

VANDERBILT MAGAZINE

spring 2003

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1,000 Words

One image frozen in time

Before the Ceremony

Year end at Vanderbilt offers groups across campus an occasion for gathering. For the Navy ROTC unit at Vanderbilt, its midshipmen celebrate the end of the academic year with the Spring Parade and Change of Command Ceremony, during which the graduating commander of the midshipmen battalion turns over command to the unit's new commander. During the year, activities for midshipmen include color guard, drill team, *Semper Fi* and Trident societies, as well as taking part in community service. Approximately 100 Vanderbilt students are NROTC midshipmen. Nearly 25 percent are female, and 15 percent are Marine Option students. Photo by Neil Brake.



Dore Ways

A forum for exchanging ideas

From the Editor

The meaning in the shadows

I GREW UP IN TENNESSEE—THREE AND A HALF HOURS SOUTHWEST of Vanderbilt via I-40. I lived my adolescence in the shadow of Graceland, within the sphere of influence of the Mississippi-delta blues, amid the river-town ethos that was Memphis. So when I took on the editorship of *Vanderbilt Magazine* and returned to the South after having lived in New England for nearly 20 years, I anticipated a homecoming. I expected to be wrapped in the warm blanket of familiar dialect, and to be reintroduced to cultural traditions and a way of life that would awaken memories.

What I found was a land sometimes familiar, but more often strange and always multi-layered. Exploring this new land has been an adventure. I can't say it's been all pleasant, but it's often been surprising and sometimes delightful. One of the great delights has been that as editor of *Vanderbilt Magazine*, I have been able to rediscover elements of southern culture, thereby gaining insight into people and institutions, through the stories of Tony Earley. His short story "Cross" appears on page 88 as this issue's "Southern Journal."

A writer by education and trade, I enjoy imagery. I can get lost in it. And the dogwood in Tony's story is rich, insightful, true to southern culture, and just plain fun to think about. I won't try to unpack the image for you because, as a writer, I also believe that we all bring a history and set of values to the image, and that shapes our understanding of it.

Much of this holds true for the magazine you hold in your hands. I develop the contents for each issue of *Vanderbilt Magazine* with the idea of offering the reader rediscovering Vanderbilt an experience similar to mine in rediscovering the South.

Vanderbilt, like the Middle Tennessee region it calls home, is multi-layered. Our dialect is the language of scholarly discourse. Our traditions: the rigors of scientific testing, the time-honored collaboration between faculty and students that we call mentoring.

As you read *Vanderbilt Magazine*, I urge you to explore, to experience some of the elements that make up this University. Spend some time with the departments. Maybe "Vanderbilt Holdings" or "Bright Ideas." Read about Bart Victor, our featured professor in the "In Class" department. Or invest a little more time and delve into a feature.

Vanderbilt is, of course, much more than the sum of the parts you experience through this magazine. It is the people, their ideas, and the debate, scholarship and research that surround those ideas. I've heard this labeled "the shadows"—that intangible element of university life where ideas take shape and new knowledge is born. It's a place those of us who serve the University seek out and a place where we find meaning in our work. It's the area into which I hope this magazine can shed some light.

KEN SCHEXNAYDER

From the Reader

Lawson Revisited

I WAS A STUDENT IN THE GRADUATE DEPARTMENT of Religion during the days in which "the Lawson affair" [Fall 2002 issue, "Days of Thunder," p. 34] was unfolding. The venomous tone of one of the letters you published in the Winter 2003 issue of the magazine has prompted me to write. I knew Jim Lawson, of course, and some of the other persons who were involved in the protest movement. Thank you for your fine story regarding Jim and these important events in the history of Vanderbilt and the nation.

JOHN C. ENGLISH, PHD '65
Baldwin City, Kan.

Compelling Images

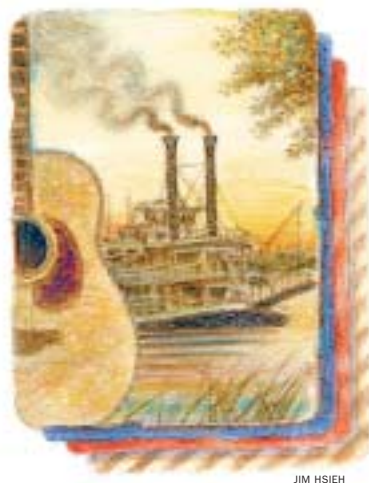
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE INCLUSION OF Carlton Wilkinson's beautiful photographs [Winter issue, "Images of Man," p. 44]. He is extremely talented and owns the finest gallery in Nashville. Please continue to include the work of Nashville artists.

Love the new format.
STEPHANIE THOMAS, BA '01
Atlanta

To Be in France

I WANT TO COMMEND KATIE GALBREATH ON her recent contribution, "Reflections in the Fountain" [Winter issue, p. 66]. The article hit home in revealing the beautiful essence of life in Provence. Like the author, I, too, climbed to the top of Monte Sainte Victoire and traveled to other local towns outside of Aix as part of my experience on Vanderbilt's program. Reading her essay was deliciously painful in remembering the greatness of that experience as I took the metro train to work 11 years later. (Wow, am I really that old?)

Her essay reminded me of my favorite "French" lesson. I remember enjoying fresh fruit and cheese at a picnic held by a French World War II veteran, Monsieur Aberlain, who was my host. After devouring an apple, I started to walk into the kitchen to throw the core into the trash when my host stopped me in my tracks. He remarked, "Oh, you Americans always want to throw nature's creatures in the trash when they can be returned to nature." He then took the core out of my hand and walked over to the trunk of a small tree and dug a small hole near the roots where he buried the core. He then said, "What comes from



JIM HSIEH

the tree should be returned home.” To me, that lesson demonstrated the essence of life in Provence. A beautiful, yet simple reminder that the symmetry of nature is right in front of us if we just open our eyes.

SCOTT SEDER, BA’93
Chicago

A Question of Gore

I WOULD LIKE TO RESPOND TO CHRISTOPHER Talbert’s comments regarding the failure of *Vanderbilt Magazine* to recognize Al Gore as a distinguished alumnus of Vanderbilt [Winter issue, “From the Reader,” p. 8]. While Talbert is unlikely to read this because he wants to be removed from the mailing list, I would like to remind him that Gore attended the Divinity School for only one year and the Law School for just two years while working for the *Tennessean*. Although attending a university is, by definition, enough to constitute alumni status, it’s not enough to even get you invited to your class reunion at Vanderbilt. The fact that Gore’s sister and mother graduated from Vanderbilt and his wife from Peabody is rather irrelevant. I believe that if *Vanderbilt Magazine* exploited Gore’s Vanderbilt connection, the University would receive criticism from the other side.

KELLI STAPLES BURNS, BA’92
Jamestown, N.C.

REGARDING THE LETTER FROM READER Christopher Talbert in the Winter 2003 *Vanderbilt Magazine*, there is a simple reason why Al Gore hasn’t been featured by the magazine as a proud Vanderbilt son. He never graduated from Vanderbilt! He attended the Divinity School and the Law School, but dropped out from both without getting a degree.

If the magazine wanted to do an article about his mother being the first woman to graduate from Vandy Law, that would be marvelous, but you ought not claim or credit somebody falsely.

ANDREW WAGNER, BS’98
Somerville, Mass.

What’s in a Name?

I AM TOTALLY ASTONISHED AT THE UNIVERSITY’S caving in to the liberal political correctness agenda by renaming Confederate Hall [Winter issue, “Residence Hall Name Change at Center of Controversy,” p. 16]. Also amazing is the fact that an institution with a law school would be an accessory to grand theft (in effect) of stealing \$50,000 (that’s about \$3 million in today’s dollars!). In a like manner, it is unclear how a university with a history department justifies itself by supporting the rewriting of history!

It is profound that members of the Student Government Association who, with 20 whole years of life experiences, have the nerve to push for a change about which they have hardly any understanding.

Featured Letter

In Tribute

WHEN *Vanderbilt Magazine* AND the A&S *Cornerstone* came today, I learned that Gisela Mosig had retired from Van-



derbilt last year and then died from cancer this January [“In Memoriam,” Faculty and Staff, p. 84].

I am very sad to learn of Professor Mosig’s death, since she was an inspira-

tion to me when I was a student. The story she told of her escape from East Germany made a lasting impression on me, for it taught the importance of taking conscious responsibility for one’s own future, despite the possible consequences. Also, I must say that her teaching was exceptionally clear. She patiently coaxed the best out of her students, even those like myself who were not yet sufficiently organized to practice effective scientific research. Along the way, with her assistance, I began to appreciate the necessity of discipline in executing my scientific endeavors.

At the last Vanderbilt reunion for my class, I missed seeing Professor Mosig. That event now has become a lost opportunity to connect with her again. I must now develop a keen resolve to be more assertive in taking opportunities to make connections with people I knew in the past whenever the opportunity arises.

JOHN CROSS, BA’69
Alexandria, Va.

It is axiomatic that students are against everything but having fun and parties.

Most disconcerting is the spineless conduct of university officials who let themselves be bullied by the diversity crowd and then attempt to rationalize by using the “memorial” label. Said “officials” must now decide whether to remove and burn all books in the library relating to the Confederacy.

P.S. Good for Dr. Tarpley.

PAUL A. TANKSLEY, E’54
Dallas, Ore.

Mayan Mistake

IN THE WINTER ISSUE OF *Vanderbilt Magazine*, “Bright Ideas” #1 [“Hieroglyphs Expose Mayan Superpower Conflict,” p. 24], the following statement is made: “Their translation is helping to explain the fracture of the Mayan empire into warring states and the eventual collapse of a civilization that once ruled southern Mexico as well as Central and South America.”

My wife and I have never heard that the Mayan empire extended to South America. Is the exten-

sion of the Mayan empire to S.A. a new discovery by [Ingram Professor of Anthropology Arthur] Demarest? Please cite a reference that discusses when and where the Mayan empire extended to South America.

ROBERT C. NABORS, BS’54, MA’54
Fort Washington, Md.

[EDITOR’S NOTE: *Vanderbilt Magazine* incorrectly gave the Mayan empire a great deal more real estate than they in fact possessed. Their empire did not extend into South America.]

Kudos

I WANT TO EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION FOR the superb Winter 2003 edition of *Vanderbilt Magazine*. I had noted the earlier excellent article on the Lawson affair [in the Fall 2002 issue] but didn’t realize the sea change that has taken place at the magazine until thoroughly reading the winter edition.

In particular, please convey my compliments to Paul Kingsbury for “Pride and Prejudice”—a great title, and an extremely informative article. Like many of my fellow alumni (I suspect), I had the impression that there was a tradition of excellence in the Vanderbilt English Department, and that it had something to do with Robert Penn Warren and the *Fugitives*. That’s about all I knew or recalled, with my English career at Vanderbilt confined to the single required course freshman year (taught, as Mr. Kingsbury suggests, with the assistance of *Understanding Poetry* by Warren and Brooks). Now, for the first time, I have a clear understanding of who these people are, and the distinction between the *Fugitives* and the *Agrarians*. The illustrations for the article are superb, from the initial photo (famous to some perhaps, but the first time I’ve seen it) to the individual photos and descriptions of each of the *Fugitives* and *Agrarians*. The article also gives me the information I need to read further about this bit of southern and Vanderbilt literary history.

I also want to give my compliments to Katie Galbreath, author of “Reflections in the Fountain” [p. 66], about her studies in Aix-en-Provence. This was a particular delight to read since I was a member of the very first Vanderbilt-in-France program (also the first Vanderbilt overseas program) in Aix in the fall semester of 1961.

The photography for the edition was also very well chosen, in particular the frosty winter scenes on the front cover and back inside cover, and the Susan Gray School photo.

I look forward to your next edition!

MORTON HOLBROOK III, BA’64
Manila, Philippines

CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU AND YOUR STAFF for a fine job with *Vanderbilt Magazine*. The new direction you are taking the publication has already enhanced its professionalism and influ-

ence. Vanderbilt—to firmly entrench a richly deserved national reputation—needs a better alumni outreach program, and you are directly contributing to that accomplishment. Well done, and thanks.

BRAD GERICKE, MA’96, PHD’02
Stockbridge, Ga.

REGARDING THE COMMENTS ABOUT THE “NEW look” and the content of *Vanderbilt Magazine*, I suppose it is why I liked Vanderbilt: intelligent diversity of opinion. Some graduates may not agree with others, but at least the opinions are articulate and thoughtful, unlike most letters to the editor in newspapers.

CHRIS SCHMIDT, BA’70
Cincinnati

I PICKED UP THE WINTER 2003 EDITION OF *Vanderbilt Magazine*, removed it from its plastic armor, and began looking at the pictures. I receive a lot of stuff from colleges and universities, principally because my three children are enrolled in one or the other of them. I seldom look at publications like these anymore since I subscribe to the Sunday edition of the *New York Times* and now have little time to read anything else. For some reason I decided this day to at least look at the pictures. I’m glad I did. The editors did a great job in putting this issue together. I was impressed by the diversity of the contents. Carlton Wilkerson’s black and white photographs were especially artful. His photograph of Ansel Adams’s hands was classic. I have always admired Adams’s work, and Wilkerson obviously learned his lessons well. The picture of the three talented and attractive Vandy girls basketball players got my attention. I decided to look over the table of contents. The article on the *Fugitives* pulled me into the center of the magazine, and I read the article. Thank God for Walter Sullivan. I flipped over to the letters from the readers, and there was diversity of thought there.

I was about to toss the magazine on the “I’ll read more later or throw it away” pile when I decided to look at the back cover one more time. And then I saw it. The short story by Tony Earley, “The Book of Ed.” I read it twice. I love Tony Earley’s prose and not because we are from the same county in North Carolina, and not because I grew up knowing his mother-in-law, and not because I knew the original *Jim the Boy*. It’s because Tony Earley is a very gifted writer. And he wrote in the “Southern Journal” section of your magazine under “Reflections on the South.” More diversity!

Thank you for a good publication. I will look forward to the next issue and hopefully more of Tony Earley from time to time.

I still think our school has been too harsh on the *Fugitive* issue. They should at least hang the pictures back up.

W. WINSTON HOY, BA’64
Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Fugitives and Agrarians

I ENJOYED MR. KINGSBURY’S PIECE ON THE *Fugitives* [Winter issue, “Pride and Prejudice,” p. 30].

In 1962, Mr. Ransom was back on campus after retiring from Kenyon. He taught a modern poetry class, which I audited. I found him a consummate gentlemen, a gentle soul, without an ounce of hatred, and a person with no pretensions. The class dealt with the work of other poets, but I had begun to read Mr. Ransom’s poems on my own. If, as professors Kreyling and Daniels seem to indicate, his poetry is not currently being taught, it is a great tragedy. He is, I believe, one of the greatest poets in history, not by virtue of a huge output, but by virtue of the fact that his poems are each a taut thing of beauty.

Professor Kreyling stated that *I’ll Take My Stand* is a misogynistic book. Indeed, it was a product of a misogynistic and racist time. How long had women in the U.S. had the right to vote at the time of its



publication in 1930? Already by 1962 the Agrarian movement was considered at least irrelevant if not an embarrassment, but that did not keep us from appreciating the poetry and fiction of Ransom, Warren and Tate. Mr. Ransom’s poems are devoid of misogyny and racism. They should not be ignored because of his 1930 political views.

LARRY MALLETTTE, BA’63, PHD’68, MD’70
Houston

YOUR INTERESTING ARTICLE ON THE *AGRARIANS* stimulated a variety of memories and the following comments.

I was an undergraduate English major in 1930–34 and rather immersed in its affairs. First, [contrary to what] you state on page 33, Warren was not on its faculty from 1931 to 1934. In 1932–33 he replaced Ransom, who was on leave. I experienced him, just back from [earning] an M.A. at Oxford, as rather self-conscious and excessively “Br-r-ritish.” (He recovered!)

I’ll Take My Stand left me ambivalent. As a rural southerner, I hummed to some of its tune. At the same time, the authors struck me as unreasonably nostalgic for a charmed past which never was quite as they pictured it. Frankly, I was something of a New Deal liberal, but did not find any of them

significantly racist—except Davidson, who was explicitly prejudiced.

After WWII, Red Warren came South on leave from Yale doing research for his long book, *Segregation*. At Ole Miss, where I taught “race relations” in the sociology department, we consumed much of a night (and modest amounts of his Kentucky bourbon) exchanging information and opinions on the changing South. We continued this relationship via correspondence until his death. His letters relating to Vanderbilt, the South and the Agrarian movement, etc., I gave to the Vanderbilt Library; those about his career generally, I gave to Yale.

To be even an undergraduate major in the afterglow of the *Fugitives* and heyday of the *Agrarians* was an experience I cherish. Both helped make our Vanderbilt the eminent and cherished institution it is.

MORTON KING, BA’34, MA’36
Georgetown, Texas

IT WOULD BE A PITY IF THE article about the *Fugitives* and *Agrarians* in the Winter 2003 issue of your magazine were allowed to stand unchallenged. It was written out of ignorance of the history of the group, and of the literature created by them, and out of a profound misunderstanding of their importance to Vanderbilt and to the world at large. Most of what is said about them is prejudiced by a myopia so short-sighted that it regards the present dismissive attitude of Van-

derbilt English professors as superior to the collective wisdom contained in the writings of Ransom, Davidson, Tate, Warren, and their fellow *Fugitives* and *Agrarians*. Is that what is meant by the title, “Pride and Prejudice”? Prejudice, yes, but not pride: arrogance. The names of the principal *Fugitives* will be remembered—and honored—long after their detractors are forgotten. History is merciless to those who scorn it, more merciful to those who make it. And the *Fugitives* did make a difference in American cultural history.

Let me put the case as simply as I can. There have been only three groups of writers who really matter in American literary history, and the *Fugitives* are one of them. The others were the 19th Century New England Transcendentalists (Hawthorne, Emerson, Thoreau, et al.), and the 20th Century International Imagists (Pound, Eliot, H.D., et al.). The *Fugitives* were unique in being southern, and in coming together on an American university campus. The Transcendentalists were centered in Concord, a village west of Boston in a rural setting, and the Imagists were attracted to the metropolis of London, though many were Americans. Thus the value of the *Fugitives* to Vanderbilt is crucial and can never be discredited. They created highly original poetry in an academic setting, giving a dis-

inction to the Vanderbilt campus which no other American university enjoys. Paul Conkin was right: “Nothing in Vanderbilt’s history has come anywhere close to the Fugitives and Agrarians in giving it a national reputation. . . . It’s still by far the most significant aspect of Vanderbilt history in the larger university world.”

Those words of praise from Vanderbilt’s prime historian are almost enough to redeem the article. Sadly, the context surrounding them is derogatory. The misrepresentation of Fugitive and Agrarian writing in the article makes its message appear to be entirely racist, anti-feminist, and out of key with American culture as it has evolved in recent years. And to concentrate on the social and political arguments of the Agrarians instead of the literary achievements of the Fugitives is to put the cart before the horse, since Fugitive poetry preceded Agrarian essays. In their heyday at Vanderbilt in the 1920s, before they espoused Agrarianism in response to unfriendly attacks on southern culture and the economic disaster of the Great Depression, the Fugitives created real literature, an art that encapsulates culture and transcends its place and time. Fugitive poetry was clear proof that the South was not the “Sahara of the Bozarts” that H.L. Mencken had contemptuously called it: It led the way in what blossomed as the Southern Literary Renaissance. Its historical and literary merit are therefore permanent and cannot be discounted by later generations, however different their perspectives may be.

I regret that the *Vanderbilt Magazine* should show so little regard for the literary and intellectual tradition of the University as to make a mockery of its greatest writers. To call the famous photograph of five Fugitives at their reunion on the campus in 1956 “Vanderbilt’s Mount Rushmore” is not far from the truth, even though it is cast as a satirical exaggeration. They were not political leaders, but they were intellectual leaders, and that is how a university ought to be defined.

WILLIAM PRATT, MA’51, PHD’57
Professor of English, emeritus
Miami University (Ohio)

BOTH OF US WERE AT VANDERBILT IN THE 1970s and feel fortunate that we majored in English during the last vestiges of influence of the Fugitives and Agrarians. We met and, in some cases became friends with, those who were still living: Allen Tate, Andrew Lytle, Robert Penn Warren, Jesse Wills, Lyle Lanier, and others who became part of their circle such as Dorothy Bethurum Loomis, Peter Taylor, Walker Percy and others. We consider ourselves equally blessed to have been instructed by teachers who were their disciples: Thomas Daniel Young, Walter Sullivan, Herschel Gower, Robert Hunter and Hal Weatherby, to name a few.

One thing was evident then: Vanderbilt’s official relationship with its most famous sons continued to be chilly at best. Vanderbilt had lost John Crowe Ransom in 1937 because it refused a few

hundred dollars raise; it decided that Warren was not worth the effort to keep, so he went to LSU and founded the *Southern Review*. In the late 1940s it lost Frank Owsley, one of the pioneering figures in southern antebellum statistical studies. Then, beginning with the Fugitive Reunion of 1956, it seemed as if Vanderbilt was coming to terms with them. It was a brief moment. By the late 1960s, whatever good will had built up over the last decade was largely dissipated. Yes, Donald Davidson was an embarrassment to the University’s efforts to desegregate, but he was not responsible for the James Lawson incident or for the vote of the student body in 1963 against integration.

Only in recent years has it become convenient to blame the University’s attitude toward the Agrarians on their racial views. By the 1970s the relationship was finally and permanently poisoned. When Tate, needing money, offered to sell his papers to the University, Vanderbilt refused, and Tate sold them to Princeton. One of Joe B. Wyatt’s first speeches as chancellor of the University paid tribute to the Fugitives and Agrarians—and factually garbled their story. From then on, matters got worse. As late as 1981, Lytle was scheduled to teach a class at a writer’s symposium, only to find the building locked. He vowed never to set foot on campus again, and did not for eight years until a memorial service for Warren that the University had to be shamed into holding.

Were the Agrarians wrong in their racial beliefs? Of course. Does that make them any less a major force in American letters? Of course not, and it is to Vanderbilt’s shame that it continues to downplay them, led by Professor Michael Kreyling, who was hired in 1985, to finally expunge them all together. That he has not succeeded yet is evidence that their individual and collective accomplishments will outlast their critics.

ROBERT HOLLADAY, BA’77
MARJORIE HOLLADAY, BA’78
Tallahassee, Fla.

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE NEW *Vanderbilt Magazine*. The format and contents are splendid. One criticism: the mezuzah on page 13 [“Details: Shalom Vanderbilt”] is upside down.

Paul Kingsbury’s thoughtful article, “Pride and Prejudice,” sent me back to my *Vanderbilt Miscellany*, published by Vanderbilt University Press in 1944. Richmond Croom Beatty (PhD, 1930), my favorite professor, edited the *Miscellany*. In his thoughtful introductory essay, “By Way of Background,” Mr. Beatty pointed out that *The Fugitive* “never had any formal or official or financial connection with the University, whose administration was preoccupied with a building program attendant upon expansion in the

social sciences and Medical School.” How well I remember Mr. Beatty leaning on his arm on his desk, talking about “those people downstairs,” the social science and business majors. However, Mr. Beatty’s essay concluded that “the basic impetus which brought forth *The Fugitive* and *I’ll Take My Stand* is still lustily alive at Vanderbilt.” The *Miscellany* was delightfully illustrated by my former professor of art, Marion Junkin. While Donald Davidson was scrutinizing my writings, I was taking every course that Mr. Beatty taught. Fortunately, however, Vanderbilt has moved beyond the Ivory Tower atmosphere of those days.

ANNETTE ROSE LEVY RATKIN, A’48
Nashville

I CONFESS I DID NOT GO TO VANDERBILT AS an undergraduate. I only went there to law school. But one of the reasons I chose Vanderbilt over some other distinguished law schools was its association with the Fugitives/Agrarians. I had read their poetry and criticism in college and thought it was wonderful. I’d also read *I’ll Take My Stand* and recognized it as nonsense.

I graduated from Vanderbilt Law School in 1953, and I’ve spent the intervening years practicing law in the South. Along the way I fought the contemptible governor of Arkansas and worked for the integration of our schools and other institutions. I believe I am not a racist.

What I cannot understand is how the Vanderbilt English Department can choose to ignore the poetry and criticism of these men and extol the literary products of Allen Ginsberg, rap musicians and “deconstructionists.” What those English professors are doing is not political correctness. They are depriving our children of access to fine literature and substituting drivel.

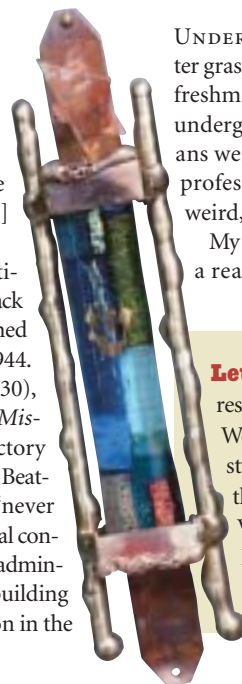
RON MAY, LLB’53
Little Rock, Ark.

UNDERGRADUATES MANY TIMES HAVE A BETTER grasp of things than you might imagine. In my freshman year of 1936, the feeling of Vanderbilt undergraduates was pretty well that the Agrarians were kind of nutty, but, after all, they were professors, and that the Fugitives were kind of weird, but, after all, they were poets.

My only personal acquaintance from the group, a really nice guy, was Donald Davidson, my

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



An Education in 404 Pages

A recommended reading list for all Americans.

By JAMES BACCHUS, BA'71

MORE THAN 30 years ago, as an undergraduate at Vanderbilt, I first learned the value of a good liberal arts education. In all the years since, I have tried my best to keep learning—and living—the liberal arts.

If asked what America needs most today, I would reply that America needs a good liberal-arts education. But a good education is getting ever harder to find. Not everyone is fortunate enough to spend four years at Vanderbilt. And not everyone can find the time to get a good education by reading all the “great books.”

With this in mind, I suggest the following list for the consideration of all who feel in need of a good liberal-arts education. This list can provide an education, not by reading a few hundred books, but by reading only a few hundred pages.

My recommended reading list for all Americans is:

Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Self-Reliance.” We must be true to ourselves. Only by being true to ourselves as individuals will we be able to build a true society of individuals that will be worth sharing. We must never be afraid to stand alone in the crowd. (36 pages)

Alexis de Tocqueville, “The Principle of Interest Rightly Understood,” from *Democracy in America*. Our real self-interest, as individuals and as a society of individuals, is in our broader as well as our narrower needs, and in our needs tomorrow as well as our needs

today. We need others, and we have obligations to others. (4 pages)

Thucydides, “The Melian Dialogue,” from *History of the Peloponnesian War*. “The strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must.” We may be stronger than others, but that does not make us right. All of history is an effort to prove that might does not make right. (6 pages)

James Madison, Number 10 and Number 51, *The Federalist Papers*. For government to help make right into might for all of us, government must be founded on an understanding of the reality of human nature. “If men were angels, no government would be necessary.” We are capable of both good and evil. We can always make progress. We can never achieve perfection. (11 pages)

Adam Smith, “Of the Division of Labor,” from *The Wealth of Nations*. Like government, all economics must begin with an awareness of our unchanging human nature. We tend toward exchange, trade, and an ever-expanding and ever-deepening division of labor. It is in our nature. (21 pages)

Voltaire, Letter 15, “On the System of Gravitation,” from *Letters on England*. Unique to human nature is human reason. Reason made science. Science made the modern world. Science can help us make an even better world. (9 pages)

Richard Feynman, “The Uncertainty of Science,” from *The Meaning of It All*. Science gives us our technology. Science does not give us our values. And science does not give us certainty. Science is a way of living with uncertainty and also with doubt. (26 pages)



Plato, “The Cave,” from *The Republic*. We must doubt. The world may not be as it seems. We live in shadows, and we must search for the light of the truth. (9 pages)

Michel de Montaigne, “Of Cannibals,” from *The Essays*. Local custom is not necessarily eternal truth. There are other ways to live and think. There are other ways to search. We Americans do not have a monopoly on wisdom, virtue or truth. (15 pages)

John Stuart Mill, “Of the Liberty of Thought and Discussion,” from *On Liberty*. Truth emerges from free and open discussion among free individuals in a society that cherishes the freedom of thought. Truth welcomes debate. Truth welcomes criticism. (44 pages)

Karl Popper, Chapter 10, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. In the “closed society,” there is no freedom of thought. In the “open society,” the individual is free to think and to choose. The freest society is the “open society” where the individual is free to make the most possible personal decisions about how to live. (32 pages)

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The Campus Spring 2003

“We share the hope that we can feed one person, then one day make a big dent in the hunger problem.” —DIVINITY STUDENT FREDDIE HADDOX

Seeds of Change

FREDDIE HADDOX CAME INTO land in a most unusual way, so it's fitting that he has a most unusual dream for that land. In the 1800s a farm near Franklin, Tenn., was owned by a man named Samuel Winstead who also owned nearly 70 slaves. When Winstead died, he bequeathed the entire farm to his former slaves instead of to his own family. The Winstead family contested the will, but the Tennessee Supreme Court ruled in favor of the former slaves.

Haddox, a 55-year-old Vanderbilt divinity student, is a direct descendant of those slaves. His stepfather has farmed the property for the last 50 years. Now, despite weekly offers from land developers who claim Haddox is “hindering progress,” the divinity student is using part of the land to launch the Just Crumbs hunger-relief initiative. Volunteers from the Divinity School and elsewhere have planted seeds, built fences, constructed a new entrance to the farm, and bottle-fed baby goats.

The initiative has started with just three acres, using an organic method of cultivation called “nature farming” as a model for feeding people who struggle with hunger. By focusing on the nutrition of the soil



ADAM COLLIN SAYLER

instead of added fertilizers, pesticides and other “unnatural” growth stimulators, proponents of the method say a small area can produce large amounts of produce.

Harvest from the Just Crumbs initiative will be distributed through the Society of Saint Andrew, an ecumenical Christian ministry established by United Methodist pastors. Twenty-four-year-old divinity student Will Connelly has

embraced the Just Crumbs initiative, raising funds for farm equipment and other supplies. “We believe it's a basic right to have nutritional food,” he says. This April through October, Connelly is trading his urban existence for the life of a farm hand on the land.

“Will and I share this hope that we can feed one person, then one day make a big dent in the hunger problem,” says Haddox.

The Next Best Thing to House Calls

VANDERBILT SCHOOL OF Nursing's Faculty Practice Network (VNFNP) has opened a nurse-managed, community-based clinic. The new Senior Health Center, which opened in February, offers family practice, mental health and women's health services.

The clinic is located in Hermitage, a Nashville suburb, at McKendree Village, a progressive living community for seniors with cottage homes, apartment-style living quarters, and housing for residents in need of assisted living, rehabilitation and nursing-home facilities. The center will serve nearly 400 potential clients. McKendree Village has been part of the Vanderbilt family of related institutions for several years. Recently, McKendree's physician services ended and the School of Nursing moved in to provide health care for the facility's senior residents.

“Older people have a greater demand for health-care services, but may not be able to get out whenever they need to, so this is a huge convenience for them,” says Bonnie Pilon, senior associate dean for practice management. “Senior women often don't seek gynecological or breast care perhaps because of embarrassment or because

they're no longer reproductively active, and that can be detrimental to their health. They face serious risks, particularly from cancer. By providing targeted GYN services, for example, we're making an important preventive health program readily available.”

