MACALESTER TODAY

February 1988

THE LEGACY OF THE ’60s
Alumni look back 20 years

Macalester professors on education’s changing face

The ‘Rhodes’ to scholarship:
Seven stories span 84 years

Faith Ohman ’64
LETTERS

We welcome readers' opinions of recent articles. Please send letters intended for publication to Letters to the Editor, Macalester Today, Public Relations and Publications Department, Macalester College, 1600 Grand Ave., Saint Paul, MN 55105. We reserve the right to edit letters for conciseness and clarity.

Just the right words

Many thanks to Professor Thomas Hill ("Letters," November) for expressing so well the thought that may many of us had upon learning of the death of Professor Hugo Thompson. He was indeed "loved by those who knew him." 

John B. Lilja '56
Minneapolis

How unique? How fluent?

"Gerunds and Geography" (November) was interesting. However, I have certain doubts regarding some of the claims made.

I have had training and experience in language teaching, both at the secondary and postsecondary levels; accordingly, I speak of what I know. It seems unlikely that a student who has studied a language at only the intermediate level would be able, even with a concurrent special language class, to effectively participate in a college-level content class conducted in the target language. I can believe that the student's knowledge of the target language might be significantly augmented, but not that the student could achieve native or near-native-speaker fluency. Nor is it credible without further evidence that the student would learn the same amount of the content-subject as s/he would have in a similar course taught in English.

The Macalester program is said to be unique. May I point out, just for a few examples, Middlebury College in Vermont, Millsburg University in Pennsylvania, the Monterey Institute of International Studies in California, and Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn.? These programs offer out-of-class reinforcement of language learning; students participating in them promise to use only the target language for the duration of the program.

Macalester's program is an interesting one, and I do not deny that the students in it must learn a significant amount. Nevertheless, the claims in the article as they stand require more substantiation than they are given. I am willing to be convinced, but I will need more evidence.

Bruce Alan Wilson
(son of M. Glen Wilson, emeritus professor of speech and dramatic arts)
Heber Springs, Ark.

We stand by the article's statement (based on the research and beliefs of the professors conducting the program) that the bridge program's particular in-class focus—courses taught by foreign scholars in their areas of expertise and in their native language—is "probably a unique offering among U.S. colleges."

As a former teacher, Mr. Wilson is naturally interested in statistical quantification—finding out how much students learn under Macalester's bridge program compared with students of other colleges' language programs. We know of no such comparative statistics. Nor, as we see it, are they necessary.

The point is not that Macalester students end up more fluent than participants in other institutions' language programs, but that the bridge classes combine two elements not usually brought together on the campus of a small college: a non-language subject (geography, economics) taught in a foreign language.

— Editor

Bright ideas

I enjoyed the November 1987 issue of Macalester Today. I am sharing the article ("'Gerunds and Geography'") full of bright applications of Fulbright awards with other staff here at CIES, including Robert Burnett, who manages the Scholar-in-Residence program for Western Europe.

I recall that a dozen years ago at Carleton College, when I was an undergraduate, Professor Paul Riesman used to teach his introductory anthropology course in French occasionally. Macalester's coupling of subject with language courses, and in several languages, is impressive.

Frederik Ohles,
Program Officer,
Council for International Exchange of Scholars
Washington, D.C.

Correction

Because the November issue's article on language teaching was researched and written while one of the five professors it names was out of the country, it inadvertently misspells the name of Fulbright scholar Rainer Vollmar. Macalester Today deeply regrets the error.

