

Dore Ways

A forum for exchanging ideas

From the Editor

Magic Moments

PUBLISHING A MAGAZINE BRINGS LOTS OF SATISFYING MOMENTS—little touchstones when, as editor, I know we’re on the right track with a particular issue. Discovering a new writer, a photo shoot that yields the perfect image, or building an editorial structure that I know pushes the boundaries of what we do as university magazine editors. These happen pretty frequently—one or another every issue—and that’s a good thing because it keeps the magazine staff engaged on those occasions when production isn’t proceeding as planned.

But there’s something that happens less frequently, something that beats them all. That’s when a good story comes to me “over the transom.” Unsolicited. Fully formed and engaging. Shedding some light onto what it means to be affiliated with Vanderbilt University. These stories are like little gifts that I’m able to pass on to readers. This issue the unexpected happened when I received two: “Li’l Duck” and “Mr. Quinq.”

I’m not going to summarize them here. Part of the joy of reading these two rather short gems is the humanity behind each, the obvious care for the people who make up Vanderbilt and the bonds that can be shared. Both Rob Hammond, who wrote “Li’l Duck,” and Allan Drash, who wrote “Mr. Quinq,” take us back to an earlier time at Vanderbilt. They prove that the connections made while a student can have resonance for years.

And while these stories originate in the past, I’d like to think they are also talking about the present. In fact, I know they are. I often receive phone calls from recent graduates telling me about a fellow alum or a faculty member they met while a student at Vanderbilt. “Do a story about [him or her] because what they’re doing is important.” What those people are doing is important, though not always appropriate for a story in *Vanderbilt Magazine*. What I always hear in these conversations, however, is the importance of that person to the caller.

People at Vanderbilt forge strong connections and carry the intensity of those connections for a long time. “Li’l Duck” and “Mr. Quinq” are just two such Vanderbilt personalities. I’m happy to bring them to our readers’ attention.

KEN SCHEXNAYDER

From the Reader

20 Gifts

I WAS ENJOYABLY ENLIGHTENED BY THE ARTICLE on Vanderbilt’s gifts to the world in the Fall 2003 issue [“20 Gifts Vanderbilt Gave the World,” p. 42]. I was pleased to see the inclusion of the world-famous astronomer E.E. Barnard, but I think the section about him contains a couple of minor errors. First, according to Robert Lagemann’s *History of Physics and Astronomy at Vanderbilt*, p. 57, the “house that comets built” was located on 16th Avenue near Division Street, not near Kirkland Hall as the article states. While associated with Vanderbilt, Barnard and his wife, Rhoda, lived in a house owned by Vanderbilt located on the [present-day] site of Rand Hall, which is not far from Kirkland, but Barnard had nothing to do with building this house.

The other error states that Barnard was the only person to receive an honorary academic degree from Vanderbilt. He did receive an honorary doctor of science [degree] in 1893 from Chancellor Garland, but Lagemann states on p. 86 [of his book] that Milton W. Humphries, professor of Greek, received an honorary doctorate from Vanderbilt in 1883.

You correctly included Marx Delbrück in your list. It is not widely known that the work for which he shared the 1969 Nobel Prize was largely carried out in a third-floor lab in Buttrick Hall, the biology building, while a faculty member in the physics department (see Lagemann, p. 181).

I am sure you will receive many suggestions as to what should have been included in this article. I have two. The first relates to Francis Slack, head of the Vanderbilt physics department from 1938 to 1950. While on leave at Columbia from 1941 to 1944, Slack led a group of about 40 to 50 physicists, including Professor Newton Underwood of Vanderbilt and seven others who had been physics students at Vanderbilt, to invent a porous barrier that would separate by gaseous diffusion of uranium hexa fluoride the fissionable uranium 235 isotope from the much less fissionable but much more abundant uranium 238 in naturally



occurring uranium. Most experts said a workable barrier could not be made, but Slack's group succeeded in making one that was produced by a company in Illinois and installed in the enormous K-25 gaseous diffusion plant at Oak Ridge [Tenn.] that produced enriched U-235 for nuclear plants to produce electrical power, and for the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima that was instrumental in forcing the Japanese dictators to end World War II. While many citizens of Hiroshima perished, ultimately the lives of millions of Japanese and American military men, which were being lost daily by the thousands, were spared.

