

Bard College  
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# BARDIAN

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# The Bardian



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VOL. II—No. 5

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1947

# The Bardian

Official publication of the students of Bard College,  
Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

## EDITORS

Robert B. Sherman (Managing)  
Marty Weiss Mary Louise Campbell

## STAFF

Olga Churek Lorry Larsen  
Henry Frothingham Patricia Dillon

BUSINESS  
Howard Koch

ART  
Mary Gelb

## ARGUMENT FOR INTELLIGENCE

By Alan Ostrom

According to the official catalogue of Bard College, this is a school which "... desires to provide for each student the educational experiences which will be of most value to him or her." It is a place where, "Teachers are in intimate contact with their students, and in the tutorial conferences and small classes can adapt the subject matter and methods of teaching to get the maximum genuine results." In other words, it is a school in the true sense of the word; it is not a diploma factory. It is an institution to which people come who are interested in receiving the best possible education. It is a means of giving the best possible education. According to the catalogue.

But it is debatable whether the catalogue tells the truth. In fact, it could be said that perhaps the catalogue is like all advertising; enticing but empty. And it is well worth looking into, for the findings will affect not only Bard as an institution, but the future of each and every person who either graduates from or works for the college.

To begin with, what are the "educational experiences" offered here which will result in the "maximum genuine results"? Are they small classes? The size of the class is important only in relation to what is said in it. And many much larger schools have equally small classes, while some (such as Penn State) have even fewer in many cases. Is it excellence of faculty? Let's be frank about it. We have a good faculty here, but it is no better than anywhere else. Superior physical facilities? It is obvious that we are not in the same league as other, wealthier institutions. So just what is it? Well the answer is—NOTHING! Nothing but a studied and increasingly conspicuous mediocrity and an oversized tuition. And a small mediocre school can not possibly compete with a large one.

There was a time when Bard did have something to offer its student body. Or perhaps I should say that it was something the students offered each

other. It was intelligence. There was a level of student-ability which was high enough to be sufficient recompense in itself to validate paying a large tuition. And it was not a mere pretense. If you didn't have the ability, you went somewhere else, regardless of how much tuition you could pay. If you did have the ability, you were welcome—even if you could not meet the financial requirements. And *that* Bard was an institution which continually gained more esteem in the eyes of the rest of the educational world, and which was growing larger and stronger all the time. All this was due to the fact that Bard could offer something that other schools could not; the interchange of ideas with other intelligent minds under a flexible system of education. That was what made the small classes and conferences valuable. That is what made Bard valuable. Today we have only a few remains of the minds and equally few remains of the system. All the rest is a *sham* which is morally reprehensible and educationally criminal.

On page twelve of the Bard catalogue there is this statement: "Although the student naturally devotes most of his time to the pursuit of his academic work, some extracurricular activities have developed." Yet it is now deemed more important to meet physical education requirements than to do better than average work in an academic subject. The epitome of ambition today is to have a whopper of a prom each semester. And there is a faction on this campus attempting to control the admissions and educational policies which advocates the admission of students who will be active in what they call, "College affairs." That is their criterion of acceptability; intelligence comes next. Proms are fine things, and so are "activities." But there should be some school in the country where they are second to education in importance. If this group does gain control, there will be no such place, and the name Bard on diploma will be worthless. And that will apply to the diplomas of the past and the present as well as those of the future.

At this moment there is indecision in many minds as to what course the college should take in the future. There are fears of losing the financial support of the alumni. There are many considerations which deter a large number of people from making up their minds. And it is the student body, as a group as well as individually, who holds the balance of power. If we will make ourselves heard, we will be able to safeguard both our own interests and the interest of Bard as an institution, for they are one and the same. There are a great many intelligent persons in this world, and it should be the avowed purpose of Bard College to find some of them.

\* \* \* \*

Miss Patricia Maxwell Hellman (Bard '48) presented several catalogues and forty fine art prints to the Art Division for its collection of color reproductions, used for teaching purposes.

