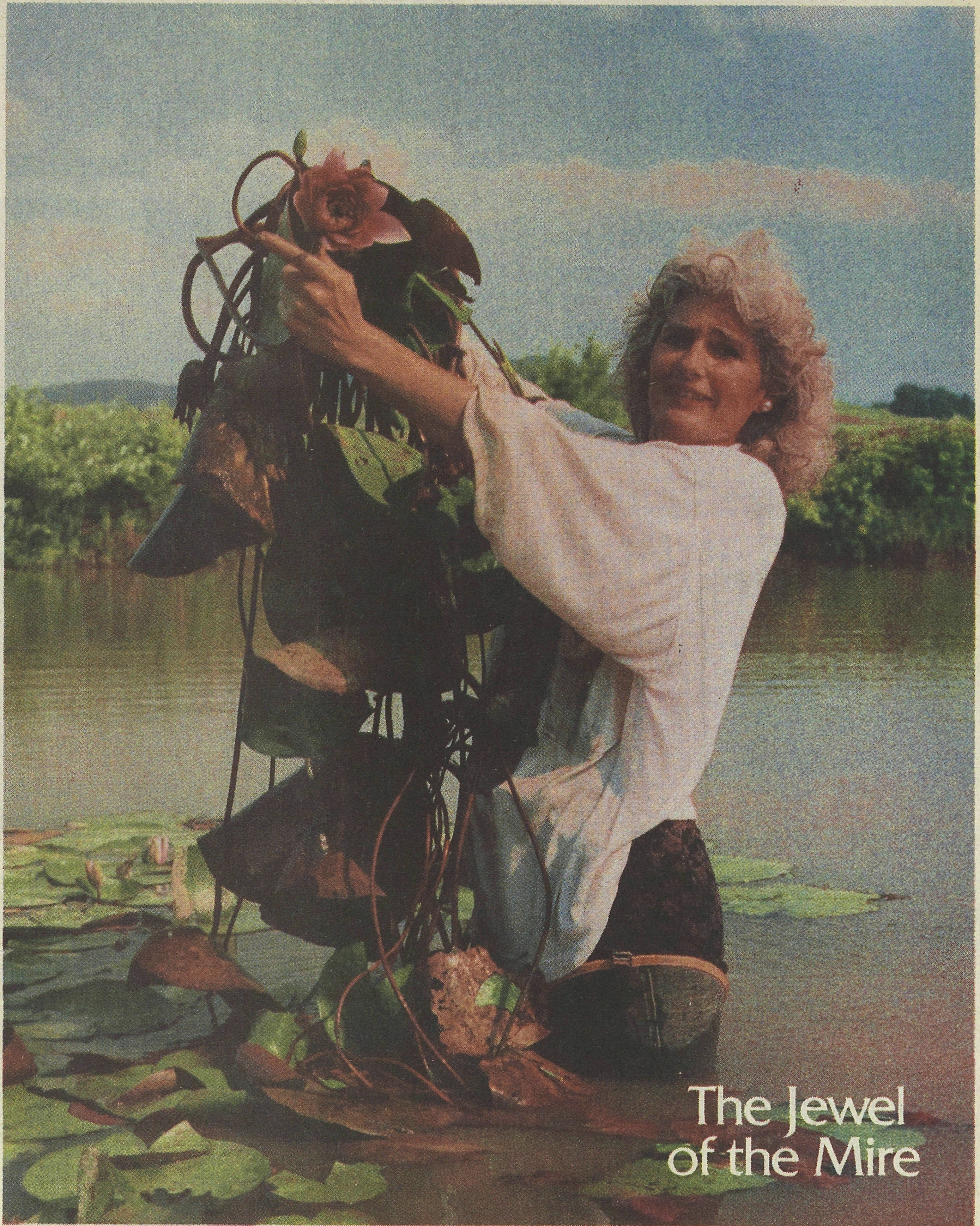
FIMU
C479

Michigan Today

The University of Michigan April 1990 Vol. 22, No. 2



The Jewel of the Mire

Photo by Mike Elspas

Michigan Today

The University of Michigan

April 1990 Vol. 22, No. 2

A Biographer's Dilemma

What made Sylvia Plath go over the edge? Was she a woman scorned or a psychotic? Is either of these extreme views accurate? These were questions alumna and poet Anne Stevenson was asked to settle —

By Madeline Strong Diehl

Photo by Madeline Strong Diehl

Stevenson and Guinness-the-Dog.

Less than a week after a January hurricane killed more than 10 people in Great Britain, the poet Anne Stevenson sits in her peaceful drawing room with a near-gale wind howling outside.

It has been a rough winter in northern England. County Durham, where Stevenson lives, has its share of downed trees and roofless houses. For the most part, Stevenson talks softly between the gusts that batter her small collier's cottage in remote Langley Park, a former coal-mining village. But her voice rises in anger when she discusses the controversy over her latest book, and it becomes clear that, for Stevenson, that storm is not over.

Responses to poets, as to poetry, can be very subjective, and biographers of poets often find themselves in the middle of critical and personal debates. But with the publication of *Bitter Fame*, her 1989 biography of fellow poet Sylvia Plath, Stevenson found herself in the middle of one of the most corrosive literary disputes of recent decades.

"I never meant to get into this, and I don't want to blot out the sun for the rest of my life," Stevenson says. Not the sort of poet who craves the limelight, Stevenson found herself unprepared for the wave of objections and outright attacks fired at her in the wake of her book. *Bitter Fame* is the latest of many books on Plath, the powerful and meteoric Boston-born writer who committed suicide in 1963, and who is generally placed in the first rank of American poets. Almost three decades after her death, Plath retains a powerful hold on the national psyches of America and Britain, not only because of the searing beauty of her language, but also because of the circumstances of her suicide at age 30, in the midst of what appeared to be the most auspicious of lives, and because of the haunting anger found in many of her later poems.

At the core of the hubbub about Plath's life lies her relationship to her poet husband, Ted Hughes, who is currently Britain's poet laureate. For six years the couple seemed to enjoy an ideal relationship, sharing their work and lives at a level of intensity and fruitfulness few marriages achieve. Yet, cast in the light of Plath's suicide, every facet of their life together became the focus of countless interpretations, beginning with their first meeting in 1955 at the St. Botolph's Literary Review party in Cambridge, England, at which Ted kissed Sylvia and Sylvia bit him, drawing blood and incurring endless interpretations of the symbolism of the event.

Even before she undertook her biography of Plath, Stevenson knew she would find her "witnesses" falling roughly into two camps. Some Plath associates blamed Hughes for her suicide because it occurred while the couple was separated and experiencing marital difficulties. Some earlier biographers seized on these sources and portrayed Plath as a wronged wife and stylized martyr, driven to despair by her unfaithful husband. The couple broke up, according to this line of reasoning, because Plath discovered that Hughes was having an affair.

Another camp, more silent until recently, saw Plath as a driven and paranoid manipulator whose suicide was a final act of depressive desperation. In drawing on these new sources, Stevenson's book threw off the halo that critics and biographers had drawn reverentially over Plath's head, and Stevenson became the target of their indignant arrows.

Why did Stevenson, knowing that she was entering a literary minefield, agree in 1985 to tackle the biography project? "I'm essentially naive," she

A Biographer's Dilemma Continued

explains. "Perhaps I thought too much of my abilities to calm and soothe both sides. By nature I'm a peacemaker. I thought — now I see wrongly — that I could reconcile the opposite sides by simply getting the 'truth' from as many witnesses as I could and putting it all together, which has proved to be something no one could do at this stage."

Before *Bitter Fame* even reached the bookstores last October, it was being heralded as "the controversial new biography" in the London *Observer*. And when she appeared on "The Late Show," a popular British evening talk show, Stevenson was raked for allegedly trying to discredit Plath. The next phase of the chain reaction saw the formation of a Sylvia Plath Society in Britain to protest Stevenson's book and her "bias" against Plath.

Stevenson's quiet home is in stark contrast to the chaos she describes. Her cat Bonny and Guinness-the-Dog nap by the late-morning fire. Upstairs in the poet's study, another cat, Clyde, is asleep on a large cardboard box that contains four years' worth of book drafts and correspondence which resulted in the book that has so far earned a rather bitter fame for Stevenson.

Many literary scholars, however, credit Stevenson with providing a needed balance to the story of Plath's life. Getting to the truth about Plath had been unusually difficult because her family and friends refused to make themselves available to biographers.

Close associates tried to keep themselves out of the fray because of the emotional pain involved and out of deference to Plath's two children, who were infants at the time of her death. Hughes himself has maintained a profound silence over the couple's marital problems and his wife's death, sustaining years of incriminations. But he has remained a staunch supporter of Plath's work and has administered the rights to her poetry through his sister, Olwyn Hughes, the executor of Plath's literary estate.

Because Stevenson won the cooperation of the Hughes estate, she had access to many important sources denied to earlier biographers. Some in the literary community — John Updike and Joyce Carol Oates, among them — say Stevenson's book has indeed cut through the mythology surrounding Plath, and presents an intimate, faithful picture of the brilliant, ambitious, self-destructive poet.

But less enthusiastic reviewers have detected in *Bitter Fame* the hand of Olwyn Hughes, who is rumored to have strongly disliked Plath. Because it tarnished the image of Saint Sylvia the Innocent, one London reviewer called the book the Hugheses' "unsubtle corrective" to earlier, unofficial biographies.

Stevenson admits that *Bitter Fame* became more of a collaboration with Olwyn Hughes than she had intended. She describes a harrowing tale of being tangled in family politics and endless compromising rewrites. Despite all her efforts to write a balanced view, Stevenson had to put her name to a book that she says she was not allowed to complete without interference.

"Plath's desire, like mine, at the end was for cohesion, peace, love, stability," Stevenson says. "This was not insisted upon enough in my book, because it was being overseen — supervised all the time — by Olwyn. And useful as she was in providing an enormous amount of material, she did want control of it. So, though the book is basically mine, it doesn't represent my complete idea of Sylvia Plath. And this distortion is what I'm in a sense rectifying now. I had to get the book out, and now I can go back and rethink some of its conclusions."

According to Stevenson, the book was Olwyn Hughes's idea. In 1985 Penguin Books asked Stevenson to write a biographical sketch on Plath for a series on famous contemporary women. Stevenson says she sent Olwyn Hughes a draft for her comments in 1986, and Olwyn suggested that Stevenson expand the work "because Olwyn thought I was the first biographer who picked up something of the terrorist in Sylvia's extreme personality."

"I made the mistake during the first year of sending off chapters to Olwyn and getting her comments," Stevenson continues. "This is because her view and that of the witnesses she brought to bear was so different from anyone else's I'd read or talked to — I was working with four or five completely new witnesses, and I wanted to be sure I got their opinions correctly. I didn't want to misquote them. But unfortunately Olwyn wouldn't let go."

Stevenson gradually became aware of the bias Olwyn was introducing into her book and sought out other sources in 1987. These sources included leaders of the newly organized Sylvia Plath Society — Trevor Thomas, Elizabeth (Compton) Sigmund and Clarissa Roche. This "pro-Sylvia" faction sees Plath chiefly as a victim and a suffering genius, and Stevenson says she included elements of this perspective in her book. But, she adds, she began to see the trouble she was getting into when she heard "the passion of their diatribes" against Ted Hughes and his sister.

"What these pro-Sylvia witnesses did, instead of giving me a great deal of positive material on Sylvia, was run down the Hugheses," Stevenson says. "Olwyn is her own worst enemy, and by her behavior to me she'd given me every reason to delight in running down the Hugheses. But when I produced my 'de-Olwynized' manuscript, trying to put Olwyn's testimony in her own words, and detaching myself from anybody, both sides jumped on me."

Stevenson says she was repelled by the nastiness of the tactics used by both sides, but in the end she was forced to choose. "The animus of the pro-Sylvia side against Olwyn was so very great, and the misconception of what Sylvia was all about was so terrible, that I found I was thrown back in Olwyn's arms anyway," Stevenson says. "I had, of course, to assess the quality of each witness I talked to, and ultimately I didn't — couldn't — credit any of them with telling the absolute truth. So I had to choose one side or the other, and I chose the Hugheses' side because it seemed to me they knew the most about Sylvia."

According to Stevenson, both sides gave her an ultimatum, and after her decision to continue to cooperate with the Hugheses, the "pro-Sylvia" faction cut ties with her. Stevenson's wrangles with Olwyn continued, however, and by early 1988 they had reached an impasse. "I just stopped," said Stevenson. "I said, 'I can't do this.' And that is when Peter Davison took it over."

By coincidence Davison, Houghton Mifflin's editor on *Bitter Fame*, dated Plath just after she graduated from Smith College in 1955, and his impressions of Plath appear in the book. Stevenson speaks highly of Davison's efforts to reconcile the conflict between herself and Olwyn, but in the end, Stevenson says, "a compromise had to be made among all three of us."

At issue were the final sections of *Bitter Fame*, which covered the conflict between Plath and Ted Hughes and the days leading up to Plath's suicide, as well as the very crucial analysis of Plath's later poems, including the so-called "Ariel poems" for which she is most famous.

"In writing the last four chapters Olwyn and I almost came to blows," Stevenson says, "because I wanted again and again to introduce qualifications to what Olwyn had said, and Olwyn would not allow me permission to quote anything if I didn't use her contributions verbatim. Finally, I decided that the book was enough mine and that I'd just have to let the book go. All the time, I may say, Olwyn was claiming more and more of the royalty. Now she wants 45 percent. She thought I was incompetent, that I just wasn't getting the point. She couldn't understand that I was actually objecting to being dictated to." Olwyn finally did win 45 percent of the British royalties, Stevenson adds.

Stevenson calls the last four chapters Davison's "mixture" of her views and Olwyn's, and, because of this, she wanted Olwyn's name on the book as co-author. The two compromised by describing Olwyn's role in an author's note; in the end, however, according to Stevenson, Olwyn changed even that. "At the last moment Olwyn would not even permit me to have my own author's note," Stevenson says. "She insisted on writing the author's note herself — on pain of withdrawing permission for the use of quotations."

Although the two have been on strained terms since working on the book together, Stevenson says she is grateful to Olwyn for defending the book's integrity against those who question it. Stevenson adds, however, that "Olwyn has been defending the book vehemently from attacks — but the attacks have mostly been on passages that Olwyn forced me to include."

The book has inspired new allegations against the Hughes family for censorship; it has also attracted new barbs at Ted Hughes. For all her ambivalence, Stevenson has publicly defended both Hugheses. "Although I found Olwyn almost impossible to work with, there's no way I can turn my back on her now. Like Mrs. Thatcher, she's bossy, but informed."

Despite the indignation that creeps into her voice when she is talking about her struggles over *Bitter Fame*, Stevenson is "very proud" of the book and strongly believes that it imparts an important critical view of Plath's life and work — a view Olwyn helped her to see. "I do believe that the Hugheses are telling the truth. Ted is not forthcoming about his own life, and wishes not to talk about it. He may have kept things back, but I do not believe he has told a lie."

Stevenson continues: "There seems to have been an organized campaign against the book by people who knew Sylvia slightly and feel that they must defend her to the death. They even started that protest society that sort of meets to worship Sylvia. The trouble is it's almost as much anti-Ted

Sylvia Plath in 1954, shortly after the nervous breakdown she recorded in **The Bell Jar.**

HOT WIND, HARD RAIN
For Sylvia Plath—August 1988

The joy of the rowan is to redden.
The foxglove achieves the violence of its climb.
This summer gale flattens the flower
and deforms the tree.
The dog trots at a queerer angle
to the disused railway.
The tabby seizes the fledgling blown to the
midden.
From the river, gaseous with weed, a reek of decay.

