

Quadrille

DECEMBER 66

Bennington College
Bennington, Vermont

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CARO, FEELEY, OLITSKI AND SMITH HAVE ONE-MAN SHOWS

Four of the major voices in contemporary art—Paul Feeley, Anthony Caro, Jules Olitski and Tony Smith, all of whom have been closely connected with Bennington College in recent years—have had concurrent one-man shows this month in New York and Hartford.

Although their works greatly differ stylistically, the four have had an immense influence, especially on younger painters and sculptors, in recent years. All have attracted attention internationally in the past decade, and are now regarded in the forefront of experimental art.

Paul Feeley's show, at the Betty Parsons Gallery in New York, consisted of a dozen new paintings and five of the sculptures he developed before his death last spring. None have been shown publicly before.

Nine paintings by Jules Olitski were shown at the Andre Emmerich Gallery, also in New York, for the first half of November. All are spray-painted, and some are so large (10 feet by 15 feet) that they must be folded and hinged to get them in and out of galleries.

A show of new sculpture by Anthony Caro was installed in the Emmerich Gallery immediately after the Olitski show. The show will run into the first week of December.

The Wadsworth Atheneum, in Hartford, is exhibiting about a dozen large sculptures by Tony Smith. Three are outside, in a large square near the Capitol, and the others are arranged tightly in a three-storied-high main exhibit hall of the Atheneum. The show is Smith's first. A second show opened November 22 at The Institute of Contempo-



Detail of 9-piece Feeley Sculpture

rary Art at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

Feeley was born in Des Moines, Iowa, in 1910. He studied art with Hobart Jacobs and Cecilia Beaux at an early age, and later with Thomas Hart Benton and George Bridgman at the Art Students League, and at the Beaux Arts Institute of Design.

He taught at Cooper Union from 1932 until 1939, when he came to Bennington College. In his 27 years at Bennington he was almost singularly responsible for forming one of the best-known art departments in the academic world.

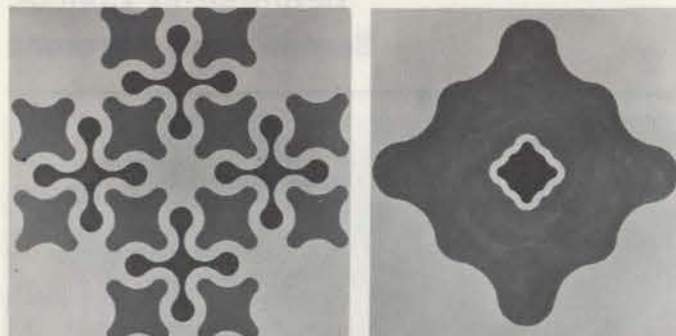
Feeley has had important one-man shows in New York, San Francisco, and London.

In an interview with Lawrence Alloway in 1964, Feeley said of his work that "I'd say that my fight with Abstract Expressionism, if you'd call it a fight, had to do with deciding that all that dynamic stuff was more than the ever-loving world could stand. You know—down with movement, man's nutty enough, what he really needs is something to allow him to ease off . . . I began to dwell on pyramids and things like that instead of on jungles of movement and action . . . I've always been interested in notions about sub-divisions. Whenever any concept of mathematics ap-



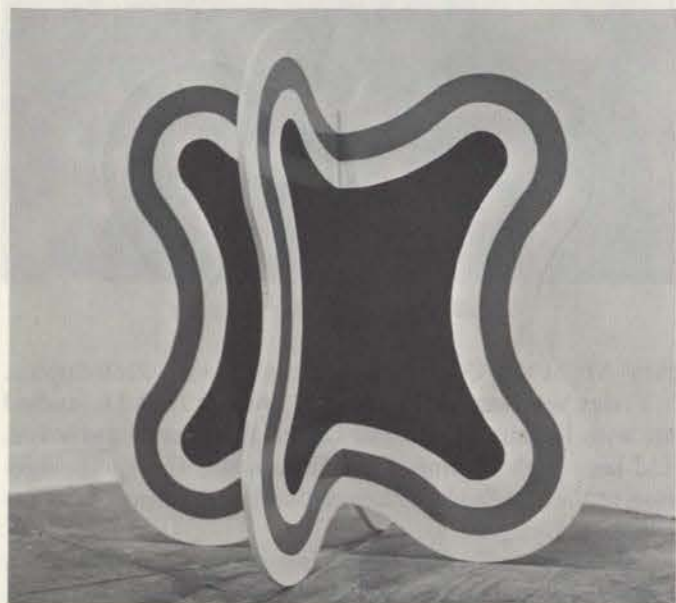
Smith Sculpture in Hartford

appears to lend itself to a visual construction, I'd be taken by it and find some way of representing it, just to see what it might look like . . . Any conception that takes an aspect of life or its appearance, and translates it to another aspect of its appearance, I find fascinating. Any device which



takes things that may be seen in three dimensions and translates them into two dimensions, or things that may be seen in two dimensions and translates them into three dimensions, is to some extent the very life of art."

Eugene Goossen has said of Feeley's sculptures that "the artist had succeeded in creating forms which could be transferred from the two-dimensionality of painting to the



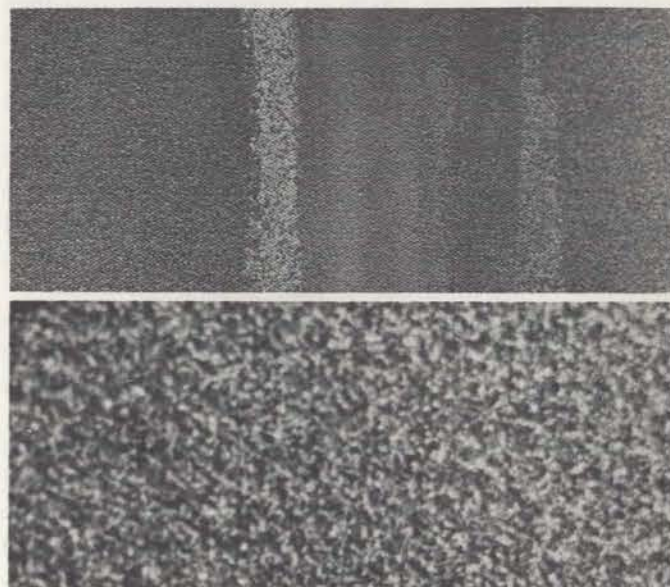
three-dimensional requirements of sculpture without a loss of power to either means of expression," and Gene Baro said the pieces seemed as though "contrived of color itself."