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I am highly gratified that *The Bardian* offers us a medium through which to discuss our educational program under the disciplines imposed by putting thoughts on paper. While our frequent and informal bull sessions give everyone a chance to toss ideas around, it is only when we try to get them down in black and white that we realize how vague our thinking often is. Jim Rosenau's article, "A House Divided", is an excellent example of good, clear thinking on paper and challenges all of us to evaluate the organization of the College in the light of what we strive to do. This letter is my response to that challenge. I hope there will be others.

Our College is organized in four teaching divisions for two main reasons: first, to avoid the petty competition and narrow outlook that have characterized colleges organized on a departmental basis—where historians look down their noses at economists, chemists suspect the scientific orthodoxy of biologists, teachers of English literature consider the learning of foreign languages as necessary but menial crafts—and so ad infinitum—and ad nauseam. The Divisional organization was devised to educate the teacher, as well as the student in a broader approach to the fields of knowledge of which his subject matter is a part. Meeting with his fellow teachers for a couple of hours each week does much to expand the outlook and increase the knowledge of anyone genuinely interested in pioneering along new frontiers in education. Out of our divisional meetings came new sympathies, new understanding, new conceptions of the unity of knowledge and way of presenting this unity to our students. If our faculty were composed of fifteen or twenty geniuses who could comprehend all human knowledge, we might conceivably function quite effectively without Divisions. But we have more than forty teachers—none of whom would lay claim to qualities of genius—and fruitful discussions involving all in such a large group is difficult, if not impossible. The second main reason for having Divisions in the College is to facilitate our student personnel work. Bard's system of counseling is based on the premise that a student's teacher has a better knowledge of him—of his needs and problems and capacities—than a professional counselor can possibly have unless he holds many conferences with the student over a considerable length of time. We also believe that several heads are better than one, that a group of teachers can give more objective and more valid advice to a student than can be offered by one person. The progress of a student majoring in a Division is discussed by the faculty of that Division informally from time to time and more explicitly when the student meets the challenges of the Sophomore Review and the Senior Project.

In brief summary, the main reasons for having Divisions at Bard are: (1) to enlarge the outlook

of both teachers and students beyond the limited scope of traditional departments of instruction, without setting the superhuman task of surveying the whole sweep of human knowledge; and (2) to bring together, in groups of convenient size, those teachers who know the student well and are thus best qualified to guide his progress through the College.

—EDWARD C. FULLER

### SOMETHING NEW

By Lorry Larsen

One evening a few nights ago there was a meeting held in Albee Social. It was so successful that it would be an excellent example for others to follow.

The nature of that meeting was this: our two instructors in Sociology, Miss Gillard and Dr. DeGre thought it would be of value if the junior and senior Sociology majors met in a group and discussed Senior Projects. They felt that in such a meeting: 1) the Seniors would have a chance to air their troubles and perhaps get helpful suggestions from the other students who are majoring in the same subject. 2) through discussion of the subject-matter of these Projects the Junior might get ideas for his own forthcoming Project. 3) the Junior would have a chance to become acquainted with obstacles which he might encounter when he is working on his Project. By being made aware of them he might then be able to overcome them with less difficulty by making use of the experience of others.

It was decided that the meeting would last for approximately two hours, allowing for two Projects to be discussed; one hour spent on each. It was conducted in the following way: the first hour was given over to a student who has just begun to work on her Project this term. She presented her problem and a brief summary of what she has accomplished so far. The other students were able to make very helpful suggestions pertaining to further reading material, different methods of attacking the problem, etc. The second hour was devoted to a Project that is almost finished. The student explained how she tackled her problem, narrowed it down to one aspect of a larger field and collected material. Her subject-matter was so interesting that many of us stayed longer than the allotted two hours questioning her on what she had learned from her work.

Miss Gillard and Dr. DeGre were not certain how their students would accept the prospect of discussing other people's problems for two hours. Before the evening was over however, they realized that all the students felt the time had been well spent.