Hot winds bring on hard rain, and here in
Durham
a downpour tonight will probably allay
whatever has got the willows by the hair,
shoving light under their leaves
like an indecent surgeon.
Now light's in every particle of air,
acetylene wind that blows too hard and clear.
Who sifts the saving from the killing terrors,
O my dear?

From The Other House, *Oxford U. Press, June 1990*

Hughes as it is pro-Sylvia, and it seems they have made up a great deal that didn't happen; fundamentally, they accuse Ted Hughes of causing Plath's suicide by leaving her. In fact the opposite is the case; Ted Hughes was trying to negotiate with Sylvia at the time of her death, and he did believe they would be together within six weeks. I believe what Ted Hughes tells me. I do not see any reason why I should not believe him."

Even the enigmatic, reclusive Ted Hughes has come out of his tent to join the fray. In a rare public gesture, he wrote a letter to the London *Observer* in the midst of the furor over Stevenson's book to assert that his role in its publication had been a minor one. He closed by stating: "This does not mean that I approve of the book, knowing the effect these eruptions have."

In fact, Stevenson says, Hughes had a larger role than his letter revealed. According to Stevenson, when she contacted him in 1986 for his comments on her Penguin biography, "Ted sent me one very good letter at that time and criticized what I had to say. A very long, seven- or eight-page letter. He then asked me to work with Olwyn, and he saw two complete drafts before publication. So in a way he is responsible for the book more than he actually lets on."

Stevenson's book traces Plath's depression and emotional instability from the poet's early years and argues that Plath suffered from a mental illness that Stevenson believes was psychosis. Plath is portrayed as trapped in a psychic state which gave her the image of the bell-jar for her novel by that title. This "case history" of Plath's mental state, drawn from Plath's poetry, journals and the testimony of "witnesses," is a contribution Stevenson claims unequivocally as her own.

"So in a way I won a Pyrrhic victory," Stevenson says. "I think I have in a sense persuaded Olwyn that Sylvia was not wicked or bad, but that this was abnormal behavior, that there was something pretty close to psychosis going on in Sylvia. And once Olwyn and Dido Merwin [a literary ally of Olwyn's] realized that, they modified their stance and became more sympathetic, as I am, toward Sylvia. So Olwyn may have won most of the battles, but I won the war."

While Stevenson seems to resent being pulled into the cloud of controversy surrounding the Plath legacy, she says she does not regret undertaking the project. As a contemporary of Plath's and a fellow poet, Stevenson says the work of sifting through Plath's life has helped her gain perspective on her own.

"I identified with Sylvia for a good one-third of my life," Stevenson says. "When I began writing in the 1960s I felt many of Sylvia's anxieties — especially about whether I could write. But I didn't have her appetite for emotional exaggeration, and I didn't have her immense fertility of imagination, either. My own work is more balanced and more metaphysical."

Stevenson was going through a divorce at the same time Plath was, and felt much of the same anger against the "enforced gentility" of her parents. "At times I'm sure I was at least as unpleasant a person to live with as Sylvia Plath was," she says. "My criticism of her in the book is partly a criticism of myself at that time."

When asked what her next project will be, Stevenson is quick to answer, "Recovery! Life after Plath." A volume poems titled *The Other House* that she managed to compose despite the demands of writing *Bitter Fame* is scheduled for June publication by Oxford University Press. Stevenson says several of her new poems reflect a personal philosophy that evolved as she confronted the intense despair in Plath's later poems.

"From the human point of view, what Sylvia Plath was looking for was a kind of total love, was God," Stevenson says. "And she wasn't able to find it. You see her searching for this in her line: 'Is there no great love, only tenderness?' And I think this is one of the reasons Sylvia Plath despaired, because she felt that without God, there is no reason a human being should matter.

"As a poet I want to respond to this. My role in life has been to reconcile myself to tenderness — not to a 'great love' or great creeds of belief — so that human beings, not God, become responsible for their own actions."

Stevenson says she also sees Plath's despair partly as a product of her tumultuous era, when old assumptions were being swept away by social changes and scientific discoveries and nothing filled the vacuum. With advances in science, Stevenson says, humans have lost the central place in the universe that onc existed in their imaginations, and she feels a revolution must take place in human thinking, similar to the revolution that followed Galileo's evidence that the Earth was not the center of the solar system.

"In the past we have thought of ourselves as centrally placed in the universe," Stevenson says. "We have thought we were here to serve some purpose. We serve only a human purpose. One has terrible responsibility as a human being. We have no God-given right to exist."

Stevenson's inquiry into Plath's poetry continues. She is publishing her analyses in literary magazines as her thoughts evolve, and will present several lectures in the months ahead. She is focusing on the "aggrandization of self" found in Plath's poetry, which Stevenson associates with the Romantic tradition.

"Sylvia Plath was the last Romantic," Stevenson says. "We can't go on that way anymore."

For all its annoyances, Stevenson credits the experience of writing *Bitter Fame* with helping her see her own life more clearly. Having led an unconventional life in the 1960s and '70s, Stevenson, now in her fourth marriage and a grandmother at 58, looks back on her acts of Romantic rebellion with hard-won wisdom.

"This is the best way I can think of putting it," she sums up. "Anger is very useful. Everyone feels angry. But anger is tremendously short-lived. It releases by destroying. It can be very exhilarating, but like any exhilaration, like the exhilaration after drink or love, it's of short duration, and it needs to be followed by something solid. You can't live with ruin."

Plath and husband Ted Hughes, currently Britain's poet laureate, in 1956. The reclusive and enigmatic Hughes has stated, ostensibly in Stevenson's defense, that although he vouched for her accuracy, 'this does not mean that I approve of the book, knowing the effect these eruptions have.'

From Anne Stevenson's Selected Poems, *Oxford U. Press, 1987*

THE MOTHER

Of course I love them, they are my children.
That is my daughter and this is my son.
And this is my life I give them to please them.
It has never been used. Keep it safe. Pass it on.

EPITAPH FOR A GOOD MOUSER

Take, Lord, this soul of furred unblemished worth,
The sum of all I loved and caught on earth.
Quick was my holy purpose and my cause.
I die into the mercy of thy claws.

University's 1990 Alumnae Award

A 1954 Michigan graduate, Anne Stevenson is the 1990 recipient of the University's Alumnae Award, presented annually by the Alumnae Council to "an alumna who has achieved prominence and the respect of her peers in her chosen profession."

Stevenson, daughter of the late U-M professor of philosophy Charles L. Stevenson and Louise Destler Stevenson, will attend the annual Alumnae Luncheon on May 11 and will address the University community.

As an undergraduate, Stevenson won a Hopwood Award for a collection of poems, was an accomplished cellist and delivered a "preachy" address at her class's Phi Beta Kappa ceremony. She remembers herself as being "far too tense and ambitious," adding that she was "saved from the plight of Sylvia Plath — whose breakdown at Smith in 1953 put her a year behind me — by the international and coeducational nature of the University."

Stevenson has published several volumes of poetry, including Living in America *(1965);* Reversals *(1969);* Travelling behind Glass *(1974);* Enough of Green *(1977);* Sonnets for Five Seasons *(1979); and* Green Mountain, Black Mountain *(1982).*

A collection of Stevenson's new poems, The Other House, *is due out in June from Oxford University Press.*

COLOURS

Enough of green
though to remember childhood
is to stand in uneasy radiance
under those trees.

Enough yellow.
We are looking back
over our shoulders, telling our children
to be happy.

Try to forget about red.
Leave it to the professionals.
But perceive heaven as a density
blue enough to abolish the stars.

As long as the rainbow lasts
the company stays.

Of black there is never enough.

One by one the lights in the house go out.
Step over the threshold. Forget
to take my hand.

THE FISH ARE ALL SICK

The fish are all sick, the great whales dead,
the villages stranded in stone on the coast,
ornamental, like pearls on the fringe of a coat.
Sea men, who knew what the ocean did,
turned their low houses away from the surf.
but new men, who come to be rural and safe,
add big glass views and begonia beds.

Water keeps to itself.
White lip after lip
curls to a close on the littered beach.
Something is sicker and blacker than fish.
And closing its grip, and closing its grip.

COMPLAINT

'Dear God,' they write, 'that was a selfish winter
to lean so long, unfairly, on the spring.
And now — this too much greed of seedy summer.
Mouths of the flowers unstick themselves and sting
the bees with irresistible dust. Iris
allow undignified inspection. Plain waste
weeds dress up in Queen Anne's lace; our mist
blue sky clouds heavily with clematis —

'Too much,' they cry, 'too much. Begin again.'
The Lord, himself a casualty of weather,
falls to earth in large hot drops of rain.
The dry loam rouses in his scent, and under
him — moist, sweet, discriminate — the spring.
Thunder, Lightning. He can do anything.

Madeline Strong Diehl, a free-lance writer from Ann Arbor, is temporarily residing in Italy.

The Center for the Education of Women gives more than money —

VOTES OF CONFIDENCE

By Deborah Gilbert

The Center for the Education of Women (CEW) is marking its 25th anniversary this academic year by awarding 35 CEW Scholarships in April to women students of demonstrated potential, determination and need.

"The CEW Scholarship program for returning women students began in 1970 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the admission of women to the University," says CEW Director Carol S. Hollenshead. "By April, we will have awarded 574 scholarships; we are very proud of our record in that regard, especially because our scholarships are supported entirely by private gifts."

The 1990-91 scholars will be named the Margaret Dow Towsley Scholars in honor of Towsley's 20 years of leadership and contributions to the Center.

"The scholarships range from $500 to $3,000 and often have a major effect on the students' ability to continue with her studies," Hollenshead says. "We are frequently told, however, that the symbolic nature of the award is as important as the dollars. The award is a vote of confidence, an affirmation that we believe in the woman and her work."

Last November the Center changed its name from the Center for the Continuing Education of Women. The change signals both an expansion of focus and a continuation of it ongoing mission. "We will continue," Hollenshead says, "to offer an array of academic, financial and personal counseling services and programs to women returning to school, but we also work with women now in school. Given demographic projections, there will be a great need for highly educated professionals in the next century. Through our scholarship program and our other activities, we want to do what we can to prepare women to take advantage of these opportunities."

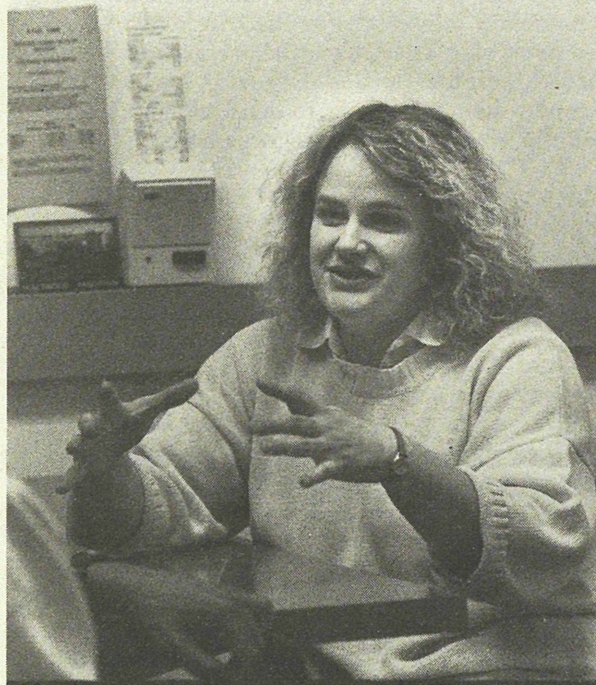


Photo by Bob Kalmbach

Tina Parke-Sutherland

When the oil depression hit Fairbanks, Alaska, in 1985, Tina Parke-Sutherland's job at the University of Alaska was "defunded" and the home-building business she and her husband owned went bankrupt.

"We lost our shirts. No one could afford to buy homes," Parke-Sutherland recalls. "We had to sell our home to pay the people who worked for us. I'd been head of the Cross-Cultural Communications Program at the university, but I had no tenure because I didn't have a Ph.D., so I resolved to get one to make myself less vulnerable financially."

A year later Parke-Sutherland, her husband and their two children, Billy, then 4, and Susie, then 18 months, came to Ann Arbor so she could enter the doctoral program in English language and literature. Her husband, Bill Sutherland, cares for the children, works as a mason and polishes the novels the two have written together and a new one of his own.

"It's not easy to be an older graduate student at the U-M," Parke-Sutherland says. "The graduate program is designed for 25-year-olds who have no family responsibilities and no financial ones. I had both. The $3,000 CEW fellowship I received in 1988 came at a very critical time. It allowed me to read every day throughout the summer for my preliminary exams, and it gave me the chance to discover that at 40, I could still function competitively — that I was up to snuff.

"The most important part of the award, however, was the emotional significance: Somebody thought I was worth supporting. Even now, when I am down, when it all seems impossible, I think about the women at CEW. There is a lot riding on my degree. Right now, I'm the financial 'point man' in the family, so I cannot quit."

Parke-Sutherland graduated from a "blue-collar high school in Lansing" in 1966. She went to Northern Michigan University in Marquette "where I could fish every day"; she married her first husband there in 1970, and two years later graduated with a master's degree in English. Her next destination was a two-room, K-12 schoolhouse in Glidden, Wisconsin, where she was "a floating substitute who taught everything in all the grades."

Between 1975 and 1978, Parke-Sutherland worked at a Michigan ski resort, rising from desk clerk to manager of hotel operations. In 1978 she headed for Fairbanks to get a master of fine arts degree in creative writing. During the next eight years, she divorced, remarried, and earned a living lecturing and counseling indigenous Alaskan students.

Parke-Sutherland has a penchant for scrutinizing the familiar as if she were an ethnographer. For instance, the satirical science fiction novel on which she and her husband are collaborating involves "an alien detective from a planet where there is just one sex, a transvestite rock star from Earth and so on. The novel is a comic study of gender behavior."

Ruby Beale, now a lecturer in organizational psychology at the U-M and a human resources consultant, spent the past three years in Boston dealing with one of the most intransigent issues in America: raising academic achievement levels among Black students by convincing them that if they work hard and effectively, they can succeed.

After graduating with a Ph.D. in social psychology in 1986, Beale became a trainer and director of research and evaluation at the Efficacy Institute (EI), which runs four-day "efficacy" workshops for school administrators, faculty and students that often enrage some of the participants.

