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ABSTRACT

One of a series of 20 literary magazine profiles written to help faculty advisors wishing to start or improve their publication, this profile provides information on staffing and production of "Haggis/Baggis," the magazine published by Miss Porter's School, Farmington, Connecticut. The introduction describes the literary magazine contest (and criteria), which was sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English and from which the 20 magazines were chosen. The remainder of the profile--based on telephone interviews with the advisor, the contest entry form, and the two judges' evaluation sheets--discusses (1) the magazine format, including paper and typestyles; (2) selection and qualifications of the students on staff, as well as the role of the advisor in working with them; (3) methods used by staff for acquiring and evaluating student submissions; (4) sources of funding for the magazine, including fund raising activities if applicable, and production costs; and (5) changes and problems occurring during the advisor's tenure, and anticipated changes. The Spring 1984 issue of the magazine is appended. (HTH)

AN EXEMPLARY HIGH SCHOOL LITERARY MAGAZINE: HAGGIS/BAGGIS

Compiled by

Hilary Taylor Holbrook

INTRODUCTION

In 1984, the National Council of Teachers of English began a national competition to recognize student literary magazines from senior high, junior high, and middle schools in the United States, Canada, and the Virgin Islands. Judges in the state competitions for student magazines were appointed by state leaders who coordinated the competition at the state level.

The student magazines were rated on the basis of their literary quality (imaginative use of language; appropriateness of metaphor, symbol, imagery, precise word choice; rhythm, flow of language), types of writing included (poetry, fiction, nonfiction, drama), quality of editing and proofreading, artwork and graphic design (layout, photography, illustrations, typography, paper stock, press work), and frontmatter and pagination (title page, table of contents, staff credits). Up to 10 points were also either added for unifying themes, cross-curricular involvement, or other special considerations, or subtracted in the case of a large percentage of outside professional and/or faculty involvement.

In the 1984 competition, 290 received ratings of "Above average," 304 were rated "Excellent," and 44 earned "Superior"

ratings from state contest judges. On the basis of a second judging, 20 of the superior magazines received the competition's "Highest Award."

As a special project, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills has selected 20 magazines from those receiving "Superior" ra ,s to serve as an array of possible models for other schools wishing to start or improve their own student literary magazines. The profiles of these magazines are based on the faculty advisor's contest entry sheet, the judges' evaluation sheets, and interviews with the faculty advisors. Where possible, the magazines themselves have been appended. Information for ordering copies of the magazines is contained at the end of each profile.

HAGGIS/BAGGIS

Miss Porter's School

Farmington, Connecticut

Faculty Advisor: Alice DeLana

Principal: Rachel Phillips Belash

1984 Student Editors: Victoria E. Brown and Natasha A. Reed

HAGGIS (hae'gis) n. Chiefly Scottish. A dish made of various sheep or calf meats cooked like a sausage; HAGGIS BAGGIS, a spicy collection of this and that.

Miss Porter's School is a private four-year boarding high school for girls located in the Hartford suburb of Farmington, a community of approximately 30,000 residents--comprised of both blue and white collar residents. In addition to including students from the community, the student body has representatives from 32 states and a large international population. Approximately 14% of the 304 students are black or from other minorities, a higher percentage than that of the community.

The school and its magazine enjoy a great deal of interest and support from the community. For example, the magazine sponsors an annual poetry reading attended by both students and townspeople. In November 1983, George Starbuck, the Elisabeth Severance Hadden Memorial Poet for 1983-84, read from his works under the auspices of HAGGIS/BAGGIS. The 1984 issue of the

magazine features a student poem of thanks in response to Mr. Starbuck's reading.

THE MAGAZINE FORMAT

The magazine is 8"x 8" square, perfect bound, with a white coated cover, and 60-70# white paper stock. The front cover is illustrated with a black and white photograph and the magazine title is 36 point Times New Roman display type. Within the magazine, titles are in 10 point bold caps, with the text in 8 point type. Text pages are in two 20 pica columns, justified left and right, and divided by 1 point black line.

With one exception, the photographs and artwork are in black and white. The 1984 edition also contained a four-color print generously donated by artist Jamie Wyeth, illustrating a feature section on Orwell's 1984.

PRODUCTION: A MODEL OF FLEXIBILITY

Alice DeLana, the magazine's faculty advisor since its founding in 1967, refers to the magazine as "truly a product of compromise and consensus," and to the production process as "a model of flexibility." Students try out for the magazine staff by submitting an essay and by judging an unidentified work. The staff of 14 operates with two student editors, but everyone reads contributions, chooses artwork, and participates in layout. In an average year, each staff member reads 225-250 pieces of student writing, grades each piece, and then discusses each piece with the other staff members.

Students on the staff perform 90 percent of the editing and 90 percent of the layout and paste-up, with faculty performing

the other 10 percent in these areas. Students complete 80 percent of the proofreading, and faculty the remaining 20 percent. All printing is contracted to outside businesses.

During the course of the year, the staff discuss techniques and look for design models to emulate. They also visit the press, so that by layout time in April, every staff member has a clear sense of the production process from start to finish: working on the staff is a learning experience as well as an extracurricular activity.

SUBMISSIONS: ANYTHING GOES

Techniques for soliciting submissions of writing and artwork from students include posters and classroom announcements. The character of each magazine issue is shaped by the submissions, and changes from year to year to reflect the students attending Miss Porter's at the time. Much of the fiction and poetry, photography, and artwork is generated by classroom assignments, with English teachers often keeping a record of the best classroom writing for possible submission. Ms. DeLana acknowledges two problems in the area of submissions. First, most submissions come from about 10 percent of the student body, and, second, it is sometimes difficult to achieve a balance of work from each of the four grades, particularly since the freshman class is smaller.

Usually, all submissions are from students, including magazine staff members, but in the 1984 issue, about 20 percent were from outside authors. For that issue, the magazine solicited entries from 92 noteworthy people, asking them to look into the

year 2020 the way George Orwell had looked thirty-six years ahead of his time to write 1984. HAGGIS/BAGGIS received forty-seven responses. A sampling of responses from those declining the invitation, as well as the responses from the eight who agreed to share their vision of the future is included in the final section of the magazine. Respondents included Ray Bradbury, Art Buchwald, and Vice President George Bush. It is this section for which Jamie Wyeth donated his drawing.

FUNDING: WE'VE SOLD EVERYTHING

Approximately 75 percent of the funding for HAGGIS/BAGGIS comes from the school budget, 5 percent from advance sales of the magazine, and 20 percent from staff fundraising activities. The unit cost of producing the magazine is $9.85 per issue, for a print run of 450, and the annual budget runs approximately $4,200. The magazine is sold for $10.00 per copy, but is distributed to the community free of charge. As a rule, the magazine does not ask parents or local merchants for donations; the yearbook does the former while the school newspaper does the latter. The magazine staff have always raised funds through in-school sales, "and we have sold EVERYTHING at one time or another!" including tee-shirts and chocolate candy.

The cost for printing the Wyeth drawing in four colors required extra effort and imagination in the fundraising process. Staff members sold over $1,000 work of chocolate, hired out as slaves, wrote home to parents, and solicited former staff members ("our private alumnae group") for contributions. While Ms. DeLana expects the budget to run in the red for this year, anticipated

use of a computer modem for typesetting should greatly reduce the cost of printing future issues.

ANTICIPATED CHANGES: HAGGIS/BAGGIS REVISITED

Done completely by outside vendors, printing constitutes the magazine's greatest operating expense. The staff plans to acquire a computer modem that will enable them to complete the typesetting themselves, and to design and transmit the layout by computer, reducing considerably the expense of printing. This opens the possibility of publishing two issues per year, as was the case during the first two years of publication. Semi-annual issues would provide room for a greater number of contributions and possibly increase freshman contributions.

The two features that make the 1984 issue unique are the contributions from national figures, and the four color printing for one page. In 1968, staff solicited comments from celebrities on salient issues, and received responses from E.B. White, Arthur Miller, and Margaret Mead, among others. Soliciting works from notable achievers is certainly a possibility for future editions as it was for the 1984 edition.The Wyeth drawing was a spontaneous gift from the artist; but whether or not future issues will contain four-color prints depends, of course, on the submissions. As Ms. DeLana explains, "It's truly serendipitous how each issue comes together."

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Copies of HAGGIS/BAGGIS may be obtained from

Miss Porter's School

60 Main Street

Farmington, CT 06032

Cost: $10.00 (includes postage)

HAGGIS/BAGGIS

HAGGIS/BAGGIS

SPRING 1984 ISSUE TWENTY-ONE

MISS PORTER'S SCHOOL
FARMINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06032

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GEORGE STARBUCK, THE ELISABETH SEVERANCE HADDEN MEMORIAL POET FOR 1983-1984, READ AT FARMINGTON ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1983, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF HAGGIS/BAGGIS.

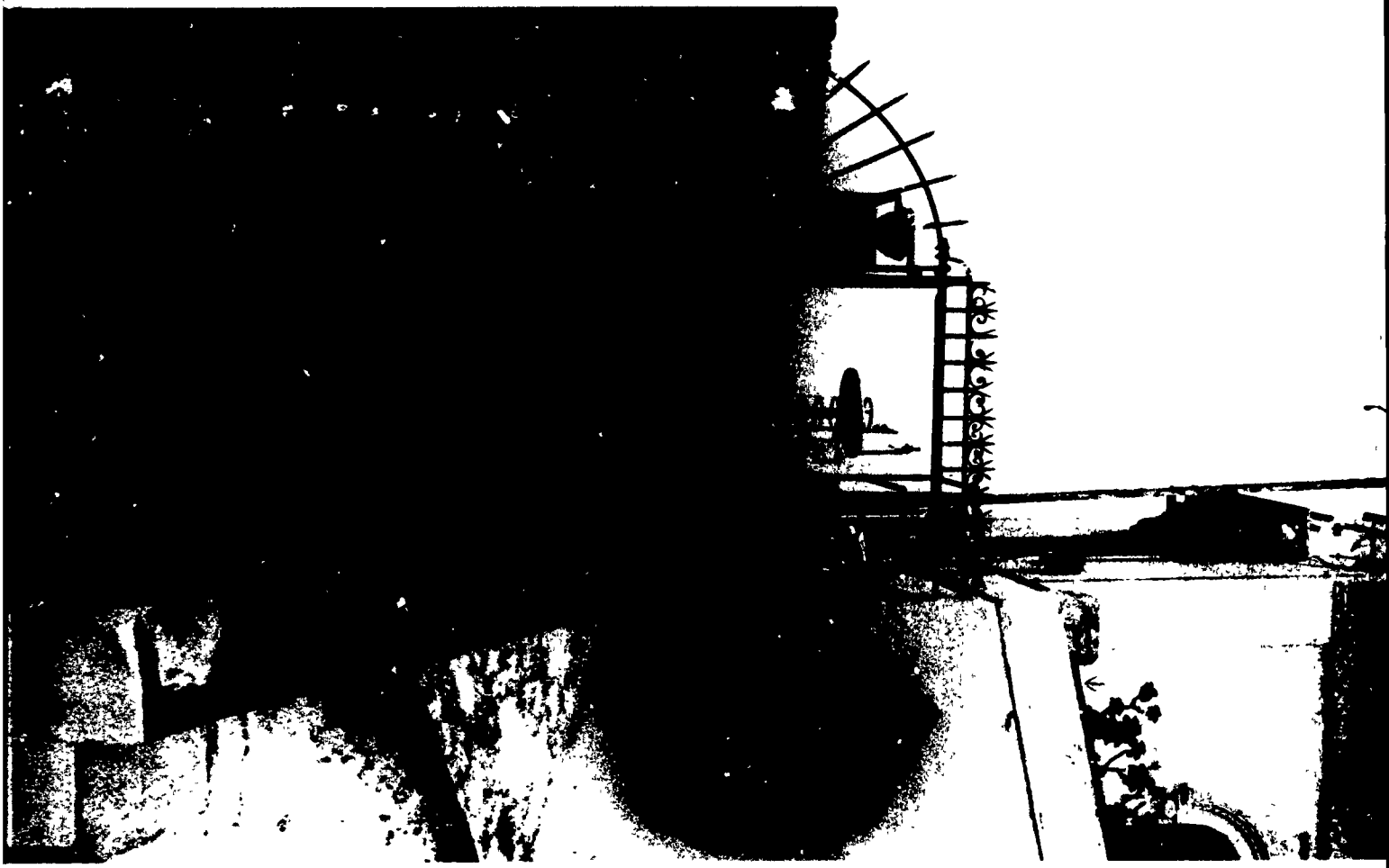
O, Poet! What lines in honor can do justice,
sum up your value and our awe?
The strain of a far-off lyre which inspires you,
and through you the world,
is a melodious thing.
Only a few hear that sound for what it is,
sweet whisper from Parnassus.
Those are called to a duty,
inspired or tormented, to pour forth
that stuff called poetry.
This, the deaf populace hears, recognizes,
and just for a minute, the song of a Muse is heard by all.

Oh, drat the thing! These coronation orations make
me gorpy.
Just another intimidation, another vehicle running you
off the road.