The Senior Health Center brings to nine the number of clinics run by nurse practitioners in the Vanderbilt School of Nursing's Faculty Practice Network. However, two of its three Jane McEvoy School-Based Health Centers, which serve neighborhoods with a high need for easily accessible health care for children and families, could be faced with closing soon unless additional support is found to replace funding that is expected to be gone by the end of the school year.

Stiff Competition Prompts Creative Entries

MARKING THE CONTINUATION of a healthy upward trend, Vanderbilt has increased its number of applicants by approximately 11.4 percent this year. These numbers shed a hopeful light on an institutional goal of increasing applications from 10,000 to 15,000 over the next several years, and dramatically dropping the acceptance rate. This academic year the University admitted 39.7 percent of those who applied, a record low.

This year 10,945 prospective students applied to Vanderbilt, breaking all previous records for total number of applicants, Hispanic applicants, and African-American applicants.

Most application letters



{Details}

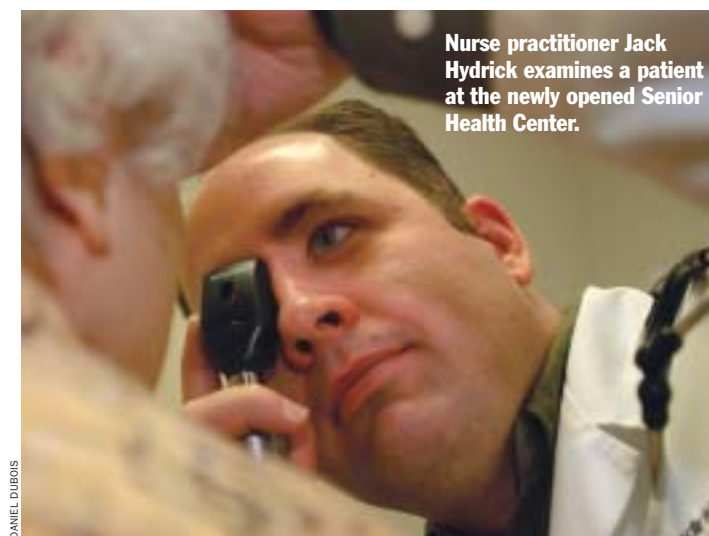
Mosaic in Marble

Marble mosaic embellishes the entrance atrium of Cohen Memorial Building, given to Peabody College in 1926 by Nashville art collector George Etta Brinkley Cohen, who occupied an apartment on the second floor until her death in 1930. Nowadays students enjoy studio art classes in the stately columned building.

arrive in a standard legal-sized envelope, but there are always a few applications, usually about 200 or so, that come with more than what's required. The office has received necklaces, videotapes, slides, manuscripts and countless other items that applicants include in hopes of setting themselves apart from the rest by showing a real-life example of their talents and interests. This year, what may be the most unusual “extra” included with an application was a vial of red food coloring attached to a note indicating the applicant would “sweat blood” to come to Vanderbilt.

“People under stress do all sorts of stuff to try to give them an edge,” says William M. Shain, dean of undergraduate admissions. “But I am concerned with super students.” Shain himself says he reads at least a third of the applications—around 3,000 files—and says he's probably read at least 10,000 essays per year during his career at Vanderbilt, which began in 1998.

“Every winter there are a reasonable number of essays that really move me, that are especially poignant, or are intellectually on the cutting edge.”



Nurse practitioner Jack Hydrick examines a patient at the newly opened Senior Health Center.

DANIEL DUROIS

{Inquiring Minds}

Drug Improves Outlook for Suicidal Patients

The antipsychotic drug Clozaril has received the Food and Drug Administration's first indication for reducing the risk of recurrent suicidal behavior in people with schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder. The decision, announced in December, was due in large part to an international clinical trial led by Vanderbilt's Dr. Herbert Meltzer, director of the Division of Psychopharmacology, that compared Clozaril to the more commonly prescribed drug Zyprexa.

"Treatment with clozapine reduced suicidal events by up to a quarter over and above an established and effective anti-psychotic," said Meltzer. "There would be 10,000 fewer suicide attempts and 20,000 fewer hospitalizations annually, with greatly reduced costs for treatment and, of course, suffering to the individuals and their families."

The study could lead to clinical trials of Clozaril to prevent suicide in people with bipolar disorder, a disease that affects as many people as schizophrenia but carries twice the rate of suicide deaths. It also has gained the attention of the American Psychiatric Association, which will soon publish new guidelines for treating suicidal patients in all diagnoses.



PHILIP DYORAK

The Kids Are All Right

American children fare surprisingly well when their military parents are deployed halfway around the world, says Claire Smrekar, associate professor of educational leadership at Peabody College.



FRANK RENLIE

"It's part of the culture at school for these kids," she says. "The schools are well informed by military command, and many teachers grew up in the military and understand what students are dealing with."

Smrekar, who has overseen a much-publicized study of why students in Department of Defense-run schools score higher in reading and writing, recalls visiting a military base in Germany where school personnel were being fitted for battle fatigues in preparation for a visit to Kosovo, an experience they hoped would help them help their students cope.

Pay Now or Pay Later

How do you put a price tag on the cost of failing a high-risk youth? Mark Cohen, Owen associate professor of management and co-director of the Center for Environmental Management Studies, says the cost to society is between \$1.7 and \$2.3 million. Cohen used multiple economic models to estimate the potential cost savings for three scenarios: when a youth is rescued from becoming a high-school dropout, is a chronic substance abuser, or is a career criminal. His models employ variables such as victim costs, lost earnings, rehabilitation expenses and medical costs.

It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time

VANDERBILT'S SPRING jonquils weren't the only things popping up all over campus the week after spring break. Chancellor Gordon Gee was all over the place, resplendent in his trademark bowtie, reassuring students in the flesh that, contrary to the front-page story in a bogus issue of the *Vanderbilt Hustler*, he was alive and well.

"GEE DEAD" read the headline in what first appeared to be the March 11 issue of Vanderbilt's student newspaper, complete with advertisements. Front-page stories told of Gee's death from a heart attack and detailed his accomplishments as chancellor. Some students were in tears while others immediately saw through the hoax. For one thing, *Hustler* was misspelled in the masthead—deliberately, it turns out. Gee's office moved quickly to issue a good-humored press release and campus-wide e-mail statement reassuring the Vanderbilt community that he was still around.

That afternoon staff members of the *Slant*, a student-run humor magazine, acknowl-

edged responsibility for the prank. "It was a bad idea, and we got wrapped up in it," says sophomore *Slant* editor-in-chief David Barzelay. Only the magazine's senior staff members were involved in the counterfeit issue, which was a year in the planning and included a couple of real advertisements that they say helped foot the \$350 cost of printing approximately 3,000 copies.

Following the prank, Barzelay's student peers on the board of directors of Vanderbilt Student Communications—the corporation that owns the *Hustler*, the *Slant*, and other media outlets at Vanderbilt—voted to remove him as *Slant* editor, but he has continued as an active contributor to the magazine. ➤➤



NEIL BRAME

Editorial cartoon appearing in a post-hoax *Hustler*

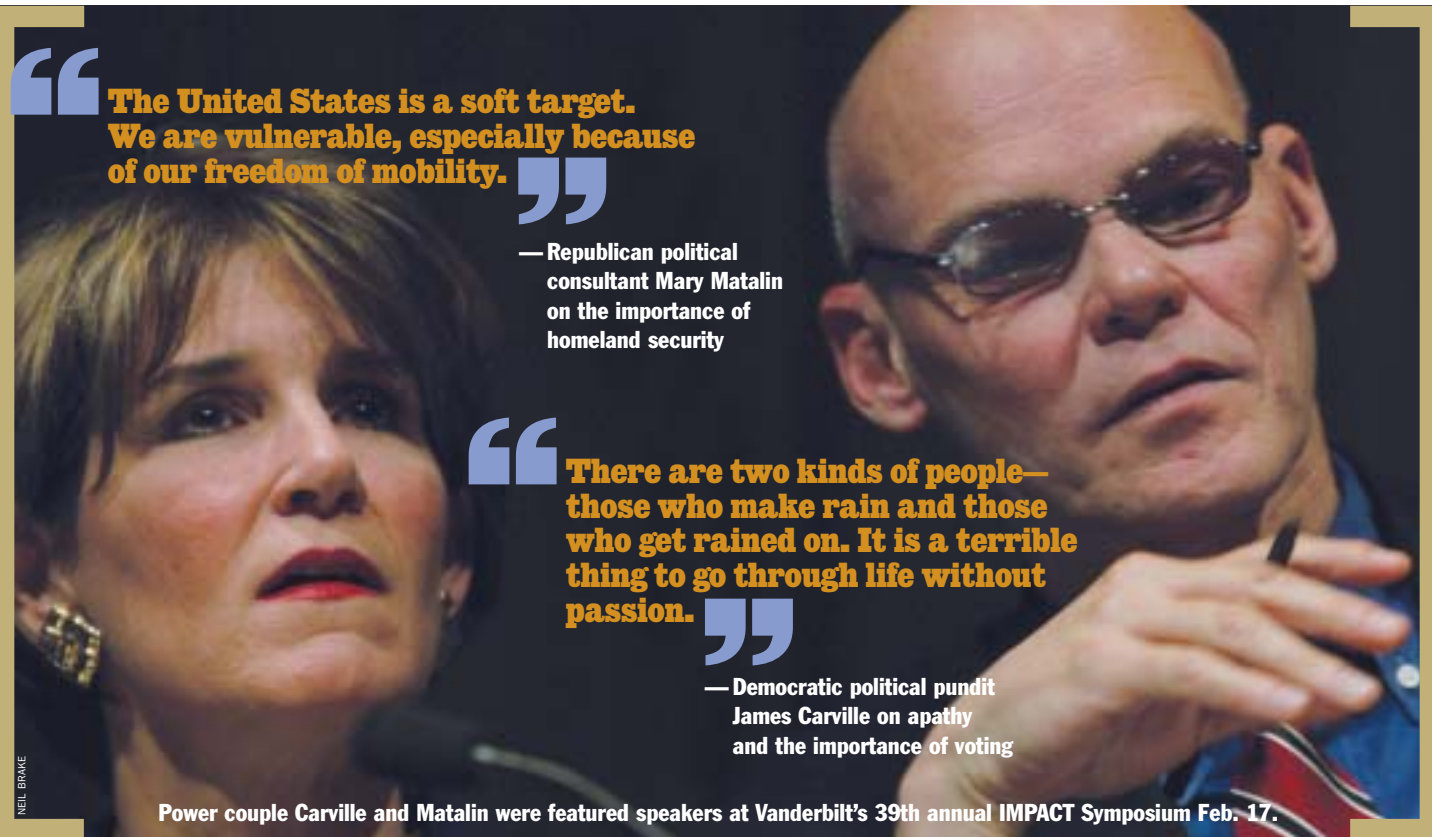


NEIL BRAME



Stairway to Heaven

Step out into the stairwell at McGill Hall and you enter Dante's *Inferno*, a three-story mural of images conjured up by students who live there. McGill students began painting the stairwell art in the early 1990s. The mural, which evolves from year to year, currently includes figures from ancient Egypt, fantastic mythological beasts, and this celestial creature. The gothic collegiate dormitory is the site of the McGill Project, a program to encourage discussion between residents and department of philosophy faculty.



“The United States is a soft target. We are vulnerable, especially because of our freedom of mobility.”

— Republican political consultant Mary Matalin on the importance of homeland security

“There are two kinds of people—those who make rain and those who get rained on. It is a terrible thing to go through life without passion.”

— Democratic political pundit James Carville on apathy and the importance of voting

Power couple Carville and Matalin were featured speakers at Vanderbilt's 39th annual IMPACT Symposium Feb. 17.

Health-Care Construction in a Brave New World

VANDERBILT SCHOOL OF Engineering has developed a new construction project management graduate program including specialization in health-care construction. Currently, only a handful of civil and environmental engineering departments in the nation provide graduate training in building health-care environments. Engineering graduates with the necessary expertise to build health-care environments capable of meeting these complex challenges are in short supply.

“Health-care facilities are challenged by new threats and new public expectations,” says David S. Kosson, chair of Vanderbilt's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. “What is required is a new approach to design that will create environments that mitigate

threats and optimize healing.”

The new Vanderbilt program will incorporate latest developments in construction technologies, advanced engineering design and management principles with other disciplines. Post-Sept. 11 construction considerations include blast barriers that separate public roadways from the hospital area, reinforced materials, strong supportive baffles, and overpressure releases built



PAUL WENZ

into the roofs. Pre-wiring facilities so they can be quickly converted from public spaces to treatment areas allows improved emergency response. Management of the flow of hospital personnel and patients is important in dealing with highly contagious diseases and large numbers of patients. Advanced ventilation systems are needed to reduce the spread of infection.

Research: Good for the Economy

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT activities at Vanderbilt are responsible for more than 5,700 jobs in Middle Tennessee, according to a report based on statistics from the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Those jobs constitute about 43 percent of the more than 13,300 employment opportunities supported by research and development activities at colleges and universities statewide. Na-

tionally, the number of jobs resulting from academic research totaled more than 1.08 million, according to data for 2000, the most recent year for which complete statistics are available.

The federal data, collected by the Association of American Universities, consider grant money received at academic institutions. The expenditures come from all sources of funding including federal, state and local government, industry and institutional funds.

Vanderbilt's research expenditures of \$171.9 million in the 2000 fiscal year directly and indirectly supported an estimated 5,759 jobs in Middle Tennessee.

“University research is one of the best investments we make as a country,” says Chancellor Gordon Gee. “While creating new knowledge, developing cures for diseases, inventing new technologies, and improving understanding of the world

around us are primary missions of research, a rewarding offshoot is the creation of thousands of jobs.

“The results of research often take years to have an impact on society,” he adds. “But the thousands of jobs that sustain this enterprise have a real and tangible effect on the local economy.”

The AAU noted that a report published by a University of Pennsylvania professor in 1991 concluded that the average annual rate of return to society from academic research was 28 percent. That means that society gets back 28 cents every year from every dollar invested in academic research.

Ready for Their Close-Ups

“ER.” “ST. ELSEWHERE.”

“Marcus Welby, M.D.” “Ben Casey.” America just can't get enough of TV docs. And now, coming soon to a living room near you, is a program tentatively titled “Young Meds”—a 13-episode series told through the eyes of Vanderbilt University Medical Center residents and fellows.

Set to debut on the Learning Channel this fall, the series will offer viewers a comprehensive look at what it takes to be a physician in training in today's highly specialized, highly competitive environment. A production crew from New York Times Television, the electronic bureau of the *New York Times*, began filming the series at VUMC in January.

Vanderbilt's medical center was selected over several other top academic medical centers for the series based on strength, size, and diversity of its graduate medical program. It has



Videographer Brandon Terrell films a segment of a Learning Channel series that will provide a look at medical training through the eyes of Vanderbilt residents and fellows like Julie Prudhomme.

hosted film crews for New York Times TV on several other occasions. Several episodes of “Trauma: Life in the ER” and “Maternity Ward,” both programs produced for the Learning Channel, have been filmed at Vanderbilt.

Consortium Exploits Vanderbilt's Brazilian Ties

VANDERBILT AND HOWARD universities are joining with two Brazilian institutions to help prepare their nations' next generation of scholars, government officials and corporate executives for the challenges of a global economy.

A grant of \$430,000 from the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education and the Brazilian Ministry of Education's CAPES program will help establish a consortium among Vanderbilt, Howard, the Universidade de São Paulo, and the Universidade Federal da Bahia.

Faculty from all four schools will develop an interdisciplinary curriculum allowing students to explore themes of race, economic development and social

inequality in both the United States and Brazil. In addition to faculty and student exchanges between the U.S. and Brazilian universities, the program will allow students to earn a gradu-

ate-level certificate recognizing their concentrations.

Student exchanges will begin in the 2003-04 academic year, and students who complete certain courses and study abroad will receive a certificate in international studies from Howard University or a certificate in Latin American studies from Vanderbilt.

“Vanderbilt has one of the largest concentrations of specialists on Brazil in the United States and has a long and distinguished history in Brazilian studies, dating to 1947 when Chancellor (Harvie) Branscomb established the Institute for Brazilian Studies,” says Jane Landers, principal investigator of the Vanderbilt effort and associate dean of the College of Arts and Science.

{Top Picks}

Kent D. Syverud, dean and Garner Anthony Professor of Law at Vanderbilt University Law School, has been installed as president of the American Law Deans Association (ALDA). An organization of deans of law schools in the United States, ALDA advocates on behalf of the deans on issues of accreditation, academics, admissions, and other issues affecting legal education. Its membership includes about 110 deans of American Bar Association-accredited law schools from throughout the United States.

Bill Frist, who founded and directed the Vanderbilt Transplant Center and retains a post as assistant professor of cardiac and thoracic surgery (on leave), was elected Republican senate majority leader by the members of the Republican caucus in January. First elected to the U.S. Senate in 1994, Frist was the only challenger to defeat a full-term incumbent in 1994 and the first practicing physician elected to the Senate since 1928. In 2000, Frist was elected to a second term in the U.S. Senate by the largest margin ever received by a candidate for statewide election in the history of Tennessee.

Lamar Alexander, BA'62, has been elected to the U.S. Senate seat formerly held by Fred Thompson, JD'67. Alexander is the first Tennessean to be popularly elected both governor (1979-87) and senator. He later served as president of the University of Tennessee and was U.S. secretary of education during the administration of President George H.W. Bush.

Sports

A look at spring athletics

On the Double

Sarah Riske and Aleke Tsoubanos Set 'Em Up and Knock 'Em Down.

By NELSON BRYAN

WHEN OPPOSING players stare across the net at Sarah Riske and Aleke Tsoubanos, they would be well advised to remember their Shakespeare—*Macbeth* in particular: “Double, double toil and trouble; Fire burn and cauldron bubble.” Because in this Vanderbilt duo, women’s tennis coach Geoff Macdonald has cooked up a fiery mixture of power and speed.

Macdonald paired Tsoubanos and Riske three years ago, when Kate Burson and Julie Ditty were setting Vanderbilt records in doubles and singles competition. Early on, he noticed a potent alchemy in the combination of Riske’s and Tsoubanos’s styles of play.

“They seemed to be clicking,” Macdonald says of the early pairing. “They had a lot of chemistry, and their strengths complemented each other. Sarah and Aleke matched up well. Aleke came in as an outstanding doubles player, and Sarah was an accomplished singles player.”

Riske is a senior psychology major from Pittsburgh. She is tall and composed. Tsoubanos is a junior human and organizational development major from Chesterfield, Mo. She is strong and quick. Riske has a strong serve and

volley game with good ground strokes. Tsoubanos has excellent hands and anticipation at the net. “It’s sort of like a setter and a spiker in volleyball,” Macdonald says.

“We’ll set up some plays together,” Riske says, “but for the most part we let each other do what we do best. We really trust each other in that. We know each other’s strengths and weaknesses. Aleke has faster hands than I do, quicker hands at the net. She puts the point away more. I more or less play straight up and make the other team play another ball. Aleke will lob, she’ll drop shot, more touch. She does well off my serve. She moves across the court; she poaches very well.”

“Sarah has a really big serve,” Tsoubanos testifies. “She’s like the meat and potatoes out there. She just plays straight up. She’s very solid from the baseline with solid volleys. I feel like sometimes Sarah does a lot of the grunt work, whereas she frees me up at the net to be more proactive and creative with volleys. She sets me up a lot. I have no complaints about that. I’ll let Sarah do that all day.”

Last fall Riske and Tsoubanos brought home a national title when they won the Riviera/ITA Women’s All-American Championships in Pacific Palisades, Calif. Vandy’s

No. 1 doubles duo went into the championship tournament as the team to beat.

No one did.

“Sarah and I worked together a lot last fall,” says Tsoubanos. “We did a lot of individual work with the coaches and just went out there and did the best we could. It just so happens that we played four really good matches and everything clicked. It was nice. I think a lot of people were speculating as to whether we were going to hold to the honor that they gave us in the preranking, and we did that.”

At the beginning of the spring 2003 season, Vanderbilt beat top-ranked Florida in a dual match, 4-3. Riske won at the No. 1 singles spot, and Tsoubanos won at No. 3 singles. Together they won the No. 1 doubles 9-7. It was the first time in 23 years the Vanderbilt women defeated the storied Florida program.

“It was definitely special,” Riske says of the victory over Florida. “It was one of the high points of my college career. When I came in as a freshman, the seniors always said, ‘Let’s beat Florida; we’ve never beaten them before,’ and it’s been that way every year, with some matches better than others. Last year we had two close ones with them, but we’ve always come up short. That was such a big deal to us. It was so cool to see everyone come through. It felt like we were in the nationals. Everyone just fought so hard.”

“I think we’ve gotten better,” Tsoubanos says matter-of-factly. “At the end of the season, the NCAA individuals and doubles tournament could be really exciting for us.”



NEIL BRAKE



Aleke Tsoubanos and Sarah Riske

DAVID JOHNSON

In Memory of Fred Russell

Fred Russell, L'27, sportswriter extraordinaire, died at his home Jan. 26 after a brief illness. [See obituary on page 77 for more details.] He counted among his acquaintances the finest sportswriters, coaches and athletes of their time. In 1953 legendary sports writer and Vanderbilt alumnus Grantland Rice, BA 1901, wrote a tribute to his friend and fellow Commodore. Fifty years after it was penned, the poem yet pays homage to Fred McFerrin Russell and the days of yore.

"To Fred Russell"
By Grantland Rice
Sept. 2, 1953

*Freddie, the south wind's calling
From far and far away
I see the twilight falling
On hills of yesterday.
I find an old, old yearning
And when I turn to you,
I meet old pals returning
To find a dream come true.*

*Freddie, through joy and sorrow,
Where my fading footsteps fare,
Where will I be tomorrow?
I neither know nor care.*



Fred Russell and Grantland Rice

*Freddie, one cup together,
And here is the final test.
Through stormy or sunny weather,
Through breaks at their worst or best,
Untouched by the staining dollar,
On through to the journey's end,
A gentleman, sir—and a scholar,
But better than all—a friend.*

Quarles, Yoder Win World Championship

Former Commodores Shelton Quarles, BS'94, and Todd Yoder, BS'00, became world champions when the Tampa Bay Buccaneers won Super Bowl XXXVII in January. At Vanderbilt they never won a championship. But after Tampa Bay's victory over the Oakland Raiders, they joined their former teammate, Corey Harris, BS'92, and coach, Woody Widenhofer, in the fraternity of Super Bowl ring owners. Harris earned a ring with the Baltimore Ravens in 2001. Widenhofer garnered four rings with the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Quarles, a starting inside linebacker, was one of Tampa Bay's top defenders in the Super Bowl game, making seven tackles. Yoder joined the Buccaneers in 2000 as an undrafted tight end and was active on all Tampa Bay special teams.

*For all that I'll miss in grieving
Where Charon's boat may land,
Is the smile from a pal I'm leaving,
And the friendly grip of a hand.*

*For twenty-five years or longer,
Where time plays a leading part,
I've found the link grows stronger,
In the beating of heart and heart.
I've found the friendship dearer
As the endless years roll by,
And, as night draws nearer,
We wait for the light to die.*

COURTESY OF FRED RUSSELL COLLECTION, VANDERBILT SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

{Where Are They Now?}



Hutcheson and Bargo in 1970

Ann Hutcheson, BA'71, MD'78, and **Nancy Bargo**, BA'72, brought Vanderbilt women's tennis into national prominence before Title IX elevated the status of women's collegiate sports. In 1970 the doubles partners reigned as Tennessee intercollegiate champions and represented Vanderbilt in the National Intercollegiate Championship in Las Cruces, N.M., for two years. Today Ann Hutcheson Price, former chief medical officer at Nashville's St. Thomas Hospital, is taking a hiatus from medicine and tennis to nurse an injury. She and her husband, Scott Todd Price, BA'71, have two children. Their son, a wheelchair athlete, graduates from Lipscomb University this year, and their daughter is entering Princeton University to play tennis. Nancy Bargo is now Nancy Bargo Anthony, executive director of the Oklahoma City Community Foundation. She earned two



master's degrees from Yale and a doctorate from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. She and her husband, Robert, have four daughters, all athletes who play field hockey collegiately at Princeton, Yale and Duke. Thinking back on their days at Vanderbilt, Anthony remarks, "It was fun to be on the bottom floor of emerging women's athletics prior to Title IX."

and a doctorate from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. She and her husband, Robert, have four daughters, all athletes who play field hockey collegiately at Princeton, Yale and Duke. Thinking back on their days at Vanderbilt, Anthony remarks, "It was fun to be on the bottom floor of emerging women's athletics prior to Title IX."

{Sports Roundup}

Tennis: Men Win First SEC Title

The eighth-ranked Vanderbilt men's tennis team won its first-ever Southeastern Conference Tournament championship, defeating No. 2-ranked Florida April 20 in Oxford, Miss. Second-ranked Bobby Reynolds scored a 7-6, 6-3 (2) victory over 18th-ranked Hamid Mirzadeh at the No. 1 position. Reynolds, a junior, was later named SEC Player of the Year, and Commodore coach Ken Flach was named Coach of the Year. Last year the team finished the SEC regular season with a 1-10 record and a first-round exit at the SEC Tournament, making this season a worst-to-first achievement within the conference.

Cross Country: Brogan Named Marshall Scholar

David Brogan, a Vanderbilt biomedical engineering senior who combines his studies with cross-country competition and community involvement, has been chosen to receive a prestigious Marshall Scholarship. He is one of 40 U.S. students selected this year to participate in the program.



Brogan

Brogan plans to use his scholarship to pursue a master of philosophy at either Kings College of London or Oxford University. He hopes to become a physician and to explore combining medical imaging techniques with surgical practice to develop innovative methods of treatment.

Basketball: Anderson Sets Scoring Record in Season Finale

Senior center Chantelle Anderson set a new Vanderbilt women's basketball scoring record in the Commodores' last game of the season, an 86-85 overtime loss to Boston College in the second round of the NCAA Tournament. She surpassed by one point the record of 2,602 points set by former All-American center Wendy Scholtens.

The team finished the season with a 22-10 overall record, 9-5 in SEC play and ranked 15th in the nation by the Associated Press.

Basketball: Freije Named Second Team All-SEC

Junior forward Matt Freije has been named Second Team All-SEC by a vote of the league's basketball coaches. He was a member of the SEC All-Freshman Team two years ago and earned Third Team All-SEC honors after his sophomore season.

Freije, who scored at least 20 points in eight of the final 12 games, finished the regular season as the Commodores' leading scorer with 17.9 points per game, and he finished second on the team in rebounds with 4.3 rebounds per contest. He ranked among the SEC's best in scoring, field-goal percentage, free-throw percentage, three-point percentage, and three-point field goals made.

In the Vanderbilt record book, Freije is ranked 21st in career scoring (1,247), ninth in career three-point field-goal attempts (326), 10th in three-pointers made (118), and is only one block away from reaching the school's top 10 with 49 career blocks.

Track: Hahn Sets Pentathlon School Record

Josie Hahn, a sophomore from Clinton, Tenn., established a Vanderbilt pentathlon record and finished fourth overall during the opening day of the Southeastern Conference Indoor Track and Field Championships in March. Her 3,892-point total is the highest ever by a Vanderbilt women's track athlete, easily surpassing her own mark of 3,598 points. She set career bests in the high jump and long jump and matched her previous record in the shot put during the performance.



Hahn

Golf: Snedeker No. 1 in Golfstat Rankings

Vanderbilt golfer Brandt Snedeker claimed the top spot in early spring Golfstat rankings with a 69.45 stroke average in 20 rounds. The rankings came on the heels of Snedeker's climb to No. 1 in the nation in the *Golfweek/Sagarin* Poll.

In Vanderbilt's first event of the spring, the senior from Nashville finished in second place and just one shot out of the top spot at the Gator Invitational in Gainesville, Fla., and was named SEC Golfer of the Week.

On the strength of three first-place finishes, Snedeker was atop the SEC rankings since the beginning of the fall season. In measuring stroke averages from team tournaments, he had more than a two-stroke lead over the SEC's second-place golfer with his mark of 69.06 in 17 rounds.

Snedeker is one of 21 collegiate men's golfers who has been named to the watch list for the 2003 Ben Hogan Award. The Ben Hogan Award is presented annually to the top men's NCAA Division I, II or III or NAIA golfer.



Vanderbilt Crew team training on Percy Priest Lake

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEEL BRAKE

Collective Memory

Vanderbilt's Television News Archive keeps an eye on history.

By MICHAEL SIMS

OUR PLANET IS A busy place. For one thing, it's crawling with billions of human beings—citizens struggling for humane treatment, politicians making promises to their constituents, soldiers fighting wars, and businesspeople wrangling for advantage over their rivals. For more than half a century, television journalists have been pointing cameras at these frantic activities and bringing them into living rooms across the country.

History is the collective memory of the human race, and TV news broadcasts are history in the making. Yet, for many years after they began broadcasting, the networks did not keep copies of their daily news programs. Each network jealously hoarded files of its own raw footage, but made no copies of the final edited product. This absence left a serious gap in society's memory. The evening news broadcasts—appearing in living rooms every evening at dinnertime, calmly surveyed by a familiar talking head—not only document events but shape our opinion of them.

This journalistic sin of omission was corrected in August 1968, when the Vanderbilt Television News Archive began recording and cataloging the networks' daily updates on our

chaotic world. The archive was founded by a Vanderbilt alumnus, a Nashville insurance executive named Paul C. Simpson, JD'33. Working with Frank Gresham, director of what was then called the Joint University Libraries, and with the chancellor's office and the board of trust, Simpson built the initial archive with grants from various sources. Contributors ranged from the Ford Foundation and Mobil Oil to local Nashvillians such as Vanderbilt's David K. Wilson, BA'41. Nowadays the archive, which is one of 10 divi-



sions within the Jean and Alexander Heard Library, receives donations from many other universities. Vanderbilt covers the deficit that usually remains after fees and donations have been tabulated.

Originally, Simpson was the only staff member, and currently there are only five full-

time staff and a fluctuating number of student workers. They stay busy. Ever since 1968, the archive has been recording every evening news broadcast by ABC, CBS and NBC. "Nightline" was covered sporadically from 1980 to 1988, and comprehensively ever since. In 1995 CNN's nightly updates were added.

"Our collection tends to be American current events, sort of presidential-centered," explains John Lynch, the archive's director. One cyclical uproar the archive always documents is presidential campaigns. In fact, the troubled 1968 Republican convention was one of the first events recorded by the fledgling operation. (Simpson's new institution had yet to purchase its own recording equipment and initially borrowed items from Nicholson HiFi in Nashville.) There is no particular emphasis on foreign news, but naturally many events wind up documented. They range from the Watergate hearings to the Iran hostage crisis, from the Persian Gulf War to the terrorist attack on 9/11, not to mention the Clinton impeachment hearings and interviews with Ayatollah Khomeini and Saddam Hussein.

"In many ways," observes Marshall Breeding, library technology officer, "the collection hasn't changed. We have been using the same criteria for collecting since the beginning. It has grown enormously in size, though, with a collection that spans 35 years totaling 30,000 hours of material."

Every taped program displays both the network identification and the date and time (in Central Time). This running clock coordinates the various aspects of the collection. Later, while writing a brief synopsis of each program, an indexer records the start and stop times of each news story, along with key items of information that will aid a search of the database.

"On the evening news," says Lynch, "we describe down to the individual item—every single story—and every commercial, although on commercials all we do is list the product."

