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# BARDIAN

Vol. 2 No. 6 December 20, 1949

This issue of the Bardian was born in the coffee shop. It grew out of a sense of disappointment, for some of us had been to convocation last week. We heard that Convocation was not able to call out a majority of students because, it was said, there were few issues to be discussed. We found that this was hard to believe. We knew that there were major issues that needed clarification and action. We remember that four educational panels were held in which certain aims were proposed for Bard and certain specific recommendations for curricular changes were made. We were troubled because this year most students either failed to continue this evaluation of Bard's educational program or had failed to pool their new ideas.

We believe that Bard is in a period of continuous crisis. The outside world, educational, business or professional, either has little knowledge of experimental education or is downright hostile to it. We believe that this crisis calls for increased experimentation and evaluation at Bard, in order that we may alter such attitudes.

As we talked, the group was gradually enlarged. Enthusiasm was generated to the point where someone suggested —let us write a Bardian. Let us state our ideal program in the form of specific suggestions for curriculum. Let us also go to the teachers and find out what new courses they want and how they should be organized. So we spoke to the editors, and formed with the Bard staff a temporary group. Then we went to work.

## editorial

As students of a small experimental college, in a country terrifyingly large, and in love with bigness, in a world which we feel to be increasingly apathetic to innovation, we realize that we have the responsibility to imagine and create. We sense our isolation, for we do not accept the slow death of progressive education. Nor do we consider assembly-line education "progressive," regardless of the claims of certain universities.

In this letter we have tried to present a concrete plan for an ideal curriculum. We realize that this ideal has many loopholes but we feel that it will give us a working basis for actual change. We all recognize that at Bard there is an unusual possibility for making such an ideal program a reality. Our college is small, the teaching staff proportionately large. Here educational principles can be fully realized in terms of the specific needs of individuals. We have developed the techniques for a harmonious and personal flow of knowledge from teacher to student. Seminars, projects, and above all, conference-courses have made us outstanding in an educational world dependent on lecture systems, tests, and routine assignments—a world in which the teacher has only a mechanized contact with his students. We are no longer faced with the problem of how to learn. Now we must ask: what are we to learn?

We came to college to achieve perspective. We came to have our world widened and then to find our location. Why did we come here is not to find roots in a new soil. For either our roots were dug in a narrow world that could not last, or we had no roots at all.

Some came with a special insight. Others came to find that insight. It is futile to argue the merits of the specially talented against the generally interested, for both are needed.

Regardless of this distinction between students, they have a common need. There are certain main currents of Western Civilization, certain focal problems to which Western man has continually addressed himself, of which students, regardless of their specialty, should become aware. The ability to think creatively and critically requires this awareness of alternative approaches to the fundamental problems of man, motivation, God, reality, and truth. In an age of devastating specialization, in which the scientist is alienated from the artist, the politician from the pedagogue, by barriers of terminology and approach, it is increasingly important that mature students understand these multiple approaches (even those beyond the pale of Western Civilization) and attempt to integrate these fragmented areas of knowledge.

Thus, the ideal school would offer courses every year which would provide the basic concepts and techniques of the various fields of knowledge, to supplement courses dealing with specific factual material and specialized approaches. Already we have begun to offer these courses. Two years ago a course in the history of scientific ideas was offered and proved eminently successful for those non-science majors who were interested in scientific concepts. At present, an introduction to literature course is providing the necessary techniques for approaching literature, and freshmen, regardless of field, have been strongly urged by their advisors to take it. But these are not enough.

There are major areas that have been left uncovered, and courses which are offered only once in a great while, regardless of their merit, do not reach enough students. Specifically, we envision the development of two types of courses to supplement the present curriculum: 1) concept courses in which the fundamental aims and methods of various fields are offered to students who are not interested in specialized content, for example, a course in scientific concepts and methodology; 2) correlated courses in which various departments cooperate in describing a fundamental problem or period, for example, a course in the Elizabethan world view. Through the advisor system, lower college students would be advised to take those concept courses which they needed, so that by sophomore moderation, students would have both a special technique in a definite and an understanding of the disciplines involved in other fields. After moderation, the student would then be prepared to understand more specific relationships between his own field and other fields, relationships that correlated courses would point up.

We see that there is danger in this problem. Only a small school can take this approach, for a large school mechanizes the background training, makes its students handle concepts uncritically, brutalizes, and reduces them. We have already seen this happen at the University of Chicago. The concepts have been systemized and reduced in terms of a theological bias. There has been no attempt to relate concepts to the specific needs and experiences of individuals. Machine-marked tests, lecture systems, and failure to value the hands, all distort Chicago's basic aim. But for a small progressive school based on a seminar and conference system, this problem does not exist. The teacher, aware of his students as individuals, can bring concepts to life. Here, too, one finds that intimate contact between the faculties of different divisions that can create natural correlations.

On the following two pages are concrete suggestions for new students from both students and faculty. Also, suggestions for extra-curricular techniques that can be employed in the near future.

In all that we have stated, we are aware of practical difficulties. There are the problems of finance, faculty to teach the courses suggested, and time to plan the specific courses. But these are not insurmountable problems. These suggestions define an idea that can be put into practice.

*In the last Bardian we discussed public relations. Improved public relations would enable us to have a better student body. This is perhaps its chief aim. But what will we do with such a student body—or for that matter the present one? We already do a great deal—Bard's educational system is excellent. There are, however, opportunities within the frame of our present advisor-seminar structure which have been neglected.*

official
student
publication
of
Bard College,
Annandale-on-Hudson, N. Y.
financed
by
student
funds.
Vol. II, No. 6
December 20, 1949

# the bardian

## two faculty evaluations

### 1. Stefan Hirsch

The "we" in the title and in the following article must not be interpreted an an official or collective expression. It is purely editorial and all the opinions uttered here are entirely my own—although their formulation may not have originated solely in my head.