O, down from Parnassus the lyre strains float,
whispers of a Muse calling reveille, inspiring,
tormenting her subjects to work!
Those few who hear the ephemeral music are drawn —
O, Poet! Through you the world recognizes the song of
a Muse!
What lines in honor can do justice,
sum up your value and our awe,
summon forth that same feeling your quiet manner
evokes?
Who shall be the one to say he has praised
your words?

Oh, drat the thing! These coronation orations,
intimidation relations, make a man gorpy.
Take off your jacket and be yourself.
Have a seat among us and hear our thanks, G.S.

Natasha Ann Reed, 1984



Laura Elizabeth Hynes, 1984

A NEWPORT MANSION

coal
created this
magnificence
and marbled
a gilded age where the
glorious treasures hid
corruption and deceit.
a simple man "striking silver"
inspired the grand trianon to
surface by the cliffs rolling
into the sea. marie antoinette could
have called this mansion her own, with
its arched french doors and ionic pilasters,
rose, crocus, lily, and violet granite cubes.

gold
fleur-de-lis
stamped louis
xiv's chairs
squat at the bottom of
the grandiose staircase
near a water fountain in
the ballroom. the luminous rococo
style ceiling, with powdery clouds
drifting across a blue sky conceal
the blemished steel supports underneath.
a sculpture of young musicians in concert
stands by the arched windows that open out
to the cliffs and sea. dancers no longer sweep
across the parquet floor, preoccupied with imperial
grandeur. but now and then Strauss' waltzes float about the
elegant rooms, reminders of a past that still echoes through this summer-time cottage.

Nancy Lincoln Tupper, 1984

AUNT GRACE'S FRONT PORCH

Before I knew so much, I would run to Aunt Grace's every afternoon for a good time. She's actually not my real aunt, but she deserves the title for living so long — long enough to have pet Granddaddy, Daddy, and then me. (and long enough to tell her tooth story. She was ten years old, and having a toot[illegible]d, when Halley's Comet made its precious appearance, when she ran outside screaming with both delight and pain.) Aunt Grace religiously awaited my arrival each afternoon after school, and greeted me with a Milky Way, a Coke, and a toothless smile — treasures I eagerly sought and knew I would find. I would sit in her favorite rocking chair and watch "Bonanza" while she helped me with my math homework, and she loved me all the more. There was a perpetual fire in the fireplace, where the perpetual firewood had burned perpetually through the four seasons for probably the past century. I didn't mind. I could always sit on the front porch if it got too stuffy and enjoy the rhythmic squeak-squeak of the swing, the subtle buzz of the mosquitoes, and the pit-pat of Uncle Bud's tobacco splatting in the can. I secretly delighted in his playfully fiendish cackle and harmless, crude remarks when Aunt Grace scolded him, and she knew (at least I think she knew).

The heat was blinding on the day Uncle Bud passed away, but the faithful shade of the oak trees on the front porch continued to provide solace and comfort for me. I never could figure out whether the shade was really just a shadow cast by something, or something within itself. Hopscotch in the sun would have seemed useless without some sort of shade nearby to look forward to. Gina Foreman, my mischievous counterpart from across the street, would always grow terribly bored of childish pastimes, and scheme about more grownup things to do on Saturday. Then, just as I would be about to abandon my hopscotch, Aunt Grace's voice would ring out with a come-n-get-it, and I would (take off my horns, put on my wings) and dash for oatmeal cookies and Kool-Aid. Gina would follow me, and together, in the shade of the oak tree, we'd savour our treat and scheme. The shade never finked on us, but Aunt Grace knew (at least I think she did).

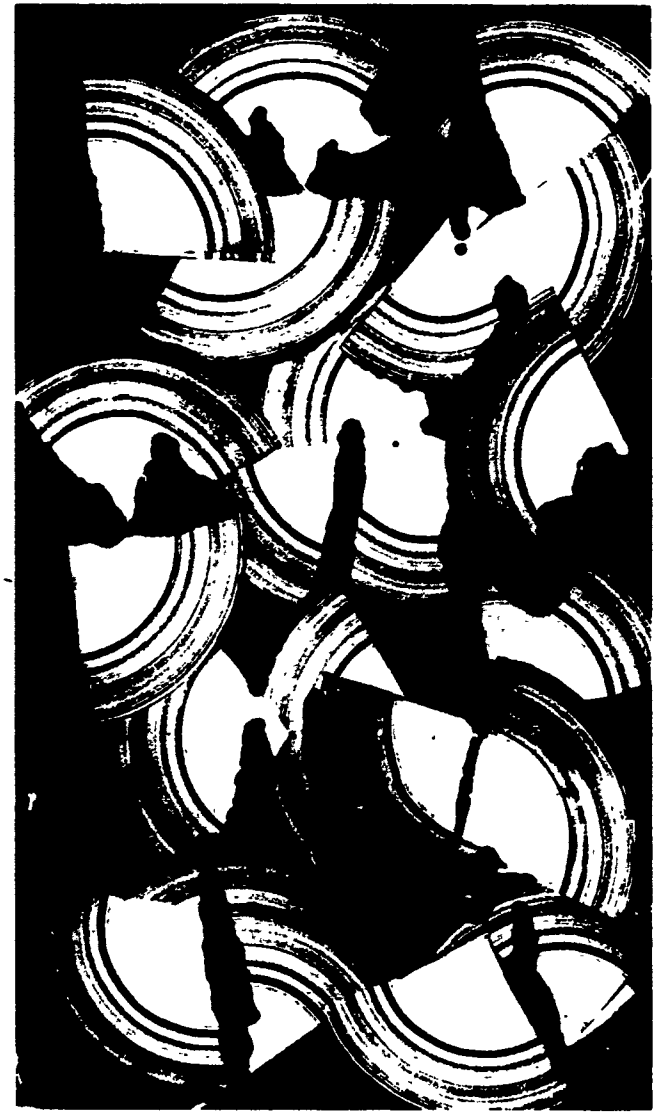
Winters were magical at Aunt Grace's. I would spend the night at her house and receive royal treatment, a warm iron (wrapped in a cloth) at my feet in the bed, a pee-pee pot at hand under the bed for middle-of-the-night whims. (When Daddy was a little boy, he called the pee-pee pot a Dr. Cola can.) I loved that hollow, tinkle tinkle sound against the metal can in the silence of the creaky room, and the unexpected chime of the clock in the transparent darkness. The formless shadows protected me throughout the night, and I would wonder how the shade had escaped the front porch simply to watch over me. And if fear ever crept into the room and tried to get me under the covers, I would take a deep breath and smell the familiar mustiness. The mustiness was always there.

In the morning, before daylight, Aunt Grace would put wood on the fire, and I would awaken at the sound of her graceful grunt. She must have had eyes in the back of her head because she would bid me good morning while still tending the fire, and I would marvel at the beautiful hump in her back. I never understood why it was there, but I cherished it nonetheless.

Once, I wanted to be an astronomer (I was inspired by the tooth story), and Aunt Grace bought me a telescope. Two weeks later I wanted to be a scientist. I think the telescope is in her attic now, viewing the years, and reluctantly entering antiquehood. Aunt Grace lives in a nursing home in the city now, and her letters are a constant source of entertainment. She spends every holiday with my family, and recently received the family title of Grandmother.

Every time I pass Aunt Grace's, I observe the front porch where the shade so serenely dwells, and I feel relieved. I wish it could follow me, but if it did, it would never catch up.

Clara Converse Connell, 1985



Susan Debo Roediger, 1986

THE BACK PEW AT C STREET

Removed from the Good People, the naughty four-year-olds at the C Street Church scrunched down in the back pew, a six foot by 2 foot bench in the shadows in the corner, far from the crystal lights, body heat of the congregation, and cooling fans. We were exiled from all but cranky, old, owl-eyed Mother Countie, who wobbled her large, flabby elephantlike body over to our pew to viciously scold and pinch us for what she thought was our constant misconduct. There were three of us: Saundra, Ivy, and me.

When we were first sent to the back pew, it was a shiny spotless golden brown, just the color of Wheat Chex cereal. The pew had an alarmingly strong odor of Pledge Furniture Polish. With our stomachs making leaps and dives, we soon took care of the awful odor. My sister's newly invented hot-sausage-and-sour-cream-potato-chips special was smeared into every crack of the bench. We even tore the meat into tiny pieces and put the pungent bits into the edges of the nails like little toilet air fresheners. We succeeded in getting rid of three things: the tear-jerking aroma of the polish, the back-door ushers who tried to sit with us, and Mother Countie, who was apparently allergic to sausages.

This activity is only one of many memories summoned up by thinking of that battered bench in the back of the C Street Church. The weathered markings of that ill-treated pew tell an ancient history that unfolds the mysteries of our growing stages from four-year-old brats to ten-year-old adults. Before we were finally allowed to join the rest of the congregation, years filled with adventures went by.

In the bottom of the tithe envelope holder lies a secret bottom we constructed spontaneously in response to oncoming disaster. At age four, we tore paper into the tiniest pieces; we shredded anything. Our destructive energies were curtailed, however, when the acutely observant elders noticed the gradual disappearance of five Bibles and four hymnals. One day, a hasty disposal of our shreddings was mandatory when Ivy noticed that the three of us in the back of the Church were receiving a surprise visit from a fast-approaching Bishop. What to do? The tithe envelope holder and miniature quarter purses seemed to be the only places to hide the bits and pieces of paper we had produced during the morning service. We stuffed the confetti in the holder, and the Bishop never knew.

Along the edge of the pew we left evidence of another activity. Sensing the danger of continuing to tear all the paper we could get our hands on, we switched to candy sampling; in particular, we loved Nowlaters. Even now, along the bench is an array of colors: purple is the grape flavor, pink is the watermelon, green is the lime, and so on. We sucked the Nowlaters until they felt bumpy against our tongues, then we placed them in the square part of the pew in a carefully arranged geometric design.

This is not the only decoration exhibited in the back pew. On the bench seat, a checkered pattern of Tic-tac-toe games extends in a diagonal line from one corner to another. It was the result of a paper shortage. Overcome with boredom, Sunday after Sunday, we used navy blue pens to express frustration. X's and O's were the language of our discontent.

Some of our artistic efforts were not easily spotted, even though they seemed very conspicuous to us. One that can still be seen today is The Purple Path, a light purple stain of grape juice extending from the pew in the back all the way down the Church to the pulpit. It came about this way. During one our quarrels, Saundra knocked over her jar of juice, causing a purple river to flow, ever so slowly, straight down the bleached white floor straight to the altar, the place of prayer. We needed prayers after our parents got through with our hindquarters.

Perhaps the most esoteric of our artistic achievements was concealed right under the seat, the perfect spot to escape parental eyes. It was a beautiful arrangement of

chewed Bubble Yum, beautiful at least to our eyes, although not, I suspect to Mother Countie who would have loved to know about this latest mischief. As far as I know, she never discovered it, although great globs of gooey gum were stuck in clumps all over the underside of the pew. It was evident that our favorite flavor was cherry. Pineapple Bubble Yum entered the market rather late and we didn't care for it too much, so there's not much pineapple under the seat. What there is stands out like tiny scars in a vast bed of roses. As for grape, it outlines the whole display.

Time passed. By the time we were nine or ten, we had replaced our love of bubble gum with longing for more intriguing items: Barbie dolls and live boys. Colorful threads became entangled in the splintery knee rests of the bench. Red, yellows, and blues were no doubt from our Barbies' fancy clothing; the blacks most likely were from our haircut adventure. Upon spotting Rod, a yellow boy with sandy blond hair, the three of us decided instantly that we needed a new look. Taking our Barbie scissors, we snapped the front half of our hair off. We never did clean up that hair; we used it as a rug for our Barbies to pose on, so enraptured were we with fashion.

When I look at the bench now, I think that the most haunting evidence of our long friendship and our equally long confinement to that back pew is the "78" scratched in red ink on the armrest farthest to the front. We scratched it there the last time we sat all together on the bench. That last time now seems very far away, so far that I had not heard from Saundra for over five years until last summer, when she found her old handmade telephone book in the crack of the bench. My number was in the book, of course, so she called to tell me the latest gossip: Ivy is dating Rod, and the Church is being renovated. Then she said, "Nothing is left except the Purple Path." Perhaps I'll meet her again — and Ivy, too — on the path of faith and friendship shaped by our childhood experiences. I hope so.

Melissa Olivia Word, 1986

NOW

Shall I just sit here on the porch
Some more while the
Breeze flutters and then lands
Across my fingers?

Maybe the purple finches
Have reached the tropics;
But I am not a migratory bird.
I have to much to pack.

So I sit here,
While the red and
Mauve night climbs the
Trees and is gone.

Victoria Elizabeth Brown, 1984

THE STREET VENDOR THAT WASN'T

Standing on the corner —
so ordinary
  and yet
so unusual
  with bright, cheerful eyes
  and a clean, shining,
    closely-shaven face.
He still sells pretzels
  like the others,
and they are still lukewarm,
overpriced,
and too salty,
yet
his warm, friendly voice
  and kind smile
are so unusual,
so different from all the others
  that i
        s e
          m l
            i

as i walk away
wondering
about the street vendor
  that was not like all the rest —
    the street vendor that wasn't
      (really a street vendor).