As with all research institutions, the TV News Archive wrestles with budget issues that affect quality. For example, most programs are recorded on three-quarter-inch tape. Twenty-four hours a day, however, there are six-hour VHS tapes monitoring everything on the three major networks, just in case something comes up unexpectedly. These backup tapes are recycled if nothing momentous occurs during their watch. John Lynch explains the difference with an example: "If something like a big development in the war with Iraq comes, and the news stations and networks go 24 hours a day for a while, we use two-hour VHS." The larger tape costs many times as much per hour. Lynch explains that they simply cannot afford to run the more expensive tape all day long. Around-the-clock coverage also requires more staff time, particularly to catalog the resulting backlog accurately. "The last Gulf War," Lynch sighs, "just about closed the archive, it cost us so much money."

Copies of every evening news program or news special are available for loan, but copyright restrictions do not allow materials to be sold. Because of its unique collection, the TV News Archive is besieged with requests from many different kinds of patrons. One man is slowly working his way through the Watergate coverage. Another researcher wanted to document the progression of public discussion of diabetes over the years. Some

need duplications of complete programs, while others request specially created anthology tapes of various stories on a particular issue. Vanderbilt itself doesn't have a journalism department, but other University departments use the archive frequently—especially English, American studies and his-

will make the material available to researchers and students much more quickly. Patrons will merely have to find their item in the index, click on it, and view a small version of it on the computer screen, as easily as they might sample a movie preview on the Internet now. To begin evaluating the magnitude of the task



tory. Lynch says with a smile, "We're just getting old enough for history."

Eventually, like everything else in the world (for example, radiology departments, as discussed in the winter 2003 issue of *Vanderbilt Magazine*), the TV News Archive will switch completely to digital equipment. This change will take place slowly, but when completed it



of digitizing their materials, the archive has already completely digitized and indexed one entire month.

Now new copyright questions are being addressed. Sometimes the relationship between the networks and their independent collective memory has had its stumbling blocks. But no one denies the invaluable service the archive performs. "If you go to the networks for a broadcast," says John Lynch, "they will send you to us." In fact, in 1991 CBS anchor Dan Rather declared that in his work he faces two professional burdens—the viewer ratings and the Vanderbilt Television News Archive. In the long run, the latter may be more historically significant. Viewers can defect to another channel, but the crew at the TV News Archive is always watching. ▼

Michael Sims writes about science and culture. He is the author of *Darwin's Orchestra and the forthcoming Adam's Navel: A Natural and Cultural History of the Human Form* (Viking, 2003). He is a frequent contributor to *Vanderbilt Magazine*.

Bright Ideas

“With a coronavirus like SARS, there’s a lot of information in place that can be harnessed to develop treatments.” —MARK DENISON

Old Virus, New Tricks

1 IN THE LAST 30 years, scientist Mark Denison estimates, researchers have been identifying something on the order of one new humanly recognized or newly emerging human infectious disease per year. Advances in the science of microbiology are part of the reason. But Denison says the rate of identification also reflects the fact that human beings make it so easy for viruses to thrive.

There are 6.3 billion of us dispersed over all parts of the planet, often living in close quarters or jetting across continents. And when we’re not spreading viruses around among ourselves, we’re relocating other species or planting monocrops that make it easy for viruses to spread—as in the case of the Irish potato famine.

Denison, associate professor of pediatrics and associate professor of microbiology and immunology, is an expert in coronaviruses, which are responsible for, among other things, 30 percent of common colds. For the past 11 years, Denison has quietly gone about his work in the Lamb Center for Pediatric Research, studying the mouse hepatitis virus to increase our understanding of

how viruses grow and spread. Since March, however, the work of the Denison lab has been under an intense spotlight. The SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) virus, which has devastated parts of Asia and created a worldwide scare, is a coronavirus. Suddenly, everyone is coming to Denison for information. He is collaborating with the National Institutes for Health (NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to understand the replication process of the SARS virus.

Speaking to *Vanderbilt Magazine* on a recent day during which he had also given interviews with CNN, *Newsweek*, and a Nashville television station, Denison says that, as ominous as the threat from SARS may be, medical researchers are far ahead of where they were when HIV first appeared two decades ago.

“When HIV first appeared, we didn’t know the virus. We didn’t know how it grew, or what kind of cells it grows in, or anything about the enzymes or proteins.” However, with a coronavirus like SARS, Denison says, “there’s a lot of information in place that can be harnessed to develop treatments or prevention strategies.

“Coronaviruses live out on the edge of the RNA world,” he adds. “RNAs usually can’t be very big, but the coronavirus

RNA is huge.” The range of diseases they can cause in animals includes severe respiratory disease, hepatitis, neurological disease, and renal disease. They have also been used as an animal model for studying multiple sclerosis.

Coronaviruses are found in many animal species. “They have some fairly novel characteristics,” Denison says. “I call

them promiscuous viruses. They do everything big. Their genetic material is big, they make a lot more proteins than other viruses, and they mix and match their genetic material during their normal life cycle. So they can generate lots of different variances.”

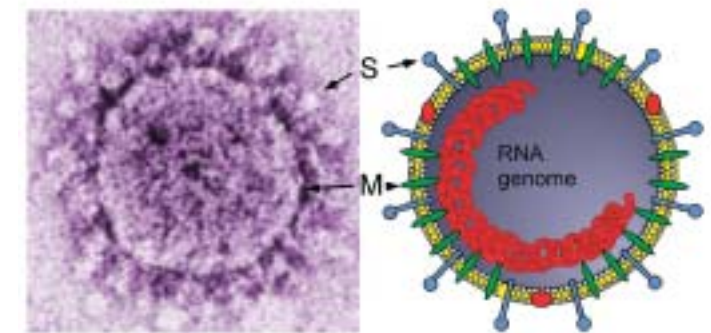
A virus that could live for thousands of years in one host animal species, for example,

might suddenly mutate or mingle with another virus, allowing it to jump to another type of animal.

Denison speculates that such a variance could have allowed SARS to jump from another as-yet unknown animal species to humans. “Any time something new is introduced into a genetically and immunologically naïve popula-

tion, it’s risky,” he says.

Scientists are looking at more than one approach to attacking the SARS virus. The one in which Denison and his colleagues are most interested involves preventing the virus from making proteins. When the virus enters the host cell, it makes a polyprotein, a giant protein that contains a number of substances, including three



Difficult to grow under laboratory conditions, coronaviruses are responsible for SARS and 30 percent of common colds.

enzymes called proteinases. The proteinases chop up the polyprotein into smaller, functional proteins.

“We’ve shown that if you can block this process, the virus can’t go on,” Denison says. “So we’re particularly interested in proteinase inhibitors—enzymes or chemicals that keep the virus from cutting its own replication proteins.”

Proteinase inhibitors are used in the treatment of HIV. New ones would likely need to be developed to treat SARS.

“We’re also interested in working with the NIH and the CDC to develop a SARS vaccine,” Denison says. He is particularly interested in live attenuated vaccines, which have a reduced capacity to grow—as in the case of the oral polio vaccine. “They can still grow and infect people, but because they grow poorly, the body has time to build up an immune response.”

Denison’s research with the mouse hepatitis virus has already shown that, by producing a mutation of that virus, it is possible to stop the virus from cutting the polyprotein into smaller individual proteins, making it harder for the virus to grow.

“I’ve worked with coronaviruses for 18 years, and some of my colleagues have worked with them even longer. We know an awful lot,” he notes. “SARS is like the kid down the street. We know everything about him. We know his actions and movements. We just didn’t expect him to commit a crime. But we have a lot of places to start. And that’s a compelling argument for the value of doing basic science. The research we’ve done over a period of years is now paying huge dividends because with SARS, it’s allowed us to learn so much very quickly.”



Dr. Mark Denison

NEIL BRASSE

Personal Theories and the Diagnosis of Mental Disorders

2 WHEN YOUR therapist tells you you're depressed or bipolar or have a

borderline personality disorder, you depend on that diagnosis to be based on facts. For 22 years the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders*, fourth edition (DSM-IV), with its 300 diagnoses has been the clinically accepted therapist's bible. It's routinely used to assess and determine patient diagnosis in the mental health field. Even so, a recent study from two Vanderbilt researchers has found therapists' objectivity can be clouded by personal beliefs. And that clouding can impact the diagnosis they attach to you and the kind of care you receive.

It's a finding Woo-kyoung Ahn, associate professor of psychology at Vanderbilt, and co-researcher Nancy Kim, a visiting faculty member from Wesleyan University, have uncovered in their work. Their results were published in December in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology*.

"Clinical psychologists have been told they should make their diagnoses based solely on a checklist of symptoms. But our results [find that they] are significantly more likely to diagnose patients with a mental disorder when the person exhibits symptoms that are central in the clinician's own theories. Similarly, they are far less likely to make the same diagnosis for a patient with symptoms they consider to be peripheral [to their own theories]," says

Ahn. She and Kim hope their findings will have an impact on future editions of the DSM. Funding for their work came from the National Science Foundation and the National Institute of Mental Health.

In their study, Ahn and Kim had 35 clinicians and 25 clinical trainees perform four tasks. They measured participants' theoretical views by having them draw relationships between the symptoms of some disorders. Next, the subjects identified the relative importance of symptoms associated with disorders, and then they diagnosed hypothetical cases. Several hours later they tested participants' memories of the symptoms of the patients they diagnosed.

The researchers found the test group held complicated theories about various disorders—ranging from schizophrenia, major depression and anorexia nervosa to a variety of personality disorders—and the relative importance of various symptoms. Concurrently, the individuals' personal theories varied greatly.

In general, such theorizing appears to be part of human nature and is not necessarily bad, says Ahn. At the same time, because there is no basic understanding of the underlying causes of mental illness, the clinicians' individual theories can be idiosyncratic and lead to conflicting diagnoses.

And there's more. Ahn and Kim found individual theories held by clinicians about a given disorder affected the diagnoses. This, in turn, influenced the clinicians' recollection of patients'



Woo-kyoung Ahn

symptoms. They observed the clinicians and students were more likely to remember symptoms correctly if they judged them to be central to a given disorder. On the other hand, they were far more likely to forget symptoms they considered peripheral.

Even more striking was how clinicians' theories affected their memories of patients' symptoms. When they diagnosed patients with a specific disorder who did not have some of the symptoms that the clinicians considered central, they were likely to remember that the patients had these key symptoms when, in fact, they did not.

Ahn predicts these problems will be even more pronounced when clinicians are dealing with real patients. "I think this effect may actually be stronger because many more ambiguities surface when working with actual patients. For instance, clinicians' theories may influence their interpretation of patients' symptoms or characteristics, such as mood or level of hygiene."

Robot Fridays

3 "I SENSE THAT YOU are anxious. Is there anything I can do to help?"

No, it's not your therapist or your mother; it's your robot asking the question. There's no point in telling this robot "No, I'm fine," because your heart rate and sweaty palms have already given the game away. And your robot is right: Your anxiety could well signal that something important is going wrong, which could be extremely crucial information if you're working underwater or out in space.

Emotionally sensitive robots that can interpret the body's physiological signals would enjoy obvious advantages in being able to respond more rapidly and helpfully to situations that are confronting their human masters. This was the motivation that inspired one of the robotics laboratories at the Vanderbilt University School of Engineering to develop a robot that can mine physiological

data from sensors attached to the body in order to interpret emotional state, treat it as important information, and respond to human needs quickly and usefully.

"There is a lot of communication that is implicit between two persons," says Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering Nilanjan Sarkar. "We study each other's faces and body language to see how the other person reacts." Other robotics researchers have used cameras to capture visual clues to emotion, but Sarkar wanted to focus on physiological manifestations of emotion, such as heartbeat.

Like most engineering problems, it turns out to be complicated. For one thing, individual human beings don't have the same physical reactions to their emotions. There is a great deal of individual variation; some people make facial gestures while others' heart rates skyrocket. Any emotion-sensing robot must be able to read the emotions of its particular human; universal patterns of emotional response don't exist.

For another, it turns out that researchers in different disciplines speak slightly different procedural and conceptual languages, making cross-disciplinary collaboration more challenging than either professor expected.

Sarkar had read a great deal about physiological responses to emotions and knew the robot would need to be able to learn its individual human's response patterns. He also knew that he would need to find a collaborator in psychology to help him design the human-subject research.

Vanderbilt Associate Professor of Psychology Craig Smith admits he was prepared to reject Sarkar's idea until he realized the engineer had done his homework in psychology

and had come up with an intriguing idea. A specialist in cognitive studies at Peabody College, the project interested him. Learning about robot cognition might shed light on human cognition.

Pooling their academic expertise and resources, the two professors began to learn some tricks of the other's trade.

"It was a little bit of a culture shock for both of us," Smith says. "Engineering focuses on getting something to work. Research in psychology focuses on testing a hypothesis to infer causality."

"One of our biggest challenges was to enable the robot to extract data in real time so that it would not be lost forever in thought," Smith says. "The tools and techniques we used to

extract and analyze the data quickly will also be applicable to many other psychology research projects."

In their research, the professors used heartbeat, facial-muscle movement and hand-sweat sensors on human subjects and monitored these physiological markers while the subjects played video games. The research demonstrated some patterns of stress response when analyzed with wavelet analysis and fuzzy logic. They liken their approach to that used by voice and handwriting recognition systems: gathering baseline information about each person and analyzing it to identify the responses associated with different mental states.

The preliminary concepts and results of the research were reported in the *Robotica Journal*, published by Cambridge University Press. The article touched off a flurry of general science and news media articles and broadcasts on the professors' research.

Since then, the research team has taught the robot to decide whether to protect itself, sound alarms, or move to assist the person.

Future research will involve additional sensors such as electroencephalogram (EEG) brainwave monitors and additional measures of cardiovascular activity. One of the most formidable challenges they face is to find a way to discriminate between high levels of anxiety and engagement. These two states are accompanied by physiological responses that are much closer to each other than either of them are to low levels of anxiety or engagement.

"This is the really big one," Smith says.



Graduate student Pramila Rani wears emotion sensors that provide data to the robot about her moods.



Nilanjan Sarkar and Craig Smith

PHOTOS BY DANIEL DUBOIS

High-Intake Oxygen Can Be Harmful

4 AT HEALTH SPAS, mall kiosks and “oxygen bars” across the country, people are paying to breathe oxygen. For about a dollar a minute, enthusiasts inhale 95 percent oxygen — air offers a paltry 21 percent O₂—and report that it relieves a variety of maladies from hangovers to headaches.

The practice may be a bad idea, according to Vanderbilt University Medical Center scientists who are studying the damaging effects of free radicals—highly reactive molecules derived from oxygen.

“We’re starting to think that oxygen is not as benign as many believe it is,” said Dr. L. Jackson Roberts II, professor of pharmacology and medicine. Roberts and Joshua P. Fessel, an M.D./Ph.D. student, have discovered a new class of compounds, called isofurans, which form when free radicals attack cell membrane lipids. Isofurans, whose production is favored by high oxygen concentrations, are expected to be a useful tool for assessing the role of free radicals and oxidative injury in disease and for evaluating the effectiveness of antioxidant therapies.

Already, the investigators have demonstrated that isofuran levels increase when animals breathe 100 percent oxygen for as little as three hours. These findings, part of the group’s work reported in the *Proceedings of the National*



Oxygen bars have sprung up in malls across the country.

AP/WIDEWORLD PHOTOS

Academy of Sciences, demonstrate that free-radical processes are at work in hyperoxia-induced lung injury. “We suspected this to be the case, but we didn’t have the tools to show it until now,” says Roberts.

Hyperoxia-induced lung injury is a key problem in intensive care units. Patients on ventilators can only breathe oxygen concentrations up to 60 percent for prolonged periods of time. Higher concentrations—though of potential benefit to the body’s organs—lead to severe lung damage.

The ability to measure isofuran production will make it possible to study the oxygen-induced damage and to evaluate potential therapeutic

interventions like antioxidants, the researchers report.

“The question is, is there something we can do that would allow clinicians to actually use higher concentrations of oxygen safely, and therefore better oxygenate patients who are sick?” asks Roberts. “We don’t know yet, but now we have a way to monitor that.”

The fact that isofuran levels increased in the lung after only three hours of exposure to 100 percent oxygen—indicating that free-radical damage is a very early event—surprised the researchers. They also found evidence for the release of a trigger for programmed cell death, cytochrome c, in the lung at three hours.

“Most physicians are certainly aware that extended periods of exposure to 100 percent oxygen is harmful, but three hours would not be considered an extended period of time,” Fessel says. The short time frame of free-radical damage opens questions about potential damage to the lungs of patients who breathe 100 percent oxygen during surgical procedures and to the lungs of those “oxygen bar” enthusiasts.

For a healthy individual, any damage that results from breathing high concentrations of oxygen for a short time is likely to be insignificant and spontaneously repaired, Fessel says. “But what about the person who has some underlying

infection or other problem in the lung?” he asks.

Roberts and colleagues, including Dr. Jeffrey Balsler, the James Tayloe Gwathmey Professor and Chair of Anesthesiology, and Dr. Kenneth Smithson, assistant professor of anesthesiology, are launching a clinical study to evaluate how free-radical processes might impact lung function in surgery patients. The study could suggest that lower oxygen levels would be beneficial, say Roberts and Fessel, or that antioxidant interventions should be tested to prevent free-radical damage.

The newly identified isofurans are actually the second set of compounds Roberts and colleagues have linked to free-radical processes. The group’s 1990 discovery of isoprostanes, prostaglandin-like products of free-radical injury, made it possible for researchers to detect

and monitor free-radical reactions in human beings for the first time. Measuring isoprostanes quickly became the “gold standard in the field,” says Roberts, and it has been used to implicate free radicals in disease processes ranging from atherosclerosis to neurodegeneration.

Dr. Jackson Roberts (left) and Joshua Fessel have discovered a new class of compounds, called isofurans, which form when free radicals attack cell membrane lipids and whose production is favored by high oxygen concentrations. According to Roberts, “we’re starting to think that oxygen is not as benign as many believe it is.”

But isoprostanes are not perfect measures of free-radical processes. Because the formation of these compounds becomes disfavored when oxygen levels climb above 21 percent, they do not provide an accurate measure of free-radical reactions that occur in the presence of high oxygen concentrations. The isofurans overcome this limitation. High oxygen levels favor the chemical reactions that produce isofurans, making them useful indicators of free-radical damage in high-oxygen settings like hyperoxia-induced lung injury, as the investigators showed, and for other oxygen-associated disease states like retinopathy of prematurity.

The investigators also have measured isofurans to assess oxidative injury in disease states involving mitochondrial dysfunction. Mitochondria—

the power plants of cells—use oxygen in a complex series of energy-generating chemical reactions. They also generate free radicals. When mitochondria are not fully functional, oxygen levels inside the cell theoretically climb. Roberts and Fessel postulated that free-radical activity under these conditions might result in isofuran production.

Indeed, they found that isofuran levels were elevated in brain tissue samples from Parkinson’s patients—Parkinson’s disease is known to involve mitochondrial dysfunction—whereas isoprostane levels were unchanged. The investigators will continue to explore disease states where mitochondrial dysfunction is thought to play a role.

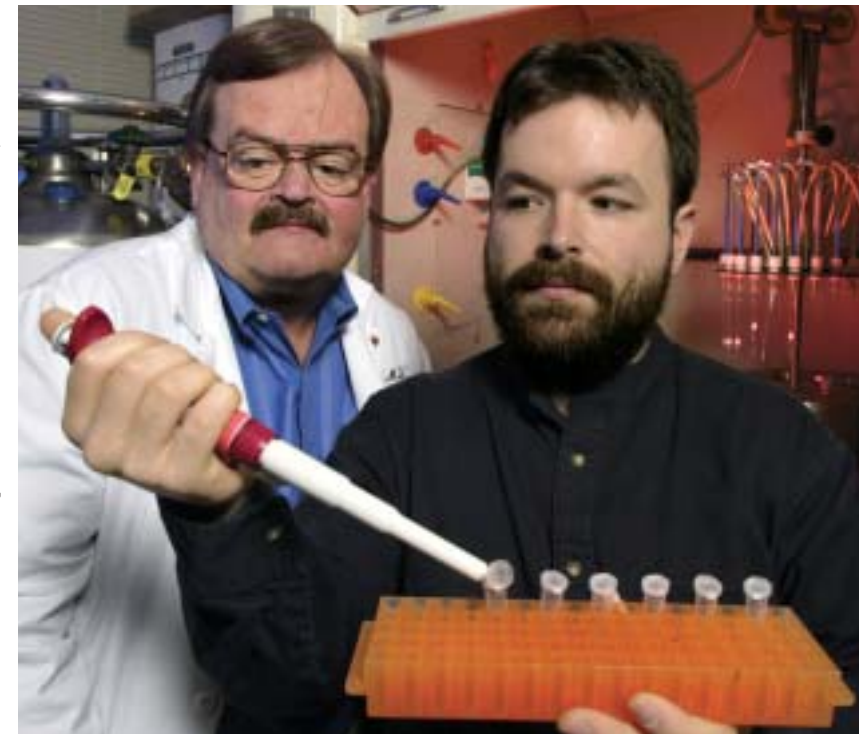
“Measuring isofurans really complements measuring isoprostanes,” Roberts says.

“Together the two of them provide a complete picture of oxidant stress.”

The two also can serve as a sort of “oxygen sensor,” say Fessel and Roberts. The researchers found that the ratio of isofuran to isoprostane concentrations in normal tissues—the compounds are produced by ongoing free-radical processes—provides an indication of tissue oxygenation. In oxygen-rich tissues like the brain and kidney, isofuran levels were two to three times higher than isoprostane levels. In the oxygen-poor liver, isoprostanes predominated.

“The isofuran/isoprostane ratio is really a measure of steady-state tissue oxygenation,” says Fessel. The ratio should be useful for studying disease states where oxygen supply is perturbed, like peripheral vascular disease, or for assessing the effectiveness of so-called “blood substitutes”—compounds that carry oxygen to tissues, he says.

Other authors of the PNAS study include Ned A. Porter, Stevenson Professor of Chemistry; Dr. James R. Sheller, associate professor of medicine; and Dr. Kevin P. Moore of the Royal Free and University College Medical School in London. The work was supported by the National Institutes of Health and the PhRMA Foundation.



NEIL BRINKE

For more information about stories in *Bright Ideas*, visit Vanderbilt’s online research journal, *Exploration*, at <http://exploration.vanderbilt.edu>.

What Doth It Profit a Man?

Bart Victor teaches Vanderbilt business students how to do the right thing.

By PAUL KINGSBURY, BA'80

IT'S A WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON IN March. Spring is in the air, the campus is in bloom, and in Room 222 of Management Hall, the class is wrestling with right and wrong.

"So we've got lying, stealing, cheating," Professor Bart Victor says, summing up a host of ethical breakdowns

that plagued eye-care giant Bausch & Lomb in the 1980s and '90s, and which directly led to a slump in the company's fortunes. "Sounds like a country song." A beat. "Without ethics, you know, there would be no country music." Big laugh. Welcome to the Ethics in Business course, spring 2003.

Bart Victor, the Cal Turner Professor of Moral Leadership at the Owen Graduate School of Management, keeps the mood light, roaming around the cozy amphitheater-style classroom like a standup comic visiting tables at a nightclub, tossing out the occasional quip. But there's serious thinking going on here, too, as he asks tough questions and pushes the class of about 40 MBA students to confront the inevitable friction that comes from the Golden Rule bumping up against the Profit Motive.

For about 20 minutes during the 90-minute session, Victor turns the class over to three students, who assess where B&L went wrong and how the company could have stayed on the straight and narrow. In their PowerPoint presentation, they display a bombshell of a directive from B&L CEO Daniel Gill about

meeting the company's quarterly sales goals: "Make the numbers, but don't do anything stupid." As one of the student presenters notes, it certainly looks like a rather transparent code for "Don't get caught."

As the three students wrap up their presentation, a series of questions comes from a classmate: But why is making your numbers

considered acceptable behavior in pursuit of business goals. But as the session winds down, it's clear that "making the numbers"—and how one does that—is the heart of the matter.

"You're going to have the responsibility for sales targets," Bart Victor reminds the twenty-something students. "You're going to be responsible for people's behavior, even when you can't watch them."

Anyone put off by the pious ring of "professor of moral leadership" would be immediately disarmed upon meeting Bart Victor. On a spring morning in his third-floor Owen office, dressed casually in khakis, loafers and black polo shirt, with his feet occasionally propped on a pulled-out desk drawer, the 48-year-old business professor seems nearly as unguarded and informal as the students he teaches. At the same time, though, his conversation crackles

continued on page 84



{Suggested Reading}

- 1. Defining Moments: The Discipline of Building Character**, Joseph Badaracco (Harvard Business School Press, 2001)
- 2. God the Economist**, M. Douglas Meeks (Fortress Press, 1989)
- 3. Development as Freedom**, Amartya Sen (Knopf, 2001)
- 4. Crimes of Obedience**, Herbert Kelman and Lee Hamilton (Yale Press, 1989)

wrong? Isn't that standard business practice? If you're a company that disregards the numbers, are you going to be around very long?"

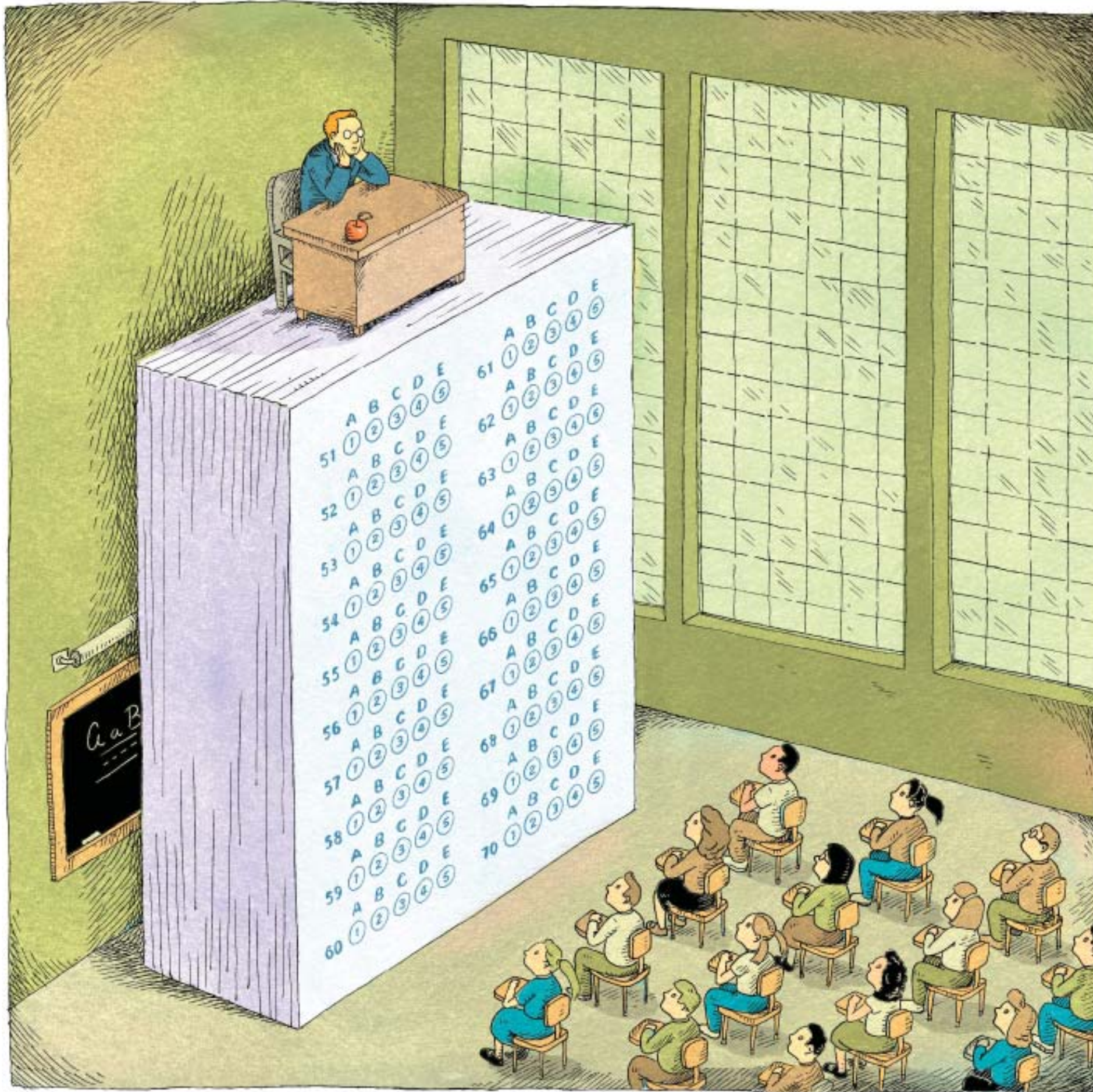
Hearing this, Bart Victor's face lights up, and he says, "Now you've got something there," and he urges the students to grapple with the issue.

The student presenters do a creditable job of fielding these tough, fundamental questions and, challenged by the professor, the class openly discusses just what is con-



Bart Victor

NEIL BRANE



By LABAN CARRICK HILL

COM PRO MISE IN THE CLASS ROOM

Do new standardized-testing policies limit a teacher's ability to educate students properly?

Illustrations by WESLEY BEDROSIAN

WE ARE A COUNTRY OBSESSED WITH MEASURING. IF WE CAN'T QUANTIFY it, then a value cannot be placed on it. In a market economy, something without a specific value cannot be put up for sale and cannot be bought. In short, it cannot be a part of the economy. The way President Bush's 2001 "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) Act is designed seemed to be based on these simple truths, which also suggests why it has received unprecedented support. The bill passed the House of Representatives by a 381 to 41 margin and the Senate 87 to 10. The No Child Left Behind Act became law Jan. 1, 2002. At the core of the NCLB legislation is standardized testing in reading, math and science to quantify the success or failure of America's schools. This kind of testing is meant not only to measure student progress, but is also an incentive to change the culture of the nation's schools.

The belief that our schools have failed in teaching our kids what they need to know has been increasing in recent years. According to the U.S. Department of Education, 88 percent of the United States public supports raising standards and requiring graduation exams, which suggests a real belief that schools are not performing. Beginning with the *Nation at Risk* report nearly 20 years ago, there has been a vigorous national debate over how to improve our nation's schools and our children's achievement.

The NCLB Act responds to these concerns by attempting to give schools and districts greater flexibility and control, to require only scientifically proven teaching methods, and to hold schools accountable for results. NCLB is the largest education law passed in more than 35 years, when Congress passed President Lyndon Johnson's Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The NCLB law increased education spending to more than \$22.1 billion—a 27 percent increase over 2001 and a 49 percent

increase over 2000 levels. "These reforms express my deep belief in our public schools and their mission to build the mind and character of every child, from every background, in every part of America," President Bush said during his first week in office in January 2001.

At the center of the law is a big stick called "Adequate Yearly Progress" (AYP), an ambitious program set up to hold school districts and schools accountable for their students' performance in the core content subjects of reading, math and science. While AYP does not tell states what standards their students must meet, it does insist that states create clear guideposts that students, teachers, parents and administrators can measure for academic achievement. The NCLB Act requires states to create annual assessments that measure what children know and can do in reading and math in grades three through eight. One of the innovations of this law is the insistence that states provide data on student per-

formance by poverty levels, race, ethnicities, disabilities, and limited English proficiencies to ensure that no child—regardless of his or her background—is left behind.