The catalogue statement on admissions runs as follows:

> (1) Bard is a co-educational college with a total enrollment of 300 students . . . It chooses to remain a small institution because it believes that the character and quality of its program can best be maintained in a community of limited size. (2) Bard College is primarily interested in students for whom education is a serious concern and who desire an opportunity to develop further their intellectual and artistic interests and abilities. In selecting candidates emphasis is thus placed upon evidence of such purpose supported by demonstrated capacity to do good work in fields of their special interest . . . (3) Records of successful participation in group activities, the social and

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### 2. Paul de Man

It is all too tempting for a newcomer to an institution to comment on the purpose of this institution. The danger of those so-called "fresh approaches" is that they may lack in information and in responsibility. For this reason, I prefer to keep this statement confined to the discussion of general principles without entering into the details of their execution.

I can see only one justification for an institution like Bard College, but it is an important one: it should prepare its students for *intellectual* leadership, that is, train them in the formulation, the criticism and the handling of ideas. In the state of our present world, which is one of basic instability, it is a fallacy to teach adaptation to a social situation which is itself mobile and disturbed. Right now, the most urgent need is for people who are able to *think* about the fate of this society in a coherent and well-informed fashion. Contrary to current opinion, there is at present an acute need for real intellectuals rather than for engineers, scientists or over-specialized economists or psychologists.

If we admit this fundamental principle, namely that the goal of education at Bard is the formation of strong in-

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# SUGGESTED COURSES

## correlated

*Below are a series of suggestions gathered from both students and faculty regarding correlated courses. Both a general discription of the course and any suggestions of techniques for application are included. The name of the person who made the suggestion is included in parenthesis.*

■ The Surrealist Movement in Art and Literature. (The movement is) To be considered in relation to the economic and social developments after World War One.

A three hour seminar open to all students in their junior year. For instance; one faculty member from each of the four divisions would conduct a panel to be followed by a general discussion. To facilitate discussion, the classes could be split up into four sections, conducted by four teachers. Teachers would rotate between sections. (Mr. DeGré)

● Parellel Themes in Music, Literature, and Philosophy. A study, for example, of the handling of the Faustian idea by Goethe, Gounod, and Nietzsche or, the relationship between Goethe and Wagner. (Mr. Frauenfelder)

A seminar conducted jointly by instructors in music, literature, and philosophy.

■ A course in the affect of the Orient on 19th Century literature, art and philosophy.

A seminar course for advanced students conducted jointly by an artist, writer, and philosopher. This course would be supplemented by field trip to various museums. (D. Newman)

● A course in the problems an artist faces today including the relationship between an artist's technique and the social and commercial demands made upon him. (Mr. Burns)

A seminar to be taught by an artist or artists who have had to face this problem directly in their own lives. (Bardian)

■ The Problem of Reality Raised by the Plastic Arts. An attempt to define the creative approach and critical standards in relations to specific workshop experience. An attempt would be made to trace the relationship of ethics and logic to these problems. (Mr. Stefan Hirsch)

Rather than conduct this course separate from studio work, it would consist of an hour in addition to every existing studio course. In the beginning, the individual workshop teacher would handle the discussion, but towards the end, there could be inter-departmental meetings and also meetings at which a philosopher and a psychologist would offer background information. (Harvey Edwards, Debi Sussman, D. Newman)

● Studio courses in dance, art, music, and drama for the outside community of Red Hook, Rhinebeck, and vicinity. (D. Smith)

Taught by senior students. Adults as well as high school students could be involved. (D. Smith)

■ A basic departmental course in the history of the theatre and the ideas behind play production. This would be handled by a study of key plans and their motivation. (Mr. Wismer) Specifically, one might teach a course in Strindberg, Ibsen, and Checkov. (Debi Sussman)

A seminar course taught by a drama instructor in which teachers of psychology, sociology, and literature would be invited to give background lectures. In this course, experimental acting would supplement the discussions. (Bardian)

● A course in primitive dance to be studied in connection with anthropology, art, and ritual. (Miss Weigt)

A combination workshop and seminar taught by a dance instructor, anthropologist, and artist. (Bardian)

■ A course that would attempt to define the concept of values as seen from the varied viewpoints of the economist, psychologist, theologian, and philosopher. (David Hoddeson)

A two hour seminar limited to advanced students in which an economist, psychologist, theologian, and philosopher would jointly handle the material through panels and discussion. (Bardian)

● A Course in the Greek World. The forms and principles of the Greek World as revealed in literature, philosophy, art, institutional structures, etc. (Suggested by Faculty Policy Committee and numerous other faculty members) One could handle other cultures in the same manner. For example, a course in the Elizabethan World View, (Mr. Wismer), or in the 17th Century. (Mr. Summers).

There are two alternative techniques suggested. 1. One course in which teachers from every department help develop the curriculum and run the discussions. 2. The creation of independent courses on specific aspects of the Greek world which a student might take simultaneously. (Mr. Summers)

■ A social science colloquium that would handle the problems of methodology such as were handled this term by the science division. (Miss Gillard)

This colloquium could either take the exact form of the present science colloquium or be modified by having no audience (Mr. Stefan Hirsch), possibly in faculty homes. (Mr. Frauenfelder)

## background

*Below are five suggestions for background, concept courses. They are but a few of the many conceivable courses which could be included under this heading and are offered in order to concretely illustrate our theoretical statements.*

SOCIAL SCIENCE: a course in the relation of personality to culture in which the varying methodologies of the social science disciplines would be examined. This course would try to illuminate the differences in methodology between the psychologist, sociologist, anthropologist, and economist. It would show, through analysis of a social situation that is common to the experience of lower college students, that there are varying concepts of human nature, of the relation between the material and the ideal, of social change and sources of power that are located in different concepts of social reality. The specific factual situation would serve to give concepts location and immediacy, but facts would not be an end in themselves.

This course would take a seminar form. Lectures would kill the essential spirit of such a course, for the student must see the different concepts in terms of his own social experiences. Four or five teachers might rotate in teaching the class and meet together at certain moments of synthesis. If possible, people outside the Bard Community, from other schools and institutions should be invited to discuss their approach to social problems.

HISTORY: a course in the application of major historical concepts to a specific case-situation. For example: a class might study the period from the French Revolution to the Revolution of 1848, looking at the period not just as a political development, but in institutional, philosophic, and cultural terms. After a fundamental grounding in a specific field, the student would be asked to apply those concepts of history found in Vico, Marx, Spengler, Toynbee (to give but a few examples) to the specific field. He would attempt to build a synthetic image of that historical epoch through the application of these concepts.