Gretchen Mabee Logan, 1985

Laura Elizabeth Hynes, 1984

CREATIVITY IN ACTION

My poem was clearly in pain.
I tried giving it water but it said no.
It ate nothing, and no weight did it gain

Day after day, night after night,
Coaxing and teasing, I turned it
Over and held it up to the light.

But it only pressed its thin lips
Stubbornly together and I knew that
With it I must come to grips.

It developed a rash
And refused to be bribed.
I offered it all my cash,

My clothes, my car with a full tank.
But my poem only stared at the walls,
And into a depression I sank.

Finally I grabbed the poem and ran to the street
Wondering how to end things between us.
My poem then squirmed and jumped to its feet.

It demanded my food
And drank up all my water,
Suddenly in a cantankerous mood.

My poem took all my money, my car key,
And tore the clothes off my back
While shrieking loudly with glee:

"HOT DAMN!" My poem turned, and to town
It sauntered (full of schemes),
Slowly slicking its hair down.

Victoria Elizabeth Brown, 1984

Natasha Ann Reed, 1984

GHOSTS FROM CHRISTMAS PAST

That winter, the combs on each and every chicken froze. It was a tough winter, and mama would go up to the old out house where they lived, and twice a day, crack the ice in their trough. With frozen combs, and complete immobility, the chickens needed to listen to the gentle drip of the special water trough in order to maintain some sort of sanity. The sub-level temperatures affected old grandma in much the same way as our most motherly, long legged pullet, in that she would screech from her own roost-of-a-bed that this would be the coldest Christmas her 86 years could ever recall . . . For mama, it was a definite toss up of who would get their ice cracked more often: Grandma or Scrambled Eggs, the chicken.

The week before Christmas, it was 26 below zero. Papa had gotten the holy days off and he would spend his time raking the snow and top layer off of the manure pile so that he could see if there was any fermentive heat in the inside. nailing together the coral boards that our pugnacious pony has bursted through, and regretfully, (and through his spouse's pressure) choosing the pine trees that his wife could trim branches off for her beloved swags. Mournfully, he tied red ribbons on the trees he had chosen.

Between water hikes, mama spent her time in the basement pricking her fingers while trying to intertwine holly leaves in her homemade, square wreaths. We swore that old Mr. Hendrickson was selling round, manufactured wreaths for real cheap, but she would just glare at us from underneath her Christmas spirit. Billy, my brother, spent a lot of his time beside mama because last year he had complained so bitterly about the lack of strings around the packages and asked, one too many times, why in the world Mama didn't order manufactured ribbon from Mrs. Tuftee for five cents a role. At the time of the final complaint, Papa had just opened a pair of grandma's hand knitted underwear, and this caused him to growl and vow that next Christmas Billy would darn well make strings, and join mama in the holiday spirit. So Billy improvised by collecting all the hay bale strings, dumping them in a tub of green dye, and after they had dried, sprinkling sparkles on them. Billy was proud of himself, and his hands which were green for that entire week, and two months afterwards.

That Christmas, i was in charge of the cookies. I sat for hours with old recipes, and hoped that for once, I could come up with cookies that would rise and have frosting that wouldn't be clear looking like glaze. I was real excited because mama had received some food coloring from Mrs. Hadson because Mrs. Hadson's dog was allergic to it, and thus would not be able to eat her left-over cookies. I was planning on green and red Christmas trees.

So that was our Christmas spirit. I guess you could say that we were a real Christmassy family that year; most families would celebrate at some department store buying all their Christmas decorations. God knows, I envied those families. We always decked the tree on Christmas-eve-day. Mama would lug it in, and usually buy it too, because papa wouldn't want to cut down one of the trees he had spent so many years fertilizing. Mama was pleased that specific year because she had gotten a tree that was 12 feet high. Papa was grumbling like mad because our ceilings were 10 feet at the most.

So we dragged down all our traditional ornaments that mama had wrapped up special in the attic, and after Papa had strung the lights and said a few un-holy words about the tippy top of the tree being bent downward from the pressure of the ceiling, he went to the store to buy some tobacco, and mama began busily hanging the strung popcorn and cranberries, and re-hanging every ornament my sister and I had hung. Traditionally, mama always cracked a bottle of discount champagne, and since papa picked this day for a corniferous allergy he disappeared, and she ended up getting awfully crocked. My younger sister and I found the whole event rather tiresome but remembered our vows of better not crying and better not pouting.

That specific Christmas was a turning point in my life because my angel did not get to squat over the summit of the tree. Every year since I could have remembered, my angel, who was made out of paper and crayons and uniquely folded just so that she could fit on the branch, would majestically look upon the entire room, smiling

with these two adorable red dimples that I had drawn in, finessing the end of a perfect smile. That year there was a movement from a typical younger sister, to have a new angel on top, just for a change. I was heart-broken, and the whole thing ended with mama, reaching her height of giddiness, balancing herself on the top rung of the ladder, in the same position as most flying angels, and placing each angel on one of the second highest contending branches. After that, we were sent for a mid-day nap, and the angels seemed to frown at each other for the rest of the joyous holiday

That Christmas eve we were all dragged out to the mid-night service because mama wanted us to know that Christmas was more than beautiful homemade wreaths, and swags, and green sparkled ropes to wrap presents. She wanted us to think beyond the joy of trimming the tree, and scrubbing for the Christmas Eve service, and completing our various 'spirit tasks." She wanted us to remember that a little Jewish King had been born from the womb of a virgin, and this baby had been found out through a beautiful star that was real hard to draw on paper.

We got home from that Christmas service and got ready for a Christmas feast that we were far too tired to eat, and Papa made us all hang up our coats and get him some milk of magnesia to aid his upset stomach. Singing hymns always made his stomach a little unsettled. Mama would pull out the feast that she had shoved in the slow cooking crock pot at 6:30 that morning, and we would all eat, and usually Billy would make fun of the sermon that the priest had given. I remember mama had reported that we would always remember this Christmas because it wasn't many a Christmas that the chickens' combs froze and Papa's pride and joy pine trees bowed to the ground from the weight of all the new fallen snow. We kids posed with our hand-knit stockings in front of the fire place for one picture, because grandma always insisted that if she was going to go to all the trouble of knitting things, they had better be in the Christmas photos. We would then go to bed, and mama would nab papa and make sure that he was going to help her with all the dishes, as well as stay up all night with him to do all of Santa's duties.

I remember the presents that year distinctly. Mama gave us slippers in their own carrying case, waste baskets, and flannel pillow cases. Papa promised that he would make us a sled in the upcoming year, and grandma, who would never wake for the occasion, had wrapped all her hand-knit objects in tissue paper. Billy got a face mask with only one eye and two noses, my younger sister got an apron for her doll, I got a sock and a mitten, Mama got a tea pot-kettle warmer, and Papa got more underwear.

All in all, Christmas was just about the same that year as it was every year, but we did find two frozen chickens after we had finished burning the wrapping paper, and Billy's strings. I remember thinking at the time that one day I might look back upon the Christmases of the past and recollect the essence of my family life, but this stream of thought was interrupted by grandma She was waddling down the stairs chirping, "Hell's bells, the toilets have frozen over."

Ariane deVogue, 1984

THE BOX

"Cleo, darling, pass the salt."

"Philip, I want to see it." She forgets the salt.

"What's that?" He too forgets the salt.

"Philip, don't play games with me," Cleo threatens with a spoon.

"You know, Cleo, my princess, I can't reveal . . ."

"What can't you reveal, what?!" Eggs, muffins, and a napkin scatter. A new wrinkle in the tablecloth is all that's left. Philip is quite taken aback. "I'm tired, Philip. I'm not some ten cent toy to wheel around for two months and then to start putting in the closet every night. No more secrets, do you hear me?! When a man removes a section of roof to lower a ten foot square sealed box into his livingroom, I feel, in all my female instinct, that he should reveal its contents to his wife." Cleo removes the tablecloth from the breakfast table with a brilliant gesture of wifely disquietude. Philip stares at the barren piece of furniture.

"This table needs refinishing," he scratches the scuffed surface.

"Don't change the subject. Honestly Philip, I never dreamed that a box would ruin our marriage."

"So, you've been dreaming of a divorce!"

"I didn't say that!" Almost forgetting the box, Cleo discovers Philip's cleverness. "Now, Philip. I want to know NOW — or my dreams will come true!"

"Now?" He rises from the table and saunters into the livingroom, confronting an enormous ten foot square box. Its edges are sharp and threatening. Cleo follows, staying at a safe distance from both him and the box. The lights flicker in an overdramatic statement of the mass hysteria experienced during the average melodramatic household scene. Cleo cannot bear the suspense. Checking the combination lock, Philip slides his fingers along the smooth edges of the container. Without warning, the sides spring open upon his touch. In a heavy blow, too heavy for even the hero, the front wall of the box crashes down upon Philip. Cleo screams.

"Run Cleo, NOW!" Philip gasps. She runs, forgetting to look inside the box.

"The salt! The salt!" she cried.

"How odd," thought Philip. He set his focus upon dying, and did so, quite professionally, in one last breath, "Now."

Jill Anne Roberts, 1984

ESSENTIAL

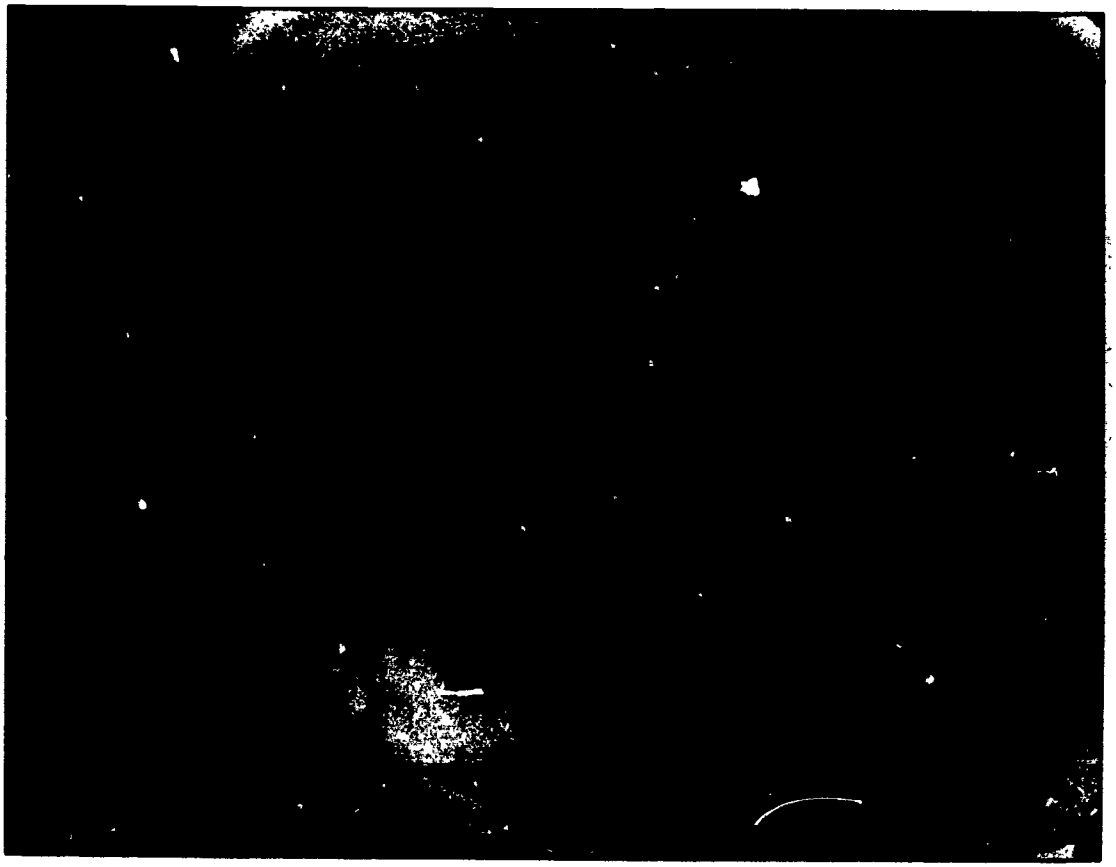
In the essence
lies the force

In the silence
lies the reason

plaintive in its supplication,
reality casts no shadow
in the mud
(for to be real
it must be given
of the gods)

the answer lies in a hog.

Jan Maria Sechrist, 1985



Clare Fagg, 1986

Laura Elizabeth Hynes, 1984

NOW

It was a burning day in July, and Helen had taken refuge in the Northern side of the house, the one that looked out over the channel and the small domed church. She sat now, on a rough, low stool, looking past the heavy-framed, inset windows at the brilliant blue water and the hazy mountain that sloped into it. If she looked West, she could just make out the cliff where the village women had leaped to their deaths, babies clutched to their breasts, preferring to dash themselves on the rocks rather than let the invading armies capture them.

The sight of that sharp drop always made Helen wonder if she could have done the same, if she had been there. It could have been a day just like this one, the same cloudless sky above, the identical church with its narrow, blue painted doors and white-washed stone walls. Her husband would, maybe, have stood in the courtyard just below, on that large red flagstone, bloodied sword raised against the unrelenting enemy, hoping only to give his wife and child time to flee, then to die with honor, pressed against the wall his ancestors built.