Therefore, I should like to make a suggestion to both students and faculty. It is: to follow the example of our Sociologists. If these gatherings are restricted to separate subjects (for example: a his-



tory Project discussion attended by all Juniors and Seniors majoring with Dr. Hirsch and Mr. Garvan) there need be comparatively few meetings a term—approximately one a month is often enough. This would give two Seniors a chance to speak each time, and all the Projects would be discussed in one term. If this plan were to be continued, a Senior, who reports during the first half of his Senior year, could report again in the second half of the year and show how he was able to overcome obstacles that were in his way when he first started on his project. It would certainly be a great help to those who now want to hide everytime someone whispers "Project" in their ear.

### WXBC

#### Standard Program Schedule

Here is the weekly standard program schedule of WXBC, Bard College. Cut it out and hang it up in your room for reference.

#### Monday

7:30 Popular Music—Peter Stone  
8:00 Trend is Music  
8:15 Presenting Moonshine  
8:30 Jazz (recorded)  
9:00 News  
9:05 Recorded Music  
9:20-10:30 Music for Meditation

#### Tuesday

7:30 Popular Music  
8:00 Trend is Music  
8:15 Recorded Music  
8:30 Attitudes towards Art  
9:00 News  
9:05 Remember this one  
9:20-10:30 Music for Meditation

#### Wednesday

7:30 Popular Music  
8:00 Trend is Music  
8:30 Jazz Selections  
9:00 U. N. News  
9:15 Record Rareties  
9:30-10:30 Music for Meditation

#### Thursday

7:30 Popular Music  
8:00 Trend is Music  
8:15 Dramatic Presentation  
8:30 Attitudes towards Art  
9:00 News  
9:05 South America Take it Away  
9:20-10:30 Music for Meditation  
12:00-1:00 "The Midnight Special"

#### Friday

7:30 Popular Music  
8:00 To be announced  
8:30 Jazz Selections  
9:00 News  
9:05 Musical Comedy Hits  
9:20-10:30 Music for Meditation  
12:00-1:00 "The Midnight Special"

#### Sunday

12:00-1:00 "The Midnight Special"

### BRASS KNUCKLE DEPARTMENT

By Patricia Dillon

The object of this little article is to dispel the old bogey of the Special Committee. In connection with the current plan of publicising the committee's functions and methods, the *Bardian* was asked to send a staff member to cover the most recent meeting. As a result, this reporter can definitely state that absolutely no blood was shed. The meeting was quiet, dignified and anything but stuffy. There was no beer, but still the atmosphere did not lack congeniality.

The Special Committee is dedicated to the not-so-easy task of keeping peace on campus. This does not mean that it delights in handing out disciplinary measures by the dozens. The Committee does far more than simply chastise erring students. It tries to avoid trouble before it starts by maintaining close ties between the house presidents and the faculty representatives. This involves considerable tact, in which the Committee as a whole is not lacking. Any deviations from the Bard community pattern are quickly noted and acted upon. When the need for change arises the Committee is there to carefully weigh the situation and consider the possibilities for adjustment.

It is necessary that the students realize that the Special Committee is working for them. Chances are that many of us will go right through our days at Bard without having any closer contact with the Committee than hearsay, but if ever called up for any reason whatsoever, it is well to remember that the Committee's purpose is mainly to discuss our problems with the aim of reaching the best solution for everyone involved.

### SOMETHING BORROWED, SOMETHING BLUE WORKSHOP PRODUCTIONS

This paper deals with workshops or any group which gives a piecemeal presentation and calls it a theatrical presentation.

As a practicing student of design, I have little to say in the choosing of projects of aspiring actors or actresses who will be seen for a few brief moments on local boards in their versions of often hackneyed and classical drama digest fashion. These players who rise to the occasion to be filled with sound and fury in Grecian tragedy for two minutes only to return to stalk through the halls of Glamis for another five minutes are certainly the little wonders of drama departments all over the country. The rare quality and ability seen in these hurried glances is certainly open to question.