This course would also be a seminar course. However, during the first months of the course, teachers from the literature, art, and philosophy departments would be called on to give background information. Wherever possible, source material should be used, books, pictures, journals, newspapers, etc.

SCIENCE: the development of the scientific method. An attempt would be made to show how the concepts of causation and reality have changed from the Greek to the modern world, not by handling the specific discoveries of each epoch, but by showing how the methodology and aim has shifted. A thorough analysis of modern methodology would be attempted, with a possible try at showing how the scientific method has affected other fields of knowledge.

In addition to the necessary seminars and lectures, laboratory work should be offered in order that the student may have some contact with the practical application of concepts.

SEMANTICS AND LOGIC: this course would be developed to the problems of definition and organization in language. It would try to make students aware of their specific linguistic and thought devices, and to point up through this awareness the necessity for accuracy and consistency in thought and word.

This must be a very small seminar in which the instructor is able to sense the specific difficulties in the thought processes of individuals. Where it is needed, it would focus on the problem of exposition, in order that students may know how to organize term papers.

PROBLEMS OF PHILOSOPHY: in this course, the student must become aware of what have been the major philosophical questions raised in the different epochs of both Western and Eastern Civilization. Intensive analysis of specific works of philosophy and theology, Eastern as well as Western, would try to illustrate the verying concepts of reality, perception, ethics, æsthetics, and causation.

Again, small seminar classes in which an instructor would call on teachers from other departments to offer essential information.

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● The Function of Science in Social Change: the relation of science to political and social reform. The role of the scientist in modern political society would also be discussed. (Mr. Newman)

A small seminar conducted by a scientist, who, if possible, has had political and social experience. (Bardian)

■ A course in the important experiments that have led to the formulation of basic theories of the physical world. (Mr. Garrett)

A small seminar for discussion and laboratory work. (Mr. Garrett)

● The U. N. and Related Organizations. (Mr. Bertelsman)

Besides the seminar discussions, movies are to be an essential part of the course. (Mr. Bertelsman) Also visits to the U. N. (Bardian)

■ A course in the relationship of science and philosophy. For example, the relation of Aristotle to Greek Science, Newton to Locke, or Marx to Freud to Darwin. (Bardian)

A small seminar for advanced students taught by Mr. De Man and Mr. Lensing. (Suggested by certain members of the audience of the last science colloquium)

## other faculty suggestions • • • • •

In connection with this issue The Bardian has made an effort to contact as many faculty members as possible. We asked them five questions to elicit their attitudes toward interrelated courses, concept courses, teaching techniques, and the level of development of their advisees by the time of their sophomore review. We also asked them to suggest any extra-curricular teaching devices which they felt would be valuable if used at Bard. In addition, many expressed their opinions about the existing educational policy at Bard. Since most teachers agreed that at the end of their first two years students are not well oriented to the concepts of the various fields of knowledge, our ideas seem valid. It is impossible to print all of the responses verbatim, and we have tried to abstract what seemed to be the most pertinent ideas of the teachers interviewed.

MR. FRAUENFELDER suggests an intensive language course for advanced students to be conducted two hours a day, five hours a week. He would like to see artists rather than critics at lectures and agrees that there is a need for controversal speakers. He wants to see more planned, "special" weekends. He feels that rather than face the basic problems existing at Bard, many students seek forms of escape as widely diversified as cocktail parties and art, and is in favor of a program which would stimulate them by relating all of their studies, to each other and to the world.

DEAN CASADY recollects an experimental system at Yale in which the student studied correlated courses for the first two years. An attempt was made to give solutions for the basic problems of knowledge after having defined them. The seminars in this plan were attended jointly by all teachers engaged in the courses. At Bard such an outline could be followed under the more flexible plans suggested in this issue. Specifically, one could study the basic concepts of various thinkers and evaluate the consequences of their action. (i. e. Plato and the Neo-Platonists)

MISS GILLARD offers two suggestions pertaining to seminar; one interdivisional and limited to sophomores and juniors, the other accepting unlimited membership. She would like to see a Social Science Colloquium planned for next semester.

STEFAN HIRSCH feels that certain minimum standards should be set for sophomores to pass their review. This would facilitate the judgment of the student's ability to participate in the intensive advanced study planned for the upper college. He points out the difficulties involved in conducting courses by more than one teacher because of the small size of the faculty. This limitation and the obvious shortage of books (budget difficulties) seem to be obstacles to the proposed system.

GERARD DE GRE feels that we must realize that a great deal of the "orientation" for which we are striving should be accomplished at home and in high school. He senses the need for interdivisional seminars in the junior or sophomore years, to follow the EPC's suggested basic orientation courses for freshmen. "Movies are hampered by lack of knowledge of specific films, since we must order them from a catalogue, by mail." Furthermore, they should be presented by instructors in a way most beneficial to the class.

LAWRENCE WISMER claims that there is not enough time in the present acting courses for non-majors to acquire a broad conceptual knowledge. With non-majors and majors grouped in the same course a compromise between intensive and broad, extensive study must be made.

HEINZ BERTELSMAN and PAUL GARRETT would like the student to be shown how to coordinate knowledge and be able to accomplish the actual co-ordination himself. They and GEORGE ROSEN stress the importance of visual education.

JOSEPH SUMMERS advocates at least one course a year in which three different instructors participate. He recommends that at the end of his junior year a student should be judged either capable or incapable of completing a senior project. Those judged incapable should take a course designed as an alternative instead of struggling with the project. Their graduation would depend upon the results of a test to be given at the end of the course.

WILLIAM HUMPHREY states that the prerequisite for the plan proposed by the Bardian is a superior faculty composed of teachers well-oriented in all fields of knowledge. He is in favor of a fifth course open to superior students in the upper college which is organized on an interdivisional basis. This course would be organized chronologically, and would be taught by several faculty members, each teaching for a period of a few weeks.

DICK BURNS sees too many students who have at their fingertips bits of disconnected material and who lack orientation in larger fields. He suggests instruction in the lower college in methods of study. Specific courses for non-majors in a particular field, says Mr. Burns, should be planned by members of all of the divisions in order that there be no discrepancy between what two instructors think a student should know about the same subject.

DAVID BAZELON is against a narrow interpretation of any field, favoring a conceptual understanding rather than the historical study of literature.