There would be a slight respite, and he would, by chance, glance up, just as Helen was doing now, at the very spot where she would be standing. He would see the women in a knot at the rise of the mountain, and his companions would also pause a moment, clasping their medallions in silent prayer.

It could be that the soldiers rounded the bend at that moment, began to rush forward to catch their booty, glassy-eyed with heat and expectation. She would back to the edge of the rocks, repelled by the smell of gore and lust, exchanging frantic, helpless glances with the others. A proud people they were; even cornered, the women's eyes flashed as sharp as their tongues — some even hurled rocks, which briefly slowed the pace of the hungry army. They could wait; they knew they would win. An eerie, menacing ripple of laughter reached the trapped women's ears. Helen would catch her wide-eyed son, only four small years, by the waist. Piteously, foreseeing her intent, he would cry, in equal fear of the cliff and the dark-skinned warriors. He would raise his eyes to his mother, who still held him tightly, then reach for her shoulders.

Helen would pick up her son, press his head to her neck, look quickly, finally, down at the village, and leap without a sound after her sisters. Her husband, seeing only the plummetting figures, would utter a fierce oath and spring at his attackers, while the baking stones warmed his blood and carried it to the sea.

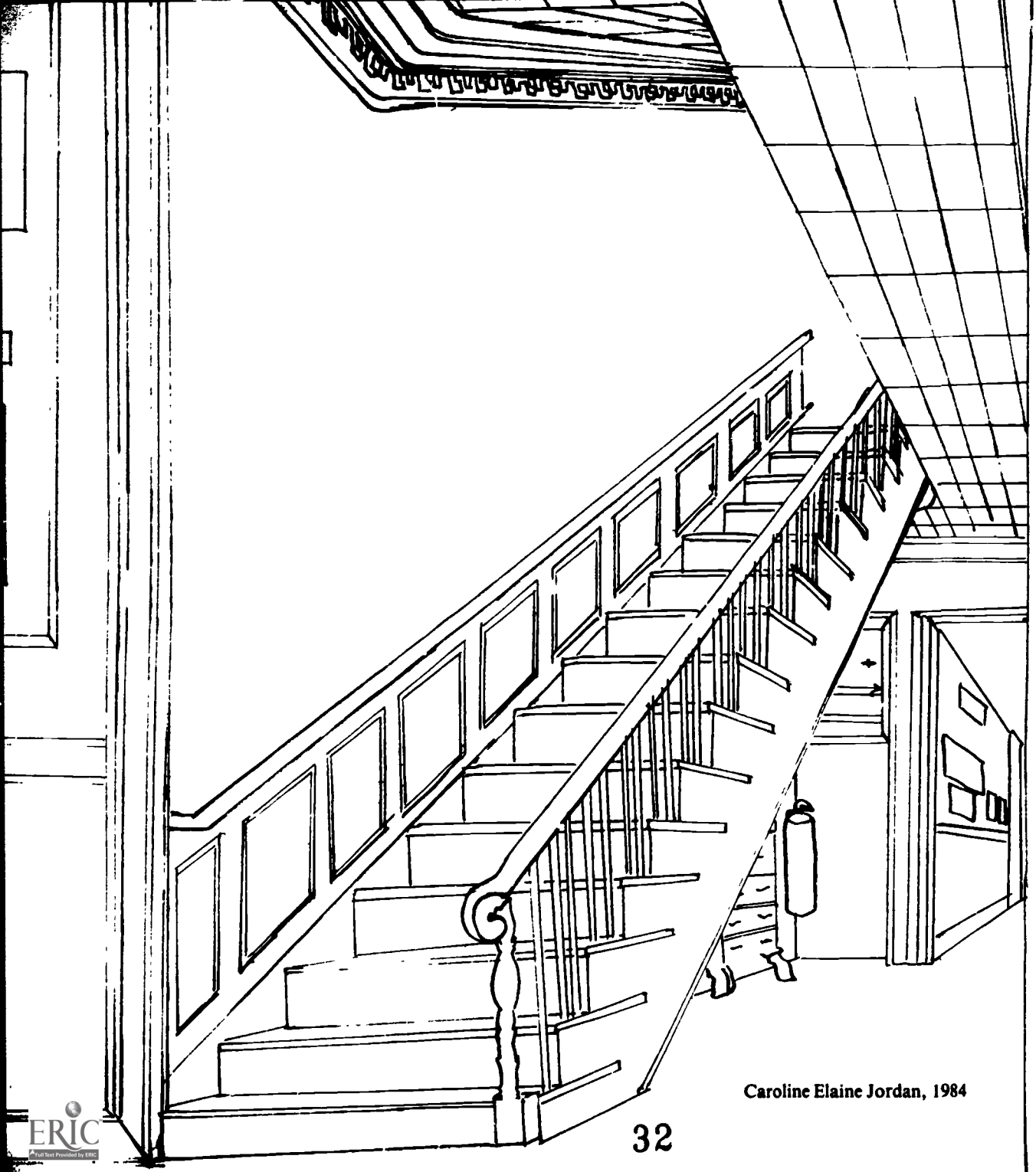
Helen's eyes followed the narrow gutter down the twisting street to the beach. A small boy played in the dust, his black hair shining in the sun. He looked up suddenly, sensing her stare. The wide eyes found hers amidst the clutter of shuttered windows and white stone walls. His tentative wave was cut short by a shrill, scolding flow of warnings from his mother: playing in the sun, not wearing his sandals, getting dirt on his clothes. He responded in turn with a small, childish pout, but quickly disappeared in the direction of the voice.

The waves lapped against the stone wharf as a cool breeze came down from the mountains. A silver-bellied fish jumped out of the water and fell back with a splash; a swift, low flying sea-bird swept over the surface, darting and turning with the ease of its kind. Helen sat leaning on the wooden frame, her head resting on folded arms, watching as the man who sold roasted corn began to prepare for the evening's business, going through the setting-up ritual methodically, pausing occasionally to hail a friend.

It must be near four. Another fish jumped, and Helen started as she recognized an approaching figure. She sat up and watched him carefully as he advanced. His walk was easy, but contained within it a hidden power. He slowed to comment on the weather with the corn roaster, and looked up to her window. Helen thought she saw him smile before she turned her head to find the stone wall of the little domed church.

She continued to study the pocked stones until he had turned the corner and could no longer see her. Then she immediately rose, checked her hair in a faded mirror, and left the cool, dusky house for the street. As she pulled the two blue-painted doors closed, Helen looked once more at the far away cliffs, lit almost golden by the sun, then turned to make her way down the familiar, dusty road, never noticing the shriveled widow, wrapped all in black, who turned to stare knowingly after her.

Natasha Ann Reed, 1984



Caroline Elaine Jordan, 1984

LOOKING BACK

As Asa Hassan rose from his frayed prayer mat, he mumbled one last faint, disconnected prayer, and then stretched his body upward, as if reaching for Allah himself. Although the rug was worn with years of kneeling, and crystals of sand were deeply embedded in the fine weave, anyone cou'd see that the rug had once been beautiful, with its deep red hues, the perfect, even number of strands at the base of the carpet, and the intricate designs of ancient Persian weavers. And the rug still embodied a strange, mystical aura of ageless beauty, for its sturdy, yet delicate nature earned it both respect and honor.

The morning sun glared into the tiny paneless window. It was that hour when it shone directly into the cell and was capable of almost blinding the frail old man. But today he looked unflinchingly into the light. It was the last time he would see it, he thought. At least from this particular place. His term was over, and it had been a long trying one indeed — one that had lasted for fifty-nine years, although he had spent only the last three in the solace of the cold, somber chamber.

The guards took Asa at precisely 6:00 a.m. Arabic custom held that prisoners who were to be put to death maintain a sense of dignity and serenity until the very moment the axe fell. The mind should be devoid of all thought and the eyes should look directly ahead, empty and motionless. Above all else, however, the Holy Code demanded that the prisoner never, never look back. To do so would be to declare openly that one did not acknowledge the punishment which it was the unquestioning duty of the prisoner to accept. To turn back would be to blatantly reject the decree that one was a guilty and unforgivable sinner.

He was old — so old — and exnausted with his life. Like the prayer rug, which had been tossed only a few minutes before into a blazing fire, Asa felt abused by years of wear and discarded by his fellow man.

He reached the wooden plank and lifted his weary leg to mount the platform. For an instant, for a fraction of a second perhaps, his eyes quivered. Suddenly, with one irrevocable burst of energy, Asa swung his neck around, thrust his shoulders back, and strained his eyes to peer past the sharp silver edge of his destiny. Looking back, just in time, Asa caught a glimpse of a distant cloud of smoke rising into the air in majestic glory.

Katherine Marie Young, 1984

GREENWICH VILLAGE, U.S.A.

Sharp, short hair —
Cut.
Punk? New . . . flood. Ska!!
Dyed. Get the beat.
Scents of stale make-up, fresh David's Cookies, and
black and white.
Music lives?
Ripped clothes and
Dreams.
1960's —— Anarchy . . . "Where is the power?"
1980's —— Anarchy . . . "Where am I?"
New Leftists . . . take a right on the
2nd corner.
Corrupt, overpriced —
What a bargain!!!
Paris green, China blue, Scarlet O'Hara,
London fog.
The American accent's gotta go — so corny!
Souls nonchalant and uninterested
Let the world fall
Down.
Up with
What?
It's o.k. — I guess;
Just as long as everyone looks . . .
Cool.

Catherine London Prevost, 1985

THE CHANCE

He called to them but they would not listen.
The roar of the maddening crowd teased and beckoned;
Just a moment, he begged from half of forever —
But the never of consecutively comprehending smiles
Cajoled him as it echoed through the broken walls of his psyche —
And they turned the other cheek to that which caused them most pain
And in doing so smote that which could save him.
The tentative tendrils exploring hope were obstructed and mangled —
The ears of many deaf to the voice of one
Which tired of giving, instead asked to receive.
He called to you but you would not listen.

So he descended into the hole and pulled it in after himself.

R. Erica Doyle, 1985

THE DRAFT

In my spring, there were never signs of plight,
Children at the playground, unsupervised;
Not in that season was there any fright,
At a time when feelings were not disguised.
At this time I could bawl for want or need,
At this time no one I knew ever died,
Never wanting to follow, I could lead,
When I was young, the grown-ups never cried.

But after that, the summer had to be
When something from the Government arrived.
A letter for my brother, not for me,
And that was when the grown-ups first had cried.

It was fall when my brother went to war,
And then it would be winter ever more.

Margaret Power Mulry, 1984

IN THE WOODS

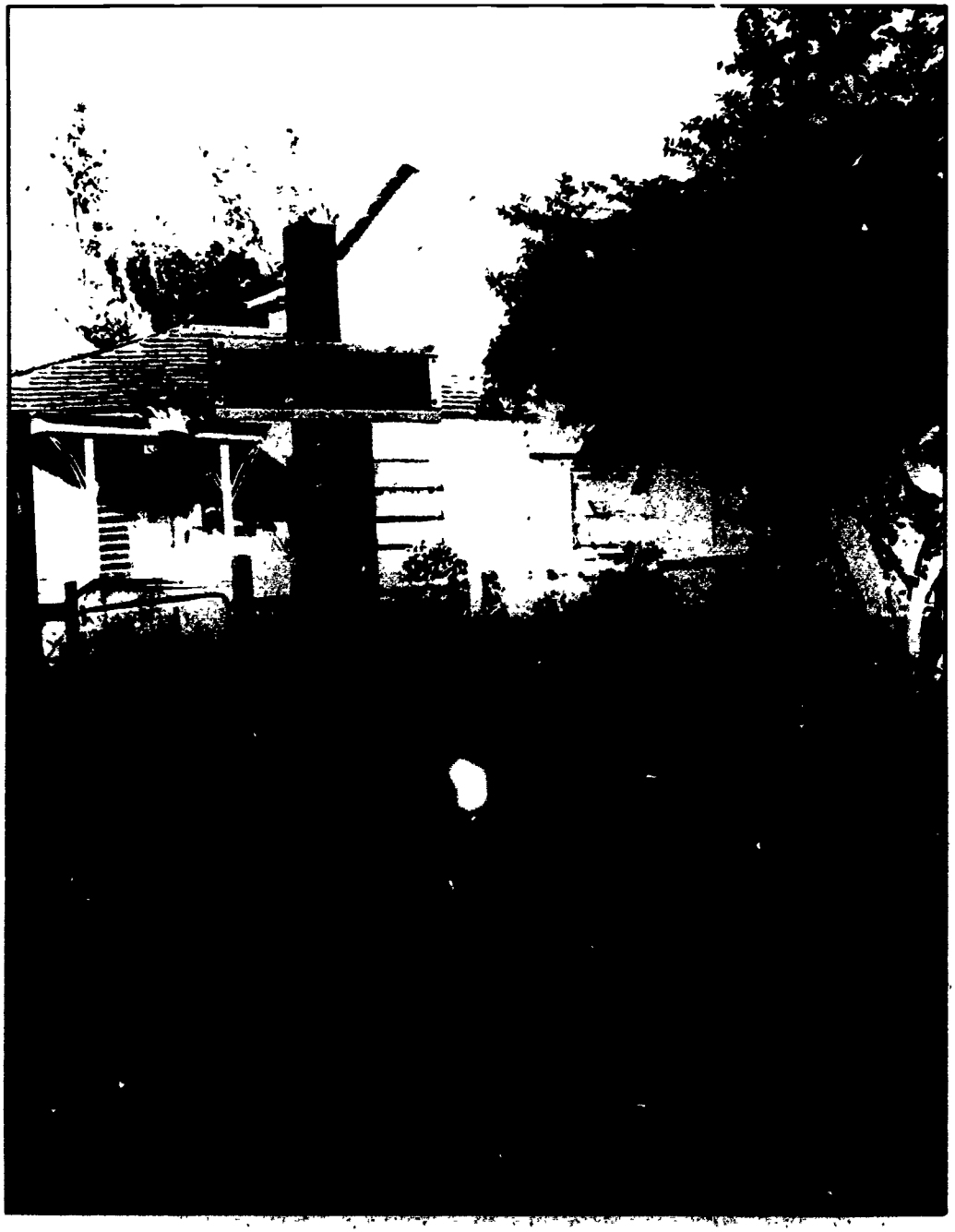
It's where we played
intertwining paths
among our hosts
cordial host of cries
climbs
cooos
and with our friends we came, and with our friends we sang.