A second gift to the world was made by Professor Newton Underwood who, while working at Oak Ridge on leave from Vanderbilt, devised a way to manufacture the diffusion barrier by a continuous rather than a batch process, saving the U.S. government probably millions of dollars annually. For more details about these developments in nuclear energy, see Chapters 7 and 8 of Lage-mann's book.

WENDELL G. HOLLADAY, BA'49, MA'50
Professor of Physics, Emeritus
Provost, Emeritus
Nashville

MAYBE THE ARTICLE ABOUT 20 "GIFTS" SHOULD have been titled "gifts and plagues." William Walker seems a precursor to U.S. rejection of Latin America's civil governments in favor of training their military in the methods of torture at Fort Benning, Ga. As I write this note, MaryRuth Matlock Weir (BA'63) and one of our daughters is standing at the gates protesting this torture training at the former named School of the Americas.

Below is just a short sample of myriad problems with Corrections Corporation of America. The shares bottomed out at 18 cents a share, leading an analyst to comment "the company has taken a dive that would make a dot-com blush." However, the same report indicates that "we expect the industry to have more growth opportunities in difficult economic times." College campuses boycotted Sodexho-Marriott because its "close ties to the scandal-ridden Corrections Corporation of America make it an unfit provider of campus dining services." Yes, that's the Marriott as in hotels and food services, because private prisons work on an occupancy rate basis (higher vacancies, less profit) and have thousands of people who require regular feeding. The campus movement pressured

Sodexho-Marriott to divest itself of CCA, but they have retained an operating interest in British and Australian private prisons.

C. ED WEIR, BA'64
Barnesville, Ga.

WHAT A TREMENDOUS ARTICLE! INSPIRING, humbling and gracefully written. Whomever is responsible for the pellucid description of the electromagnetic spectrum in #17 (about the Keck Free-Electron Laser Center) deserves a raise.

GARRISON COX, JD'81, MBA'81
Louisville, Ky.

I WAS VERY OFFENDED BY THE ARTICLE IN THE latest magazine listing "De-stigmatizing Homosexuality" as one of Vanderbilt's greatest accomplishments! Also including it in the same breath as heart transplants! There are many people who believe homosexuality is morally wrong, and to shove your polarizing agenda down my throat makes me livid. If this is where my Vanderbilt donations are being used, maybe I need to rethink my priorities.

MARIE MUNSCH, BA'87, MBA'88
Tampa, Fla.

IN THE ARTICLE "20 GIFTS VANDERBILT GAVE the World," you have inexplicably included a bourbon whiskey as a "gift" of note.

The article fails to tell how Vanderbilt is responsible for this "gift" and only links the whiskey to the school through the fact that its current president

(and owner?) was a 1967 graduate of the Vanderbilt Law School. This seems to be a tenuous, if not contrived, connection. Further, even if Vanderbilt were truly the donor of this "gift," one must ask why Vanderbilt would wish to take credit or responsibility for offering this substance up to the world?

I think all but the most hardened users or sellers of alcohol would agree that, on balance, alcohol causes much more harm than good. Highway fatalities, domestic violence, lost productivity, neglected children and alcoholism are some of the very negative consequences flowing from the use of alcohol. The only apparent benefit is that it gets people high, intoxicated, helps take the edge off, etc.

During my freshman year at Vanderbilt, I was required to change classes three weeks into the semester because my political science professor had to enter rehab. He literally passed out during class one day—and another professor came in and told us, effective immediately, that we would be reassigned to different sections. During my senior year a fellow student died from alcohol poisoning. I point these out simply because they are two concrete examples of alcohol's impact at Vanderbilt. Numerous other examples could be given. In short, whiskey, under any brand name, is simply a legal mood-altering drug. Notably, for the vast majority of Vanderbilt students, it is an illegal drug. It is both telling and ironic that this Vanderbilt "gift" could not even be purchased by most Vanderbilt students without subjecting them to criminal penalties. The inclusion of this prod-

20 gifts
VANDERBILT
GAVE THE WORLD

Fetal Surgery 1

IT'S A DAUNTING TASK—SOME WOULD ARGUE FOOL-hardy—to select from the myriad contributions Vanderbilt has made to the world, and offer up a handful as representative of the University's influence. In its 120-year history, Vanderbilt's faculty, students, alumni and staff have been engaged in work that has literally shaped the way we perceive ourselves and the world around us. Their work has changed the way we treat disease. It has created some of the programs developed to help those in our society who need assistance. And it has offered new twists on some very old traditions.