Jules Olitski was born in Russia in 1922, and came to this country a year later. He studied at the National Academy of Design in New York, and with Ossip Zadkine in Paris. He has B.A. and M.A. degrees from New York University. He began teaching at Bennington in 1963.

He was one of four painters to represent America in the Venice Biennale this year (another painter, Helen Frankenthaler Motherwell, '49, was a student of Feeley's, and Caro represented Great Britain). He has had shows in New York, Toronto, Chicago, Paris, Milan, and Florence.

For the Biennale catalogue, Clement Greenberg wrote

"From its first maturing in the latter 1950's until 1965, Olitski's art went through five phases. . . . In 1965 he began to paint entirely with the spraygun; linear drawing disappeared from his pictures, to reappear after a while in incandescent streaks of pastel inserted at their margins; then—and more radically—in ruled right-angled bands of contrasting color or value that framed the canvas on two sides or, in one or two cases, on three. . . . The grainy surface Olitski creates with his way of spraying is a new kind of paint surface. It offers tactile associations hitherto foreign, more or less, to picture-making; and it does new things with color. Together with color, it contrives an illusion of



enlarged details from Olitski paintings

depth that somehow extrudes all suggestions of depth back to the picture's surface; it is as if that surface, in all its literalness, were enlarged to contain a world of color and light differentiations impossible to flatness but which yet manage not to violate flatness."

Olitski himself has said "Painting is made from inside out. I think of paintings as possessed by a structure—i.e. shape and size, support and edge—but in a structure born of the flow of color feeling . . . Color is felt throughout . . . Paint becomes painting when color establishes surface. Where edge exists within the structure, it must be felt as an integral

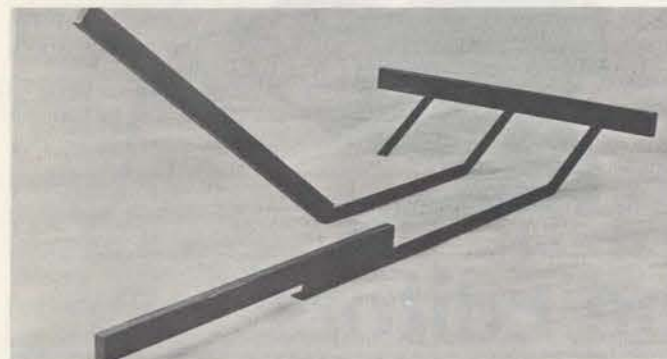


and necessary outcome of the color structure. Outer edge cannot be thought of as being in some way within—it is the

outermost extension of the color structure. The decision as to *where* the outer edge is, is final, not initial . . . I think . . . of color as being seen *in*, not *on*, the surface."

Anthony Caro was born in London in 1924. He studied engineering at Christ's College, Cambridge, and sculpture at Regent Street Polytechnic, and attended Royal Academy Schools in London. He worked as an assistant to Henry Moore from 1951 to 1953, taught at St. Martin's School of Art, and at Bennington College from 1963 until 1965.

He has had one-man shows in London, Milan, New York, Washington, and at the Venice Biennale. His sculptures have been included in dozens of group shows and collections. Allan Solomon has said Caro "uses industrial materials as the simplest route to pure geometric forms;



painting them suppresses their functional origins and introduces color as an essential factor in a manner which is not so distant from the Bennington painters' (Feeley, Olitski, Noland) way of thinking . . . he has altered the premise of sculpture as much as they have taken off in a new direction in painting . . . Caro has broken loose from the conventional resolutions of perpendicularity and gravity. His forms flow along the ground or rise on diagonals in a manner which one might say has freed him from the figuration implicit in abstract floor sculpture up to this point."

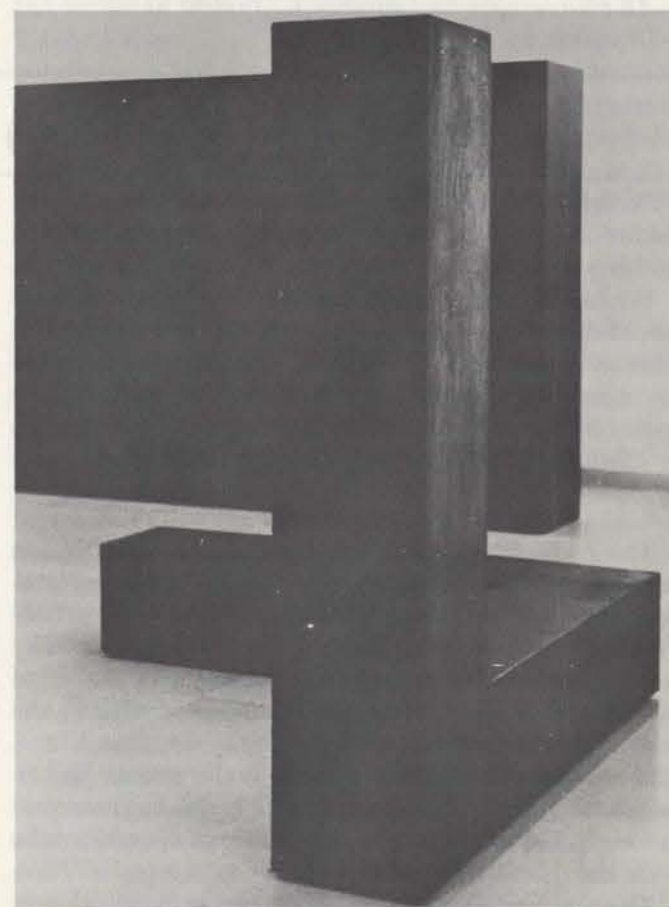
Tony Smith, an architect, painter and sculptor, was born in 1912 in South Orange, New Jersey. He operated a bookstore in Newark and worked as a toolmaker, draftsman and purchasing agent before studying at the Art Students League, and later at the New Bauhaus in Chicago. He served as clerk of the works on several Frank Lloyd Wright houses and worked as an architect until about 1960, when he turned to sculpture. He has had no major exhibits until now and has been called "one of the best known unknowns in American Art."

Smith taught at New York University, Cooper Union, Pratt Institute, Bennington College from 1958 to 1961, and is now at Hunter College.