In maturity we no longer play —
Our hosts remain. At the heart of life the offspring blow and the branches clench their fists.
our hosts remain alone.

And as there always is, there is a being, softly floating up above.
And the cordial hosts offer themselves as a roost
rest
realm.

and the three toes clench the clenched.
and the being sings among the offspring,
and the offspring rustle,
and the being sings to us,
and we are no longer there,
and the being sings everything to nothing.
Why did it sing
serenade
swoop
everything into nothing?

Ariane deVogue, 1984



Laura Elizabeth Hynes, 1984

Dear Sirs:

First and foremost, I am very sorry about the poor typing. I happen to be typing this on an IBM Selectric owned by the school and (supposedly) repaired by the school. Actually, it does have a nice sort of pastel-ly shade to it, doesn't it?

Anyway, the reason I am writing this is to tell you that the reason I cannot attend your summer seminar on the growth and reproduction of asparagus shoots, is: inolongerfeelthatihavethematurityorthecapabilitytodeal withsuchanobscuresubjectofconcentration!

HOW CONVENTIONAL I AM! Sorry, dear sirs, I just had to get that unconventional thought on paper before I changedorbecameuniqueorsomethingreallyintenselikethat — you know? I think I just realized the REEAAALL reason why I am writing this. It is just that I do not feel like going to bed, and I do not feel like staying up, and this is the closest to a "happy medium" I could find. Here comes a new paragraph.

So, as I was saying, the view from up here is quite exotic — hmmm, let me see, what's a word that rhymes with exotic? BY GEORGE, I THINK I'VE GOT IT! "Spasmotic." Well, maybe next time. A poet I'm not, although I could become one if I had the write stuff (or is it the right fluff? I always get those two confused.)

SIGNIFICANT! Okay. Now I really think I've hit upon something. I swear, I just thought of this new word. It's significant; how do you like it? I think it has a nice sort of ring to it. If I were asked to describe a significant experience in my life, it would have to be something really exciting, something really interesting. It would have to be eye-opening and unique. Gosh! Who do they think I am? Gulliver? I have had nightmares about a college essay reader (it seems like a nice easy image) flipping through my application and saying, "Hmmm, what a bore . . ." or "Where does she get off. . . . Well, that does it! I'm starting to conform to the mold, I suppose, but I really do want to go to the college seminar on the growth and reproduction of asparagus shoots, P L E A S E (stress) New paragraph.

Now you've really got me worked up about learning about asparagus shoots. First, it was only a summer session and not it is a college! You know, when I first sat down at this typewriter, I really was not thinking about asparagus shoots, and I was not thinking of making up new words, and I was not thinking of conventionality or unconventionality — it all just sort of made its way from the old corpus luteum right on to this nice piece of white typing paper . . . whoops! I just made the funniest mistake. You see, science has always been my "worst subject," so I have always kept certain words like "corpus luteum" in my mind so that I could throw them into conversations here or there, so as not to seem totally ignorant of the realms of science. Well, anyway, I have always thought it was part of the brain, so I have always said things like. . . . oh, I don't know . . . I can't think of an exact example right now . . . but HOLD IT! I am really starting to get sidetracked. (Aaahh, PURPOSE. DIRECTION.) Anyway, I just looked in the dictionary to check up on my good old friend (or so I thought) "corpus luteum," and what do you know? It turns out that the corpus luteum is (and I quote) ". . . a reddish yellow mass of endocrine tissue that forms a ruptured Graafian follicle in the mammalian ovary . . ." Imagine that! I've been referring to my ovaries the whole time I thought I was talking about my brain. There is something remotely funny in that, but I can't quite put my finger on it. Oh, well. New paragraph.

I am getting terribly longwinded about this whole thing — thing — shming, I don't really care. For the first time in a really long time, I am enjoying myself while doing a required activity. So THAT is what school is all about (Why am I starting to sound like a contestant on the Miss America show???) HOW PATHETIC!

Well, there you have it. I am conventional and pathetic. Actually, I am a little of each or am I a leach of ittle(HA! That was supposed to be humor . . . ha, ha, hah, huh, ho, hum, hhem, cough (sigh, stress)) Oh, well. You know who I feel like right now? (Well, it's not right now anymore, but it was when I first thought of it.) Answer: Kurt Vonnegut. In his book *Slapstick,* he always says "hi ho." It sort of means frustrationdespairhappinessreliefandagitation all mixed up into one. I do not really know what it means, but that

is what my oh, well means. New paragraph.

Let me see now. Without even trying, I have covered my favorite vegetable, my "worst subject," my "summer reading," not to mention the definition of corpus luteum — and let's not forget that word I made up. Wait . . . what was it? Oh, yeah. S-I-G-N-I-F-I-C-A-N-C-E.

Sincerely yours,

mpm/MPM

P.S. I forgot to mention
that I am in the process
of learning how to juggle!

Margaret Power Mulry, 1984

Alexandra Hersey Hamm, 1984

A LATER LOVE SONG, MUCH LATER

Let us creep then, you and me,
When the light is soft and the evening's free
Like a droplet squeezing through the veins;
Let us fly, through known and travelled lanes,
The weekend reigns
Of gods and princes in crystal huts
And boarded shacks with windows shut:
Lanes that cross like a twisted maze
Of passings days
To lead you to an overwhelming question . . .
God! Do not ask, "Where is it?"
Hold your bladder and make our visit.

In the kitchen our mothers frown and talk
Smoking and gossiping as they gawk.

Their mildewed smoke clogs its throat upon their window panes,
Their mildewed smoke that curtains and curtails the window panes,
Gnawed its teeth and numbed from roots to mind,
Waiting for those memories left behind,
Let fall the hes that blind them to forget,
Rushed by the trees and ponds and sweat,
And seeing an easy ashtray of empty brain,
Dragged in to suffocate the light domain.

And indeed there will be time
For the coming cloud that eats its way along the lane,
Biting its mouth upon the window panes;
There will be time, there will be time
To mold and match a face for all to see;
There will be time to diet and calorie,
And time for all the words so big and bland
That pierce your panes and drop drool upon your hand;
Time for you alone and time for only me,
And time yet for a trillion more of billion,
And for a billion million of equal fill,
When we will pause and puke and slowly chill.

In the kitchen our mothers frown and talk
Smoking and gossiping as they gawk.

And indeed there will be time
To wonder, "Do I dare?" and, "Do I dare?"
Time to turn back and not to care,
With a watch hand ticking unaware —
(It will say: "How brainless you all are!")
Your wrinkled faces, the dirt beneath your limbs,
Your jewels and jasmines flowing, and blotting out all natural whims
(It will say: How my ticking taunts them not!")
Should I sound
It louder still?
In a minute there is time
To stop and start a plummet where the clock's the only chime.

For I have heard the sounds already, not them all:
But sounds of silence and of the pall,
I have fought the sounds with smiles;
I know it shall not last
Until the dying fall.
And yet I shall presume.

For I have known the clocks already, not them all —
But ones that fix you in a maturated phase,
And when I am maturated, posing in a haze,
When I am big and fogging down the lane,
Then I shall know it's mine,
Mine and yours to spit the guts out of our youth.
But why should we rush time?

Yes, I have known the arms already, not them all —
But ones that pinch you in embrace
(And in the darkness gorge your face!)
Is it the stench of a Hollowland
That makes me understand?
Arms that teach and touch and taunt and tear,
I know how I shall fight,
Or how I shall begin.

We should not worry, or rush the ashes hence
Nor heed our elder's breathless voices
Of choking robots in a land nonsense.

We should have been a pair of whippoorwills
Singing and swimming in a sea of timeless fill.

Now the afternoons and evenings pass so peacefully!
Marked by endless slumbers,
Asleep and awake are likewise free.
And near us on the dirt, beside both you and me,
The mist and moisture wet us,
Our two made only we.
And though the clock is quiet,
And though our wind is clean,
We are not faceless, and our changing not unseen.
For I have seen the smog arriving,
And I have seen the drooling Madman snicker at our doors,
And, in short, I was afraid.
But it will have been worth it, after all,
After the dancing and the rain,
After the sane before the game.

It will have been worth while,
To have held on to the last,
To have squeezed the years into a smile
To have hid them all steadfast,
To say "I am a child, come from the wind,
I have come to tell you naught, I shall tell you naught" —
I shall say nothing but hold on to my smile
What I near now is but a waiting
And a fight against the bile.

And it will have been worth it, after all,
It will have been worth while,
After the ashtrays and wrinkles and curtained panes,
After this and that and more —
I know what is and is to come!
But I shall have a dagger to cut off all the dirt:
To fool the Madman and slit his snicker,
And turning toward the clock shall say:
"I remember what a smile is,
I remember it — and all."

No! We are not two infants new, nor were meant to be;
We are waiters of the coming
Of the coming of debris,
We wander and we wait,
For the dark to come and crush,
For the start of blindness and of fate
Full of bigness and of empty slush.
At times, indeed, we drool just slime,
Almost, at times, give up ourselves.

We grow old . . . we grow old . . .
Yet we hide and grasp the last Windhold.

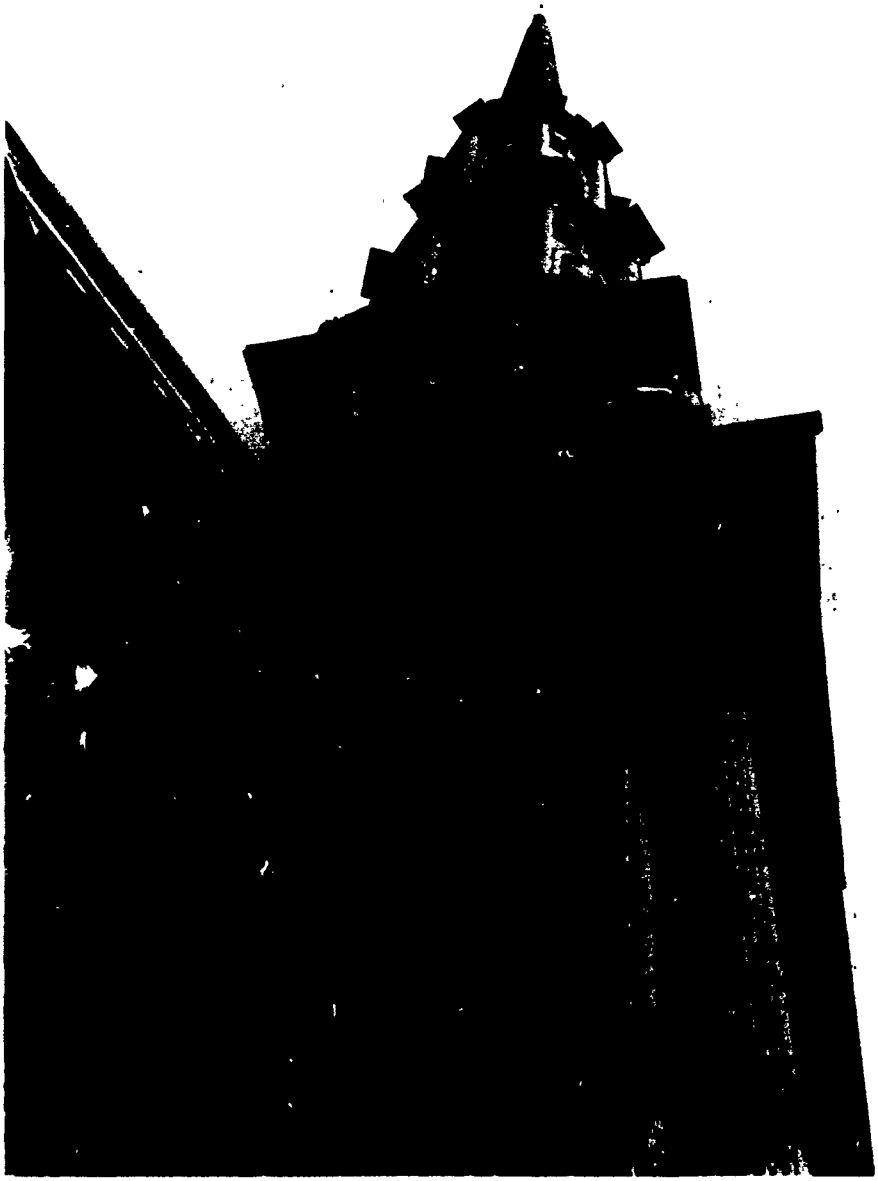
We do not comb our hair. We dare to touch the earth.
We wear a sun-burned skin of gold and tread upon the Madman's hearth
And we do not stop and think of him.