Archivist Harry Drake '50 would love to see more gifts like the one pictured above—a 1924 photograph, recently donated by Raymond Lindquist '27, of Macalester's Athenaean Society (a literary organization) on the steps of Old Main. Pictured are (left to right, first row): unknown, Gordon Uhley '26, Paul Skiff '24, Joe Dugan '24, unknown, Rudolph Keller '24, William Williams '24, Milton Olson '24, unknown, William Paden '26, Lindquist; (second row) unknown, Luverne Tanglen '25, Fenwick Taylor '26, Lester Wilcox '26, Victor Ziebarth '25, Clinton Beresford '25, Raymond Griffith '26, Robert Barr '24, Lyle Bonham '24, Chester Hamblin '27, two unknowns, Herbert McQuillen '26, Arthur Skjold '26; (third row) George Roberts '27, Allan Pelson '26, unknown, Thomas Ross Paden '26, three unknowns, Rolland Zellar '26, unknown, Elsworth Heed '27, Albert Haakinson '27. Among the archives department's current needs are 1974–75 Spot-lites, baccalaureate programs (just about every year from 1889 through 1926), and Baldwin School Commencement invitations and Class Day programs. To donate any of the above, or to inquire about other needed items, write to: Harry Drake, Archivist, Weyerhaeuser Library, Macalester College, 1600 Grand Ave., Saint Paul, MN 55105.
At Macalester
Students build a 'mitten mountain'; a Russian-flavored conference reaches a nationwide audience; and the library campaign nears its close.

The '60s Meet the '80s
Did 1960s activism change the world? Five alumni and three students explore the personal impact of that gaudy and volatile decade. by Rebecca Ganzel

'You Need Strong Moral Indignation'
A black activist, now a judge, muses on the continuing fight for human rights.

Forty Years of Freshman Faces
With or without a cause, Prof. Roger Blakely '43 loves rebels.

The Opening of the American Mind
How does the education of today's students differ from our own? Seven Macalester professors present the changing face of knowledge. by Jon Tevlin

The Well-Travelled Rhodes
Spanning 84 years, Macalester's seven Rhodes Scholars have taken diverging paths to and from Oxford University. by Micheal J. Thompson

Alumni News
A reforged link in the alumni-admissions chain.

Alumni Profiles
Novelist Tim O'Brien '68; and Gilbert Baldwin '71, a man for whom nuts and bolts are bread and butter.

Class Notes
Of saints and sinners, mommies and daddies, lawyers and mathematicians—and at least one 'Teacher of the Year.'
Conference on AIDS part of wider education effort

"AIDS Awareness Week" provided only a few of the thought-provoking speeches and public addresses given at Macalester last fall. In other programs, three Nobel Prize-winning scientists addressed the community on separate occasions, each funded by the Wallace Distinguished Visitors Program; in late October, the minority-program office sponsored several talks on the 19th-century Dakota Conflict and its impact on present-day Native Americans; and the college hosted an international conference on Soviet policy (see p. 3).

During a week of special forums and speakers last November, the attendance was small but the message was clear: AIDS is a threat to everyone, including the Macalester community.

"The education process is going to be much more difficult than we thought it would be, but we've got a good start," chaplain Brent Coffin said following the Nov. 2-5 "AIDS Awareness Week" he organized.

Coffin said he was initially disappointed by the low turnout at the eight events. Most people assume they know all about acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS' full name) through the media, he said, but few people are confident enough in their knowledge to protect themselves and discuss the facts openly.

"People have a very superficial knowledge, and that's enough to make them not really think about it," he said. "There's a lot of hesitance to admitting that we're all vulnerable."

False rumors about catching AIDS through mosquitoes, handshakes, and kissing contribute to misunderstandings and fear about the disease, physician Scott Strickland said in his Nov. 2 address. Strickland, director of the Hennepin County Special Disease Clinic, has seen two recent Macalester graduates die of AIDS. He said the disease is a statistical reality that must be faced by the wider community.

Fear of the disease is a negative force as well, Coffin said.

"Fear is a two-edged force. It can motivate us to confront—or to flee," he said.

Richard Danila, director of the Minnesota Department of Health's AIDS unit, enlarged on this point in his Nov. 3 presentation.

"Half my time is spent dealing with AIDS. The other half is spent dealing with AIDS hysteria," Danila said. He painted a sad picture of the U.S. AIDS epidemic, noting that between 1 million and 1.5 million people have contracted AIDS and are capable of spreading the fatal disease.