CLAIRE WEIGT claims that many courses which now are taught separately here would be more effective if they were conducted jointly. She suggests improved lectures, movies and equipment to promote higher educational standards at Bard. Student work-shops should be more frequent, and they should be evaluated in discussions with the faculty. Miss Weigt would like to see a re-valuation of requirements for seniors majoring in the arts.

TED WEISS is "willing to accept various lopsidedness (in orientation), since a student may be brilliant in one field and so devoted to his subject that he finds little time for other subjects. Such insufficiency can be accepted with the hope that this very intensity will lead to breadth as well as width."

KATE WOLFF would like to see unified standards on the part of teachers evaluating students, and stresses the importance of flexibility in the Bard program.

Debi Sussman

## social integration • • • • •

The soft and comfortable cloak of familiarity warms and eases us to the point where it clouds those areas of our awareness in which with acute vision, we would be able to detect the shortcomings and the poverties of the familiar institutions around us. This atrophy of critical faculties becomes a dangerous fault when it renders us so uncritical of our environment that we cease to note the routine activities in which we engage that do not function for the benefit of our system and community as well as they might. The danger is enhanced when, as a community dedicated to an educational ideal, we find ourselves surrounded by an educational climate which holds our system to be anachronistic—which upholds the survey course as the *nexus* of progressive education. If we hope for survival in these circumstances we will be forced to a perpetual criticism. In so far as we believe ourselves experimental, in all aspects of our collective effort, we must engage in constant search for hidden possibilities within our existing framework. It is in this spirit that we make the following suggestions, which could, with some effort, enlarge our educational horizon through use of our present facilities. The following proposals would aid greatly in actualizing our ideal of a community with common bonds of interest and shared achievement—they would contribute greatly to a sense of unity which is completely lacking now.

1. We propose that outside lecturers should be chosen *for their ability to present vital controversial issues in which they are intimately engaged*. Further, this implies that we should not, under any circumstances, stand in fear of entertaining a speaker whom we know to be stimulating but who, in the opinion of some may not be completely acceptable to everyone; i. e. press, "public," etc. As students in the world of today we cannot afford *not* to listen to conflicting and controversial ideas. We suggest as speakers men like Klineberg, Weiner, Fromm, Nibeuhr, Murphy, Mead, Bishop Oxnam, Clement Greenburg, Hans Hoffman.

We further propose that a program be set up in which members of the faculty would present, in lecture form, vital aspects of their fields or their personal research and work in progress.

2. We propose that each division schedule, at least twice a term, a colloquium, in which the seniors of the division come together to describe and discuss the problems and progress of their several projects. We feel that this would not only inject a sense of unity into the various groups of seniors at work in the same division but would enable them to help each other with the common problems which arise.

3. We propose that at the end of each term a magazine be published under the auspices of the Bardian. Such a magazine would contain material of general interest which would be submitted by each member of the faculty and which, in their opinion, represents the best work of their students.

4. WXBC is potentially the most valuable activity on campus. To date, it has contributed little to the community as an educational supplement. We feel that an experiment in educational radio could gain wide and excellent publicity for Bard. The possibilities are limitless. Faculty could use the radio to present material to supplement the seminar. A course in listening to music could be facilitated through the station etc. At the very least the possibilities of WXBC should be systematically explored.

5. We propose the revival of language tables in the Dining Commons. Such tables would be set aside so that language students could have an opportunity to speak conversationally during time which cannot be utilized for other activities, and which is ideal for this purpose.

6. We feel that the movie program, rather than serving only the function of entertainment, could be implemented by discussion groups—to be held after the movies. Furthermore, the movies should be chosen with an eye toward their educational and æsthetic value.

7. We propose a debating team. Through this means the community could be exposed to formal, thought-out, organized controversy. In addition, we envision the debating team as valuable contact with other schools, since it would be possible through such an agency to carry our beliefs and abilities to other schools and educational climates.

8. We would like to see more participation on the part of the Drama, Art, and Dance Departments in the social functions of the community. Again, we have here an opportunity to establish a sense of contribution and unity that has to a large extent been lacking.

9. We urge that transportation be made available to Vassar so that those who want to can participate in the excellent programs which are offered. This term has already seen presented the *pro musica antiqua* and the Julliard String Quartet.

# Season's Greetings

***from those who helped put out this issue:***

*guest editor*: Danny Newman
*assistant guest editor*: Miles Hollister
David Smith
Roger Phillips
Joyce Laski

## and the staff:

*managing editor*: David Hoddeson
*associates*: Mona Pine, 'Debi Sussman
*make-up editor*: Martin Johnson
*business*: Frank Gambee
*circulation*: Marlene Seldin
Miriam Kornguth
Joanne Pines
Robert Solotaire
Robert Cornell

# the tall fellow

by Harvey Edwards

Some men sit on benches around the big park behind the library in Lexington. The big trees sway back and forth in the gentle breeze throwing large shadows across the grass. A few beams of sunlight sift through the shadows making a bright patch here and there. It is warm.

A few hours before these men could be seen in the union office listening to Uncle John as he portioned out the day's work. Then gradually those who had been turned away moved off to the park where they could sit and doze quietly, and drink a little water from the fountain at the far end.

Four or five small children play about the park. A little boy turned one end of a rope, the other end being fastened to a bench. The kids would run with a sudden movement, take their jumps quickly, then dart back afraid of the rope which might rub their backs.

A tall well-built young man with a big head, wearing a "T" shirt and a pair of dungarees stood by watching. He took the rope from the little boy's hand and turned it evenly so they all could jump. Then he jumped while the kids turned.

"I'll show you what it is to jump," he cried and leaped up and down with great ferocity, two or three feet off the ground, his chest moving in opposite directions underneath his shirt. He was awkward and missed often but the kids laughed as he tried again.

They all played tag around the park. The tall fellow was "it." He ran with long strides around the trees and benches, the kids following, trying to corner him. Sometimes he would lose his head and put too great a distance between himself and the kids. Then he would turn, slow down to a walk, and the kids would dash up to him, tag him, hang on to his legs and arms, hold him still. He would shake them off, running once again, dragging a big wooden bench in his way, avoiding it, leading the kids around it. Then he headed for it and leaped way over it, turning his body in the air, landing, favoring his right side. The kids would run around the bench and chase him again.