We do not think of chillbound days.

And yes we have seen his smog arrive
Smoking in our land near done
We have seen his insides clogging in the lanes in which we creep

We have seen his finger flicker
And we have seen our smoking mothers beckon us to come
But skinless fingers touch us not, and we live on in our sleep.

Katherine Donahue, 1984



Alexandra Hersey Hamm, 1984

TOWN SQUARE

The statue perches bronzely
on a granite slab. He leans
splendidly above the city's traffic,
one hand in silent benediction,
the other clutching a heavy sword.
A plaque speaks of valor
and stupendous deeds.
Pigeons abuse him,
taxis circle him,
and people mistake him for somebody else.
He is brave in the face of all this,
and bears no resemblance to the old man
in the wheelchair
  who mumbled under his breath
    and drooled.

Victoria Elizabeth Brown, 1984

WHAT ARE FRIENDS FOR?

Billy Joel sings a song that goes "Only the good die young," or something like that. I'm not sure because I was never really into Billy Joel. At least not like Annie was; she had every one of his albums. Considering what happened, that seems pretty ironic. I still think a lot about Annie, and when I do think about that song. I don't know how good she was, but she was so young, only fifteen years old. I didn't cry or anything when I heard. It's not like we were close, at least not when it happened, so there really wasn't any reason to get upset.

It wasn't always like that, though. Once, a long time ago, we were best friends and were inseparable throughout seventh grade. We weren't friends before then, I hardly knew Annie, but that year all our classes were the same, we played the same sports, ate lunch at the same table, and spent every possible moment together. If one of us appeared, the other was sure to follow. It's funny how a friendship as close as ours can begin so suddenly and end so quickly.

Annie was always a comedienne. Just looking at her made you laugh, not because she had a wild sense of humor, but because she was always laughing herself. She would laugh at anything in a wonderfully gritty laugh that you couldn't help but smile at. When Annie and I were together we were always in hysterics. I've never known anyone to get into more ridiculous and embarrassing situations than she, and she always seemed to drag me into them also. Together we were thrown out of dozens of stores, movies and restaurants, but it never seemed to bother me because it was always so funny. Now I become mortified just thinking about it.

Annie loved nothing more than to create a scene. Strange as it sounds, you knew Annie liked you if she did her best to humiliate you. From the number of times Annie embarrassed me in public, I knew she liked me well enough. A typical example is the time we went on a double-date together. Annie and I and our respective boyfriends were politely eating pizza when she started to laugh. I don't know what is was that struck her as so funny, but she kept laughing louder and louder until her chair fell back, and she landed on the floor with a huge crash. One of the boys jumped up to help her, but instead of trying to get up, Annie remained in the center of the floor, laughing wildly. I hid behind my menu as all the patrons turned to look, and finally, after what seemed like hours, Annie made it back to her chair. However, she continued to laugh contagiously throughout the rest of the meal, and soon had me laughing also. By the time we got to the movie theatre we were laughing so hard we could barely watch the film. Needless to say, those boys never took us out again, but I haven't had that much fun on a date since then. Annie was like that; she created awful situations but was always able to laugh her way out of them.

I was devoted to Annie, as she was my best friend, and would have done anything for her, but to Annie our friendship meant even more. To love Annie you had to understand her, and, as that was difficult, although she was well-liked she had few real friends. I was one of such friends, and though I didn't always realize it, she did everything she could to make me happy. Her main concern, like most seventh grade girls, was boys, and she was determined to find not only her own Prince Charming, but mine as well. Annie was very forward in conveying her true feelings to each of the true loves she experienced, but I was shy around boys. Eventually losing all faith in my ability to operate on my own where the opposite sex was concerned, Annie took matters into her own hands, devising a plan. Certain that I would only mess things up, she left me oblivious to the whole situation. I should have known that something was going on, seeing her whispered conversations with Colin, the best friend of my most recent heart-throb, that would suddenly cease when I came near. I should have realized

that something was up when she kept attempting to stifle fits of laughter on the way to the movies that Saturday afternoon, but I didn't. I knew, however, that it was no coincidence when we "accidentally" ran into Colin and John in the line for tickets. Wasn't this a nice surprise, exclaimed Annie. Of course we'd have to sit together, Colin rejoined. Sitting in the theatre, Annie laughed, Colin snickered, and John, whose intelligence, I later realized, was similar to that of a sneep, was oblivious to all. I, however, was embarrassed. My cheeks grew hotter and hotter until finally, to my vast relief, the movie was over. Annie's plan accomplished little, for, despite her protests, John and Colin then left, leaving me alone with her. I ranted and raved about her heartlessness and cruelty, but Annie only laughed. As she laughed, my anger subsided. As much as I wanted to, I couldn't stay mad at Annie, and as hard as I tried not to, I started to laugh also. I couldn't help myself, for I knew that, despite her attempts to prove otherwise, Annie really cared about me. In typical Annie fashion, her plan had backfired, but she was only trying to make me happy, and, by turning the most uncomfortable situations into laughable ones, she always succeeded.

Annie never meant to be rude or to get anyone into trouble when she embarked upon one of her ' es, she just loved to be the center of attention. She couldn't bear not being noticed, and if she had to make a fool out of herself to get attention, that's what she would do. Her dream was to be an actress, to be on center stage as the star of a Broadway play. It wasn't just a fantasy though; Annie was ser ous. She tried out for all the school plays and usually got the lead because she really was good. Annie promised me that she'd never forget her old friends if she became famous. In fact, we were going to go to the top together. I was writing plays with roles designed especially for her, and we planned to go to New York when we finished school to look for fame and fortune as two of the theatre's greatest prodigies. In the spring we used to spend all our free time sprawled in the school courtyard, planning for the future. While I worked on my writing, Annie would rehearse my finished scenes. We talked about everything during those spring afternoons, and Annie came to know all my deepest secrets, but it didn't matter because I knew she wouldn't tell anyone. Those fragments of plays now lie in the bottom drawer of my desk, and sometimes I take them out and read them. I don't know why I kept them, they're all so childish.

You would think that Annie was embarrassed by some of the things that she did, but she wasn't. She didn't care what anyone thought of her, so it didn't matter what they saw her doing. Usually I didn't care either, but sometimes, when I couldn't laugh it off, it really did matter what other people thought. When I tried to explain that to her, Annie said I was being siliy. I worried that everyone would think I was strange or something. I wanted to be liked. Annie said that everyone liked me, but I knew they didn't. Although I tried to ignore it, I could see their disapproving looks when we refused to attend English class, carrying picket signs and claiming we were on strike, or whatever Annie's latest scene entailed. Most people would laugh at our antics, but not one little group; they only stared condescendingly. Annie told me to forget about them, for if they were too shallow and dull to have fun, that was their problem, not ours. I believed her and followed her lead as usual. Annie was so hypocritical, but I believed her. I was so stupid.

I don't know exactly when Annie and I stopped being friends. It wasn't sudden, we didn't have a fight or anything, but a very gradual drifting apart. I started forgetting to save her a seat next to me, and once, when I was downtown with my mother, I saw her shopping with Chrissie, one of those people who used to stare at us, one of those people who Annie told me to forget about. When school ended, I went away to camp, and so, aside from a few letters, Annie and I didn't do much together that summer. She called me the evening before school started, though, and we were on the phone for almost two hours just talking and laughing like we used to. We decided to meet on the front steps so that we could begin our first day of eighth grade together. When I got to school the next morning, Annie was already waiting on the steps. I started to call out, but silenced

myself when Chrissie came and sat down next to her. I suddenly felt awkward and out of place, and I wasn't sure what to do. But Annie saw me and ran screaming down the stairs to give me a warm embrace. I laughed with joy and relief, thinking that everything was alright and nothing between us had changed. She linked her arm in mine, and we entered the school building together with Chrissie following behind. When we got inside, however, Chrissie rejoined us, and she and Annie began talking about summer and all that they had done together. Again feeling awkward and out of place, as though I didn't belong, I slowly edged away and began greeting other people. I don't think Annie even noticed I was gone.

After that day we were rarely together, at least not alone. Annie was always surrounded by Chrissie and her other new friends, all people we used to ridicule for being shallow and stupid. I didn't know what to say to Annie; we didn't seem to have anything in common anymore. She was so different. She still laughed constantly, but in a high pitched giggle that made me want to get away, not join in with her. At first I was hurt by her rejection, but then I became angry. Not wanting to be with Annie, I spent my time with other people and began making new friends. I never stopped watching her, however, hoping that she would change back again. She didn't though, and, seeing them together, I wondered if she ever talked to Chrissie about me, if she ever betrayed any of my secrets. Certain that she had, I started to hate Annie.

My anger eventually subsided. I had a new best friend to do everything with, not like Annie, but good enough, so I stopped worrying. I didn't talk about Annie, and I refused to think about her. She didn't matter anymore. Then I went away to boarding school and almost forgot. That is, until I heard Chrissie called me when she found out. I don't know how she got my number or why she called, but she was crying so hard that I could hardly understand what she was saying. At first I thought she was kidding, and I laughed. Then I understood. Annie had been in New York City for her birthday, to see a Broadway play. She stepped off the curb and was hit by a car she never saw. She was killed instantly. The school was planning a memorial service to be held next month, Chrissie said. She hoped that I could come and would send me the date and time when it was definite. I didn't say anything, and I didn't cry. It was such a shock.

The memorial service was held on May fifth at four p.m. I was away at school, so my mother went instead. She sent me the program, saying that a plaque was erected in the theatre in Annie's memory, and that it was all very nice. I looked at the program for a long time. Inside was listed songs sung for Annie and talks given about her, all by her new friends. Chrissie was the final speaker. On the front cover was a photograph of Annie sitting in the courtyard laughing, not giggling but really laughing. It looks like a spring day. When I saw the picture, I almost started to cry, but I couldn't. I just couldn't.

Jane Elinor Notz, 1985

Clare Fagg, 1986

Susan Debo Roediger, 1986

THE BRIGHT SIDE

When my mama was birthin' me, pushin' an sweatin' till she were all clogged up an' shakin; stretchin' till she near ripped her very guts out an' they slopped on the floor settlin' in nice with the dirt, when my poor mama were screamin' an' gnashin' her yellow-speckled teeth together in torment, brithin' me, my Daddy, he were askin' ever-so genteelly for a long, cool glass of fresh squeezed lemonade, if you please, an' do it quickly, darkie, or I'll tan your hide! An when my mama was spent an' cryin, my Daddy sent a boy down the hill to see when mama was goin to birth me. When the bitch would whelp, he said. He sent somebody down to see when I was goin' to be borned after I'd been borned already. I guess maybe me an a shipment of tobaccy got messed up someway. My Daddy is a very busy Southern Gentleman; he shore is at that.

An' I know that my mama was a fine, fine woman, even if I never did meet her really. See, when my Daddy were drinkin' down that cool glass a lemonade, my mama was dyin' on the floor. I wished that I could have helped my mama. My Daddy buried my mama, though, right next to one of his best mules. A pretty good burial for a nigger, my Daddy said, an' a woman at that. When I were 'bout eight or nine, I made my mama a grave marker outta leather scraps that I stoled from Big Jonas' leather bench. I found two sticks an' I tied the leather around them two sticks, an I were ready, 'cept that I weren't sure whether she were next to the mule on the left or on the right. So, my mama might not have a marker still, but I know she understands. See, my mama went to heaven straightaway after she died on the floor. She met Jesus an' all them 'portant folk, an' then she set herself right down next to the split-rail fence that goes round heaven, an she set down in the green grass an' watched me grow. (Please Gawd! Let my mama be real busy now; don't let my mama see me now. Don't let her be leanin over that fence, strainin an cryin as he pours the gasoline all over me. Oh . . . nooooooo, not now Gawd! Jesus help my mama!) I'm thinkin' pretty quick here for a nigger; my Daddy might yet be proud of me. But, he'll never be as proud 'a me as he is 'a Jimmie, my forever best friend Jimmie.

See now, that scorchin' day in mid-July when my mama died an' I were borned, Jimmie were sittin' atop [illegible]ldy's knee, blowin' bubbles with his spit, spit that would someday land instinctlike tween some nigger's eyes, 'cause that's the way it was, is, and will ever be, Amen. But, Jimmie 'an me, we were different. You know, he even made me his honest to Gawd blood brother once. We were let alone to play together till we were bout eleven or so 'cause Jimmie seemed to like me a bit. I had a pretty easy life till then, spite the fact that my mama died birthin' me, an' she were buried next to a mule. A pretty easy life for a nigger anyway. That's what my Daddy always said to me, the few times that he talked to me.