"We encouraged people to face some truths, to acknowledge things that many, particularly people of color, don't want to see," Beale says. "Essentially, EI confronts Black educators and Black students with the fact that many of them

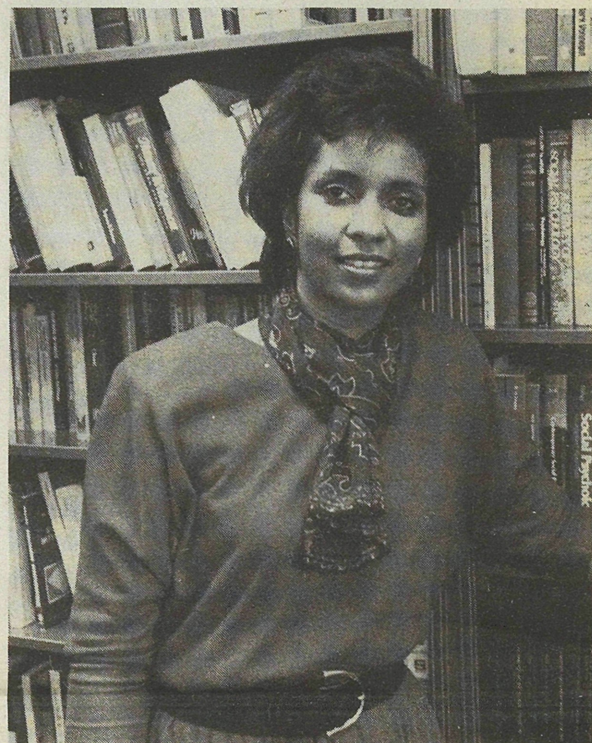


Photo by Bob Kalmbach

Ruby Beale

have internalized rumors of genetic inferiority. Unconsciously, they believe what they have been told by a racist society and some may freeze when they have to perform, or tend to avoid taking intellectual risks. If they do fail — which everybody does on occasion — many Blacks are likely to attribute failure to lack of ability rather than lack of effective effort. Then when the next challenge comes along, they expect to fail, so they don't try or try hard enough. White society, with its negative expectations about Hispanics and Blacks, initiated and often perpetuates the phenomenon."

It was difficult to deal with such issues when seminar participants are from diverse backgrounds, Beale found. "People of color get very sensitive about 'airing dirty laundry' while white people are liable to start thinking, 'Oh, these people are pathological.' The seminar leaders have to work particularly hard to bring whites into the fold by showing them how some of the attitudes and behavior that many inadvertently practice with students and colleagues exacerbate the problem. We emphasized that this is an 'everybody's responsibility' model not a 'blame' model."

Beale, who grew up in Philadelphia, dropped out of high school to marry and care for a baby. At 19, she received her GED and then took a series of jobs "to help out — they weren't part of a career." Eventually she divorced and decided to pursue an associate's degree in business. "But I also studied psychology, English and accounting, and really got hooked on education."

After graduating from the University of California, San Bernardino in 1980, she came to the U-M to begin work on her Ph.D. "CEW was very important to me at that time. They appreciated me as a whole person. I didn't have to segment myself and my interests. I could talk about my research, my sons, my parents, my career goals all in one conversation without one topic seeming off limits or unprofessional. Although most of the people at CEW were not Black, they were not intimidated when I talked about being Black. They were very affirming through the whole process. I knew I could survive, but CEW taught me I could thrive — that I could dare to take risks again and again."

When 1983 CEW Scholar Karen Tomcala sees photos of Sen. Dave Durenberger, R-Minnesota, and Sen. Dennis DeConcini, D-Arizona, splashed across the front page of the *Washington Post*, she reads the accompanying articles with a mixture of avidity and dread.

A first-year associate with the law firm of Olwine, Connelly, Chase, O'Donnell and Weyher of Washington, D.C., she is participating in the defense of both Durenberger and DeConcini. Durenberger has been accused of circumventing Senate limits on speaking fees by accepting stipends for "book promotion" speeches from a Minnesota book publisher. DeConcini has been cited for unethical conduct related to the Lincoln Savings and Loan scandals.

"I was hired by the firm originally to do work in energy legislation and regulation," Tomcala says, "but then I was shifted to these cases where I was needed more."

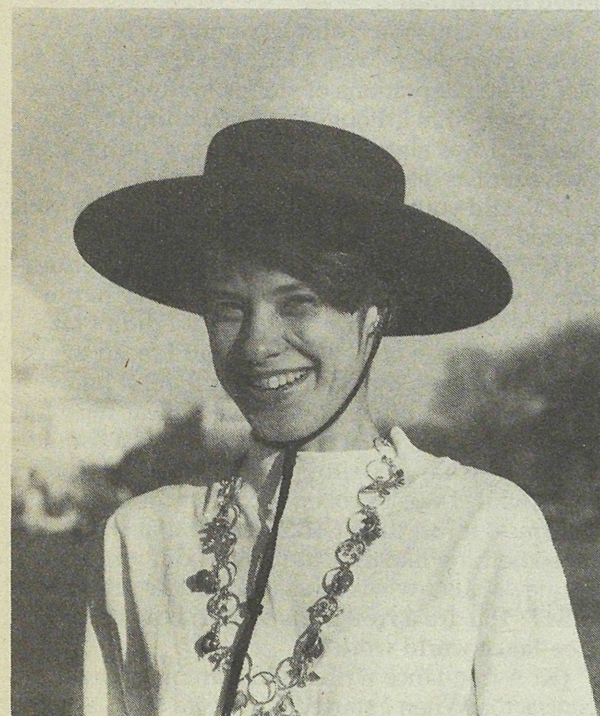
Although Tomcala entered the U-M Law School in 1986 with the intention of getting a government job in public policy development, $30,000 of accumulated debt led her to join a law firm.

"My financial options were narrow; I had to pay back the school loans. But I find white-collar criminal defense to be extremely absorbing detective work," she says. "You sift through memos, letters, documents, and calendars to reconstruct events and, inevitably, begin to encounter the intimate and personal side of people's lives. It is a lot like delving into gossip all day. The work is not strictly legalistic. You really have to function like a psychologist as well as a lawyer as you try to figure out what your client was thinking and doing during the time in question."

Tomcala's background made her an unlikely candidate for a Washington law firm. "I come from a family in Flushing, Michigan, just outside Flint, and was married right after high school. Seven years later, I had two children, Aubrey, who was 5, and Quinton, who was 1. I desperately wanted to go to college but didn't think a four-year degree was feasible, so I attended Mott Community College for an associate's degree. My husband had been laid off the assembly line at General Motors, so he went back to school, too."

In 1983 Tomcala got a CEW Scholarship, finished her last two years at U-M Flint, and her husband was called back to work. "The CEW Scholarship award ceremony made the college experience seem more real, more possible for me, to see others doing the same thing with similar conflicts." Tomcala received her B.A. in 1985, and also separated from her husband.

"I felt a sense of total confusion when I got to Law School in the fall of '86," Tomcala recalls, "but I began to attend CEW's brown-bag lunches and sat on some 'How to Get into Law School' panels for them. Meeting other mothers in the same boat was very helpful at that point. As a non-traditional student, you can feel you are not doing well enough as a student or as a mother. The CEW meetings help you readjust your attitudes."



Karen Tomcala

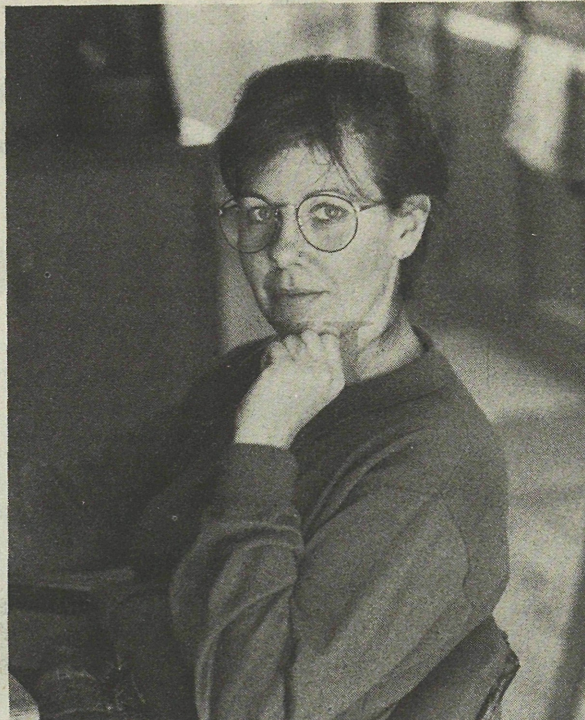


Photo by Bob Kalmbach

Julie Nugent

When she was in her first year at the College of Engineering 1987 CEW scholar Julie Nugent used to gloomily ponder alternative ways to make a living. "I would think, 'It wouldn't be so bad being a maid. The money might not be that bad and someone has to do the work. Why not?' Then I would think, 'I can't drop out. CEW might make me give my scholarship back.' That was how bad it was."

Despite her fantasies of a simpler, less challenging life, she continued to slog through the work. Eventually she adjusted, her grades improved and now, two years later, she is about to graduate with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering.

About six years ago, however, the odds of her becoming a mechanical engineer had seemed slim or none, because Nugent started her climb up the academic ladder from one of the lowest academic rungs — a government-funded program at the Port Huron School of Business to train low-income workers in word processing and secretarial skills.

"It was 1980. I was 23 and had just ended a six-year marriage. I had an 18-month-old son, a 3-year-old daughter and lived in a condemned building with an arsonist downstairs," Nugent says, eyes widening at the memory. "My mother thought my life was over."

Once she got her business school degree, she joined Manpower Inc., which assigned her to a full-time job at Detroit Edison's Belle River Power Plant in St. Clair, Michigan. "The engineers wore hard hats and carried radios and seemed to make a ton of money while doing exciting things," Nugent says. "Also one of the engineers was a woman. She was very competent and well-respected. I admired her tremendously."

That fall, she entered St. Clair County Community College in pre-engineering to take the classes she had ignored in high school: physics, trigonometry, chemistry, algebra and pre-calculus. After paying for her first year, she got governent aid, wangled student loans and three years later graduated summa cum laude with straight A's.

Just before graduation, she was casting about for future opportunities and saw a CEW poster advertising scholarships for non-traditional students on the wall of the St. Clair College financial aid office. The following September, with a $3,000 CEW Scholarship in hand, she was at U-M.

Her first year in the College of Engineering was wretched. "I studied all the time, ignored my kids and we all were miserable. My grades were not good the first year and it was a shock for me."

Several months in family therapy helped her over the hump. "I now have a 3.3 grade-point average and try hard to keep a balance between school and not-school."

Her grade point, an internship at Marathon Petroleum and a clear sense of what she wants in a career have made her an attractive hiring prospect to many companies. She has had more than 20 campus interviews and five job offers. "The ideal job for me would include the chance to work in a plant. I want to do true technical engineering. If and when I do move eventually to upper levels of management, I will know how the product is made. I will know the fundamentals of the company. That is essential to good management."

Sibel Koyluoglu, 37, a product design engineer with Ford Motor Company, is still mildly astonished at her "incredible luck" to be doing precisely what she wants to do for a living. "Every time I drive past the 'Research and Engineering Center' sign outside my office in Dearborn, I start to grin, all alone in my car," she says.

Koyluoglu graduated with an M.S.E. in May 1989 and joined Ford last September. She is now responsible for "four of the zillion parts" in Ford light trucks — the plastic steering column cover, called the shroud; the left shake brace and the right shake brace, which keep the steering column from vibrating; and the brake and clutch pedal support behind the dashboard.

"They are my babies, all mine," she says. "I'm responsible for any changes in design, checking for quality control, working with the suppliers and making sure the parts can be installed successfully on the assembly line.

Koyluoglu is "fascinated by assembly plants. You have all these unrelated parts — thousands of them — and then they all come together and a truck drives off the line. Just think of the centuries of innovation it took to get from the wheel to the truck. Who thought first of making a screw rather than a simple nail? Technological puzzles can bring out the best in human beings."

As a child, Koyluoglu was attracted to machines. "I loved taking things apart — motors, toy engines. Once I dismantled my father's typewriter. He was not happy. I never put anything back together."

Koyluoglu's father was a Turkish psychiatrist who had been a veterinarian. "He came to America after World War II. The U.S. government was shipping mules to Greece as part of the Marshall Plan, and the ship needed a physician for the crew and a veterinarian for the mules. My father could do both, and that was our foot in the American door."

The family settled in upstate New York, and after high school Koyluoglu got a B.A. in communication at the State University of New York at Albany. Her ties to Turkey remained strong, however, thanks to summers spent there, so she took a job teaching English to engineering students at a Turkish university. The textbooks she used left her "yearning to become an engineer."

Photo by Bob Kalmbach

Sibel Koyluoglu

When her husband, Sukru Dogan, a professor of public policy and engineering economics, got a sabbatical in 1983, they came to Ann Arbor. "He was unbelievably supportive while I took introductory classes in calculus and chemistry to qualify for engineering school. I am very lucky."

Koyluoglu says she became "petrified" at that point, and went to CEW to talk to Cinda-Sue Davis, director of CEW's Women in Science program. "I said to her, I'll be at least 35 when I get my degree. And she said, 'You'll be 35 no matter what you do. Do you want to be 35 with a degree in engineering or 35 without one?' "

Two years later, Koyluoglu entered the College of Engineering. "It was sheer hell financially and emotionally. But when I graduated, I felt like I had been given a second chance in life. Now when I overhear secretaries in the halls at work talking about maybe going back to school, I butt right in even if I don't know them and say, 'Please, give it a try.' " MT

Covering Princess Di

(and other adventures of the free-lance trade)

Photo by Mary Emblen

The spotlight rarely falls on free-lance writing, for people tend to take it for granted; some even feel they could do better themselves "if only I had the time." But armchair free-lancers may find their confidence shaken once they've had a chance to hear about it from one of its top practitioners, Joanne (pronounced 'Joan', not 'Jo-anne') Kaufman '73, '74 MA, a New York-based writer whose ability to convey her personal take on just about anything amusing, interesting or newsworthy has made her a success in a tough profession.

When you see the byline "By Joanne Kaufman" in *People*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Vanity Fair*, or a dozen other major newspapers and magazines, you could be reading anything from a review of the latest best-seller to a description of a meeting with Princess Diana.

Kaufman was born in Detroit and grew up in its northern suburbs. After earning two degrees in English literature at Michigan, she spent four more years in Ann Arbor working at The University of Michigan Press and "trying to get published." Then she moved to New York City, capital of the free-lance writer's world, and was soon being published almost constantly. In addition to writing for publications like the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, *The Daily News*, *The New York Times*, *Glamour*, *Self*, and *New York Woman*, Kaufman is a part-time writer at *People* magazine — a position some consider to be at the top of the popular journalistic heap.

Read a couple of Kaufman's pieces, and you can see how she got there. She asks all of the questions you would have liked to have asked yourself, and then presents an apparently effortless and totally readable distillation of her subjects; editors find her to be the perfect stand-in for readers who want to know all about something and aren't hesitant to laugh a little about what they find. Even the rich and famous can be unconciously funny, as Kaufman's deadpan delivery often illustrates.

'It makes me angry when people maybe just out of college call and say, "I would like to become a writer. What's involved with that?" 'The only reason to become a writer is because there is nothing else you can do — because there isn't a choice'

Joanne Kaufman '73, '74 MA

Kaufman provides a window onto the problems and pleasures of the free-lance life in this interview for *Michigan Today* with New York free-lancer Ann E. Berman.

Michigan Today: When did you become interested in writing?

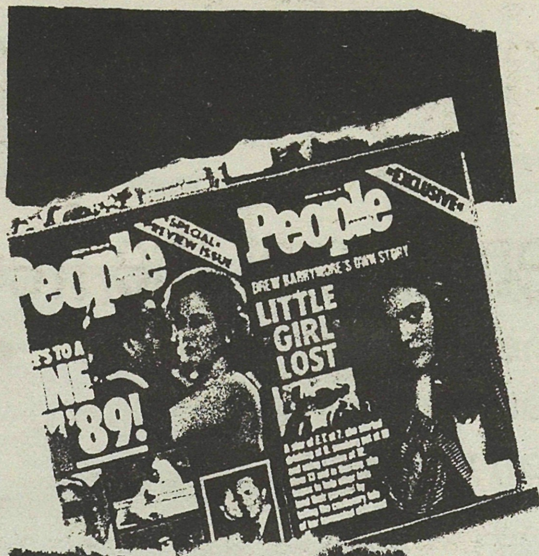
Joanne Kaufman: I always wanted to be a writer, even when I was a kid. When I was 7 years old, I'd do adaptations of stories, dramatizations and poems that I thought were meaningful and "heavy." I was always torn between wanting to be thought of as deep, or as very funny.