We've chosen 20 "gifts" to highlight here. You may be amazed at what we have featured; you may be amazed at what we've left out. We're certain you'll find some surprises.

Pediatric surgeons have long been frustrated that medical science can identify birth defects in a fetus long before its mother delivers. But corrective surgery had to wait until birth, and by then the defect often had worsened and caused even more damage to the child.

Dr. Joseph Bruner and Noel Tulipan were determined to find a way to do surgery sooner when the baby had a better chance of recovery, even survival. They found it in 1997. Bruner, who directs Vanderbilt's fetal diagnosis and therapy program, and Tulipan, director of pediatric neurosurgery, developed a dramatic, new technique to operate on a sickle child while still in its mother's womb. Spina babies was the disease they set their sights on to conquer, or at least tame.

The two surgeons knew they couldn't reverse the damage of spina babies, but they hoped to halt it before it got worse. Their solution was to get into the uterus via an incision, expose the fetus, and repair the opening in its spine. They began operating at 28 weeks, but one occasion bore close to us early as 21 weeks. Since the first surgery in 1997, they have performed more than 200 with good results. Along the way, they pioneered a similar surgery to treat hydrocephaly.

Today the fetal surgery program are studying long-term benefits of the surgery along with teams at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and University of California at San Francisco. Bruner and Tulipan are confident of the outcomes, and they already are studying other possibilities for treating other malformations and troubles—heart defects, metabolic disorders, blood and tissue transplantation—to babies long before they begin their lives in the outside world.

44 FALL 2004

{ Featured Letter }

A Gift for Whom?

THIS LETTER REGARDS YOUR ARTICLE IN THE FALL 2003 issue titled “20 Gifts Vanderbilt Gave the World.” Most of the “gifts” you mentioned would fit the description, especially the persons who have actually *given* to humanity by way of healing or helping the poor, etc.

But I must contest the idea of Corrections Corporation of America being a gift to anyone—except, of course, its stockholders. Making money off incarcerated persons, to me, is even worse than making money off sick persons. At least the HMOs are trying to heal all the time they are taking in big bucks.

It’s a disgrace that the State of Tennessee ever allowed privatization of its prisons. There may be less overcrowding and lower recidivism, as they claim. But of course the reason for this is that no one is ever released. The more inmates housed, the more money CCA takes in. There is never any thought of rehabilitation or treatment, just longtime housing for those poor unfortunates who have no defenders and no merciful judges.

A company that grew out of a cocktail-party brainstorm? Give me a break! Even Vanderbilt should have recognized the incongruity of such a cruel idea.

M. SMITH, '53

Goodlettsville, Tenn.



Yes, We Work Out

I WAS QUITE IMPRESSED WITH THE PHOTO ON THE back cover of the Spring 2003 *Vanderbilt Magazine*.

Not one of these young men is obese or has a beverage belly. Given the national trend, this is amazing—unless these are the only 11 on campus!

A. GIL BELLES, PHD'72

Macomb, Ill.

Fugitives

IT'S A LITTLE GOOF, BUT WORTH CORRECTING. In my letter on page 9 of the Spring 2003 issue, it says that Robert Penn Warren published a “long book” titled *Segregation*.

He wrote a long article by that title, almost the entire issue of *Life Magazine*. It was published later as a very small book under the same title.

We won't pursue whether you or I made the goof!

MORTON KING, BA'34, MA'36

Georgetown, Texas

A DISTINGUISHED MUSICIAN AND GRADUATE of Yale and Peabody sent me the “Pride and Prejudice” article [on the Fugitives and Agrarians] plus letters from your *Vanderbilt Magazine* issues of Winter and Spring 2003, respectively, and let me say I was toughly able to thole the views of Vanderbilt's English department professors Michael Kreyling and Kate Daniels.