In playing a smattering of a drama the actor sustains the mood for a few minutes. Since he can do this, I guess that it follows that he can naturally do it for the full two and a half hours of the actual production. To use this technique with a quotation or two from Shakespeare and a few lines lopped from the middle of Ibsen is rather an affrontery and usually does not constitute a

dramatic presentation of any high calibre.

As a designer, I have found that not one of the productions on which I have worked that was greeted with success either artistically or financially was a cut version. In designing the simplest set-up for anywhere from five to eight scenes with the type of scenery that would be worth while for a designer to do, it would take a large crew and almost more hours to execute than would be spent on the rehearsal of the scenes by the actors. Workshop scenery is necessarily cut to a minimum; the reason for this is the limited backstage space and the cutting down of crew and time for shifting. There are many ways to design a show, but when all the limiting factors are taken into account in designing for workshops, I feel you cannot really design one properly or show the purpose of a designer in the work.

In looking at this problem further, why isn't the audience considered? All the work, sweat, tears, fuming, fussing, and last minute adjustments that make up a theatrical production are focused on one thing, the time when that curtain will go up in front of people—an audience. The audience is the one that suffers in these short nightmares of bad taste and characterizations done in spurts. Are they deluded into a feeling of true theatre by this hodge-podge Pot Pourri of fragments of the drama? The audience does not see enough of the play to know what is going on or enough to know if a characterization is right or even good. How can motivations and action be clear to an audience that does not know what has gone before. What they get is a rather confused variegated sampling of different authors from different periods, and to call these snatches a theatrical offering is a purjury of the most destructive kind.

What the public feels is the theatre's concern. When most of the things that make up good theater, scenically or otherwise, are not present, it is not doing anybody any good. Theater should impart the full essence of a play that is being presented and not just a small part of the whole, at least in anything that resembles a production. If an actor cannot get along without trying to play every character conceivable in a single evening (some few exceptions can), then let him have this dreamed up illusion by doing this wonderful feat in front of an audience and playing the scenes for what they are, a workshop, a testing of dramatic prowess; and let it be done on a bare stage with no scenery, just a chair or table if needed. Let there be no make-up or costumes. Let the public know just what it is, an actor preparing. Let the major work of technicians and actors go into productions of full length, and in this form, the theater of today as we know it, let us try new things and new ideas. Let us give what we can in the best way we can so that we may better understand the intricacies of a production, and in this way give an idea of real theater to the audience while learning.

—WILLIAM PITKIN

## INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS AT BARD?

By Henry A. Frothingham

At a convocation held on November 19, attended by a turnout of over 175 members of the Bard College community, a motion that intercollegiate athletics be resumed was defeated by a vote of 83 to 67.

The fact that the vote was so close and that many people are in favor of intercollegiates, but against the particular motion, make a worthwhile introspection of the problem and the pros and cons.

The motion was for basketball, baseball if facilities were available, and any individual sports which the athletic director deems fitting. According to the rules in effect with the passing of the motion, intercollegiates would not interfere with the attendance of classes, or educational processes, and the normal physical education program. Other rules set down were the authority of adviser to bar any of his or her advisees from competing in inter-collegiates, if he or she believes the student's work is suffering, because of participation; no student shall be given financial aid because of his athletic ability.

Methods of financing the program were suggested by the presenter of the motion, such as grant from the college, rise on convocation dues, donations, playing in Poughkeepsie.

The arguments presented for were that it would give the school a boost, that it couldn't harm the school, it would publicize and spread its name. It would give the school a spirit of unity and coordinate interest within the community. Also, it would be a stimulus to intermurals and would enhance the present physical education system.

The arguments presented against were that the spirit of intercollegiates was against the Bard Program; the school was too small to put out a winning team, and the community would support no other; it would take away from studying; it might possibly lower class and admission standings; proper financial support was needed; the money for such a program could be better used, in the library, for a community center and other community improvements.

