want to find out I am HIV-positive. But I could walk away. I could go to the U.S. and get proper treatment and support. Many of the women I counsel have no place to turn—to them it would be a death sentence.

I am beginning a new project to create guidelines for physicians in Uganda. The guidelines will be used in psychosocial support groups throughout Uganda. I've been asked to help write the guidelines for the section on domestic violence. I am supposed to help the women make a connection between domestic violence and increased risk of HIV infection.

There has been a lot of political activity lately. Last week as I got off a taxi, I was caught in a protest and was tear-gassed for the second time during my three months in Uganda. The Islamic population, both men and women, was protesting a domestic relations bill being discussed in congress. The bill would force a man to ask for permission from his first wife before marrying a second wife. This apparently undermines local Islamic law, which states a man need not ask for permission.

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May 1, 2005

I was happy to be embarking on a trip to Nairobi (a city most refer to as "Nairobbery," with an emphasis on the *robbery*). As I entered the airport, I received a phone call from Ethiopian Airlines informing me that my flight would be delayed for at least four hours. I pulled out my laptop and began working.

The most important thing that happened



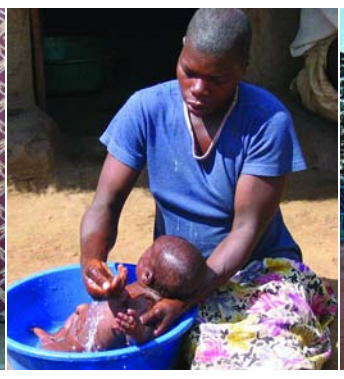

during my five hours at the airport was the birth of a mango fly maggot from my left hip. Last week I hired a woman to wash and iron my clothes. In Uganda and many subtropical countries, it is essential to iron your clothes. Because there are no dryers, clothes are hung outside on lines. A pesky insect called a mango fly lays eggs in wet clothes. Ironing clothes before wearing them kills the eggs. If you don't iron the clothes, the eggs can continue their lifecycle and burrow into your skin. The eggs grow under your skin for about one week. During this time you develop an extraordinarily painful sore the size of a dime. After the maggot has developed, it is able to hatch out of your skin. Occasionally, you can force them out by putting Vaseline on the sore, which suffocates them, or if you are terribly impatient you can cut them out (not always a good idea because they break into pieces). Since I had time on my hands and could barely sit because of pain, I retreated to the airport bathroom and performed surgery on myself. The body of the maggot is as thick as two to three pencils. They are not long, but because they are so fat, they cause great pain when they emerge. I successfully birthed a live maggot. And a few days later I gave birth to my second maggot. I am happy to be maggot-free.

June 12, 2005

When I returned from Nairobi, I attended a gathering of the social elite of Uganda. I began speaking to a South African government official. I told him about my experience there and how much I loved his country. Then I began to ask him about the work he was doing in Uganda. He primarily discussed the South African economy. This was the perfect opportunity to ask him how the HIV pandemic would affect the RSA economy. For example, there will not be enough educated workers to replace the dying ones, the country lacks the foreign investment it needs because of this fear, etc.

The official explained that unemployment was so high, they could simply replace the workers who die. He was suggesting that uneducated laborers are the predominant group with HIV and that they are expendable. I told him about a research study done in South Africa that showed CEOs and company presidents have the same rate of HIV infection as the uneducated laborers. The only group with lower infection rates is that of management-level people. The research revealed that company executives have money to hire prostitutes, whereas managers are too busy and lack the finances to hire prostitutes or frequently participate in unprotected sex. The uneducated laborers don't have good AIDS education, and many don't have access to free condoms. The official didn't become defensive; he just continued to claim that the economic impact of HIV wouldn't be a problem. After living in South Africa, I knew this was a battle I couldn't win.

I left the party a bit disillusioned. President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa doesn't totally "believe" HIV exists, even though he has seen colleagues and friends die from the disease. And now the country is appointing officials who don't see HIV as a monumental problem the country is facing—they say it is merely affecting the lower classes. RSA is a country I love. I want them to succeed. But with the leadership currently in place, I am unsure if it's possible.



I will be returning to the U.S. soon. Just as I am about to leave Africa, I am learning to deal with frustrations that previously slowed me down, like walking over a 20-pound rat, being caught in tear-gas, and learning that a man beat his wife to death over 50 cents.

June 14, 2005

Sunday afternoon on my way into the grocery shop, a man began walking towards me with his arms open. As he got closer it became evident that he was intoxicated. As I was trying to get out of the way, he stretched his arm further and "accidentally" grabbed my breast. I was furious. I walked into the store and asked the cashier to ask him to leave. All four of the women who work there and know me on a first-name basis just looked at me and said, "He's drunk," as if that made his behavior tolerable. They had no idea what to do. I realized they probably had never been in a situation where they would have to order a man to do something. I am nearly certain that if a male manager or cashier had been present, the man would have been escorted off the property. But the females knew their status made such action not only culturally inappropriate but also useless.

June 28, 2005

When we arrived in Gulu, one of the largest towns in northern Uganda, we went to the World Vision Mothers with Children Reception Center. The group counseling they do at the center is much different than what we call group counseling in the U.S.A. The aim in both countries is to equip women with skills so they can reintegrate into a society, but in Uganda the methods include teaching the ABCs, how to write names, etc.

Women with babies spent most of the session breastfeeding and tending to their children's needs. Throughout the session it was evident that the women make no association between love and sex. They all have children who were produced through rape and violence. The love they described for their children was not the same uncontrollable, passionate feeling that most Americans would identify as love. They spoke of love for their children because the children will assist them when they are older. They loved their mothers for teaching them how to be women. They loved each other for being supportive. This made me sad. Love is such a powerful emotion. There is nothing like passionate love and all the feelings associated with it to remind you that you are alive.

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Throughout the time I have lived in Uganda, I have been surprised by how little the Ugandan people and other aid workers know about the war in the north. Monica, who was working at the World Vision Center, is originally from the north but now lives in Kampala. She had never heard of the "night commuters" in Gulu. Every evening 40,000 children walk into the city to sleep because they are less likely to be abducted there than if they sleep in the villages. An aid worker I spoke with said that when colleagues from his organization came to visit northern Uganda, they knew very little about the war and had never heard of the night commuters, either. If the aid community doesn't know about the problems, how do we expect to get international involvement in this war?

July 4, 2005

I had hoped to spend last week wrapping up my work and preparing for my mother's arrival, but I had another bout of food poisoning. This week I pulled out my copy of the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution that I brought with me to Africa. Uganda is in the process of changing its constitution. I was curious to compare our constitution with theirs. The comparison made me grateful that I am a citizen of the U.S.

Because of the referendum vote, tensions are high among the Ugandan people. After the first vote this week, a member of Parliament was arrested and several gatherings were dispersed by the police with tear gas. Once again I was in the wrong place at the wrong time! I was stuck in traffic in a taxi when my throat started to burn—it felt like it was on




fire. I coughed, wheezed, cried and sneezed. When I read the paper the following morning, I learned that the tear gas used was toxic. It was old tear gas from the apartheid period in South Africa.

While the newspaper prints some articles that are informative to the public, it also prints articles with no informational value. One in particular made my temperature rise. Last Friday the *New Vision* introduced a new section that included this article:

> **Happy Homes: A Reward for Buying Genuine Electronics**
>
> *Today it is not strange to encounter domestic fights or rows that emanate from the use of substandard domestic appliances. If a man isn't beating the wife to a pulp for "blowing" his treasured secondhand TV set, he is admonishing her for not ironing his clothes neatly, not knowing the source of his woes most likely lies in purchasing substandard home electronic appliances from places other than the recognized and authorized dealers.*

I e-mailed a letter to the author of the article as well as the editor, but I am yet to receive responses.

Last week several people mentioned that the Ugandan government most likely is monitoring my Web page. Earlier this week I was doing Internet research for a letter I am writing to Human Rights Watch about northern Uganda. I was using Google to search and was surprised to find my first three searches brought up my Web page as one of the top three matches! As I write I am bearing in mind that I may possibly have a broader audience than I had suspected.

September 2, 2005

To be honest, I have been dreading writing this final journal entry. Leaving Uganda was difficult. During my seven months there, I went from hating the country to giving my heart to the people. I felt like I was leaving the people and all their problems behind.

When we landed in Johannesburg, the cold air took my breath away as I stepped outside the airport. During South African winters the government uses controlled burning to prevent wildfires. The smoke seems to bring the earth into the air, filling your entire soul. A deep breath after a South African storm always made me feel a part of the earth. It is a feeling of being home, grounded, and light enough to float away. I am yet to exhale; even now, back in the U.S.A., part of my heart remains in Africa.

The first night home, I stopped in a gas station on the way back from the airport to get a granola bar. I stood in the "granola bar aisle" as tears formed in my eyes. There were too many options to choose from; I left empty-handed. That night I crawled into bed exhausted, but knew that sleep would not come easily. It was the unfamiliar feelings of comfort and safety. My sheets smelled so nice and my best friend, my dog, was at the foot of my bed. My luggage had gotten lost on the way home, and I didn't have the knife I usually clutched in my fist as I slept.

As the days pass I continue to readjust and am frequently shocked by some aspect of American life. Massive SUVs, washing machines, dryers and air conditioning all seemed excessive at first. Without a doubt I miss the people of Africa the most. The women in the camps in Uganda changed my life forever and will never be forgotten. I plan to keep my promise to continue to tell their stories. ▼

Passing It On

The Traveling Fellowship is unique at Vanderbilt in its status as financial support benefiting students *after* graduation. Previous recipients have, in the year following their graduation from Vanderbilt, undertaking arduous courses of study all over the world.

The idea of creating a fellowship based on a self-designed program of travel and learning was conceived in 1960 by Amory Houghton Jr., chairman of the board of Corning Glass Works, in conjunction with Harvard University. The Corning Fellowship program expanded in several stages to include students from Vanderbilt, Yale, Kentucky and North Carolina. However, Corning Glass saw its role as innovator and creator, rather than permanent supporter, and funding ceased in 1968.

Nearly 10 years later, former recipients who viewed the traveling fellowship as one of the most important experiences of their lives established the Corning Fellows Association Inc. Michael Ainslie, BA'65, was elected president of the group and made a five-year, $50,000 pledge.

From 1998 through 2004, contributions from alumni and from the World Trade Council of Middle Tennessee allowed the fellowship to be awarded at Vanderbilt on an intermittent basis. In 2003, Michael Keegan, BA'80, the 1980 Vanderbilt traveling fellow, offered to fund the 2004 award and to secure an endowment that would guarantee the program on an annual basis. An anonymous $250,000 gift followed, and the program has been renamed to honor Keegan's efforts.

The strength of the Traveling Fellowship lies in the continuing network and financial support of the previous 26 fellows and other alumni who are committed to the notion of developing Vanderbilt students into global citizens. Former fellows assist with the annual selection process, share contact information, and refer new fellows to people around the world who can help them pursue their topic of interest.

For more about the Michael B. Keegan Traveling Fellowship, go to www.vanderbilt.edu/studentlife/clips/documents/fellowship.doc.

I Heard a Rumor

Finally, the truth about age-old Vanderbilt rumors is revealed.

By Claire Vernon Suddath, BA'04

Vanderbilt is really old. I'm going to take a stab in the dark, without actually researching anything, and say … oh, about 5,000 years. As is the case with anything old, the University has become the subject of countless stories, some of them true and some of them absolute nonsense. Spend a significant amount of time at Vanderbilt, and you will undoubtedly hear some of these rumors. For instance, did you know that David Bowie's eldest son, Zowie Bowie (who now goes by his first name, Duncan, for obvious reasons), attended Vanderbilt? That rumor is true; Duncan Bowie enrolled in the philosophy Ph.D. program in the 1990s. (No word on whether he finished.) It's not true, however, that David Bowie's role as Jareth the Goblin King in the movie "Labyrinth" was inspired by philosophy professor John Lachs. If anyone ever tells you that, be sure to set them straight: It wasn't John Lachs. It was former Chancellor Joe B. Wyatt. The underground tunnels led to his goblin den. It's true. I read it in the *Hustler*.

For such a well-established University, Vanderbilt has surprisingly few rumors. For the most part, students know what is and is not happening at their school. Nothing on campus is rumored to be haunted, and if a student's roommate dies, nobody really believes that the bereaved student automatically gets all A's for the semester. Despite the University's level-headedness, some rumors still circulate the campus, feeding on a new class of freshmen every year. In this article I will reveal the truth. Here are the popular Vanderbilt rumors and their official verifications or denials, as the case may be.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MICHAEL SLOAN

RUMOR #1:

The Kirkland Hall bell is not a real bell. Also, it doesn't always toll at 1 o'clock.

This is my favorite rumor, as it intrigued me the most during my college years. Many students, some of them my good friends, told me that the Kirkland bell was just a tape recording. Some claimed to have seen the bell with their own eyes, and others said their professors told them about it. They said the original bell had been replaced in the 1970s or '80s when the University realized it would make more sense to use a recording. No one could explain to me why a tape recording would make more sense, but that didn't seem to matter. I didn't know how to verify the bell's existence without seeing it for myself, so I asked Paul Young, Plant Operations' electrical leadman, to give me a tour of Kirkland.

Kirkland Hall was built in 1873, and for a long time served as one of the only buildings for the entire University. Eventually it was called "Old Main." Students lived off campus in boarding houses and commuted via foot or carriage to Old Main for classes. In 1905 the building burned almost completely. The fire started in the middle of the day and spread slowly, engulfing the library and north tower. Firemen did their best, but only the outer walls and the south tower survived. Chancellor Kirkland rebuilt the hall almost immediately, but decided to forego replacement of the destroyed tower in favor of restocking the library. Students had saved 4,000 books from the fire by throwing them out the windows, but another 18,000 were lost. Kirkland replaced the library, leaving us with a lopsided building. Chancellor Kirkland retired in 1937 and died two years later. Old Main was renamed in his honor. But you probably already figured that out.

"The Children of Vanderbilt," who, as far as I can tell, were just wealthy alumni, donated a giant bell in 1906 when Old Main's bell tower was rebuilt. Paul Young took me to see the bell and, sure enough, it's up there, tolling away every hour on the hour, unless it's broken or it's 1 o'clock. The inscription on the bell reads, "The Children of Vanderbilt, 1906, Ringing in the nobler modes of life." Over that, someone has scrawled the word "Princeton" in paint. Apparently, we are the victims of an old Ivy League prank.

Kirkland's time is set with a pilot clock located towards the base of the tower. Halfway

up, in a locked shed, sits the so-called "sewing machine motor," which was installed in 1966 and actually turns the hands and makes the bell toll. That's right, Kirkland's clock tower is powered by something that looks like a sewing machine. A thin metal rod connects the motor to a large metal hammer. Every hour, the pilot clock tells the motor to turn the rod. The rod moves the hammer and the hammer strikes the bell. It works like, well, clockwork, except at 1 o'clock.

The bell wasn't actually working when I saw it. The rod had snapped, so the hammer couldn't hit the bell. This happens a lot, says Young, and Vanderbilt has lots of replacement rods. The bell was up and running within a day.

In 2003 I wrote an article for the *Vanderbilt Hustler* in which I stated that the Kirkland bell doesn't always toll at 1 o'clock. I arrived at this conclusion via the very scientific experiment of standing in front of the bell tower at 1 a.m. and witnessing its silence. Lyle Lankford, public affairs coordinator of special projects in the University's Public Affairs Office, says the pilot clock is getting a little tired and hasn't struck 1 on a regular basis for a few years. Paul Young blames "gremlins." I have a different theory. I blame Princeton.

RUMOR #2:

A little old lady used to live in one of the frat houses. Vanderbilt tried to buy her land, but she refused.

The woman in question was Mrs. Lillie Mayfield, but there was never any animosity toward Vanderbilt or vice versa regarding the sale of her property. Lillie married a Vanderbilt professor, George Mayfield, and by the time of his 1947 retirement, Professor Mayfield held the record of having served on more committees and worked with more groups than any other professor. Lillie had been one of his students at Peabody, and when he died in 1964, she continued to live at 2414 Vanderbilt Place, even when the fraternity and sorority houses sprung up around her. When she finally moved out in 1982, she rented the house to students for a few years. The Alpha Chi Omega house now stands in its place. Mrs. Mayfield hardly embodied the image of a cranky old lady; students who attended Vanderbilt during her time have only nice things to say about her. And she must have liked the frats, or else she would have moved. In fact, when Sigma Chi stole the infamous KA cannon in 1970, they buried it in Mrs. Mayfield's yard. Whether she knew about the prank or not is uncertain, but she never gave away the secret.

RUMOR #3:

The fraternity Sigma Alpha Epsilon was kicked off campus because its members accidentally set a young woman on fire during one of its parties.

This one is true. The fire in question occurred in February 1993 at a "Paddy Murphy Party" during which the concrete lions in front of the fraternity house were ignited and four or five people sustained burns from standing too close. The fraternity was disciplined by the Interfraternity Council and lost its house. SAE moved off campus until 2000, when it was allowed back into the house. It was reissued its charter in 2001, and so far its members haven't tried to light the lions on fire again. Good for them.

RUMOR #4:

The teacher in the film "Dead Poets Society" was based on philosophy professor John Lachs.

This is a great rumor but, unfortunately, it's not true. Tom Schulman graduated from Vanderbilt in 1972 and went on to write a number of commercially successful screenplays, including "What About Bob?" and "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids." He won an Oscar for writing "Dead Poets Society," but John Keats, the teacher in the film played by Robin Williams, was inspired by Schulman's high-school English teacher at Nashville's Montgomery Bell Academy, not John Lachs. That's OK, though, because Lachs is pretty awesome all by himself. Though not as awesome as the ant the kids rode in "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids." Then again, it's hard to top a giant ant.

RUMOR #5:

McGill Hall once seceded from Vanderbilt.

This is definitely true. In 1970 five people dressed as Cuban revolutionaries took over the dorm and announced they were seceding from Vanderbilt. They created a list of ideals for their new "Republica de McGillica," which went as follows: McGill no longer would recognize the authority of the chancellor; McGill would not obey any ruling group associated with Vanderbilt; and McGill denounced the Vanderbilt Board of Trust. Later they flew a flag outside the dorm proclaiming the new "Republica de McGillica." The University's reaction? Absolutely nothing. On Monday the revolutionaries still went to class. They still ate at Rand and bought books from the bookstore. And they all graduated. So much for the revolution.

RUMOR #6:

Classes have been canceled only twice at Vanderbilt. The first time was in the 1800s when a bull got loose on campus. The second time was in 1963 when John F. Kennedy was killed.

This rumor made its way around campus after Sept. 11, 2001, a day for which classes were not canceled. Students didn't understand why classes continued, so they told each other that Vanderbilt has a strict no-cancellation policy that it has broken only twice.