MT: Did your years at Michigan influence your career?

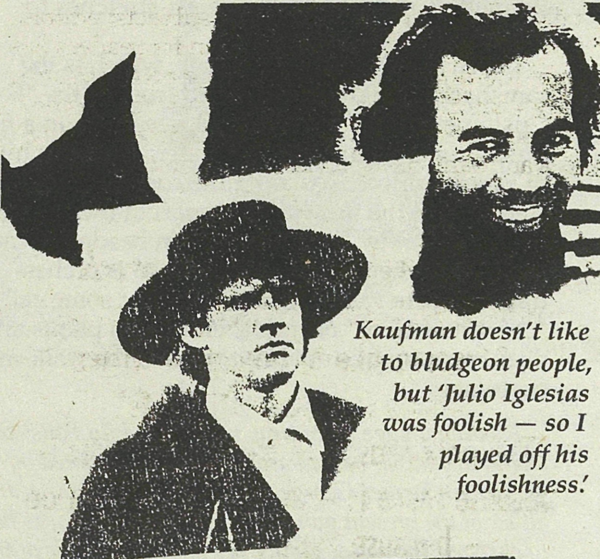
JK: I know that at Michigan I got a good education. I studied English lit, and I was very happy there — I loved it. Now I regret that I didn't take more advantage of it. It's ironic, but I raced to get through it, even though I loved it. I don't know what I was in a hurry about. Then it was hard for me to leave, and in fact I didn't leave for a couple of years. As far as writing is concerned, I wrote plays while I was in college. I didn't think of journalism — it just didn't occur to me that I would do something like that, although I did write for the newspaper when I was in graduate school.

MT: You are a free-lance writer; how does the free-lance world work?

JK: A free-lance writer is like an independent contractor. When I started out, I had to do a lot of calling to editors to get jobs, but now it's mostly people calling me because they have seen my work. When I get an assignment, sometimes it is something I want to do, and sometimes it is what somebody else wants me to do. It is nice when it's the same.



'Remember the one about Charles and Di and the "Seven Year Itch"? I wrote that.'



Kaufman doesn't like to bludgeon people, but 'Julio Iglesias was foolish — so I played off his foolishness.'

Alexander Godunov 'was hideously rude and contemptuous. I left in tears.'

MT: What kinds of pieces do you usually write?

JK: I don't specialize in a certain type of story. I want to be thought of as somebody with a lot of bows in her quiver — not as "Joannie one note." Recently I've interviewed Bill Murray, Jackie Mason and celebrity bodyguards, the personal shopper at F.A.O. Schwartz, the playwright king of summer stock and the top money-winner on the woman's pro bowling circuit.

MT: Where do all these different story ideas come from?

JK: Out of the air sometimes. Or maybe I'll read something in a magazine. For example, I remember in the *New Republic* Stanley Kauffman was reviewing Dustin Hoffman's performance in *Rain Man*. He said that in the movie Dustin Hoffman was not acting but *simulating*, like the people who simulate medical symptoms for pharmaceutical and medical conventions. And I thought: "There are people who do that?" So I wrote a story about them for the *Wall Street Journal*.

MT: What are the worst and the best interviews you've done?

JK: My most horrible experience was interviewing the dancer Alexander Godunov for the *Detroit Free Press* four years ago. He was hideously rude and contemptuous. I left in tears. So I decided that *obviously* he had fallen in love with me during the interview and was behaving like that because he didn't want to have to break it to Jacqueline Bisset. The best people for me to interview are those who lend themselves to being funny — who you can make fun of. Julio Iglesias and Princess Di are those sorts of people.

MT: Okay, let's get to Princess Di. How and where did you meet her, and what was it like?

JK: I met Princess Di when I did a story about her visit to F.A.O. Schwartz for the *Wall Street Journal*. She was opening an exhibition of British toys, and she was presented to me by the store owner. It was great, it gave me a lot of interesting things to talk about at dinner parties. You can dine out on that sort of thing. What is she like? She is very pretty, very tall, very gracious — she looks like her pictures. I was told that if you are not her countryman, you don't have to curtsy — we shook hands, then chatted for about three minutes. It is improper to write while speaking to a member of the royal family, so I had to remember what she said and jot it down as soon as she moved on. I was nervous, but it was fun.

MT: You were also on the royal family beat at *People*. Do you enjoy writing about the royals?

JK: Yes. For one thing, I'm interested in English history — I even considered majoring in it. Also, given a choice, I'd rather write about the royal family than about Cher. I don't particularly care about "meeting the stars," but I love the royal family. I am an Anglophile and a Jew, and I love them as only a Jew can love them. So I have done a number of pieces about them over the past few years. Remember the one about Diana and Charles and the "Seven Year Itch"? I wrote that. And also the one on Fergie's baby's birth, and the story about letters being discovered from a paramour of Princess Anne's. But now a different editor has the royals beat, so no more stories abou them for me at the moment.

MT: How does *People's* writing and editing system work?

JK: *People* has bureaus around the world with reporters who do the interviewing of a subject or the reporting of an event. Then these "files" are sent to the New York office and funneled to the writers. The writer is really a rewrite person who has to weave details into a story. Next, several layers of editors "slice and dice," and write nasty notes about the writer's lack of marbles or whatever, and the piece is finally shaped into a story. The system is really group editing. Writers are assigned to particular editors who cover various areas. When you are assigned to an editor, you do stories in his or her areas.

MT: What kind of subject do you find most difficult?

JK: A subject you already know a lot about is difficult because you may make incorrect assumptions about what your reader may know. And something you know nothing about is also difficult because you are going to have to explain it. A mentor once gave me *Elements of Style* and written on the flyleaf was, "Remember that most people are in trouble most of the time." I took this to mean, "Don't make assumptions about people's knowledge." The real point is to be concise and clear and communicate. Don't obscure your meaning.

MT: Is writing the chief skill needed to produce a well-told story?

JK: Yes, but you also have to research well, organize well — a whole bunch of skills. You also have to be a good thinker. For instance, if you are doing an essay, you should have an interesting way of seeing the world. Sometimes the problem is that someone is not good at all of these. I think you have to have 80 percent skills in each of them to do well.

MT: Can writing be taught?

JK: Certain skills can be. You can be taught to write *better*. It is a mechanical skill in a certain way. But I am not sure you can be taught to write. It's something you are born with. It makes me angry when people maybe just out of college call and say, "I would like to become a writer. What's involved with that?" It's as if they are saying that if they thought it was interesting, they could just take it up. It doesn't work like that. I don't want to sound mystical, or as if I'm saying, "I can do this and you can't" — I don't think writing is a "calling" — but it's not like going to, say, social work school either.

The only reason to become a writer is because there is nothing else you can do — because there isn't a choice because you really love it. You are always putting yourself on the line — it's ego-involving. Maybe it shouldn't be, but it is. You get your ego bruised a lot, like if something gets killed [not published after it has been assigned] that you really worked on, or if it does get published but is ignored. And there are always new people coming up. Writing doesn't pay. It can be heartbreaking. It is not easy.

MT: But you have succeeded at it. Why do you think people like your work?

JK: They don't always, but when they do, I suspect it may be because I have a fairly easy, relaxed style. Also, I am sometimes funny — I can be a little bit sly.

MT: Humor is very important to your work?

JK: Enormously. I like writing about things that allow me to be amusing, I love people laughing at what I write. I love being able to poke fun at somebody in a way that isn't obvious. When I started out, I used to bludgeon people with my humor. Now I like to use the subject's own quotes to make him sound foolish, or just use my own wry comment.

MT: What kind of feedback do you get after you have had something published?

JK: Sometimes I feel that I am writing into a vacuum or into a pit. I wonder, does anybody read it? Does it move them, interest them? Do they say to their friends: "I just read a great piece on such and such — you have to read it!"? Sometimes other writers and editors do recognize my name and call me after having seen something I did. But if I go to a party and say my name, people don't usually recognize it. Then if I mention a particular piece, frequently people will say, "Oh I saw *that*."

MT: What is most satisfying to you about what you do?

JK: Seeing my byline. It still gives me a tremendous kick even after all this time. And when it's going well I really do love to write. I like words — how powerful they are and that I have a whole palette of them to choose from. I feel privileged that I get to do this. I am surprised that people sometimes pay me large sums of money for what I would do for free.

MT: What do you see yourself doing in 10 years?

JK: I'd just like to be doing more of the same and doing better. Although I've been approached to do books on various occasions, I'd have to be very interested in the subject to write one. I have a very short attention span, but I can be interested in anything for 5,000 words. Journalism is very good for me. MT

Jewel of the Mire

She was a new grad heading for home, but got swamped on the way —

By Pamela M. Larratt

I admit I'm attracted to direness. After three years at Michigan, during which I jumped from one program to another, I'd become the prima donna in an opera about parking tickets. As graduation approached my dilemma was not a career choice but whether to suffer a tragic fate in court or hotfoot it out of town.

Directly on getting my degree in communication, I hit the road for Baltimore in my 280ZX (bought with a single college loan), needing to make it on one tank of gas. As I drive I can hear a sigh of relief all the way from Connecticut. It's my mother, premature as ever. "Now," she's saying, "my daughter will get a good job."

Then, in Buckeyestown (oh, fateful name!) in western Maryland, just an hour from my destination, I run out of gas. I'm not calling my mother or any other family member to bail me out. I look for temporary jobs agencies in the phone book and sign in at Dunhill Temps, better sounding than *Manpower*. More aristo. (I might mention here that members of my family tend to be successful beige WASPS, buzzing around New England after hardware and insurance, mainly. They Black-&-Decker themselves to the hilt. My uncle, when he pays his taxes, asks the IRS if he's paid enough. If he overpays and gets a refund, he's ecstatic.)

"Dunhill Temps." I can just see the foxhunts and lazy afternoons as I pull my oar for Dunhill in this backwater. I tell them I won't do clerical, which leaves me two job possibilities. One is interviewing 7-Eleven shoppers on buying preferences. I keep a thin smile plastered to my face. The other is pulling aquatic plants at Lilypons Water Gardens, where they tell me there are snakes. My fingers begin to twitch.

"The second job sounds attractive," is what I say.

I call my brother, a Fortune 500 type, and a heavy silence follows when I tell him the pay — $5 an hour, no benefits. My mother's voice moves down a waterfall of despair.

My job is to pull thousands of plants from freshwater ponds; 90 percent of the plants will be mailed to people who are spending upwards of $600 on lilies or lotus blossoms for their backyard water gardens. Sending out for serenity is a big trend today. Those who can afford it are unwinding to the drip-drip-splash of a bronze fountain — also available from Lilypons, the nation's biggest supplier of water gardens and sundry paraphernalia.

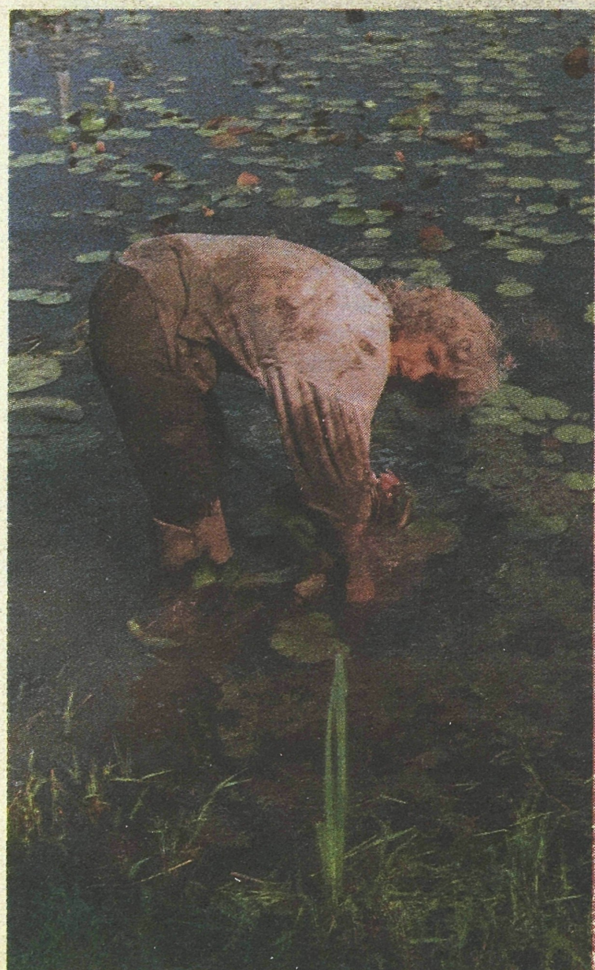


Photo by Mike Elspas

It was hard not to think of the snakes and snapping turtles that lived in the ponds, Larratt says, but only a creature called a hellgrammite did her any harm.

Monday, April 25, driving to work. Buckeyestown comes into sharper focus. I see the meandering northern edge of the Mason-Dixon line, with its Victorian verandas and state flags, laurel and honeysuckle, and beyond that a few miles of cow-high grass until the car breaks through woods at the bridge over the Monocacy River. There everything falls away to a long floor of ponds, steaming and misting in the blue and pink early morning. It's a treeless bog forever, 270 acres of lily and lotus, cattail and iris, with a ramshackle building down at water level. At a distance, like a superior cousin, an old brick house sits on higher ground. Splitting up the ponds is Bennett's Creek. The whole vista stretches to Sugarloaf Mountain.

Down at Lilypons Operations, which is the ramshackle building, I park out front in the "For Customers Only" space. Employees park in a field up the road. I start walking, listening to the hum of water pumps circulating the contents of a deep well toward the fish-hatchery part of the business, a half-mile away. That's where I'm headed because that's also where "plant production" is orchestrated, where we performers in what some call the "concert of labor" bring the enormous plants and deep roots up from the bog right to the walk-in customers.

It's been an age since tiny, mercurial Lily Pons, the late French diva, bobbed around in a boat piloted by gentleman farmer George Leicester Thomas Sr., grandfather of the present owners of Lilypons. Pons was here to christen the place, giving her name, then one of the world's most glamorous, to the water lily business. The year was 1936. She was here from her estate in southern Connecticut. Bands played. Theaters in nearby Frederick showed her films, and the cash began to flow into Lilypons. Why not Lily Pons? Because by the mid-1930s, the Three Springs Fisheries, founded by George Thomas Sr. in 1917, had begun to mail too many items for the small local post office. Postal officials said the business should establish its own post office, but that the name should be one word, not two. Thomas had already thought it a nice gesture to honor the songstress he admired. Hence Lilypons.