Informal discussions on campus and in the residence halls were also part of the week-long program, which Coffin sees as part of a continuing drive to educate the community about AIDS. Several students completed training sessions at the St. Paul public-health department during the week to become volunteer AIDS educators in the city's public schools, Coffin said.

Associate philosophy professor Martin Gunderson spoke on AIDS and the right to privacy on Nov. 5, arguing that "privacy is being balanced against health concerns." Gunderson said that the virus opens two new areas for potential litigation: Someone who gets AIDS from a sexual partner may decide to sue that partner, and a physician could conceivably be sued by an AIDS patient for informing others of the patient's status. Litigation itself, Gunderson said, constitutes a major threat to privacy.

Coffin later said that, in the event of a Macalester student getting the disease, the college would uphold that person's rights to privacy and confidentiality.

"The community would provide whatever resources are necessary to complete the person's education, so they can live as full a life as possible," he said.

"This AIDS Awareness Week is a launch pad for something that should be an ongoing part of this community," Coffin said. "There's no reason to be fatalistic about this disease. There is no excuse [for getting] it. We know how to prevent it. We know how not to spread it."

—Katherine Rowlands '88
Overlooked in *U.S. News*, Macalester ranks well in guidebooks, statistics

“We are disappointed but not surprised” that Macalester was overlooked in a newsmagazine’s listing of top American colleges, says President Robert M. Gavin, Jr.

Macalester was not among the top 25 “national liberal arts colleges” in the Oct. 26 issue of *U.S. News and World Report*. The annual rankings are based solely on the opinions of college presidents, Gavin points out, and rely on their knowledge of other colleges. Other, more objective indicators such as SAT scores and admissions rates are not reflected in the ranking.

For example, at six of the colleges on the list, average SAT scores of entering freshmen are lower than those at Macalester (1218), and at five more they are within two to twelve points. Eight colleges on the list are less selective in their admissions process—that is, they admit a larger percentage of applicants than does Macalester at 50.8 percent.

Macalester is working to communicate its strengths to the public nationally, including education leaders, Gavin notes. One indicator of the college’s success is the descriptions of Macalester in various college guidebooks used by prospective students and their parents in selecting a college. These guidebooks, such as *Selective Guide to Colleges* by Edward B. Fiske, education editor for *The New York Times*, have described Macalester in increasingly favorable terms over the past several years.

The importance of the guidebooks in admissions is emphasized in a Dec. 2 *Times* article, which also quotes Macalester dean of admissions William M. Shain. “Nobody ever describes you as you would describe yourself,” says Shain in the article. Nevertheless, he tells *Macalester Today*, the college is being portrayed very positively in the books.

Worldwide visitors convene for ‘glasnost’ conference

Hundreds of foreign ministers, administration officials, and scholars from the West and from Eastern-bloc countries convened at Macalester in mid-October for a conference on the new Soviet policy of glasnost (usually translated as “openness”).

The conference, sponsored by the New York-based East-West Institute for Security Studies, focused on the putative failure of the U.S. and other Western countries “to respond creatively to the opportunities offered by the new directions in Soviet policy” under Mikhail Gorbachev.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State John Whitehead, U.S. Senator Bill Bradley (D-N.J.), *New York Times* editorial-page editor Leslie Gelb, former vice president Walter Mondale, and West German foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher were among the speakers in the conference’s series of private discussions.

Although much of the three-day conference was closed to the public, several faculty members and administrators were invited to be part of the deliberations. And the Macalester community was able to hear and ask questions of several conference participants in a public forum on Oct. 11—a program produced by Minnesota Public Radio and broadcast live by American Public Radio. Panelists for this radio program (Donald Kendall, chairman of the executive committee of PepsiCo Inc.; Flora Lewis, foreign-affairs columnist for *The New York Times*; Richard Ullman, professor of international affairs at Princeton University; and Kenneth Dam, former deputy secretary of state) responded to questions from the Macalester audience and, by telephone, from students listening across the country.