Jimmie an' me, we'd go huntin' an' fishin'; the only thing was, that whenever I caught somethin', I had to make like Jimmie had caught it really. I know that, 'cause once I killed a rabbit; it were as white as the flour that they used up on the hill, and it were real soft too. Daddy asked Jimmie if he were makin me carry his kill, an' I said, "No Suh, I done killed it myself." My Daddy took out his black leather belt an' it bit into my back till I were as limp as that rabbit. But, still, not too bad a life for a nigger anyway.

Well, spite that, I still love Jimmie, even now I still love Jimmie. Once he gived me somethin'. It were dark, an' I were whittlin' a stick for my Daddy, maybe he'd like this one better than the last; he throwed that one into the fire uncaringlike. Anyway, Jimmie were older then, sixteen or seventeen at most. He were all crazy an' fired up 'bout somethin', some fightin' goin' on somewhere. He gived me a gold necklace with a leather friendship knot tied on it, an' he told me that no matter what happened that he'd always love me.

Then Jimmie want away, an' I didn't see him till right now, till right now at this very same minute. Right this very same minute my friend Jimmie, my bestest friend Jimmie is pourin' gasoline all over me. I don't got nothin' on, cept a course my necklace, an' I know that even though he's gettin me mighty wet, that Jimmie's makin shore not to wet my knot. I know he's doin it purposefullike, 'cause he's my bestest friend. He's goin' to bring that fire over here now, an' all a them white ghosts is goin' to laugh at me burnin', but I won't scream, 'cause I love Jimmie, my forever friend, an' maybe my Daddy will be proud a me, an' anyway, I ain't had so bad a life for a nigger anyway.

Anne Elizabeth Wilmott, 1984

Laura Elizabeth Hynes, 1984

IRRITANTS

Corinne was considered by all, especially herself, to be creative. She dressed in wildly disarrayed clothes of bizarre color and shape, and had a disconcerting habit of loudly expressing her sensitive insights into life when-and wherever they struck her. Despite her unique sensitivity, or perhaps because of it, she considered herself immune to the normal social graces. Thus, Sunday afternoon found her solidly seated in the middle of my tiny apartment, discoursing emotionally on the tragedy of mankind, impervious to my loud mention of a psychology paper and a long list of errands. While talking, she disdainfully appraised my second-hand furniture, covered with a rather thick layer of dust and papers (I am what is kindly called an indifferent housekeeper). Her eye fixed upon a small, withered plant stuck in a corner of my homemade bookshelf. It had been a housewarming gift from my mother, habitually forgotten until I had to move it to make room for more piles of papers. It had not thrived.

"Oh, how perfect!" Corinne exclaimed, sweeping over to the small, unattractive mound of wilted leaves. "How symbolic of life's emptiness and misplaced values! This once green plant, provider of life-sustaining oxygen, diseased and mouldering, while collections of empty words are cared for!" She picked it up with reverence.

Now I was *really* exasperated. The thing was only a common mini-bush gone bad, after all. Several acerbic retorts were hovering on my tongue when she suddenly squealed and dropped the plant.

"Oh my God!" she shrieked. "There are bugs all over this . . . this thing! Bugs! What kind of a slob are you?"

She continued to expand upon my deplorable sanitary habits as she flung on several haphazard layers, grabbed her black leather tote bag, and flounced out to the stairwell. I watched her departure with ill-concealed amusement, then walked over to the discarded symbol of man's displaced values and, picking it up with two fingers, threw it out the window.

Bonnie Elizabeth Galvin, 1985

ASCENSION

As a moon rising
in summer,
the white sow
emerges, untained
from the mud to
the sweet dusk
and the flies.

Jan Maria Sechrist, 1985

GRUMBLINGS

And the preacher says to me
Child, your mama knows when you lie.
She asked me to talk to you and see
Why you make her cuss and cry.

I ain't done lied, I says.

And the preacher says to me
Child, it's worse to try and hide
Cause I know what I see
And I see what's inside.

I ain't done lied, I says.

We can stay here forever says the preacher,
I ain't got no journey to go.
No one's sicking or marrying or borning or interring
So we'll just wait here 'till we know.

I ain't known nothing, I says.

But the preacher, he says nothing.
And I says nothing too.
I just sit there reckoning.
There on the sticky pew.

Alright. But I didn't want to, I says.

And the preacher still don't speak,
But my stomach does instead.
And that church it starts to reek,
So I stood up and I says

Alright, preacher, so maybe I did.

And he looks at me and smiles.
And he pats me on the head.
And he stands up in the aisle,
But stops and sits instead.

Well then, I best be getting along, I says.

But the preacher still don't nod his nod
And he folds his hands akin
And says to me, When you talk to God,
Child, do you sin and lie to him?

I don't do no talking so I reckon I don't
Do no lying, I says.

Then the preacher stares inside my insides
And pokes way down my soul
And talks about the Dark outside
And the Devil's Big Black Hole.

But I ain't list'ning to his mouth
Or smelling his preachy sighs
I'm going to the sweaty South
Where they make them peachy pies.

And the next time the preacher says,
I isn't there to hear it.

Katherine Donahue, 1984

Ariane Carissa Mermod, 1985

THE SONG OF THE CRICKETS

The song of the crickets was raspy in the heavy darkness. That song still reminds me of my grandparents' old house. Their house was the last one on the left with the red-striped awnings; it was in a rundown cul-de-sac in New Jersey. When I went there in the summers of my childhood, the eight tiny rooms would welcome me into their crowded warmth. Those rooms were fascinating to me, filled with ancient, dusty furniture, Hummel figurines, dozens of plastic end tables from Bradlee's, and photos of my family. The kitchen, my favorite room, always smelled rather queerly of Parmesan cheese and scrubbed Ajax. I would sit on the tiled floor for hours at a time eating grapes and talking to Grandma with my mouth full, while she warned me laughingly that I'd get a belly-ache eating all that fruit.

We went to my grandparents' house every summer until I was eight; it was the fall of that year that my appearance-conscious parents decided I should go to summer camp instead, to make friends "my own age" (and where, in fact I did make a few friends).

Still, the sound of the crickets' raspy song late on an August night always reminds me of one particular evening, the last summer we went to my grandparents' house. That evening, the year I was eight, was in celebration of my grandparents' fortieth-or-so wedding anniversary. It began with the promise of warm party weather. A little humid, perhaps, but my mother insisted that the guests would be happier in the clean summer air than in the hot little house. "The air conditioner leaks, and it would be mortifying, Kimmie." So, early that evening, my cheek-squeezing, bottom-pinching, and hair-pulling relatives arrived, the whole lot of them, complete with cries of "You've grown, Honey," and "Don't you look like your mommy?" and to Gram, "Maggie, you don't look a day over fifty!"

The menu that night consisted, of course, of everyone's favorite: big, fat heroes from Zuchette's and Sicilian pizza. "Pies," my grandfather called them as he waded through a sea of loud relatives carrying piles of pizza cartons. "For you kids!" he said proudly, although I don't know what "kids" he was speaking of. I was the only child there, unless you counted my sisters, both long since in bed.

Later, sitting in one of the red woven-strap garden chairs with Aunt Tina, my confidante and the only thin person at the party, I took monstrous bites of my sandwich and eyed my relatives in that timid, yet suspiciously sly way that only children have. Giggling, I whispered in Aunt Tina's ear, "Do you think Aunt Fran can make it into the chair?" and "Look at Aunt Connie's legs squishing out of the seat!" Tina would admonish me in the expected fashion, shaking her head but smiling, and I would ease my way out of the chair and race toward the kitchen for some more grape soda.

The humid evening wore on and I wore out. About ten o'clock, I wandered out to the edge of the lawn near the brook, which was frosted pale yellow with long-stemmed cattails. Sitting cross-legged by myself in the dark, I waved absently at the flies buzzing hungrily around me. My bare legs and arms were streaked with dirt and sweat, and the slice of watermelon I gobbled spilled sugary juice down my chin and onto my shirt. As I sat there, reveling in the stars and scratching my legs, I was vaguely aware of the dim laughter and conversation going on in the yard behind me. From somewhere across the brook, someone — probably a Black, I reasoned, with the wisdom of an eight-year-old — was playing Eric Clapton (although I didn't know the name at the time). The seductive music suddenly changed to a gentle, lulling song meshing with the sounds of the crickets all about. The magic of it all drugged me, until I found myself rubbing my eyes and singing the words drowsily over and over, "Mm-mm . . . I want to linger, mm-mm . . . a little longer, Mm-mm . . . a little longer here with you . . ."

Annoyed, my mother later abruptly awakened me from my dreamy spell. My father lifted me into hot uncomfortable arms to carry me inside and upstairs to

bed. He smelled like hamburgers. I gladly accepted sleep, and don't remember much more of that evening.

We don't go to my grandparents' house in the summer anymore. My parents say that the neighborhood has deteriorated and become overridden with minorities. They mean Blacks. But I don't know; when I think about going to that little house on the dead end road, I think of warmth and friendship and all sorts of people. Besides, for some reason, I associate minorities with nature and being outside and being free. Whatever the reason, I haven't been to my grandparents' house since I was eight.

But still, sometimes, on a hot summer evening, when the night is warm and quiet and the crickets come upon me, and the mood is just right, I can hear that melody out of the past, the words ringing so clear and cold and sweet that it is startling, "Mm-mm . . . I want to linger, mm-mm . . . a little longer, Mm-mm . . . a little longer here with you . . ."

Kim Lisbeth Miscia, 1985

Laura Elizabeth Hynes. 1984


2020

1984 — 2020

On January 1, 1984, HAGGIS/BAGGIS sent this request to ninety-two people:

> Thirty-six years ago, in 1948, George Orwell looked into the future and saw 1984. If you were to look thirty-six years into the future, you would see 2020. Would you write a book about what you saw? Would you write a page? Would you write a paragraph, and then send it to us?

Forty-seven replied. Most said no, sorry, they didn't have time.

LOUIS AUCHINCLOSS wrote that he has "a built-in prejudice against making predictions."

JOAN DIDION replied, ". . . trying to sort out 1984 is more than I can handle at the moment!"

DONALD HALL wrote, "I would like to do anything that Miss Porter's School asks me to do, but I really feel awkward and impossibly stupid about trying to look into the future . . . I hate to say no, but I really can't do it. I have had the opportunity before — and really know that it is not my sort of thing."

ORIANA FALLACI replied, "Thanks for what you ask me but, right at this moment, it is quite impossible for me to do it. I am working at my new book (which is the reason I put myself in exile in my country house in Tuscany). And, when I work at a book, I am totally in ... ble of doing anything else. Even thinking of an ... ing else — Sorry. Maybe some other time. when this terrible enterprise of mine will be over . . ."

ANTHONY LEWIS wrote, ". . . I have been asked more than once for an Orwell comment, and I just do not want to make one. Please forgive me."

IRIS MURDOCH replied, "I am so sorry — I cannot write on 2020 AD — it's too difficult — and depressing!"

CYNTHIA OZICK responded, "Two things prevent my replying. First, I am just now standing on the lip of a trip abroad, and can't take the time to think; and, second, and not least, I have every confidence that I will be dead in 2020, which rather limits my interest in the question. You've probably noticed that the world before your birth counts only as history, and doesn't partake of any sense of reality. I have a suspicion the world after we leave it is just as trivial."

CARL SAGAN wrote, "I have promised that I would dedicate all my available free time for the foreseeable future to working for a dramatic decline in the world arsenals of nuclear weapons . . ."

BARBARA TUCHMAN sent a printed card reading, "Thank you for your interesting proposal. While appreciative of the suggestion, I regret that I cannot undertake it." Just below the printed message, she jotted, "Sorry, I have no useful ideas about the year 2020."

ROBERT PENN WARREN wrote, "I don't think that I am the man for the subject."

Eight responded by sending us their visions of the future. Their responses — for which HAGGIS/BAGGIS is grateful — are printed together here as a group as a tribute to Eric Blair (1903-1950), author of *1984*.

ANNE BERNAYS

In the year 2020, everyone will have 20-20 vision, back packs with engines in them for getting from one place to another, and plenty to eat. All nuclear weapons will have been destroyed. One central, representative body will govern the globe, and the criminally greedy will be shipped off to an island in the Caribbean where they will convert cane to rum.

RAY BRADBURY

1984!

We've been scaring ourselves with that date for more than thirty years now.

And suddenly 1984 has arrived and it is not a bad year at all but a good year. Not a year of mind control and book burning and totalitarian oppression. At least not in the United States. In other countries, in far too many, 1984 has been a constant date year after year for centuries.

But now as the New Year begins, we find ourselves in America participating in a series of continuing revolutions, all of which began in 1776. And we are such a part of all these turnings-over, these aerations of idea and blueprint and machine that we sometimes forget to name our good fortunes.

Jean Francois Revel, the French writer, has said that America is the only country where we see five revolutions going on at once.

First, the poltical revolution, which helps us fire people every two or four years.

But the political revolution would mean nothing if we did not at the same time enjoy a social revolution. Add to that a technological and scientific revolution.

Plus a revolution in culture, in values and standards.

Then finish up with a revolution in international and inter-racial relationships.

All of these changes are fused in a single huge ongoing turn-over that refreshes and revitalizes our country.

The average man today is richer than all the kings in history. Once only kings had horses. Now every family in our nation has 80 horses, compacted into a single device known as an automobile.