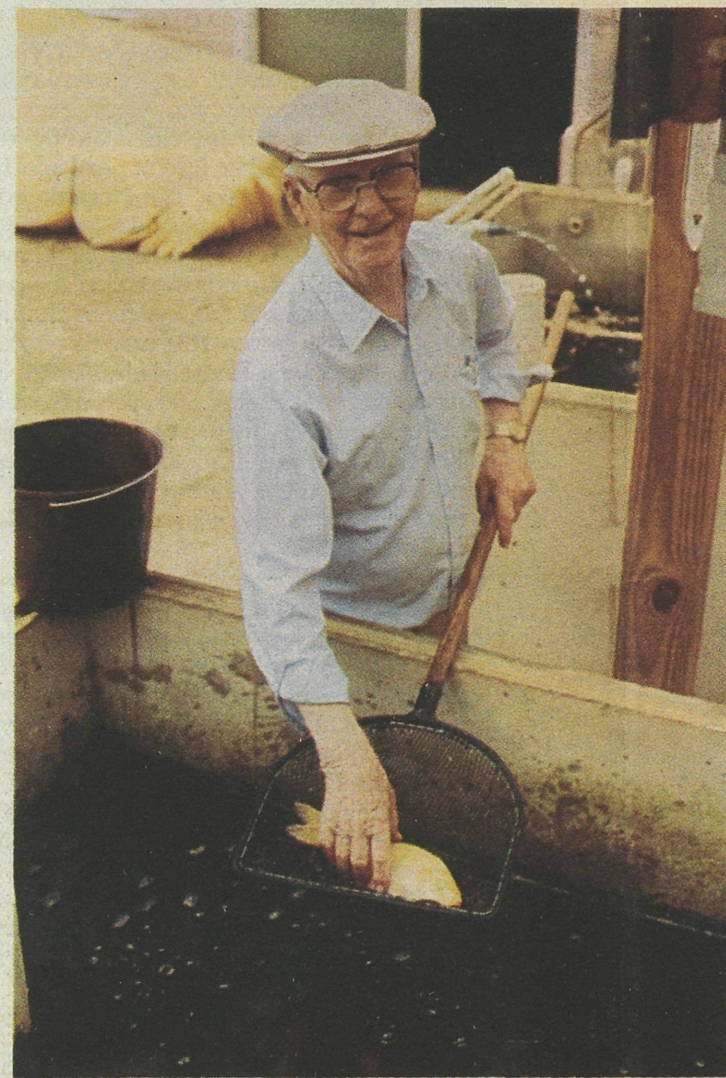


Photo by Mike Elspas

Ernest Page, who manages the fish end of the business, is known for whistling mysterious melodies.

Where am I? Oh yes, I'm reaching with trembling hands — not for lilies just yet, but for lotus tubers. I've been dispatched to a rippling plastic roof, a potting area containing waist-high benches, pits of clay soil, 50-pound bags of peat, plastic tubs, bags, buckets, pails and trashcans full of pea gravel. I have to remember that they're more fragile than robins' eggs as I gingerly transfer a single tuber from a box to a plastic-lined mailing container of peat and water.

Potting is tough, but I find out in a few days how much tougher harvesting is. We're in the four-week harvesting season, during which the ponds are drained and the lotus tubers are pulled from them. The rest of the crew and I hop in the back of a farm truck and bounce out to a pond to get some *Mrs. Perry D. Slocum*, a lotus named for a Texas woman. There's a wagonload of cussing when we get into the drained pond, as our fingers run painfully but fruitlessly down into the graveled clay soil in search of lotus strands. We're told to keep trying.It can take hours to get just one lotus out of the bog. Not infrequently, after those hours, the plant can snap at its crucial point, the fragile growth tip, which ruins it.

Trina, the crew boss, doesn't give up easily. She teaches corporate fitness in the off-season. I think of her as Miss Hardbody. Finally she calls us off the hunt. "We'll go get lutea, instead," she says, and we are trucked back beyond Operations to a pond near the entrance road. I'm pouting big time. I want to go home. Blisters have formed down in the bottom of my waders. My socks are soaking wet. My hands hurt like hell. Clay is all over me. I'm in Vietnam.

The crew fans out for lutea lotus. After about 20 minutes plunging my hands into slightly more

Lily Pons as Lakmé in 1928.

Photo by Mike Elspas

Charles Thomas, grandson of Lilypons founder, with one of the jewels that entrance him as much as ever.

pliant soil, I've got one. I'm ready to ease the sucker up from about 18 inches down, roughly elbow length. I'm eager. This is the only North American variety of lotus there is. One false move and I have destroyed a regal plant that would rise above my head and take over this pond within three months, seeding and flowering at once, the ancient symbol of fertility and tranquility.

Homer's lotus-eaters consumed some portion of the plant to enter dreamland. The Egyptians, impressed by the lotus seed's ability to remain fertile for hundreds of years walled up in an impregnable shell, worshiped the white lotus as a deity. "Om mane padme hum," goes the most famous Hindu mantra, "the lotus from the bottom of the muck," which means the jewel (lotus blossom atop the pond) that is the mental state of enlightenment arises from the experiences of ordinary life (the muck). Or something like that.

Jewel Continued

I gouge away at the dense soil, clearing an area around the lutea's tuber. Now I feel the two banana-like tubers. I feel the growth tip where they connect. I close my hand around it. I pull. The tip starts to come up. I'm getting thrilled here. The thing has tentacles that seem to reach for acres under there. I pull a bit harder. Then I feel, before I hear, the snap.

It's over. I walk right out of there back to Operations. I'm done. Finito. I'm crying quietly. The rest of the crew returns in an hour; a few carry lotus. The funny thing is, Trina is very sweet to me after that. I decide not to call her Miss Hardbody, even under my breath. I begin to work. I get into it. I care. I get dirtier than anyone. I begin to understand things are going to be right as rain. I'll learn something.

Most of the time silence surrounds the packing of the plants except for the intermittent *"This place sucks"* I hear from my benchmate. He curves these words around a wad of tobacco jammed under his bottom lip, then adds, "beats working inside, though, that's for sure."

"Yup," I reply. Anything more would be excess verbiage.

I study the "pull orders" that come down on plastic strips from computer printouts; they are lists of plants to be prepared for mail and telephone orders. The place is shaking from the demand. Water gardening has just hit a vein of desire in the marketplace.

It rains for two solid weeks. My master's degree is growing green mold. Do I care? No. I'm in hip waders all the time now, going into the ponds, keeping dry where it counts. Then I'm back in the potting area looking at lotus tubers floating like Palm Beach matrons, their tentacles outstretched, in the dozen or so fish tanks brimming with exotically colored fish that also are part of the age-old water gardening concept — fish to be sold in plastic bags of water along with tadpoles, snails, clams, mussels and algae-cleaning submerged grasses, all boxed for overnight mail orders.

One day I'm reclining on the edge of a pond nearest the fish tanks, a pond serving as a liquid burial ground into which "floaters" from the fish tanks are tossed. I'm not loafing. I'm planting dwarf papyrus around the pond's edge. And I'm watching snakes. They're just northern water snakes, "brown and friendly," I've been told, "never a cottonmouth up this far."

"DON'T LET C.B. CATCH YOU SITTING ON THE BANK," Trina calls over to me. C.B. is Charles Brocious Thomas, president of Lilypons and the undisputed water lily king of America.

"I'm not going into this pond," I yell back.

"Well, okay," she says uncertainly, and flicks her braid.

I've also been watching, for the first time, snapping turtles the size of armadillos get lifted on poles to which they've clamped their jaws. They are dropped into trash cans and beheaded. But they don't let go of the poles. It occurs to me that if one unwittingly steps on a snapper lying at the bottom of the pond and then reaches down for a lotus. . . .

As I feel for my first pond plants after seeing the hoisting of the turtles, a single image fills my mind: the severed head of a snapper on my piano-playing hand. Again and again I winnow my hand down; it is covered only with a yellow plastic glove, and as it gropes deeper into the muck, this is not far from the direst time of my life.

I remember C.B., the Boss, coming up to me in the potting area a day or two after I arrived. I don't know who he is. I figure he's a nosey customer wanting information I can't possibly give him.

"What do you know about plants?" C.B. asks me. Ruth Carson next to me, who is studying to be a horticulturalist, looks up and smiles at him.

"Nothing," I say in a tone designed to impress my other benchmate — the "this-place-sucks" tobacco-chewer — with my shirtsleeve candor.

The "customer's" face goes blank, and there's a decent pause. He looks pleasant enough, so I decide to help him out.

"I just got my master's in communication," I say. "This job is temporary."

"Oh," he says.

"I'm just doing this until I can get out of here and get a real job."

"Oh," he says weakly, and slowly moves off.

"Fine, go ahead," I mumble after's he's out of earshot. "Buy a big plastic pond with filters, pumps, underwater lights. Buy the lotus and lily, frog and fish. Contemplate away until Niagara falls. You won't get anywhere with serenity until you've been in the bog."

"That was Mr. Thomas," Ruth says.

"Oh."

More times goes by. I get used to the snakes. They teach me how to slither and wrap around a plant without squeezing it. I watch the turtles at a respectful distance and I don't get struck. But I do get injected with a stream of cyanide from something I find out is a hellgrammite, the carnivorous larva of the dobsonfly, while I'm weeding in the sawgrass one day.

I'm getting filthier all the time in the ponds, where I wade as the customers line up on the banks to point out which lilies and bog plants I should fetch for them. It gets to be 100 degrees and humid. There are no showers, and just one old Coke machine for refreshment. In the 1940s German prisoners of war were sent to Lilypons from a nearby stockade. After their first day on the job, most of them decided they preferred the stockade and exercised their right to decline further work.

Ernest Page, who manages the fish end of the business, was there then. Now he's 89, a 60-year veteran of the place. He's a a soft-spoken man who whistles mysterious melodies. His life has matched the rise and fall of the ornamental and feeder fish trade. In the height of his career, during the '50s and '60s, the feeder fish raised for pets and for bait swam in all the ponds. Today far fewer species swim in even fewer ponds; most fish stock is brought in from a supplier firm's hatchery and kept on site for viewing or mailing out. Nonetheless, Page is here every day, which has made him the official repositor of Lilypons lore.

"Charlie knows all about the lilies," Page says of C.B. Thomas, "but he doesn't care so much for the fish. He doesn't think of them as pets. He's never once told me when to come to work — or when to go home either."

And Thomas says of Page: "You'll know something's wrong the day Mr. Page doesn't come to work whistling."

Whistling while you work. It seems odd here. Every day brings the reality of time-punching, blisters, heat. There is too much to do in weather that is boiling in squalls and tornados while the orders increase to the breaking point, but the workers are not reinforced.

"Lord, I'm tired," says Miz Bee (Mary Williams), who runs the packing room.

Charles Thomas's older brother, George, is Lilypons' general manager. Charles refers to George as Mr. Inside to his Mr. Outside, the more sociable sibling whom people have come to know at horticulture conventions. That's as far as C.B. will go on rank, but inside or out, he is running a business that is edging up to being big business, with as much as $6 million sales last year.

"I'm well aware of the growth potential," C.B. tells me when I finally get to talk to him in the Brick House, his administrative offices. He is neo-Victorian, with elegant eyebrows and the look of someone who's in the right spot and knows it. "We're doubling profits every three, four years. That's enough growth." He talks about the lilies as legend, education, philosophy. He obviously adores them and says he "never thought of doing anything else."

"What's your favorite lily?" I ask.

He puts his feet up on a big old desk in his office. "The Blue Beauty," he says, and stares off into space. "What is the word for something so, um . . . ?" He pauses and begins a silent inventory of his floral adjectives.

I'm thinking, maybe he's searching for "transcendent," but I sit tight. He's still gazing at the ceiling, meditating on the flowers he has raised since he was a schoolboy. No word, I'm forced to conclude, can express what the Blue Beauty means to C.B. Thomas.

At Lilypons, I got to commune with the bottom of beauty and peace. When I got too hot, I jumped into a cold-running stream. As my hands got stains from lily roots, the mud worked its wonders on me, slimming me down. The ponds reflecting sun and sky and banks of flowers got me brown, and I got in touch with the flowers in this way, and their implacable need to transform themselves from mud to a jewel-like flower.

My last day was June 5, the day after tanks roared into Peking's Tiananmen Square, crushing demonstrators. That morning the crew at Lilypons sat in stunned silence for a while, learning about the atrocity from their newspapers. And I knew with them, working every day, the immutable laws of right and wrong. I was reminded of the abuse of power, of the consequences of human actions, of the meaning of mud and water and flowers.

I'm back on dry land now. First I went to Connecticut, and did a "regular" job, using my writing skills and all that. Work was deeper, darker, better in the mud at Lilypons, where the world of Charles Thomas and company keeps important secrets about serenity. Even though it's cold now, I can hear the pumps whining, see the snakes curling as the steam rises over all those acres.

I couldn't take "regular" for long. Now I'm searching for work again, and as I do, I hear the tobacco-chewer saying, "This place sucks."

"But you say you come back here every season," I finally challenge him one day. "So why do you do it?"

"I'm here for other reasons," he says. MT

Pamela M. Larratt '89 MA is now a free-lance writer — whereabouts temporarily unknown.

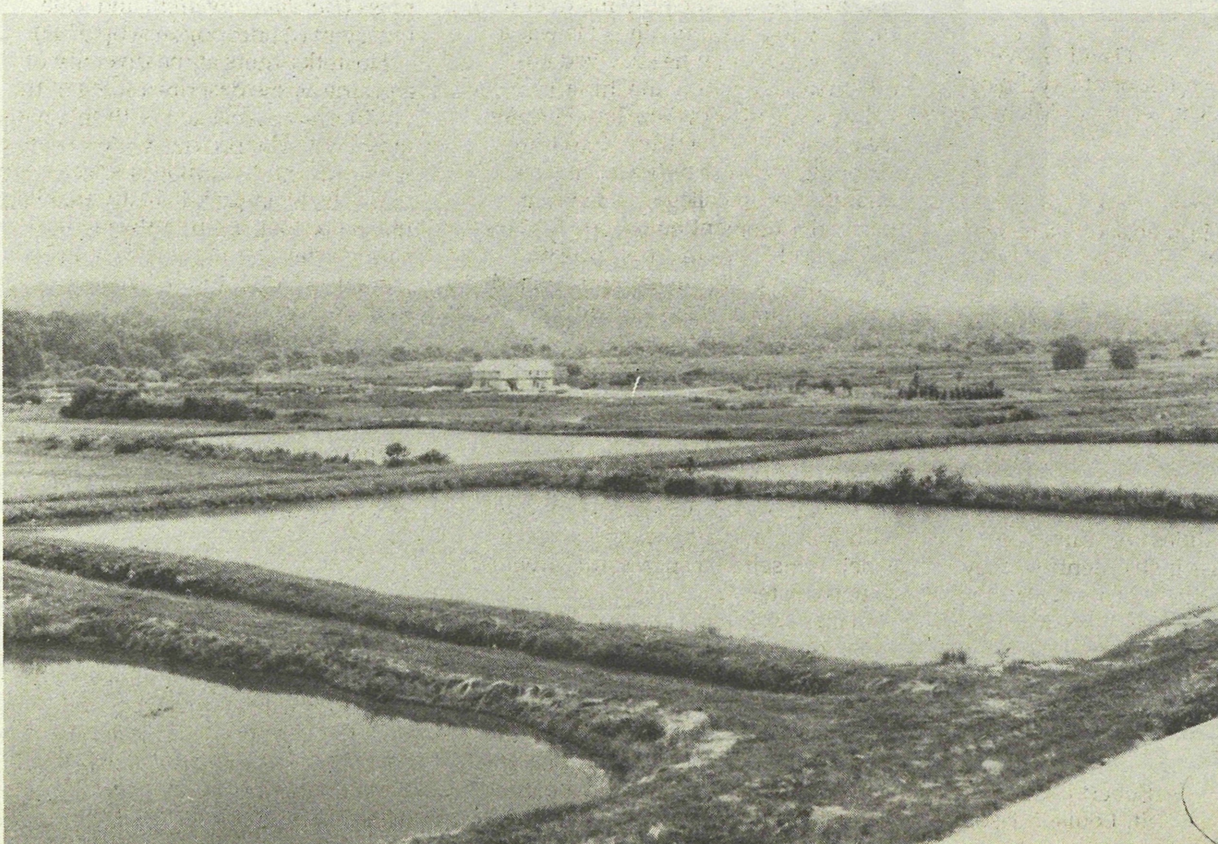


Photo by Mike Elspas

During World War II, German prisoners of war preferred the stockade to wading for lilies and lotus.