While on the surface this new act seems not only admirable, but also badly needed, many education professionals already have questioned the innovation of its provisions. Charles B. Myers, emeritus professor of social studies education at Peabody College, finds himself a bit cynical when he thinks about the NCLB Act. "We've been developing standards of accountability for social studies teachers and colleges and universities teaching social studies teachers for five years," explains Myers. "This is nothing new."

Myers also questions the effectiveness of standards when, in many school districts, having a certified teacher in the classroom is a luxury. In places like California and New York City, where dramatic teacher shortages have existed for years, sometimes the most a district can hope for is a warm body in every classroom. For the current 2002–03 school year, New York City has more than 8,000 teachers who are not certified in the classrooms. It is clearly unrealistic for the New York City School Board to insist on full certification if the consequences are classrooms with no teachers. Myers recalls talking to a school principal from a rural district. "He had two openings in his school and advertised widely for teachers. None of the applicants who applied for the job was

qualified to teach, but he had to fill those slots. He hired two teachers whom he never would have hired if he were not desperate."

No amount of certification requirements will help children learn if no teachers are available to do the job. Myers suspects the tough new teacher standards are simply a new way to avoid funding education at the levels necessary to attract good teachers. "Paying for testing is a lot cheaper than actually spending the money needed to improve schools," says Myers. If a school cannot find a certified teacher because there are none, the best standards in the world will do no good. "There have to be teachers to hold accountable, and that is just not the case everywhere."

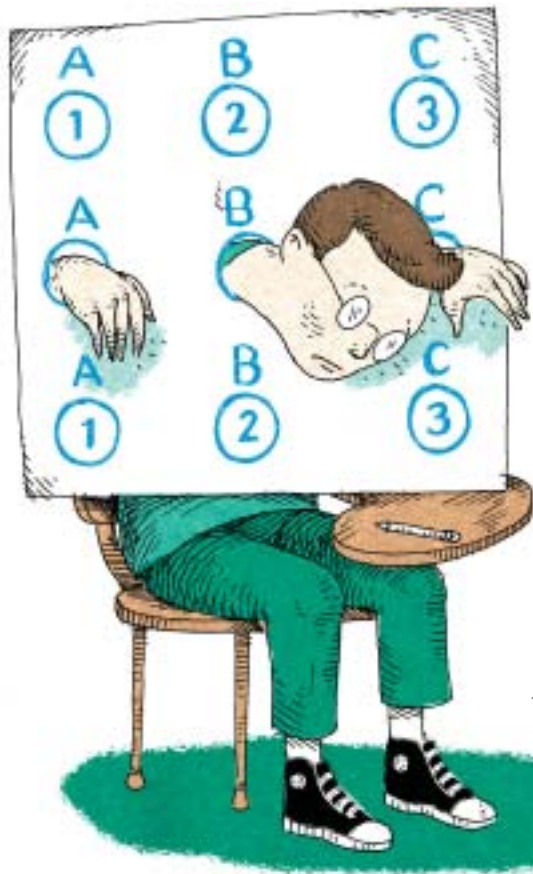
The program at which Myers levels his most withering criticism is NCLB's "Adequate Yearly Progress" program, which requires schools to give students achievement tests every year from third through eighth grades. "Testing isn't going to make poor students better or make teachers more effective. Yearly testing is just a bigger hammer to hit teachers with," argues Myers.

Alecia Ford, MEd'97 (Peabody), who has taught sixth grade at Jere Baxter Middle School, an inner-city school, and now teaches at

Meigs Magnet School in Nashville, confirms Myers's conclusions about student achievement. "If you were to grade my ability as a teacher by standardized tests, you would have given me a failing grade at Jere Baxter Middle School and an 'A' at Meigs Magnet School, even though I as a teacher did not change. At Baxter the biggest problem was getting the kids to school and getting them to focus in the class. They had so many social and economic issues outside school that dominated their lives that whatever was



While "Adequate Yearly Progress" does not tell states what standards their students must meet, it does insist that states create clear guideposts that students, teachers, parents and administrators can measure for academic achievement.



One of the other truths that standardized testing does not address is that many students who fall behind do not catch up in high school. Instead, they drop out. In fact, the pressure of these tests can help to push these students out even faster.

According to Myers, one of the other truths that standardized testing does not address is that many students who fall behind do not catch up in high school. Instead, they drop out. In fact, the pressure of these tests can help to push these students out even faster. Myers has found that it is not unusual for 75 percent of a class entering an inner-city high school to test below level, and for this same class to have a graduation rate of 40 to 80 percent. On the surface it appears this class has made great strides to catch up. In reality, the majority of failing students have dropped out because they have no chance of passing the standardized graduation exam. In this case the standardized test functions to discourage students from staying in school. Again, Myers sees a lack of funding beyond creating and administering the standardized tests. His fear is that preparing students to pass these tests will become the primary education goal, not the retention of those students falling behind.

When it comes to what happens in the classroom, Carolyn Evertson, professor of education in the Department of Teaching and Learning at Peabody College, has spent her career working with teachers on classroom management. Her work is concerned with creating conditions in which children can learn. Over the years she has seen new programs come and go with varying degrees

of success. "I've seen this happen so many times that teachers can get overwhelmed by the sheer amount of work it takes to make learning a priority," she explains. "These new programs may last a couple of years and then something new comes along. Some teachers manage to work new trends into the classroom the best they can. Other teachers just have to start from scratch and restructure, and still others may ignore it."

"If we add a new element," Evertson worries, "the assumption of policymakers is that it's just additive, like beads on a string. You're just adding another bead. In reality it is much more complicated. A new mandate can add a geometrical complexity to teaching, especially if teachers are trying to create a classroom in which students have ownership in what they do, or if some children have different educational plans from other students. I'm thinking particularly of special-needs kids as well as gifted kids. We've known for a long time that for all students to succeed, we have to differentiate so that children have access to learning in the ways they learn best."

Anne Marie Elkins, MEd'95 (Peabody), a sixth-grade teacher at Isaac Young Middle School in Hendersonville, Tenn., knows exactly what she has to sacrifice because of increased standardized testing. "I'm a literature teacher," she says. "If a child is going to continue to love reading, the sixth grade is the time to help solidify that. It gets a bit old

to keep hearing that what I need to be doing is teaching skills and essentially bore them to death." Elkins is a proponent of the Accelerated Reading Program in her school, which provides real incentives for reading. She worries, however, that this successful program is being crowded out of the curriculum because it is not measured on a test. She argues that a love for reading is a skill that will enrich students for their entire lives, rather than for a short-term goal like a test. For her this is the kind of sacrifice education is making for higher test scores.

Elkins explains that at the end of the year, standardized test scores provide the basis of her evaluation as a teacher. Whether her students gained an enthusiasm for reading that will carry them through life, whether children read Greek mythology, is not important to the way she is measured.

Evertson tries to put the potential troubles into perspective. "Suppose you're a teacher who has worked out a way for those who need more help in reading to get that help, and the kids who need more help in math to get that help. And suppose you've also put together groups of students working together to help each other, along with a whole-class situation in which there is some direct teaching. All of this is orchestrated throughout the day through a system of procedures that have become routine. Then there's a new mandate in which the focus is for all students to have high scores on achievement tests. This new emphasis doesn't just add a bead to the string. It adds a higher level of complexity that has to be sorted through in all those different ways in which each class functions."

Evertson's concern arises out of years of working with and observing teachers in the classroom. She cannot overemphasize how complex it is first to try to meet the needs of children who are much more diverse than in the past and then to do justice to a mandate no matter how wise or how needed it is. "It's just an organizational complexity that is

very hard for teachers," explains Evertson.

She uses an example of a friend who had to integrate a new reading strategy mandate into her classroom in the middle of the school year. "By the time the new policy came down, she already had each child on a reading level matching both where they were and where they needed to go. She had managed to individualize her whole class for reading, which is extraordinary. The students were doing well and enjoyed reading, and they could move to more difficult books. Each child had his or her own plan. Then the directive came down that each teacher must create three reading groups in the classroom. This teacher just decided to divide the kids up in three groups while still utilizing their own plans so that when someone came to see if the directive was implemented, what he saw was three groups."

Though the new mandate may have been smart policy, to ask this teacher to abandon a strategy that was obviously working in order to conform to the new mandate did not simply mean more work for the teacher, but also potential harm to her students' learning. It categorically dismissed her classroom decisions and attempted to impose a new order that contradicted what was already working.

Business management consultants John Maleyeff, an associate professor at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in the Lally School of Management and Technology, and Frank C. Kaminsky, professor emeritus in the College of Engineering at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, echoed Evertson's concerns recently in an editorial in the *Hartford Courant*. Like Evertson and most every other educator, they support the use of standardized testing in schools.

Maleyeff and Kaminsky, however, "have serious concerns about the way tests are being implemented and the way the results are being interpreted." They stress three important rules of effective quality management that must be adhered to if the testing is to be effective. "First, always use statistical methods

to distinguish between random variation in performance outcomes and real changes that may occur. Second, always use performance outcomes to understand and improve the system. Third, never use performance outcomes simply to reward or punish individual employees." They stress that management by fear encourages teachers to find ways to beat the system, and they suggest that programs like "Adequate Yearly Progress" are setting themselves up for disaster because they emphasize rewards and penalties without giving any real power to the teacher who is ultimately rewarded or punished.

"Consider the case in which the annual bonus of a teacher is based on the performance of students on standardized annual tests," they write. "On the surface, the policy appears to be a good idea. But this policy violates key rules of quality management. That teacher has no control over the quality and makeup of the incoming class, no control over whether the current year's test is similar to the previous year's test, and no control over random statistical variations." The consequence of this kind of quality management is a system that rewards "teachers and administrators who divert their attention from other subjects to spend an inordinate amount of time teaching to the test." Maleyeff and Kaminsky conclude that relying on this system is no better than rewarding teachers and schools on the basis of a coin toss.

Peabody graduate and schoolteacher Alecia Ford likes to make the distinction between constructive uses of statistics and punitive abuses. She cites a recent article in the *Tennessean* newspaper that listed all the scores of local schools and broke down the schools into economic class and ethnicity of their students. "The problem I had with that article was that it made certain schools and teachers appear bad. Statistics are helpful to informed educators because they can use the information to respond to those who are not doing well. But to simply label a school

or teacher bad is not helpful at all.”

Recent graduate Elizabeth Amy Bantly, BS’02 (Peabody), who teaches sixth grade at H.G. Hill Middle School in Nashville, feels this public accounting is good for schools and communities. “We have to demonstrate quality to the outside world,” she explains. “The public is not there with us every day, and they don’t know what we’re teaching and how the students are learning, so [standardized testing provides] an outside indicator of these things.” In her first year of teaching, she has not felt a lot of pressure to completely change the curriculum. She remains optimistic, saying, “I think they want us to do what’s best for the kids.”

Still, Evertson worries because a standardized test doesn’t measure everything a school teaches. “People who believe achievement tests are valueless really miss the point,” she explains. “It truly is important, for example, that third graders have certain basic skills such as number sense, word recognition and vocabulary, and testing can serve a purpose in determining this. But, conversely, not performing well on the test doesn’t necessarily mean that students are not going to do well in school. Other things come into play. Kids who don’t do well on tests, but learn through different modalities, may not have the opportunity to use those modalities on the test. Let’s say I understand a concept if I see it represented in pictures. If I am tested with words, I may not do very well even though I know the basic concept. I won’t be able to show my understanding in a text-based mode.

“Tests are useful, but limited, tools for assessing what students know. They typically cover a pretty narrow range of skills. And if they are given the proper weight in the larger picture of student assessment, they provide important information (when combined with other things) to help teachers understand what needs to be taught or re-taught. But not all students are able to show what they know through formal testing. It’s

The American Federation of Teachers ... insists that teachers participate in the creation, implementation and evaluation of standardized tests, that sufficient funding is provided for struggling students, and that the tests are used only for the purposes for which they were designed.



when the tests become high stakes that it becomes a problem. Even the [college-level] GRE and SAT exams make allowances for taking the tests orally; I haven’t heard about much of that kind of accommodation [in the AYP program]. The assumption is that kids should be able to take these tests.”

Bantly concedes that Evertson’s concerns are valid. “For some students testing is a good representation of their abilities, but with others not so. I have some students who have learning and attention difficulties, and I know they are a lot smarter than the tests. They might test on a third-grade level, but I know they can read on a sixth-grade level.”

Charles Kinzer, former professor of teaching and learning at Peabody College and now at Columbia University, finds the insistence on one kind of assessment troubling. “There are lots of ways to assess,” he says. “Teachers assess when they grade homework. Teachers assess when they see people on the playground sitting by themselves and not interacting with other kids. If they’re not socialized into the classroom, they’re not learning as well as they could. So there are lots of different kinds of assessment going on, including standardized. What people forget is that there are lots of goals and needs for assessment, such as the needs for a school board that is going to be ordering textbooks. The kinds of scores and information they need is different in some ways than what the classroom teacher needs

to know for the next day’s lesson. So there are different needs of assessment across the educational endeavor. The concern I have is that the act doesn’t deal as much with teaching as it does with assessing. If we start putting a limited pie of resources into additional assessment, then some of the good things that could be happening in terms of instruction will go away.” Though Kinzer admits it is too early to tell if this will actually happen, he feels strongly that these issues must be raised early.

“So much of what you hear in the popular press—and that’s where perceptions get formed on the part of parents—is that we’re going to do state tests and we’re going to do national tests and we’re going to make sure that no child is left behind because we’ll be able to figure out who is not learning,” Kinzer says. “But there is very little in the act that addresses what to do once we figure out who’s *not* learning. We already know that in fourth grade, we have this tail-off. Some children do really well in the second grade and third grade, but when they hit the content areas, they don’t learn as well as they could. That transition from ‘learning to read’ to ‘reading to learn’ gets stalled. They have learned to read stories OK, but when they get hit with textbooks, they tail off. The NCLB Act is good at identifying effective early reading strategies, but when kids hit the fourth grade and fifth grade, the act provides no direction. It can’t be more of the

same stuff. That obviously didn’t work. All the act does at this point is test to see who’s reading in fourth and fifth grade. What if they’re not? Then what?”

Myers suggests that teachers and schools already know who is not performing and that standardized tests, therefore, provide redundant information. He sees the increased testing as an unnecessary and inadequate effort to improve student learning. “These tests are really good at assigning blame, but not particularly successful at solving the problem.” He would like to see more of these funds diverted into solutions.

One bright spot in the NCLB Act is the work that Lynn Fuchs, professor of special education at Peabody College, has done for the “Reading First” program. Reading First is a \$900 million state grant program that promotes the use of scientifically based research to provide high-quality reading instruction for grades K–3. “I served on the reading assessment committee for developing guidelines to examine the technical features of reading tests,” explains Fuchs of her work for the U.S. Department of Education. “That process is one that states need to use as they incorporate assessments into their Reading First applications [for grant money]. I was also on the assessment and instruction committees for Early Reading First, a program for preschoolers. These committees are shaping what states need to do as they develop their applications for Reading First money.”

Fuchs, who is also a research-program director in Vanderbilt’s John F. Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development, is excited about the work she has done because this program will give school districts the kind of information they need to make good choices. “School districts can look at the available methods out there that they can invest their resources in, and have the information about which of those procedures produce which kinds of effects and which of those procedures there’s just no in-

formation for,” she explains. “That can help school districts spend their money wisely, both in purchasing materials and the money they spend in professional development. Generally, I think the move to try to put into place evaluative criteria of educational practices that rely on scientific evidence is a good thing, not a bad thing. If I had a child of school age, I would rather have my child in a classroom for which the school district has invested its dollars in methods for which there is scientific evidence showing it produces a good outcome.”

Ironically, Reading First and Early Reading First hold the most promise for students, teachers, schools and parents even though its emphasis is on preschoolers through third graders. The majority of the NCLB Act focuses primarily on third through eighth grades and does not provide the kind of support that the Reading First and Early Reading First programs offer.

Recently, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) passed a resolution on standards-based assessment and accountability that attempts to provide guidance for the AYP program. In the resolution the AFT stated it supports “appropriate, high-quality testing” but “continues to oppose the abuse, misuse and overuse of standardized testing.” The organization also insists that teachers participate in the creation, implementation and evaluation of standardized tests, that sufficient funding is provided for struggling students, and that the tests are used only for the purposes for which they were designed. Finally, the resolution asks that other kinds of student evaluation be used on an equal basis. In short, the AFT supports standardized testing as long as it is not the only evaluation tool.

Marc Bernstein, president of Kaplan K12 Services and a former math teacher and school superintendent, argued in a letter to the *New York Times* editorial page that “teachers are handicapped when too much emphasis is placed on standardized testing.”

He wrote that “a narrow curriculum clips the wings of creative, enthusiastic teachers. There is a way to maintain standardized state testing ... and to keep teachers reaching toward their ‘Mr. Chips’ potential, too. Use tests in combination with other evaluations. By having teachers assign a practical demonstration of student knowledge, like a term paper or oral presentation, we get a more complete understanding of a student’s skills, underscore the value of teaching subjects not measured on state tests, and keep teacher motivation high.”

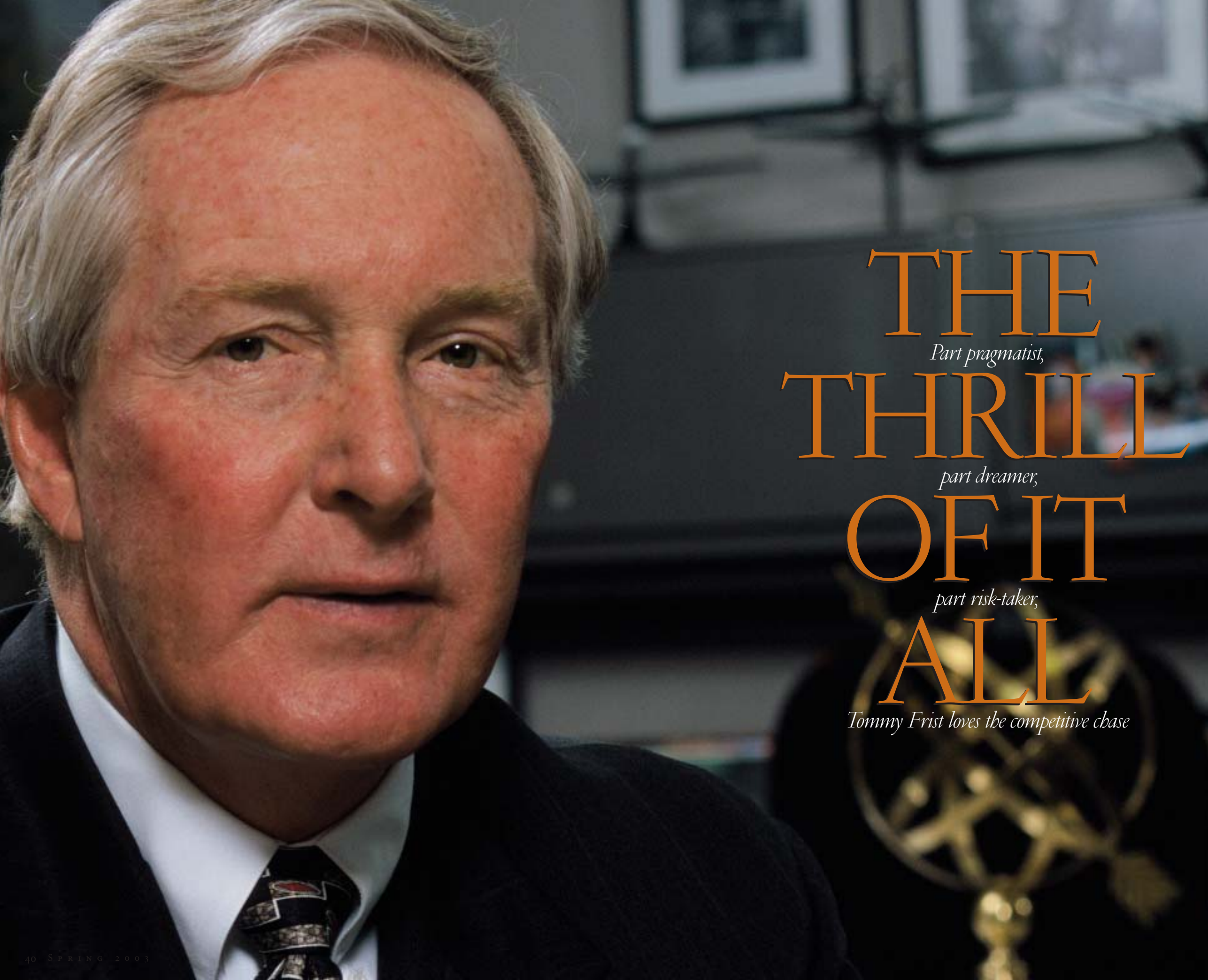
“I think one of the issues state education leaders are struggling with,” cautions Fuchs, “is what they use for their statewide assessment, what they can use for tracking annually, and how those assessments align and don’t align. To some extent, the people in Washington are trying to figure that out, too.”

Finally, Fuchs tries to put the new act into perspective as its first-year anniversary passes. “With any major initiative there are likely to be good things that come from it and unanticipated outcomes that are not what you hoped for,” she says. “Who knows on balance how this will go, but I think it’s worth trying to infuse the educational system with standards that help school districts spend their money wisely. If you look at Title One, for example, there has been an enormous amount of money spent on things with no evidence that they work. As a taxpayer, I think people in this country want to feel that their money is being spent wisely, even though there are not clear-cut answers. We would like to know in the meantime that the best information we have is being used.” ▼

Laban Hill is currently working on a reader’s guide to Jonathan Franzen’s Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, The Corrections, and is writing a cultural history of the Sixties. His cultural history of the Harlem Renaissance, Harlem Stomp!, was recently published by Little, Brown. He lives in Vermont with his wife and two daughters.

TOMMY FRIST JR. LOVES TO TAKE CALCULATED RISKS. And when he sets out to do something—anything—he hates to lose. Not that he spends a long time celebrating when he wins, because he's never been one to gloat or brag. Victory is fun, sure, but it's the *pursuit* of victory that truly gives him a thrill.

Frist's love of the chase, his ability to set and meet goals, and his driving competitive spirit define his personality. These traits also help explain how he has managed, in 34 years, to build, salvage and rebuild the nation's largest for-profit hospital network; to rescue and re-secure the United Way of Middle Tennessee; and to provide the financial backing to convert an old post office into a sparkling downtown-Nashville art museum. He has a trophy list of broken bones from skiing too fast, turning a snowmobile too sharply, and biking too soon after hip-replacement surgery. And he's relished every minute. Completely devoted to his parents, wife, children and friends, he wouldn't want to live his life over, he says, because he's afraid he might mess something up on the second go-round.



THE
Part pragmatist,
THRILL
part dreamer,
OF IT
part risk-taker,
ALL
Tommy Frist loves the competitive chase

Although he has net assets worth billions and has spearheaded numerous philanthropic endeavors in his hometown of Nashville and across the nation, Tommy Frist, BA'61, has still managed to remain largely out of the public eye. His father, Thomas Frist Sr., MD'33, was a renowned cardiologist and practicing internist. His youngest brother, Bill, is a heart-lung transplant surgeon and a Republican senator from Tennessee. By comparison, Tommy Frist II merely revolutionized the delivery of health care in America, for better or worse, by applying the concept of the corporate umbrella to medical institutions.

The consummate southern gentleman with his soft speech, gentle manners and self-deprecating humor, Frist is, in fact, the reigning Evel Knieval of the hospital management industry. Upon each new crisis in health care, his colleagues, family and Wall Street analysts have learned to cover their eyes and peek through their fingers—too fascinated not to watch what he's going to attempt next.

Born in 1939, the oldest of five children, Thomas Jr. stayed the course for the first third of his life. He distinguished himself as an outstanding athlete at Nashville's Montgomery Bell Academy, a Civil War-era all-male prep school. He graduated from Vanderbilt University, married his childhood sweetheart, Patricia Champion, BA'61, and attended medical school at Washington University in St. Louis. After returning to Vanderbilt for his residency, he was drafted into the Air Force and served two years as a flight surgeon in the Strategic Air Command Unit in Warner Robins, Ga.

The Vietnam War changed young men of the '60s. Many felt disillusioned and removed from society. Others, like Tommy Frist, grew to adulthood lured by the possibilities America offered. He had begun investing in the stock market, and he watched as people made their fortunes by practicing the fine art of the franchise.

"A friend of my father's, a patient of his, was Jack Massey," Frist recalls. "He had been in the surgical supply business for most of his career, but he sold his business at 62 years of age and ended up buying Kentucky Fried Chicken. When he took Kentucky Fried Chicken public, I borrowed one or two thousand dollars to buy stock and by the end of 18

or 24 months, I ended up with \$300,000."

Even so, Frist was naïve about the world of business. In order to protect his investment, he says, he made his little children eat fried chicken at least three times a week.

After he completed his military requirements, he returned to Vanderbilt to continue his residency. But he was restless. The year was 1968 and he was 29 years old, a married father with three young children. He knew that Kentucky Fried Chicken and Holiday Inns of America—one having transformed the fast-

The consummate southern gentleman, Frist is, in fact, the reigning Evel Knieval of the hospital management industry.

food industry and the other, the leisure industry—weren't flukes. While other doctors-in-training dreamed about patient reports and getting a good night's sleep, Frist fantasized about ways to put his entrepreneurial skills to use. He loved medicine, but he also loved to fly, and he loved running the tricky gauntlet of the start-up business world. Surely, he thought, he could devise a profession to satiate all his passions.

At that time Medicare was only a few years old, and the country's population was shifting from the Rust Belt states to the Sun Belt, straining the infrastructure of the rural South and creating a demand for education, utilities and health care. Frist reasoned that there must be a way to provide better services more efficiently.

To that end, he formed a partnership with his father and businessman Jack Massey to found Hospital Corporation of America, or HCA, the nation's first and now its largest for-profit, investor-generated hospital management company. "I'm young and energetic," he told his father at the time. "I'll fly around the country and find the hospitals [to buy]—and I'll be full time."

The idea that a chain of hospitals could be handled like a chain of restaurants did not sit well with everybody. Frist says, "I went to my attending, Dr. Scott at Vanderbilt, and I still have nightmares when I think about telling that gray-haired old man that I wasn't coming back to his residency program because I

was going to start a for-profit hospital company. He made me feel like a heathen."

The risk paid off. By 1970 HCA was listed on the New York Stock Exchange, and in less than a decade had reached \$1 billion in sales. By 1982 the company had expanded to more than 350 hospitals in 41 states and five foreign countries, generating revenues of nearly \$2.5 billion. Tommy Frist Jr. continued to rise within the HCA ranks to president and COO in 1977, and to chairman, president and CEO 10 years later.

Frist's parents, Thomas Sr. and Dorothy Cate Frist, BS'32 (Peabody), a schoolteacher, had instilled in their children the credo that along with privilege comes responsibility. In 1982 the Frists established the HCA Foundation, a charitable organization that provides grants to support programs in the arts, education and health care, primarily in the city of Nashville. Several years later, the foundation became legally independent of HCA and elected its own board of directors.

During this same era, he also chaired the campaign for the beleaguered United Way of Middle Tennessee. Under his leadership, the local chapter topped the nation with a 26-percent increase in donations. Frist took on the mission of not only turning around the local chapter, but in establishing a campaign that might be transformational around the country.

"At the time, United Way was a rather moribund organization," says Ken Roberts, BA'54, JD'59, president of the Frist Foundation. "Tommy came up with the idea that if you could get several individuals of means to give at least \$10,000 a year, it would cover the overhead of the organization. Then all the other gifts would cover the needs of the specific agencies. It was original, it was creative, and it was a way of maximizing the gifts."

Yet, Frist required more in his life than the parallel careers of industry mogul and philanthropist. He sought physical challenges, too. Ever since elementary school he has been

friends with Frank Drowata, BA'60, JD'65 (now chief justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court), and Steve Riven, BA'60 (now a managing partner of Avondale Partners, a securities firm). For nearly 50 years, the three have been running buddies—both in the figurative and literal sense—often referring to themselves as Six Fast Feet.

"Tommy is a little bow-legged, a little pigeon-toed, and he's not a speedy runner," Drowata says. "When his company was in its early stages, he enjoyed running long distances. And I remember that he'd land his plane, get home around 12:00 or 1:00 in the morning, and turn on his car headlights so he could go running. Eventually, he got his time down to around a seven-minute mile."

Frist was also an avid tennis player at that time and made use of the tennis court his parents had in their back yard. "Tommy used

Upon each new crisis in health care, his colleagues, family and Wall Street analysts have learned to cover their eyes and peek through their fingers—too fascinated not to watch what he's going to attempt next.

to call me up and we'd play in the dead of winter," Riven says. "It'd be freezing cold and snowing, but we'd be outside playing tennis."

Some found this hard-driving quest for perfection hard to take. "The Frists are highly regarded, but not without controversy," commented family friend Edward G. Nelson in *BusinessWeek* (November 1997). "They are so competitive and so self-confident that people sometimes lose sight of their generosity. There's a saying: 'There's the right way, the wrong way, and the Frist way.'"

By the mid-1980s, the hospital franchise business began hitting some stones in the road. HCA was a behemoth operation with 50 psychiatric hospitals, 82 large general hospitals, 104 small hospitals, 225 management contracts, and 30 foreign properties. Earnings weren't keeping pace. Just as determinedly as he had once purchased properties, chairman and CEO Frist rolled up his sleeves and began to cut back staff, overhead and management.

He also sold and spun off the under-performing small, rural properties into HealthTrust Inc., an employee stock ownership plan.

By 1989 the stock market was so unfavorable that Tommy Frist decided to gamble once again. He rolled 100 percent of his net worth into a leveraged buy-out of HCA to take it private, purchasing it for \$5.1 billion. Within three years the health-care industry had again mutated, and Frist celebrated HCA's 25th anniversary by returning it—in an \$800 million offering—to the New York Stock Exchange.

Although triumphant and enriched, Frist was worn out from the buy-out ordeal and began looking for someone else to assume the day-to-day oversight of the giant corporation. He thought he'd found that man in Rick Scott, the brash young CEO of Columbia Healthcare. Frist approached Scott about a

headlines Frist had spent his career trying to avoid. On a tip that Columbia/HCA hospitals were engaging in Medicare fraud, in March of 1997, FBI agents raided the offices in El Paso, Texas. Other dragnets followed, spreading to sites in six other states. Scott and other top executives were forced to resign, and Frist was reinstated as CEO with the mandate to clean up any corruption, pay the governmental fines, and restore a culture of honesty and quality patient care to the organization he helped found.

Several industry pundits seized the opportunity to air simmering disputes with Frist's methods of operation. In a blistering article in 1997, the *Wall Street Journal* claimed, "Hundreds of pages of documents in Tax Court involving Mr. Frist's HCA suggest his own management style was quite aggressive and marked by numerous acquisitions and a relentless focus on maximizing profit, while he and his senior team enjoyed lucrative compensation."

During that same period *BusinessWeek*, among other news outlets, lambasted Frist for outwardly supporting Columbia/HCA's practices and only criticizing Scott after he was made to step down. Justifying his earlier silence, Frist told *BusinessWeek*, "There's nothing worse than having a former CEO sitting there second-guessing. ... Once a decision is made, you go out and support the team."

"That was a really difficult time—that first six to 12 months, not knowing what was going to happen," Frist says, looking back. "I didn't know if I could turn the company around. The government was coming down on the company, the banks, the media, everyone. The company was so different when I came back. They'd put a whole new management team together and people didn't even know me. My greatest fear was not the financial risk as much as it was my family's reputation."