The other men sitting about laughed occasionally as the awkard fellow would dodge when he was trapped.

"Look at him Joe, he thinks he's a kid again. He's tiring out the little devils. It's those big legs of his; that little fellow over there has to take four steps to his one. No wonder they're exhausted."

The tall fellow stood still watching the kids, his legs apart, his big head staring blankly ahead, ready in an instant to run off. One kid arose with a bow and arrow and making believe he was Robin Hood chased the big fellow around and around the park, dodging benches, slipping through trees. Finally they stopped. The big fellow lay down on the grass breathing heavily, his legs apart, his arms outstretched, his head back. The kids swarmed all over him, pulling his hair, sitting on his legs which he raised quite easily. They tried to hold him down but suddenly with a violent movement, his body erupted and the kids flew away.

He sat down on a bench next to another man. They sat quietly for a long while, then the tall fellow cursed once or twice beneath his breath; "Those damn kids never know when to stop, do they?"

# E. P. C. report to community

Following its traditional policy of acting as a liaison between students and faculty in matters of a academic nature, the Educational Policies Committee has, in recent months, dealt with a number of rather pressing issues with considerable success. I believe I can say with confidence that the committee has exerted more influence on academic affairs than it has tended to in the past, in addition to pursuing with effectiveness its more routine activities.

The committee has handled with renewed vigor the matter of student absenteeism, a problem of particularly great magnitude during the beginning weeks of the semester. With the full cooperation of the Dean's office, the mechanical operations involved in dealing with absences have functioned smoothly. Significantly, the trend in absenteeism is down.

As usual, we have carried on the activities of the complaint committee. Due to their nature, specific complaints handled cannot be discussed here, but I can report that each of the five cases brought before us this year was resolved satisfactorily. I strongly urge more members of the community to take advantage of this particular function of the E. P. C.

The E. P. C. instituted this year a sub-committee on library affairs. It was designed to aid in determining future library practices and to give voice to suggestions of the general student body. Infractions of library rules and regulations will also be handled by this group, to expedite matters for the staff and to deal more effectively with individual students.

A sub-committee dealing with the question of remedial courses has been endeavoring, in cooperation with the Faculty Policy Committee, to discover methods of aiding students unable to meet minimum requirements in grammar, spelling, etc., or having difficulties in reading. This is a matter of utmost importance, and must be faced squarely. There has been demonstrated a definite need for such corrective measures here at Bard, and this need cannot go unanswered.

The faculty evaluation sheets are being made available to all members of the faculty expressly wishing to have them administered to particular classes. Last year, the vast majority of instructors found the results of the questionnaires useful in determining the effectiveness of their teaching methods. Only a lack of time prevents us from administering them to every class, as was the case last year.

Undoubtedly, the most important issue facing the E. P. C. this semester has been that of admissions. It has been brought to our attention that a rather critical situation exists at Bard in relation to its admissions procedure, and, to go still further, to its public relations program. Although recognizing the nation-wide fall in college applications, we feel, never-the-less, that Bard has perhaps missed its mark in striking its correct market for student material, a market that exists in spite of present conditions. If located, this source of material should ease our admissions problem considerably, perhaps not in the actual volume of students applying, but rather in an over-all improvement in the brand of our existing applications.

Consequently, the Faculty Policy Committee has authorized the E. P. C. to go ahead with the problem. In the capacity of faculty advisors, Miss Gillard, Mr. Lazar, and Mr. Precker have joined us in this work.

We have found that the issues facing us are of greater scope than originally predicted; so great, in fact, that our preliminary reports have been merely approaches to the problem, in place of any kind of definite answer to it. We now fully understand, however, why very little by way of positive improvement can be achieved in hurried, superficial panel meetings or by mere repeated versions of a catalogue statement. What must come will necessarily have to be by deliberate, painstaking, constructive study on the part of an empowered and qualified group—one willing to devote its efforts to producing a document not merely nice to read, but actually useful in guiding future procedure in the closely related fields of admissions and public relations.

Since this problem haunts us from term to term, it is imperative that the pace of the investigation not bog down. The committee will present an initial report to Council shortly before the Christmas recess, so that the other members of the community, too, will have a chance to make their contribution.

It is my belief, and I believe that of the entire E. P. C., that if handled properly this question of admissions can be resolved in a manner that will prove a definite asset to the administration officers, and will be an excellent reflection on our system of education here at Bard.

Howard Koch, Jr., *Chairman, E. P. C.*

# dance of death

Lew Silvers

# drama review

The Drama Department is to be both congratulated and thanked for their performance of August Strindberg's *The Father,* which took place last week. Seeing *The Father* was not simply a way to spend an evening, or a chance to see your friends on a stage, or an exhibition of improvement in the Drama Department. It was an artistic experience, and an exciting one. This is the essence of theatre as an art, and that's what we had last week. Such an experience is not to be had any too often, and when you find it, it's time to be grateful.

When a group creates for us the gift of a different and forceful reality (which is what an artist does if he is an artist), it seems ungrateful to quibble with whatever faults there may have been in the presentation. The main question is whether the reality was there or not. It was there in *The Father.* The responsibility for this accomplishment hardly lies with Strindberg, for this play, which is somewhat outdated and occasionally absurd (although immensely strong), is hardly actor-proof.

Joan De Keyser was enormously forceful as Laura. To do such a part even bearably well one must have skill—to portray Laura as Joan De Keyser did requires a great talent. Joan has that talent.

In a role at least as difficult—the Captain—Al Haulenbeek did an excellent job. In saying this I do not mean to damn with faint praise. In the last act he transcended himself to give us moments of great power. For in this role Al Haulenbeek discarded his representational crutches and emerged with a sustained, believable, forceful, true characterization. It was a tremendous jump from his previous work and a fine job in its own right.

Ellen Kraus as Bertha was good. She moved well, and in her scenes with Al they played to one another instead of behaving as if alone on the stage, as has been the case too often here. Larry Hagman as Doctor Ostermark showed a surprising ease and facility. Unfortunately he played within too narrow a range. Bob Smith as the Pastor was competent, but his timing was bad. Clinton Archer as Nojd was passable enough.