LETTERS

Blizzard Bowl of 1950

I WAS working in San Jose, California, in 1950 when Michigan beat Ohio State in the famous Snow Bowl (Dec. 1989 issue). The University of California Golden Bears were enjoying a 33-game unbeaten streak, and were number four in the country. The Cal alumni that we knew were truly disgusted that their win in the Rose Bowl would be a shallow victory since Michigan was second best in the Big Ten. (In those days, you couldn't appear in the Rose Bowl two years in a row.)

Quite a few Michigan graduates were living in the area, and we immediately sent for tickets, and made plans to see our beloved Wolverines beat Cal — and we had no doubt that they would.

We attended the Rose parade in a group, and when the best band in the country came proudly high-stepping down the avenue, we furiously snapped pictures — all of which turned out blurred because of our shaking hands and wildly beating hearts.

Our 14-6 victory over Cal was an exhilarating experience. After the game, we joyfully marched behind our band while they played and we sang our fight song over and over. I guess our smiles were glued to our faces for days — even in our sleep.

The post game party to which we had been invited was a lovely affair. We could hardly wait to celebrate in front of the Cal people who had heretofore looked at us with disdain, and almost refused to discuss our lowly Big Ten team. But we missed the opportunity, because not one of them showed up at the party!

Thank you, team of 1950, for giving me the most memorable football game of my life. Incidentally, we attended one other Rose Bowl game in 1977, and the score was also 14-6, but this time we lost to USC.

Elizabeth Lee Gannon '47
Farmington, Michigan

IT WAS wonderful to read about Bennie Oosterbaan. I had heard little news about him for many years. I shall relate two memories. One day on the football practice field Coach Oosterbaan demonstrated what a great pair of hands he possessed. The team was practicing kickoffs. The receivers would return the balls by punting or place kicking them. We were standing in the middle of the field with Bennie when a line-drive, waist-high kick headed toward us. Bennie's back was turned toward the ball but he turned his head to see the ball, and then nonchalantly reached his big paw behind him, caught the ball, flipped the ball over his shoulder and allowed it to run down the front side of his arm to his hand — setting it upright for the next kick.

The football squad traveled by train. This gave us a chance to read, study and also walk about to visit with the coaches and teammates. On one trip Bennie introduced us to *The Rubaiyat*. This was Bennie's favorite.

"The Ball no Question makes of Ayes
and Noes,
But Right or Left as strikes the
Player goes;
And He that toss'd you down into
the Field,
He knows about it all — He knows
— HE knows!"

Robert C. Antle '42
Sunriver, Oregon

"THE BLIZZARD Bowl" and the story about Tony Momsen recalled the 1950 Ohio State game which, along with the rest of the 1950 season and the 1951 Rose Bowl, was one of my most vivid memories of being 11 years old. To me, it was still a time — perhaps one of the last before growing up — when miracles could happen (as the papers said at the time, when "roses bloomed in the snow"). Perhaps the happiness of my memory is heightened by the contrast with the grim news from Korea that month, as American troops were overwhelmed and then surrounded by the Chinese, finally fighting their way through to the North Korean coast, and sea evacuation.

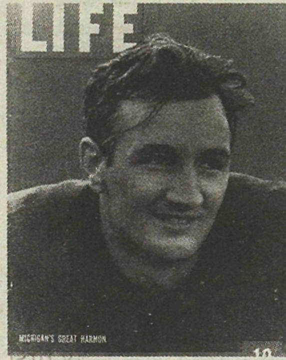
A few minor notes and memories: (1) Ohio State did not take the Big Ten (actually, it was then the Big Nine) in '49; their 7-7 tie with Michigan gave them only a tie with Michigan for the title. (2) In 1950, Michigan had not "suffered only a tie in the conference," but in fact had earlier lost, 7-0, to Illinois in Ann Arbor (during a snowstorm that may have given experience that would prove valuable in Columbus). (3) Jerry Burns (then a reserve quarterback for Michigan and later a coach for Iowa and the Minnesota Vikings) described Janowicz's field goal for the Buckeyes — into a blizzard so intense it almost disappeared between the uprights — as one of the most amazing kicks he had ever seen. I heard him say this in 1954, when he was a counselor at Interlochen. (4) The game was on television, at least in some cities. In Grand Rapids, we somehow received (from WKZO in Kalamazoo?) for a while the audio of the Michigan-Ohio State game, and the video of another game (Illinois-Northwestern?). (5) The "Blizzard Bowl," as well as the rest of the season, were the basis of a fictionalized novel for teen-age boys, *Rose Bowl Linebacker*, by the Ann Arbor writer C. Paul Jackson. (With some changes of position and anagrammatical name transformations, players such as "Tromann" and "Kudef" [*Ortmann and Dufek*] appear for Michigan.) Can you locate this book? I don't think it was included in your recent listings of U-M fiction. For some reason, the Ann Arbor Public Library has only his earlier *Rose Bowl All-American*, an even more fictionalized account of the 1947 team.

David G. Winter
Professor of Psychology
University of Michigan

Does any reader know where to find the novel Rose Bowl Linebacker *mentioned by Professor Winter? — Ed.*

AS A former member of the Marching Band, I enjoyed reading about the Blizzard Bowl. As usual, besides the football game, we had a battle of the bands. Again, Michigan was victorious. Ohio State's band was all brass and percussion, while Michigan included woodwinds. The extreme cold caused frozen slides and valves on most of the brass instruments so they could play only the note on which they were frozen. Fortunately, the Michigan woodwinds didn't have that freeze-up, so could play all the notes. Also, were able to play "The Victors" after the game was over.

Robert J. Patrick '51
St. Louis, Missouri



Tom Harmon '41
1919 - 1990

Farewell to Old 98

THOSE OF us who were enrolled at Michigan in the early 1940s were privileged to watch the great football teams coached by Fritz Crisler and to see the heroics of Tom Harmon on the gridiron, who died this March. Without a doubt he was one of the great football athletes in the University's history.

I first watched him play in my home town of Whiting, Indiana, where I was a member of the high school band. He was the star of the game and seemed to have a magical flair in his running. The Gary, Indiana, Horace Mann team won their conference championship that year; their only loss was to Whiting that evening.

The following year I became a freshman at Michigan, and over the next three years I watched his performance as a basketball player and a football player, and we struck up what one might call a facial recognitive acquaintance.

A moment that has always remained in my memory occurred in the Michigan-Iowa football game. The Iowa team lost that afternoon, and when the game was over, the football players and the band members headed across the field to the tunnel exit.

I was directly behind Iowa's great star, Nile Kinnick, as we crossed the field, and he was sobbing over his team's loss. Tom Harmon came up from behind and put his arms around Kinnick's shoulders, trying to console him. It was a touching and compassionate gesture. Kinnick was to lose his life in the military service of World War II.

The next time I saw Tom Harmon was in Chicago. I was stationed with the Fort Sheridan Post Band north of Chicago. We happened to meet in the Chicago Loop, and on saluting we recognized each other. He had just returned from his ordeal in the South American jungles where his plane had crashed. He was the only member of the crew to come out alive. He was a survivor. (Later on he survived another plane downing in China.)

I was surprised when Tom Harmon asked me to have a drink with him. After all, we were only passing acquaintances in college, and at that particular moment he was an Air Force officer and I was an Army private. We went to a nearby bar and chatted about Michigan days and our then-current military situations.

I cannot help but believe that The University of Michigan years helped mold Tom Harmon into an extraordinary person who exemplified the best that the youth of America had to offer. He served his country in the military with honor, and afterwards he established himself in a successful career as a sportscaster.

In an earlier edition of *Michigan Today* [Oct. 1986 — Ed.], there was an article on Tom Harmon's career. In the article he stated that he had offered all his memorabilia to the University, but that some shallow-brain administrator rejected his offer. Perhaps in a pique of resentment, he offered his memorabilia to the University of Wyoming.

It would be a great tribute to the memory of Tom Harmon if The University of Michigan could in some way convince the University of Wyoming authorities, with the consent of Harmon's family, to obtain some of the memorabilia to be placed with those of other great Michigan athletes.

We are all saddened by the death of a great athlete, personality and human being. Like all great people, he was unique.

Milan Yancich '42, '46
Rochester, New York

Plant Life

I FIND it interesting that *Michigan Today* and another U-M publication, *The Medical Center News*, referred to the same plant in the same month. In your article on Matthaei Botanical Gardens (Feb. 1990), amaranth was mentioned as an ornamental with multiple uses, particularly with regard to world hunger. In the Medical Center publication, the U-M Cancer Center reported that an extract of amaranthus seeds had value in early detection of colon cancer.

Phillip R. Turner '40 MD
Sun City, Arizona

YOUR article on the Botanical Gardens provided stimulating and fascinating reading on a subject of universal interest. As a layman in the field of science, my first impulse was to skip entirely the story and go directly to other articles. However, having devoured the inner pages, I am glad that I returned to what Maggie Hostetler had to say about the Matthaei. The pictures and sketches were excellent as well. Thanks for the broad scope of your publication. I always look forward to receiving my copy.

Nelson M. Swarthout '47, '48
Whittier, California

WHAT A treat it was to read about the Matthaei Botanical Gardens. Maggie Hostetler vividly brings to life various facets of one of U-M's unique treasures.

Her general scientific accuracy is a bit distorted, however, when she describes the Gardens' prairie as a field of grass of big turkey foot. Indeed, this species is probably the dominant grass, but I'm fairly certain that it shares its place in the sun with many other prairie grass species. At least we planted quite a few others there over 20 years ago. These included Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*), switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*) and little bluestem (Andropogon scoparius).

Hostetler hints at the diversity of a prairie as she describes some of the wildflowers associated with this native grassland. The prairie's wide variety of both grass and wildflower species provides the biological diversity that helps make it self-sustaining throughout various climatic and other environmental changes. Quite in contrast to the modern-day monotypic agricultural fields that require considerable supplementary energy inputs and can be easily disrupted by a single pest or other hazard, the native prairie ecosystem is a model of stability and productivity — as well as one of incredible beauty.

Marilyn Bland '72
Medford, Oregon

P.S. Yes, I am the Marilyn Bland referred to in the article. I hope some day to return to Ann Arbor and visit the U-M prairie. (*Bland planted Matthaei's seven-acre plot of prairie grass when she was a U-M researcher 25 years ago — Ed.)*

A Reader's Query

BECAUSE we were recently informed that the Law School has "no records for the Class of 1941," perhaps *Michigan Today* can serve both the Law School and the Dunedin (Florida) Public Library by publishing the following request:

When Franklin Chase Milliken, of the U-M Law School class of '41, died last May in Dunedin it was found he had left his estate to the Dunedin Public Library. In researching to make a person of an unknown donor, we would like to hear from those who knew him during his years at Michigan (1936 — 1941). Thank you for your help.

William A. Sutton, Editor
Newsletter of the Friends of the
Dunedin Public Library
1348 Carlisle Ct.
Dunedin, Florida 34698

Mascot or Not?

PRAISES for Doris Rubenstein for her concise and accurate statement re the childish idea of a mascot for U-M teams. I always think of nursery schools when I see mascots jumping around. Such does not fit Go Blue!!

Mary Badgley '53 MA
Winter Park, Florida

Hail to The Daily

AS A *Michigan Daily* staffer (way back, night editor in 1924,) I was delighted with your interesting and colorful story "100 Years of The Michigan Daily." Also, the hilarious story "The Great Poker Scandal of 1919," featuring that remarkable lady, Mildred Mighell Riorden Blake, who headed the *Daily* in the fall of 1918, is a knockout.

Will you kindly send me five extra copies for old *Daily* hands I'm going to urge to come to the 100th Anniversary next October? Will you see that 93-year-old Mildred Blake is there?

(*Ms. Blake says she definitely hopes to be there — Ed.*)

Alfred B. Cannable '24
Regent Emeritus
Kalamazoo, Michigan

"100 YEARS of The Michigan Daily" was fascinating and well written, but needs one minor correction. The important news of Dr. Jonas Salk's successful polio vaccine was given at a medical conference on the first floor of the Rackham Building, not Hill Auditorium. Rackham's top floor bristled with black telephones hastily installed for eager reporters to send the good news back home in a hurry.

I had left my office job for the English Language Institute at Rackham in mid-morning to stand at the back of the auditorium during Dr. Salk's announcement, then followed this newly famous man to a news conference elsewhere in the building, standing close enough to touch him!

Very pregnant with my first child, I already knew my future family could enjoy summertime swims and crowds, something my parents had had to deny us as youngsters. It was a thrilling day, and one to be shared later with my three children and now the nine grandchildren.

Joyce Schreiber Seward '51
Cadillac, Michigan

I COMMEND you and your staff for your excellent work, in general, in publishing *Michigan Today*; every issue has attractive format and illustrations — photos as well as sketches — together with interesting letters and fascinating articles, e.g., the superb article "100 Years of the Michigan Daily" by Peter Mooney in the February issue.

For me, *Michigan Today* performs the invaluable function of ever increasing my pride in, and loyalty to, The University of Michigan. To paraphrase an old saying, "You can take the person out of Michigan, but you can't take Michigan out of the person!" Keep up the good work.

William Oleksak '38
New York

FASCINATING though the article commemorating the *Daily's* centennial was, it failed any mention at all of the glory days during and immediately following its golden anniversary in the 1930s. Serving as Ann Arbor's only morning newspaper (the *Ann Arbor Daily News* being the evening paper and the two Detroit papers — the *News* and the *Free Press* — having an emphasis on that metropolitan center), the *Daily* filled a definite local need. Its Associated Press wire service made it more than a mere organ of University functions. Consistently in that era it earned the "Pacemaker of Pacemakers Awards."

Housed in the magnificent Albert Kahn-designed plant on Maynard Street, it enjoyed all the amenities of a daily newspaper for a city such as Ann Arbor. There was a city desk presided over by the city editor, who edited the copy of the reportorial staff before it went downstairs to the print shop for typesetting. Sometimes it ventured into controversial areas, such as the American Legion Preparedness Day Parade in Detroit in 1933(?), and aroused the righteous indignation of the legislators in Lansing who controlled the purse strings of the University's budget.

Though the Board in Control of Student Publications, headed then by Prof. Edson Sunderland of the Law School, exercised minimum restraint on editorial freedom, an example had to be made to placate the legislators, and a few heads rolled.

As business manager of the *Michigan Gargoyle*, it was my good fortune to know many of the *Michigan Daily* staffers. Demonstrating a lack of sexist bias, the 1936-37 *Daily* was presided over by Elsie Pierce, who earned a Phi Beta Kappa key in addition to her position as editor. The *Daily* produced several outstanding journalists, among them Frank Galbraith co-author of *Cheaper by the Dozen* and Fred Warner Neal, who as a *Wall Street Journal* staffer won a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard, to mention only two. Among the more controversial was Tom Hayden from the 1960s, but that was another era indeed, one that delighted in trashing tradition.