In his introduction to his Hartford show he wrote: "These figures, whether based upon rectangular prisms, tetrahedra, or other solids, may be thought of as part of a continuous space grid. In the latter, voids are made up of the same components as the masses. In this light, they may be seen as interruptions in an otherwise unbroken flow of space . . . I think of them as being isolated in their own en-



vironments . . . I think of them as seeds or germs that could spread growth or disease . . . The pieces seem inert or dormant in nature—and that is why I like them there, but they



may appear aggressive, or in hostile territory, when seen among other artifacts . . . They are black and probably malignant. The social organism can assimilate them only in areas which it has abandoned, its waste areas, against its unfinished banks and sides, places oriented away from the focus of its well-being, unrecognized danger spots, excavations and unguarded roofs."

Editorial Note

Quadrille will be published at Bennington College six times a year—in October, November, December, April, May and June. It is designed to reflect the views and opinions of students, faculty, administration, alumnae, trustees, parents of students, and friends of the College. It will be distributed to all the constituencies, and is intended primarily as a monthly paper in which members of the Greater College Community may expound, publicly, on topical issues.

The editors of *Quadrille* invite articles, statements, opinion and comment, letters to the editors, photographs and graphics, and reviews from members of all the constituencies.

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—All photographs by Laurence J. Hyman

—Drawings by Joyce Keener



Letters To The Editors

(The following two letters present comment on the question of the prose reviewing of public events in the performing arts.

While fully recognizing that the differing characteristics of each performing medium impose their own necessities in questions involving both opinion and fact, those members of the drama and music faculties, whose names appear below, wish to consider their respective statements as allied in principle.—Henry Brant, Paul Gray)

To the Editor:

The undersigned, all members of the Drama Division faculty, are fully opposed to any “officially published” student criticism of dramatic works produced by the Bennington Drama Division. We feel that criticism written by students grossly inexperienced in dealing with the art of the theatre can only come “off the top of the head” and can only harm the project at hand. Praise as well as damnation can cause harmful effects both to the student participants and spectators, and can create misleading interpretations and impressions in those readers of *Quadrille* who were not spectators.

The problem runs still deeper; the contemporary theatre is no longer a theatre which can be interpreted, staged or criticised as works of dramatized literature. The theatre is now a poetry of gesture, of scenic image, and of sub-textual rhythms as much as it is a poetry of language. Only a practicing theatre artist (who could not at all be objective) could practice such criticism of the mise-en-scene. We would also rule out the possibility of a drama student criti-

cising another drama student in such a public way, since this would be in direct violation of our educational objectives.

Criticism written in several hours which interprets the relative success or failure of a work that took several months of intensive research to prepare is much too easy—indeed the very idea of such a phenomenon in a college such as Bennington is absurd. Students experimenting with dramatic criticism should confine their efforts to the classroom and/or, if they feel strongly on the subject, to a Galley put out for the community. In a college devoted to intense experimentation with the arts, such as Bennington claims to be, every opinion is as important and as individual as the next one. Every viewer-participant in the performing arts should develop her own critical attitude or point of view. To publish the criticism of one student for a large readership in a public-relations-oriented medium immediately gives significance to that point of view, and it becomes the major taking-off point.

Such criticism, which tends to stress the popular success-failure attitude, is one of the elements conditioning the atmosphere which engenders established works. What is needed to continue the Bennington spirit of experimentation is a fully creative atmosphere.

Why then should faculty members in the performing arts—whose primary duty is to teach—continue to offer their works up before the college public in the spirit of experimentation, when they now find themselves in a situation just as illegitimate as the one they are committed to counteract? Criticism of the performing arts as prac-

ticed in *Quadrille* represents a giant step towards such illegitimacy.

—Paul Gray, Judith Davis, Gretchen Gray
David Hamilton, the fourth member of the drama faculty, shares the sentiments expressed above but prefers not to sign at this time because a production under his direction is currently in performance.

To the Editor:

The recent review of a program presented by the Bennington College Community Orchestra, appearing in *Quadrille*, has led to discussions of the function, purpose and effect of the reviewing of musical events in general.

The undersigned feel that prose criticism of musical compositions or performances at concert events is *not a legitimate branch of musical practice*, since the objective facts involved are quite inaccessible via the written word alone, and could not be substantiated with unequivocal certainty even if the complete printed music and recording of the concert under discussion were to be made available to each reader of the review. Essential matter such as tone-quality, balance and volume are not precisely measurable or recordable by any device presently available to musicians. In consequence, the prose musical review is limited to the articulation of mere impressions, often of fugitive character. With no objective procedure for checking such impressions, the license and temptation to express bias, pro or con, are considerable—as is the freedom to make misleading, damaging and unsupportable statements. This is a very different matter from the freedom to express opinions in areas where, unlike in music, facilities exist for the objective challenge and analysis of the facts involved. There can, of course, be no objection to published reports limited to names, dates, programs, instrumentation or other objective material not involving opinion or subjective reaction of any kind.

For the reasons given above, it is our conviction, as musicians, that the conventional practice of music reviewing is directly contrary to sound educational policy in music.

Consequently, if we, the undersigned, are expected to participate in college musical events which are to be reviewed in college publications in the usual manner, involving opinion, we are, in effect, being asked to concur in a situation, which, as music educators, we do not believe in and which we cannot, in good conscience, support.

—Frank Baker, Henry Brant, Vivian Fine,
George Finckel, Marianne Finckel,
Gunnar Schonbeck

To the Editor:

More than one year ago we were witness to the closing of the North Bennington gate on the College Drive. This “slight inconvenience” was recognized as logical due to a rash of bad accidents which had occurred—to Village residents—in the after dark hours. Soon thereafter, Fruitrich Road (a dirt road between the Carriage Barn and slightly north of the North Bennington gate) was opened “on a

trial basis to see whether the undesirable traffic which had been making the main Campus Road a place of danger would begin using Fruitrich Road.” We have recently been notified of and subsequently inconvenienced by the closing of this road as well. This unlit road has, indeed, become a dangerous spot for pedestrian and vehicular traffic alike. The “community at large” is now safe.

Although the Community is now safe from the dangers of our own poor on-campus roads, it is necessary to travel over a much longer and equally hazardous route: College Road (connecting a point slightly west of the President’s House with a point a few feet north of the North gate). This road is just as poorly lit and rocky as Fruitrich Road, and due to the housing of students in Ludlow House there is now a large amount of pedestrian traffic on this road as well.

Wouldn’t it be easier for everyone if we were to put up a light or two on the College Drive, have the Drive police-patrolled, and forget about all those unlit dirt roads?