The medical revolution has delivered us, in the main, from the terrible threat of the death of children. When I was young, by the time I was 8, half my family, my brother and sister, was dead. Today, my four daughters, raised in this revolutionary time, have yet to go to their first funeral among their friends. Children still die, yes, but not in the millions that once filled the graveyards of the world.

You are part of a revolution called the book and the library. One of the greatest revolutionaries in American history was Andrew Carnegie who built and gave us as free gifts 2500 libraries, trusting us to use them well and often. There is no longer any excuse for not being educated. All you have to do, as a single individual reading this article, is put it down, walk out the door, and walk into the library which stands open and waiting. Remember, teachers can only inspire. Each of us must finally teach himself. The process must go on for a lifetime. It truly begins the day you leave school.

Cities? Towns? Social climates? Between now and century's end we must and we will rebuild all or part of every major city and most of the towns in the United States. The process is already underway. The mall which began as a small part of our lives and living, only 15 years ago, will grow by the thousands, offering us newer, better, safer ways of meeting people, buying goods, and seeking entertainment. We will refind ourselves as social animals.

The computer revolution? Need I say anything about this at all? You already know what lies ahead, when it will be possible to walk around with the Encyclopedia Britannica tucked in an electronic capsule in your pocket. The ability to instantly find the fact that you want will enable you to think faster and create better.

How about the immigration revolution, or haven't you noticed? It has been said, in recent years, that the promise inscribed at the base of the Statue of Liberty no longer holds true. Nonsense. The torch is still lit, the gates are open, and the immigrants pour in, as to no other country in the world. Year after year, in the past ten years, 300,000 to 800,000 people give up their country's citizenship and flee to the United States to live forever. By the millions they arrive, by the millions they survive.

And once here, what? Ten years ago it was predicted that when the population reached 230 million people there wouldn't be enough jobs. Another misapprehension. At this very moment in history, we are employing 100 million people, more than ever before in all the years. Our next task is to fully employ those eight or nine million who at present still seek work in our society. And, of course, as in the past, we will do it.

What about Space Travel? *There's* an impossibility for you! When I was a boy, they said it just couldn't be done, ever. No way. Forget it. When I traveled about the country as a young man, people laughed and called me Buck Rogers or Flash Gordon. I was that terrible minority who believed in the future. I bit my tongue, and kept a list of the laughers and doubters. On the night when we landed on the Moon, I, in a burst of unchristian-like malice, called or wrote the doubters and laughers on my list and cried, "Fools! Fools! Why *didn't* you *believe*!"

Between now and 2001 we will begin the colonization of the Moon. You will be part of it. Just beyond — landing and colonies on Mars. You will be part of it. Solar receptors will be flung up to catch the light of the sun, beam it back to earth, and light the cities of the world. You will be part of it.

In sum, in the midst of doubts and fears and worries, you will survive, prevail, exist, live, and your children's children will move on out through the planets, and their children in turn survive toward the stars.

This is heady and beautiful stuff. I promise it all to you. I intend to stick around until 2020, when I will be one hundred years ago. Check me out in 1999 to see if I was target-on, absolutely A-1 right and true in all that I have said above.

Chances are, we will all find that I was much too timid and afraid of seeming optimistic.

But, then, what *do* we mean by optimism?

I mean just working optimally, at the top of your imagination, energy, and ability. Which then gives you an optimal chance for optimal results. Simple, yes? No pie in the sky at all. Not impossible.

All I say is: do things. That way things get done.

All of these revolutions lie around you, circling you, changing you. You can be part of the five great circles, and the incredible changes. You can help shape them, for many of them are technological and within your reach.

Which means in the instant future of the next minute you must learn to read and write well (regardless of your age *now*!) so that you can think well about that amazing tomorrow that starts in the next hour and will continue for 100 thousand hours or more on to the end of your life when you might well be buried in a tomato soup can between here and Alpha Centauri.

The future waits to be made and remade again. The years wait to be done up in grand packages by you.

We are all going there. I'm going with you. It will not be easy. It will often be rough. But I can't wait, can you? What a journey it will be. What a lark!

ART BUCHWALD

I'm not certain what the year 2020 has in store for me or whether I will write a book about it or not. By the year 2020 I should be 95 years old, and I imagine I will only be able to play doubles at tennis. By then though, computers should be sophisticated enough to write my columns for me. All I will have to do is feed in the subject matter, such as "forty trillion dollar deficit," and the computer will print out 650 very funny words. I don't know how my sex life will be in 2020, but I believe there will be many medical advances and it could be better than it is now. (Please note, I'm not complaining, I'm just looking towards the future.) My only concern about 2020 is, will Brooke Shields still be able to fit into her jeans?

GEORGE BUSH

If you would look at the last two paragraphs of Alexis de Tocqueville's first volume of *Democracy in America* (published in 1835, a century and a half ago), you will find that the then 30-year old Frenchman wrote this:

> There are at the present time two great nations in the world, which started from different points, but seem to tend towards the same end. I allude to the Russians and the Americans. Both of them have grown up unnoticed; and while the attention of mankind was directed elsewhere, they have suddenly placed themselves in the front rank among the nations, and the world learned their existence and their greatness at almost the same time.
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> All other nations seem to have nearly reached their natural limits, and they have only to maintain their power but these are still in the act of growth. All the others have stopped, or continue to advance with extreme difficulty; these alone are proceeding with ease and celerity along a path to which no limit can be perceived. The American struggles against the obstacles that nature opposes to him; the adversaries of the Russian are men.
>
> The former combats the wilderness and savage life; the latter, civilization with all its arms. The conquests of the American are therefore gained by the plowshare; those of the Russian by the sword. The Anglo-American relies upon personal interest to accomplish his ends and gives free scope to the unguided strength and common sense of the people; the Russian centers all the authority of society in a single arm. The principal instrument of the former is freedom; of the latter, servitude. Their starting point is different and their courses are not the same; yet each of them seems marked out by the will of Heaven to sway the destinies of half the globe.

The prediction of a highly centralized Russia and a free America each "swaying the destinies of half the globe" seems extraordinarily prescient, considering that the Russia and America Tocqueville was looking at in 1835 were far from the first-rank of nations then.

The lesson to be taken from Tocqueville's achievement in prediction is not that our futures are predetermined and that human effort makes no difference in the face of larger forces. Far from it. In fact, our destiny is very much influenced by what we do — and try to do — every day of our lives. Acts of love and insight and imagination give real meaning to life. The significance of Tocqueville's foresight is that circumstances and habits existing at one point in history continue to work their effects over time. History takes few sharp turns.

So I tend to look at the continuities in American society when I envision what America will be like in 2020. There will still be families. There will still be moral dilemmas to be solved: loyalty will clash with integrity, innocence with ambition, insight with indignation, courage with patience, family with career, individualism with the claims of community. Among the two great values on which our nation is based, liberty and equality will be in mutual contention. People will hope and despair, feel angry and loving, plumb the depths of failure, and feel the elation of success.

There are forces presently in place which have consequences for 2020. One example: we now know with virtual certainty that there will be three million 40-year olds alive and well in America thirty-six years from now. We also know, again with about as much certainty as life ever affords, that there will be practically four million 60-year olds. That is to say, in 2020 the number of 40-year olds will be roughly the same as it is today, but we will have twice the number of 60-year olds as we have in our society today. While I don't want to create the impression that the whole nation will look like Miami Beach in 2020, our society will behave as if it were older. The entertainments will be focused on topics of interest to mature audiences; books will be written about topics like commitment and integrity and life renewal and the meaning of mortality. American society will be more reflective and less erratic than it is today — more "conservative" may be the word for it. Journalists will probably be calling 2020 the Age of the Grandparents. And yet, I think you will find a lot of older people starting new businesses and rejuvenating themselves with "second" careers.

As for the world at large, I see the technological revolutions in transportation and communications continuing to bring all of mankind in closer and closer contact. The shocks that will be felt in the more traditional cul-

tures as they adapt to American and so-called Western ways will continue to provoke reactions against modernity (as in Iran) and uncomfortable stresses (as in China). We in America will become more cosmopolitan, as much by necessity as by choice, as we try to understand strange cultures for business, professional, and political reasons. The great technological advances mean that the world will continue to diminish in size, and nations will come to realize that they are such close neighbors of one another that they must learn to be neighborly.

In the light of these worldwide changes, the verse of an American popular song touches me more deeply:

No man is an island.
No man stands alone.
Each man's joy is joy to me.
Each man's grief is my own.

The practical meaning for the students of this wonderful school — and of all the young men and women of your generation — is to use your schooling experience to prepare yourself to live in a truly international world. You need to understand strange cultures — to master at least one other language and to take literature and history and art courses which will extend your empathy to peoples whose ways may first seem different. Find a way to live and work abroad for a time. And embrace the world and all its wonderful variety.

See you in 2020.

ANTHONY HECHT

Thank you for inviting me to put on the robes of prophecy, but I fear that they ill become me. And, with all respect to the sensitive moral intelligence of George Orwell, I am not so sure they became him, either. *1984* is not so much a prophecy of things to come (in the manner of H. G. Wells and the Science Fictionists) as it is an imaginative and metaphoric account of the kind of complete totalitarian society that was already firmly in existence under Stalin at the time the book was written.

Still more to the point, Orwell's vision of life was moral and political; he was a sort of Christian Socialist. And his book, which was written in 1948, envisioned the future in terms of political problems. But by 1948 the chief problem of the world was no longer essentially political; it was scientific. The bomb had been devised, used, and begun to be improved upon. And by our time the bomb is a more serious threat to our planet than any political philosophy in whose cause it might be employed. In fact, today not a few petty tyrants (the major powers quite apart) may melodramatically declare, "Après moi, le deluge," and finish us all off. This is at least as horrible as Orwell's vision, but altogether different.

EDWARD HOAGLAND

I would guess there's only about a 50% chance there will be a civilized world in 2020, because of the danger of holocaust. I think there's a 90% chance of a lesser but significant nuclear exchange during that period of time, either an accidental superpower launch or a nuclear war between smaller powers. I think, paradoxically, that the likeliest chance of thorough nuclear disarmament will be after such a catastrophic event, when a small country or a portion of a large country has been destroyed. New inventions will enable world-governmental authority to smoke out all nuclear weapons, reactors, and stockpiles by satellite — even terrorist nuclear weapons which pose a probable threat to my own downtown Manhattan neighborhood, near Wall Street.

I don't believe there will be an increase in dictatorship or "thought control." There will continue to be varying degrees of freedom, diversity, dissent, and so forth in different countries, with new technological tools for regimentation matched by free-lance inventiveness that can evade those tools. I think that, apart from widespread cooperation (or coercion) to bring about nuclear disarmament, the world will keep right on being nationalistic, racist, and selfish. The inevitable African famine ahead will not be relieved by countries such as ours.

The plurality of languages and cultures will shrink, but not the almost infinite variety of individual behavior and enjoyment that we know. And for many, many people, religion will have no less power. Sex roles as we know them will continue to blur; androgyny will be one of our American exports. But new freedoms go with androgyny, and these will help replace old freedoms which, through overcrowding, overregulation, and computerization, are being lost.

I expect that half the species of plants and animals now on Earth will have vanished. But most people will not viscerally miss them, having lost touch with all feeling for the wilderness, which concurrently is being destroyed.

Barring a world war, life will be about as good and bad for individual human beings in 2020 as it is now. Although new technology here on earth and space exploration will not "improve" our basic human nature, neither should it validate Orwell's vision. "City life" and "country life," like the two sexes, will have blurred, but a rich range of choices and experiences will remain in the midst on a new angst and a new savvy. People are protean, mercurial. They will betray the wider Nature of oceans, plains, and forests from which we have sprung, but, simply by forgetting it, they will survive that betrayal and go on much as before.

WILLIAM MANCHESTER

It is January 20, 2020. The new President is a black female quadriplegic with four minority-group grandparents, and in her inaugural, she inveighs against the "male chauvinist Establishment." Actually it no longer exists. The number of boy births has been dwindling sharply since the turn of the century, when a constitutional amendment made artificial insemination mandatory for women electing to be mothers; except in extraordinary cases, the vials they receive from the National Sperm Bank in Fort Knox guarantee the birth of daughters. Men are largely restricted to the occupations of hairdressers, manicurists, stenographers, and nursing, though a few exceptions are made for future competitors in the Mr. America contest in Atlantic City, N.J., narrated on television by Beryl Parks. The real problem for the country, though it is unmentioned by the new President, is a nationwide Depression triggered by the Great Vibrator Price War of 2018, which ruined IBM and Texas Instruments. Among those not attending the inauguration is Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis DuPont Rockefeller Mellon Getty, who is now in her ninety-first year and has just filed suit against WOMEN'S WEAR DAILY — the country's most powerful newspaper — for an invasion of her privacy. WWD published her design for her own tombstone, including the inscription: "If you can read this, you are too close."

RICHARD L. STROUT

You ask about the future. I am more worried about nuclear war than most of my friends. I think we are living precariously. A recent scientific conference of biologists and geneticists here in Washington advanced the idea that it will not be the concussion or blast of the bomb but the volcanic-like dust storm that it throws up that will be the principal danger. If it cuts off the sunlight, it will change the climate fairly quickly, changing sea levels, climate, and biological sequences. At my age, it doesn't matter extravagantly to me, but it's something for young people to think about.