Unfortunately, the bull story isn't true. In the 1800s Vanderbilt's grounds were an open field that sometimes was used for grazing cattle, but no record of a loose bull exists. In the 1950s a cattle truck overturned on West End Avenue, and one of the liberated cows found its way into the basement of a building. Classes were not canceled that day. However, they were canceled for nearly a week during the blizzard of 1951, which buried the city under 8 inches of ice and snow and, according to the National Weather Service, was the "worst ice storm in the history of Nashville."

Vanderbilt also closed its doors for the National Day of Mourning on the day of the funeral of President John F. Kennedy, Nov. 25, 1963.

So while it is true that Vanderbilt has canceled classes only twice, the first time was caused by a blizzard and not a bull.

RUMOR #7:

The Indigo Girls' song "Closer to Fine" is about Vanderbilt. The "doctor of philosophy" in the song is John Lachs.

What's with all the John Lachs rumors? While Indigo Girl Amy Ray did attend Vanderbilt and John Lachs is a doctor of philosophy, the song just refers to a man with a Ph.D.—who could be pretty much any Vanderbilt professor. In fact, the song isn't about Vanderbilt at all. Amy Ray did write a song about attending Vanderbilt, but it's called "Nashville," and is less than complimentary. Ray transferred to Emory University and finished college there. John Lachs isn't mentioned in any Indigo Girls song, or any Sarah McLachlan song, or even any Joni Mitchell song. Give the poor man a break.

RUMOR #8:

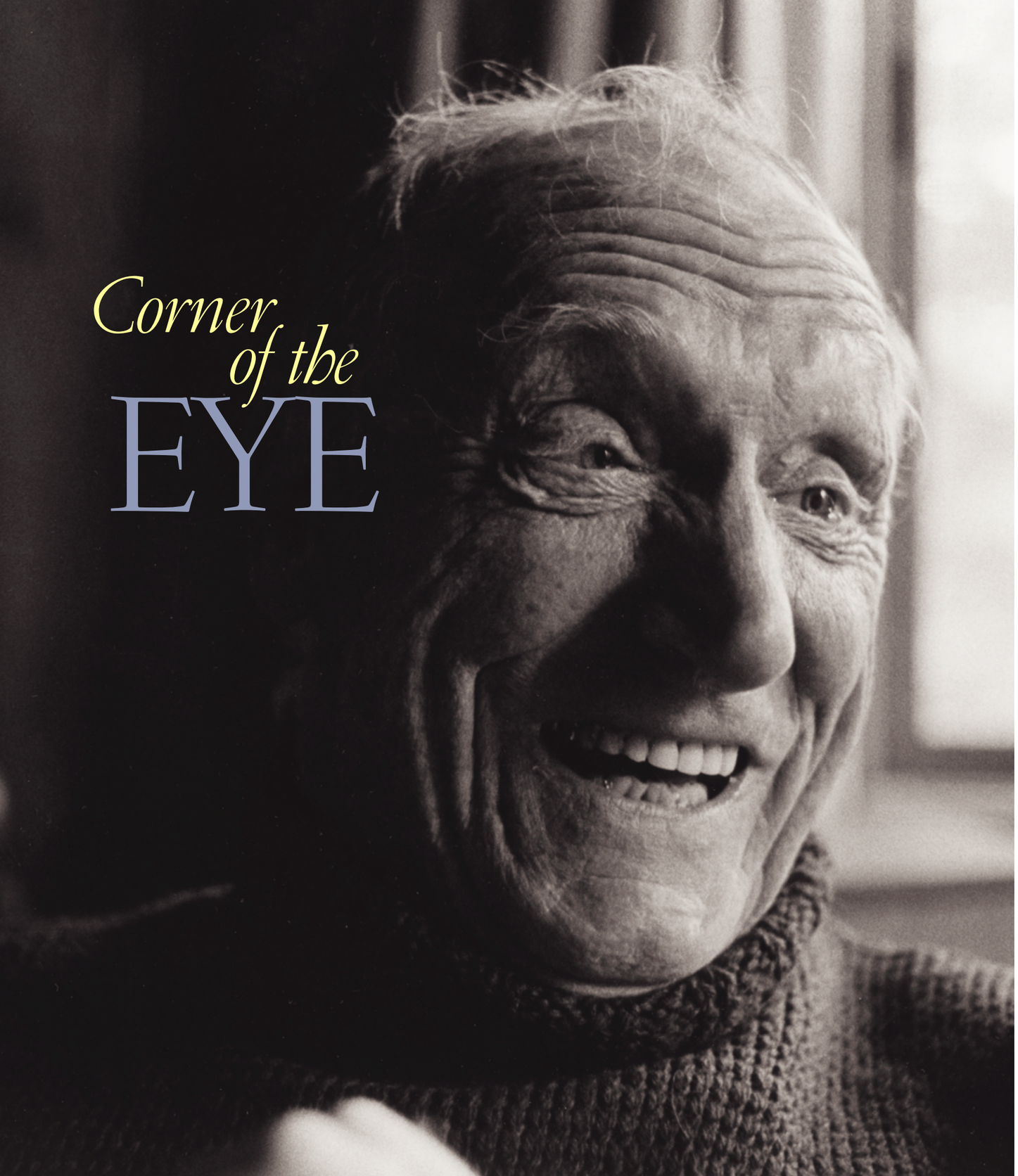
People are buried on campus. Students walk by their graves every day on the way to class.

Well, that depends on where your classes are located. This rumor is true, although the answer is much less scandalous than one might expect. There are five marked graves on campus. Bishop Holland McTyeire (who established the University on behalf of Commodore Vanderbilt) and his wife have the most recognizable graves, in a small cemetery plot near the Divinity School called Bishop's Commons. The cemetery also includes three other graves, those of two bishops who were friends of McTyeire's, and Landon Garland, the first chancellor of the University. Chancellor Harvie Branscomb and his wife, Margaret, are buried inside the west wall of Benton Chapel, but they do not have proper graves.

So there you have it. Those are the main rumors that circulate campus. The bell is real, the bull is not, and everything else falls somewhere in between. Some of these rumors probably plagued you during your time at Vanderbilt, and some you've probably never heard. As far as I can tell, John Lachs has never been the subject of a major motion picture or pop song. Although if you play the Beatles' song "I Am the Walrus" backwards, you can clearly hear the phrases "Paul is dead" and "This song is about a Vanderbilt philosophy professor." But they meant Henry Teloh, of course.

There are still more Vanderbilt rumors left unsolved. Why is the baseball glove chained down in the Baseball Glove Lounge? Are there monkeys under Wilson Hall? Who was the man who indecently exposed himself on West End Avenue all the time? Did someone really fall down an elevator shaft in Towers? These things are better left unanswered. After all, we need to lie to the freshmen about something. **V**

Claire Vernon Suddath, BA'04, earned her degree in English and economics at Vanderbilt, where she wrote a weekly humor column for the Vanderbilt Hustler. *She now is a staff writer for the* Nashville Scene, *one of the city's weekly alternative newspapers.*



Corner of the EYE

In the centennial year of his birth, Robert Penn Warren's work continues to find fresh admirers. The past decade has seen publication of at least a dozen books examining Warren's life and work. Earlier this year the U.S. Postal Service issued a stamp bearing Warren's image.

This December, Columbia Pictures releases a remake of Warren's most famous work, *All the King's Men*, with a star-studded cast that includes Sean Penn, Jude Law and Anthony Hopkins. At Vanderbilt's Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities, last year's annual Harry Howard Jr. Lecture featured journalist and author Joe Klein. Klein's best-selling novel *Primary Colors* was much influenced by *All the King's Men*, still considered one of the greatest political novels of all time.

A three-time Pulitzer recipient, Warren is the only writer to win the prize in poetry as well as in fiction. He excelled in literary criticism as well as fiction and poetry, and taught at Vanderbilt, Southwestern College in Memphis, the University of Minnesota, Yale and Louisiana State University. In 1986, three years before his death, he was named the nation's first poet laureate.

Born April 24, 1905, in the small town of Guthrie, Ky., "Red" Warren came to Vanderbilt at the age of 16, where he joined the Fugitives, a group of writers who influenced the beginning of the Southern Literary Renaissance. In 1925 he graduated summa cum laude and received the Founder's Medal.

Warren might never have attended Vanderbilt except for a mishap that occurred in his teens. A rock-throwing incident perpetrated by his brother led to the loss of an eye and dashed aspirations of an appointment to Annapolis. "Askew, one eye long gone—and I reckoned/I knew how it felt with one gone," he later wrote in "Red Tail Hawk and Pyre of Youth."

"Strongly not a Christian believer, Warren nevertheless had Augustinian convictions as to sin, error, guilt, and history," writes longtime friend Harold Bloom in the foreword to *The Collected Poems of Robert Penn Warren*. "Himself a man of great humor, ironic tolerance, and considerable wisdom, Warren was probably the most severe secular moralist that I have ever known."

Included here are samples of his poetry, a recollection of his time at Vanderbilt, reminiscences by a writer who met him, and an excerpt from *All the King's Men*.

THE Only Place OF ITS Kind

A Reminiscence by Robert Penn Warren

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Warren recalled his Vanderbilt days in an essay written for the book* Nashville: The Faces of Two Centuries 1780–1980, *published in 1979 by PlusMedia Incorporated and abridged for reprint here.*

I finished high school in Guthrie [Ky.] when I was fifteen, and since I was a little too young for college, I spent another year at the high school in Clarksville [Tenn.], hoping for an appointment to Annapolis, for to be an admiral of the Pacific Fleet had been my romantic boyhood dream. I did receive the congressional appointment, but then I had an eye injury from an accident, and so I turned in disappointment to my second choice, which was Vanderbilt, and enrolled there in 1921, when I was sixteen.

Warren as a senior at Vanderbilt in 1925.

My intention was to study chemical engineering, but that notion lasted only three weeks or so. Chemistry was taught primarily for pre-med students—it was very deductive, having nothing to do with the nature or philosophy of science—and that turned me away. The English classes were much more interesting. Edwin Mims taught literature one class a week—Tennyson the first term—and John Crowe Ransom taught grammar and composition two days, and they got me started. I enjoyed writing English themes and I began to dabble a little in poetry, and it didn't take me long to find out where my true interests lay.

I've always been grateful to Dr. Mims for demanding that every student memorize hundreds of lines of verse. His old-fashioned method was total immersion in poetry. It should be the new-fashioned method.

But the two people who influenced me most at Vanderbilt were John Crowe Ransom and Donald Davidson. They were young men in their early thirties; they had been in World War I; they were writing poetry I could identify with and understand. With both men I would maintain a lifelong friendship.

Ransom's house later became almost a second home to me. He was a splendid teacher and a fascinating personality. He was a classical scholar, had been to Oxford, and he was the first real poet I had ever seen—his first book, *Poems About God*, had only been out a couple of years. When I read it, I saw Ransom making poetry out of the life and objects of my boyhood. He had grown up, as I had, in the rural upper South—his father was a very learned country parson—and Ransom had found in that familiar setting the stuff of poetry. It was strange and even disturbing to me, that discovery. In his poetry and in his performance as a teacher, I saw a first-rate mind at work. He could be distracted and uninspiring two days a week, but on the third day he might catch fire, like a man possessed, and pursue a thought into fascinating nooks and crannies, creating fresh ideas before your very eyes. That's what education should be—seeing a first-rate mind catch fire. And with all that, Ransom could also be very witty and amusing.

Donald Davidson was different—a superlative teacher, very systematic, humorous only in his intensity and in his utter seriousness. He was a darkly handsome man with an intense gaze, passionate in his convictions but kindly and generous in human relations. Davidson was particularly fond of folk balladry. His father was, I think, a county school superintendent in Middle Tennessee, and Don had spent much time in the country, as I had, but he really woke me to the special beauty and poetry of the country tongue. And that's only one example of the broad impact of his teaching. Years later, I would realize how deeply he had made me feel a pleasure, a necessity, in writing, for he allowed me to write an "imitation" of an author being studied—say, a new episode of Beowulf—instead of the regular bi-weekly critique.

In their different ways, Davidson and Ransom touched part of my experience and opened up my mind. I learned from others too—from Walter Clyde Curry, who taught Shakespeare with a real dramatic sense and a sense of scholarship. But I suppose my real university was not Vanderbilt as such—it was classmates and friends I had the good fortune to know, people whose intellectual and philosophical interests and literary tastes were sometimes far more sophisticated than my own. A peculiar feature about the little university that was the Vanderbilt of the 1920s was an active and spontaneous interest in literature and in writing among a great many students. There were two official writing clubs, "Blue Pencil" and "The Calumet," but even more unusual were the informal groups, one of which issued a book of poems, some of which actually resembled poems—though I doubt that mine did.

I recall that Charles Moss and I were admitted to "Blue Pencil" at the same time. Charlie was a very handsome young man, a romantic, a humorous fellow, wonderful company, and he was also a very promising poet, but he turned instead to journalism and was for years editor of the *Nashville Banner*.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

Another fellow who pops into mind was Ralph McGill, who had no interest in poetry whatsoever, not the slightest, but who was a marvelous companion. He lived on West Side Row, where a good many of the students were considered "offbeat." McGill worked as a sports writer at the *Banner*—he and Moss were both part-time reporters. The association is what I remember. We used to sit around telling tales, sharing a bottle, arguing. McGill could not have dreamed that he would become publisher of the *Atlanta Constitution*. Years after our time at Vanderbilt together, he helped me with the background material for a book I wrote on race relations in the South.

And there was William Bandy, a dashing young man, a great dancer, popular with the ladies—and mad for them. He had the air of a Frenchman, and though only an undergraduate, he was already a French scholar, especially of the poet Baudelaire. Bill Bandy ran a sort of informal French seminar in his living quarters, a kind of competing university in French. The sessions sometimes went on until four o'clock in the morning—lubricated, as often as not, with a jug of corn whiskey. He had already begun collecting the works of Baudelaire, the first step toward the famous collection he has since given to the university.

Bandy also had the only Stutz Bearcat on the campus. About three o'clock one morning, with several of us as passengers, he undertook to climb the great story-high stone flight of entrance steps to Wesley Hall in the Bearcat. He succeeded, and then made a hair-raising descent, bouncing back step by step in reverse as astonished theological heads popped out of the upper windows of the building. Bandy leveled off at the bottom and we sped away. The culprits were never identified.

> "If anybody's going to be a writer, he's got to be able to say, 'This has got to come first.' ... You've got to pretend to be an industrious apprentice but really steal time from the boss. Or from your wife, or somebody, you see."
>
> Interview with Richard B. Sale (1969)

Wesley Hall (now long since burned down) was an enormous brick building of Early Methodist architecture, you might say, dating back to the dark ages of the founding of the university. It was an imposing building, ugly as sin, but the theological school. However, non-theologians had crept in as rooms became vacant, for it was a wonderful place for privacy. I lived in Kissam Hall, but in my sophomore year I got into Wesley.

Ridley Wills lived there. He was a senior who had returned to finish his degree after fighting in France in World War I, and after we became acquainted, he invited me to move in with him. I was overwhelmed with pleasure and flattered beyond belief. He impressed me greatly, not just with his age and rich experience but with the fact that he was the only undergraduate who had actually published a book, a real novel in a real publishing house in far-off New York. Not only that, but he was marvelously amusing and full of anecdotes.

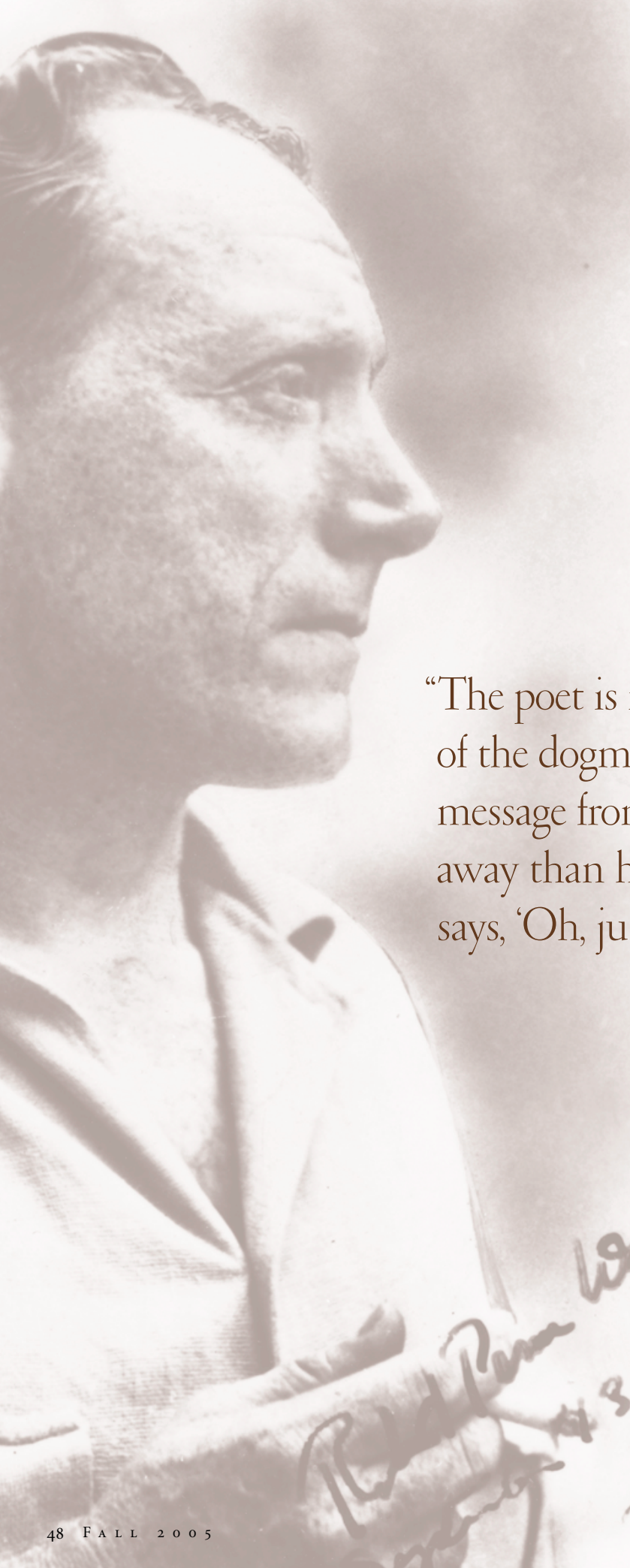
Soon Allen Tate, that genius of a poet, moved in with us. He was six years my senior, returning from a siege of illness to finish his degree. (For several years, Tate could not force himself to do freshman chemistry and math; finally, in spite of his aversions, he graduated magna cum laude.) A fourth young man, William Cobb (later to be an editor at Houghton Mifflin), came to occupy the last of our two double-decker beds. The room was a sty—dirty shirts in the corners, match stubs and cigarette butts over the floors, empty or half-empty bottles—but there was also the conversation and the poetry. Both Ridley Wills and Allen Tate were members of the Fugitives, a group of young philosophers and poets whose presence was already being felt around Vanderbilt (though the group, as such, had no relation to the university), and they were willing to look at my attempts at poetry and give me detailed criticism and long lectures on the subject.