Everyone seems to be in favor of individual sports on an intercollegiate level—the disfavor arises in the matter of team sports. Perhaps it would have been better if the ban had just been lifted, and individual sports allowed. This may still happen. Then if a suitable financial program can be worked out, perhaps one team sport could be tried to see how it would work out.

\* \* \* \*

### American Music Concert

Otto Leuning, prominent composer and flutist, and Edmund Haines, pianist and Professor at Bard, will present a concert of American Music on Wednesday evening, December 10, at 7:45 p. m. in the Gymnasium. The entire community and visitors are invited.

## THE FOLK ART OF AMERICA

By Pete Kaufman

The most important musical development of our century has been almost totally unacknowledged by the general public—the jazz and allied folk music of this country.

For the last twenty years, the radio has steadily blared the popular corruptions of this musical form at the undistinguishing public, and tin pan alley has contributed its bit in changing the clef to the dollar sign by its constant plugging of the commercial slop foisted on the American public. But the real music, seldom heard, has been practically beaten into oblivion by the dollar crazy promoters, and even those few who have chanced to hear the real thing rarely have an awareness of its importance as a definite art form. And the artists themselves, through this tragic non-recognition, have been forced to play for bread and butter, while the perverters and cheapeners of the art have made millions in building the bastard form of popular music into a national industry. And there are too many thousands of folk artists, not even able to earn bread and butter, who have been forced to seek a living by other means—an appalling indictment of the artistic awareness of the American public.

Yet there is evidence of a slowly broadening appreciation, the number of those with a full understanding of the music seems to be growing. Actually, though, this is rather difficult to definitely ascertain, as there are too many people who claim to like the music but who don't even realize a distinction between the folk music and its popular corruption.

At the risk of seeming snobbish—which I hope I'm not—I want to say that a full understanding of the music seems to require a maturity and insight into life that too many people unfortunately never acquire. I say this because I have always noticed these qualities existing in those people who do fully appreciate the American folk music. There is something in the music that makes certain values necessary in the listener for an understanding of it. I think Art Hodes summed it up, he once said to me—"You have to be a good person to be able to play this music." I believe that goes for the appreciation of it too.

\* \* \* \*

### Folk Artists Appearing At Bard

Four outstanding folk artists are coming to Bard for an informal concert on December 7th.

Sonny Terry has been fortunate enough to gain some of the recognition due his talent and is at present playing in the Broadway show, *Finian's Rainbow*. And, what's important, what he plays in it is the real thing. Sonny, who whoops, sings, and plays harmonica like nothing that's ever been heard on this planet, was born in Durham, North Carolina, and started out playing in the cabarets around his home. He came to New York in 1940 to play in a "Spirituals to Swing" concert in Carnegie

Hall, and has been around New York since then. He has accompanied **Blind Boy Fuller** and **Brownie McGhee** on a number of records, and made a few records under his own name, playing and singing without accompaniment on some, and on others accompanied by **Bull City Red** on wash board.

Music has always been a part of **Brownie McGhee's** life. Born in Knoxville, Tennessee, he was singing hymns at an early age, and at nine he was beating out notes on the piano by ear. He got pretty good and went around playing for parties, churches, and shows. Next he picked up guitar, and that's what he's been playing ever since—**Champion Jack Dupree** calls it the best blues guitar playing he has seen around. **Brownie** has recorded for half a dozen different companies, playing the guitar and singing the blues. **Sonny Terry** plays on most of **Brownie's** records and **Pops Foster** is on some of them, as **Brownie** says—"... the greatest harmonica player and the greatest blues and jazz bass player that ever did it!"

The history of **Pops Foster** is the history of jazz. **Pops** was born in New Orleans, and was right there playing before anybody outside of New Orleans had ever heard a jazz band. When jazz went up the Mississippi, **Pops** went too, playing on the riverboats and going on to Chicago. He recorded with the greatest jazz bands of all time: **King Oliver**, **Louis Armstrong**, **Jelly Roll Morton**, and **Luis Russell**, among others. **Pops'** powerhouse bass playing is well-known to all jazz enthusiasts—just recently he was voted the number one bass player in the **Record Changer** jazz poll.