The Institute for East-West Security Studies is a non-profit organization that promotes study and dialogue on issues affecting countries of the NATO and Warsaw Pact alliances. This was the first institute-sponsored meeting to take place west of New York City; seeking a Midwest site for the conference, the institute chose Macalester because of its reputation for fine scholarship and long-standing internationalism, according to institute director John Mroz. —N.A.P.
Computerized catalog transforms library research

The physical changes in Weyerhaeuser Library's reference room aren't enormous: the old wooden card catalogs have been rearranged (the "authors" and "titles" have moved to the reading room across the hall), and a table with some computer terminals has been added just by the door. But these small alterations represent a revolution in library use.

The sign on the card catalog gives you a clue: "This is a CLOSED catalog." The old catalog, with its paper-intensive system averaging around seven cards for every book, magazine, microform, recording, map, or government document in the library's collection, is—in a word—obsolete. Weyerhaeuser's two catalog librarians (and 10-12 student cataloguers) stopped adding cards to it on July 1. The old catalog is still available for use, but researchers are finding it's faster and more thorough to bypass it altogether.

With the library's new Carlyle computer terminals (five in the reference room, two in the downstairs periodicals room, and, early next month, one each in Olin Science Library and the Humanities Learning Center), it takes only seconds to search through not just everything in the Macalester library's collection, but everything in the libraries of seven other Twin Cities institutions as well.

Macalester has joined with Augsburg College, Bethel College, Concordia College, Hamline University (including the law school), the James J. Hill Reference Library, the College of St. Catherine, and the College of St. Thomas to form an organization called CLIC - Cooperating Libraries in Consortium. The computer network that links all their libraries (called "CLICnet" for short) is housed in Macalester's computing center. Altogether, 2 million items are catalogued in this computer's memory banks.

Thanks to years of backstage data-entry work ("It was going on long before I got here," says library director Joel Clemmer, who was hired in 1985), all Macalester's bibliographic records — barring a few hundred of the most recent acquisitions — are now stored in computer-readable form. The computerized records will be updated regularly.

Why the change? User-friendliness plays a big role.

"The new system frees you from a straitjacket," Clemmer says. "The old card catalog locked you into a strict word order; it locked you into alphabetical order."

Not any more. And this summer, if all goes well, CLICnet will include circulation records — telling users not just the names of the books they're looking for, but whether or not they've been checked out. Eventually, the inter-library loan process will be computerized as well, but he estimates that this will take a year or more.

CLICnet sports a $1.1 million pricetag. Of this, $340,000 (plus all annual operating and maintenance costs) is being shared by the eight participating institutions; the remainder has been raised from foundations and corporations.

Although many library users (this writer included) look on the old wooden card catalog with great affection, Clemmer doesn't expect nostalgia to get in the way of enthusiasm for the new system. "Nationwide, the acceptance of on-line catalog systems has been phenomenal," he says. "It's simply a more flexible and appropriate approach to an academic library."

—R.L.G.

Freshman-to-sophomore rate hits 91 percent

College admissions isn't just about attracting students — it's about keeping them after they enroll. And this year's Macalester sophomores sport some impressive retention figures.

According to the registrar, the overall percentage of students "retained" between freshman and sophomore years for the class of '90 (a total of 435 students) was 91 percent; for the 25 minority students in the class, 92 percent; and for the international students, 94 percent.

This is the highest freshman-to-sophomore retention rate in the 23 years that Macalester has kept retention records, and the first time the rate has exceeded 90 percent. Over the past five years, an average of only 85 percent of freshmen came back to Macalester for their sophomore year — and for minority students, the average figure has been 75 percent.

In addition, the freshman-to-senior retention rate for the class of '88 is 74.5 percent, 10 percentage points higher than it was four years ago.
Towards the end of fall semester, the new library building was shrouded in plastic to facilitate the bricklayers’ work—behind the plastic, propane heaters kept the temperature above 45 degrees, the minimum at which bricks can be laid. By mid-December, workmen had completed the Romanesque building’s 12-foot-high limestone skirt and were nearly done with the windows.