Our room became an informal gathering place for others of like inclination, and all enjoyed the irony of a little Bohemia in the citadel of a divinity school. Merrill Moore, another member of the Fugitives, lived on the floor above us. Before the year was out, Ridley and Allen had taken me as a guest to a meeting of the group. Later, I published a poem in their magazine, *The Fugitive*, and I was invited to join. My cup truly ran over.

The first issue of *The Fugitive* had appeared in 1922, during my freshman year, with an introduction declaring whimsically that the Fugitives fled from various things but from nothing more speedily than the "magnolia and moonlight" type of Southern poetry. In fact, the magazine was primarily a manifestation of modernism, or rather a battleground for debating modernism and traditionalism. The group had been founded long before my time—before the war, in fact—but after the war there were new faces and new interests.

The original group had been more interested in philosophy than poetry. It brought together a few young professors (principally Ransom and Davidson), some local businessmen, a banker, and a Jewish sage—I have no other word for him—who presided at the meetings. The sage was Sidney Hirsch, who in younger wanderings was reputed to have been heavyweight boxing champion of the Pacific Fleet. He had lived in the Orient and in France. He was a mystic, a man of brilliant and undisciplined intellect. He was the catalyst, the magnet to whom the others were drawn. Those first meetings were held at his apartment on Twentieth Avenue South.

Hirsch and his brother, Nathaniel, and James M. Frank, who mar-



ried their sister, and the Starr brothers, Alfred and Milton, were all young Jewish men in Nashville who would be identified with the Fugitive group for as long as it lasted. Sidney Hirsch and James Frank and Alfred Starr were the principal off-campus members—they and Alec B. Stevenson, a banker, whose father had taught Semitic languages at the university. From the faculty came Ransom, Davidson, Walter Clyde Curry and Stanley Johnson, and the students were Tate, Ridley Wills, Merrill Moore, Jesse Wills (Ridley's cousin), William Yandell Elliott, William Frierson and me. Laura Riding, the only woman, came late into the group from outside Nashville. There were sixteen of us in all, over the years, who were actually members and whose poems were published in the magazine.

I was an eighteen-year-old sophomore when I became acquainted with the Fugitive group in 1923, and it was an exhilarating experience to be suddenly involved in an intellectual exchange with men twice my age. It was anything but a college club. That's where I got my education, where I began to find my way in the world—and Vanderbilt was both incidental and essential to the experience.

For the remainder of my undergraduate years, *The Fugitive* was

"The poet is in the end probably more afraid of the dogmatist who wants to extract the message from the poem and throw the poem away than he is of the sentimentalist who says, 'Oh, just let me enjoy the poem.'"

—Lecture, "The Themes of Robert Frost" (1947)

my main interest. The magazine prospered—that is, it attracted attention nationally, and even in England. It was poetry or death for me then, and some of the others shared that passion. We usually met at James Frank's home on Whitland Avenue, each of us in turn reading our poems and having them criticized by others. Among my contemporaries in the university, I became especially close to Tate and Ridley Wills, and also to Merrill Moore, who was a fascinating young man. His father was John Trotwood Moore, well-known in Nashville as a writer and a librarian. Merrill became a psychiatrist, but in those days, as ever after, he wrote sonnets.

Merrill was unique in the history of literature. Even during the Fugitive days he had settled on the sonnet form as his special concern. It became such a natural form of thought for him that even while waiting for a traffic light to change he could compose one in shorthand—or later, in the course of technological change, dictate one to a recorder. At his death in the 1950s he left several remarkable volumes in print and some 50,000 items in manuscript, shorthand or tape, in code of some kind, at the Library of Congress. He was

PHOTO COURTESY OF VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

unique as a psychological curiosity. He once joked to me, "I am my most interesting patient." Or was it a joke?

I made other friends at Vanderbilt outside the Fugitive group: Cleanth Brooks, with whom I later wrote several textbooks, and who is now generally recognized as one of the foremost literary critics of our age; and Andrew Lytle, with whom I later attended Yale; and Bill Bandy the French scholar, and Charlie Moss and Ralph McGill and others.

When we sat down together to discuss poetry, we sat as equals. It was one long seminar, and I was getting a priceless education writing boyish poems. I *was* a boy. Ransom and Elliott had been Rhodes Scholars, Frierson had studied at the Sorbonne, Hirsch had been around the world—and I had been to Nashville, and almost nowhere else. We were all Southerners, coming together around a common interest—poetry—but it was Ransom and Davidson who gave us purpose and direction.

I had another friend at Vanderbilt in those days, Saville Clark, who was far ahead of most people—a generation or two ahead—on a subject that was to become the dominant issue of our time: race. For a time I shared an apartment with Saville and his brother, Cannon Clark, on Grand Avenue. Saville had gone over to Fisk University and become acquainted with a good many students, and he brought one or two of them—to the horror of the landlady—to our apartment for conversations. This was in 1925, I believe, during a big student-administration clash at Fisk. I remember what an eye-opener it was for me, that small beginning in conversation across racial lines. I would think of it often in the 1950s and 1960s, and wish there had been more Saville Clarks.

Social issues didn't interest me then. Still, other things besides literature were happening at Vanderbilt. Football, for instance. Vanderbilt was a football power in those days. As I remember it, there were two all-Americans in my class—Hek Wakefield and Lynn Bomar—not to mention Gil Reese and Alf Sharp, who were all-Southern. I think Reese starred in the first game ever played at Dudley Field, in about 1922.

And of course, there were girls. Female enrollment at Vanderbilt was limited, I think, to ten percent, and in chapel each Wednesday morning the segregation was maintained, with the girls sitting in a balcony at the rear of the assembly hall, surveying the goings-on among their betters below. Once or twice a year when we (the males) entered the hall and saw the balcony empty, we were prepared to give more attention than usual to the business of the day, for an empty balcony meant it was time for what we called "the clap talk." On this occasion, some member of the medical faculty described in technical detail, sparing no horror, the ravages of venereal disease, and always added that beneath the finest, fairest flower—my metaphor—"the viper might lurk." The doctor would tell us that even that smiling and smartly dressed secretary or telephone operator might have loved not only too well but too widely, and we should be wary of them. I do not recall that the speaker ever touched on morality, or gave instructions for preventive measures. Perhaps he was forbidden to do so, or perhaps he trusted common sense and a mother's prayer in such matters. In any case, the clap talk was welcome and titillating and even provocative. I can't be sure that the female ten percent

The Corner of the Eye

The poem is just beyond the corner of the eye.
You cannot see it—not yet—but sense the faint gleam,

Or stir. It may be like a poor little shivering fieldmouse,
One tiny paw lifted from snow while, far off, the owl

Utters. Or like breakers, far off, almost as soundless as dream.
Or the rhythmic raps of your father's last breath, harsh

As the grind of a great file the blacksmith sets to hoof.
Or the whispering slither the torn morning newspaper makes,

Blown down an empty slum street in New York, at midnight,
Past dog shit and garbage cans, while the full moon,

Phthisic and wan, above the East River, presides
Over that last fragment of history which is

Our lives. Or the foggy glint of old eyes of
The sleepless patient who no longer wonders

If he will once more see in that window the dun-
Bleached dawn that promises what. Or the street corner

Where always, for years, in passing you felt, unexplained, a pang
Of despair, like nausea, till one night, late, late on that spot

You were struck stock-still, and again felt
How her head had thrust to your shoulder, she clinging, while you

Mechanically patting the fur coat, heard sobs, and stared up
Where tall buildings, frailer than reed-stalks, reeled among stars.

Yes, something there at eye-edge lurks, hears ball creak in socket,
Knows, before you do, tension of muscle, change

Of blood pressure, heart-heave of sadness, foot's falter, for
It has stalked you all day, or years, breath rarely heard, fangs dripping.

And now, any moment, great hindquarters may hunch, ready—
Or is it merely a poem, after all?

WHAT JUNE MEAN?

The books the people brought were reflections of their lives. Standing in line on the Hillsboro Village sidewalk, an elderly gentleman attired in suit and tie unwrapped a first-edition volume from folds of white tissue paper. Undergraduates mused over passages from paperback textbooks whose lines of black type had been colored with yellow highlight markers. I and other teachers carried our anthologies, replete with marginal notations from past lectures, as we waited our turns to meet Robert Penn Warren on Tuesday afternoon, April 10, 1984.

Before arriving on campus for a poetry reading sponsored by the Student Government Association's Speakers Committee, Mr. Warren had agreed to visit Mills Bookstore, that venerable institution from the years before literature was usurped by the bath salts and aromatherapy candles of contemporary franchises. I had assumed my place in line on 21st Avenue after having lectured earlier in the day on Mr. Warren's short story "Blackberry Winter" to a class of freshmen at Aquinas College.

To make waiting in line pass more quickly, I began thinking about my favorite scenes from "Blackberry Winter," a story which offers a profound commentary on the human's futile effort to comprehend, in absolutes, the properties of time. When the 9-year-old narrator and protagonist, Seth, proclaims to Old Jebb, the elderly African-American character, that Middle Tennessee's cool weather following a storm on a June evening in 1910 is blackberry winter, Old Jebb replies, "What June mean? Maybe hit is come cold to stay."

My reminiscing of young Seth's initiation into an understanding of the constant mutability of time was interrupted by the strident voice of a matronly high-school English teacher who announced to the entire crowd that she was going to ask Mr. Warren exactly what he meant by the last sentence of "Blackberry Winter." I privately discerned, rather patronizingly, that she obviously had not studied Warren's writings in the context of the New Criticism or she would have known that the author was an advocate of a close, objective reading of a work of literature and would argue that the text's meaning could be interpreted independently of any biographical or authorial intrusions.

As we moved closer to the front door, we learned that none of us would be having a conversation with the author. The proprietor of Mills, Mr. Bernie Schweid, told us that in the interest of time, Mr. Warren would be able to sign only one book for each person and that his schedule would not permit us to engage him in conversation. I decided that I would have him sign my recently purchased, unmarked copy of *Being Here: Poetry 1977–1980,* and merely thank him for his kindness. The recurring mutterings from the high-school English teacher suggested, however, that she would not be deterred in her mission to find out what Mr. Warren meant by the last sentence in his short story.

When my opportunity came to sit by Mr. Warren at the round wooden reading table that served as the centerpiece of Mills Bookstore, I handed him the volume of verse, and as he asked my name, he noticed the anthology and two novels I was holding under my arm. He then asked if I were a student, and after I told him I taught literature to undergraduates, he smiled gently, reached for the other books under my arm, and inscribed his name on each title page.

After reading selections from his poetry that evening, Mr. Warren received questions from the audience in Langford Auditorium. I wondered if the English teacher from the bookstore line had secured a ticket to the reading so she could ask, now publicly, her question about "Blackberry Winter." But the first question Mr. Warren acknowledged was asked by a young man who wished to know if the poem "The Cross: a Theological Study" was based upon a poem by William Butler Yeats.

Upon hearing the question, Mr. Warren walked slowly from the podium, moved stage right—toward the direction of the inquirer's voice—paused, and then replied in a tone suggestive of puzzlement over the comparison to the modern Irish poet, "Well, that's news to me. I write what I know."

Twenty-one years after Mr. Warren read for the last time at Vanderbilt, I continue to hear his declaration: "I write what I know."

Those five monosyllabic words were a gift, unknowingly bequeathed from his experiential wisdom to a young teacher, and they remain the foundation of my creed as a writer and editor. Like the protagonist in "Blackberry Winter," writers can recount and describe the transient circumstances of time as we experience them, but in our efforts to render the definitive answer to Old Jebb's question, "What June mean?", we ultimately prove the finite, imperfect nature of language.

—Victor Judge, BS'77, MS'79

BLACKBERRY BLOSSOM BY MIKE HASKEY / KRT

were given any equivalent admonition; at that time, there wasn't even a dean of women in that purlieu of purity.

Occasionally, greater drama broke routine. A classmate of mine became convinced that he was in the wrong pew—his real passions were not a B.A. and a respectable position, but girls and motorcycles. In those old days before any hint of progress had changed the campus, it was in spring a bosky place full of the chancellor's iris and magnolia blossoms in profusion, and toward late afternoon, ladies from the city would flock there in their black electric automobiles to breathe the clean air and admire the beauties of nature.

One afternoon my nameless friend must have reached the breaking point. His great Harley Davidson, or whatever it was, exploded into action and, as reported to me, began to twine in and out among the automobiles from West End and Belle Meade. That was bad enough to bring well-bred shrieks from the ladies—but worse, according to report, my friend was wearing scarcely a stitch—if even that. He may have been the first streaker. On he wove among the screams of fear and outrage to his doom and destiny. Back then, Vanderbilt University had only a single cause for expulsion: "conduct unbecoming a gentleman." It must have been applied in this case. (A footnote about expulsion in those days before the worldwide exfoliation of professional administrators: Our dean was a classical scholar noted for sweetness of nature and a halo of white hair. It was generally understood that if he even called you in and, affectionately but sadly, laid his arm across your shoulders, your goose was cooked. And he suffered far more than you.)

How long ago it seems since a freshman with a hat cocked on one side of his head and a cigar in his mouth entered a poolroom with a friend and began to chalk his cue, and how long ago the sophomore's first transaction with a bootlegger. I have one vivid memory of a summer job as an American Express truck driver, and briefly as a money guard with a sawed-off shotgun and a gray felt hat with the brim pulled low and sinister. Candor forces me to say that the boss who appointed me to that post drew me aside and said, "Warren, I'm giving you this job because you're expendable—you're the worst driver I've got. All you have to do is close your eyes and pull both triggers if anybody sticks his head in the back of the truck." To my eternal disappointment, nobody did.

By the time I graduated from Vanderbilt in 1925, *The Fugitive* had almost run its course. Its final issue was published in December of that year. The members of the group were beginning to scatter in all directions, and though the effort was made, there was no hope of holding us together. The university had given no recognition or encouragement to the magazine—Chancellor Kirkland had ignored it as best he could—yet the reputation of the journal was substantial. It was called "the most distinguished poetry magazine in America." In retrospect, I think it is fair to say that it was a modest historical document in American literature—not so much for what it contained as for the school of poets and writers it spawned. The creative ferment around Vanderbilt at that time made it a rare place, the only place of its kind. V

Heart of Autumn

Wind finds the northwest gap, fall comes.
Today, under gray cloud-scud and over gray
Wind-flicker of forest, in perfect formation, wild geese
Head for a land of warm water, the boom, the lead pellet.

Some crumple in air, fall. Some stagger, recover control,
Then take the last glide for a far glint of water. None
Knows what has happened. Now, today, watching
How tirelessly *V* upon *V* arrows the season's logic,

Do I know my own story? At least they know
When the hour comes for the great wing-beat. Sky-strider,
Star-strider—they rise, and the imperial utterance,
Which cries out for distance, quivers in the wheeling sky.

That much they know, and in their nature know
The path of pathlessness, with all the joy
Of destiny fulfilling its own name.
I have known time and distance, but not why I am here.

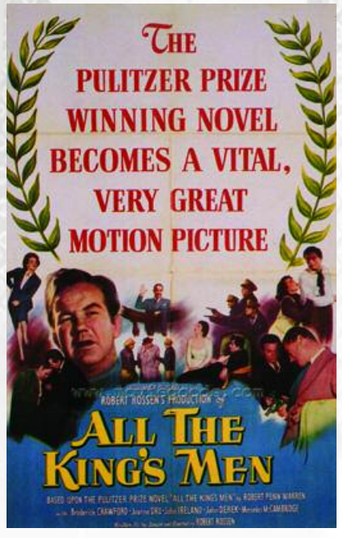
Path of logic, path of folly, all
The same—and I stand, my face lifted now skyward,
Hearing the high beat, my arms outstretched in the tingling
Process of transformation, and soon tough legs,

With folded feet, trail in the sounding vacuum of passage,
And my heart is impacted with a fierce impulse
To unwordable utterance—
Toward sunset, at a great height.

ALL THE KING'S MEN

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Robert Penn Warren's* All the King's Men, *winner of the 1947 Pulitzer Prize, remains one of the most widely read works in American fiction. It chronicles the rise and fall of Willie Stark, an idealist turned corrupt Louisiana politician.*

Posters from the 2005 release (left) and the original film (below) in 1949



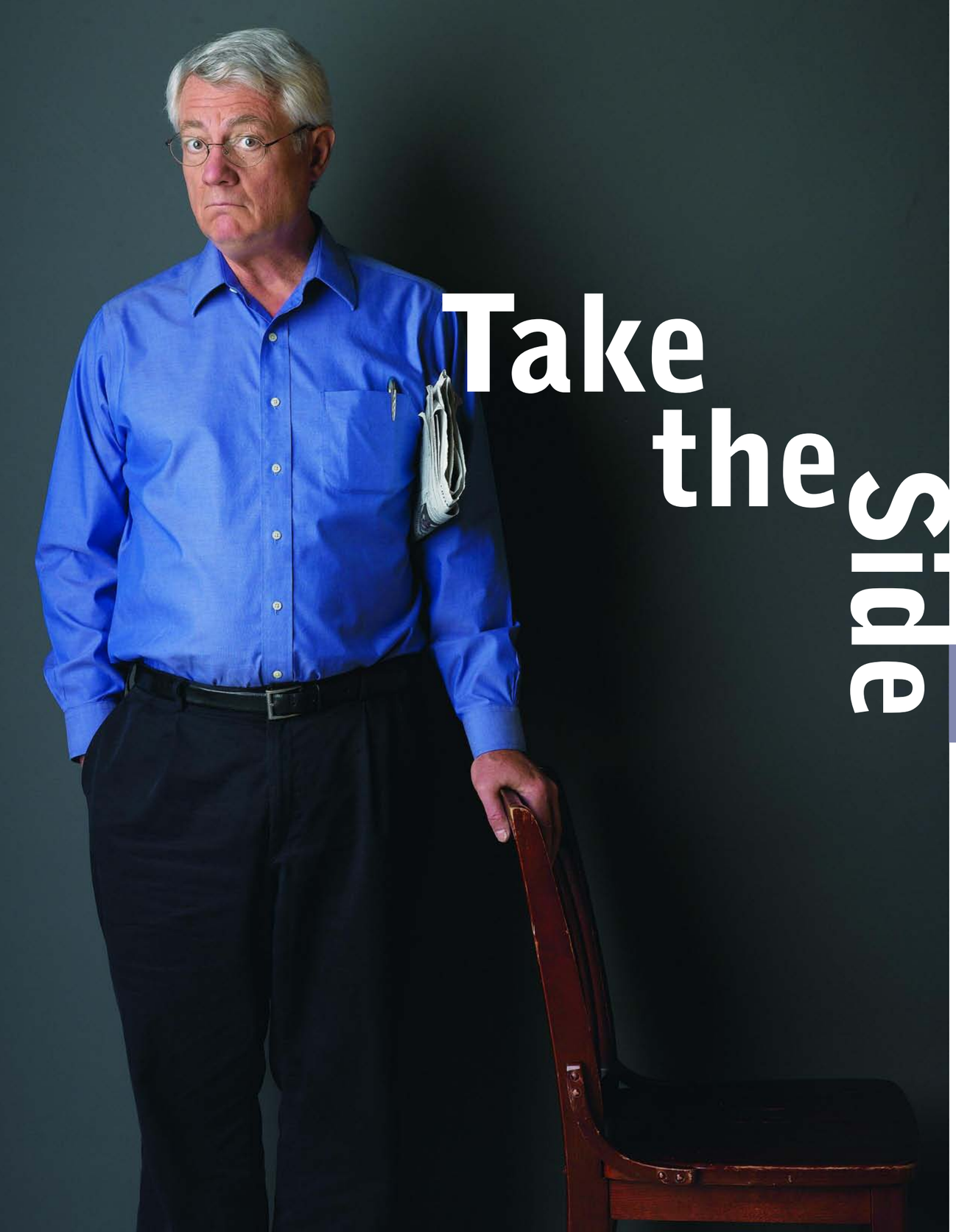
Willie kept his word. He stumped the State for MacMurfee. He didn't ride the rods or buy him a mule or steal him one. But he drove the pants off his pretty good second-hand car over the washboard and through the hub-deep dust and got mired in the black gumbo when a rain came and sat in his car waiting for the span of mules to come and pull him out. He stood on school-house steps, and on the top of boxes borrowed from the dry-goods store and on the seats of farm wagons and on the porches of cross-roads stores, and talked. "Friends, rednecks, suckers, and fellow-hicks," he would say, leaning forward, leaning at them, looking at them. And he would pause, letting the words sink in. And in the quiet the crowd would be restless and resentful under these words, the words they knew people called them but the words nobody ever got up and called them to their face. "Yeah," he would say, "yeah," and twist his mouth on the word, "that's what you are, and you needn't get mad at me for telling you. Well, get mad, but I'm telling you. That's what you are. And me — I'm one, too. Oh, I'm a red-neck, for the sun has beat down on me. Oh, I'm a sucker, for I fell for that sweet-talking fellow in the fine automobile. Oh, I took the sugar-tit and hushed my crying. Oh, I'm a hick and I am the hick they were going to try to use and split the hick vote. But I'm standing here on my own hind legs, for even a dog can learn to do that, give him time. I learned. It took me a time but I learned, and here I am on my own hind legs." And he would lean at them. And demand: "Are you, are you on your hind legs? Have you learned that much yet? You think you can learn that much?"