Judy Sherman as the Nurse was painfully bad. She seems to have made the fatal mistake of thinking that being natural on the stage is equivelent to good acting. It is not acting at all. It is only after creating a characterization that naturalness has anything to do with acting. There was no characterization involved in what she did with the nurse.

The set (Stephen Burr) and the costumes (Dick Burns) were both excellent, as seems to have become the rule here.

One conclusion can be drawn from this performance which might be of value to the Drama Department. Tragedy, or at any rate, serious plays, can be better done here than comedy, which demands too high a degree of polish and experience from young actors. And while comedy places too much emphasis on the tricks of an actor's trade, it places none at all on the stuff of which his art is made—an emotional identification with the role. Serious drama, on the other hand, offers the opportunity for both better training and better performances. I'd like to see more of it.

David Hoddeson

# Strindberg and the father . . .

# on strindberg

That this is the one hundreth anniversary of his birth is a minor reason for the revival of interest in the works of August Strindberg. During the past three months not only has a biographical study of this remarkable playwrite appeared, but his plays *The Father* and *The Creditors* are currently being shown in New York. The real (and major) reason for the present curiosity in the works of a writer who was a pioneer in the fields of both naturalism and expressionism seems to me to lie in the character of the man himself rather than in the works he created. Now, more than ever, we have become fascinated by the personality of the neurotic artist. Strindberg, like Kafka, Kierkegaard, and Dostoevsky, is a genius of neurosis; an "existential" writer whose works and life are one. If one is acquainted with the life of this man one can hardly read a play without noticing how it reflects Strindberg's own perplexities and philosophies; a confirmed misogynist, he presents all his doubts concerning marriage (his own marriage) in *The Comrades, The Creditors, The Link, Road to Damascus, The Father,* and *Dance of Death*; the last being the most macabre of the marriage plays.

The question eventually arises (and an extremely important one it is, too) whether Strindberg's dramas exist by themselves; can we disassociate them from the powerful personality of their creator and still consider them effective works of art? Often, as in *Road to Damascus,* his plot structure and symbols become so personal, so confused, that the importance of the play appears slight as well as limited. This later attempt in the field of expressionism can hardly compare with the earlier naturalism of *Miss Julia* and *The Father.* In *The Father* Strindberg depicts the ultimate destruction of man by woman. A house with too many women ("a lion's den" as the Captain himself describes it) provides the setting for a drama of clashing ideas and dark impulses.

Strindberg is a lyric writer, interested in subjective states and problems. So many of his plays possess similar themes and characters that it is hard to think of them separately; they all congeal into a world overuled by a man's domestic tragedy, the crimes he is guilty of and his quest for salvation. Strindberg saw man as an ever-changing being and, as a result, many of his characters lack dramatic unity; a man is many things, constantly in the presence of contradiction. In creating his characters Strindberg began with an abstract idea and, therefore, many times his characters become exaggerated, one-sided creatures. Yet, I maintain that his subject matter is not dated (here I disagree with many of the recent New York reviews of *The Father*). *The Father* is not a period piece. Unlike many of Ibsen's works we can appreciate this play without connecting it in our minds with any social movement. The economy of structure and the theme of the battle between the sexes, with its many psychological implications, remains today as immediate and effective as ever. The faults of the present revival lie, not in the play itself, but rather in Raymond Massey's portrayal of *The Father.* The Captain should be bitter and pathetic (herein lies the strength of the role); Massey represents him as a disillusioned cynic. Although he is powerful in his scenes of declamation, he does little to bridge these scenes. This production of *The Father,* however, does emerge as good theatre due to some towering dramatic moments and a provocative characterization by Mady Christians. The real test of any play, after all, is to see it acted out upon a stage.

Having seen the Cherry Lane production of *The Creditors* I am convinced that there is nothing better than Strindberg done well; nothing worse than Strindberg done badly. Interestingly enough, this production is played against a modern setting. Although the theme is just as significant (which proves my notion that Strindberg is not dated), the language is not. Besides presenting a bad translation of the play, the Cherry Lane production is filled with archaic phrases that are hardly meaningful today. There is nothing more difficult to convey than a Strindbergian character; it takes master acting, indeed, to convey a character possessed by many devils. Tekla, the *femme fatale,* a woman capable of tempestuous love and frenzied hate, emerges in this production as a young vampire equipped with the pseudo-passion of a blues singer. The result is ludicrous. What should create nervous tension creates nervous laughter. Strindberg is drained of all his power.

Strindberg's achievement is no small one. His plays range from the naturalistic to the mystical; from the fairy play *Swanwhite* to the impressive historical dramas of Sweden in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Through all his plays there shines the personality of a literary genius; a great pioneer of the theatre whose theatrical innovations are still influencing contemporary drama. A man like Strindberg who is preoccupied with the workings of man's mind, as well as his soul, can hardly be considered dated. Because of our current interest in psychology and the neurotic artist, his works perhaps possess more meaning today than ever before.

Lewis S. Silvers, Jr.

## • • • • • evaluations continued • • • • •

### 1.

> emotional maturity of an applicant and his character and personality are also considered very carefully to determine his desirability as a citizen of the Bard Community. (4) Every effort is made to achieve a representative cross-section of college youth . . . who will contribute constructively to the life of the College Community. (The deleted material is not relevant to the argument of this paper)

These statements contain several basic internal contradictions. They give the impressions that we want to be all things to all people. They look like a compromise between two factions. They have certainly bred dissension.

First they suggest (1) that we feel entitled to a portion of the national philanthropy, whose lion's share goes to the large colleges and universities because of the services they offer to the political and commercial life of the nation, but that we offer a very special kind of service for which we too deserve consideration.

Then, on the one hand (2) they indicate that we want the *self-starting, self-directed* student; the student with a consuming interest in cultural pursuits—by which I mean intellectual, scientific and artistic studies—with a genuine passion for learning.

On the other hand (3) (4) they indicate that we want an average sampling of the youth of the American community—the foreign student isn't mentioned—people with a passion for participation in group activities, mature in matters pertaining to community living.

There is of course no limit to the possible combinations of diverse traits in the human individual. But there must be serious doubts as to the possibility of finding 300 individuals who combine self-directed passion for cultural pursuits with a mature emotional and social balance in matters of social living.