To add to the family's anguish, Thomas Frist Sr. and Dorothy Frist died in early January 1998, within two days of each other.

With fraud charges and audits mounting, and despite overt skepticism by investment analysts questioning whether he was the man for the job, Tommy Frist felt the fire in his belly reigniting. One of the first actions taken during the restructuring was to re-

What happened next made the kind of

continued on page 86



Archiving into Space

Epiphytic plants adapt to life above the ground.

By JONATHAN ERTELT



Illustrations by BONNIE ARANT ERTELT

OVER THE PAST YEAR many in the Vanderbilt community have noted a fellow, sometimes pushing, usually pulling a cart full of a wide variety of plants through the center of campus. That fellow was me, and for the last six months those plants on the cart have been part of what makes up Vanderbilt's botanical teaching collection.

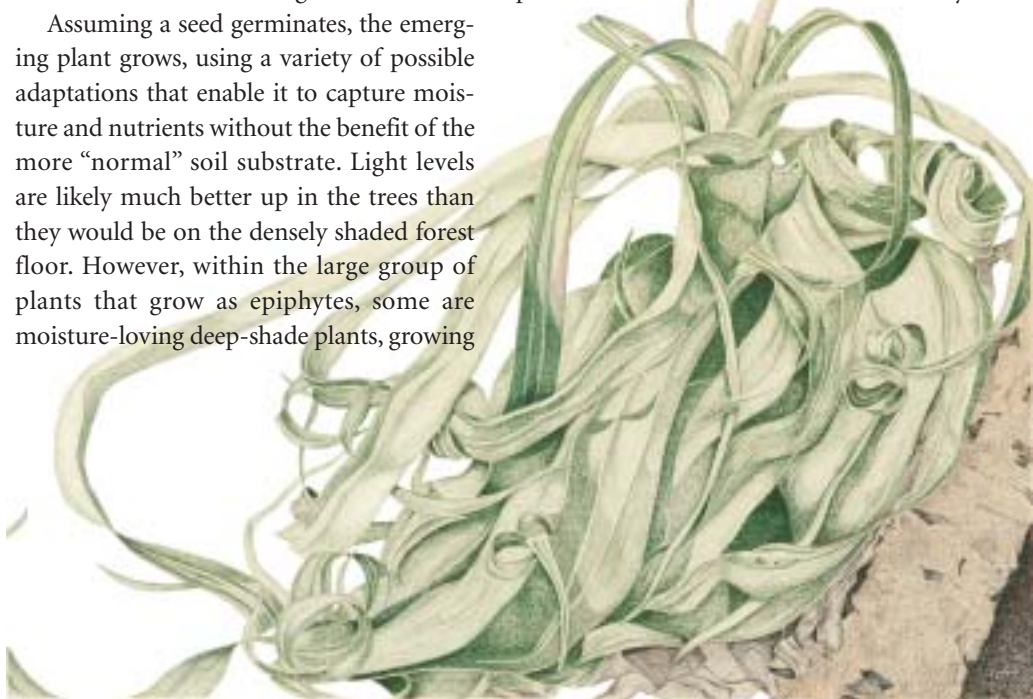
Shortly after I started working with the collection, I overheard a faculty member commenting on my love for hanging baskets. It is true that I tend to use hanging baskets extensively, for two reasons. First, baskets offer more space for growing and displaying. Second, that is the way the majority of plants grow in the tropics—not in hanging baskets as such, but arching out into space, often high above the ground, with roots anchoring onto bark or into an organic mix of debris that has settled onto branches after falling from branches higher still. Plants that grow in this fashion are known as epiphytes, literally translated as “upon plants.” Unlike parasites, these plants do not put their roots into their host plants, nor derive any nutrition from them.

Epiphytes generally start life in the trees the way most plants start life—as a seed. Some seeds are windborne, while others are transported by ants or by various larger animals (either stuck to fur or feather, or traveling through the digestive system of animals that spend part of their lives in the trees). The seeds are rubbed off or deposited onto bark or branch, anywhere from 5 to more than 150 feet off the ground.

Assuming a seed germinates, the emerging plant grows, using a variety of possible adaptations that enable it to capture moisture and nutrients without the benefit of the more “normal” soil substrate. Light levels are likely much better up in the trees than they would be on the densely shaded forest floor. However, within the large group of plants that grow as epiphytes, some are moisture-loving deep-shade plants, growing

close to the trunk and low in the canopy or close to the ground, while others could almost be desert growers, with extreme exposure at branch tips at the tree top.

Eighty-three families of vascular plants have epiphytic species; of those families, nearly 25 are represented in our teaching collection. Why does the Vanderbilt collection have such a large number of these ecological specialists? Aside from the fact that so many



Pictured from left are three epiphytic bromeliads in the genus *Tillandsia*; upper right: An ant plant grows on the side of a tree.

epiphytes are spectacular to look at, especially when they're in bloom, it is precisely the wide diversity of survival strategies that have evolved across these families that makes them so useful in a teaching collection. Consider the “ant plants” from tropical Asia. From the time they have only four leaves, their stems are swelling, developing an interior catacomb of tunnels and chambers complete with entry and exit doors, inviting ants to move into a ready-made home. Of course, the ants provide nutrients as well as increased carbon dioxide levels, both good for plant growth.

The ants may guard their vegetative home from herbivores as well, and serve as dispersal agents for the seeds.

Some plants have root systems that grow across and into the bark fissures, anchoring the plant to its perch, but also roots that grow straight up into the air. Why? The term “trash-basket root system” has been applied to these plants, which have negatively geotropic roots sticking up, catching debris falling from branches and other plants above. Once the debris is caught, every rain leaches out nutrients that are then absorbed by the roots, allowing for strong growth and flowering far above the forest floor.

Many bromeliads, members of the pineapple family, have leaves that grow in a tight rosette, forming a vase that catches rainwater as well as debris, making a nutrient-rich solution. Not all of these vase-like growths are small, either. The record measurement so far is a plant holding upwards of 30 liters of water—enough to fill a child's wading pool. Then there are orchids, with a number of survival adaptations of their own, but also with their own unique and spectacular flowers. In several of the genera we have, the flower spike comes out of the base of the plant and grows straight down, which would be a problem in a pot but not on a tree

branch or in a loose-fiber basket.

The teaching collection is housed under the auspices of the Department of Biological Sciences. The collection likely started before the first greenhouses were constructed back in the mid-1930s. Attached to the west side of Buttrick Hall, those first greenhouses served the Department of General Biology, then the Department of Biology when the organismic and ecological disciplines split from molecular biology in the early '60s. When I first arrived seven years ago, probably 40 families were represented, with possibly 100 genera present. The collection now boasts a representation of nearly 90 families and 220 genera.

With such a rich variety of plants, the collection offers much to inspire the imagination. Sometimes it's the flower, sometimes the entire plant with a strange adaptation or two, and sometimes what catches the eye is simply the fact that these plants are growing on a branch hanging by a wire. But if the eye is caught, the next step can begin. That step is teaching—helping students gain a better understanding of the world. ▼

Jonathan Ertelt is greenhouse manager for Vanderbilt's Department of Biological Sciences. He has worked as a tropical plant specialist for the past 26 years.



“We’re not trying to preach, but we are trying to present a clear picture of Islam. We’re competing with other organizations, other entertainments and festivals. I’d like to see more programs that talk about the various religions. We should share experiences.”

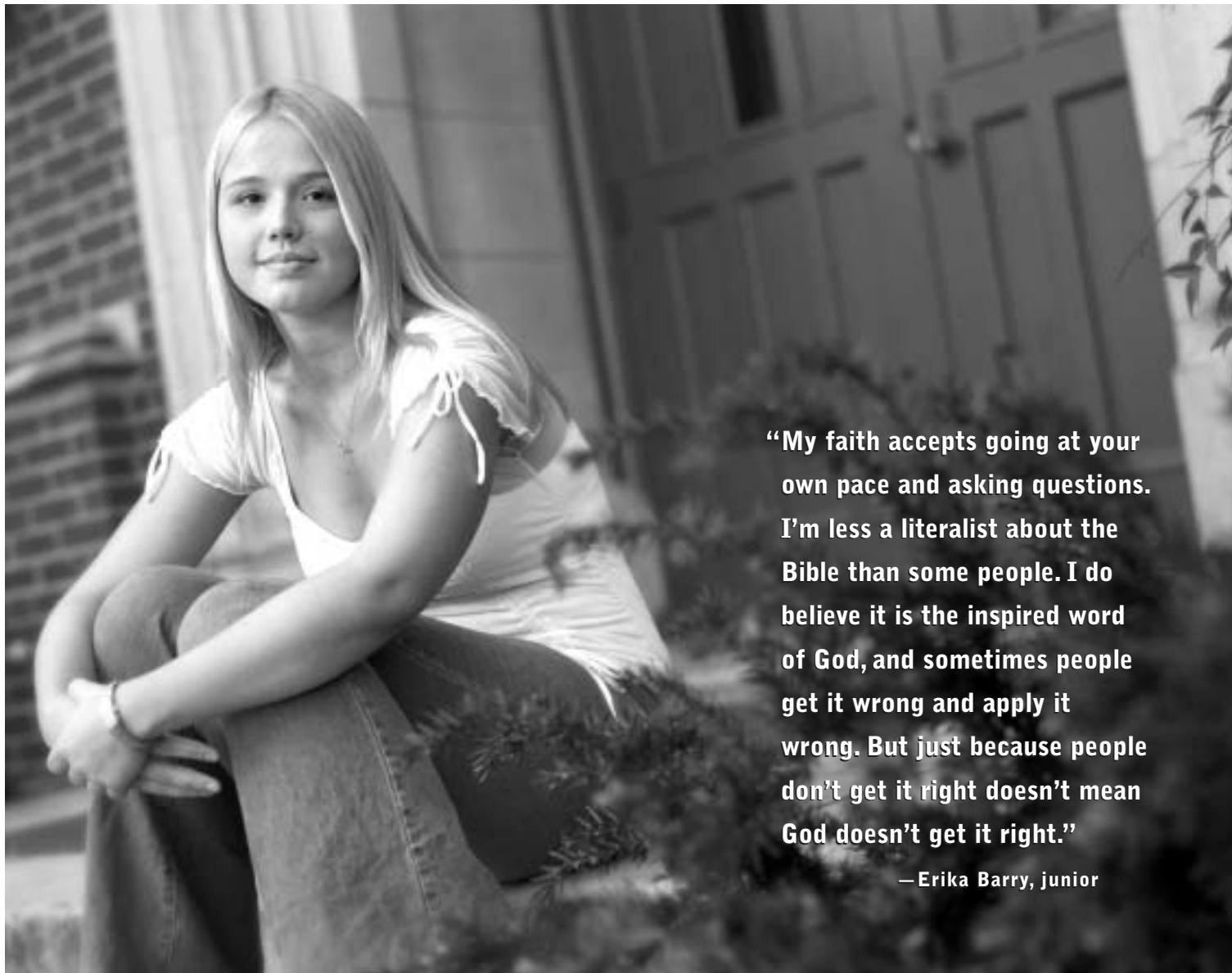
—Hamad Al-Rugaib, senior

The Search for GOD at Vanderbilt

THE WALL AT RAND IS A REASSURING chaos of the latest campus announcements—a weathered smear of posters for lectures, pizza joints, war protests, concerts—the life of the mind, the life of the senses, the life of Vanderbilt, a barometric shorthand of student preoccupations, circa 2003.

It’s not all politics, music and food.

The Wall’s crowded kiosk pluralism yields another 21st-century pursuit as well—a renewed stress on news of the spirit.



“My faith accepts going at your own pace and asking questions. I’m less a literalist about the Bible than some people. I do believe it is the inspired word of God, and sometimes people get it wrong and apply it wrong. But just because people don’t get it right doesn’t mean God doesn’t get it right.”

— Erika Barry, junior

In recent weeks, a wanderer at the Wall would have noticed a half dozen or more fliers of religious innovation contending for space with a Cornel West lecture, a Sweet-T concert, and a new student production of “Two Gentlemen of Verona.”

“A Christian Fraternity?” one poster teased. “Find out more at www.geocities.com/vandy-wantsbyx.”

“Catholic and Don’t Remember Why? New 10 p.m. Mass! Contemporary music, new environment — It’s really cool — Come!”

There were others:

“Worship and Bible Study every Thursday, 8:15 p.m. — Live Band — Free Food!”

“First meeting of the Vanderbilt Socratic Club: ‘Can atheists justify or explain the origin of their morals and ethics?’” announced

a flyer about a new debating society.

Sophomore Phillip Albonetti, a Christian, started the Socratic Club this semester, based on the British university model associated with C.S. Lewis at Oxford. The idea is to defend Christian belief with the intellectual rigors associated with a debating venue.

“In college, people begin questioning their religious beliefs, and some people pull away,” says Albonetti, from Memphis, Tenn. “We need more outlets for people to re-engage those questions about God or pluralism or science.”

The search for God at Vanderbilt, for students who pursue it, takes place in a campus climate rich in paradox.

Vanderbilt: A private university (originally Methodist) committed to academic freedom in the heart of the Bible belt. Vanderbilt:

A traditionally conservative campus that is home to one of the nation’s eminent liberal divinity schools. Vanderbilt: A southern school steeped in fraternity and football and a busy Ivy League intellectualism, too. Vanderbilt: A predominantly Protestant place where the single largest religious group is Catholic, but which also boasts a new high-profile Jewish student center on Greek Row and lately a student-body president who is Muslim.

“What I say is they didn’t elect me because I’m a Muslim, and they didn’t elect me because I’m not a Muslim — they saw me as a human being,” says Samar Ali of Waverly, Tenn., president of the Student Government Association this past year. “There’s religious interest here, in pockets. There are lots of programs you can attend. But people don’t always know

about it. So five people will attend an important program on religion when 2,000 ought to be there. Everybody’s overbooked.”

The spiritual search at Vanderbilt is a diffuse thing, a hands-on thing, a many-splintered thing. Since the 9/11 terrorism, it has become a more serious thing.

Some chaplains talk of pensive undergraduate inquiries into the details of theology or the complexities of religious pluralism. On a given night, two or three student-led Bible studies are likely under way in the dorms. Students sign up for service work — blood drives, tutoring, house building, feeding the homeless. Divinity students lead city marches against war with Iraq.

“The students I see these days are less afraid to pray publicly or privately; they want to know the Bible better; they’re more interested in seminary,” says the Rev. Drew Henderson, the Presbyterian (USA) chaplain on campus for the last 10 years (he recently left Vanderbilt to take a church position in North Carolina).

“In my generation, we wanted to walk our own way, choose and reject what we wanted,” says Henderson, who is in his 30s. “With this generation, there’s been a shift from the question ‘Why be Christian?’ to ‘I’m Christian: Tell me what it means, give us the tools to go deeper.’ ... And when students have experienced divorce or a major shift in caregiving or uncertainty about parental authority, they want to put their hearts down in something that’s permanent and stable. They appreciate consistency, boundaries — the belief that God’s love will not fail, God’s love is unending and reliable.”

At Vanderbilt, there are two university chaplains, as well as chaplains for seven faiths, funded by those organizations — United Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian (USA), Presbyterian Church of America, Episcopal, Catholic, Jewish — and at least 19 student-led religious organizations, including the Baptist Collegiate Ministry, Vanderbilt Meditation Group, Asian American Christian Fellowship, Voices of Praise, Christian Business Association, Christian Legal Society, Ozark Commodores, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Campus Crusade for Christ, Victory Campus Ministries, Commodores for Christ, Young Life, Orthodox Christian Fellowship, and Lord Jesus Christ Ministries.

Still, the impression remains strong among some that this is a campus of “organization kids” who are bent on fast-track success and executive-style workaholicism, with matters of religious practice languishing on the periphery. “Such students might seek out religion when they suddenly need a base, or if they’re in a crisis,” says Associate University Chaplain Gary White. “Otherwise, they are focused on preparing for a career, and they’re overworked, overscheduled.”

Student attitudes themselves are mixed, impossible to reconcile. Some complain there’s not enough religion at career-driven Vanderbilt. Or that there’s too much quick-fix fundamentalism, too much arrogant disdain for free-thinking non-believers. Or that it’s too easy to keep one’s childhood faith in a box, unchallenged by new questions, unbothered by a wildly hypocritical party life.

The pluralism that students suddenly find when they arrive on campus is disorienting — or invigorating.

“I looked forward to coming to college to interact with the other side and test arguments for the faith that I learned in earlier years,” says Albonetti, who attended an Assemblies of God-oriented high school. “I knew non-Christians before. But here, they’ll argue and defend their positions. It helps me understand the sincerity of their beliefs. I used to believe other religions were inherently evil, just lies. But now I realize there are quality teachings in other religions, and some overlap with my beliefs—like the Golden Rule. Nevertheless, I can still see where they don’t overlap.”

Erika Barry, a junior from Tampa, Fla., and a Presbyterian, exhibits a faith that’s strong on action. She is student director of the Room in the Inn program, a citywide program that shelters homeless people on winter nights.

“My faith accepts going at your own pace and asking questions,” she says. “I’m less a literalist about the Bible than some people. I do believe it is the inspired word of God, and sometimes people get it wrong and apply it wrong. But just because people don’t get it right doesn’t mean God doesn’t get it right.”

For the weekly Room in the Inn stint at St. Augustine’s Chapel, Barry helps rustle up student volunteers, cooks a big breakfast for the homeless guests, and gets them back downtown by 6 a.m.

“It’s a way to connect my religious values to the world in an active way,” she says. “We do their laundry, which reminds me of the Christian tradition of foot washing—humbling yourself to serve others.”

Others on campus want to establish new ways of intensifying religious *esprit de corps*—like starting a Christian fraternity.

“What I want to do is try to fill a gap, create a deeper sense of Christian fellowship,” says sophomore Dillon Barker, who has received permission to explore possible campus interest in starting such a fraternity. “I’m definitely not anti-Greek. I don’t want to draw people away from that. We just want to create an organization of men that will deepen their walk in faith.”

The fraternity, Beta Upsilon Chi (BUC), was started in 1985 in Texas, where most of its 10 university chapters are concentrated. At Sarratt in February, 30 undergraduate males committed to joining a prospective Vanderbilt chapter.

BUC (also called “Brothers Under Christ”) would have some traditional fraternity elements—rushing, pledging, secret rituals, semi-formals, perhaps a house on campus some day. But its real aim, Barker says, is to glorify Jesus Christ by building Christian camaraderie and encouraging moral accountability through small cell groups that meet weekly.

“We’d have parties, but there is a code of conduct,” he says. Members would not be forbidden from drinking, but BUC events would be alcohol-free. The tone of the national organization is evangelical Christian, but it’s open to a wide range of believers. Doctrines center around basic Christian creeds.

Barker admits that obtaining or building an actual house for a Christian fraternity at Vanderbilt wouldn’t be plausible, for now. “We realize that a house isn’t a realistic short-term goal,” he says. “There’s no land anywhere.”

But he dreams of such a house fitting in nicely with Vanderbilt’s characteristic “geographical paradox,” where a Jewish student center and an Episcopal church are fixtures on Greek Row, signals of an intriguing spiritual and cultural mix.

“Vanderbilt is special,” says Barker, raised a Southern Baptist in Rogersville, Tenn. “There’s an intersection of world views—the south-

ern character, the Ivy League character. Here I can be comfortable as a southerner and a Christian meeting someone who is Jewish from New England or someone who is agnostic from California.”

The recent hopes for a Christian fraternity at Vanderbilt might be seen as a sign of the strength of evangelical Protestant energies on campus. There are about a dozen organizations on that side of the Christian spectrum, and they attract hundreds of students weekly to study groups and worship.

Probably the biggest regular worship gathering on campus draws about 200 students to Branscomb on Wednesday nights. It's sponsored by the Reformed University Fellowship, a ministry of the conservative-minded Presbyterian Church of America.

“I'm trying to encourage folks to engage the culture from a vantage point,” says the Rev. Brian Habig, the RUF campus chaplain. “I'm admittedly not neutral.”

He counsels with two or three students a day and stays in regular contact with dozens of others. His assessment of student spirituality: Lots of résumé-ready Vanderbilt undergraduates inevitably feel a void in life if they neglect the divine dimension. Habig's task is to give them biblical answers to life at a time when a predominant moral ideology and style, customarily called postmodernism, an attitude of skeptical irony and relativism, is exhausting itself, he says.

“It seems that postmodernism has overplayed its hand. When you just squint at everything and nuance everything and explain everything away—well, after a while human beings can't live that way.”

According to the latest annual freshman survey, 56.9 percent of the incoming class in fall 2002 claimed a Protestant identity. Despite turbulent shifts and declines in American religious loyalties in the past generation, the Protestant religious spread at Vanderbilt hasn't changed dramatically in 30 years: It was 60 percent Protestant in 1972. The largest Protestant groups on campus today are Baptist (11.8 percent), Presbyterian (11.3 percent), Methodist (10.2 percent) and Episcopalian (7.76 percent), according to the freshman survey. The category “other Christian” is 10.46 percent.

Those declaring no religion (14.6 percent) hasn't changed much in three decades, either

(16.2 percent in 1972). What has changed is the number of Catholics, which has doubled in 30 years. Catholic students now make up 20.4 percent of the latest entering freshman class and represent the single largest religious denominational group on campus. The trend might be explained as the mainstreaming of Catholics into non-Catholic university life, and the mainstreaming of Vanderbilt into national life.

“As Vanderbilt has moved from a southern regional school to a national university, the proportion of students is starting to reflect the spread of 18- to 22-year-olds nationally,” says Associate Catholic Chaplain Jim McKenzie.

Some estimates put the number of Vanderbilt Catholic students at closer to 30 percent.

“I'm amazed at how spiritual they are, how they have a relationship with God that they're willing to talk about,” says McKenzie, referring to the Catholic students he works with.

Perhaps it's the swing of the pendulum, he suggests. Today's students often appear to be more pious, more service-oriented than the older Gen-X demographic, or more theologically conservative than their parents. Also, the shock of 9/11 terrorism cast a new shadow of sobriety and fear over religious life, a new search for the image of God in a time of suffering.

“Students, like everyone else in the country, started to look around and think harder about their relationship with God, what that relationship should be not only in times of prosperity but in times of disaster,” says McKenzie.

Freshman Victoria Stevens, in any case, was active in her parish back in high school in the Fort Lauderdale, Fla., area before she came to Vanderbilt last fall. Already she is president of the Vanderbilt Catholic student community. With her music background (mezzo-soprano), she helped spice up the 10 p.m. Sunday Mass at Benton Chapel with contemporary sounds (guitars, drums and singers).

Her attitude: “Live your faith out loud, and don't be afraid to go for it,” she says. “We live in the Vanderbilt bubble, but there's still a lot of religious support if you are looking for it. Being in a pluralistic setting, you scrutinize your faith in ways that don't happen in high school.”

There are three Masses per week at Ben-

ton Chapel (attendance at each is 70–100 people). On Wednesday nights, Stevens and 15 other committed Catholic students meet for dinner and a program of discussion, a gathering called Nourishment of Soul and Body.

Recently, they met as usual at their designated Wednesday night gathering place for pizza and evening prayer. Where they meet might sound incongruous, but the Catholic kids like it just fine: The Ben Schulman Center for Jewish Life.

The Schulman Center opened in August 2002 at the corner of Vanderbilt Place and 25th Avenue South, with notable fanfare (Vanderbilt graduate Ben Schulman, class of 1938, donated \$1 million to launch the \$2.2 million construction). The Schulman Center has quickly become a cross-cultural reference point on campus.

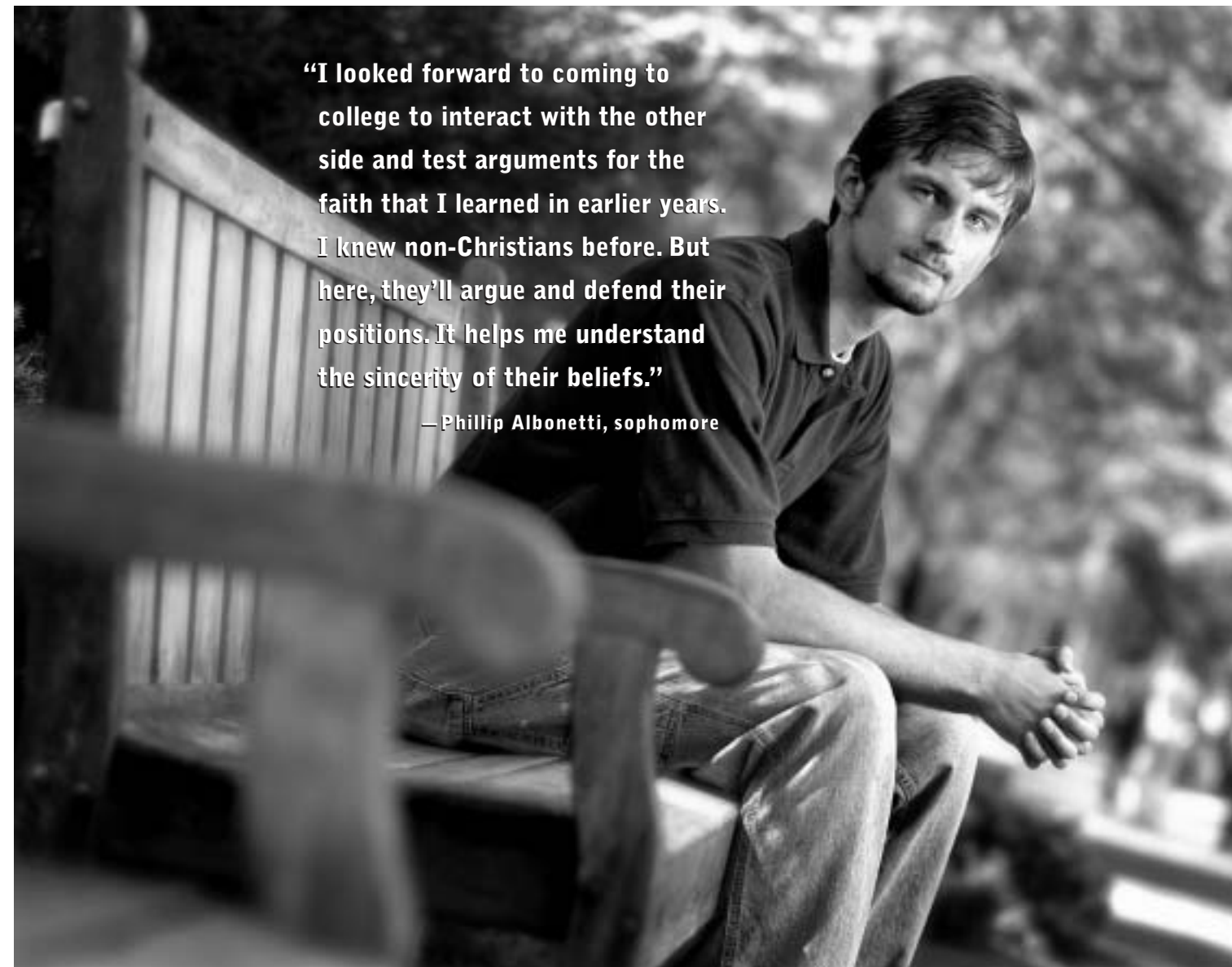
“The center has made us more visible. It makes it easier to find us,” says sophomore Hannah Bloom, vice president of Vanderbilt Hillel, the Jewish student organization.

It's a place where Jewish students can attend regular worship services and connect with their religious identity as a tiny minority on campus (they represent about 4 percent of enrollment). More Jews—a number fluctuating between 15 and 150—attend Friday night Sabbath services now that the center has opened.

It's also a place that welcomes non-Jewish students: Classes are conducted here, and campus groups (like the Catholics) can reserve space to hold their own sacred or cultural events. Grins Cafe, the city's only kosher-certified restaurant, is now a lunch routine for hundreds of students. It's part of the center's mission to educate a traditional southern campus about Judaism.

“One of the biggest problems at Vanderbilt is you have students who come out of a vacuum, without contact with other groups,” says Shaiya Baer, executive director of the Schulman Center and Vanderbilt's Jewish chaplain. “In the South, Jews are part of the diversity equation. It's up to us to engage the majority, invite them to work with us. We want to build relationships.”

The center has given Jews a higher profile on campus. New connections with non-Jewish groups are unfolding. Last fall Jewish and Baptist students collaborated on a home-



“I looked forward to coming to college to interact with the other side and test arguments for the faith that I learned in earlier years. I knew non-Christians before. But here, they'll argue and defend their positions. It helps me understand the sincerity of their beliefs.”

—Phillip Albonetti, sophomore

coming float (theme: the Ten Commandments). Miraculously or not, it won first place.

“Who would ever have thought the Baptist and the Jewish students would work together on a float?” Baer exclaims.

Hannah Bloom, a New Jersey native, turned down other universities with sizable Jewish enrollments to come to Vanderbilt because she wanted to be part of a re-energized Jewish student community. “We're a spanking new organization and can go in any direction we want,” she says.

Her goals for campus Jewish life: heightened religious observance among Jewish students, more inter-community campus discussion, and more programs so the Schulman Center is constantly in use.

Being surrounded by so many Christians

at Vanderbilt led Bloom to deepen her connection with Judaism, she says. “Coming down here has made me appreciate more the positive aspects of Judaism in my life and want to share them with others. A lot of people here identify themselves as Christian, and that influences me to learn more deeply what I believe, my own religious principles.”

Other religious minorities round out Vanderbilt's student spiritual spectrum: Buddhist (.59 percent), Eastern Orthodox (.76 percent), Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (4 percent), United Church of Christ (1.6 percent) and Muslim (.59 percent), among others, according to the freshman survey's religious preference data.

There are also small numbers of Christian traditions such as Quaker (.25 percent)

and Seventh-Day Adventist (.34 percent), and non-Christian traditions, too—Hindus, Wiccans, Baha'is, atheists.

“We're not trying to preach, but we are trying to present a clear picture of Islam,” says Hamad Al-Rugaib, a senior from Saudi Arabia and an officer in the Muslim Student Association. That means sponsoring Islamic information programs and panels and cultural celebrations that dispel media misconceptions of the religion, especially after the terrorism of 2001.

“We need to communicate better,” he said. “We're competing with other organizations, other entertainments and festivals. I'd like to see more programs that talk about the various religions. We should share experiences.”

The Muslim students' meeting place for



“Coming down here has made me appreciate more the positive aspects of Judaism in my life and want to share them with others. There are a lot of people here who identify themselves as Christian, and that influences me to learn more deeply what I believe, my own religious principles.”

—Hannah Bloom, sophomore

Friday noontime prayers might sound as incongruous as Catholics praying at the Jewish center: The Muslims meet at Vanderbilt Divinity School, at least for now. The Muslim student group is asking the University’s help to find a more permanent space for gatherings and prayer time.

A lack of communication between religious groups frustrated student Frank Lee, a Catholic, into joining the Interfaith Council, of which he was president this year. “We keep using the word ‘diversity,’ but there was a lack of communication, a lack of expression between groups,” says Lee, a senior originally from South Korea.

He credits Chancellor Gordon Gee for stirring new student interest in the many threads of Vanderbilt life, the adventure of learning.

Gee’s own identity as a Latter-Day Saint heightens curiosity about religious diversity.

The Interfaith Council held a panel of world religions in the fall, representing Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, Muslim, Hindu, Mormon, Baha’i, Wiccan and Buddhist perspectives. More and more people are turning out for such events, in Lee’s view. This spring the council was busy planning a music night, with a wide range of expressions — Mormon, Muslim, contemporary Christian and others.