He told them things they didn't like. He called them the names they didn't like to be called, but always, almost always, the restlessness and resentment died and he leaned at them with his eyes bugging and his face glistening in the hot sunlight or the red light of a gasoline flare. They listened while he told them to stand on their own hind legs. Go and vote, he told them. Vote for MacMurfee this time, he told them, for he is all you have got to vote for. But vote strong, strong enough to show him what you can do. Vote him in and then if he doesn't deliver, nail up his hide. "Yeah," he would say, leaning, "yeah, nail him up if he don't deliver. Hand me the hammer and the ten-penny and I'll nail him." Vote, he told them. Put MacMurfee on the spot, he told them.

He leaned at them and said: "Listen to me, you hicks. Listen here and lift up your eyes and look on the God's blessed and unflyblown truth. If you've got the brain of a sap-sucker left and can recognize the truth when you see it. This is the truth: you are a hick and nobody ever helped a hick but the hick himself. Up there in town they won't help you. It is up to you and God, and God helps those who help themselves!"

He gave them that, and they stood there in front of him, with a thumb hooked in the overall strap, and the eyes under the pulled-down hat brim squinting at him as though he were something spied across a valley or cove, something they weren't quite easy in the mind about, too far away to make out good, or a sudden movement in the brush seen way off yonder across the valley or across the field and something might pop out of the brush, and under the eyes the jaw revolving worked the quid with a slow, punctilious, immitigable motion, like historical process. And Time is nothing to a hog, or to History, either. They watched him, and if you watched close you might be able to see something beginning to happen. They stand so quiet, they don't even shift from one foot to the other—they've got a talent for being quiet, you can see them stand on the street corner when they come to town, not moving or talking, or see one of them squatting on his heels by the road, just looking off where the road drops over the hill — and their squinched eyes don't flicker off the man up there in front of them. They've got a talent for being quiet. But sometimes the quietness stops. It snaps all of a sudden, like a piece of string pulled tight. One of them sits quiet on the bench, at the brush-arbor revival, listening, and all of a sudden he jumps up and lifts up his arms and yells, "Oh, Jesus! I have seen His name!" Or one of them presses his finger on the trigger, and the sound of the gun surprises even him. ▼

Released in April by the U.S. Postal Service, this Robert Penn Warren stamp by artist Will Wilson features a portrait based on a 1948 photograph and background scenes recalling *All the King's Men.*



Take the Big Road

Roy Blount Jr., BA'63, looks none the worse for events of the last few minutes. A woman done up in this season's finest dominatrix leatherwear just stubbed out a cigarette on his forehead, sending him to the floor where he rolled on his back and kicked his legs in the air. Friends helped him to his feet, and he staggered about comically, gray hair mussed, skinny necktie askew. A few hundred people have witnessed this spectacle, and now they hoot and cheer as the tough chick wielding the coffin nail, who happens to be writer Amy Tan, finishes singing "These Boots Are Made for Walkin'."

Is this any way for one of America's foremost writers of humorous prose to behave?

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARC HAUSER

Well, yeah, sure it is. What the hell, all this had taken place at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland, and Blount is onstage as a backup vocalist, sort of, for the Rock Bottom Remainders, the band that features a bunch of Blount's writer friends, including Tan, Dave Barry, Mitch Albom, Scott Turow, Ridley Pearson and Greg Iles—authors who collectively have sold a gazillion books and now and then like to stash their laptops and pick up guitars and drive around in a bus like real rock stars and play a few gigs. Besides, the cigarette wasn't real, and one thing you should know about Roy Blount Junior is that not only is he a seriously literary fella, he's a clown. He likes to make people laugh, always has, and the fact that he can't sing, can't dance, and can't play an instrument doesn't prevent him from being part of an antic rock 'n' roll show.

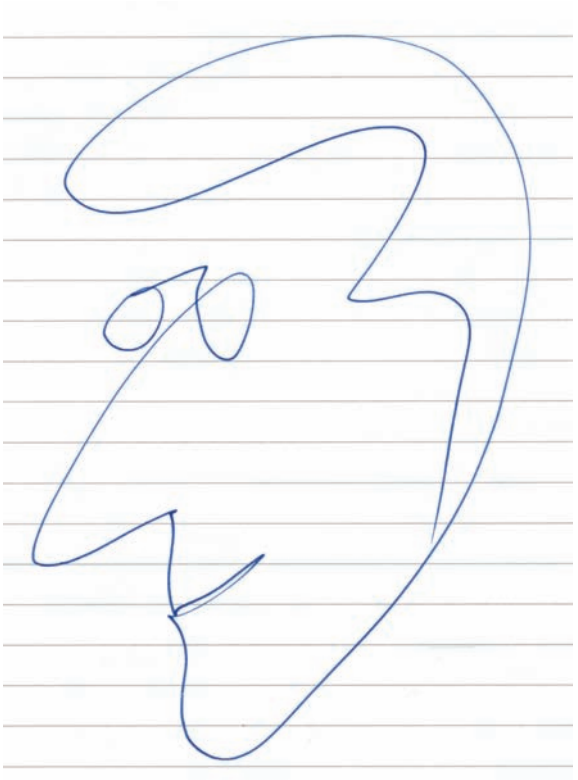
Which recalls something a longtime friend, poet James Seay, says about him. Seay, who teaches writing at the University of North Carolina, the big one in Chapel Hill, has known Blount more than 30 years, and annually they and four other guys go to Florida to fish for speckled trout and cobia and various trash fish. They used to go offshore for grouper and snapper, but they're getting a little old for that. Anyway, of these fishing trips, Seay observes, "In general, whether we're fishing or whatever, we act like 12-year-olds. Actually, over the years most of us have advanced and worked on up to 13-year-old behavior, but Roy's stuck in that juvenile, almost puerile kind of 12-year-old thing. I don't know how we're going to bring him along. He may just be stuck."

Seay remembers other things about Blount. "He's the only man I've ever known who tried to ski uphill out of a ditch. It was our first time skiing, and we were in line to get on a t-bar, which we'd never used before, and when we got to our turn, it just flung us both off into these ditches on either side. My skis came off, but his somehow stayed on, and I looked over and Roy was trying to ski up out of the ditch." Then there was the time when Blount was eating salmon mousse on top of Seay's car as Seay tried to drive somewhere.

But that story has to give up its spot for what's known in the scribbling trade as The Summary Paragraph. So here you go: Roy Blount Jr., graduate of Vanderbilt and Harvard, father of two, ex-husband of two, is a damned fine writer who makes readers laugh and makes other writers look at his sentences closely, because often they are uncommonly fine. He has published articles of all sorts in 127 publications, including the *New York Times*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Esquire*, *The Atlantic*, *Rolling Stone*, *Architectural Digest*, *Scuba Diving*, *Harvard Business Review*, and the old Banana Republic travel clothing catalog. Also the Decatur [Ga.] High School *Scribbler* and the magazine you now hold in your hands. He has authored 19 books, including *Crackers*, *First Hubby*, *Be Sweet*, *About Three Bricks Shy of a Load*, *If Only You Knew How Much I Smell You*, and a biography of Robert E. Lee, plus the recently published *Feet on the Street: Rambles Around New Orleans*. Another writer looking at that output will nod and say, like a character from "The Sopranos," "He produces." He's written and starred in a one-man off-Broadway show, "Roy Blount's Happy Hour and a Half." He makes regular appearances on National Public Radio's "Wait, Wait, Don't Tell Me." He once wrote a movie that, he says, "starred my friend Bill Murray, who prefers not to be too familiar with the script, and an elephant, who never gave the script a look." The New York Public Library has named him a Literary Lion, and the Boston Public Library has named him a Literary Light, though it's unclear exactly what distinction is being made there. In short, Roy Blount Jr. has been an uncommonly successful funny guy.

Blount remembers Vanderbilt in those days, the **early 1960s,** as traditional, conservative and **apathetic.** During his junior year, he and his friends John Sergent and Lamar Alexander **provoked** angry campus debate by advocating **desegregation** of the student body.

Oh, and he can draw, too. His grandpa showed him how to put a pen to paper and sketch a face in one continuous line. Like this:



Which is a fair graphic representation of how the sketcher writes. Blount starts a story seemingly headed in a purposeful direction, but soon he veers, he digresses, he divagates, he perambulates, he tells a vaguely tangential story that leads him to something else, and he talks about that for a while, then he more or less circles back around to his primary tale, but that reminds him of something else, so he writes some paragraphs about that, and because it's all very entertaining and well wrought, the reader follows him wherever he's going. And then damned if by the time he's done, he hasn't assembled a coherent picture out of that single wandering line. In *Be Sweet*, Blount wrote, "I'm a wanderer. I lose my way in words, to the detriment of what male writers are supposed to have: narrative drive." Actually, Blount's book about the Pittsburgh Steelers football team, *About Three Bricks Shy of a Load*, does possess a good bit of narrative drive, but it's an account of a single football season, and a housecat could maintain narrative drive with that kind of material.

Speaking of housecats, Blount has penned poetry about them. He has teamed up with photographer Valerie Shaff to produce four books of animal pictures and poetry. Here's the title cut, so to speak, of *I Am the Cat, Don't Forget That*:

When I purr
Don't infer
It's because you pat.

No, you pat
Because I purr.

I am the cat,
Don't forget that.

From the same book, there's this:

No doubt you're
        Hoping I'll purr.
But I'm demure
        And must demur.

Which displays a sort of wordplay that Blount enjoys. "Both my parents spoke fluent colloquial," he recalls, sitting in the living room of his house in Mill River, Mass. "People in the South generally like to play around with words. We like to roll words around in our mouths. I remember arguing with my parents that my name had two syllables in it. *Raw-ee. Raw-ee*. They'd point to the dictionary and say, 'It doesn't say that in the dictionary.' I didn't care. I always felt that I knew better than anybody else about words. I don't know why. I always had a sort of physical connection to words."

His father was president of a savings-and-loan in Georgia, a man so upstanding that when he died, the *Atlanta Constitution* wrote, "Humanity could use more of his kind." Blount says, "My father died just as I was turning in the Steeler book. I was really worried that the four-letter words would upset him. When I heard that he'd died, when I got the phone call from my mother, I thought, *Well, at least he won't have to read my book*." Blount's mother … well now, she could be a handful, on occasion an extraordinarily sad and angry woman who used to refer to her stepmother as someone who would "beat me 'til the blood ran." She often said, "You children ruin everything we try to do." On occasion, she would remind Blount, "You know, I nearly bled to death

having you, son." When his sister, Susan, announced she would be spending a few months in Germany with a man who was not her husband, their mother tried to kill herself by swallowing a bottle of aspirins. She didn't die; she just threw up. On her deathbed, Blount told her that he loved her. Her response haunts him: "Do you, son?" In *Be Sweet*, he wrote, "I have been all over the world, trying to find the key to the castle my mother and my heart are still locked up in."

But he gives her credit for seeding his fascination with language. "My mother was a verbal person. She read to me very early, and taught me to read Uncle Remus stories. They're dialect, you know." And it was for her that he first tried to be funny. Again, from *Be Sweet*: "Why have I pursued humor to such an absurd extent—to the point of vocation—if not because I grew up desperately wishing I could do something to keep my mother from being so sad and angry?"

Blount says, "I was *afraid* of how sad and angry she was. I wasn't just trying to make her feel better. I was trying to protect myself from her anger. There's nothing scarier than an angry parent. On the other hand, she liked to laugh."

Which suggests a digression into what else *he* likes, but, in the interest of maintaining some semblance of narrative drive, let's demur, for now.

As a Georgia schoolboy growing up in Decatur, Blount enjoyed sports, especially baseball, and he liked to read. In the 10th grade, he encountered Ann Lewis, an English teacher who was tolerant of his peculiar sense of subject matter for the papers he wrote for her. "I liked to do odd things," he says. "I didn't like to do the basic assignment. Instead of writing about what I did last summer, I'd write about the pencil I was writing with. She had by far the most sophisticated reading tastes in Decatur. She gave me Robert Benchley and S.J. Perelman and E.B. White and James Thurber, and suggested that I write for the school paper, which had never occurred to me before. She told me I could be a writer. I had reluctantly given up on being a three-sport immortal, and I figured I ought to be *some* kind of immortal, so why not be a writer? I had no idea how unlikely that was."

For the Decatur High *Scribbler*, he wrote humor and served as editor, and he covered high school football games for the *Journal* in Atlanta. When he heard about Vanderbilt's Grantland Rice Sportswriting Scholarship, he thought he'd give it a try. He became the fourth recipient of the stipend, which covered all his tuition, dorm, and mealtickets. Blount remembers Vanderbilt in those days, the early 1960s, as traditional, conservative and apathetic. During his junior year, he and his friends John Sergent and Lamar Alexander provoked angry campus debate by advocating desegregation of the student body. Sergent, now a physician and faculty member of the Vanderbilt School of Medicine, recalls Blount as a mumbler—he still is—who soon acquired a campus-wide following for the hilarity of his columns in the student newspaper. "He was smart," Sergent says. "He knew a lot about baseball and other interesting things. And he was very well read. He'd even been to *see* Flannery O'Connor, not just read her."

After Vanderbilt, Blount put in time at Harvard, which cured him of some notions he'd had about becoming an English professor. To convey the difference between himself and people he met at grad school who actually *became* English professors, he notes that they had already read all of Joseph Richardson, while he was pleased to display "the best left-handed hook shot of any right-handed person in my graduate class." After his year at Harvard (which did produce a master's degree), he entered the army and was assigned to the quartermaster corps at Governor's Island, N.Y. But as the Vietnam War began producing greater numbers of casualties, he became one of the officers designated to deliver to families the news that their sons had been killed in action. "You had to show up early in the morning, in case they were going to work," says Blount. "You knocked on the door, and they saw a person in uniform standing there and must have suspected what it was. You had to ask if you could come inside, then get them to sit down so they wouldn't faint. They were always really nice to me, I guess because I looked so regretful that I had to do this. They would always sit *me* down and make me coffee."

After the army he returned to Atlanta to write for the *Journal* and was there when a friend, Kim Chapin (BA'78), suggested he try for a job with *Sports Illustrated*. "I didn't want to be a sportswriter," he says, "but it was a job in New York." He spent seven years working for the magazine. His first story was on tennis player Clark Graebner. He wrote about runners Jim Ryun and Billy Mills, about opossums, coon hunting, and the oldest living lifeguard. He wrote about basketball, golf and

He relates writing to **religion**, sometimes, stating his personal fundamentalism concerns **words** and the proper respect for **language**. Other times he compares writing to **carpentry**. He likes the **joints** to be tight, likes to "sand it down so that the grain's still there but it's smooth, a **pleasure** to move over with your eye and inner ear."

squash, presumably with narrative drive. He went to Iceland to cover the Boris Spassky-Bobby Fischer chess championship. Fischer wouldn't talk to him, but Blount wrote a story about the tumultuous lead-up to the match, then went salmon fishing for another story the magazine never published. "You could really get around in that job," he says. "They'd say, 'Go write about [Oakland A's pitcher] Vida Blue.' So I'd go down to Mansfield, La., and visit his mother and sit around in her kitchen, and go talk to his coach. You could get into the infrastructure of America in informal ways." He was pleased to get the opportunity to write about Willie Mays: "But he was not pleased to be written about. He was a cranky old guy." One of his favorite assignments was covering the Pittsburgh Pirates of the early 1970s: "They were big and loud and funny and yelling at each other. I loved that locker room. They were so funny and so politically incorrect, as we would say today. They would insult each other racially and have a great time."

When *Sports Illustrated* suggested he spend the 1973 season with a team in the National Football League, he recalled his good times in Pittsburgh and selected the Steelers. The resultant volume, *About Three Bricks Shy of a Load*, was hailed by no less than the *New York Times Book Review* as "a terrific book." Not that it isn't, but the *Washington Post* described it more aptly: "raucous, affectionate, bawdy and hilarious." Reporters know that in producing a good story, 80 percent is just hanging out, and Blount is good at hanging out. The Steelers were good hanging-out company. "They enjoyed life. It was sort of like writing about mythical characters. So big and bulbous and huge, and they were familiar with violence." They liked to stay up late and talk and see how much they could drink. "It was," says the author, "a great way to not be a Methodist. I could remember things drunk then that I can't remember sober today. I was really good at it. It had been my lifetime goal to sleep from 9 to 5 and work all night. I did that for about three months writing the book. It was great."