Also overlooked was the *Summer Daily*. It performed the important function of acquainting students from afar with the amenities of the area during summer. Summer editor Tom Groen won undying fame and the nickname of "Typo Tommy" by failing to proofread and catch an errant 'S' that dropped into the space intended for a 'W' in a mention of Whitmore Lake. After his subsequent stint as city editor of the 1935-36 *Daily*, Tom went on to the *Detroit News* and earned renown for his coverage of the then startling development of "sitdown strikes."

No doubt about it, the *Daily* was a force to be reckoned with in its golden anniversary era. I would hope that it has continued to be so until the present day, but there have been inklings that it has not. Aside from the turbulent Hayden editorship, another editor of the same era took perverse delight in recounting how he and his staff enjoyed physically trashing that classic Student Publications Building. I can only imagine what they did to the editorial content of that prestigious publication. One would hope that in its centennial year the *Michigan Daily* again fills the niche it did so well 50 years ago.

Norman Williamson Jr. '36
Claremont, California

I WORKED side-by-side the *Daily* people in the old Student Publications Office as business manager of the *Gargoyle* in 1929. As to Michigan editors and assistant editors that slanted the news, the feature page on headline reporting the outcome of the 1928 U.S. presidential election read, "Happy Warrior Goes Down in Defeat!" As any reporter or editor should well know, the headline should have featured Hoover's victory.

At the time it was rather well known who at the *Daily* got away with the caper, but some reader of *Michigan Today* might still recall who it was.

Carl U. Fauster '29
Toledo

XXL & XXXL

1. T-Shirt. 50/50. White, Navy, or Maize.
Adult S thru XL $11.50
XXL (Only White or Navy) $13.00
XXXL (Only White or Navy) $16.50

1A 100% Cotton TShirt. White or Navy.
Adult S thru XL $12.00
XXL (Only White) $13.50
XXXL (Only White) $17.00

2. Sweatshirt. White, Navy or Maize.
Adult S thru XL $26.00
XXL (Only White or Navy) $29.00
XXXL (Only White) $32.00

3. Hooded Sweatshirt. White or Navy.
Adult S thru XL $29.50
XXL (Only White) $36.50
XXXL (Ony White) $39.50

4. Sweatpant. White or Navy. Logo only as shown.
Adult S thru XL $26.00

MICHIGAN A
Alumni University of Michigan B
MICHIGAN C
D
University of Michigan E
MICHIGAN WOLVERINES F
GO BLUE G
MICHIGAN H

How to Order:
Select any design to the right. Designs come in full or pocket size. Choose shirt & design combination of your choice. Some logos only as shown.

Garments are 50% cotton/50% polyester unless otherwise described

7. Panel Sweatshirt. Choose a narrow logo like G or H. Navy body with white panel.
Adult S thru XL $33.00

8. Super Heavy Weight Cotton Shirt. 85% Cottton/15% Polyester. White. The fabric is cut across the body for minimum shrinkage. Adult S thru XL.... $46.50

9. Golf Shirt with pocket. White or Navy. Pocket Size logo.
Adult S thru XL $27.00
XXL.... $30.00 XXXL.... $33.00

10. Flannel lined nylon Jacket. Navy. Logos only as shown. Pocket logo printed on front. "MICHIGAN" printed on back.
Adult S thru XL $60.00

11. Short. Elastic waistband. White or Navy
Adult S thru Xl $12.00

12. Sports Bag. 13" X 28" cotton canvas bag with web straps. "D" rings on end. White strap comes with Navy bag.
Only Logo A...own $33.00

Gold Imprint

Alumni Products
American Tees, Inc.
PO Box 465
Belpre Ohio 45714
(304) 485-4856

Satisfaction Guaranteed

Phone Orders Call 1-800-445-4856

Item #	Description	Size	Color Garment	Design #	Design Size Full or Porkcet	# Pieces	Price Each	Total $

Subtotal	
WV residents add 6 % tax	
Shipping & Handling	
GRAND TOTAL	

Name
Street
City State Zip
(UPS requires a street addres)
Telephone ( )

Visa MC Exp Date
Card #
Signature

UM 2/90

Shipping & Handling
If subtotal equals:
to $40.00 add $3.95
$40.01 to $80.00 add $4.95
$80.01 to $120. add $5.95
$120.01 + add $6.95

Backgrounds

U-M seniors Curtis Chin, an English major from Detroit, and Darci McConnell '90 of Lansing have launched a literary journal to feature writings by members of ethnic groups that have experienced color-based discrimination.

The publication, *Backgrounds*, has sold well at campus-area bookstores and on other college campuses, Chin says, and it was also distributed to Michigan high schools "to inspire young children to create and to give them a better understanding of people."

McConnell says she decided to join Chin in starting the publication because "before coming to the University, I'd read only one author of color, when I did a sixth-grade book report on Phyllis Wheatley. I knew nothing of the creative contributions by other authors of color, and therefore I was left to believe that there had been none. It is so important to know that there are others similar to you who have enjoyed the same emotions; encountered the same obstacles; and, most of all, have been recognized as talented."

The first issue of *Backgrounds* contained works by 17 Americans of African, Chinese, Native American, East Indian, Mexican and Cuban descent. Most of the writers are U-M students, but the editors seek manuscripts, drawings and photographs from non-students as well. The publication received support from the U-M Office of Minority Affairs.

Submissions may be sent to *Backgrounds*, 3909 Michigan Union, Ann Arbor, MI 48109. Subscription and other information may be obtained by writing or by telephoning 313/995-3072.

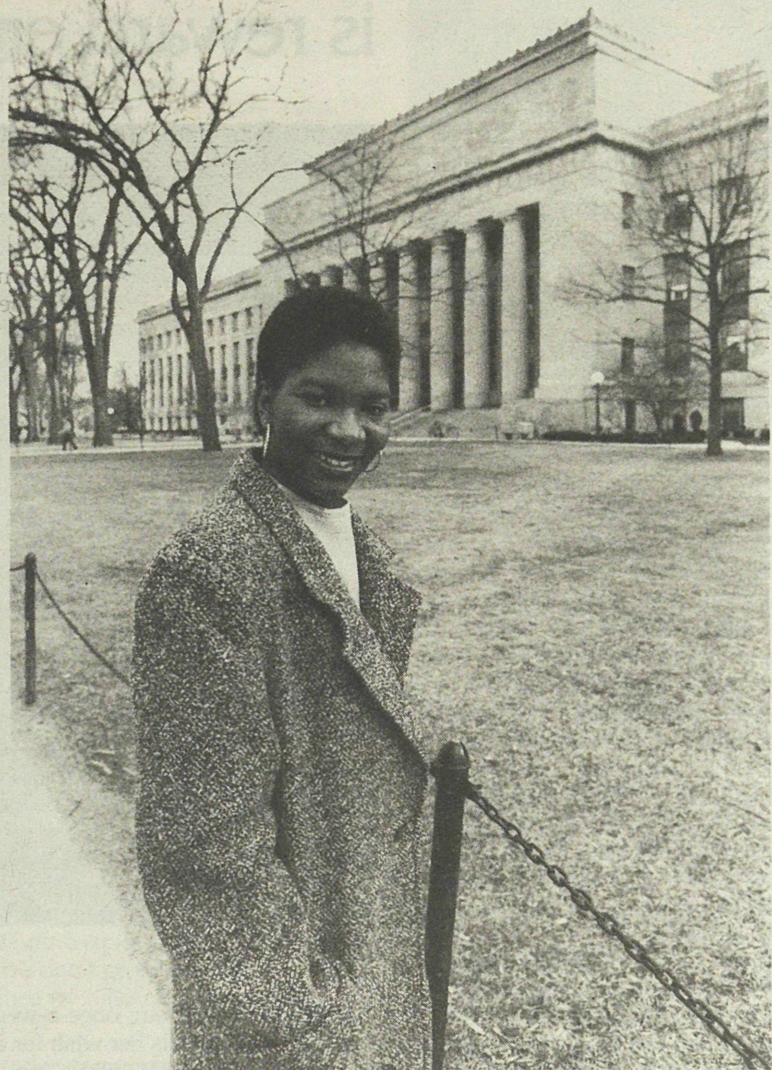


Photo by Bob Kalmbach

Simmons

'Poetry is my freedom'

Lynette Simmons '90, whose poetry appears in *Backgrounds*, has composed poems since high school, "but I've planned to become a lawyer longer than that — since I was 12."

This fall Simmons will enroll in the Michigan Law School. A philosophy major from Berrien Springs, Michigan, she transferred to U-M after a year at Andrews University, a Seventh Day Adventist school in her hometown. "I took the required religion course at Andrews," Simmons recalls, "and it was taught by a challenging person. I found I was asking philosophical questions about religious issues, and I loved it. But Andrews doesn't offer a philosophy major, so I felt I had to go where I could major in what I wanted."

Simmons singles out her course in existentialism with Frithjof H. Bergmann and one in moral philosophy with Stephen L. Darwall as favorites, calling the professors "great teachers who have helped me refine my world view."

Simmons says the U-M's financial aid program was another major factor in her choice of school. "Andrews is private, and I had to come up with $5,000 on my own, so in my freshman year I worked two eight-hour evening shifts on weekends as a nurse's aide and obstetrics technician. At Michigan, thanks to the financial aid package, I had to earn only $1,000 on my own."

Simmons likes "to write against the negative reality confronting many Blacks. Some people think a Black poet shouldn't write about the sunset," she continues, "but poetry is a place I can be anything I want, where I don't have to be weighed down by other people's opinions."

Simmons says her poetry is not, however, "a denial of the concrete world. The fact is, I enjoy being Black. It doesn't make me bitter or upset me. But I don't have to sit down and beat myself through my poetry. Enough outsiders are already beating on me. If the country were predominantly Black, though, no one would question why I write about nature, so you might say poetry is my freedom."

You can show your U of M Pride!!

We're back!! Due to great response, we are able to offer this beautiful reproduction of the exclusive "Rolex Oyster." Men's or women's watches, bearing the official proud U of M sports logo on the dial.

Available in Men's and Women's Sizes
- **Great Gifts**
- **Fully Adjustable Band**
- **Quality Quartz Movement**
- **Stainless and Gold**
- **Warranty included with each watch**
- **Hundreds Sold**

Charge Card # Mastercard/Visa________ Exp. Date________
Name________
Address________
City, State, Zip________

Price: $44.00
Handling & Tax: 5.00
TOTAL: $49.00 ea

ORDERING ______ Quantity Men's
______ Quantity Women's
______ TOTAL @ $49.00 ea

A portion of the proceeds go to U of M.
Mail CHECK, MONEY ORDER or CARD NUMBER to:

Michigan Watch Co.
5111 Lashbrook
Brighton, MI 48116

INCANDESCENT

Incandescent
Brown eyes
Turned to the sky.
Eyes dancing deep with
The sunset emotions of
Mother Africa
Indian America and
Spanish borders.
Their limpid tears of
Passion flowing deeper
Than the bluest;
Falling in the dark —
Silent as the moon.
—Lynette Simmons

THE DREAMING

Tonight I am a dream inside myself.
I am anything that defies the weight
Of air or wind; a song that plays its endless canon in the breeze; a thought released
From prison in your mind. I am anything
That always looks the same, that brings you comfort
Just because it's me. I'm everywhere yet
Difficult to find (the Ancient Soul with
No leak at the seam). The realm of beauty
I compose — the land, the air and water.
The Milky Way's within my grasp; the stars
Are mine to have and hold — to keep until
The ocean breaks (and they would fall if I
Would ask). I sparkle in the gentle rain,
Refresh the earth, renew the night. I call
Your name and touch your hand, then run away
Like Hide-n-Seek. I'm all alone (but I'm
not scared); I've not a cent (but I'm not poor).
Right now I'm free to give and take —
To dream unharmed before I wake.

Michigan Today

John Woodford - Executive Editor
Sherri Moore - Graphic Designer
Linda Walker, Peter Seidman,
Kate Kellogg - Writers
Bob Kalmbach - Photographer
Margaret Goebel - Correspondence
Michele Thompson - Student Intern

Michigan Today is published five times a year by News and Information Services, The University of Michigan, 412 Maynard St., Ann Arbor MI 48109-1399.
Circulation: 310,000

James J. Duderstadt - President
Walter L. Harrison - Executive Director, University Relations
Joseph H. Owsley - Director, News and Information Services

For U-M volunteers:

The pleasure of working is reward enough

By Kate Kellogg

The University has a class of worker who receives no paycheck, benefits, vacations or promotions. For this group, the pleasure they receive from their jobs is reward enough.

University volunteers rock babies at Mott's Children's hospitial, lead lost concert-goers through the shadows of Hill Auditorium and dig through hundreds of musty documents to find one needed for an important U-M archive file. Volunteer docents at the Museum of Art can sway a 9-year-old's attention — momentarily, at least — from Nintendo to Picasso.

Volunteers contribute so much to the University that no single article could cover their many jobs. The following volunteers involved in the arts, fundraising, the library system, Medical Center and Matthaei Botanical Gardens do illustrate, however, the variety and value of their services.

Hamel

The 65 volunteer active touring docents at the U-M Museum of Art (UMMA) are all well-versed experts in art history. Yet Barbara Hamel ('37) had no art background whatsoever, other than auditing a few art classes, when she decided to try conducting tours of the museum. After a year of intensive classwork, coupled with her own independent learning, Hamel got the knowledge she needed to be an effective docent.

"It was the hardest year of my life because it was so intense and concentrated," says Hamel, who is now a 15-year veteran at UMMA. "We went from Greek and Roman art to the present, took exams, wrote papers, observed tours and practiced giving them."

The next phase involved giving tours one-half weekday a week for two years. Why so long a trial? "With such an investment in their training, the museum looks for someone who is willing to stick with the job, someone who is truly interested in the work and not just in doing it because they think it is socially correct."

"The continuous learning is the thing I love best about the job — so much that I feel like it's a selfish thing I'm doing, even though I am a volunteer," says Hamel. Over the years she has developed special interests in particular periods of art, especially the Tokugawa period of Japanese art (1603-1867), when ink drawings and wood block printings "became so uniquely Japanese because of the country's enforced isolation during that time."

Volunteer service has been a tradition with the U-M Hospitals for more than 75 years. Established in 1914, the Hospitals' Volunteer Services Department includes about 143 volunteer positions in seven hospitals, the Turner Geriatric Services and several new off-campusrehabilitation facilities. Volunteers also staff Motor Meals of Ann Arbor, a local branch of the national food program that provides two meals a day to 100 elderly Ann Arborites in their homes.

In 1988-89, hospital volunteers totaled about 2,400 and worked nearly 89,000 collective hours, reports Beverly Smith, coordinator of volunteer resources and community relations.

"An emergency room volunteer sees people at their lowest point," says Shirley Midyette, who has volunteered in Emergency Services for two years. "First of all, you have to help them realize that things will get better, that the worst will pass."

Without any prior medical experience, "other than what I learned as a mother," Midyette was "the only one in my volunteer orientation class who wasn't a prospective medical student."

During her four-hour, once-a-week stint, Midyette fulfills her wish for a volunteer position that entails "no standing around."

What makes Midyette's shift "my high of the week" is seeing "the human spirit rising to the forefront in the face of adversity. For example, I stayed with a woman in her 40s who had been in an automobile accident while driving to high school completion classes. Her neck was broken, and I knew she was in great pain, yet she was more worried about upsetting her children and missing class and than about her condition."