The point is somehow to expose students to fresh perspectives on the spiritual quest amid the daily demands on one’s time and talents, the stresses that plague 21st-century student life.

“A lot of students care, and they struggle with the issue—should you do service when

there’s an exam to study for?” Lee says.

Meanwhile, the first meeting of the Vanderbilt Socratic Club did indeed assemble one snowy February night. About 25 people showed up. The organizers were pleased, perhaps relieved, at the turnout.

“Someday, I’d love to see the Socratic Club debate twice a month,” says organizer Albonetti.

Consult the Wall at Rand for further developments, further signs of the times. ▼

The former religion editor at the Tennessean, Ray Waddle is a freelance writer for national newspapers, denominational magazines and Web sites. He has a journalism degree from the University of Oklahoma and a master’s degree in religion from Vanderbilt. He and his wife, Lisa, live in Nashville.

In all sorts of weather, MarLu Scott, a Divinity School student, has stood on the streets of Nashville to protest capital punishment and, most recently, war with Iraq, alongside kindred souls.

She also helps organize the eclectic line-up of Wednesday worship services at the school’s All Faith Chapel, a staging ground for crosscurrents of the spirit and prayers for the healing of the world — a simple room of gray neutral colors adaptable to a Methodist service one week, or Catholic, Lutheran or Cherokee the next.

Both activities, outdoors and indoors, connect her to Divinity School values that have helped her clarify her vocation—the religious conviction to speak out for justice, and the consoling miracle of community.

“This is what the Divinity School gives me: Even when it gets crazy out there, we have a faith and community that under girds us,” says Scott, a United Methodist who graduates this spring, on track to be an ordained minister. “Activism stirs us to make the world better. And it comes out of a sense of ritual, a sense of sacrifice. It means giving something of yourself that you cannot express in another way.”

The Divinity School is a mystery to some on campus—a graduate school where they study scripture and the wide world of faith. Is it a monastic Bible school? No. An academy of sainthood? Not exactly. It’s a training ground for ministers and others who have a sense of religious calling. It’s a multi-layered place of serious theological study, passionate debate, critical inquiry, and diverse attitudes about God, politics, sacred texts and congregational life.

Inside, religious tradition and pluralism co-exist, jostle, mutually probe—the way they do in the 21st-century global world outside.

“Our job is to help religious leaders prepare for lives of commitment and devotion—in a world where not everyone shares those same commitments,” says Divinity School Dean James Hudnut-Beumler.

The Divinity School is ranked with the nation’s top graduate schools of theological education, and it’s one of the few, along with the divinity schools at Harvard, Yale and Chicago, that have no official denominational sponsorship. (The school was started as Vanderbilt’s Biblical Department in 1875 and was under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, until university and Methodists dissolved ties in 1914. The Divinity School since has been under the direction of the Vanderbilt Board of Trust. It was named the Divinity School in 1956.)

“An advantage to being ecumenical is that we live in an increasingly non-denominational world—that is, a majority of people don’t draw sustenance from a single religious tradition now, and so at an

ecumenical divinity school, we’re allowed and even encouraged by our diversity to draw on the many sources of wisdom and spiritual practice,” explains Hudnut-Beumler. “What we have here is an incredible range of students and viewpoints.”

Denominationally untethered as it is, the school’s statement of commitments declares its active opposition to racism, sexism and homophobia. This framework of progressivism, forged in the heart of the Bible belt, gives the school a reputation for liberalism, at least locally.

“Some people might believe these values of diversity are lofty and academic, but we see our preparations as extraordinarily realistic for the real world,” says Chris Sanders, director of development and alumni relations for the Divinity School. “More than 50 percent of our students are women, and more than 50 percent of people attending worship, whatever the tradition, are women. We have a significant number of African Americans here. The issue of race isn’t

going away in the world. Look at the scandal that brought Trent Lott down. And gay men and lesbians are winning rights in city after city in this nation, and that issue isn’t going away, either.”

About 200 students are enrolled in the Divinity School (for the master of divinity degree or master of theological studies degree). Another 100 or so are studying for a Ph.D. or master of arts degree in the Graduate Department of Religion.

Graduates work as ministers or chaplains, or in nonprofit ministries, social services or law, or in teaching and academic research.

The single largest group of divinity students is United Methodist, but 25 denominations are represented.

Recently endowed faculty chairs in Jewish studies and Catholic studies, as well as Methodist tradition, commit the school to a future of built-in diversity. (There’s also a Disciples of Christ concentration.)

As a Unitarian-Universalist, student Jason Shelton, director of the Divinity School choir, could have pursued a Unitarian seminary but decided on Vanderbilt’s multi-faith climate as better preparation for his ministerial future. “Being here makes you realize there are always perspectives different from yours,” he says. “It makes me more cautious about speaking in broad sweeping terms about what ‘everyone’ believes.”

When he graduates this spring, he’ll officially have his master of divinity diploma. But, he says, what he perhaps has truly mastered in a school that endeavors to produce “ministers as theologians” is the art of asking questions.

“We are constantly engaged in asking questions,” he says. “We are prepared here to ask better questions.”

SEEKING GOD AGAINST THE GRAIN

*Vanderbilt Divinity School’s
pluralistic approach to theology*

BY RAY WADDLE, MA’81

By LISA DUBOIS

VIRTUOSO PERFORMERS

*Top students at the
Blair School of Music
go note to note in
the annual solo
concerto auditions.*



EACH YEAR A FEW VANDERBILT STUDENTS AT THE BLAIR School of Music willingly pit themselves against one another in competition. They are violinists and cellists, pianists and timpanists, sopranos and tenors—for whom college life shifts back and forth between the academic milieu of math, science, history and language, and the rarified world of classical music and the art of performance.

For those few who are mentally and technically ready and who are willing to subject themselves to immense pressure, to long hours of rehearsals for a 10-minute solo, and to the scrutiny of outside judges, the ultimate prize is worth the trouble. Three winning participants are allowed to perform their solo concertos in a concert backed by a full symphony orchestra.

From a field of 27 competitors, *Vanderbilt Magazine* selected four students of differing musical passions and followed them as they prepared for and performed in the 2002–03 Blair Collegiate Concerto Competition. All four of them put their musical craftsmanship on the line. In the end, only one of them would receive recognition.

The Week Before

The day of the competition is set for Saturday, Feb. 1, 2003. The weather has been frigid and gray, and Nashville is digging out from a snowstorm that has made traveling unusually treacherous. Melissa Rose, assistant professor of piano and chair of the committee that runs the concerto competition, has been e-mailing music professors all week to determine which of their students have been approved for participating. She is trying to get a head count.

Typically, around 30 students audition, she says, although the numbers are still trickling in. This year the competition has some rule changes. A maximum of three students, rather than the usual four, will be named as winners. And this is the last year that previous winners will be allowed to audition.

“The Blair Concerto Competition is not as cutthroat competitive as those at other schools and conservatories,” says Rose. “We prefer to treat this as a good learning and per-

formance opportunity, because it requires virtuosity. We have the judges comment on each student’s performance, and we make those comments available to the students’ professors.”

The four judges, all of whom come from outside the close-knit Blair community, represent different musical persuasions—piano, strings, vocals and winds/percussion. Their charge is to determine the three best performances on that particular day. They are also allowed to bestow “honorable mention” honors on students with outstanding, but not winning, performances.

Emelyne Bingham is senior lecturer in aural studies at the Blair School and assistant conductor of the Nashville Symphony. She will conduct Vanderbilt Orchestra’s spring concert featuring one of the winners. Explaining the golden ring dangling before these young artists’ eyes, she says, “The difference

between playing an unaccompanied solo and playing a solo with a full orchestra is like the difference between a black-and-white photo and a color photo. There is so much more art to be made with color. Most people don’t get a chance to play those pieces as they were intended to be played with the colors that come from combining cellos, French horns and violas. The full range of instruments gives a more realistic interpretation of the true art form. Orchestras are expensive, and it’s rare for a student to get this kind of opportunity.”

The Performers

Jonathan Chu, Senior, Nisacayuna, N.Y.

If any student in this year’s competition understands Bingham’s comments, it’s senior violinist Jonathan Chu. Two years ago during his sophomore year, he won the competition and was able to debut as a soloist with the Vanderbilt Orchestra. “It was a great experi-

Jonathan Chu hopes to have a career as a violinist in a string quartet, and believes the Brahms concerto lets him prove his chops in both technique and musicianship. ... He knows, however, how capricious such competitions can be.



PHOTOS BY NEIL BRANKE

ence playing with an orchestra of 80 people rather than with a piano,” he says. “That’s why I decided to enter again.”

He has been preparing Brahms Violin Concerto, First Movement, for the competition. It’s a piece he’s been practicing for months, not only for this event but also for auditions to graduate-school programs. In fact, graduate school, at the moment, is weighing much more heavily on his mind than the competition. Although he is double majoring in violin and economics, he recently has decided to pursue music rather than business after he leaves Vanderbilt. Ultimately, he hopes to have a career as a violinist in a string quartet and believes the Brahms concerto lets him prove his chops in both technique and musicianship. Throughout college he’s garnered numerous awards for his musical skills, and the buzz among the students is that he’s the odds-on favorite to win again.

Jonathan admits, “I really feel like I’m well prepared. I did lots of work before this year, and I feel like now I’m reaping the fruits. Lots of people are cramming, and although I’m not taking anything for granted, I’m not too stressed.”

He knows, however, how capricious such competitions can be. “I also competed my freshman year,” he says. “I thought I’d nailed my performance, and I didn’t win.”

Krystal Grant, Sophomore, Birmingham, Ala.

Sophomore Krystal Grant is searching for her voice—not the one in her throat, the one within the keys of a piano. Trained in classical music and a student of Craig Nies, associate professor of piano, she has selected a 10-minute abridged version of George Gershwin’s “Rhapsody in Blue” for her concerto audition and is striving to be freer and looser with the bluesy jazz rhythms and cadences of this musical genre.

“Granted, it’s a technical challenge, but it’s mainly an interpretive challenge,” she says. “This is my voice, in a way.” She has been practicing the work for months, and although she thinks it’s now “seasoned,” she recently began to feel like she was losing touch with its message. So, a week ago she picked up the original score and played it in its entirety—all 42 pages.



“I got the concept of the piece back. I was able to appreciate it in context again,” she says.

With only a week left before the competition, she has become fiercely protective of her practice time. Rehearsing with her accompanist, Leah Bowes, Krystal focuses on her pauses and stops, learning to cue her accompanist, who stands in for the orchestra.

Bowes explains, “The big difference between preparing for a concerto competition as opposed to one for solo work is keeping in mind that you hopefully are going to be playing with a symphony. You have to consider the conductor. You have to cue me and let me know your intentions. That’s a very big point for the judges. They want you to get across the beauty of the whole [orchestrated] piece.”

Suddenly, the telephone in the office rings—once, twice, three times. An answering machine clicks on, and an unknown voice leaves a lengthy message for a missing professor. Unfazed, Krystal does not stop playing. Showtime is fast approaching, she has exactly 30 minutes with her accompanist this day, and she has no room in her schedule for interruptions.

Noelle Jacquez, Senior, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Because voice majors usually take several years to develop the vocal technique necessary to be competitive in such an event, this is soprano

Krystal Grant has been practicing the work for months, and although she thinks it’s now “seasoned,” she began to feel like she was losing touch with its message. So, a week ago she picked up the original score and played it in its entirety—all 42 pages.

Noelle Jacquez’s first opportunity to audition for the concerto competition. Her mentor, Amy Jarman, senior lecturer in voice, is careful about which students she will recommend for the competition, which is considered prestigious to enter, much less to win. Noelle is fine-tuning a luscious aria from Antonin Dvořak’s opera “Rusalka,” based on the story of the Little Mermaid. Sung in Czech, this aria is rarely performed by undergraduates.

“This song requires somebody with a big instrument, who has a good top and a good low,” says Jarman. “About a year ago I thought Noelle’s voice had matured and that this was a perfect piece for her. The challenges of this aria have made her sing better and have taken her voice farther. That’s been really thrilling.”

Sitting in the Blair lobby between rehearsals, Noelle comments, “I’m nervous because I know how well I can do. I don’t want to have a freak-out and not do as well as I can. I feel like if I

do well, then it will be a triumph. This aria is a technical breakthrough piece for me.”

She adds that she enjoys the audition process because it’s “a great adrenaline rush,” and that she is looking forward to the experience. As Noelle prepares to go to her warm-up, she realizes with chagrin that she has been speaking, as they say in the business, “on the fry”—meaning she’s been using her lower vocal register, which is less healthy for her voice.

Lin Ong, Sophomore, Ames, Iowa

For percussion major Lin Ong, the concerto competition represents not just a performance but a comeback. A specialist on the marimba, Lin suffered an over-use injury akin to carpal tunnel syndrome last spring that caused

Lin Ong suffered an over-use injury akin to carpal tunnel syndrome last spring and couldn’t grip a pencil, much less a marimba mallet. She has been rehearsing her concerto, Alan Hovhaness’s “Fantasy on Japanese Woodprints,” for only three and a half weeks.



excruciating pain and weakness in her right hand. She couldn’t grip a pencil, much less a marimba mallet. After months of rehabilitative therapy, she slowly began to work her way back to practicing her beloved instrument for a few minutes at a time.

By mid-January of this year, she finally was able to return to a fairly normal practice schedule. On several occasions she has come close to withdrawing from the competition, ultimately deciding she would go through with it as a tribute to her recovery. However, she has been rehearsing her concerto, Alan Hovhaness’s “Fantasy on Japanese Woodprints,” for only three and a half weeks. The other entrants have spent months preparing theirs.

Explains her mentor, Assistant Professor of Percussion William Wiggins, “She feels like she’s under some pressure to do this. Lin is highly motivated and has a competitive nature—and she’s a talented player.”

“I’m not going to win,” Lin says. “Maybe I’ve overshot myself. It’s a daunting task to try to learn a concerto in three and a half weeks. But given that it’s been three and a half weeks, I’m really happy with it.”

Finding an accompanist on such short notice posed an additional problem, and she’s

enlisted her friend, fellow sophomore Ralph Blanco, to play the orchestral portion of the work. Ralph has not entered the concerto competition, but is busy with his own auditions for a master class at Blair later in February with internationally recognized pianist Emanuel Ax.

“I’m approaching this competition from a different angle because of my injury, and I’m just seeing it as a lot of fun,” Lin says. “For me it’s not the winning, but the road I took to get to this point, that matters.”

The Competition

On the day before the big event, the atmosphere at the Blair Music School is a dichotomous swirl of joviality and high tension. Krystal has picked up a virus that made its way through the University, and she has been unable to practice for three days.

Lin has finally found time to rehearse with Ralph, and they perform her piece before her percussion studio class in front of her peers. After she completes the concerto on the marimba, Professor Wiggins explains that Hovhaness originally wrote it for the xylophone, a smaller, tighter instrument. With the understanding that Lin has never practiced it this way, he suggests she demonstrate how “Fantasy on Japanese Woodprints” sounds on the xylophone. Lin and Ralph run through the concerto again. Although the keyboards of the two instruments are similar, Lin’s body is used to the larger, softer-toned marimba and she stumbles a few times. The students comment that they actually prefer the work played on the xylophone because of its sharper musical coloring.

During the early hours of Feb. 1, 2003, the world learns that the space shuttle *Columbia* has blown apart while reentering earth’s atmosphere. Twenty-seven students have no option but to set aside the tragedy temporarily if they are to play well in the Blair Concerto Competition that same day. Lin Ong is slated to perform first. The Blair Recital Hall is empty, save for four judges and a timer. Lin appears on stage, dressed in a flowing black and silver skirt, wheeling her instrument into the room. Ralph takes his seat, and Lin begins to perform—on the xylophone. Hands flying, mallets dropping gently on the



Noelle Jacquez is fine-tuning a lush aria from Antonin Dvorak’s opera “Rusalka,” based on the story of the Little Mermaid. Sung in Czech, this aria is rarely performed by undergraduates.

orchestra in the midst of a concert. He made a professional decision to plow ahead—a choice that may or may not have cost him a chance to win.

“Jonathan doesn’t fold under pressure,” says his mentor, Chris Teal, a violinist with the Blair String Quartet and the Joseph Joachim Professor of Violin at Blair. “Competitions are fickle things. If you live to win competitions, in my estimation you don’t belong in music, because you have to be motivated by your love of the art and craft of music-making. I admire him very much. He faced a lot of choices at that point, and he chose to play through. As a teacher, I feel very fortunate to have had Jonathan Chu as my student.”

Although Noelle was also disappointed by the results, she is taking some solace in the high praise and scores given her by the vocal judge and in knowing she met the challenge of singing an extremely difficult aria. “When you build yourself up to performing the best you possibly can,” she reasons, “you’re always disappointed when you don’t win. Now I have to move on and audition for other things. It was a great performance for [accompanist] Daphne Nicar and me, and we accomplished all we set out to accomplish. When it’s a passion and you love it so much, it’s really not hard to keep keeping on. You just have to get over the little hurdles.”

With nothing to lose, Lin went for broke. The comments by the members of her studio class hit a nerve. Because they preferred the way the piece sounded on the xylophone, Lin decided to give it a shot—knowing she was coming down to the wire. “It was neat to change to the xylophone at the last minute, even if it was a little abrupt,” she says. “Although it felt new and weird on that instrument instead of on the larger marimba, I didn’t feel like it was out of control. I felt like it was doable. Next year I’ll hopefully have a concerto that I’m more ready to play.” Lin was so

continued on page 85

wooden keys, she creates the sound of raindrops on water, playing beautifully on an instrument she first tested out the day before.

A few hours later Jonathan Chu stands before the judges. “Excuse me,” he says apologetically, when he realizes he must retune his violin on stage because it doesn’t match the key accompanist Leah Bowes gives him on the piano. Rightly tuned, Jonathan launches into the Brahms concerto, his bow ripping through the dramatic, physical passages and dancing across the light, lyrical phrases. All of a sudden, one of his strings slips, losing its pitch. In an instantaneous decision, Jonathan plays on without stopping, although by the end of the concerto his E string has dropped to a G-sharp. His performance is stunning, albeit noticeably flawed. After he leaves the stage, the judges stir and whisper among themselves, clearly facing a dilemma.

Krystal follows immediately. She is wearing a long gold skirt that shimmers under the spotlight as she begins the famous Gershwin classic, teasing the melodies out of the piano and, without distractions, perfectly cuing her accompanist during the breaks and resumptions in the music.

It is mid-afternoon when Noelle takes the stage. Dressed in a long red skirt and earrings

that sparkle as they catch the light, she sings an aria that Dvorak could have composed for her voice alone. Pleading to the moon with heart-tugging emotion, she lets her full soprano ring through the hall and ends her performance with a slight curtsy.

Later that evening Professor Rose posts the names of the concerto winners: freshman Preetha Narayanan, violin; sophomore Martin-Patrick Eady, piano; and senior Jennifer Bernard, oboe. The judges also award three honorable mentions: junior Scott Seaton, saxophone; junior Sarah Seelig, piano; and senior Jonathan Chu, violin.

The Aftermath

“I’m disappointed,” Jonathan says simply. “Every competition is a snapshot of a player, and that performance is a bad snapshot of me.” Three days have passed since the competition, and the dramatic loosening of his string still stings like a fresh wound. Because the Brahms concerto moves quickly without any substantive breaks during which he could have paused gracefully to retune, he knows he would have had to stop his accompanist, retune, and pick up where he left off. In the real world, however, a soloist can’t halt an

The Arts Culture

“To see my notes leap off the page into her feet, hands, body and face—it has been unbelievable.” —MICHAEL ALEC ROSE

UPCOMING



VISUAL ARTS
Marking Time, an exhibit of mixed-media pieces by Linda Laino and handmade paper quilts by Zelda Tanenbaum, explores the layering of memory, dream and experience at Sarratt Art Gallery, June 16–Aug. 2.

Summer Reading: Artists' Books from Nashville Collections presents a number of artist-made books, some illustrating important works of literature, others that are distinct, independent works of art at Vanderbilt Fine Arts Gallery, June 17–Aug. 16.



MUSIC

The **Blair School of Music** will host its second annual **International Fiddle School** July 27–Aug. 2. Acclaimed artists such as Vassar Clements and Buddy Spicher will teach classes in Celtic, bluegrass, Texas swing, jazz, country, old-time and rock styles of playing.

THEATER

Actors Bridge Ensemble, housed at St. Augustine's Episcopal Chapel on campus, presents Rebecca Gilman's **"Boy Gets Girl,"** a dark thriller about how a blind date sparks a man's obsession, beginning July 18 and running weekends through Aug. 2 at Nashville's Darkhorse Theatre.



VISUAL ARTS:

Sarratt Art Gallery

showed work by mixed-media artist **Crimson Rain McCaslin** during February and March. The exhibit, **Full Circle**, showcased what McCaslin refers to as "two-and-a-half"-dimensional work resembling miniature dioramas in which she utilizes natural materials such as wax, seeds and rust. McCaslin draws on museum displays of cultural artifacts, beetles, bones and medical oddities in jars to reflect her preoccupation with recording events in her life.

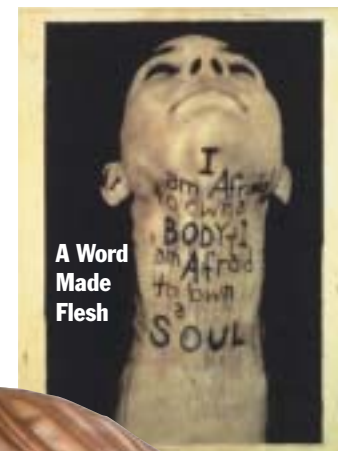


From "Full Circle" recently added four works by **Laura McNellis** to its permanent art collection. McNellis, a Nashville native with developmental disabilities and autism, was introduced to artists of the Riddle Institute in North Carolina five years ago when their show traveled to the Kennedy Center. That connection led her to move to North Carolina where she now works full time as a painter and sculptor. Since 1992 McNellis has been represented

The John F. Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development

by the Ricco/Maresca Gallery in New York City.

Running from late March through June at the Fine Arts Gallery are works by New York artist **Lesley Dill**. **A Word Made Flesh** features large-scale, photo-based tapestries,



A Word Made Flesh

merging images of the human body with poetry by the 19th-century American poet Emily Dickinson literally drawn on the figures themselves.

Paranirvana (Self-Portrait)

by San Francisco State University professor **Lewis DeSoto** reclined at the **Vanderbilt Fine Arts Gallery** during February and March. The 26-foot-long, air-filled, fan-inflated sculpture was inspired by a well-known statue of Buddha at Gal Vihara in Sri Lanka, but in this sculpture the artist replaced the face of Buddha with his own, thereby portraying both himself and the reclining Buddha at the moment of death and supreme consciousness.



Paranirvana (Self-Portrait)

ACCOLADES

Michael Aurbach, professor of art, reprised his exhibit **"The Administrator"** in February at Belmont University's Leu Gallery of Art. First seen in spring 2001 as the inaugural exhibit at the Frist Center for the Visual Arts in Nashville,



Aurbach's consummately crafted piece uses hidden symbols to poke fun at small-minded people in positions of power. Professor of Art and Art History, Emeritus, **Don Evans** celebrated his 64th birthday with an exhibit titled **"Be One of These"** at Ruby Green Contemporary Arts Center in Nashville through March and April. Evans, who is famous for his doodles, enlarged a number of these drawings—some done during "boring faculty meetings"—transferred them to plywood, cut them out, added color, and hung them from the Ruby Green ceiling suspended by fishing line. For the opening, he invited participants to come as their favorite doodle.





Eos Orchestra

MUSIC:

Eos Orchestra performed at the Blair School's Ingram Hall as part of the Great Performances Series in February. The program included the complete ballet score of Aaron Copland's *Appalachian Spring* and two works by the late Paul Bowles, a former student of Copland best known as author of the novel *Sheltering Sky*.



Leisner

The **Blair Guitar Fest** took place Feb. 6–7 in the Steve and Judy Turner Recital Hall at the Blair School of Music. David Leisner, currently teaching at Manhattan School of Music after more

than two decades at the New England Conservatory of Music, was featured along with Michael Cedric Smith, on faculty at the Conservatory of Music of Brooklyn College. They performed works by Rodrigo, Schubert, Bach and Villa-Lobos, among others.

Robert Beaser, artistic director of the American Composers Orchestra at Carnegie Hall and chair of the composition department at Juilliard, was featured as this spring's **BMI Composer-in-Residence** at the Blair School during February. Blair faculty members Amy Jarman, Melissa Rose and Carolyn Huebl, along with staff accompanist Leah Bowes, performed works by Beaser in a Feb. 17 concert at Blair's Steve and Judy Turner Recital Hall.

ACCOLADES

President Bush intends to nominate **John E. Buchanan Jr.**, MA'79, of Portland, Ore., to be a member of the National Museum Services Board for the remainder of a five-year term expiring Dec. 6, 2006. Buchanan currently serves as executive director of the Portland Art Museum. Previously, he served as director of the Dixon Gallery and Gardens, and as executive director of the Lakeview Museum of Arts and Sciences.

The Blair String Quartet joined the concert to perform Charles Ives's First Quartet.

Early this semester, numerous **master classes** brought some of the nation's best musicians to teach students and community members at the Blair School. In January, **Paul Kantor**, chair of the string department at the University of Michigan and a member of the artist-faculty at Aspen, conducted a violin master class, and **Roberto Diaz**, principal violist of the Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted a viola master class. In February, Blair was visited by the trumpet/guitar duo Spanish Blue whose members, trumpeter **Richard Carson Steuart** and guitarist **Christian Reichert**, taught for the Del Sawyer Endowment Guest Artist Concert and Master

Class. Just a few days later, the **Baltimore Consort**, a six-member ensemble specializing in popular music of the 16th to 18th centuries, shared their expertise, while internationally acclaimed pianist **Emanuel Ax**, in town to perform with the Nashville Symphony, closed out the month.

Emergence!, a collaboration between the Blair School of Music and the Nashville Ballet, featured new music by Blair faculty **Michael Alec Rose** and **Stan Link**, and traditional Celtic music newly arranged by **Crystal Plohman**, director of Blair's fiddle program. The mid-March performances marked the most extensive collaboration yet between the Blair School and a local arts group. Rose's music for *Night of the Iguana*, based on the

Tennessee Williams short story and choreographed by Nashville Ballet artistic director Paul Vasterling, was rhythmically complex, composed only after



DANIEL DUBOIS

Rose had seen the dancers rehearsing it in silence. Link's music, entitled *LAPseDANCE*, for Robert Philander-Valentine's abstract piece *Premeditated*, was described by the composer as "Stravinsky played on African drums." The **Vanderbilt New Music Ensemble**, com-

posed entirely of students, performed Rose's and Link's works for the performance, while Plohman performed her own arrangements of Irish music onstage.

Nashville Symphony principal oboist and Blair School of Music faculty member **Bobby Taylor** gathered his musical friends and neighbors April 5 for an **Appalachian Celebration** at the Blair School's Ingram Hall as the final concert for the Concert Series season. Taylor, whose Kentucky grandfather was a mountain musician, enlisted the musical aid of fellow Blair faculty members—master fiddler **Crystal Plohman**, Nashville Mandolin Ensemble leader **Butch Baldassari**, and dulcimer master **David Schnauffer**—to help kick up the audience's heels in a joyous celebration of some of America's deepest-rooted musical traditions.

Great Performances at Vanderbilt ended the year with the **Afro-Cuban All Stars**, whose Latin rhythms had the Langford Auditorium audience dancing in the aisles. Brought together by musical director Juan de Marcos González (leader of the groups Sierra Maestra and Buena Vista Social Club) as a multi-generational big band to explore a broader scope than the Buena Vista projects, the All Stars paid tribute to the diversity of Cuban music, marrying the past with the present.

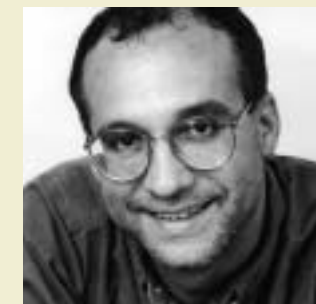


Emergence!

NEIL BRAVE

Q & A

Michael Alec Rose, associate professor of composition, Blair School of Music



In mid-March 2003, Michael Rose witnessed his original classical score interpreted in a way few composers ever experience—by a troupe of professional ballet dancers. The Nashville Ballet and the Blair School of Music joined in a first-time collaboration to present a program, "Emergence!," in which Rose and choreographer Paul Vasterling emerged with a new take on Tennessee Williams's short story "Night of the Iguana."

Q: You've said that initially you weren't sure you were the right composer for this piece. Why not?

A: "Night of the Iguana" is a very neurotic short story. It's very intense—filled with desire and rage and potential love. I wasn't sure I had the temperament to write this piece. It was not literature that I was familiar with or that I naturally gravitate towards. It's "compulsive" literature.

Q: Why did you decide to go for it despite these doubts?

A: It gave me a sense of artistic excitement. And I felt that if the choreographer believed in this story, it was my job as a composer to embrace it enthusiastically. I knew it would be a great ballet, and I knew there was artistic gold here to be mined—whatever the style of writing. Tennessee Williams got to the very core

of what human beings suffer in their desire for other human beings.

Q: Paul Vasterling has said that when he first heard your composition, it wasn't at all what he was expecting.

A: That's OK; his choreography wasn't what I was expecting, either. He was expecting something more regional, more southern, in sound. I was trying to capture something universal. This is a story of mythic consequence. The music seemed to me to be stretching beyond the Mason-Dixon Line.

Q: What was your reaction when you first saw the dancers perform to your score?

A: I was at rehearsal for three days, and I was just crying. These are all great dancers. Jennifer McNamara [the lead ballerina] is a celestial being. I've never seen anything like what she does with my music and Paul's choreography. It's astonishing. To see my notes leap off the page into her feet, hands, body and face—it has been unbelievable.

—Lisa DuBois

THEATER:

The promise of spring was celebrated in mid-February when **Vanderbilt University Theatre** presented “**Two Gentlemen of Verona**,” a musical adaptation of the Shakespeare play. The happy coming-of-age story celebrates spring and its promise of love with a satirical undercurrent involving the government’s sometimes less-than-pure motives for war. With music by Galt MacDermot (“Hair”) and lyrics by playwright John Guare (“The House of Blue Leaves”), this adaptation of the Shakespeare comedy won both the Tony Award and the New York Drama Circle Award for best musical of 1972.

In April, VUT presented Lee Blessing’s drama “**Two Rooms**,” in which rising Middle East tensions and self-centered government policies serve as a backdrop. The drama places an American hostage, held captive in a featureless cell, beside his wife, who has stripped a room in their home of furnishings to better understand his deprivation.



Two Rooms



Two Gentlemen of Verona

DAVID CHENSHAW

“**A Letter to Harvey Milk**,” a one-man show about a week in the life of Harry Weinberg, a widower and Holocaust survivor living in San Francisco, was performed at the **Ben Schulman Center for Jewish Life** at Vanderbilt in late March by local actor Yaron Schweizer. The humorous play, told through the voice of a 77-year-old man, examines questions of personal identity for a young woman trying to reconcile being lesbian and Jewish.