Blount enjoyed himself at the magazine, too. "*Sports Illustrated* was an extremely loose job. In those days you didn't have to go into the office very much, and when you did go into the office, there were people running up and down in gorilla suits, or playing golf in the hall, or smoking dope in the stairwell." Nevertheless, after finishing *Three Bricks*, he quit. Why? Blount chuckles. "It was still too structured." He was tired of *Sports Illustrated*'s required voice, which he describes as "rollicking and smart-alecky." He wanted to write in his own voice, and about subjects unrelated to sports. And the editors too often wanted to change the rambling quality of his work. "If I think of something for a story, I feel like I ought to welcome it. I guess that's kind of a Southern thing, to tell long, rambling stories. If something pops in there, you ought not to dismiss it. Might be an angel unawares." He relates writing to religion, sometimes, stating his personal fundamentalism concerns words and the proper respect for language. Other times he compares writing to carpentry. He likes the joints to be tight, likes to "sand it down so that the grain's still there but it's smooth, a pleasure to move over with your eye and inner ear."

Speaking of likes, Blount likes butter beans, especially the way his mother used to cook them. He likes a blue ballcap from a Manhattan barbecue joint called Blue Smoke, which he wears in Mill River when he goes to the post office and general store to fetch his mail and that day's *Times*. He likes country music and country-music songwriters, and he likes to collect songs about food. He has 2,400 of them recorded on cassettes. He

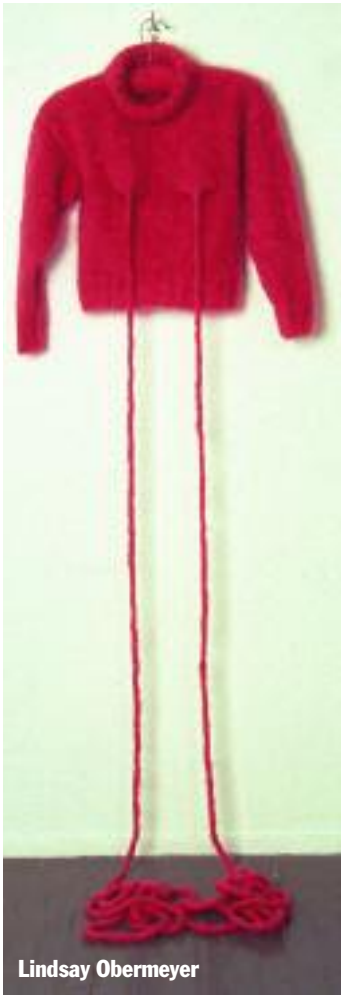
continued on page 85

The Arts

"There is a huge drop-off *from those who study to be artists and those*

VISUAL ARTS:

At **Sarratt Gallery,** fiber artist **Lindsay Obermeyer** opened the fall exhibition season showing textiles that study issues as diverse as medical ethics, mental illness and gender. Her thought-provoking sweater art is both a display of fabric sculpture and a mildly absurd sweater collection. Maternal bonding and the connection between textiles and figurative art blend with a celebration of the act of knitting itself, a metaphor for nurturing.



Lindsay Obermeyer

From mid-September through mid-November, **Nate Larson**'s exhibit on the second level of the Sarratt Student Center focused on "how people make meaning of the world around them." This up and coming Chicago-based photographer pictures everything from unidentified flying objects and Jesus' face in a tortilla to recent work that has grown more personal and incorporates text.

Nate Larson

Starting in mid-October, **"Misleading Trails"** at the **Vanderbilt Fine Arts Gallery** featured work by Ai Weiwei, Xiaoze Xie, Hong Hao, Vernon Fisher, Enrique Chagoya, Dan Mills and Hai Bo. At first glance the work of this group of artists from China and the United States is misleading; it appears simply to be about the depicted subjects. Closer viewing reveals complex and layered meanings. After opening at the China Art Archives and Warehouse in Beijing in 2004, the presentation at Vanderbilt travels throughout the United States in 2005–06.

At the **Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development,** which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year, a photo history titled "**The Science and the Hope: Celebrating 40 Years of Discovery,**" on view from late September through late October, showcased landmark research over the past four decades in behavioral

DANIEL DUBOIS

This installation by Jin Soo Kim, called "roll-run-hit-run-roll-tick," was on view at the Fine Arts Gallery in September.

Culture

who actually continue to make and exhibit art after school. —JUDY CHICAGO

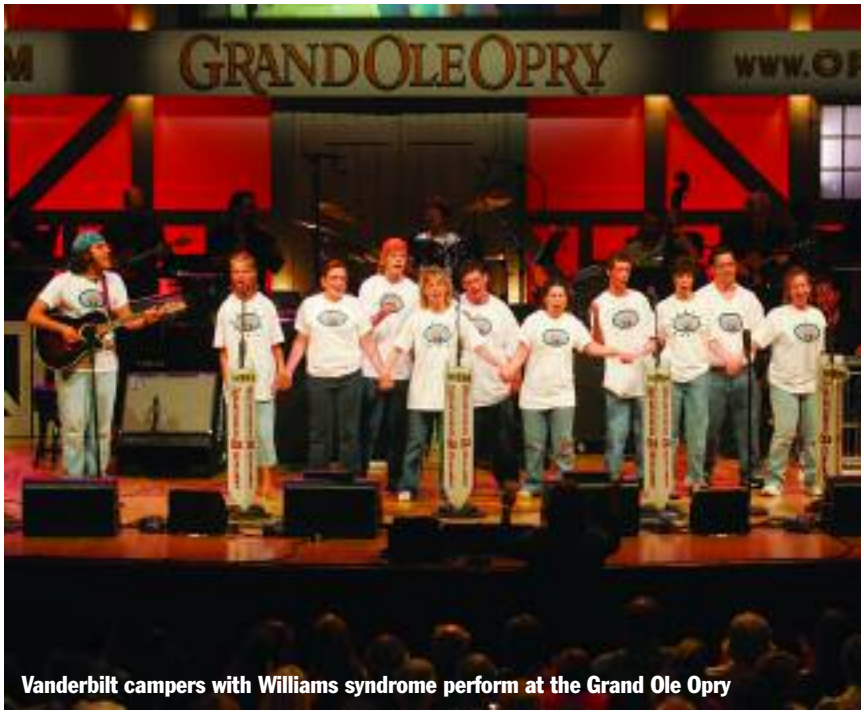
and educational topics. The Kennedy Center is distinctive in its commitment to transferring research into practice in the community. These photos chronicle that commitment from its inception to the present.

Kennedy Center

Brenda Butka, a practicing pulmonologist on the Vanderbilt medical faculty, showed watercolors, quick sketches and poems reflecting upon daily activities at the **Vanderbilt University Medical Center** through the end of October. During the day she picks up paintbrush or pen and quickly captures an image of a patient, a gesture of a co-worker, or the view from her office window on torn manila folders designated for recycling. Her work gives an intimate glance of the mundane yet poignant environment in which she is professionally enmeshed.

MUSIC:

Caused by a genetic deficiency of only 20 genes, people with **Williams syndrome** have various developmental and health challenges. At the same time they have a strong proclivity for music. Many individuals with this syndrome have amazing musical gifts, including perfect pitch, metronomic-like rhythm, or the ability to sing in multiple languages or memorize thousands of songs. In late July, thanks to a partnership among the **Vanderbilt Kennedy Center**, the Grand Ole Opry, **Vanderbilt's Blair School of Music**, the National Williams Syndrome Association, and many generous Nashville musicians, a one-week, on-campus camp for 10 young adults with Williams syndrome from across the country was held, culminating with the campers performing on the Opry stage, where they received a standing ovation from the audience.



Vanderbilt campers with Williams syndrome perform at the Grand Ole Opry

Los Hombres Calientes

The *afrocubosoul* ensemble **Los Hombres Calientes** presented an evening of upbeat Afro-Caribbean dance music to open the University's **Great Performances Series**. The group considers itself to be on "a musical, cultural and historical mission founded on and bound by the principle that we as all people are one—that all of our intricate individual ancestry leads back to one source." However, in addition to the group's desire to express its deep cultural experiences,

co-leaders Bill Summers and Irvin Mayfield simply insist that "listeners move as many body parts as possible." That was accomplished at Ingram Hall in late September.

In September and October, the **"Blair Presents" Series** brought tenor **Ian Bostridge** and baritone **Nicholas Isherwood** to campus for two separate concerts. A major figure in the world of classical music, Ian Bostridge has become recognized around the globe for his unique vocal qualities. In opera, he is a regular guest at Covent Garden, English National Opera, and the Bavarian State Opera. Nicholas Isherwood is an expressive, sophisticated and lyrical interpreter of both early and contemporary vocal music. His program for Vanderbilt Homecoming Weekend included repertoire extending from Baroque music to improvised rock music, via Schubert and contemporary classical music, including a piece by the singer himself.


Nicholas Isherwood


Ian Bostridge

The **Blair Voice Faculty** performed and discussed cabaret music from around the world, written specifically for classical singers in **"Cabaret du Monde."** Exploring the many languages, approaches, historical contexts, and the inside scoop on composers, performers included Amy Jarman, soprano; Gayle Shay, mezzo-soprano; Jonathan Retzlaff, baritone; and Melissa Rose accompanying on piano. The mid-October concert was part of Blair's new Nightcap Series held on various Mondays at 9 p.m.


DANIEL DUBOIS
Blair Voice Faculty

In **"Omaggio a Boccherini,"** renowned guitarist and Blair faculty member **John Johns** along with the **Blair String Quartet** opened the Blair Signature Series with a concert honoring the 200th anniversary of composer Luigi Boccherini's death. They performed two of the most popular Boccherini quintets for guitar and strings. Johns also played solo guitar pieces by Fernando Sor and the "Sonata Concertata" for violin and guitar by Niccolo Paganini.

DANCE:

This summer, performances by Ballet Manila, Stephanie Powell of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and the Nashville Ballet were featured during **"A Celebration of Cultures: An Evening of Dance"** at Ingram Hall. The event was held to honor the first anniversary of the founding of the Asian American Performing Arts Society (AAPAS). Christopher Mohnani, principal dancer at Nashville Ballet and director of the AAPAS, said he had received several requests to bring Ballet Manila back to Nashville since the group's last


NEIL BRAKE
John Johns

ACCOLADES

There's a soundtrack interwoven into the stories of pioneer survival in the *Little House* books by Laura Ingalls Wilder—enduring music that can shed light both on Wilder's stories and America's musical heritage.

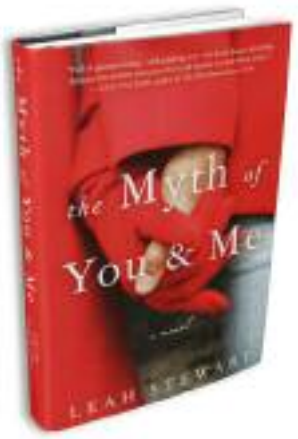
For the new album ***Happy Land: Musical Tributes to Laura Ingalls Wilder***, top Nashville musicians were brought together by **Dale Cockrell** and **Butch Baldassari** of Vanderbilt's Blair School of Music to record fresh versions of songs cited in the *Little House* books.

Released in August by Pa's Fiddle Recordings (*www.pasfiddle.com*), the album, produced by Cockrell and Baldassari, features performances by Riders in the Sky, Dave Olney, **Andrea Zonn** (BMus'93), Deborah Packard, Pat Enright, Douglas P. Green, Keith Little and The Princely Players.

performance. Mohnani, a native of the Philippines, studied with the company before joining Nashville Ballet.

BOOKS AND WRITERS:

When a romantic relationship ends, weeks are spent deconstructing the mistakes and rationalizing the final move. But when a friendship breaks up, there is often a painful silence, as if the topic alone will reveal secret faults.



Leah Stewart's (BA'94) novel, ***The Myth of You and Me*** (Shaye Areheart Books, 2005), captures the universal experience of friendships gained and lost. The book explores the intensely rewarding, sometimes heartbreaking, but always meaningful and life-changing bonds of early friendship. This is the dramatic story of a woman who must track down her childhood best friend a decade after their painful feud.

Award-winning novelist and short story writer **Nancy Reisman** began teaching at Vanderbilt this fall, as a master's program in creative writing begins to take shape at the University.

Reisman, author of the short-story collection *House Fires* (University of Iowa Press, 1999) and novel *The First Desire* (Pantheon, 2004), came to Vanderbilt from the University of Michigan. A native of Buffalo, N.Y., she earned her master of fine arts degree from the University of Massachusetts. Her fiction has appeared in *2001 Best American Short Stories*, *Glimmer Train* and *Kenyon Review*, and her story "Tea" was included in the anthology *The O. Henry Prize Stories 2005. House Fires* won the 1999 Iowa Short Fiction Award, and the National Foundation for Jewish Culture awarded *The First Desire* the 2005 Samuel Goldberg Jewish Fiction Award in June. The *New York Times* named *The First Desire* a notable book of 2004.

THEATRE:

Girls ages 12–16 participated in **Act Like a Grrrl,** a three-week summer program designed to help participants tell their personal stories through writing and performance. Working with instructors from Nashville's **Actors Bridge Ensemble** and Vanderbilt's **Women's Studies Program**, participants generated written material based on their real-life experiences, and learned to act and craft their work into public performance.

UPCOMING

China Coin

VISUAL ART

Native Nashvillian and sculptor **Steve Benneyworth** collaborates with the Sarratt Visual Art Committee in a long-term public art installation on the University campus, beginning in January.

MUSIC

Blair Celebrates the Holidays in a series of three evening performances for the holiday season with the Vanderbilt Chamber Winds and Contemporary Music Ensemble on Dec. 1, the Vanderbilt Symphonic Choir on Dec. 2, and the Vanderbilt Chamber Orchestra on Dec. 3. All concerts are in Ingram Hall at 8 p.m.

THEATRE

Sekou Sundiata

Djali poet/playwright and musician **Sekou Sundiata** spins a tapestry of poignant spoken word with humor and irreverence in his play **"Blessing the Boats,"** about his five-year battle with kidney disease. The production, part of Vanderbilt's Great Performances Series, is Nov. 30 at 8 p.m. at Belmont University's Curb Event Center.

The Great Performances Series kicked off a national tour with the world premiere of **"The Great Tennessee Monkey Trial"** Oct. 19–20 at Belmont University's Curb Event Center. Adapted by Peter Goodchild from the Scopes trial transcripts and drawing on actors Edward Asner, John de Lancie and Alley Mills, radio theatre company LA Theatre Works set the stage for

DAVID CRENSHAW

"The Man Who Came to Dinner"

the ongoing national debate over the separation of church and state in a democratic society.

Forced to recuperate after falling on an icy walk in small-town Middle America, celebrated critic and radio personality Sheridan Whiteside exposes the Stanley household to his acerbic wit and eccentric friends in **"The Man Who Came to Dinner."** Kaufman and Hart's classic American comedy has delighted audiences since 1939 with its parade of madcap characters and wickedly comic banter. **Vanderbilt University Theatre**'s production ran in late September and early October at Neely Auditorium.

HUMANITIES:

Vanderbilt Senior Lecturer in Earth and Environmental Sciences **Jonathan Gilligan** discussed "Democracy in the Age of Science: Trust, Numeracy, and the Voice of the People" in early September at the Nashville Public Library for the first **"Thinking Out of the Lunch Box"** lecture this fall. Gilligan works primarily at the intersection of science, ethics and public policy with a focus on the ways in which scientific knowledge and uncertainty affect policy decisions about the government. Thinking Out of the Lunch Box, now entering its fourth year, is co-sponsored by Vanderbilt and the Nashville Public Library.

As People's Branch Theatre set the stage for its production of George Orwell's "1984," mass media and its role in the age of information became the topic of this year's first **"InsideOut of the Lunch Box"** lunchtime discussion on the performing arts. **"The Media Machine and Orwell's '1984'"** involved Matt Chiorini, artistic director of People's Branch Theatre; Jeffrey Frace, director of SITI Company; and Christopher Yoo, professor of law at Vanderbilt Law School, in a discussion moderated by Cindy Steine, director of external relations at Vanderbilt's Blair School of Music. The

STEVE GREEN

Jonathan Gilligan

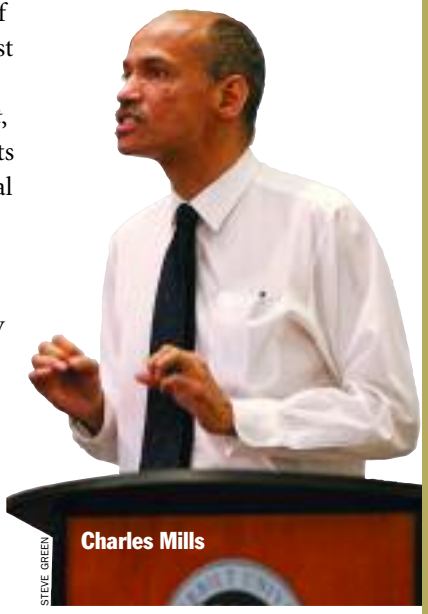
event took place in mid-September at the Tennessee Performing Art Center's Polk Theater.

Carole Pateman (political science, UCLA) and **Charles Mills** (philosophy, University of Illinois, Chicago) gave a joint presentation titled **"Contract and Domination: A Collaborative Debate on**

ACCOLADES

Bridgette Kohnhorst, director and student facilitator of the 30-year-old Great Performances Series at Vanderbilt, was a guest this summer of the Taiwanese government for a cultural exchange sponsored by the Taipei Economic and Cultural Affairs Office. In an effort to promote cultural understanding and global exchange between the United States and Taiwan, six of America's top arts presenters were asked to participate in a three-day celebration and tour. This celebration coincided with Taiwan's first National Performing Arts Fair in the southern city of Kaohsiung. Kohnhorst joined 30 other curators and managers from France, the U.S., the United Kingdom, Belgium, Japan, Singapore, Macau and Hong Kong on the former military Wei Wu Camp site with government officials and President Chen.

Social Contract Theory" at the Vanderbilt Law School in September. Pateman is the author of *The Sexual Contract*, and her major research has covered three broad areas: democratic theory, theories of original contracts and feminist political theory. Mills is the author of *The Racial Contract*, and his main research interests are in radical and oppositional political theory, particularly around issues of class, gender and race. Together they are working on a book tentatively titled *Contract and Domination.* The program was an outgrowth of the Diversity Reading Group, one of the **Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities'** 2004–05 seminars.



Charles Mills

STEVE GREEN

Photographs documenting the 70-year history of the **Kemet Jubilee** were on display in late September at the **Bishop Joseph Johnson Black Cultural Center.** The organization's general chairman, Clyde Venson, kicked off the exhibit Sept. 26 with a lecture on the parade's history. The celebration was founded in 1935 by a group of Memphis business and professional African-Americans who wanted to counter the white Memphis establishment's Cotton Carnival Parade. The first parade is credited with helping launch Memphis' Beale Street as the "home of the Blues."

Kemet Jubilee display

DANIEL DUBOIS

Chicago, Woodman to Be First Chancellor's Artists-in-Residence

Vanderbilt University will strengthen its commitment to the arts this spring when Judy Chicago and Donald Woodman spend a semester as the first Chancellor's Artists-in-Residence.