Moreover, the emotionally mature, socially well balanced adolescent is a contradiction in terms. He does not really exist, except in specimens so dull that they could not very well live up to the challenges of the Trial Major, the Sophomore Review and the Senior Project. I do not mean that every adolescent is deeply disturbed or that a relative degree of maturity does not exist. One might as well admit that, here and there, a few members of that age group loosely termed adolescent, are adults in the sense that they have decided, inwardly, on their "strategy of existence," on the fronts at which fighting themselves and the world is futile and irrelevant, and on those others where all efforts must be made, where all personal responsibility must be taken even at great personal danger. But since such people are relatively rare even in the so-called adult age group, it cannot be expected of any admissions officer to dig them up for Bard or any other college in large numbers.

But the student who has at least made the decision, before coming to college, that he wants to study and do a certain thing above all others, has most closely approached this state of maturity especially if he has already produced some evidence to show that he means what he declares, on his application blank, to be his major interest. Whether or not he likes to continue those group activities which seem to play such a great role in high school, whether these activities have to do with his major intellectual and artistic interests, with outdoor life, or with political matters, cannot, as such, be considered of decisive importance. The history of human achievement is peopled with gregarious personages as well as with hermits, with introverts and extroverts, with slobs and with dandies. We academicians really ought to know that.

Lest there be any misunderstanding, it must be said that self-direction occurs on any level of intelligence, that we are not holding out for the quixotic notion of 300 geniuses, but that we hope for a large population well above the 50th national percentile of intellect, and that we wouldn't mind a goodly representation of students in the upper quarter of the test score scales.

There are of course certain criteria which a small college ought not to neglect in its admissions policy. While its population ought to be cohesive from the point of view of intellectual and artistic passion, it is highly desirable that it should be a democratic microcosm. The rich should rub elbows with the poor, the Gentile with the Jew, the Negro with the White, the member of a professional family with that of the worker or the merchant, the Easterner with the Westerner, and the American with the European and the Asiatic. But these desiderata should never be allowed to water down the quality of the student body which should be constituted primarily along the lines of self-direction. Since self-directed students do not grow in abundance on one single tree, it would seem advisable to conduct our search for them over as broad a geograhical and social area as is practically possible.

The implications of all this are quite obvious. Our prescriptive, not free elective, curriculum, centered around the Trial Major and Major Conferences must be maintained and the desire for "general education" must be satisfied *within* this curriculum. Our teachers must be chosen for competence in their special fields augmented by cultural breadth. Our administrative and especially our admissions officers must be in full sympathy with our policy and must of course display most of the traits we expect of our students and faculty. Our admissions officers are entitled to have our educational and admissions policies stated in a clear and vital way, without contradictions between the two or within themselves. And above all they must have the ability to spot the kind of student we want, when they see him and under any garb whatsoever. My own experience with the admissions personnel has been satisfactory, because in my recommendations for admissions of candidates I have seen I have interpreted the policy in the above manner. A major part of the dissatisfaction, I believe, has been due to the inherent contradictions in our admissions policy and to the lack of clear directives from the several divisions.

Stefan Hirsch
Dec. 11, 1949

### 2.

tellectual personalities, the general policy for the planning of courses and for admissions follows quite logically. First, it is obvious that a small place, being flexible and individualistic, is better suited for such a task than a large college. While, on the other hand, considering this little isolated conglomeration of chosen individuals as a substitute for real society, leads to the most artificial and dangerous kind of "playing at" social responsibility. This turns out maladjusted individuals, who have been brought into contact with ideas just long enough to be disorganized by them, but by no means enough to strengthen their minds.

The first and main characteristic of an intellectual education is that it is *not* specialized. Its purpose is not training in one form of thought but in thought in general and, as such, primarily in the coordination of different ways of thought. For the average student, specialization is the normal and most constructive road to follow, and the large educational institutions provide him with more and better facilities for that purpose than Bard can ever hope to possess. Diversification, however, with the difficult problem it entails of coordinating different and sometimes conflicting disciplines of thought, should be the privilege of the intellectually gifted—the only kind of student whose presence here really makes sense.

In this connection, two points should be emphasized. The first is that the present mechanism of Bard College is perfectly suited for this purpose and can be used without any alteration. All the features of the organization: seminar, trial conference, field period, sophomore review, senior project, etc. are valid and adequate if considered as means toward intellectual formation but meaningless if another purpose is assigned to them. It seems almost superfluous to discuss and reorganize those devices; the only problem is to fill them with the right educational content.

The second point concerns the type of effort required from the faculty in such an endeavor. Even for the highly gifted student, the effort of coordinating divergent disciplines is extremely hard. The faculty itself should be the main contributor to this goal, by the organization of interdivisional courses, open-minded discussion among divisions, a general attitude of cooperation and mutual interest. The creative initiative must come from the faculty itself. If it succeeds in its essential function, that is, the planning of intellectually stimulating courses taught in such a way as to provoke active thought-participation from the students, then it can require a student-body and a public relations system which make its effort worth while. The quality of a college, in the last analysis, is equal to the quality of its courses. And this quality in turn is determined by the active cooperation between faculty and students, united in common respect for the values which are at the basis of genuine thought. I still know of few places where the given conditions are as favorable for such an experience as in Bard College. There seems to be some concern about the general trend moving away from this direction. This would mean that, with the inevitable subsequent disappearance of the institution which would lose its *raison d'etre,* one more very attractive opportunity would have been spoiled through lack of intelligent imagination.

Paul de Man

## allen tate

Allen Tate, poet, critic, teacher, and prominent member of the original *New Critics* group, opened the Literature Week-end on Friday evening, December 3, with a talk on Poe, James and Joyce. Perhaps "talk" is not quite the word for it, since the only time his eyes left the galley proof (*Sewanee Review,* January issue) was when he was hunting around on the table behind him for a place to discard the sheets already rendered to his audience.

The article, or talk, was composed of three commentaries. The first, that on Poe, was confined to his short story, *"The Fall of the House of Usher;"* the second, on James, with the latter's short story *"The Beast in the Jungle;"* and the third, on Joyce, with the long last story from *Dubliners, "The Dead."* Mr. Tate's intention in presenting these particular pieces in this particular sequence was to show the development, from its inept start in the work of Poe, to its glorious culmination in the short stories of Joyce, of what Mr. Tate terms "dramatized detail," or what his wife the following morning referred to in her talk as "the naturalistic-symbolic" school.