Also from New Orleans is piano pounding, blues shouter **Champion Jack Dupree**. **Jack's** first musical influence, at the age of twelve, was a New Orleans piano player called **Drive 'em Down**. He followed **Drive 'em Down** around, singing the blues while **Drive 'em Down** played, and then after a while he was playing the piano himself. He went off into prize fighting for a number of years, that's where he picked up the nickname '**Champion**', but he got tired of getting knocked around and in 1940 he turned back to music as a profession. He drifted into New York in 1941 and made a batch of records, playing that driving kind of piano that had gotten so scarce on records at that time. Like a great majority of blues artists, **Jack** never had a lesson in his life, he claims there are only two different keys he knows—the black ones and the white ones. But he can really pound those blues out, and that's what counts.

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**SPORT SLANTS****By Marty Weiss**

The Bardian is of some use. To the consternation of the backers of intercollegiate sports and the glee of its opponents Mr. Fraunfelder, after removing a layer of dust from his files of back issues of the paper, came up with a variety of headlines, all announcing, with the different phraseology, losses sustained by Bard teams. Once upon a time, however, St. Stephens supposedly beat Yale in a football game. He might at least have mentioned that one.

At the present time the discussion of sports at Bard revolves around intra-mural basketball. The Kap House, it seems, is doing the most talking and the least winning. Prior to the commencement of the hardwood tourney Jerry Brown and Jerry Fox, expounding on the various qualifications and abilities of that dorm's two stars, Jerry Brown and Jerry Fox, predicted the invulnerability of the 'Kappa Wave.' Confronted with the evidence they retreated, mumbling, "Wait 'til next year." Shades of the beloved Dodgers.

Lee Gray wears a puzzled expression as he walks around the campus these days. It seems as if he is still trying to remember what it was he wanted to ask Don O'Meara at convocation the other night.

Al Hecht has retired from 'The Bardian.' Three anonymous threats, all signed Jimmy Rosenau, were received by the ex-columnists. To make matters worse Emil Oberholzer has reputedly hired Dewey Woodbury to talk Al to death because of the remark he made about a "New Deal for Bard." With his life endangered Al is making furtive preparations for a hasty departure.

The other day Danny Walker was caught by Mrs. B. Smith eating out of garbage cans behind the dining commons. Seizing him by the ear she bellowed, "Get back into the dining room—you're not better than the rest of the students."

One night, while Lenny Pearlberg was giving one of his inimitable shows in the store, Mrs. Martin, after stepping over a table, whispered to disciple Marty Becker, "I wish he were in the drama department. I'd really show him how to act." Lenny, who overheard the remark, grimaced and retired gracefully, shouting, "I've got to go up to the lab and kill a mother."

Just then the sound of clarinets was heard. All eyes were turned towards the door, as in walked a smile, followed by Deirdre O'Meara. With an evil smile, Bob Sherman snatched the clarinets and dropped them into the apple-jack he was making. They melted immediately.

Suddenly, Dick Cronin dashed into the store followed by Carlie Hull. Several friends aided his escape. "All I wanted to do was drive him to New York, said Carlie," "Why my car doesn't have a scratch on it." Replied an unknown voice, "And soon it won't have any fenders on it either."

Sitting at one of the tables was Pete Kaufman. Asked why he had finally shaved off his beard he

replied, "During a basketball game the other day somebody grabbed it and gave it a yank—and Asip wouldn't call a foul because it wasn't in the rules." Said Rollo Marquis, "Traitor."

Fred Beir, sitting in a corner with the third girl he had been seen with that evening, was noticed mumbling into a receptive ear. Rewarded with a slap in the face he made a hurried exit, to reappear seconds later with someone else.

Soon came the inevitable blinking of the store lights. Life at Bard had ended for another evening. Down the road a bit, Mike and Harold began preparing for the rush.

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