—Meredith Leavitt

P.S. Why don’t we have white lines on the shoulders and middle of College Drive?

To the Editor:

Isn’t it too bad that in an institution which prides itself on the quality of education which it offers to its students, in a community which prides itself on setting standards for excellence in the arts today, that a student should write such an offensive letter concerning the selection of poets for readings, a letter betraying not only her poor taste, and her failure to make an accurate inquiry into the situation which she chose to criticize, but also her inability to spell.

To begin with several facts, Lawrence Ferlinghetti did indeed read here several years ago. It was not the literature division who set poor, hungry Gregory Corso on the road to New York, but an irate Gregory Corso who hung up on a baffled Bennington faculty member. The literature division has a limited fund out of which it may finance readings; isn’t it absurd to expect that limited fund to be used up paying for readings given by these non-poets when it might be used to pay for readings given by poets such as Richard Everheart?

—I. L. Y.

GALLEY

As I began to probe my own current reactions to the war in Vietnam, I recalled the words of a conservative academic scholar during another difficult political situation—the Spanish Civil War. His reaction came finally during an academic ceremony at the University of Salamanca. General William Astray, the maimed leader of the Spanish Foreign Legion, had just spoken hysterically in favor of the fascist cause, and his “iron men” in the audience had screamed back his battle cry, “Long live death!” Then fragile (almost translucent) Senor Unamuno, who had not supported the loyalists, rose and said: “At times to be silent is to lie. For silence can be interpreted as acquiescence. I could not survive a divorce between my conscience and my word.”

Nor can we.

Our country proudly announced last July that we had destroyed 59,000 acres of crops in Vietnam in six months—an eight-fold increase over the average of the previous four years. Thus, even in the unlikely event that our technology will not allow us to increase that figure, we are now going to destroy 120,000 acres of crops a year for as long as the war continues in a part of the world that has always known hunger. (N.Y.T., 7/26/66)

The chemicals, described as harmless by the Pentagon, are so potent that if borne by the wind they can kill plants 15 miles from the spraying point. (N.Y.T., 7/26/66) The same chemicals were accidentally sprayed on Argyle, Minn., on July 8, 1966 and, because the town found them "quite lethal!" children and old people were evacuated and an antidote was flown in. (N.Y.T., 8/16/66)

Last August 22 American scientists (including 7 Nobel prize winners) asked President Johnson to end chemical warfare in Vietnam, arguing that distinctions between lethal and non-lethal chemicals are too hard to make, and that once any chemicals are used, resistance to the use of more powerful ones (and to bacteriological agents) are weakened. (N.Y.T., 9/20/66) The Pentagon replied that chemicals would continue to be used *because they were deemed militarily useful*. (N.Y.T., 9/21/66)

But what is *not* militarily useful? Our country is now using in Vietnam: a new and improved napalm which burns, sticks to the skin, and consumes the oxygen in the air; cluster bomb units that military spokesmen are not allowed to talk about; machine guns that fire 18,000 bullets a minute; new tumbling, small caliber rifle bullets that tear a hole in a man the size of a watermelon like the old dum-dums outlawed after World War I; strikes of 500,000 tons of high explosives dropped from airplanes that fly so high they cannot be heard before the bombs explode; cannisters of thousands of tiny, fluted, razor sharp needles that explode above the ground and kill every living thing above ground over a city block (called "lazy dogs"); a non-poisonous tear gas sprayed into caves (which during one reported spraying killed two Australian soldiers); high speed digital computers; the largest reconnaissance force in U.S. history with sensing devices that detect body heat through the jungle from the air and that see in the dark. It is a technological masterpiece.

But technology is not enough. Ultimately the human being must be molded. (Viet Cong prisoners are interrogated in airplanes and pushed out if they refuse to answer; electrodes are attached to male genitals and female breasts. N.Y. Herald Tribune, 4/25/65). On the Canadian television documentary "The Mills of the Gods" I watched a prisoner tortured to death while Americans stood and watched, kicking the inert body when it was all over. Asked about this later on the program, general S. L. A. Marshall—a gregarious man I have met and could have called a friend—said he was "shocked, shocked and horrified that an American officer would allow a scene like that to be photographed." Then he added after a pause that he

meant, of course, even to take place.

And yet despite all the technology the war inexplicably goes on. Five more years? Ten perhaps? Our President is vague about that.

U.S. troops pour into Asia. In Thailand and Vietnam seemingly permanent military bases are being built. General Ky has called for a U.S. invasion of North Vietnam, and Secretary of State Rusk has said that such an invasion might be necessary. Former President Eisenhower has argued that nuclear weapons may have to be used.

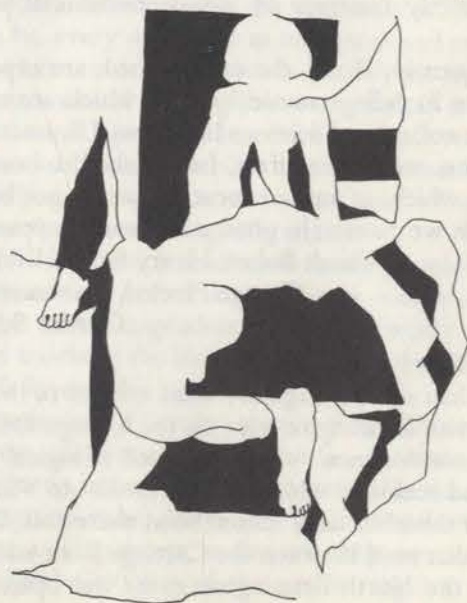
We stand essentially alone in Vietnam. Our allies with sufficient independence to do so condemn us; our vassalages equivocate. Because whatever reason or right there may have been in our cause, our technological indifference to humanity and our willingness to blunder into war with a third of the world's people, have made our cause irrelevant.

I do not think we will win in Vietnam. But even that is now irrelevant. For the victory would be pyrrhic, and the arrogance of those who manipulate the technology would be insatiable. Unamuno understood that. "You will win," he told Astray, "but you will not convince. You will win because you possess brute force, but you will not convince because to convince means to persuade. And in order to persuade, you would need what you lack—reason and right in the struggle."

We should recall also that only twenty years ago our country (with others) stood in judgment at Nuremberg and found guilty the bureaucrats of an inhuman technology. (Was that justice or simply the vengeance of the victor?)