DANCE:

Two very different dance companies graced the stage in Vanderbilt’s Great Performances Series this spring. **Ronald K. Brown/Evidence**, performing in Langford Auditorium in mid-February, had as its mission to “focus on developing African contemporary dance and [to discuss] issues of race, class, gender and assimilation” through

Brown’s vision of modern dance, theater and kinetic storytelling. In April, **Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo**, an all-male comic ballet troupe, dazzled the audience at Ingram Hall with its unusual spin on such traditional masterpieces of classical ballet as “Swan Lake” and “The Dying Swan” by combining technical virtuosity, parody, and the wearing of women’s clothing.



Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo

HUMANITIES:

As part of this year’s **Brain Awareness 2003** events on campus, **Robert Zatorre** of the Montreal Neurological Institute at McGill University presented a lecture on how the human brain perceives, understands, remembers and imagines music in “**Music and the Brain**” at the Steve and Judy Turner Recital Hall. The event was co-sponsored by the Vanderbilt Department of Psychology, the Blair School of Music, and the Vanderbilt Brain Institute.

In April, **Kanan Makiya**, professor of near eastern studies at Brandeis University, presented a lecture on the **United States and Post-Saddam Iraq** as part of the “Understanding the Middle East” lecture series sponsored by the Robert Penn

Warren Center for the Humanities. Makiya is an adviser for the Iraqi National Congress, and his work has been featured in the *New York Times Sunday Magazine*. His book *Republic of Fear* became a bestseller after Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait.

Building bridges to create opportunities for both entertainment and education, Vanderbilt and the **Tennessee Performing Arts Center** has entered into a unique initiative designed to benefit Vanderbilt and the Nashville community. The first programs spotlighted the arts in new ways through a lunchtime learning series at Nashville’s War Memorial Auditorium called “**InsideOut of the (Lunch) Box.**” In February, Dean **Mark Wait** and faculty member **Stan Link** of

the Blair School of Music joined Nashville School of Ballet choreographer Robert Philander-Valentine and *Tennessean* features writer Tasneem Grace Tewogbola for an exploration of African influences in contemporary American choreography and composition. In March, **David Grapes**, artistic producing director of the Tennessee Repertory Theatre, and **Terryl Hallquist**, co-director of Vanderbilt University Theatre, presented “Shakespeare: In and Out of Love.” The season concluded in April with **Bill Ivey**, Branscomb Scholar and former chair of the National Endowment for the Arts, talking about arts funding in America. Ivey also now heads the University’s new Curb Center for Art, Enterprise and Public Policy.

BOOKS & WRITERS:

Pulitzer Prize-winning poet **Philip Levine** was honored on his 75th birthday with a two-day poetry colloquium at Vanderbilt April 11–12, featuring 10 poets whose works have been influenced by Levine. Levine was writer-in-residence at Vanderbilt in the spring of 1995 when he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for poetry for his work *The Simple Truth*. Poets participating in the colloquium included former students, contemporaries and friends of Levine: Vanderbilt faculty members **Kate Daniels** and **Mark Jarman**, along with Christopher Buckley, Peter Everwine, Charles Hanzlicek, Galway Kinnell, Dorianne Laux, Paul Mariani, Sharon Olds and Gerald Stern. The celebration of Levine and his work was this year’s annual colloquium of the Gertrude and Harold S. Vanderbilt Visiting Writers Series.

Philip Nel’s (MA’93, PhD’97) latest book, *The Avant-Garde and American Postmodernity: Small Incisive Shocks*, proposes that a series of small but far-reaching changes drew understanding from modernism to postmodernism. He focuses on eight figures—Nathaniel West, Djuna Barnes, Dr. Seuss, Donald Barthelme, Don DeLillo, Chris Van Allsburg, Laurie Anderson and Leonard Cohen—as representative of these changes, in this, the first book to analyze postmodern children’s literature.



Number: Country Music’s 500 Greatest Singles by David Cantwell and Bill Friskics-Warren, published jointly by **Vanderbilt University Press** and the Country Music Foundation Press,

Two new books with ties to Nashville’s country music industry also have ties to Vanderbilt. This spring Chronicle Books published *Vinyl Hayride: Country Music Album Covers, 1947-1989* by **Paul Kingsbury**,



BA’80, former deputy director of the Country Music Hall of Fame. The book, illustrated with more than 250 examples of covers, offers a glimpse into the history and evolution of country music. A sweeping kaleidoscope of rhinestones, neon, flashy cars and guitars, it surveys the album art of the entire genre. *Heartaches by the*

is part encyclopedia, part history, and part collection of record reviews. It argues for a way of hearing using critical essays that, when read in sequence, comment upon each other—ultimately challenging what country music is and what it can mean.

To One Day Be Judged

Musings from a mile above Nashville. By ALEX BURKETT

AMONG MY BEST friends is a small Cessna, which provides the only venue these days where I can watch the world go by, and look upon Middle Tennessee and ponder where we've come, where we're going, and my role in chronicling it. We speak our own language up there, a mile high, in unspeakably tranquil refuge from the pressures of putting out a biweekly newspaper.

I confess to the Cessna, as we slice through the winter air together, that my biggest, most consuming fear is becoming irrelevant. I'm petrified of not making a contribution — of accomplishing mere deeds as editor-in-chief at the *Vanderbilt Hustler*, but not leaving the campus in May with a lasting and meaningful contribution.

My friends whisper of escapism when they talk about my exploits in the air, but I don't see it that way. I write flying off as a part of my job, because the best writer is he who has accrued the longest, most diverse life history, and I can't conceive of a better way to see the world — to observe it, to know it — than from an airplane.

I fancy myself more an observer than a reporter. I guess it's natural; I couldn't be one

without being the other. But in many ways, the best reporter is a pilot. He ascends above the fray to make sense of it all, getting the helicopter view from overhead and simplifying it for readers who can't be there to see it for themselves.

As the editor of students' primary source of information on everything Vanderbilt, I think it's my job to observe, to analyze, and to know something before I begin even to report a single word.



NEIL BRANKE

The truths most vital to any member of a newspaper's staff are that he is insignificant, soon will be obsolete, was born long after the newspaper's nascence, and likely will die long before it prints its last page. That's particularly important for college newspaper editors to remember, particularly when they occupy their office for, at most, a year's time, and enter their job knowing they'll be replaced, trying desperately until then to make a difference, to make a contribution. But I can report only that which happens. If nothing of note happens during my tenure as editor-in-chief, I'll simply have to be satisfied with being reliable.

But I haven't been so unlucky as to writhe in a drought of news. On a campus with 10,000 students and more staff members, there's always news.

The University has embarked ambitious-

ly on a path toward its future size and shape, preparing for residential colleges and aligning itself with the newest incarnation of the ever-changing paradigm of higher learning in the United States.

Vanderbilt, historically the stiff, somewhat high-brow conservative institution of southern legacy, has begun to shed its old skin and force a new identity. Progressivism is the only ideology acceptable in any intellectual community.

Vanderbilt administrators' decision last fall to delete the word "Confederate" from Confederate Memorial Hall, a dormitory on the University's Peabody campus, was a particular high point of the *Hustler's* reporting record. We broke the story, which spilled into local, regional and national headlines within days.

In one sense, our reporting of the renaming of Confederate Memorial Hall was routine: It told the story of yet another University-led initiative designed to refocus Vanderbilt's image as a progressive, somewhat urban, somewhat "hot" school that was trying to delete the regional boundaries that have heretofore defined its student body.

But in another sense, the Confederate coverage was a reporter's — and editor's — dream. It prompted fascinating dialogue about race in America, and conjured memories of America's past racial sins from which we continue to learn. Our coverage had a very real, almost visceral social value, something we don't always enjoy with reporting on a new greenhouse or on scholarship winners.

Information, if it's anything, is a business. We are the distributor — the middle man —

of information, and our readers are its consumers. And as in any business, sometimes it's difficult, if not impossible, to please everyone.

One student, trying to defend his friend who had been arrested two days earlier while allegedly attempting to break into the Federal Courthouse in downtown Nashville, made an interesting demand.

"Your reporter didn't tell me I'd have to tell the truth once she started asking me questions," he said. "So if you print the story, I'm going to say that everything I told her was a lie." His demand was that since he hadn't been truthful with our reporter, we must not use the interview in which he had revealed some potentially damning information about his friend's night on the town.

Needless to say, he hadn't lied. But my conversation with him, which lasted the better part of an hour, underscored the delicacy of our relationship with our readers.

On the one hand, we all inhabit the same community. All of us at the *Hustler* pay Vanderbilt tuition each year, we all attend class, we all go to weekend parties. And despite its recent growth, Vanderbilt's student body is still pretty small: One of our staff members estimated recently that students here are separated by a scant two degrees. Everyone knows everyone else through one friend.

Unequivocally, it's a small community. Almost every story in the *Hustler* affects at least two people I know, so it's important that the newspaper institutionalize a spirit of impartiality and a sense of detachment characteristic more of larger, metropolitan products than of newspapers serving markets Vanderbilt's size.

But we all live by the same rules, and it's the newspaper's responsibility to report on those who don't.

It's important I consider carefully what I write, and what the *Vanderbilt Hustler* reports. Vanderbilt's students, an increasingly diverse, Brobdingnagian bunch of scholars, academics and future power-mongers, are growing

increasingly sophisticated with every new freshman class. Perhaps no other newspaper in the country must navigate such a tenuous course through such an unforgiving and sophisticated readership.

Making our job even more difficult is the schedule we work.



ROB FRANKLE

We are practitioners of a craft whose beauty takes shape in the witching hours. Ours is a life of plenty of Coca-Cola, coffee, candy and sucrose. Like us, our office never sleeps. More often than not, I fantasize about joining the hordes of other Vanderbilt seniors as they trek to Hank Williams's and Chet Atkins's old haunts in downtown Nashville on weekday nights.

I see them — all of them — reading our product bleary-eyed in the mornings after what I imagine to be long afternoons of golf and tennis, looking tan even in January as they work their way through the paper from the crossword on the back page.

In those moments of self-doubt, I usually wander back into my office, where there's a bulletin board on which, ever the escapist, I've tacked a poster of a tropical paradise in Mal-

dives. Next to the poster there's a card whose cover declares, "Some people are special." It's a greeting card from Wymon Hayes, a Vanderbilt Dining Services employee whose son was on board the *USS Cole* when it was attacked by Al-Qaida operatives in 2000.

I covered the story of Hayes's family as they watched television news broadcasts of the attacks, and wondered and prayed about the safety of her son. I look at the card and smile, every time, as I remember when I called Hayes, famous among students for the hugs she used to dispense at the entrance to Rand Dining Hall at dinner time, shortly after she talked to her son for the first time after the attack.

I remember how Hayes, characteristically calm and spiritual, seemed so utterly energized, entirely relieved. She was a story. She was also a mother.

"Oh, honey, I'm just so happy," she told me, clearly fighting her emotions. "I've been praying so hard, and I know everyone at Vanderbilt has been, too." And then I remember why I edit Vanderbilt's student newspaper, why I decided to write in the first place.

A mile above the city, hurtling through space at 120 miles per hour, it's easy to romanticize about

the news business and collect my thoughts. But nothing is easier to me than writing a compelling article, than telling a good story.

I imagine the Cessna and I will continue to escape from the stresses of the daily grind as often as possible. But I also imagine I'll one day be judged, in some way, for my work at Vanderbilt. I hope my contribution will prove to be as profound as Mama Hayes told me it would be, as she prepared to welcome her son home. I pray I won't become irrelevant, amid the roar of the Cessna's engine and the wind racing around us.

The way I figure it, irrelevant is the worst thing a man like me can be.

Alex Burkett, a senior American studies major from Dalton, Ga., is editor of the biweekly *Vanderbilt Hustler* student newspaper. He graduates with his bachelor of arts degree in May.

A Wound Left Unhealed

Looking back at another time of war and a leader silenced too soon.

By FRYE GAILLARD, BA'68

IT WAS 35 YEARS AGO THIS spring, and what I remember most is the crush of the crowd—how they jammed together and filled up the airport, and screamed and waved signs and surged forward at the sight of him, trying to shake his hand or just touch him.

He made it halfway from the plane to his car, a step-at-a-time journey of maybe 15 minutes. But finally he was surrounded, and there was nowhere to move; so they hoisted him unsteadily to an escalator railing, and as he balanced there precariously, looking frail and very tired, he made a brief speech about the problems of the country.

These were urgent times, he said, full of war and injustice and pointless human pain. But they were not impossible times, not an occasion for cynicism or despair.

There was nothing revolutionary about the words he spoke; platitudes were as abundant as startling insights. But somewhere imbedded in his Massachusetts twang, somewhere in the strange and enigmatic intensity of his icy blue stare, in the jab of his forefinger and the tousle of his hair, in all the little components that made up his presence, there was an urgency and a passion that were soon to disappear. For this was March 21, 1968, and the man was Robert Kennedy, newly announced candidate for president of the United States.



He had come to Nashville on this particular occasion to deliver a speech at Vanderbilt University. More than 10,000 people waited for him there, but the people at the airport wanted a glimpse of him, too, and when he disembarked from the railing and resumed his slow journey in the direction of the car, the force of the crowd was nearly overwhelming.

I was in the middle of it, wide-eyed and trying to stay upright, shoving to keep up with Kennedy, whom I was supposed to introduce. When we finally squeezed through the doors of the airport terminal, it was raining outside—a cold and windy drizzle that would soon turn to ice.

I had an umbrella clutched tightly in my hand, but it was still closed, and in the delirious surge of bodies there was no way to open it, or even to lift my arm. It struck me then that the crowd, though friendly, was edging toward a mob, caught up in a kind of Pied Piper blindness for which I feel no nostalgia. But for the slouched and slender man at the center of it, there are those—and I suppose I am one—who still feel a nostalgia that borders on an ache.

When he died 74 days later, you knew with a certainty beyond shock and grief that American politics would never be the same. And it isn't. Kennedy came to Vanderbilt to serve as keynoter for the IMPACT symposium, a student-run speakers program that had brought

a number of celebrities to the campus—William Buckley, Martin Luther King, Stokely Carmichael and Barry Goldwater, to name just a few. Kennedy's speech was at least as memorable as any of the others. He spoke during a time of war and division, of urban riots and racial injustice, and against that backdrop he talked about the patriotism of dissent. It was, he thought, the duty of the people who loved their country to speak out strongly against its imperfections.

"There are millions of Americans," he declared, "living in hidden places, whose faces and names we will never know. But I have seen children starving in Mississippi, idling their lives away in the ghetto, living without hope or future amid the despair on Indian reservations, with no jobs and little hope. I have seen proud men in the hills of Appalachia who wish only to work in dignity—but the mines are closed, and the jobs are gone and no one, neither industry or labor or government, has cared enough to help. Those conditions will change, those children will live, only if we dissent. So I dissent, and I know you do, too."

For some of us at least, those words are haunting 35 years later, as we enter a new era of national division—potentially, at least, a profound and agonizing disagreement about what kind of country we want to become in the wake of the terror of Sept. 11. There is no way to know, as this story goes to press, if the divisions will become a kind of tortured replay, or even an echo, of the 1960s. But what some of us fear is that there are no Robert Kennedys among us today—no political leaders, Republican or Democrat, who have yet stepped for-

ward with the wisdom and the vision to lead us through the pain.

I don't mean to idealize Kennedy. For some time now, scholars have picked their way through his record, revealing his contradictions and his flaws. Even in the '60s, some were unconvinced by his urgency, seeing him as a cynical and ruthless politician. And even his admirers had to acknowledge that he *could* be ruthless, or at least so driven that you couldn't tell the difference. But he was not cynical.

I remember the car ride from the airport to Vanderbilt—three Tennessee politicians crowded into the front seat, while Kennedy shared the back with John Glenn and one slightly awed student who was astonished by the frankness of it all as the politicians tried to tell Kennedy what to say and not to say. It's a campus audience, they told him, so talk about the Vietnam War if you want. But this is still the South, so go a little easy on the issue of race.

Kennedy listened for a while, then turned to me and asked without warning: "What do you think I ought to say tonight?"

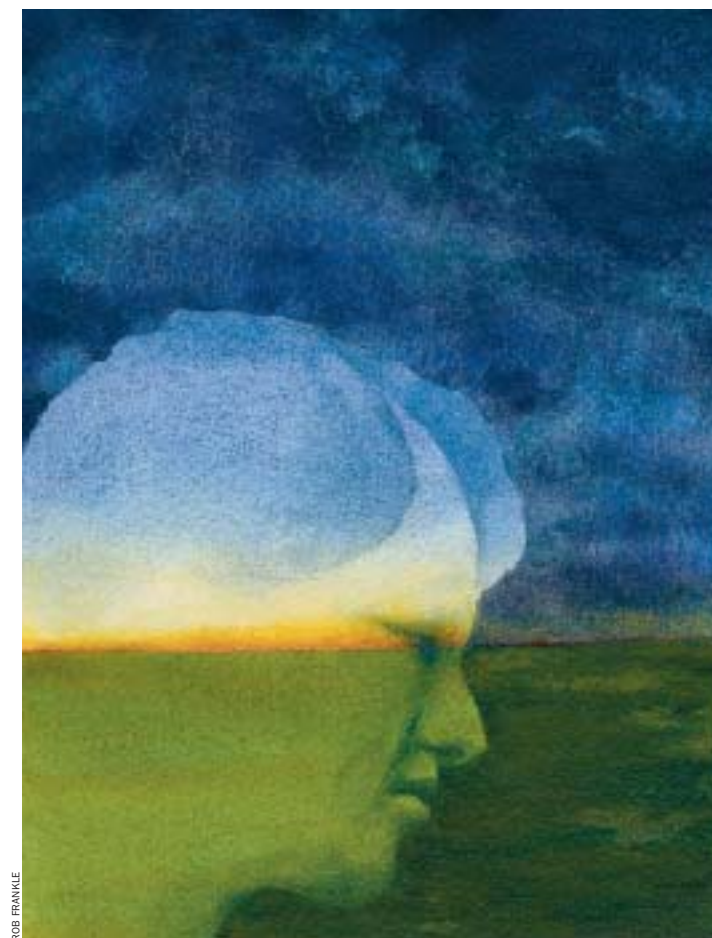
I hesitated briefly, then told him it was fine to talk about the war, but I also thought he should talk about poverty and injustice at home. I told him it was true those subjects were still sensitive in the South, but that was all the more reason to address them there—and that he might be surprised by the sympathy of the crowd.

"Thank you," he said. "That's what I'll do."

Then he sank into himself and rode along in silence, brooding enigmatically as the politicians in the front seat laughed and joked and exchanged old stories. I had no idea what Kennedy was thinking, but there was certainly a great deal for him to brood about. He could have reflected, as he did sometimes, about the shabbier contradictions of his earlier career—his time as attorney general in his brother's administration when he permitted wiretaps on civil rights leaders and angered groups of blacks who came to him regularly with horror stories from the South, telling them abruptly and with no apparent sense of irony: "Well, you

know we've all suffered."

But in the end, of course, Kennedy did suffer, and for a brief period of time—less than five years, in fact, for that was all there was between his brother's death and his—Kennedy embodied an identification with pain. He spoke at every campaign stop, including the one at the Vanderbilt gymnasium, about the trou-



ROB FRANKIE

bling things he had seen in the country—"the slow destruction of a child by hunger, and schools without books, and homes without any heat in the winter."

Despite his pleadings, the wounds of the country only seemed to grow worse, culminating on April 4, 1968, when Martin Luther King was murdered in Memphis. Kennedy heard the news on a plane to Indianapolis, where he was scheduled to appear that night at a campaign rally in a black neighborhood. All across the country the ghettos were burning, with looting and bombs and sniper fire from the high-rise apartments. But Kennedy insisted on keeping his appointment.

Standing alone on a flatbed truck, hunched against the cold in his black overcoat, he told the crowd what had happened to King, and as

the people cried out in disbelief, he told them he understood how they felt.

"In this difficult day," he said, "in this difficult time for the United States, it is perhaps well to ask what kind of nation we are and what direction we want to move in. For those of you who are black, you can be filled with bitterness, with hatred, and a desire for revenge. We can

move in that direction as a country, in great polarization—black people amongst black, white people amongst white, filled with hatred toward one another.

"Or we can make an effort, as Martin Luther King did, to understand and to comprehend, and to replace that violence, that stain of bloodshed that has spread across our land, with an effort to understand.

"My favorite poet was Aeschylus. He wrote: 'In our sleep, pain which cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart until, in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom through the awful grace of God.'"

There were no riots in Indianapolis that night. "I guess the thing that kept us going," said one of King's aides, "was that maybe Bobby Kennedy would come up with some answers."

For the next two months, a lot of people held grimly to that hope, especially as Kennedy did well in

the primaries, and the thought began slowly to form in our minds that despite all the tragedy and despair of the decade—the war and the riots and the murder of good men—Robert Kennedy might be the next president.

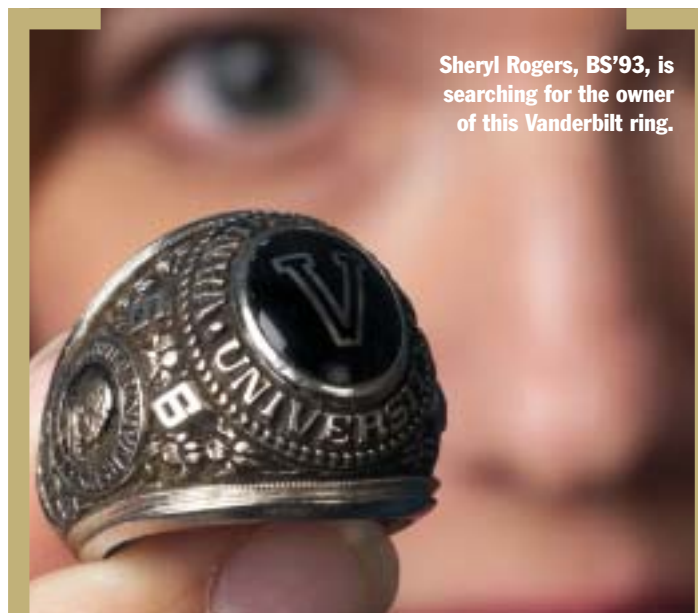
He might find the policies to implement his vision, and the country might find a way through its pain. But then in the first week of June he was gone, following unbelievably in the martyred path of Dr. King. In a way, it was the culmination of the '60s, the death of a promise that had been so strong.

Thirty-five years later, it seems clear enough that the wound to the country has never really healed. There is only the scar—the cynicism born on a California night when the most decent politician of our time lay in a spreading pool

continued on page 85

The Classes

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



Sheryl Rogers, BS'93, is searching for the owner of this Vanderbilt ring.

NEIL BRAKE

Icelandic Saga

Wanted: One Class of 1966 alumnus who likes to travel and is prone to losing things. The Alumni Relations Office has your Vanderbilt ring.

"I found it in a bag of sheepskin scraps when we lived in Iceland," writes Gayle Temple of Arlington, Texas. "We were stationed at the NATO base near Keflavik, Iceland, in 1971."

Having no affiliation with Vanderbilt and unsure of how to proceed, the Temples kept the ring in an old jewelry box. Years later, their son lost his Texas Aggie ring. "It put life and personality into that ring I still had from Iceland," adds Gayle, who, more than 30 years after finding it, has sent the Vanderbilt ring to Sheryl Rogers, associate director of alumni relations at Vanderbilt.

The unclaimed man's ring is silver with a black stone and identifies the owner as BA'66. Inside, an inscription appears to read "B.R.F. Jr."

Alumni records do not list anyone in the Class of 1966 who matches those initials. If you can help solve the riddle of the ring, please contact the Alumni Relations Office at 615/322-1003.

Alumni Association News

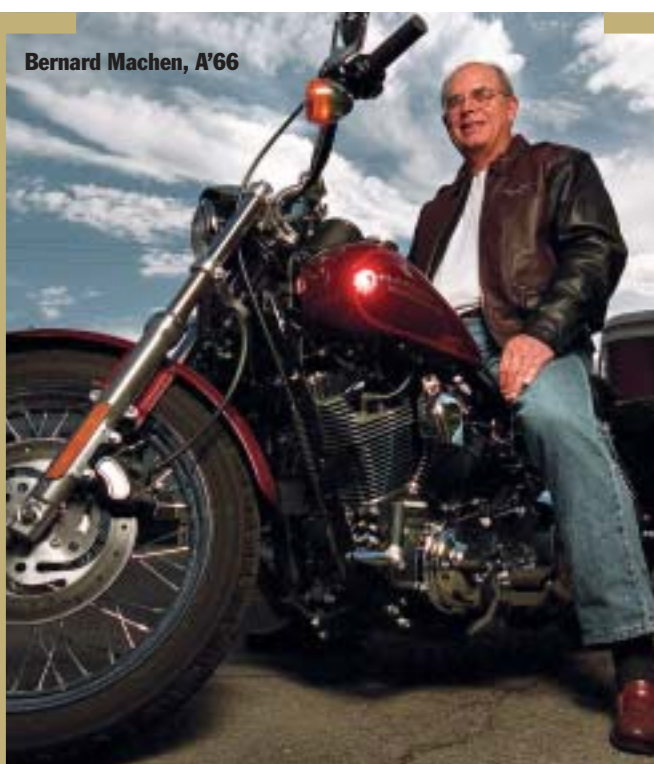
Beginning this fall, **Alumni Recruitment Committees** in three cities will take on a larger role in student recruitment. Alumni volunteers will interview students in Atlanta, Chicago and Houston. The interviewing program, which will help personalize the admissions process and expand Vanderbilt's reputation in each of these cities, will be administered by the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and the Office of Alumni Relations. Eventually, the program will expand to other cities. Training workshops will take place in all three pilot cities this summer. If you live in one of these areas and are interested in getting involved, contact Heathie Bagwell Cox in the Alumni Relations Office at 615/322-2929, or at heathie.bagwell@vanderbilt.edu.

Each year the Alumni Relations Office hosts **tailgating parties** prior to away games in a handful of cities. This year you can tailgate with fellow 'Dore fans before the Sept. 20 game at Texas Christian University or the Nov. 8 game at Florida. Other tailgating parties are still being planned. For information, contact the Alumni Relations Office.

Three members of the Class of 2003 are candidates for **Young Alumni Trustee**. They are Ashley Moore, a double major in English and psychology; Marissa Shrum, an English and sociology double major; and Matthew Saul, an economics major. Check your next *Vanderbilt Magazine* to find out which of these outstanding students will serve on the Vanderbilt Board of Trust.

Kudos to **Nashville Vanderbilt Club** organizers for their popular "Murder, She Wrote" mystery evening. About 175 alumni and friends attended the March 2 event, which included cocktails, dinner, high drama, and a program by Martha Hailey DuBose, BA'68, author of *Women of Mystery: The Lives and Works of Notable Women Crime Novelists*, and armchair sleuth Margaret Caldwell Thomas. Special credit goes to Cathy Shull, BA'68; Sharon Hels, MA'82, PhD'87; and the Nashville Vanderbilt Club Education Committee for planning this event.

Update information on what you're doing and where you are at **Dore2Dore**, Vanderbilt's online alumni connection. Information is password-protected for your privacy. Check out Dore2Dore at www.dore2dore.net.



Bernard Machen, A'66

LAURA SEITZ, DESERET NEWS

Riding High

Call it a university exchange program.

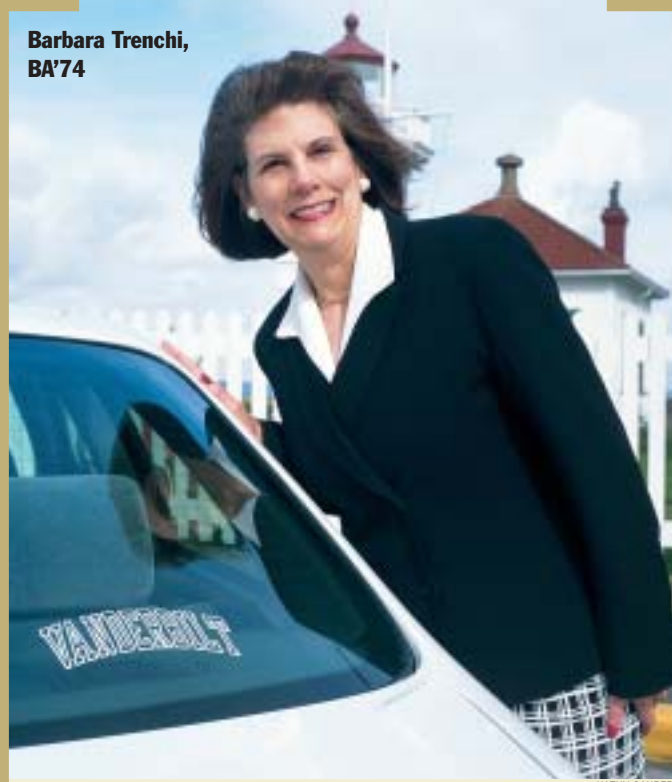
In 2000, Utah native Gordon Gee, who earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Utah, became Vanderbilt's chancellor. Two years earlier, J. Bernard Machen, who was a student at Vanderbilt in the early 1960s, was installed as president of the University of Utah.

Like Gee, Machen likes to shake things up in the ossified world of higher education. Utah's president rides a motorcycle and sometimes wears jeans to the office.

Machen didn't set out to be a university president. The St. Louis native transferred from Vanderbilt to St. Louis University after his sophomore year to study dentistry. During the 12 years he was dean of the dental schools at North Carolina and Michigan, he kept his private practice, specializing in treating children with disabilities. He is the only university president in the country who is also a former dentist—and only Utah's second president who is not a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. When asked at his first news conference in Utah whether he was "LDS," Machen thought the reporter was asking if he had a learning disability.

Now, one of his pet causes at Utah is promoting diversity among the student body of 28,000.

Barbara Trenchi,
BA'74



KATHY SAUBER

15 Minutes of Fame

You know it's going to be a bad day when you look out the window in the morning and your car is missing. It happened to Barbara Trenchi last September. She called the police, then caught a bus from her home in Everett, Wash., to her job at the *Seattle Times*.

"I was in the middle of an intersection near the office when three police cars with lights flashing came screaming up the hill toward me," she remembers.

Trenchi jumped aside just in time to see a car whizzing past. "I noticed the Vanderbilt sticker and realized, that's my car," she says. Her blue Honda Accord hit an elderly woman who flew seven feet into the air. "Then my car smashed into two parked cars. Two kids got out of my car and ran. A third was grabbed by policemen. I was sobbing hysterically because I was sure the woman had been killed."

The uninsured teenaged driver, who'd stolen eight vehicles previously, is doing jail time. Trenchi befriended the elderly woman, who sustained numerous injuries but is now doing well. Her bizarre story was picked up by CNN, NPR and Paul Harvey, among others.

Trenchi has a new car—and a new Vanderbilt sticker.

Dudley Warner,
BA'65



NEIL BRAKE

Easters on the Half-Shell

"I've loved oysters since I was a small boy and prefer them raw," declares Dudley Warner, founder of Oyster Easter, a Nashville celebration that began 41 years ago. "My freshman year at Vanderbilt, some of us were looking for something fun to do the Saturday before Easter. Somebody suggested we get a keg of beer and oysters on the half-shell."

The rest is bivalve history. Over the years, Oyster Easters have taken place in Nashville backyards, on a Williamson County llama farm, and even in Boston and Washington, D.C., when Warner lived there.

By the early '90s Oyster Easter was drawing 600 people. Organizers turned it into a charity fund-raiser. Oyster Easter is now the main fund-raiser for the Community Resource Center, which does most of the planning.