"Judy Chicago is one of the great artists of this generation," says Chancellor Gordon Gee. "Her work is both exuberant and provocative. We are honored that she and Donald will become part of the Vanderbilt community next year and will share their creativity with our students, faculty and artists from the community."

The semester-long, nine-credit class will mix upper-division Vanderbilt art students with established artists on a project or projects facilitated by Chicago and Woodman, who are married. The content and scope of the art will surface through a process of discovery, and an exhibition will conclude the project and open April 21.

Woodman is a commercial and fine-art photographer and teacher whose work has been exhibited internationally and published in *Vanity Fair*, *Art in America*, *Newsweek,* and many other national magazines. Chicago is an artist whose career spans four decades. Her major works include "The Dinner Party," a symbolic history of women in Western civilization. The multimedia work was created from 1974 to 1979 with the aid of hundreds of volunteers and will be permanently housed starting in 2007 at the Brooklyn Museum as part of the Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art.

The Vanderbilt residency will be devoted to giving art students a taste of life after university, Chicago says.

"There is a huge drop-off from those who study to be artists and those who actually continue to make and exhibit art after school," she says. "Students in this program will learn something about what's involved in professional art practice. And local artists will get the opportunity to work with young and enthusiastic students who bring a fresh perspective, something that one can lose as an artist contends with the challenges of professional practice."

—Jim Patterson

S.P.O.V.*

*Student Point of View

Common Ground

How do you help inner-city kids who've never even heard of the SAT make it to college? A little Synergy just may do the trick. By STACY TOLOS, BS'07

I HAVE MORE THAN 20 CHILDREN, and I am just 21 years old.

Rewind eight years and three weeks, and I'm an awkward middle-schooler serving as a counselor at a day camp for underprivileged Appalachian youth in rural Tennessee. This weeklong experience single-handedly shocked, scorned and spurred me toward a life of service.

Gary and Russell, the 6-year-old cousins under my charge, were the most generous human beings I had ever met. They had nothing in the way of material things, yet gave me more love—manifested through hugs, hand-holds, smiles, and small tokens gathered from nature—than I had thought possible. I began to believe I had wasted 13 years of my overprivileged life not emulating their example—giving of myself wholeheartedly to everyone and everything I could.

DANIEL DUBOIS

When I returned home I saw the world from a new perspective and understood that I had the capacity, personal resources and, most important, the commitment to give back to my global neighborhood. During this epiphany I decided to dedicate my life to the small task of changing the world.

I threw myself wholeheartedly into school and community organizations. The Northeast Community Challenge Coalition in Cincinnati was one of the most meaningful and motivating. I took on responsibility for coordinating residential leadership conferences for my peers attending area high schools. Through countless presentations, relationship building and conference planning, I acquired knowledge of how people are motivated and cultivated an even stronger passion for service.

When it was time to apply to college, I knew I wanted to attend not just a leading academic university, but one that demonstrated a commitment to serving humanity and the public good. During my exhaustive search I found Vanderbilt and the Ingram Scholarship Program. As a result of the remarkable generosity of the Ingram family, there are approximately 50 Ingram Scholars each year spanning four classes at Vanderbilt.

I knew from the moment I received the acceptance notification that I wanted to hit the ground running when I arrived at Vanderbilt. I spent a great deal of time thinking about what aspect of society I initially wanted to work on. I decided to reach out to a population that the Vanderbilt student community did not yet serve—one close to campus, and close to my age. Instead of giving more to the privileged students of suburbia, I wanted to provide resources to those who had the least public social and educational support.

It was not difficult to find a population in need, and after a few quick interviews with community leaders, it was not difficult to identify the specific need. The high-school students in the neighborhoods surrounding the Nashville inner-city neighborhood of Hadley Park needed help with the college preparation and application process. I already knew how to work with high-school students and how to apply to college, so I began researching college preparatory programs for under-resourced groups, combined the best practices into an organizational plan, and plunged in.

During my freshman year at Vanderbilt—two years ago—I founded the Synergy College Preparatory and Mentoring Program. I thought the word "synergy" defined my hopes for the program—"the interaction of two or more agents or forces whose combined effect is greater than the sum of their individual effects." The program pairs two forces, Vanderbilt students and high-school students from the neighborhoods of Hadley Park, Tomorrow's Hope and Preston-Taylor Homes, to navigate together the daunting

NATALIE COX MEAD

Instead of giving more to the privileged students of suburbia, I wanted to provide resources to those who had the least public social and educational support.

process of applying to college with the hope of simultaneously building strong, lasting relationships.

The Synergy mentees gave and continue to give the Vanderbilt mentors a more extensive, thorough education than we ever hoped to give to them. On the first day, the high-school students were asked to fill out some comprehensive information forms so we could understand their specific needs and pair them with an appropriate mentor.

The answers gave me a swift and sure reality check. Danielle, a junior at Pearl-Cohn High School, wrote that she wanted to attend Vanderbilt University so that she could become a janitor. Marcel, a senior in high school, indicated that he had never heard of the SAT or the ACT tests. Shanika, a junior, called me over as she was filling out her form, held her hand on her stomach nervously, and whispered, "Can I still be in the program if I'm pregnant?"

I would be lying if I said the mixing of the college students and high-school students wasn't awkward and uncomfortable at times. I thought the common humanity shared by Vanderbilt students and the Nashville youth would be enough to form the foundation for healthy, productive relationships. It wasn't. But the uncomfortable occasions were what made Synergy successful at transforming people's beliefs about each other, themselves, and their roles in the world.

Because of Synergy, Shawn, a Vanderbilt sophomore, shook hands with Tamara Jackson, a woman he might comfortably have called a "welfare queen" before this encounter. But sitting next to her at the kickoff pancake breakfast, he heard Tamara talk about how hard it was for her to find work and to take care of the four children her boyfriend had left her with. He listened as she exuberantly thanked him for taking the time to help her daughter with the college process. She simply didn't have the time or the energy it required. Shawn learned to appreciate Tamara in a way no book or classroom lecture could have taught him.

Jasmine, a Vanderbilt junior, developed a great relationship with her mentee and is now majoring in human and organizational development with plans to enter a career in community development. She hopes to improve economic opportunities for the people in neighborhoods similar to the one in which her mentee lives.

My favorite thing about Synergy is its diverse collection of people. Admissions and financial-aid experts at Vanderbilt, Fisk University and Tennessee State University volunteer to give high-school students an insider's look at the college application and payment process. A panel of African-American role models spent an afternoon explaining their struggles and successes to the mentees. The Commodore basketball team donated tickets for mentees to attend three games. The Vanderbilt University Theatre donated tickets for mentees to attend plays. Different ages, races, socioeconomic levels, religions and backgrounds synergize for the sake of shar-

continued on page 82

A.P.O.V.*

*Alumni Point of View

Hope, Hell and a Happy Ending

A girl with one foot in the church and the other in the library grows up to be a minister who writes romance novels. By Beth Pattillo, MDiv'90

I grew up in Lubbock, Texas. In the past I have blamed a number of character flaws—as well as my inability to pronounce the word "theater" without a long "a" sound—on the place of my birth. But even though I spent the first 18 years of my life plotting how to escape West Texas, I can now acknowledge a significant benefit of spending my formative years on what we affectionately referred to as "God's parking lot."

You see, in Lubbock there wasn't a lot to do but read and go to church.

In a town where the streets ran parallel, either north-south or east-west, and every intersection was perfectly perpendicular, I might have found it difficult to experience the transcendent had it not been for two important places.

DANIEL DUBOIS

The sanctuary of the First Christian Church, with its arching beams and tall stained-glass window, provided a sense of majesty sorely missing from my three-bedroom ranch existence. I logged enough hours on the ruby velvet pew cushions to know there was something different about being in church. Between the soaring notes of the pipe organ and the adults' hushed reverence as they passed the communion trays, I learned that even in Lubbock, Texas, one might encounter the Holy.

My other sacred place was the George Mahon Public Library. It opened when I was 11, part of the rebuilding of downtown in the wake of the deadly 1970 tornado. The first time I set foot in the cavernous new library, I almost wept when I saw row upon row of cabinets containing the voluminous card catalog. Such an embarrassment of riches was overwhelming. By the time I was 12, my mother allowed me to ride the city bus downtown unaccompanied, and I logged even more hours at the library. With no adult looking over my shoulder censoring my choices, and no younger brother pestering me to hurry up and choose my books, I worked my way through the Dewey decimal system. I cruised the shelves row by row, often plopping down on the floor to peruse a promising volume. Freed from the juvenile section and a force-fed diet of Newberry Award winners, I feasted on Victoria Holt's gothic romances, travelogues of distant lands, autobiographies of famous women, and even the occasional slim volume of poetry. When I finally left the library, replete with books, I juggled my discoveries precariously in my arms while fishing bus fare out of the pocket of my Jordache jeans.

In church I read the Bible from cover to cover. Even working my way through the Byzantine Levitical code was preferable to puzzling out the sermon. And, often, my library books seemed as incomprehensible to me as the Revelation of St. John. Yet, I knew enough to realize that despite my limited understanding in either case, I was on to something really good. Something greater than me, greater than the church or the library. And definitely greater than Lubbock. The time I spent in church and in the library formed in me a deep appreciation for the sacred nature of story—of any story, whether it was between the faux black leather covers of my Bible or had "Property of the Lubbock City-County Library" stamped on the flyleaf.

Perhaps such lofty influences should have instilled in me a desire for the highest intellectual planes, but, alas, they did not. Even at that tender age, I was already exhibiting my shocking preference for pop culture. I found Ruth and Esther far more interesting than the Apostle Paul, who didn't seem to know that the shortest distance between two theological points was a straight line. I was honest enough with myself to admit that I would rather read about the crime-solving Nancy Drew, speeding around in her blue roadster, than a crazy sea captain in pursuit of a whale. I didn't need deep literature; I just needed a good story.

All the stories of my childhood—the sacred and the secular in equal measure—taught me

NATALIE COX MEAD

Suffering was part of everyone's story, a life requirement that couldn't be avoided. In reading about suffering, I learned to accept that I couldn't escape it.

to hope. Like any good romantic heroine, Esther used her royal position—as well as her handy-dandy beauty—to deliver God's chosen people from death, proof that even in biblical times, a girl could be faithful and fabulous. In fact, Queen Esther didn't seem that different from the narrator of Victoria Holt's *Mistress of Mellyn,* who survived multiple attempts on her life before proving that her brooding love interest did not, in fact, kill his first wife. Despite evidence to the contrary, a good story demonstrated that everything might indeed turn out well.

All those stories also taught me that life held real and inescapable suffering. Sometimes hell was right here on earth. Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi, faced starvation and death before Ruth's bold actions brought them under the protection of their kinsman, Boaz. That Ruth would freely choose to follow Naomi into poverty and peril showed me that sometimes the right choices were the ones for which you paid the greatest price. And Pollyanna, for all that she's maligned for being a cockeyed optimist, lost both her parents to untimely deaths and wound up temporarily paralyzed. Melodrama? Maybe. Over the top? Possibly. But most of the people I knew in church had stories that could easily match Pollyanna's. Suffering was part of everyone's story, a life requirement that couldn't be avoided. In reading about suffering, I learned to accept that I couldn't escape it.

Despite teaching me about the reality of suffering, though, the stories I found in church and the stories I checked out from the library instilled in me a thorough-going belief in the transformative power of a happy ending. Resurrection became the model for the way I saw the world. Even in the face of the worst the world had to offer, love could and did triumph over evil. The mystery could be solved, the enemy defeated, the exile brought home. Like the rest of the world, I longed to be made complete, and the stories I read told me that such unity was indeed possible.

Eventually, I started to write stories of my own. I kept one foot in the church and the other in the library, so it came as no surprise to me when I grew up to be a woman minister who writes romance novels. In my stories I write about hope in the face of suffering, and I'm happy to provide my readers with the requisite happy ending. Some folks will say that popular fiction is little more than brain candy, empty calories for people who don't want to read anything that challenges them. But I say that any story that gives us hope, takes us to hell, and finishes with a happy ending does what a story is meant to do—bring us one step closer to that which is, as St. Anselm says, "greater than anything of which we can conceive."

As a writer I can only hope that somewhere in a quiet little town, one where all the streets run parallel and there's not much to do but read and go to church, another little girl will pull one of my books from the shelves of her local library, plop down on the floor, and be transported to a world well beyond her own. I hope my stories will teach her to

continued on page 82

The Classes

“Charles H. “Chuck” Baumberger, BA’63, of Pinecrest, Fla., was named

Please Note: Class Notes only appear in the print version of this publication.

{Alumni Association News}

The Next Chapter in Vanderbilt Clubs

Alumni and friends around the world are about to see major changes in Vanderbilt Alumni Association Clubs in their cities.

For one thing, they’re not called clubs anymore—they’re chapters, as in a Vanderbilt Chapter of the Alumni Association. More important, there’s a new emphasis on giving alumni, parents and friends the power to reach out to more people and create the kind of Vanderbilt communities that work best for their area.

What’s behind the change? Sharon Munger, BA’68, president of the Vanderbilt Alumni Association, explains: “When they asked me to serve as president, I said yes on one condition—that we can reinvent, jack up and improve the role that alumni can play for the school. We want to increase participation of alumni, parents and friends in the life of the University and to make it stronger.”

At the local level, that means volunteer-driven chapters will provide:

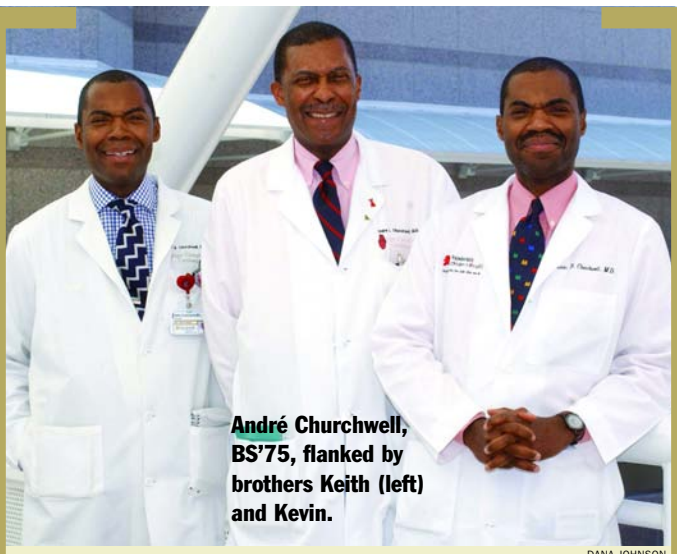
- More leadership opportunities
- More ways to connect with alumni and friends, and with VU
- A broader array of events to appeal to more people
- Strengthening of great existing programs
- More independent chapters

The Alumni Association is also streamlining communications efforts and increasing the use of e-mail for the latest Association news and event invitations. Be sure we have your e-mail address: Please update your information on **www.Dore2Dore.net**.

“Clearly, Vanderbilt is on a march to elevate the caliber of its student body and faculty,” says Munger. “Now we’re going to do the same thing with alumni and friends under the assumption that we’ll create a circle of energy that will put the University in a position to make an even bigger contribution to the world.”

For more information on regional Vanderbilt chapters and upcoming events, visit **www.vanderbilt.edu/alumni** or e-mail **alumni@vanderbilt.edu.**

2005 Trial Lawyer of the Year *by the Florida chapters of the American Board of Trial Advocates.*



André Churchwell, BS'75, flanked by brothers Keith (left) and Kevin.

DANA JOHNSON

All in the Family

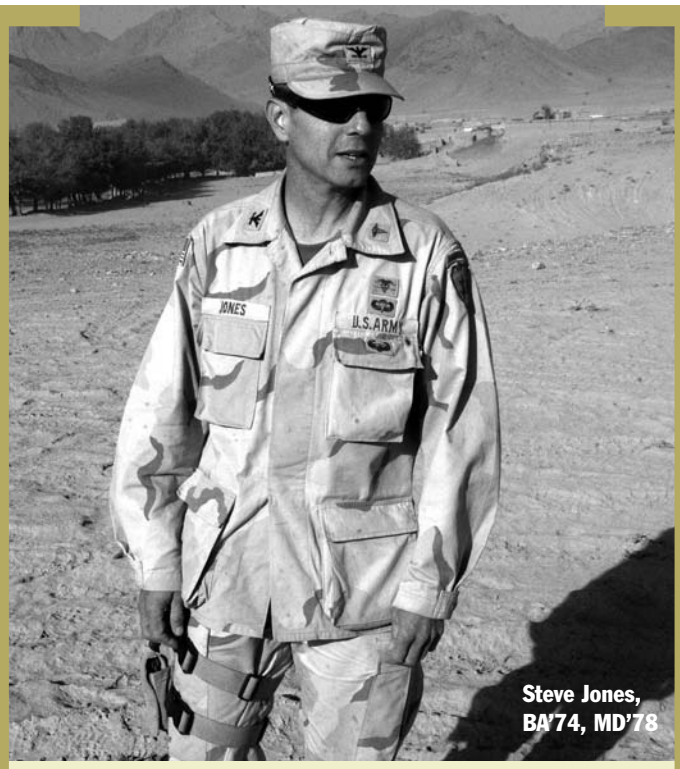
"Growing up in a family of educators and professional people as I did, education was greatly emphasized," says André Churchwell, BS'75. "I did not want a purely scientific career, but one that involved interaction with people, so medicine seemed to be a natural fit."

Churchwell is assistant clinical professor of medicine at Vanderbilt University Medical Center and Meharry Medical College. But if you page Dr. Churchwell, you could find yourself seeing triple. André's brother Keith is director of the Page-Campbell Heart Institute at Vanderbilt and assistant clinical professor of medicine. Keith's twin, Kevin, is chief of staff/associate medical director for the Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital and associate professor of pediatrics and anesthesiology.

The Association of Vanderbilt Black Alumni this fall presented André Churchwell its Walter R. Murray Jr. Distinguished Alumnus Award. For the past nine years, he has been named one of the nation's top cardiologists. He was the first African-American chief medical resident at Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta.

"When I'm long gone," he says, "I hope people remember that I tried to take care of my patients like they were members of my own family."

Bridgett Luther Thompson, BA'77, has been appointed by California



Steve Jones, BA'74, MD'78

Physician Soldier

Since May 2004, home for Dr. Steve Jones has been a tent in the mile-high deserts of Afghanistan. Every day landmines explode around him along with weekly rocket fire and mortar attacks.

"They're not very good shots," Col. Jones says assuringly. "Last week, out of six rockets fired only three hit the base."

The career physician soldier has racked up plenty of hair-raising experiences. At Fort Bragg, N.C., he was the military equivalent of chief of staff when a fighter jet collided with a transport plane. The resulting fireball engulfed more than 150 paratroopers. For six months starting in October 2001, Jones oversaw care to Al Qaeda and Taliban detainees transferred from Kandahar, Afghanistan, to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

In 2002 he became commander of Blanchfield Army Community Hospital at Fort Campbell, Ky. It was, he says, "my most demanding and most rewarding assignment. These soldiers defeated the Taliban in Afghanistan, then turned around and deployed to Iraq a few months later."