I recognize that all political choices are difficult ones. The commitment to action is necessarily a commitment to a muddled world of ambiguous motives, confusing alternatives, and strange bedfellows. We can seldom pick our allies in politics—only our enemies. But because it is in our name that Vietnam is being sacrificed to technology, the time has come when for us to remain silent is to lie.

—Christopher Koch



Student Government

This month the student government sponsored a faculty-student workshop on Vietnam, and an all-student referendum on Vietnam and the Selective Service. The action was prompted by the nationwide movement to define student opinion on the war and the draft, using student governments as a means of communication between schools. The Cornell Executive Board started the movement last spring with a student referendum similar to Bennington's. They asked other schools to respond and have called a conference on both issues for next February. They hope by that time to have an idea of student opinion throughout the country. Although Bennington will be unable to attend this conference, it is felt that this College's opinions should be known.

The President's National Advisory Commission on the Selective Service, formed to study the possible revision of draft laws, has repeatedly requested student opinion (male and female). The National Student Association accordingly formulated a questionnaire—the one used in the Bennington referendum. The results of their survey will be submitted to the Commission in December.

In addition to defining Bennington opinion, the referendum stimulated discussion and research on the war and the draft. A faculty-student committee on Vietnam has been formed and a series of forums and speakers planned. It is hoped that a Sinologue will speak on China's connection with Vietnam, and that an African will discuss the racist implications of the war. The Committee also hopes to get propaganda films from both the National Liberation Front and the U. S. Government.

A community discussion of the hours-for-men-in-rooms and consideration by the Judicial Committee of the problems of drugs and pregnancy on campus have led to a discussion of the "freedom and responsibility" principle on which Bennington is based. Some students feel that responsibility might be encouraged by revitalizing the house system of government. This would give the Executive Committee more power, encourage house meetings, discussions, and elections. It is hoped that the house rules now handled by Judicial. Others think of the situation as a community problem, to be solved on a community level.

Other issues under consideration by the Legislative Council include a request by the Williams-Bennington Committee for the removal of the Williams' snack bar ban on unescorted Bennington students and the possibility of installing food-vending machines on the Bennington campus.

—Debbie Brown

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Faculty Notes

The current activities of the Bennington faculty include lectures, symposiums, awards and articles. Pat Adams has two paintings in the current "Art on Paper" exhibition at the Weatherspoon Art Gallery of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. One of these paintings has been purchased by the Gallery for its Dillard Collection.

Ben Belitt read from his poetry at the Sanborn House Library of Dartmouth College on October 31st. Mr. Belitt was honored by the P.E.N. Club of America in the Teakwood Room of the Hotel Pierre on the occasion of the paperback edition of his *Selected Poems of Raphael Alberti*. In New York on November 12th he participated in a round-table discussion on "Critical Writing for the General Media" with special emphasis on Writing for the Dance, co-sponsored by the National Dance Guild and Barnard University, under the New York State Council on the Arts. New poems of Mr. Belitt's are scheduled for early appearance in *The New Yorker*, *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, and *Poetry* (Chicago).

Judith Davis was awarded a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation grant of two thousand dollars with which she will do experimental work with stained glass.

The latest issue of the *Tulane Drama Review*, which has been selling out, contained six interviews conducted by Paul Gray with film-makers Lindsay Anderson, Roger Blin, Pavel Hobl, Barbet Schroeder, Vilgot Sjöman, and theatre-director, Peter Weiss. The entire issue was largely the conception of Mr. Gray.

June Nash delivered a paper on "Re-interpretation of the Passion Play in Mesa America" at the November 18th meeting of the American Anthropological Association. This paper will appear in the December issue of *Social and Economic Studies*, "Social Resources of a Latin American Peasantry."

Sidney Tillim will moderate a panel on "The Art Student and the Future of the Avant-garde" at New York University's Loeb Student Center on November 29th. Mr. Tillim has recently written two essays for *Artforum*; the first, entitled "The Decorative Style" appeared in the October issue, and the second, "Tiepolo and the Decorative Style" will appear in the December issue. He also participated in a panel (Nov. 4) at the New York Studio School, which discussed the use of photography in painting.

Robert Woodworth has given a number of film lectures at various local regional schools, teachers' associations, and civic organizations. In Boston on October 27th he gave an evening of films for area alumnae at the Science Museum.

Alumna designs for Expo '67

One of the major exhibits at the Canadian Government Pavilion in Ottawa during the World Expo 67 next year will be a Children's Creative Centre designed and directed by Polly Childs Hill, '39.

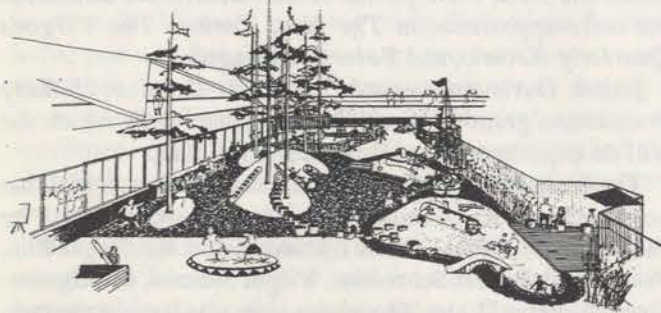
The Centre will draw its children from families visiting the Canadian Pavilion, with 75,000 children expected to use the facility during the six-months-long world exhibition.

The Centre will contain a nursery school, playgrounds, and studios for projects in drama, music, and art. All activities will be visible through one-way glass and audible over a sound-system, enabling the Centre to double as an exhibit for parents and educators.

The nursery school will contain building and climbing facilities, table toys, a quiet corner for reading, an aquarium, live insect collections, and magnifying glasses, prisms, magnets and other beginning scientific toys.

Drama activities will be guided by bilingual instructors, and children will be urged to experiment with characters and movement in response to sounds, lights, objects and words.

The music program will deal with the use of specially designed xylophones and other percussion instruments for the creation of simple music, and the art studio will utilize paints, clay, ink, wire, printing and varieties of paper.



The two playgrounds will be divided by a shallow canal of water winding through the area and encircling two large sand areas. At one end of the playground area will be musical and optical walls where children can manipulate components to create sound and changing patterns.

Mrs. Hill, a literature major while at Bennington, has been a nursery school, art and drama teacher and has been active in parent education. She is the author of six Canadian Government films on normal child development. In formulating plans for the design and operation of the Centre she has worked with more than 50 consulting experts on five committees providing advice on the nursery school, the three creative studios and the playgrounds.