Library fundraising nears completion

Fundraising for Macalester’s new library surpassed $8.55 million by mid-January, and a trustee task force is working to raise a final $200,000.

When they do, the college will earn three additional gifts. First, a $750,000 capstone gift from the Bush Foundation of Saint Paul and a $500,000 gift from the Kresge Foundation of Troy, Mich., will bring the library-fund total to $10 million. Reaching that goal, in turn, will earn a $5 million matching gift from the Wallace Funds of the Readers’ Digest Association.

The combined total of $15 million will cover library construction costs and endow maintenance and the book collection.

Look for him in Sam Shepard’s new motion picture “Far North”: Junior Timothy Hanrahan makes a brief appearance as “Boy in Back Seat.” The movie was filmed on a farm outside Duluth in December. Here, Hanrahan clowns around in the snow outside the Macalester student union.

Calendar

Since this schedule is subject to last-minute changes, we urge you to double-check dates and times before making plans. Most events are free, but it’s a good idea to call for ticket prices. A T in the listing indicates the theater box office, 612/696-6359; a C, the campus programs office, 612/696-6297.

Fri., Feb. 12, 8 p.m.
Cultural music show. Call minority programs, 612/696-6258, for information (Cochran Lounge)

Tues., Feb. 16, 8 p.m.
Mayor Raymond Flynn of Boston speaks as part of Macalester’s Mayors’ Forum, co-sponsored by the geography department, 612/696-6231 (Weyerhaeuser Chapel)

Thurs., Feb. 18, 11:30 a.m.
Marbrook Visiting Professor Robert Sonkowsky (Weyerhaeuser Chapel)

Fri., Feb. 19, 8 p.m.
Civic Orchestra of Minneapolis (Concert Hall)

Sat., Feb. 20, 8 p.m.
Harmonia Mundi performance (Concert Hall)

Mon., Feb. 29, 8 p.m.
Mayor James Durrell of Ottawa, Ontario, will speak on “winter cities” (Weyerhaeuser Chapel)

Sun.—Mon., Mar. 6—7
Admissions sampler. Call the admissions office, 612/696-6357, for information

Tues., Mar. 8, 11:30 a.m.
Wallace Distinguished Visitor William Schopf (Weyerhaeuser Chapel)

Sun., Mar. 13
Gallery opening: “Best 100 High School Art Show.” Call the art department, 612/696-6279, for information (Janet Wallace Fine Arts Gallery)

Wed., Mar. 16, 7:30 p.m.
Wayne Angell, governor of the Federal Reserve Board, speaks as part of the Cargill lecture series (Weyerhaeuser Chapel)

Tues., Apr. 5
Health Fair C (Cochran Lounge)

Fri., Apr. 8
Gallery opening: “Macalester Art Majors Senior Exhibit.” Call the art department, 612/696-6279, for information (Janet Wallace Fine Arts Gallery)

Sun.—Mon., Apr. 10—11, and Sun.—Mon., Apr. 24—25
Admissions sampler. Call the admissions office, 612/696-6357, for information

Tues., Apr. 12, 11:30 a.m.
Wallace Distinguished Visitor Freeman Dyson (Weyerhaeuser Chapel)

Sat., Apr. 23, 8 p.m.
Harmonia Mundi performance (Concert Hall)

Sat., May 7, 10 a.m.—5 p.m.
Scottish Country Fair C

—David Eddleston
The '60s meet the '80s

A 20-Year Roll Call

Christina Baldwin '68, now a writer living in Golden Valley, Minn., and president of Macalester's Alumni Association, helped found the Minnesota chapter of Clergy and Laity Concerned about the War in Vietnam in her junior year. She has traveled considerably, both as a student and as a staff member for a national Quaker organization, the American Friends Service Committee.

Tina Edwards '89, a member of a Choc-taw Indian band in her native Alabama, is chair of Community Council, Macalester's student-government organization, and one of two student representatives for the Bemidji-based Minnesota Indian Education Association. She is majoring in anthropology.