Of Poe, Mr. Tate says: "In *The Fall of the House of Usher,* there is not one instance of dramatized detail. Although Poe's first-person narrator is in direct contact with the scene, he merely reports it; he does not show us scene and character in action; it is all description." As instances of this failure on Poe's part, Mr. Tate mentions the presentation to the reader of the existence of a fissure in the wall of the "House," and the coincidence of the lid-lifting with the reading of the *"Mad Trist"* of Sir Lancelot Canning.

Picking up a subordinate theme of his article, Mr. Tate says later of James: "Again, as in *The Fall of the House of Usher* and *The Dead,* we have the embodiment of the great contemporary subject: the isolation and the frustration of personality." Of the Climax of self-revelation undergone by Marcher when confronted with the stranger in the graveyard, Mr. Tate says: "Marcher's frequent visits to Miss Bartram's grave are occasions of a developing insight into his loss, his failure to see that his supreme experience had been there for him day after day through many years. But James must have known that, to make the insight dramatically credible, it must reach the reader through a scene; and to have a "scene" there must be at least two persons and an interchange between them. He thus suddenly introduces, at the last moment, what he called in the Prefaces a *ficelle,* a character not in the action but brought in to elicit some essential quality from the involved characters."

Of Joyce's *"The Dead"* Mr. Tate says: "If the art of naturalism consists mainly in making *active* those elements which had hitherto in fiction remained *inert,* that is, description and expository summary, the further push given the method by Joyce consists in manipulating what at first sight seems to be mere physical detail into dramatic symbolism." Later: "In fact, from the beginning to the end of the story we are never told anything; we are shown everything." And later still: "The examples of naturalistic detail which operate also at the symbolic level will sufficiently indicate to the reader the close texture of *"The Dead."* We should say, conversely, that the symbolism itself derives its validity from its being, in the first place, a visible and experienced moment in the consciousness of a character.

Eliot Halpern

## world government: *ora et labora*

Almost everybody feels that we should have World Government sometime in the future. But by mere feeling and believing we shall never attain this goal. The "ora" (belief, pray) has to be followed by the "labora" (work).

Therefore, a meeting for anybody interested in any form of World Government was held on November 30 in Kappa House Social. The meeting which was sponsored by the *Bard Forum* attracted about 20 students. Many more who had expressed their desire to attend were prevented, for various reasons, from showing up.

Today, two major organizations work for the common goal of World Government—the United World Federalists (UWF) and the Federal Union, Inc. The meeting served to familiarize students with the aims and tactics of these two movements. At the close of the meeting it was decided that the students would form a chapter of each organization here at Bard. In view of the heavy schedule everybody has for the remainder of the term, it was proposed that we organize these two groups after the Winter Field Period.

The climax of the meeting was a recording heard of an exclusive interview with Mr. Walden Moore, Secretary of the Atlantic Union Committee (the Political Action Committee of Federal Union, Inc.), which was conducted by Charles Naef for the Bard Forum of the Air. Mr. Moore's remarks on Federal Union were amplified afterwards by Jean Allen, spokesman for a Federal Union chapter at Bard.

Federal Union's immediate objective is to organize all member nations of the North Atlantic Pact and other Western Democracies, such as Sweden and Switzerland, into a Federal Union. The future Federal Union is comparable to the United States. The nations (then states) would be allowed to keep certain rights, while other rights such as military defense, currency regulations, common foreign policy, citizenship, etc., would be transferred to the government of Federal Union. Only democracies are eligible to Federal Union. As soon as a country respects the Civil Rights of its citizens, it will be invited to join. Federal Union visualizes a future World Government of federated democracies. Its principle is that freedom preceeds union.

Miriam Kornguth was the able spokesman for the United World Federalists. This organization wants to transform the UN into a World Government. Thus, this proposed World Government would include democracies as well as totalitarian nations. All nations of the world would be invited to join. The United World Federalists believe that World Government can be attained in one step. They hold that freedom cannot exist without peace. The UWF have done a tremendous job in educating the people to accept the principle of World Government.

A lively discussion followed the presentation of the two viewpoints. With several pamphlets of both organizations in his or her pocket, each person left the meeting with the hope of belonging to either student chapter after the Winter Field Period. The Bard community will be kept informed about future actions. In the meantime pamphlets for Federal Union, Inc. may be obtained from Jean Allen (McVicker 3), and for UWF from Miriam Kornguth (Potter 1).

*If you believe in world government, why not work for it? Combine the "ora" and the "labora."*

Respectfully submitted, Charles R. Naef

## letter to the editor

*We are sincerely gratified to hear that the trustees have preceded us in their concern over our public relations policy. This concern, we are sure, indicates that our present difficulties in the sphere of public relations will soon be resolved.*

*The Editors*

Dear Sir:

I was very much interested in the article on "Publicity at Sarah Lawrence," which appeared in the current issue of THE BARDIAN.

As a member of the Board of Trustees and Chairman of its Committee on Public Relations, I want you to know that I agree with the premise that Bard does need the services of a full-time director of publicity, and it may be of interest to you to know that Mr. Robinson has so recommended to us for the past two years. Unfortunately, the problems of financing the program during this period have not made it possible for us to see our way clear towards the creation of this position. It is hoped, however, that the time may not be too far off when we can make such an appointment.

As City Editor of THE KINGSTON DAILY FREEMAN, quite apart from any connection I have with Bard College, I know that Mr. Robinson's office is sending out adequate press releases regarding events and students at the College. Also, I receive every week a calendar of events from which we prepare our own news releases if we think that events at Bard will be of interest to our community.

Your third recommendation, suggesting that parents be brought into a closer relationship with the College has also been discussed thoroughly. For example, the conferences held at the time that President Fuller was inaugurated had as one of their principal objectives the establishment of just such a relationship. At that time parents, students, faculty members and alumni all participated in discussing some of the basic problems of the College. I agree, however, that it is an area in which even more can be done, and I have been informed that the special Convocation in March to celebrate the Ninetieth Anniversary of the College will include opportunities for parent participation in the educational conferences to be held at that time.

Sincerely yours,
Richard O. Gruver
Dec. 12, 1949