While its pace is no match for that of emergency services, the Bentley Historical Library offers people addicted to research the chance to organize a bit of the history of the University and the state of Michigan. The library, which houses historical documents, photographs and other records of the University and the personal papers and records of Michigan citizens and organizations, heavily relies on the skills of four volunteer archivists.

Katherine Owen, a former librarian with Parke-Davis Company, volunteers for the Bentley as a manuscript processor, a title that doesn't convey the variety and fascination of her work.

"I can't help but get interested in the subject matter of the materials I organize," Owen says. "For example, in processing the papers of the Current Topic Club of Owosso, Michigan, I found a marvelous demonstration of life for a typical middle-class, Midwestern woman 100 years ago."

Four years ago, Owen decided to retire from her job of 29 years with Parke-Davis and take a degree in archival administration from U-M. She finds the scholarly approach to research at Bentley a pleasant contrast to librarianship in the corporate world "where you might have only 10 minutes to produce a piece of information."

To Owen, the lack of a paycheck on her new job is a small sacrifice to make for the benefits of flexible hours and the chance to do work she loves. "I can remember thinking, when I was younger, that library work is the best there is, and that as long as I had enough money to feed me, I didn't care whether I got paid or not. After all this time, I still feel that way."

Plants and volunteers must attract each other, or the Matthaei Botanical Gardens wouldn't have such an abundance of both. About 400 people have volunteered 20,000 hours of service to the gardens sincewinter of 1989, according to Margaret Vergith, Gardens promotions coordinator. This year's Flower and Garden Show drew even more than the usual number to help with everthing from mailings to hosting the show, to staging and set-up.

In any year, whole committees of volunteers exist to organize gift shop assistance, office work and indoor and outdoor plant-grooming. Many of the items offered at the Gardens' popular fall sale, such as dried flowers arrangements, were prepared by volunteers.

Musical and theatrical productions are among the University's biggest public attractions. Much of the success of these events depends on volunteer ushers and their supervisors.

The University Musical Society has 250 volunteer ushers, 150 at Hill Auditorium and 50 each at Rackham Auditorium and the Power Center. They arrive one hour before a concert begins and, depending upon the level of their responsibility, most may leave only when seating is completed. If they wish to, they may attend the performance free, although they must stand if the house is full. Since each usher has to commit to the full concert season, their work totals about 4,845 hours per year.

Ushering is such a popular area of volunteerism that some applicants can't find a position. Usher coordinator Bob Pratt says he receives 150 to 200 applicants for 75 to 100 openings a year. "I interview all new applicants on the Friday and Saturday after Labor Day," he says. "From the group who are satisfactory, we more or less have a lottery."

University Productions, the producing arm of the Theatre and Drama Department in the School of Music, uses two volunteers to work its box office 24 hours a week during the school year. Volunteer ushers work for University Productions' 53 openings a year at the Mendelssohn and Trueblood theaters and the Power Center. The ushers contribute a total of 2,000 hours a year.

Helmut Stern is not sure how he was talked into the challenging job of chairing the development committee of the Institute for the Humanities. But he has no doubts about the importance of his duties to the University, the country and himself.

"The Institute fills a niche that is badly needed at a time when scholars and other experts tend to know more and more about less and less," Stern says. "I think when we get too isolated in our respective tasks, creativity is stifled. The Institute, on the other hand, provides fellowships to faculty members that enable them to explore fields different from their own, and to have contact with people in many disciplines."

Besides promoting research and interdisciplinary exchange among faculty and students in the humanities, the Institute offers public events and programs throughout the year. For example, the Russian playwright Mikhail Shatrov this winter visited the Institute and discussed his work with students and faculty after a public performance of his anti-Stalinist play *Onward, Onward, Onward.*

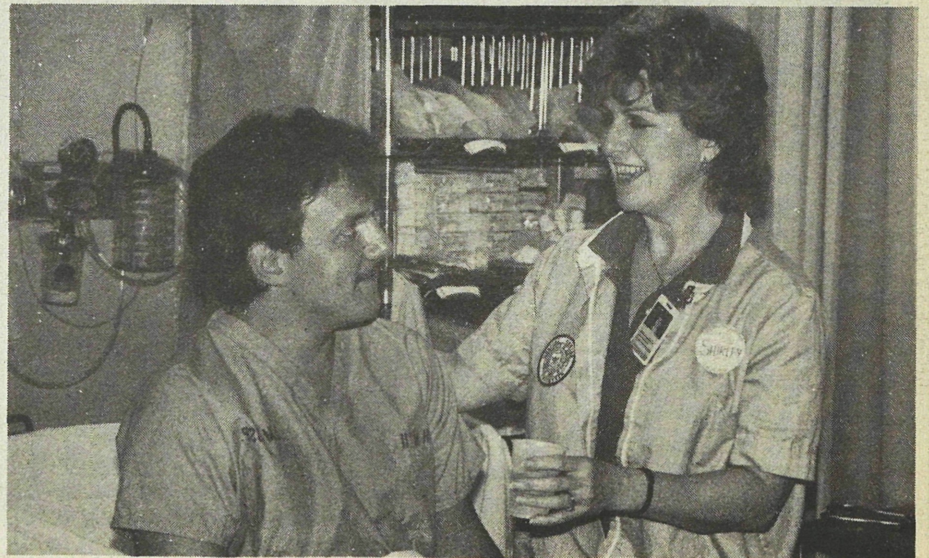
Stern is the model of a multidisciplinarian, himself. An engineer, he ran his own manufacturing com-

Continued on next page

Although no volunteer's worth as a paid employee could be accurately tabulated, suppose each received $5 per hour, or slightly above a minimum wage rate. The Musical Society would then use $24,225 worth of volunteer help and University Productions about $10,000 annually. The Museum of Art's docents, who put in an estimated 12 hours per week in touring and preparation, would provide $150,579 worth of services.

The services of volunteer archivists at the Bentley Library would bring another $900 per year, and volunteers for the Botanical Gardens, $100,000. The U-M Hospitals tops all figures with an estimated $445,000 worth of volunteer work.

The grand total of volunteer services in all those areas is $730,704 — a substantial underestimation because it excludes many other jobs performed by volunteers. And this summary by no means includes all of the volunteer effort that students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends provide to the community and institution that is The University of Michigan.



Midyette

Michigan alumni participate in Donor Pooled Income Fund

Dr. and Mrs. Charles Kelly

"My wife and I really enjoyed our Lit. School years while we were on campus," said Dr. Charles (Chuck) Kelly '53 DDS, "and we wanted to acknowledge that with this gift. I also wanted to contribute to the bands because I played clarinet in the Marching Band for two years."

Kelly and his wife, Dee, '51 DHYG, from Traverse City, Michigan, have recently joined Michigan's Donor Pooled Income Fund. The Fund operates much like a mutual fund: individual contributions are "pooled" for investment purposes. In return, the net income of the entire fund is distributed on the basis of the number and value of "shares" held by each donor. All gifts are irrevocable and qualify for a charitable income tax deduction. The amount of the deduction is based on the age of the beneficiaries and the recent performance of the Fund.

Participation in the Donor Pooled Income Fund offers several advantages, in addition to providing a donor a convenient way to support the University. For example, because the Fund's trustee manages the gift, a donor is relieved of management responsibility for those assets. In addition, unlike willed gifts, a gift to the Fund is not subject to the probate process. Such a gift also allows a donor to reinvest any tax savings realized.

The Kellys realized another benefit of the Fund. "We gave the University mature, appreciated assets to fund our participation, and so we avoided the capital gains tax," Chuck Kelly explained.

Because a gift to Michigan's Donor Pooled Income Fund benefits an educational institution, the capital gains tax, which is normally required at the sale of appreciated assets, is not triggered.

"Aside from the tax advantages," he added, "one of the attractive features of the Donor Pooled Income Fund for us is that it allowed us to stipulate that our gift be divided between LS&A and the Band. I really enjoyed playing in the Michigan Band, particularly the year we went to the Rose Bowl. We won 49-0!"

Even in retirement, the Kellys maintain their family interest in dentistry; two of their sons, Kevin '79 DDS and Patrick '80 DDS, are continuing the practice. "We are very happy that we can pass the business on to our children," Chuck Kelly commented. "It gives us a very good feeling."

It is not surprising that the Kellys chose to establish a Donor Pooled Income Fund with the University; Michigan is in their blood. Chuck Kelly's grandfather, Alton Hutchins, graduated in chemistry in 1904; his father, Don Calvin Kelly, received his diploma in dentistry in 1933; his uncle, Earl Allen Kelly, received a BS in education in 1928; and his brother, Terry Kelly, graduated from the School of Dentistry in 1965. In addition to their sons Kevin and Patrick, three other Kelly children also attended the University: Michael received his BS in civil engineering in '75 and master of science in '76; Timothy an MBA in '87, and Colleen graduated from the School of Nursing in '88.

The Kellys still visit the University regularly. "When we had children at the University, we went down to Ann Arbor fairly frequently," Dee Kelly said. "We don't go down quite as often now, since we have no family there. But we're hoping to have some grandchildren in Ann Arbor in years to come."

"We still go to most of the home games," her husband remarked. "We decided to contribute to the University now, through the Fund, so that we could be in the Presidents Club, and we're looking forward to participating in its activities. We've also joined the Victors Club — we're funding that with the income we receive from the Donor Pooled Income Fund. That's worked out very nicely for us. The information the University sent us has been very helpful in planning our estate. It's been an excellent learning experience."

A love affair with Michigan

Lucile Cecil's bequest of more than $1 million to the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics and her gift of two scholarship funds, each of $250,000, to the Law School and athletic department bear testimony to a long love affair with The University of Michigan.

"Michigan was Lucile's life," said Thomas C. Cecil '52 JD, her stepson. "She loved it. She started attending Michigan's home football games in 1927 with her first husband, [Leo A. (Duck) Thomas '08 BA], and she never stopped. She made countless University friends during those years. She and her husband owned and operated the L. A. Thomas Florists Shop in Troy, Ohio.

"She remembered the players, too," Cecil continued. "At that time, the players would go to the Union after the games to chat with fans; it was there that she met Jerry Ford. In 1976, when President Ford was campaigning in Dayton, he worked his way through the crowd to talk to her when she called out 'Go Blue!'"

Lucile Cecil's gift to the Law School reflects her husband's commitment.

Lucile Cecil and her husband, Lester, clasp hands with President Gerald Ford during his presidential campaign.

The $250,000 fund she established will provide scholarships for students otherwise unable to attend the School. "There's no more important need to the Law School than making its education available to every student, regardless of wealth," commented Lee C. Bollinger, Jr., dean of the Law School. "We are extremely grateful to Mrs. Cecil for her generosity."

The Cecils' commitment, and the gifts that flow from it, will greatly enrich the athletic department, said John P. Weidenbach, interim director of athletics. "For instance, the bequest enables us to upgrade facilities for tennis, golf and other Olympic sports. The support of the scholarship fund will allow more young men and women to achieve their athletic goals."

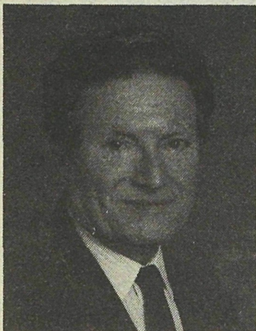
In recognition of this gift, the entrance plaza of the Center of Champions, now under construction, will be named in the family's honor.

Leo Thomas died in 1969, and in 1972 his widow married Judge Lester Cecil '17 LLB, whose commitment to Michigan equaled that of his new wife. The couple renewed the custom of attending home games.

Judge Cecil was already a dedicated Michigan fan when he married Lucile Cecil. Both his son, Thomas C. Cecil '52 JD, and his daughter, Martha Cecil Stauffer '54 BS, are alumni. Thomas Cecil's wife, Mary L. Cecil, earned a dietetic internship at the U-M Hospital in 1953.

Volunteers

Continued from preceding page



Stern

pany, Industrial Tectonics, for nearly 40 years. He is now president of Arcanum Corporation, another Ann Arbor research and development firm.

As a member of the LSA Visiting Committee, Stern offered advice and opinions on a variety of issues from student recruitment to the undergraduate experience. In 1987, for example, the committee examined undergraduate education at U-M including curriculum isssues, rebuilding the sciences and academic counseling. The committee also establishes stronger ties with LSA alumni to promote the College as one of the nation's premier liberal arts institutions.

Most recently, Stern has volunteered to coordinate the national committee that will raise $20 million for the Institute. While a recent $2.6 million challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities has provided a good start, raising the matching funds "is a sizable task," he notes.

"It may well turn out that my most important fundraising success was persuading Helmut Stern to serve as chair of the Institute's Development Advisory Committee," said James Winn, director of the Institute. "Scientist, humanitarian, art collector, man of culture, Helmut has a deep understanding of our ambitious interdisciplinary mission. He amazes me with his range of interests and the wisdom of his opinions."

To Stern, the people are what count in development work. "The greatest challenge before me isn't a question of money," he says. "It's finding people to whom the Institute will appeal."

More than 300 U-M alumni and friends across the country provide volunteer support each year for the University's Development Office. Their activities include identifying prospective donors, encouraging contributions and hosting gatherings of alumni and friends of Michigan.

Spring President's Weekend will be Saturday, May 19

The spring President's Weekend, to be held Saturday, May 19, will be titled "Education: Inventing the American Future." The program, featuring U-M faculty members, will include a panel discussion on "The Crisis in American Education" and presentations on "Michigan in the Age of Knowledge: Rx for Economic Development"; "K-12 Education — Can It Be Saved?"; and "Lifestyles, Values and a Changing Social Order." Time will be allowed for group participation.

Members of the Presidential Societies and Partners In Leadership are invited to the President's Weekends, held twice yearly. Presidential Societies members have contributed $15,000 or more to the University. Partners In Leadership have contributed $1,000 or more within the past year.

The overall theme for the two President's Weekends in 1990 will be "1990s: Doorway to the Age of Knowledge." The fall weekend, to be held Friday and Saturday, November 9-10, will focus on the changing American society and how those changes will affect education.

FImu
C479

WITH THE END of another school year, Michigan students will try to follow Samuel Johnson's advice: 'If you are idle, be not solitary; if you are solitary, be not idle.' This 1903 aquatint and etching, 'The Game of Solitaire,' is by the French painter Jacques Villon. It is part of the permanent collection of The University of Michigan Museum of Art.

Michigan Today
The University of Michigan
News and Information Services
412 Maynard Street
Ann Arbor MI 48109-1399

MOVING?
Make Sure Michigan Today Goes Along!

Clip this box, write in your new address adjacent to mailing label, and mail to address above.

U-M Regents: Deane Baker, Ann Arbor; Paul W. Brown, Petoskey; Neal D. Nielsen, Brighton; Philip H. Power, Ann Arbor; Thomas A. Roach, Detroit; Veronica Latta Smith, Grosse Ile; Nellie M. Varner, Detroit; James L. Waters, Muskegon; James J. Duderstadt, President, *Ex-officio*.

The University of Michigan, as an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer, complies with applicable federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is the policy of The University of Michigan that no person, on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, marital status, handicap, or Vietnam-era veteran status, shall be discriminated against in employment, educational programs and activities, or admissions. Inquiries or complaints may be addressed to the University's Director of Affirmative Action, Title IX and Section 504 Compliance, 2012 Fleming Building, Ann Arbor MI 48109 (313) 764-3423 (TDD 747-1388).

We are using mailing lists from several University of Michigan sources and are often unable to combine them to remove duplications. If you receive an extra copy, please share it with an appreciative reader.