Faith Ohman '64, a member of the Board of Trustees, began her long involvement with the civil-rights movement as a Macalester student, when she participated in voter-registration projects in Minneapolis and in Atlanta. Now a partner in the Minneapolis law firm of Dorsey & Whitney (specializing in estate planning), she says she's moved from "the foot-soldier work" of politics to serving on organizations' boards: Minnesota Women Lawyers and H.E.A.R.T., Inc. (a chemical-dependency organization), for instance.

Thomas Saunders '68 runs a dairy farm in Wisconsin and has been active in the national farm movement since 1982; he is on the executive board of the national "Save the Family Farm" coalition, which he helped found. He is also a stoneware potter. He and his wife, Pamela Hendrickson Saunders '70, have four children.

Donald Schwartz '71 is a self-described "Goldwater conservative" who is a senior partner in the Chicago firm Sidley & Austin—one of the largest law firms in the world. In high school, he was active in Youth for Goldwater at Macalester, he was vice-chair (as a junior) and chair (as a senior) of the Republican Club; and, during law school, he was first vice-chair of the Wisconsin Young Republicans. He and Susan, married since 1971, have twin daughters.

Susan Dunst Schwartz '71 is an attorney with the First National Bank of Chicago. She chaired the Republican Club in her junior year—the year Donald was vice-chair—and, as a senior, served on the National College Republican Executive Committee.

Douglas Selvage '88, who calls himself an "outspoken" reporter and columnist for the Mac Weekly, is chair of the Community Council's education commission. A German major with a political-science core, he characterizes himself as "progressive... I also could be called a post-Marxian theorist, since I'm alive after Marx and I think."

Jodi Vandenberg '88 has won a number of distinguished Macalester scholarships and awards. Last year, she was one of 50 college juniors chosen to participate in the first year of Leadership America, an intensive 10-week development program. She is a volunteer tutor at a local community center, a member of Hebrew House, a varsity swimmer, and an international-studies major.

—R.L.G.
Macalester students gather to mourn Martin Luther King, Jr., at the Minnesota state capitol.

We thought the world could be made perfect

by Rebecca Ganzel

Last October, 11 people gathered in the Fine Arts Lounge on the Macalester campus at the invitation of Macalester Today to discuss the impact of the 1960s on their lives. Of the six alumni in the room, all had graduated between 1964 and 1971, and all had participated in the political activism that colored the decade. For the three current students there, who were in grade school when the U.S. pulled out of Vietnam in 1976, the 1960s is an era of myth and saga, a period to study (as several had) in class. Aside from two Macalester Today editors, the only person present who had never been a student at Macalester was political-science professor Charles Green, who helped plan the discussion. By coincidence, he had taught all the alumni and student participants during his 22 years on campus. What follows is a much-abbreviated transcript of their discussion.
Baldwin: We do need to talk about what happened in the '60s. I don't mean to the extent that we talked about it then, when all we did sometimes was talk. We had no theoretical base then, and we had to bring it into consciousness by talking.

Ohman: We really thought the world could be made perfect.

Selvage: I guess people are more cynical now.

D. Schwartz: What you call 'cynicism' could also be realism. We're realizing that two or three people can't turn society around—

Baldwin (sotto voce): But they do.

D. Schwartz: —that you've got to focus on something that's practical.

When we were in college, the conservative movement was virtually nonexistent. I was involved in Young Americans for Freedom and the College Republicans, but most [other] students' activity focused on being against the war. Conservative students' big goal was not the political agenda. Our attitude was that we were there to get a good education, despite what was going on.

S. Schwartz: There was no real intellectual debate about issues. I took a class from Dr. Mitau, who had left Nazi Germany in the 1930s, and I agreed with Mitau about everything that was going on. Dr. Mitau gave speeches about how he had seen Nazism and fascism, and student activism was just 'student fascism.'