Drama Production Reviewed

THE GOOD WOMAN OF SETZUAN, by Bertholt Brecht. Presented by the Bennington College Drama Division; directed by David Hamilton. Nov. 10, 11 & 12, 1966.

The performance Friday night by the actors' ensemble of the Drama Division showed some new efforts on the part of the group to achieve its ideal of ensemble playing. The hand of the Division's new director was obvious in the attempts to convey a counterpointed unity in the mob scenes and—though reminiscent of certain productions we've seen of *The Threepenny Opera* and *Marat/Sade*—the grouping and interplay of character types, the effective placing of costume colors and textures, and the occasional choral effects showed something of the group's po-

tential for ensemble work as a central technique. One assumes that the series of mob scenes was the backbone of the production and that the design established therein was intended as a support for the whole show, with its interplay of visual, musical and spoken parts.

Unfortunately this unity was frequently broken at other moments in the play by the thrusting forward, out of the central tonality, of one individual player after another in ways that drew attention to personal idiosyncrasies of voice, movement, giggle, swish or swagger. (Oddly enough, the projected faces of various actors on a screen upstage gave a mirror effect which enhanced this sort of solipsism.)

In the group scenes the mixture of accents, qualities, diction (one person pronounced *people* as *pickle*), volume, facial contortions, gestures and movements had moments of cohering fairly well; but when individual speeches and gestures came forth, the mixture became a rather distracting hodgepodge.

Such underminings of the central effect indicate that this troupe ought to give a great deal of thought and devote a great deal of work to developing control of body and voice so that their ensemble could govern all parts of the show. Some of the actors are improving in this respect; but the others who are not detract from their colleagues and from the show as a whole.

Though the first half of the play moved slowly and heterogeneously—with the music carrying much of the burden of pulling the parts together—the rhythm of the second half picked up and the cast was able to hold the audience to the story line in spite of the continued overpersonalizing by some of the less skilled members. Also, during the second half, some of the more experienced actors were several times able to mute those outbursts and to pull the group back to the play.



One appreciates that this play, with its combination of somewhat dated satire and banal fantasy, social comment and romantic plot, was a difficult challenge for the young ensemble. The tame way these elements were handled seemed to show a certain timidity and lack of edge—especially in the satirical parts. Sometimes it seemed like a lack of understanding—and of course the translation is no help.

Much of what this ensemble group has done in the last two years has been in translation. One would hope that in the future a tremendous effort can be made to find good



American or English plays with a quality of language that will speak more directly to actors and audiences, without giving this added difficulty of the players' having to speak through a smog of 2nd and 3rd rate translations.

—Catharine Osgood Foster

Delbanco Reading

On November 16 Nicholas Delbanco read excerpts from his three books, *The Martlet's Tale*, an adaptation of the parable of the prodigal son; *Grasse 3/23/66*, a prose poem based on the Orpheus myth; and *Consider Sappho Burning*, a novel about lesbian love.

Excluding for the moment any considerations of content, Mr. Delbanco read well, did not overdramatize his material, and introduced the three excerpts with remarks which were both pertinent and succinct. It was a successful reading in that each piece had a distinct identity, giving one an idea of the author's purpose and concerns as a writer, and at the same time showing the author's growth. The reading itself grew better as it progressed.

In *The Martlet's Tale* Sotiris, a twenty-year-old Greek boy, leaves his home in Rhodes, where his family is waiting for the death of a rich and diseased grandmother, to lead a life of sophisticated debauchery in Athens. Having known "hunger and mistrust," "sleep, . . . the shadow of an action lost, and lust," in the end Sotiris returns to Rhodes and the bosom of his family a few hours after his grandmother has died.

It is a novel of richly conceived formal relations, some of them only hinted at and others perhaps too fully developed. (Before Sotiris runs away he swims near his grandmother's house and catches sea urchins, cuts them open and eats their insides. Later, after his return, he again swims in the same place and catches a langouste, which he returns to the sea unhurt).

However *The Martlet's Tale* does not have the half-starved look of many first novels, in which simplicity and economy seem more the result of a lack of ideas and imagination than of careful pruning. The writing seemed at times a touch smugly simple while at other times downright sentimental ("He was lost, and is found"). The excerpt which Mr. Delbanco read concerns Phillipos, Sotiris' older double, who is a warning to Sotiris of his possible fate.

From the prodigal son Mr. Delbanco proceeded to Or-

pheus, or, more exactly, a variation on the myth. It seems, in retrospect, that a greater part of the evening was taken up by the reading of *Grasse 3/23/66* than the other novels. This may be factually incorrect, but I think this impression, however erroneous, indicates something about the book and about the extent to which one can or should keep up a steady stream of wordplay. Actually the question is not how long one can juggle language and ideas (Mr. Delbanco having given every indication of being able to continue to untold lengths) but how long one can listen and be attentive to such verbal pyrotechnics.

Grasse 3/23/66 is the journal of a prisoner of verbiage, a man swept away on a tide of puns, analogies, alliteration and witticisms. He both Joys in the sound of his voice and is repulsed by it, strangled in its luxuriant Blooms. I may be wrong about the character of the narrator—it being difficult to get a clear impression from excerpts. My main criticism is that, even if we assume the lengthiness, the tone of near hysteria which ran as a undercurrent through most of the writing, (and the self consciousness), to be indications of the narrator's character, we are still faced with the problem of reading it through, and its brilliance can become tedious. It may be that *Grasse 3/23/66* would be better appreciated if read rather than listened to, when the reader



could determine his own pace, pausing to be amused by such bits as "Bullfinch among the rushes" and "novel descending a staircase" and having the time to understand, hopefully, what all the fun is about.

Consider Sappho Burning was by far the best of the three, and combined the richness of characterization and situation of *The Martlet's Tale* with the stylistic force and imagination of *Grasse 3/23/66*. The story is narrated by Aureore, a lesbian living on Martha's Vineyard (hardly as exotic as Lesbos) who writes of Melissa, whom she loved and who is now dead. One did not get the feeling that one was listening to a twenty-four-year-old man talking about middle-aged lesbians but at once entered into the fiction one believed it. The excerpts read made me want to know more about the characters and the novel, and you really can't ask more of a reading than that. —Martine Cherau

Sceptism as the Method of Morals

Ed. note: The following speech was delivered by President Bloustein at the annual conference this fall of the YWCA of New York. He was a member of a panel discussing "Our values under fire: space age morals, ethics and beliefs."

I am delighted to be among you and to have this opportunity to speak my mind on the subject of contemporary morals.