Why would they drop John Crowe Ransom from the curriculum? He didn't fire the shot in Memphis. And his “Here Lies a Lady” doesn't demean women. He merely wrote some of the best American poems of the 20th century and devised a *constructive* type of literary criticism. In 1956 I was a struggling English major at Wesleyan University and wrote a paper that was graded A+, the highest mark I ever received from that school. I received the grade because I had taken the time to read [Ransom's] poems closely and was enthralled. Years later my older son chose to attend Kenyon partially because I was a Ransom fan (and even today am a subscriber to the *Kenyon Review* as well as the *Sewanee Review*) and had seen what impact he had had as a teacher at that college on undergraduates Lowell, Taylor, Wright and Doctorow, to name a few. The man is a gentle giant of letters. But I will admit he smoked a pipe and hung around with that argyle-socked Tate and that bow-tied Warren and, most damning, he probably never

uct was wrong. It is an embarrassment to the University and demeans the other 19 “gifts” immeasurably.

I wish I could tell you some way to correct it, but I don't know of any way to “unring” a bell.

DUNBAR HEALY, BA'83

Covington, La.

Surviving Enron

THE CORPORATE SCANDALS THAT HAVE BEEN rocking the country for the last few years are, indeed, disgraceful. But if they can teach young people like Stephen Plauche [Fall 2003 issue, “S.P.O.V.: Surviving Enron,” p. 68] the importance of integrity, responsibility and accountability for people in positions of power, some good may come from them after all. The idea that responsibly managed firms can gain an “ethical advantage” that enhances their economic performance is increasingly accepted in business circles. Our recent book, *Redefining the Corporation* (Post, Preston and Sachs; Stanford, 2002), explains how and why some actual firms have pursued this goal; and some consulting firms are now

making a living by helping companies to achieve it. There can be no excuse for Enron, but experience shows that the corporate system, if properly managed, can produce wealth and benefits that have widespread, and largely favorable, impact throughout society.

LEE E. PRESTON, BA'51

Professor Emeritus

Robert H. Smith School of Business

University of Maryland

College Park, Md.

The Search for God

I THOUGHT THIS ARTICLE [SPRING 2003 ISSUE, “The Search for God at Vanderbilt,” p. 46] was absolutely wonderful. I'm very happy to see the University taking an active role in discussing religious diversity. As a recent graduate of Vanderbilt, I'm even more proud to have attended the University.

Thank you very much.

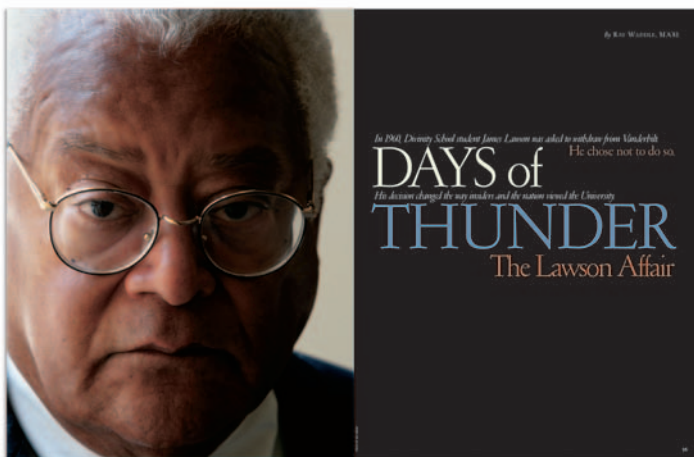
FAISAL SADDIQUE, BS'02

Ras Tanura, Saudi Arabia

taught any female students. But Ransom doesn't need my protests; those letters to you from the Vanderbilt alumni and retired academics are testimony to his immortality. "I am a gentleman in a dustcoat trying . . ."