D. Schwartz: When students heard Hubert Humphrey was going to be on the faculty, they surrounded his office with barbed wire to keep him out. The chair of the Young Democrats was one of my closest friends, and together we made a small move to 'liberate' Humphrey's office by clearing away the barbed wire.

Ohman: In fighting for civil rights [in the '60s], I had absolutely no tolerance for any other point of view than my own. I was ready to die for it. Then the war came along, and I started out being against the war in the same way. Later, I found I had friends on both sides of the issue, and I wished it were possible to be as single-minded as I had been before.

Pluralism is a burden. I'm hungry for the simplicity of the way it used to be.

D. Schwartz: But that was my frustration in the '60s—the naivété of the activists. They didn't realize that you couldn't just stop the war, or expect people to overnight change their attitudes about race by passing a law. Today, students have a better understanding of the complexities of the world. They're realizing how pluralistic our society really is.

Saunders: I think you're right about the 'naïvité.' You take a bunch of middle-class white kids—which is what we were—and put them in this new world.
intellectual environment, then throw in the draft—and you’ll see what we saw.

Baldwin: Remember the “Caravan to the South” that the Mac [chaplain’s office] organized in 1964? You came back from that saying, ‘I have seen the South, and it’s all true.’ We had one white student from Mississippi in my class, and he felt like the minority, trying to give us the white—not racist, white—perspective on the South and the real cultural upheaval that was going on there. We didn’t have the facts. We didn’t realize the culture that was being disrupted by the peace movement either.

Selvage: But what would have happened if students hadn’t interested themselves in the war? What if they had just gone along with it? That war might still be going on.

Baldwin: It is going on. It’s going on in the Persian Gulf today.

Saunders: It’s going on in the Philippines today.

Selvage: I know. But still—I guess I’m a believer in progressivism. I think that the peace movement did have an impact. Maybe it was just that the hopes were too high; you thought that you could do it overnight, and it didn’t occur overnight. But it did happen.

Edwards: The 1960s directly affected my life. If it weren’t for people going out and pushing for civil rights, I wouldn’t be here. I live what people pushed for. The people of the 1960s had ideas, and they worked. I’m not stuck in southern Alabama with two or three kids and a third-grade education. My grandmother learned how to sign her name—that’s it.

In the South, the average age to be married is 17. By the time I reached 21, I was an old maid. But I didn’t get this education to get married and raise kids.

Ohman: I’m surprised that you still feel that it has to be a choice between having a family and being involved.

Edwards: Where I come from, it is a choice. When you get married, you have babies—

Saunders (agreeing, sotto voce):—one-two-three-four.

Edwards: My mother has, what, nine brothers and sisters—it’s a really big extended family. I will be the first one out of a hundred people on [my mother’s] side to graduate from college.

S. Schwartz: What about you, Jodi?

Vandenberg: I’m in a very serious relationship right now, and having kids is very important to both
of us. I would like to set aside time in my life to stay home and be a mother—and my boyfriend would like to do the same, to stay home and be a father. Then I can go out and be a public person.

Edwards: But I'm talking about rural Alabama. Every time I talk to my mom—at least, once in awhile—she asks me, 'Are you going out with anyone?'

'Well, no, I don't have time.'

'Well, you better start making time, or you're just going to lose your chance! You're graduating in May!' (laughter)

Baldwin (laughing, as if quoting her own mother): 'There are no men beyond college!' That I didn't get married right out of college was a puzzlement to my parents and friends.

Selvage: I come from a very conservative small town in Ohio [Jeromesville], where men have pressure on them to marry, too. It's not as great as it is on the women. It's like—

Sometimes, when I get home, people say, 'When are you going to get a job, get married, and settle down?'

Not many people in my community have been able to go on to higher education. They're mainly farmers who've lived there all their lives [and expect] their sons and daughters to take over the farm. So there's that traditional pressure there still. They can't understand—'Why should education take so long? It's been years—years!' They ask, 'Why are you going to all these foreign countries?' The way they see it, you're just going on vacations.