What's the attraction? "It's a lot of foolishness after a long hard winter," Warner laughs. "We've had some unusual door prizes—candlelit dinners for two at Truckstops of America in Knoxville, and a 15-inch rope-chain macho necklace from a Dickson funeral home. I don't have any idea where they got it.

"Did you know oysters can change their sex?" Dudley adds. "Scientists will tell you it's the iron that gives them their reputation as an aphrodisiac."

From the Reader *continued from page 10*

instructor in freshman English composition, and a good one. About the proudest boast of my academic career is that he urged me to continue my studies by enrolling in his sophomore course in creative writing. There is no telling where this would have led me (I had the good sense to decline).

JAMES R. TUCK, A'40, L'47
Nashville

I HAVE READ PAUL KINGSBURY'S ARTICLE in the winter issue of *Vanderbilt Magazine*, and I am incredulous at the sophomoric vitriol of the two English department faculty members Kingsbury quoted. Paul Conkin, a veteran member of the Vanderbilt History Department, seemed far more willing to examine the complex legacy of the Fugitive poets and Agrarians than either Michael Kreyling or Kate Daniels. Sadly, these informants revealed strong personal biases rather than professional objectivity in their disregard for the rich literary history in which the subjects of the article played major parts.

As a member of the Vanderbilt English faculty for 30 years, with an M.A. and Ph.D. from the department, I can speak responsibly of its history and the achievements of the writers it developed over half a century. Among them were major poets, novelists and critics whose contributions, all told, were significant in American letters. Those writers deepened our critical appreciation of imaginative literature and showed us the permanent gifts our generation had inherited not only from English and American writers but also from the classical tradition that shaped them.

As a teaching fellow with my first class of students, I taught Donald Davidson's *American Composition and Rhetoric*, a comprehensive textbook which stayed in print for decades. Davidson "decolonialized" American English by establishing its usage and rhetorical structure as authoritative in its own right. It was a privilege for me to work with him in producing the third edition of his landmark textbook.

We must not forget, in our age of specialization, that Walter Clyde Curry's books included scholarly volumes on Chaucer, Milton and Shakespeare, the triumvirate of poets in the English literary tradition. They earned him a broad reputation with other scholars in England and Europe, and they continue to be cited in scholarly essays—proof positive that some critics survive all the popular "isms" because of their timeless relevance to the literature itself.

And, of course, Robert Penn Warren's corpus of poetry, criticism, fiction and social commentary has made him a figure acknowledged not only in Europe but in cultures around the world. His partnership with Cleanth Brooks in three textbooks revolutionized the way poetry, fiction and rhetoric were taught in this country and abroad.

Both Brooks and Warren went on to distinguished professorships at Yale.

Two of the younger members of the department were Rob Roy Purdy and Richmond Croom Beatty. With patience and a commendable ease, Purdy took generations of students through myriad Anglo-Saxon poets and the great epic *Beowulf*. He saw himself as less a linguist than as a new critic who could examine the artifacts of our early heritage with the unencumbered delight of a young workman who had just uncovered a golden relic from the Sutton Hoo. Thus, the New Criticism found its way into musty corners of academe and lit up the past for generations of students who would cherish their time in antiquity.

Richmond Beatty co-edited two major textbooks that have also shaped our discipline and continue to attract readers: *The American Tradition in Literature* and *The Literature of the South*. He and his partners included women and black writers before it was "politically correct" to do so.

So it is neither honest nor accurate to dismiss these Vanderbilt writers as superannuated relics from another age and time. Their achievements in creative letters pointed the way for younger craftsmen who came under their influence either in the classroom or in the volumes they published. The many contributions of the Fugitive poets are housed in the University Archives, where their reputations are secure in the books they wrote.

Like Proteus in the *Odyssey*, the Vanderbilt Fugitives and Agrarians were known to change shapes and positions over the years. Warren, as early as the late '30s, disavowed his "separate but equal" essay on race. John Crowe Ransom went north to Ohio and Kenyon College and modified some of the tenets of *I'll Take My Stand* with its insistence on an Agrarian South.

The truth is that they were remarkably fluid thinkers, and to understand them today's students must confront the entire spectrum of their thought and thereby apprehend a revelation of a whole larger than any single manifestation.

I invite Kreyling and Daniels to put aside their prejudices for a spell and look upon this group of dedicated teachers, writers and creative thinkers doing their honest best to represent the world and human nature as faithfully as they could.

If the Fugitives and Agrarians manifested failures in judgments in their political lives, their literary achievement will nonetheless weather the test of time and the ephemeral critical fads and fetishes that have always encumbered academics who like to keep up with them. I suspect the condemnations of two Vanderbilt English Department members will go unnoticed in the large scheme of literary history.

HERSCHEL GOWER, MA'52, PHD'57
Vanderbilt Professor of English, Emeritus
Dallas

AS A FORMER STUDENT AND TEACHER AT Vanderbilt, I was proud of my Ph.D. and association with such fine men as Curry, Bennett, Beatty, Davidson, Ransom and Purdy. With the television news reporting the prejudiced recruiting practices of the University, along with the current article "Pride and Prejudice" in your magazine, my respect for the current University has vanished. The reported prejudice of Kreyling and Daniels is appalling, and I am ashamed to admit that my degrees are from Vanderbilt.

ROBERT L. WELKER, BA'48, MA'52, PHD'58
Huntsville, Ala.

PAUL KINGSBURY'S PROVOCATIVE ARTICLE "Pride and Prejudice" in the winter issue of your fine magazine caught my attention. It seems to me a bad idea to publish an article that undermines the enormous reverence Vanderbilt alumni hold for the Fugitives and Agrarians. Paul Conkin was right when he wrote, "Nothing in Vanderbilt's history has come anywhere close to the Fugitives and Agrarians in giving it a national reputation."

In the beginning of the article, Kingsbury correctly says that, of the five men shown in the photograph taken at my father's house in 1956, four—Davidson, Ransom, Tate and Warren—were both Fugitives and Agrarians. What he did not say was that there were 16 contributors to the *Fugitive* magazine, 12 of whom, including my father, Jesse Wills, and his first cousin, Ridley Wills, were not Agrarians. One of the Fugitive poets happened to be a woman, Laura Ridings. I feel that the 12 Fugitive poets who were not Agrarians were tarnished with the charges of racism and sexism made in the article. This is painful because my father disagreed with much of what the Agrarians wrote.

The sidebar on page 32 of the magazine links the Fugitives and Agrarians together. It said, "There is a new generation of English professors at Vanderbilt who have no personal or professional loyalty to the Fugitives and Agrarians, and whose critical perspectives cause them to question Vanderbilt's long-held reverence for these writers."

My father, who was a member of the Vanderbilt Board of Trust, established the Fugitive-Agrarian Collection at Vanderbilt's library, and took great pride in it. His name was Jesse E. Wills, not Jesse W. Wills, as shown in the article.

W. RIDLEY WILLS II, BA'56
Vanderbilt Board of Trust
Franklin, Tenn.

VJournal continued from page 11

Fyodor Dostoevsky, “The Grand Inquisitor,” from *The Brothers Karamazov*. In deciding how to live, we have a choice as individuals. We can choose to let others think for us, and be slaves. Or we can choose to think for ourselves, and be free. Choose. (24 pages)

Martin Luther King Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail.” We *all* must be free to choose. Freedom belongs to everyone. Lest we forget. (6 pages)

Virginia Woolf, Chapter 6, *A Room of One’s Own*. And “everyone” includes women. Again, lest we forget. (20 pages)

Abraham Lincoln, “The Gettysburg Address.” A lot of good people have died so that we can be free to choose. A lot. Never forget. (1 page)

Suetonius, “Augustus, Afterward Deified,” Sections 61-96, from *The Twelve Caesars*. Be skeptical of those you choose to entrust with your freedom. They, too, are human. Even Caesar Augustus, to seem taller, wore lifts in his sandals. (20 pages)

George Orwell, “Politics and the English Language.” Some of our leaders will lie to us.

They will use words without meanings. They will hide behind empty phrases. Make them accountable. (12 pages)

Edmund Burke, “Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.” The best leaders will help keep us free by telling us what we truly need to hear—and not just what we want to hear. We need their judgment, and not just their echo. (35 pages)

Samuel Johnson, Number 21, *The Rambler*. We are none of us immune to the frailties of human nature. We each imagine that we are superior in some way to others. We are not. Be humble. (5 pages)

Immanuel Kant, “On Perpetual Peace.” Despite our nature, despite our frailties, we can be better than we are. Thus, the world can be better than it is. Keep trying. (33 pages)

Henry David Thoreau, “On Seeing,” from his *Journal*. Try to see. Seeing is understanding. “We cannot see anything until we are possessed with the idea of it, and then we can hardly see anything else.” Keep looking. (3 pages)

Plutarch, “On Contentment.” Look not for fame or fortune. Fame is hollow. Fortune is

fickle. We must find contentment in life no matter what blows life deals us. Keep living. (28 pages)

Soren Kierkegaard, “The Story of Abraham,” from *Fear and Trembling*. Reason alone does not suffice for living. Reason can only take us just so far toward understanding. Beyond that, we must make the “leap to faith.” Keep believing. (8 pages)

William Hazlitt, “On the Feeling of Immortality in Youth.” But believe in this world as well as the next. When we are young, we all think we will never die. We will. Life is short. Life is meant to be lived. So seize the day. (6 pages)

This is my list.

Total: 404 pages.

Of course, much is missing here. Poetry. Fiction. Song. Scripture. Shakespeare. The Bill of Rights. The Sermon on the Mount. And a whole library filled with a whole lot more.

My list could go on, and your list would surely be different. But try starting here. Starting with this list will give you—and every American—an education in 404 pages. ▼

In Class continued from page 30

with good-natured intellectual energy. He tends to speak swiftly and passionately, sometimes giving the impression that the ideas are accumulating in his head more quickly than they can get out of his mouth.

Business ethics has long been a part of business school curricula, but its importance has been underscored recently by the wave of corporate scandals that has rocked Wall Street. Firms like HealthSouth, WorldCom and Enron that not so long ago drew praise and investor dollars are now seen as synonymous with moral and—ultimately—financial bankruptcy.

But the trap in teaching ethics case studies of companies like these or Bausch & Lomb, says Victor, is that it’s all too easy for such striking examples of corporate irresponsibility to look like a rare and spectacular event. “When we make it into these big headlines, the students look at it, and it’s like watching an Arnold Schwarzenegger movie: ‘Wow! Whoa! Hope I don’t ever have to do that.’”

What Victor tries to do in his ethics classes is to show students that ethics is an every-

day issue for everyone who works. “There aren’t many people who wake up in the morning and look in the mirror and see a bank robber,” he says. “Most people wake up in the morning and see a pretty good person. But how do they bring that to action? How do they bring that to life? That’s where I get focused in my teaching. I think business ethics is all about recognizing that, in fact, our work matters to others.”

To help business students recognize ethical dilemmas buried in mundane day-to-day decisions, Victor combines three key ingredients. First, he presents classic case studies of ethical crucibles, such as the case of Ford’s dangerously designed Pinto gas tanks or Union Carbide’s reaction to the 1984 chemical disaster in Bhopal, India. Then he questions the students and gets them talking about where the ethical issues lie and how they come up against business goals. Finally, he shares basic principles of moral reasoning that have been pondered by philosophers and theologians since the dawn of civilization.

“It is a class in which their opinions, their thinking is central,” he says. “That’s the sub-

stance of the course. Their way of thinking and understanding—not mine—is essential to the course. I am catalyst, facilitator and critic, but I am not the source in a class like that.

“I can’t tell them what the right choices are. Yesterday in class I went through the Cook’s Tour of moral reasoning,” he says with a chuckle. “And the problem is that it’s a cacophony of prescription: Think about this and you’ll come to the right answer. Whether utilitarianism or deontology or social contract or virtues or moral rights—or any of these things. All of them have these strong and compelling prescriptions for making moral choices. All of them mutually exclusive. And all of them full of bloody holes. And so: What do I do? First we recognize that yes, I do have a choice. Now what? And that’s where moral courage gets called upon and where moral leadership really begins.”

In even a brief conversation about business ethics, Bart Victor can range far and wide, touching on the first 100 days of JFK’s presidency, the moral philosophy of Andrew Carnegie (“first we will do well, and then we will do good”), the business credos of John-

son & Johnson and Chick-fil-A, and the writings of contemporary Protestant theologian Harvey Cox. Along the way, he mentions relevant areas of his research, such as examining the role of business leaders as public theologians of a sort, and evaluating the “ethical climates” that determine the moral boundaries in various companies and organizations.

This broad style of inquiry comes naturally to Victor, says colleague Bruce Barry, a one-time graduate student of Victor’s who is now the Brownlee O. Currey Associate Professor of Management at Owen. “A lot of business schools have an ‘ethics guy.’ And you could look at Bart and say we do, too. But I think what we have is actually something unique, which is an ethics guy who first of all is well grounded in the underlying moral philosophy of ethical reasoning—and, sadly, you can’t say that about all business-school ethics professors.

“But more important than that, we have somebody who has core pieces of intellectually focused experience that are grounded in key areas outside of that—one of which is corporate strategy, which he has taught successfully here and at other places. And another is this firm grounding in social science at both micro and macro levels. What we have, then, in Bart Victor is unique, in that he brings not just a focus on ethics but also a real grounding in other social sciences.”

Victor’s work experience reflects his broad academic interests. Starting with an undergraduate degree in sociology, he moved from social work to service as executive director of a system of 20 day-care centers, then on to management consulting on day-care issues. Drawn to graduate school in business (“I just needed to know more”), he earned a Ph.D. in business administration at the University of North Carolina. After teaching at the universities of Nebraska and North Carolina, he took a plum position at the Institute for Management Development International (IMD) in Lausanne, Switzerland. (“It’s a world-renowned place that’s kind of part western business school and part executive development laboratory,” says Barry.) Victor taught there three years and ran the IMD’s program for executive development.

What drew him to Vanderbilt in 1999 was the potential for interdisciplinary collaboration inherent in the Cal Turner Chair in Moral

Leadership. The chair is part of an entire program in moral leadership, endowed in 1994 by Vanderbilt trustee Cal Turner Jr., BA’62, the recently retired CEO of Dollar General Corp., which brings together Vanderbilt’s professional schools (medicine, law, nursing, divinity and business) to explore topics that present ethical issues for all, such as genetic research.

Under the auspices of the Cal Turner Program, Victor leads an interdisciplinary course in moral leadership offered through both Owen and the Divinity School that is open to students of all the University’s professional schools and is co-taught by Victor and faculty from the various schools. Similarly, his Turner Program connections have led him to invite faculty from the other schools into his Ethics in Business course to expand the frame of reference.

Bringing together faculty and students from these other disciplines, says Victor, “allows us to deal with [ethical] problems in the way they really are. The interesting problems don’t just fit here in the business school. They don’t just fit in the law school. Just as business isn’t simply a concern of business.”

Indeed, says Victor, “business is the single most significant social defining force in the world today. It reaches everywhere. The world has never seen a social movement as significant, as powerful, as pervasive as business.”

Which, come to think of it, makes the idea of teaching moral leadership in business seem all the more imperative.

Despite all the recent corporate news of accounting fraud and executive deceit, Bart Victor remains upbeat about the possibilities for American business. He sees it not as some faceless, out-of-control juggernaut but as an engine that we all have some power to control. “I like business. I think business is a great, positive thing. I think it can do awful stuff, like anything powerful. It is not simply good in and of itself. It is a human creation. We are business. We are the market. Not somebody else. So let’s take responsibility for it.” ▼

An English major when at Vanderbilt and now a Nashville freelancer, Paul Kingsbury, A’80, is the author of books on the Grand Ole Opry and Nashville’s historic Hatch Show Print poster shop. His articles have appeared in *Entertainment Weekly*, *US*, *Nashville Life*, and other magazines.

Virtuoso Performers continued from page 59 content with her performance that she left immediately afterwards for the W.O. Smith Community School of Music to teach a percussion class to school-aged children.

After the competition Krystal derived some satisfaction in knowing she had played “Rhapsody in Blue” very well—maybe even well enough to win. A few weeks passed, however, before she truly understood why she had undergone so many hassles for an experience she just as easily could have sidestepped. “On Wednesday night,” she says, “I played through ‘Rhapsody in Blue’ for the first time since the competition. An upright piano was in the Ingram Performance Hall lobby, and I always like playing on pianos I find in random places. I played through the whole piece, solo, without the cuts for the competition excerpt. It was a joy just to be able to play this particular piece of music. Even if I don’t get to perform it with an orchestra, it’s a great piece to have learned: an American concerto flavored with jazz, a piece with rhythmic vitality, a piece with melodies that one leaves the practice room singing.”

That’s why Gershwin called it a “rhapsody.” And, more than any other reward, the discovery of such rhapsody drives students at the Blair School of Music to keep performing. ▼

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of his blood and whispered to the people rushing to his side, “Is everybody all right?”

The answer, of course, is that none of us was. In the political life of our troubled young country, there was simply no cure for that kind of loss. ▼

Frye Gaillard, BA’68, was chairman of the IMPACT program that brought Robert Kennedy to the Vanderbilt campus. During his lengthy career as a journalist, Gaillard has written about that event in several places, including the *Charlotte Observer*, for which he served as southern editor, and in his family memoir, *Lessons from the Big House: One Family’s Passage Through the History of the South*.

The Thrill of It All *continued from page 43*

name the HCA Foundation the Frist Foundation. “When Tommy stepped back in as CEO, there was a collective sigh of relief,” says Peter Bird, the foundation’s CEO.

He brought his friend Jack Bovender out of retirement to help him right the sinking Columbia/HCA battleship and called upon other friends from the HCA glory days whom he knew he could trust. The company quickly reorganized, spinning off small hospitals into a separate company, rewriting an ethics policy, and halting the practice of corporate branding for its hospitals. HCA also paid more than \$1 billion in fines to settle the claims by the federal government. During this period, Frist drew a salary of one dollar a year.

Bovender comments, “My admiration for Tommy, which was always high, grew significantly during that time because of the way he conducted himself through extremely difficult situations. He never lost his confidence or commitment to see this thing through.”

Last year, certain that his HCA wild-child was back on track, Frist again stepped aside into the role of chairman and officially retired in January 2002. Reflecting on the experience, he says, “The problem wasn’t that Columbia/HCA had gotten too big; the problem was that it had been thrown together too quickly by Mr. Scott. He was a deal man. He didn’t understand the humanistic aspect of a service company. The people are your greatest asset, and you have to treat them fairly. It was a culture issue.

“Now I can look back on it all and say that it was a fabulous four or five years. Now I think, gosh, what would I have done with my life from August 1997 up to this point if I hadn’t had that stimulating challenge?”

He smiles slightly and adds, “So I’m saying thank you to the government for giving me this opportunity.”

The ultimate testament that HCA has reached the far side of the scandal may be in its recent agreement to purchase Health Midwest’s 14-hospital system. The deal would never have been approved had HCA not proven itself a worthy, responsible player in the market. “The Health Midwest deal is symbolic that our company’s focus and reputation have recovered,” Bovender says.

Even when his company was in its darkest

hours, Frist and his wife continued their pursuit of major philanthropic projects. All three of their adult children moved back to Nashville and their sons, in particular, had taken an interest in the arts. The second- and third-generation Frists recognized the city’s need for a downtown art center. In April 2001, after years of planning and negotiations, the \$45 million Frist Center for the Visual Arts opened in what had been the city’s historic main post-office building, an Art-Deco structure completed in 1934. The Frist Foundation and the family of Tommy Frist Jr. provided \$25 million of the funding.

If anything, the birth of the Frist Center exemplifies Tommy Frist’s approach to both business and philanthropy, and his distaste for failure. “I have almost a chess mentality,” he says. “If something doesn’t work, I figure out what my fallbacks are and how I can re-vamp it and make it work.” This philosophy has served Frist well, and in some measure helped earn him recognition at Vanderbilt with the Alumni Association’s 2002 Distinguished Alumnus Award.

He originally pledged a few million towards the creation of the arts center, then \$11 million, and finally donated more than half its cost. “The whole premise behind that was Tommy’s feeling that we didn’t need another art museum in Nashville—we needed an educational center, because he believes the arts are a strong deciding factor in a child’s education,” says Frist Center President Ken Roberts. “He really impressed me. The costs kept going up, and Tommy kept backing it.”

Now that those obstacles have been overcome and the downtown Frist Center for the Visual Arts is in full swing (you may visit its Web site at www.fristcenter.org), Frist has no desire to rest on his laurels. Although he’s pleased about his contributions to the art museum, the recovery of HCA, his resurrection of the local United Way, and his myriad achievements and good deeds, those are in the past and he’d rather talk about other things. After all, he’s a grandfather now and his passions are changing. Each day presents a new risk worth taking, a new goal worth reaching.

“What I’m *really* excited about is the Nashville Zoo,” he says, a familiar light in his eye. “I just think a zoo is an important part of any community.” ▼

Gross *continued from page 88*

said, “We ain’t never had a basement.” For some reason that got her tickled, and she started laughing. Just shook all over. And then I started laughing because she was laughing and neither one of us had our teeth in and we must’ve been a sight and then the tornado went WHOOSH! and I thought, well, this is it, here we go, but that was the end of it. Then the old woman said, “All right, you can get off of me now.”

And I said, “I don’t think I can,” which got her going all over again. Of course, the old woman is bad to get tickled. She got tickled at her own mama’s funeral, and people thought she was crying.

After it stopped raining, we went out and had a look around the neighborhood, trees down everywhere, trees on top of houses, houses gone, roofs laying in people’s yards, power lines hanging everywhere, some of them still hot and sparking. It was a sight. Of course, most of those trees were hackberries, trash trees, and their being gone is a good thing. People were walking around saying, *It looks like a war zone. It looks like a war zone*, like they knew what they were talking about. Let me tell you, what it looked like was a place a tornado had hit. And that’s all. I’ve *been* in a war zone. I was in Germany in 1945. I know what a war zone looks like. There toward the end, we were killing Germans by the hundreds who weren’t even Germans, just boys from Czechoslovakia or Poland or wherever, boys who shouldn’t have had a dog in that fight, and for damn sure didn’t want to be in that fight, but they had the SS behind them, killing them if they didn’t fight us or if they tried to run away. They caught it going and coming. It was pitiful, the way we chewed up those boys, and them not wanting to fight, but they were shooting at us, so what could we do? And I did my share, I won’t lie to you. I did some things I ain’t proud of. So. I’m sorry some people around here lost their houses or got their roofs blew off, but I ain’t going to call a bunch of blowed-over hackberry trees and a few smashed-up houses no war zone. Ain’t no way. Then a year later the deadnettle came up.

And this war I’ve been watching on television? I’ll tell you what, I just don’t know. I ain’t been able to work up much enthusi-

asm. I just ain’t got nothing against those people. I’ve heard people around here say we ought to round up all the Arabs and send them back to where they came from, but it’s the same bunch of numbnuts that used to say that about the blacks, and that ought to tell you something right there. Shoot, I see Arabs around here all the time, in the grocery store usually, women wearing long robes with their hair all covered up, or whatever, speaking Arab or whatever to the little kids they got in the buggy, and you know what it looks like to me they’re doing? Buying groceries. That’s the God’s truth.

Nobody on the street has cut their grass yet, either, and I’m afraid it’s because none of them have lawn mowers left. I don’t have any proof, I ain’t never caught her, but I think Wilma steals from people in the neighborhood. I think she steals what she can out of people’s garages and sheds and uses the money to buy drugs. Her and her “friends.” Whatever man she’s with that week. I see her sometimes, walking up and down the alleys, and I know she ain’t doing it for the exercise. If you were just out for a stroll, wouldn’t you walk on the street where at least there’s something to look at? Dogwoods blooming or flowers? No, she’s looking in the fences to see what she can see. Wilma buys her drugs from a guy who drives a silver Camaro convertible. I see him around the neighborhood all the time. Sometimes he pulls up right in front of the house, and Wilma goes right up to the window and pulls her money out of her pants pocket plain as day. Sometimes she gets in the car with him and drives off. I hate to think about where they go. What she must do to get a hold of money. I’ll tell you what. You want to go somewhere and fight some evil? There’s enough of that right here to go around. You want to drop a bomb and fly it through somebody’s car window? How about that silver Camaro? Give me one one of them planes. Smart bombs. I’d push the button in a heartbeat. You sell drugs? I’d drop the bomb. That’s how I’d like to spend my “golden years.” Flying over Nashville in a big old bomber, keeping an eye on things.

Wilma has got a path worn through the deadnettle and the grass, all the way down to the dirt. Whenever we won’t let her in the house, which is every time she comes now,

she paces from one side of the yard to the other, wearing us out the whole time. Wilma apparently can’t stand still and cuss. You ought to hear her. She goes from the gate all the way across the yard and circles around the dogwood tree and heads back the way she came. Back and forth. Back and forth. Like she’s in a dogtrot or a zoo. Just wearing us out. Language you wouldn’t believe. We used to call the police, but they won’t come anymore, they got so tired of it. Sometimes we see the neighbors come out in the yard to listen. We can see them laugh and shake their heads. They try not to look at her, though, because if she ever catches them looking at her, boy, she’ll wear them out, too. The other day the old woman and I were sitting in the kitchen, not really paying attention to Wilma, when somebody down the street must’ve caught her eye. We heard her yell, *Why don’t you go on out to Clarksville and eat some of Dooley’s wife’s baloney which is what you’ve been craving anyway, you bastard*. Wilma’s crazy as a bat and I doubt she even knows what she’s saying half the time, but something about that struck me as funny, I don’t know why, and when I looked at the old woman, I saw she was trying not to laugh. Well, when I said, “Who’s Dooley?” the old woman spit coffee out all over the table. She felt bad about it later, but I told her we might as well have a good laugh. What else are we going to do?

It’s my opinion that the dogwood in the yard has got to be the biggest one in Nashville, although, obviously, I ain’t got no way to prove that. I’m just sure of it. You ought to see it. When the kids were little, every Easter we used to stand them in front of that tree and take their picture. And it was a big tree then. I remember this one Easter when Wilma couldn’t have been more than 3 or 4 years old. I don’t even know if any of the others had been born yet. Anyway, Wilma’s mama had her dressed up in this pretty little dress and these shiny patent leather shoes. All our girls wound up wearing those shoes, but they were new then. She told Wilma to go stand in front of the tree so I could take her picture, but Wilma didn’t want to walk through the grass because the dew would get her shoes wet. She always was the prissiest thing. Well, we didn’t want her to cry and get her face all red before I took the picture, so I went in the

house and got a towel and put it down on the grass in front of the tree, and then I carried Wilma across the yard and set her down on the towel so she wouldn’t get her shoes wet. The old woman squatted down beside her, and they smiled at me and I took their picture. Now, maybe it’s just an old man thinking, with too much time on his hands and too many regrets, but I wonder now, looking back, if that might have been the moment when my life was as good as it was ever going to be. I was young then and strong and had just got promoted, I loved my wife, and I had a beautiful little daughter in patent leather shoes who thought I was the greatest thing there had ever been. And at that moment, who knows, maybe I was.

Looking at that old tree now makes me wonder. It’s possible that from the second I snapped that picture everything went downhill, even if it was so slow I never noticed until just now. The reason I happen to remember that particular day is because the picture turned out nice and we kept it on top of the TV for a long time, and because later that day I spanked Wilma for getting ice cream down the front of that dress after I had warned her not to. Now I wonder why I did that. To tell the truth, I don’t have any idea. Back then you just whipped your kids and never thought anything about it. But you can’t tell a little girl not to get ice cream down the front of her dress any more than you can tell her not to fall down. I don’t know.

Every Easter our preacher tells the story about how ever since Christ was crucified, God has made sure that the dogwood never grew big enough to make a cross. Well, let me tell you, the one in my yard is big enough to make a cross out of, I’m sure of it. And every Easter, when I listen to that sermon, I want to bring the preacher out here and show him that blooming dogwood and say, “Now look here, preacher. Look at that tree. Don’t tell me it ain’t big enough to make a cross out of. You can tell me a lot of things, and I’ll even believe some of them. But don’t you dare ever tell me that again.” ▼

Tony Earley, an assistant professor of English at Vanderbilt, is the author of three books: Here We Are in Paradise, Jim the Boy, and Somehow Form a Family.

Cross

A short story by TONY EARLEY



JIM HSIEH

WELL, TO START with, I'm dead old. Maybe more dead than old, that's what my wife tells me, I don't know, but who is she to talk? She's dead old, too. To be honest, neither one of us has a tooth left in our head, and I don't like looking at hers any more than she likes looking at mine.

It's springtime, that big dogwood out in the yard is blooming like a teenage girl, the hostas are coming up finally, and the grass needs cutting. Only this time of year it ain't so much the grass that needs cutting, but that purple stuff, the deadnettle or the chickweed, I can't ever remember what it's called. I don't mind it so much, I think it's kind of pretty, but my wife is all over me about it. *Why don't you do something about that? Why don't you do something about that? It looks disgraceful.* She sounds like a rusty hinge when she gets going on about something. What I want to say is, "Old woman, why don't *you* do something about it if it bothers you so much," but you don't stay married coming up on 60 years going around saying whatever it is that happens to swim up inside your head. So I tell her, "I'm retired. Emphasis on tired." Well, that always makes her snort, and she goes off in the kitchen and bangs things around and makes a racket. It's a wonder we got a pot left in this house. Anyway, after while I'll go on out to the shed and see if the lawn mower will crank, and if it does I'll cut the grass. Until then, I guess I'll just watch the war on television.

It's a nice day, and with any luck at all, Wilma won't show up. That's a terrible thing

to say, but it's true. Wilma's our oldest girl, 54 years old, and she's on drugs, if you can believe that, somebody that age. She never comes by the house unless she wants money or she's already high. One way she cusses at us because we won't give her any money, and the other way she just cusses at us and says all her problems are our fault. (And who knows, maybe they are.) Wilma is crazy as a bat, and she broke our hearts years ago. We don't open the door anymore. That's what a drug counselor told us to do. Don't open the door, he said. So we don't. And she's been messed up for so long, and cussed at us so much, that we've hardened up like a couple of scabs. Wilma can be going on out in the yard, calling us every vile name she can think of, and us in here watching television, and we won't think no more about it than if it was a dog barking.

The deadnettle out in the yard is a new thing, just the last five or six years, however long it's been since the tornado came through. That tornado blew it in here, I'll swear by it, and it's taking over the place. I'll take the deadnettle, though. Like I said, I think it's kind of pretty, and things could've been a whole lot worse. The funnel came through here less than a hundred yards away and tore down several houses and ripped the roofs off a whole bunch of others, but we didn't lose a shingle. Not a shingle. Not a bush. Not a bloom off that dogwood. I'd always heard

that a tornado sounded like a freight train, but that's not how this one sounded. This one just came through here with a great big WHOOSH and then it was gone. The old lady and me were laying in the bed taking a nap, or trying to. It'd been bad all day, warnings and the TV getting interrupted, bad wind and thunder and lightning and what not, but you can only watch that for so long and we decided to take our nap anyway. Right before it hit, the wind didn't seem no worse or better than it had been all day, and it never got that dead still like you always hear it does. (You hear all kinds of things about tornadoes, all of them wrong, near as I can figure.) Anyway, I don't know how I knew it was coming, but I did. Maybe the light changed. Or maybe I knew the way a dog knows about an earthquake. But I *knew*. And when I knew, I just rolled over on top of the old woman and she looked up at me and said, "Lord God. What in the world are you doing?"

And I said, "We ain't got a basement."

And she looked at me like I was crazy and

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