Jones' next assignment is to oversee medical activities in Iraq, including humanitarian assistance, reconstruction, development of a medical system for the new Iraqi Army, and provision of care for U.S. forces and detainees.

—Abridged from *Vanderbilt Medicine*

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger *as director of the state Department of Conservation.*

Nominate to Build a Great Alumni Association Board

The Vanderbilt Alumni Association will soon select new members to its board of directors. Do you know the perfect candidate? Someone actively involved in your local Vanderbilt activities? We need your help identifying Mr. and Ms. Right to serve your interests on the board.

The board includes a minimum of 18 regional representatives, 10 representatives of the largest Vanderbilt chapters, and representatives from Vanderbilt schools and colleges. Rotation of board members, who serve four-year terms, is staggered.

The Alumni Association is now calling for nominations for representatives from:

Region I:	Nashville
Region II:	Tennessee, exclusive of Nashville
Region III:	Southeast (North Carolina to Mississippi inclusive)
Region IV:	Northeast (Virginia and Kentucky northward)
Region V:	West of the Mississippi River
Region VI:	Areas outside the United States (Asia)

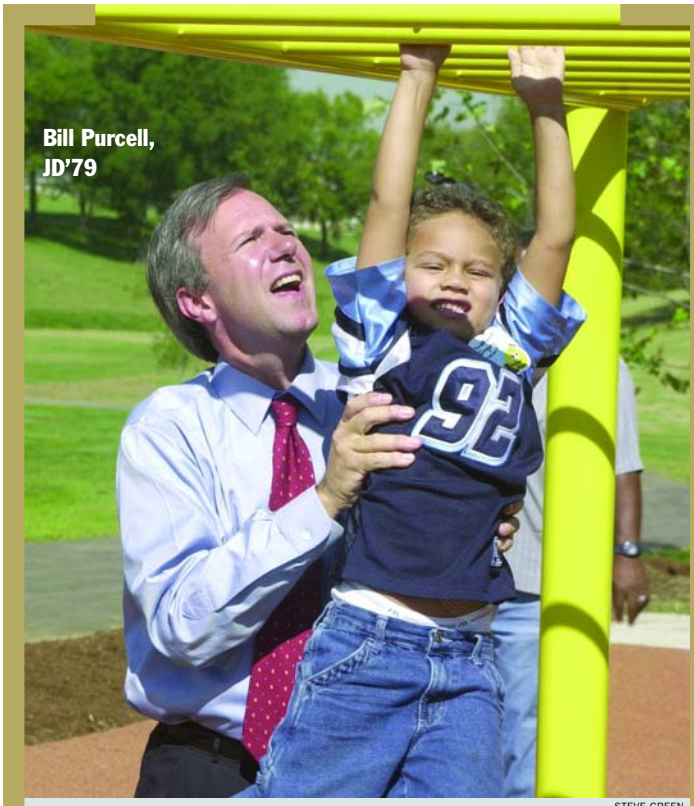
Representatives from these Vanderbilt chapters will be selected: Dallas, Houston, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Washington, D.C. Representatives from Peabody, Law, Nursing and Divinity also will be selected.

To find out more, visit **www.vanderbilt.edu/alumni/aaboardinfo.htm.** To nominate an alumnus/a, please use the online form at **www.vanderbilt.edu/alumni/aabodnom.htm**, or print out the form and submit it to:

Alumni Association Board Nominating Committee
VU Station B 357735
2301 Vanderbilt Place
Nashville, TN 37235-7735

Fax nominations to 615/343-1412, or e-mail alumni@vanderbilt.edu. Hurry! The nominations deadline is Jan. 31, 2006.

Debbie Gordon, BS'94, of Nashville has started one of the first eBay



Bill Purcell, JD'79

STEVE GREEN

For the Children

"Vanderbilt Law School brought me to Nashville and gave me the start in my legal career and interests in protecting our children," says Pennsylvania native Bill Purcell, Nashville's mayor since 1999.

Purcell entered public service in 1986 when he was elected to the Tennessee House of Representatives. As house majority leader and chair of the Select Committee on Children and Youth, he led reforms in education, criminal sentencing, health care and workers compensation. In 1996 he became director of the Child and Family Policy Center at the Vanderbilt Institute of Public Policy Studies.

Children also have been at the center of his initiatives as mayor. Early in his first term, he made education the city's top priority by visiting all the city's public schools.

Although he won 84 percent of the vote when he was reelected mayor two years ago, Purcell says he will not seek a third term and is proposing a charter amendment to limit the office to two terms.

He has an ambitious agenda involving improvements in the city's schools, public safety, parks and neighborhoods for the 21 months remaining in his mayoral term. "I can finish the job I set out to do," he says.

retail online auction stores, based on a software program she wrote.

“Joanna Roufa Welch, BS’99, has been named

{Alumni Association News}

Campfires, Cork Dorks and Carnegie Hall

If you’re not participating in the life of your local alumni chapter, you’re missing out on one of the best parts of a Vanderbilt education. Here’s a taste of what alumni, parents and friends in cities across the country have been enjoying this year, culled from hundreds of events in dozens of cities.

In Metro New York, “An Evening at Carnegie Hall” featured a cocktail reception at Shelly’s New York with Blair School of Music Professor Michael Rose speaking on “Three Great B’s at Carnegie Hall: Bartok, Boulez and Barenboim,” followed by a Chicago Symphony Orchestra performance.

In Austin, Texas, alumni and friends gathered at the LBJ Library and Museum to hear about one of the greatest politicians in U.S. history from Professor of History Thomas Schwartz, who spoke on “Reconsidering LBJ and Foreign Policy: Lyndon Johnson and the Atlantic Alliance.”

LBJ LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

President Lyndon B. Johnson

New Orleans alumni, parents and friends celebrated their traditional Summer Send-Off Party to welcome new students to Vanderbilt, hosted by the Berger family. Chancellor Gordon Gee spoke to a crowd of more than 200.

A large group of Dallas-area cork dorks got together at a brand new winemaking facility in Dallas, Times Ten Cellars, for wine-tasting and a tour.

The Philadelphia Chapter welcomed 62 alumni and family members to the Linvilla Orchard for a family day of pony rides, face painting and a campfire dinner.

associate producer *with C-SPAN Radio in Washington, D.C.*

The Breakers Mansion

KEVIN JOHNSON

Boston-area alumni enjoyed lunch with John Poindexter, BA'46, MA'48, who shared his knowledge of Vanderbilt family history and their ties to the University. The group toured the Breakers Mansion in Newport, R.I., a symbol of the Vanderbilt family's preeminence a hundred years ago.

In Huntsville, Ala., more than 100 Vanderbilt alumni and supporters gathered at the Ledges of Huntsville to hear Coach Kevin Stallings talk about the 2005–06 men's basketball team.

San Francisco alumni and friends enjoyed "An Evening of Learning, Lights and Laughter." Kass Kovalcheck, chair of the Department of Communication Studies and Theatre, spoke about the history of theatre, and the group attended a performance of "Beach Blanket Babylon," a San Francisco tradition.

To wrap up the year, the Nashville and Houston chapters are hosting "Gee Whiz: Vanderbilt Geniuses at Work." Larry Marnett, professor of cancer research, biochemistry and chemistry, explores chemical methods of detecting disease; Ann Richmond, professor of cancer biology and medicine, discusses research on inflammation-reducing drugs' potential in the fight against skin cancer and malignant melanoma; and John Wikswo, professor of physics, biomedical engineering, molecular physiology and biophysics, explores the human genetic code and protein makeup of the cell as the "new" biology.

From the Reader *continued from page 6*

Mighty Oaks from Little Acorns

I read the articles in the Summer 2005 issue of *Vanderbilt Magazine* and appreciated your efforts to compile such an interesting array of subjects and photos. I was especially interested in the "Green Spaces" section [of the "Greetings from Vanderbilt" article, p. 51].

Since leaving Vanderbilt in 1966, I have enjoyed returning to campus just to walk around and view the lawn, shrubs, flowers and trees. Several years ago I purchased a seedling from the Bicentennial Oak on campus and planted it in my front yard. Each year I have taken a photo of the tree to track its growth. It is a source of pleasure to know a small part of the Vandy campus lives in my front yard.

Dr. Bill Elias,
BA'61, MD'65, HO'65
Roanoke, Va.

Dr. Bill Elias, in September, with his prized tree, grown from a seedling of the Bicentennial Oak on Vanderbilt's campus.

Consider Us Lashed

Friends, we spend our winters in southern Arizona. To our knowledge, there is no town or city whose name is spelled "Tuscon" [Summer 2005 issue, "Scholarship Winner Globetrots in Pursuit of Public Service," p. 16]. The last time we checked, the proper spelling is "Tucson." A few lashes for your copy editor are in order.

Charles B. Hoelzel, PhD'60
Livingston, Texas

Magazine Appreciation

In the Spring 2005 issue of *Vanderbilt Magazine,* you ran a photo of the Class of '54 banner at the '54 reunion [Homecoming and Reunion ad, p. 1]. I'm the fellow in the raincoat and sunglasses right behind the returning cheerleader in the black sweater. If I can have or purchase a copy of that shot, I'd appreciate it.

Thanks. You must be doing something right down there to keep the conservative contingent so upset all the time.

Bob Sorrells, BA'56, MA'57
Rochester, Minn.

I just wanted to write and tell you how much I enjoyed the summer issue! Thank you for all you do to keep the alumni informed.

Lisa Neal, MEd'94
Kennesaw, Ga.

Letters are always welcome in response to contents of the magazine. We reserve the right to edit for length, style and clarity. Send signed letters to the Editor, Vanderbilt Magazine, VU Station B 357703, 2301 Vanderbilt Place, Nashville, TN 37235-7703, or e-mail *vanderbiltmagazine@vanderbilt.edu.*

S.P.O.V. *continued from page 67*

ing resources and our common humanity. We come together because we love people and want to help them. We leave with a deeper understanding of people's lives, experiences and circumstances.

Just as the Nashville high-school students really only need information they lack about standardized tests, applications, scholarships, financial aid and shower shoes, Shawn and the rest of us really only need firsthand information about how other people live in order to respect our mutual humanity and desire to improve each other's life experience.

Two years after the founding of Synergy, I can tell you confidently that it has been a wild ride. I've laughed until I've cried. I've cried until I've laughed. I speak for all the mentors and individuals who helped make Synergy possible when I say that I love these youth. I worry about them, I feel happy for them, I feel sad with them. I want society to pay more attention to them, and I intend to spend my life reforming the systems that will increase their opportunities and improve their lives.

I would like to continue relaying the stories of "my children" and their mentors, but I have to go now. James has been skipping school. I need to call him and make sure he is planning to attend tomorrow. Shanika's baby is turning 6 months old Tuesday, and I promised I would bring one of the Harry Potter books for her to read to him. And my paper for Public Policy about reforming the U.S. public education system is due in less than 24 hours. …

Sports *continued from page 18*

game. Throughout the SEC season, she made that big save in tight games to keep us in the match. Sometimes they were saves so big, she ignited our team and our play instantly improved."

In the classroom Griffin is an economics major with a minor in financial economics. Her summer internships have given her good insight into the world after college. She ran her own painting business for a summer in Charlotte—a good experience, but one she doesn't plan to repeat any time soon. The hardest part was having charge of her own employees. "They never do what you say. I'm sure that's what our coaches are saying right now: 'These soccer players don't ever do what we say.'"

The city of Nashville also turned out to be a good fit for Griffin. A self-taught guitarist, she enjoys country music and has a particular fondness for Reba McEntire and The Judds. "It's been fun living in Nashville. Any night you go out, there's music downtown. Every now and then somebody big will be playing. It's a great environment if you like any music."

One might even say it's serendipitous.

A.P.O.V. *continued from page 69*

hope. That they will tell her something true about the suffering she will face in her life. But most of all, I want them to instill in her a belief that a happy ending isn't a cheap convention of a dime-store novel. It's the moment of affirmation life is always seeking, the movement toward unity with God. And even if it's only between the covers of a book, I want her to believe that a happy ending is, in fact, always possible.

Without that possibility, life wouldn't be worth living.

VJournal *continued from page 7*

him out of jail, watched him come home drunk, and generally make bad choices. I leave her with one of the social workers and go back to restock our aircraft. On my way to the helipad I pass the trauma bay. As I look around the room, one word comes to mind: choice.

Years ago I made decisions and set goals that have led me to this point. I wanted to work in this arena. I went to school, took the right courses, did the work, paid my dues busting my ass working as an ER nurse, doing EMS work, fighting drunks, having HIV-positive prostitutes spitting at me, enduring endless screaming children and mindless medical bureaucracy all to get here.

I made that choice. I also make the choice to stay. I work long hours in a job that carries a certain amount of risk to my life and health, but that is my choice. I work with outstanding professionals who, for better or worse, chose to do this type of work. It is a calling and what we are supposed to be doing. No regrets.

My partner has charted much the same course. We have done a lot of this stuff together and endured the same hardships. Her personal life has taken some hits over the years because of her choice.

The nurses are there for various reasons: money, seniority, and the chance to work in the arena. A few have been here more than 15 years. Their job is critical and revolves around constantly anticipating the needs of the patient. At times their job is thankless, physically demanding and highly stressful. They all choose to stay, though.

The hospital administrator made her choices, too. She did her time as a clinician and chose a path as an administrator. She hates night shifts, wants time with her kids, and is only here tonight because someone called in sick.

We arrive on the pad as our pilot is finishing his paperwork. He is a quiet professional. He has several years' experience as an EMS pilot and was in the military before that. When I was in first grade, concerned about whether or not I was going to get to see "Batman" on TV, he chose to enlist in the army. He opted to go to flight school and became a pilot in command of a UH-1 helicopter. He went to Vietnam where his job was to kill communists. He has lots of interesting stories; some he tells, some he doesn't. He chooses this work for many reasons, most involving the people and quality of life. He is grossly underpaid and often taken for granted.

The trauma attending physician isn't young anymore. He's still on call every fourth or fifth night and endures long nights, lots of stress, not-so-great pay, and bureaucracy that is biblical in proportion. He has leadership presence like no other and, if asked, wouldn't have it any other way.

At this moment we are all here because of the *patient's* choice. Choosing to drink and drive will ultimately cause mayhem. I've never met anyone who intentionally had a car wreck, even after a 12-pack of beer. If he could tell you, he would say it was an accident. He is covered in tattoos—some professionally done and some that are jailhouse art. His chronological age is 24 but he looks 40; he has made some bad choices and done some hard living. He doesn't have a steady job; he tends a patch of marijuana on some paper-company land not far from his house. He drinks beer every day.

As my partner and I finish our chores, we receive a request to respond to another car accident. We lift and get en route as the sun breaks over the eastern horizon. I look down on the people and houses below me and think about the whole choice thing. We choose to do this type of work for better or worse. If you have a choice, you want us here, taking care of you and your family.

Vanderbilt flight nurse Kevin High's essay originally appeared in the Vanderbilt University Medical Center publication House Organ, *where it won the nonfiction category in the magazine's annual writing contest. It has been adapted for publication here.*

In Class *continued from page 28*

Burrus, associate professor of Spanish. "He's passionate about the field and about his teaching. He's not one of those researchers whose intellectual curiosity is reserved just for himself. He wants to talk with other people and wants others to be as excited as he is."

Friedman's undergraduate Spanish classes on *Don Quixote* routinely fill up with 20 or more students, despite the novel's daunting length of around 1,000 pages and the requirement, of course, to read it in Spanish.

"His *Quixote* course has been extremely popular. He really does want to guide students through it and make them love it as much as he does. And it works. The students are just thrilled with him and thrilled with the *Quixote*," adds Burrus, who calls Friedman "certainly one of the most important figures in the United States in Golden Age Spanish literature."

Friedman's interest in Spanish literature dates back to his undergraduate days at the University of Virginia, followed by graduate work at Johns Hopkins, where he earned his Ph.D. He has been a professor of Spanish for more than 30 years now, having spent stints at Kalamazoo College in Michigan, Arizona State and Indiana University before arriving at Vanderbilt in 2000. Along the way he has written some 300 scholarly articles and reviews, and has authored several books, including two popular college textbooks on Spanish literature (one of them has long been used at Vanderbilt). When the Signet Classics paperback edition of *Don Quixote,* translated by Walter Starkie, was reissued in 2001 it included a new, user-friendly introduction by Friedman, which is well worth reading as a quick primer on *Don Quixote.*

The basic outline of *Don Quixote* is widely known—even to those who have never read it. *Don Quixote* tells the story of an elderly aristocrat who loses touch with reality after reading too many romanticized books about fearless knights and fair maidens. He sallies forth to right wrongs and rescue the oppressed, equipped with homemade helmet and armor, an old broken-down horse, and a good-natured, simple-minded peasant named Sancho Panza, who agrees to go along with the charade as his squire, because for all Sancho knows, Quixote might not be crazy after all.

This much is common knowledge, for Don Quixote and Sancho Panza have become pervasively iconic figures, celebrated in famous paintings by Picasso and Dali, in opera, ballet, musical theater, and in a 1972 Hollywood movie. Thanks to the book, the phrase "tilting at windmills" is understood across the Western world as shorthand for wasting one's time fighting an imaginary foe or wrong. Likewise, we have the word "quixotic," meaning "idealistically impractical." So powerful is the symbolism of the notoriously erring knight-errant that we all feel we know him intuitively.

And yet the idealistic mission of Don Quixote is only one aspect of the book. Those who know only the musical theater production "Man of La Mancha" and its famous theme song, "The Impossible Dream," know only a faint, romanticized outline of the story. As Friedman is quick to point out, the book has lasted and remained a world favorite not simply because Cervantes created unforgettable characters, but perhaps even more so because of the way in which Cervantes chose to tell his tale.

"One of the key elements of the *Quixote*," says Friedman, "is that Cervantes is playing around with the idea of 'fiction' and 'history.' His work is clearly a fiction, but it's claiming to be a true history. …

"Cervantes is really asking us to analyze how we construct stories and, by extension, history, and how we move from viewing something to perceiving it, and then to expressing it."

Indeed, throughout the two parts of *Don Quixote,* Cervantes seems to delight in playing games with the reader about the nature of storytelling, truth and history. Early in Book 1, for example, Cervantes suggests that he is not the author of *Don Quixote* but merely someone who is recounting a translation of Don Quixote's story written by an otherwise unknown Arab historian. Book 2 gains considerable storytelling complexity because Cervantes had an unusual problem after the publication of his runaway best seller: A rival author wrote a popular, counterfeit sequel to *Don Quixote.* Cervantes cleverly dealt with the problem of the competing sequel by making Quixote, Sancho and other characters in the tale fully aware not only of Cervantes' Book 1 but also the false sequel. And so the two famous lunatics go tramping across Spain, finding themselves constantly compared to the books about them and having to debate which stories are true and which aren't.