An appearance on a panel always presents a kind of sophisticated guessing game: what view was I chosen to represent, one wonders. Was I to be the safe and sane professor among the wild-eyed radicals? Or was I, perhaps, as President of a woman's college, to represent the woman's point of view? Or was I to speak as a representative of beleaguered academic administrators who are holding off the student hordes?

I'll not spoil your fun by identifying my own role even if I could. Perhaps, if I am successful in what I say, you will be able to find a suitable ideological tag for me—or, perhaps, if I am really successful, none of the conventional tags will fit.

What impresses me most deeply about the contemporary scene is our remarkable moral smugness and ethical complacency in the face of overwhelming dangers, defaults and disasters.

We fight one war—callously calling it a *small* war—and we sit on the precipice of a nuclear holocaust. Yet we, and those with whom we do battle, make no move to re-examine the moral premise that would ever justify any war as an instrument of national policy.

Poverty demeans and enfeebles the lives of millions of our citizens and hundreds of millions of people throughout the world; yet we and our ideological adversaries continue to accept a monolithic vision of the economic order as unshakeable dogma.

The rising rates of divorce, promiscuity, infidelity, illegitimacy and abortion, make a mockery of romantic love and holy matrimony; but few are heard to raise doubt about the viability of those venerable institutions.

The blight of our cities and the defacement of our countryside goes on apace; but hardly anyone asks whether our constitutionally enshrined forms of local government are still adequate to their tasks.

The population of this country and of the world at large grows at a rate which imperils any thought of a future of peace and plenty; rarely is inquiry made, however, whether birth control should remain a matter solely of individual choice.

The rate of crime and social alienation mounts to alarming proportions; we have not begun to question, however, the continued efficacy of our ancient common law modes of law enforcement.

To be sure, I do not presume to come here today to

attempt to resolve these awesome moral quandaries. My only intention is to remark on the moral obtuseness and inflexibility with which we as a culture confront them. We stand confounded by them, repeating endlessly and without avail the sacred formulas of our righteousness, like bewildered mice in a moral maze.

Were we to have exhibited the same lack of scepticism and creative imagination in science that we have demonstrated in morals, we would be no closer to the exploration of the moon than we are to the eradication of war and poverty as social scourges. We are sceptics in science, but believers in morals. This may well explain the success of the one sphere of our human enterprise and the failure of the other.

Socrates, centuries ago, and John Dewey, only 30 years ago, made pleas for scepticism as the method of morals. Unfortunately, their voices have gone unheeded to this day. In his defense before the Athenian court which tried him as a corrupter of youth, Socrates described himself in these words and I quote him—or at least I quote Plato's version of his defense:

*"I am that gadfly which God has attached to the state, and all day long and in all places am always fastening upon you, arousing and persuading and reproaching you. *** I dare say that you may feel out of temper (like a person who is suddenly awakened from sleep), and you may think that you might easily strike me dead ***, and then you would sleep on for the remainder of your lives, unless God in his care of you sent you another gadfly."*

Athens, smug and complacent, fearful of sceptical doubt, stilled the voice of its gadfly: it put Socrates to death and slept on.

John Dewey was not stilled, but he has been neglected and forgotten, a fate which is, for a teacher and philosopher at least, worse than death. Dewey described the authoritarian or dogmatic method in morals as one which

"assume[s]—the existence of final and unquestionable knowledge upon which we can fall back in order to settle automatically every moral problem;" it is a way of thinking which appeals to "some voice so authoritative as to preclude the need of inquiry."

In contrast, Dewey described the experimental or sceptical method in morals, as one which

*"demands observation of particular situations, rather than fixed adherence to a priori principles"; it involves "an attitude of willingness to re-examine and if necessary to revise current convictions, even if that course entails the effort to change *** existing institutions, and to direct existing tendencies to new ends."*

More tragic in our day, even than the threat of war and the extent of poverty is the persistence of the dogmatic method in morals; a persistence which marks our world view no less than it does that of the Soviet Union.

We sponsor and celebrate gadflies in physical inquiry, but we fear and condemn them in ethical inquiry. We tinker with and constantly revise our theories in the natu-

ral sciences, but we worshipfully regard many of the institutions of our social and political life as sacrosanct. We study the world with critical objectivity, but we profess adherence to moral values with a metaphysical passion.

We are scientists when it comes to machines; we are ideologists when it comes to men.

Some of you, I am sure, are disturbed by the challenge to our system of values which many of our young people put forward with such zeal. I welcome their challenge.

They are the gadflies we require if we are to live as befits our intelligence. They bear the Socratic temper. They fasten upon us, arousing, persuading and reproaching us; they will not let us sleep.

I assure you that as I sit in my seat of authority I would sometimes prefer to avoid the sting of my own student gadflies; as lovely as they are. They sometimes rob me of the comfort of my settled beliefs; they sometimes transform my seat of authority into a hot seat of doubt and discontent.

They are the harbingers of the new method in morals. They and the small discomfort they cause us are part of the price of moral reconstruction.

I am convinced that if we are ever to make as much of men as we have made of machines we must invite moral doubt rather than suppress and run from it. Endless repetition and reassertion of authoritarian formulas can never be a substitute for critical intelligence, for the sting of the gadfly. The call to moral reconstruction cannot be a call to vanquish doubt, but must rather be a call to nourish doubt as the primary instrument of ethical inquiry.

—Edward J. Bloustein

Danforth Foundation Fellowships

The Danforth Foundation is offering graduate fellowships to women with B.A. degrees who have interrupted their education for at least three years. They may not be employed as full-time teachers or enrolled as full-time graduate students.

The objective of this program is to find and develop teachers among those women whose preparation for teaching has been postponed or interrupted. The award is for one year beginning September 1, 1967, and is renewable annually. The maximum award for 1967-68 will be \$3,000 plus tuition and fees, or, for heads of households, \$4,000 plus tuition and fees.

All supporting materials must be received by the Foundation on or before February 10, 1967. For further details write:

The Danforth Foundation
607 North Grand Boulevard
St. Louis, Missouri 63103

Second Summer Seminar

Another Summer Seminar for Bennington Alumnae is being planned for August 6-20, 1967. The decision to offer this kind of educational opportunity for a second time is the result of the enthusiasm expressed by participants in

last year's session. Although the general format will remain the same, changes in subject matter and in arrangements for living and study will reflect the needs and criticisms voiced during the 1966 seminar.