Read Katherine Anne Porter's 1949 letter to the editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature*. (I assume KAP's credentials and opinions are unsailable even to the subject professors.) While explaining her reason for voting in favor of Ezra Pound for the Bollingen-Library of Congress Award for Poetry—he was the best of the listed candidates, none of whom she had been able to select—she says: "I should have preferred to vote for John Crowe Ransom or Wallace Stevens; for Louise Bogan, Leonie Adams, Robert Penn Warren, Randall Jarrell, Marianne Moore, Allen Tate, Robert Graves, W.H. Auden, Archibald MacLeish, E.E. Cummings; if they were citizens T.S. Eliot or Edith Sitwell." I know, I know. Katherine Anne Porter has some knocks against her: She wrote a best seller (*Ship of Fools*), indulging herself on the profits by buying a huge emerald ring, and even into her last years was a fine-looking woman (a Texas knockout).

HORACE DEACON
Philadelphia



The Lawson Affair

THE NEWLY REDESIGNED AND EXPANDED *Vanderbilt Magazine* is beautiful. Or, as today's generation of students might say, "Awesome!" As editor, you are to be congratulated.

The article I have enjoyed most was "Days of Thunder: The Lawson Affair" in the Fall 2002 issue [p. 34] because it showed the courage my University had (and still has) to face a subject which has been very sensitive to Americans through-

out our entire nation for at least over the course of the last century and a half.

While it made me "mad" that it had to occur on our campus, it made (and makes) me "proud" of my University because we were (and are) brave enough to recognize that when we were going down the incorrect path, we took (and are probably still taking) corrective measures to ensure that: (1) our student body is fairly represented ethnically from within our national population; (2) our faculty is not only highly educated, but also similarly diverse in representation; and (3) our administration, as excellent as it is currently, still represents a crucial portion of our overall University.

To sum it up, intelligence is not measured by the color of one's skin.

If, indeed, the Lawson affair brought so much negative national publicity upon our University, it is still not too late to let the nation observe our change and see how we make amends and peace as a 21st-century institution of higher learning.

The board of trust and our present chancellor can still offer a former student who was just three months shy of graduation, as a gesture of goodwill to a now-retired minister, an "honoris causa" doctor of theology degree.

JARL ROBERTO HELLEMALM-ASHFIELD, MA'81
Marietta, Ga.

READING THE ARTICLES on the events begun by James Lawson and John Sergent and others reminds me of my own sense of loss. I was a freshman at Vanderbilt in 1960. Coming from a rural south Georgia town, I was somewhat immature and unaware of the ways of the world. I knew nothing of my own racism because I

grew up in a very segregated world, and it seemed no different at VU. I was in search of something but it turned out not to be college. I rue the day that I did not meet James Lawson or know about the events in downtown Nashville. I think I would have made the move sooner to where I am now—committed to Christian non-violent resistance to oppression, etc. This past spring my wife, MaryRuth Matlock (BA63), and I were fortunate to spend a week with people who were and still are involved in the resistance movement in Greensboro, N.C.,

where the very first sit-ins took place. In the nearby town of Barnesville, Ga., we were able to meet for two years with local black folks and learn more about our own racism and the racism around us. The local golf course still excludes black people so that white folks can work out political and economic policies unhindered.

It took us 13 years to shake off Vanderbilt and our U.S. government jobs at the CIA and NSA. Maybe we could have done that sooner if there had been more openness about the 1960 events in the undergrad setting.

C. ED WEIR, BA'64
Barnesville, Ga.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ARTICLE ABOUT THE Fugitives and the Agrarians. Although I spent two years at Vanderbilt (1944–45) and they were mentioned, I had no idea what they were all about until I read "Pride and Prejudice."

I enjoy your magazine and read most of what is interesting to me. I still haven't figured out what a digital X-ray looks like, though [referring to article "The X-Ray Goes Digital," Winter 2003 issue, p. 58]!

JULIETTE SENTURIA, A'48
Westport, Conn.

Kudos

WHAT AN INCREDIBLE ISSUE (FALL 2003). I realize I should have read it immediately, but trying to finish three book projects leaves an alum rather time-deprived.

Everything about the issue was stunning. I was moved by Stephen Plauche and Shelli Yoder's perspectives.

Thanks for the hard work you invest in making this magazine dance. I assure you the next issue will be more immediately read.

HAROLD IVAN SMITH, EDS'74
Kansas City, Mo.

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