"When you get this false sequel, it allows the literary games to become more complex," Friedman explains. "Cervantes is closing the gap between art and life. In other words, life comes into the fiction, the fiction goes out into the real world, and then goes back into the fiction. …

"Cervantes in a way is saying: The novel can do all these things. It can tell a story. It can make you feel for the protagonist. It can give you a picture of what society was like at the time. It can also focus at the same time on the inner workings of literature and the creation of a literary text. It's that process-product-product-process dialectic that I find fascinating."

For such reasons, *Don Quixote* often is referred to as the first modern novel. In many ways it established, for the first time, a standard of storytelling complexity for future novelists to reckon with. Writers who followed Cervantes—from Laurence Sterne to Kurt Vonnegut—could not help but be influenced by his breaking down of the "fourth wall," allowing readers to see the puppeteer pulling the characters' strings and winking at them from behind the curtain.

But even though *Don Quixote* was revolutionary in its multilayered points of view and its blurring of the boundaries between reality and fiction, Friedman notes that it did not appear in a vacuum. There were antecedents in fiction, such as idealistic pastoral novels and chivalric romances, and the picaresque novels—that is, tales of lower classes and anti-heroes, often told in the first person.

"There really was a tremendously rich narrative tradition in Europe," he says, "and certainly in Spain before the realistic novels in England and France of the 18th and 19th centuries."

Friedman's teaching and research interests—which include Golden Age Spanish drama and the picaresque tales— often have focused on the connections between the literary precursors to Cervantes, particularly picaresque books, and books that were influenced by Cervantes. To that end, he is currently at work on a book-length study called *Cervantes in the Middle.* In it he discusses the ways in which picaresque tales influenced

Don Quixote and then, in turn, ways in which both the picaresque and *Don Quixote* influenced two modern Spanish writers who followed, Benito Perez Galdos and Miguel de Unamuno.

"One of the things I'm looking at is that from the moment realism became a strain in narrative writing, it seems to have been accompanied by what can be called 'metafiction' or self-consciousness—that is, the literature that talks about its process of writing and its relationship to the reader," says Friedman. "It's not the suspension of disbelief as is typical of realism, but is more the opposite of it. So if we associate realism with hiding its conventions and trying to make you pretend that its conventions aren't there, this other kind of literature, metafiction, is really doing the opposite. It's throwing those conventions in your face. I'm suggesting that this self-consciousness has been part of the realistic tradition in fiction from the very beginning."

Eager to enlist more readers for *Don Quixote,* Friedman mentions several translations as being good, including Walter Starkie's and recent versions by Edith Grossman and John Rutherford. But he fully understands that despite its reputation as a great work, *Don Quixote* "is not the easiest text in the world to get into." He notes that when an 18th-century English translation was recently reissued, "some of the reviewers said that *Don Quixote* remains deadly to readers. So not everyone shares my enthusiasm."

Still, he adds, "That's why I love doing it in class, because I feel I can give people a little bit of the ammunition they need to get fired up and get into it. And once you get into it, I think it can really work for you.

"You've probably had classes and read certain texts that didn't just entertain you but had an impact on future reading and in your way of thinking about the world. If any novel can do that to you, *Don Quixote* can. You're never going to read a novel again that isn't impacted by your reading of *Don Quixote.*"

And if someone needs to read it in class or prefaced by a good introduction to gain the necessary momentum, that's fine with Edward Friedman. "It helps keep those of us in universities in business," he says with a smile that suggests he thoroughly enjoys the business he's chosen.

Take the Side Road *continued from page 59*

Barrington, Mass., named Joan Griswold, who scribbles things in his datebook like, "Happy birthday, Honey Pie!" He likes going on the road with the Rock Bottom Remainders. "It lets me use the word 'gig,'" he says. "You don't get to say 'gig' much as a writer."

Blount is profoundly unable to sing, but he's never let that hinder him from doing it onstage if the setting and the mood are right. In 1990 he attended a performance by a band called Sweethearts of the Bancroft Lounge, which included a singer named Kathi Kamen Goldmark. By day Goldmark is a freelance media escort, and by day or night she's a good pal of Blount Junior. On this specific evening, he hopped onstage and sang, more or less, what Goldmark characterizes as a "sterling" rendition of "Don't Mess with My Toot Toot." A year later, when she decided to create the Rock Bottom Remainders for all the writers who'd ever told her how much they missed playing in the bands of their youth, she invited him. He accepted and has been Remaindered ever since.

The RBR began as a one-shot deal, but the players enjoyed themselves so much they decided to get together once a year and go on the road for a short three- or four-city tour. The personnel have changed over the years. Novelist Barbara Kingsolver no longer participates. Original member Stephen King opted out of this past year's excursion. Blount missed him. He recalls gigs where some of King's disciples in the crowd begged for an encore by setting their fingernails on fire. Bruce Springsteen once sat in a club's greenroom after an RBR performance and told Dave Barry, "Your band's not too bad. It's not too good, either. Don't let it get any better; otherwise you'll just be another lousy band."

In a place like Chicago's House of Blues or the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, the Remainders are great fun, and collectively they've sold a helluva lot more books than Springsteen. Blount serves as master of ceremonies, introducing the rest of the band, and he sings backup, as in "back up from the microphone." This last tour started in St. Louis and rolled through Chicago, Cleveland and Detroit on a bus that ordinarily transported a minor-league soccer team called the Richmond Kickers. Proceeds from each gig benefit literary programs. Blount likes to amuse himself on these trips by writing songs. Roger McGuinn, the founder of the Byrds, toured with the Remainders and sang a half-dozen of his hits each night, and he and Blount got some work done on a song titled "I'm an A-Sharp Dude But I B-Flat Broke."

There was a spell during Blount's career when magazines paid him to write about musicians like Tammy Wynette, Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton, Jerry Jeff Walker and Willie Nelson. Those stories were supposed to go toward a book on country music, but when Jimmy Carter won the 1976 presidential election, Blount ended up writing *Crackers* instead, a book that didn't wait for the first page to start rambling: Its subtitle is *This Whole Many-Angled Thing of Jimmy, More Carters, Ominous Little Animals, Sad Singing Women, My Daddy, and Me*. It came out in 1980, just in time for Carter to lose his reelection bid. The book garnered good reviews but didn't sell many copies, the fate of most of his titles. His first book of dog verse has sold 150,000 copies, but for that one he only gets 50 cents per book. "If one of my other books sold that much, I'd have a bigger house," he says. "I would love to have a big payday, but I'm used to this."

His penultimate major undertaking was a biography of Robert E. Lee for the Penguin Lives series. It took him longer than he'd planned. "To my dismay, every time I read something, there was something else I didn't know anything about and I'd have to brush up on that. I started out wanting to know more about Lee's childhood, so I had to read two books about his father, Light-Horse Harry Lee. Then I realized how little I knew about the Civil War, so I started reading endless books about the battle of Chancellorsville." And Blount kept veering from the path to wander off in some esoteric direction—that straight-line thing. "I found this joke that Lee liked, and pursued that joke at great length. People were appalled. But that was interesting to me because nobody had done that, and it seemed to say something about his mysterious inner nature."

For a ramblin' researcher and ramblin' writer, a book in which the order of business is ramblin' around a city seems custom made. When Crown Publishers inquired as to whether

continued on page 86

Take the Side Road *continued from page 85*

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For a ramblin' researcher and ramblin' writer, a book in which the order of business is ramblin' around a city seems custom made. When Crown Publishers inquired as to whether he'd like to author a volume in their "Journeys" series on cities, he responded, "Gimme New Orleans! I wanted to go down there and eat tax-deductible gumbo." The result, *Feet on the Street*, serves up any number of sentences for the discerning reader to savor, sentences sanded smooth and well joined. For example: "On especially misty days in New Orleans, background colors emerge as if bleeding into the atmosphere: you catch sight of a beige-faced woman in a blue slicker carrying a manila envelope past a mint-green housefront, and it's as though you're seeing the color manila for the first time." There's the quality of the observation, the cadence of that middle clause, the unexpected choice of "manila" not just as a color but the one color worth mentioning twice, which sends you to a dictionary where you find that, yes indeed, "manila" refers not just to a type of paper but its color, which is the sort of thing Blount knows as a usage consultant to the *American Heritage Dictionary*. Or there's this little scene in an oyster house that features a woman named Becca and her husband, Kyle:

> It's late fall, crispy for New Orleans, and she's wearing a sweater. Striped, horizontally, which on a flat surface would be straight across but on her the effect is topographical. And there's a twinkle in her eyes—well, more of a glint, probably, but you can see seeing it as a twinkle in just the right light. "Shuck us a dozen," she tells the shucker, and with a look over at hubby, "Let's hope one of 'em works."

"I'm always disappointed," he says, speaking of his own prose. "Years later I might be able to look something over and think, *That sentence is pretty good*. But it never seems good." Asked if he thinks his career has worked out all right, he replies, "Well, yeah. I don't think I've done as much as I should have done. I don't know, I'm up and down with it. But I've made a living doing the things I want to do, so I've done OK." He admires writers who have been more focused, but could he have been one? Could he have been less miscellaneous, less the flaneur strolling down every beckoning path? "Probably not," he says. "Maybe if I'd gotten up earlier in the morning."

In *Be Sweet*, Roy Blount Jr. offered the argument that he's been more focused, more of a straight-line guy, than people realize. He wrote, "I have always been writing and talking about the same thing. Probing for the same frisson. Just nobody has noticed." OK, so what *is* this thing he's been writing and talking about every time out? This thing none of us has noted? Blount ponders a moment, runs his hand up under his glasses and over his face in a characteristic gesture, and says, "I must have written that late at night. I know what a frisson is, but I don't know what the *thing* is."

Next up might be a novel, though he says, "It's hard to have anything approaching a normal life and also write a novel. You get all tied up in it and have to stay up until 4 in the morning." He'd like to author a book about writing and the use of language. He's interested in writing something that attempts to reconcile the South and the Enlightenment. He wonders if he's capable of still being funny, noting that he's past the age when most humorists seem to lose their humor. But *Feet on the Street* turned out funny, and the Rock Bottom Remainders will surely tour again. (The group recently was asked to perform on the same bill as Bob Dylan and Norah Jones for Amazon.com's 10th anniversary celebration, but several members of the group had scheduling conflicts.) And somewhere along the line he'll wander into something that interests or confuses him and prompts a new story. He doesn't sound too worried when he says, "As long as they let me write another book, and I'm still solvent." **V**

Southern Journal

continued from page 88

(or even the slightly earlier "lost colony" of Roanoke in today's North Carolina), the dominant narrative of Southern culture has been characterized by its sequence of British names—in terms of its people and, for the most part, its places.

But the perception of the American South as being essentially Anglo-Saxon minimizes the quite unique contribution the Scotch-Irish in particular have made to many areas of Southern life, perhaps because, as E. Merton Coulter claimed in 1935, they "were individualistic and greatly lacking in self-consciousness." Even if the southern states of the eastern seaboard can be said to have a distinctly English origin, its western borders and Gulf coast have been significantly influenced by Spanish and French incursions, nationalities also complex in their ethnic compositions.

It should hardly be surprising that a South that until recent times barely mentioned its Native and African-American populations—despite that African-Americans comprised at least a third of those living in the region—should also have passed over in complacent silence the untidy remnants of other cultural contributions. …

Ireland figures in the Southern drama in many different ways: as a country from which a not-insignificant component of the Southern population originated; as a land with a strikingly similar historical experience of defeat, poverty and dispossession; and finally, at least in the Anglophone world, as a culture that has clear resemblances with that of the American South, not least because of the remarkable 20th-century literary achievements of both unlikely places. Ireland is to England, the argument sometimes goes, as the American South is to the United States: Both places have long been the "problem," if also frequently romanticized regions, of otherwise "progressive" nations. They exist, all too really if often unwillingly, as the untamed peripheries of their respective centers.

It was very much in such a vein that half a century ago, the Irish short-story writer Seán O'Faoláin remarked that in his own County Cork and William Faulkner's rural Mississippi, "There is the same passionate provincialism; the same local patriotism; the same southern nationalism … the same vanity of the old race; the same gnawing sense of defeat; the same capacity for intense hatred … the same oscillation between unbounded self-confidence and total despair; the same escape through sport and drink." In 1993 the dean of Southern historians, C. Vann Woodward, following O'Faoláin's steps, noted that James Joyce and Faulkner "were conscious of the provinciality of their culture and its subordinate relation to a dominant one."

I live in Birmingham, Ala., a Southern city with no especial Irish connections, but which nevertheless is home to a fortress-like Quinlan Castle (the only one in the world that I know of) that daily flies, as all proper castles do, the Union Jack, and that is marked by a shield sporting an accurate rendering of the rather undistinguished family's coat of arms. Two of my great-aunts came to the state early in the 20th century as Roman Catholic nuns and are buried in a convent cemetery in Mobile. In the 1870s, Charles Stewart Parnell considered investing in the city's new steel industry—his older brother already being a peach farmer in the state—and only changed his plans when his train was derailed outside Birmingham, an ill omen for the superstitious future leader of the Irish Home Rule party, a man destined to be celebrated as the "uncrowned king" of this country. According to one account, it was even his brother's discontent with the indignities of Reconstruction that sharpened Parnell's own perception of English-Irish injustices. At Birmingham's Roman Catholic cathedral in 1921, an Irish-born priest was fatally shot by an itinerant Methodist preacher because he had just performed a wedding ceremony between the preacher's rebellious daughter and a dark-skinned Puerto Rican. In the celebrated trial that followed, the defendant was successfully represented by the able Hugo Black, then a member of the Ku Klux Klan but who was to go on to become one of the most liberal members of the U.S. Supreme Court and whose own ancestors claimed that they had fled Ireland in the 1790s because of being related to the proscribed revolutionaries Thomas Addis Emmet and his better-known brother, Robert.

In more recent times, Irish connections—random, curious, sometimes significant—persist. The current Earl of Bantry in County Cork was for many years a farmer in Alabama and taught English at one of the local private schools. A recent candidate for the Irish presidency, a popular singer of staunchly conservative outlook, resides here, too, though I was not aware of that until she began to run for office and a number of Irish journalists sought out my uninformed ear. Almost the first person I met on arrival in Birmingham in 1986 was a Lebanese restaurant owner who had lived for years in Dublin and still retained his Irish passport.

On my way to work during the last couple of years, I have begun to notice the frequency with which a Guinness truck is parked outside a popular restaurant (nearby Atlanta now being the No. 1 consumer of that beverage in the United States), making me fondly nostalgic for a youth spent watching that company's barges lower their grimy red and black funnels as they passed beneath the Liffey bridges of "dear dirty Dublin" in the 1950s.

O'Faoláin's comment that Ireland would be a wonderful place in which to live in 200 years' time has received a kind of early fulfillment in the many exiles returning to it in the last few years, while on the other side of the Atlantic numerous relocating African-Americans have confessed that they now find the South—though there is a preferential hierarchy among its states—the most congenial part of the United States in which to live. Certainly, the economies of both places have improved dramatically, even if large areas of acute poverty still exist. By one reckoning—not at all easy to believe—it is estimated that the Southern states now have the fourth largest economy in the world. Meanwhile, Ireland is regularly, if rather provincially, touted as the "Celtic Tiger" that came from far behind to catch up with, and occasionally outpace, many of its European allies in economic activity.

Should the American South continue to prosper, it is likely that it will attract a new generation of Irish immigrants as it already has done in regard to Latinos and set off a new cycle of comparisons.

This essay is adapted with permission from Kieran Quinlan's book Strange Kin: Ireland and the American South.

Southern Journal

Reflections on the South

Causes Lost, Redemptions Found

Ireland and the American South share a familial resemblance.

By Kieran Quinlan, MA'79, PhD'84

JIM HSIEH

It was August 1977, just a couple of days, as it happened, before Elvis Presley's death in Memphis, Tenn. In the noisy, bustling JFK airport, an immigration officer was examining my Irish passport with its accompanying J1 visa that would allow me to pursue graduate studies at Vanderbilt University in Nashville.

"You won't understand the people down there," he remarked ominously without looking up at me. I was momentarily puzzled, even vaguely insulted. Had he just read the Irish Gaelic wording on my passport and assumed that English was only my second language, an "acquired speech" as James Joyce had called it?

All of a sudden the officer's face lit up in a broad grin. "Say *y'all*," he teased, routinely stamping my documents and then shoving them back into my hand without waiting to hear my befuddled reply.

The immigration officer's poking fun at the Tennessee to which I was reluctantly going, rather than the Ireland from which I had just come, brought to mind once again all the negative comments I'd previously heard from American friends about the South, its cultural and economic backwardness, oppressive religious fundamentalism and bitter racism. Drowned out were the often curious and even occasionally envious remarks of Irish and English fellow students who, however, hardly knew anything at all about the place.

The more adventurous, or perhaps cynical, among the latter even suggested that Music City was likely to be more exciting than staid Oxford, the proverbial "home of lost causes" from which I had received my undergraduate degree just weeks earlier. In any case, I now had to brace myself for my first encounter with this strange land seemingly so unlike my own and even less, I suspected, like the England where I had been living for the previous four years.

A few days later, as I sat in the airport limo riding through downtown Nashville and recalling that I had seen it described as "the Athens of the South," I thought glumly of how little resemblance the city bore to its Grecian prototype. Even its famed replica of the Parthenon seemed no more than a pathetic and disorienting imitation, ill placed in a low-lying city park. Everything European was very far away, not least because of the oppressive heat of the place. I had indeed entered a "New World."

More than two decades later, however, my perceptions *have* changed. I have certainly become more accepting and even celebratory of traditions and barely understood hierarchies not my own, phenomena to which many residents of European background remain jadedly condescending through their entire lifetimes in America. It takes the modern voluntary immigrant a while and requires some empathy to acknowledge that the Irish-American, or German-American, or even English-American experience and history represent not a mere unfortunate cultural displacement but is just as valid as his own and has simply shaped communities and families in a different way from that which has formed his identity.

More specifically, I am now aware that many of the South's inhabitants are my distant kin, and that its historical experience bears a striking, if somewhat unfamiliar, kinship with my own country's. Numerous defeated peoples—Poles, Japanese, those from the countries of the former Yugoslavia or of Latin and Central America, to mention just a few—have found it easier to identify their experience with that of the American South rather than with the more successful parts of the United States. Indeed, the traditional South in many of its social, political and economic aspects is probably more typical of the struggling world at large than is the rest of the nation. What is unique about the Irish relationship with it, however, is that *both* kin and kinship are involved.

Insofar as they are concerned with the matter at all, American Southerners—or at least white Southerners—tend to think of themselves primarily as English, with some admixture of Scottish, a perception that would be surprising to many of the present-day inhabitants of the British Isles. Certainly, few of the standard histories of the South make even passing reference to Ireland or the Irish. It is as though the latter had never been there at all. The states of the former Confederacy instead are seen as the home of quintessential American Anglo-Saxonism.

From 1607 when the Virginia Company of London founded the Jamestown colony

continued on page 87