Next summer morning classes will consider "The Contemporary Novel" and "The Realities of American Foreign Policy." During the afternoons there will be a series of art lectures supplemented by studio activity selected by the participants. A group of evening lectures will focus on "Planning the New City."

Among the organizational changes will be: extension of library hours; a separate house for those who do not bring children; more directed supervision of the children, including a program in dance and theatre; acceptance only of children who have had at least one year of elementary classroom experience; morning classes only three times each week, earlier distribution of preparatory reading material; and scheduling of individual conferences between instructors and participants.

The charges for room and board for the two weeks will again be \$125 for each participant and \$100 for each child. We have had to increase the fee for tuition, however, to \$175 for adults. The tuition fee provides for participation in any number of Seminar activities.

The over-all purposes of the Summer Seminar remain unchanged; there is the pleasure of renewing acquaintance with the campus, former colleagues, faculty friends, and, even more important, the Seminar offers a *family* opportunity for a brief, but intellectually serious, study experience. To quote from a report submitted by a husband after last year's seminar:

"I feel that the most constructive aspect and the one most unique and liable to demonstrate Bennington's farsightedness to the public is the idea of husbands and wives together getting back into an atmosphere of definite scholarship and intellectual concentration . . . The effort at scholarship, coming to know professors, as well as group members, and the beauty of the campus made the two weeks more refreshing than a regular vacation. The opportunity to share this experience with my wife will probably give us more to talk about in years to come than a similar period spent in European travel."

—Lionel Nowak

Summer Seminar for Bennington Alumnae
Bennington College
Bennington, Vermont 05201

August 6-20, 1967

It is possible that I will attend the Seminar. Please send me all necessary information and forms.

Name Class

Address

. Tel.

Alumnae Regional Notes

Boston—On October 27 the Boston group and friends gathered for a lecture and show of time-lapse botanical films by Robert Woodworth, Bennington faculty member since 1935. The evening, planned by Hoima Forbes Gaston-Cherau '40, Lydia Allyn Graves '37, and Dorothy Coffin Harvi '42, attracted a group of more than 200 people from the greater Boston area.

Chicago—Miss Meredith Leavitt will be in Chicago December 7 and 8 to speak about Bennington at two teas for interested high school students—one tea in Chicago and one on the North Shore. Hostessing the teas will be Mr. and Mrs. George H. Pattison, Jr. (parents of Sue Pattison Dawes '64) and Polly Kirsten Breul '44. Meredith will also meet with a number of Chicago area alumnae for lunch at the Arts Club in Chicago.

Detroit—Sally Winston Robinson '47, Jane Hanway Doty '49, Betty Gillett Leitch '50, Joyce Skelton Moran '49, Sally Roberts Pierson '56, Mary Ellen Bothwell Quay '49, Kay Brown Smith '50, and Peggy Dudley Thurber '41 helped with a gala reception in the Crystal Ballroom for the Martha Graham Dance Company after their October concert in Detroit. These area women poured coffee, served punch, passed sandwiches, introduced people to Martha Graham, acted as ticket takers, etc. They also chipped in and gave Martha a lovely bouquet of long-stemmed red roses with a card from the Detroit Bennington College Alumnae Association.

Fairfield County East and West—President and Mrs. Edward J. Bloustein were special guests at a dinner party given by the Fairfield County alumnae and their husbands on September 29. The dinner was held in the owner-designed house of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Giedraitis (Jane Roberts '50) of Greenwich. Yvonne Franz Herz '53 co-hosted the evening with Jane. Following dinner the group had a chance to hear Mr. Bloustein speak on the Development Program of the College as well as his ideas on continuing education, both of which led to lively discussion.

Hartford—Mr. and Mrs. Ellsworth Grant (Marion Hepburn '39) played hosts to over forty alumnae and their husbands on November 11. (Unfortunately Marion was ill and unable to attend the gathering—many thanks to Ellsworth for his dual role and to Alice Rowley Cheney '39 for a quick pinch-hit!) The dinner, given in honor of President and Mrs. Bloustein was also attended by representatives of several Hartford area preparatory

schools. Discussion centered around Bennington today and tomorrow, with great interest shown in the newly begun development program. Suzi Cremer Smith '57 receives special thanks for arranging the evening.

Long Island—On August 27 a benefit performance of *The Three Penny Opera* (Long Island's second annual benefit performance) was held at C. W. Post College, Brookville, L.I. The benefit, costing \$6.00/ticket was planned by Charlene Solow Schwartz '54. Excellent seating had been obtained for an evening well-attended, well-enjoyed.

Los Angeles—A dual treat was in store for those Los Angeles women who attended the Theatre Benefit on July 14. A dutch-treat dinner at the Brown Derby restaurant merely began the evening, as the group then went across the street to the Huntington Hartford Theatre where they saw (at \$7.50/ticket) Moss Hart's *You Can't Take It With You*.

New Haven—Late last spring more than sixty alumnae, friends of the College, and special guests gathered at New Haven's highly successful cocktail and dinner party in honor of President and Mrs. Bloustein. This endeavor took several small meetings by those involved: Betty Mills Brown '39, Hudas Schwartz Liff '47, Nancy Forgan Farnham '39, Ann Bartow Baker '61, Amory Potter Glenn '45, Diana Allyn Granbery '41, Doralee Kaminsky Garfinkel '54, Maureen Mahoney Murphy '53.

New Jersey Central (formerly South)—The Princeton home of Mr. and Mrs. David Savage (Naomi Siegler '48) was the meeting place for over forty alumnae and husbands in late September as they gathered to meet President and Mrs. Bloustein. The evening planned and executed by Naomi, Beatrice Van Cleve Lee '50, and Sonya Rudikoff Gutman '48, fulfilled all hopes and more than transcended the rainy weather.

Philadelphia—Jean Holt and Rebecca Stickney of the Admissions Office met with Nancy Fahnestock Denniston '42, Cynthia Whitney Drayton '48, Vijaya Gulhati Duggal '59, Edith Dinlocker Kuhn '45, Lydia Schoepperle Paxson '39, Adelaide Rubin Perloff '44, Holly Appel Silverthorne '45, Thelma Black Stowe '45, Joan Borden Stuart '50, and Barbara Schwanda Weedon '55 at the home of Grace Russell Sharples '48 early this month. In addition to school visiting and interviewing in the area, Becca and Jean attended a Guidance Counselor dinner at Adelaide's. A better understanding of Bennington was made possible through the efforts of these women.

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