Edwards: Every time I go home, it's a totally different world. I have to prepare myself weeks in advance before I leave. And then when I leave there, I have to prepare myself to come back here. It's getting used to two totally different cultures.

Saunders: What Tina is talking about is not just the South, it's the North too. Our daughter, Terry, is 13, and she's going to school in a small [Wisconsin] town. We raised our kids to see things in a little different way. We made a commitment not to have TV, because of what it does to our kids. One thing was clear—if I could do anything about it, my daughters weren't going to do tap dance and cheer-
In September 1966, then-entering freshman Edward Wilson was out of his element in two ways. By his estimation, he was one of "no more than 30" black students on the Macalester campus. And, perhaps more significantly, his upbringing in Chicago's South Side slums was considerably at odds with the backgrounds of most of his fellow students.

"It was quite disconcerting at first," he says. "It was very difficult to get used to.... And, let's face it, people just were not as knowledgable back then about black culture—and about just plain racial tact."

"It was a much more rigorous education situation than I'd ever been accustomed to," Wilson adds, then smiles. "But I began to get the hang of it by my senior year."

He had also begun to get involved in on-campus activism, helping to found ("in the general sense," he says) the Black Liberation Affairs Committee, a still-extant student organization.

Wilson had grown up at 54th and Dearborn in Chicago, a neighborhood that he says made nearby Hyde Park look good. His family put a high value on education: "My mother was pressuring me to go to college for as long as I can remember. You know, 'You need to go to college so you can make a better life for your kids.' "

While he was a sophomore, Wilson decided his Macalester education would be the prelude to a law degree. Becoming an attorney was his way, he says, of dealing with the anger of the decade.

The riots in Detroit and Newark, the summer before his sophomore year, were "the catalyzing event" that propelled him into law, Wilson says.

"I distinctly remember how television programs talked about the need for attorneys to represent all these people who were being arrested—thousands of people," he says. "I basically felt the same kind of anger, but on a different level. I guess I had the sense not to go out and go up against police and armored vehicles."

Instead, as a judge in the Ramsey County (Minn.) District Court, he now confronts more subtle barriers. Before he was appointed to the bench this past fall, his 12 years' work as a Twin Cities attorney was spent at the Legal Aid Society and the Neighborhood Justice Center, which serve "mainly people of color," he says.

"At both places, I probably represented more black people than I did anyone else," Wilson says. "And always, my clients were poor. You had to be low-income to qualify for services at both places."

In American society, being poor is more of a liability than being black, Wilson believes.

"The majority of people who go through our criminal-justice system are people who don't have much money, and that is essentially the reason why they're there," Wilson says. "People who are poor find themselves in positions that they would not find themselves in if they weren't poor. There's always that frustration."

"I have never seen a rich person in court for possession of cocaine," he says flatly. "It's not because they don't use it; it's because they can use it in circumstances under which they won't be penalized...."

"And more well-to-do people, it doesn't often happen that their kids are taken away from them. Now does that mean that they are better parents, per se? I don't think so. I think it means that when you're poor and you're on welfare, the government has an opportunity to invade your privacy."

As a judge, Wilson isn't allowed to publicly express political opinions, but he makes it clear that there are some present-day issues, like South Africa apartheid, on which he feels as strongly as he did about civil rights in the 1960s. And while he calls his devotion to the 1960s civil-rights cause "narrow-minded," he has no regrets.

"You ended up tolerating only the people who identified with the causes you identified with," he says. "[But] that was exactly what was needed at the time. Issues like civil rights are very clear cut. You need to have strong, uncompromising moral indignation to fight for those kinds of issues." —R.L.G.
Ohman: I always felt that Macalester was the first place where I was expected to do the best I could do.

Baldwin: But I don't remember any professor ever talking to me about developing career plans. I was part of a group in the English department who were highly regarded in that department, and the men I went through with are all in academic positions now, with Ph.D.s in English. But nobody ever told me about graduate school. When I became so politically involved that I backed out of the honors program, it was considered no great loss to the program. So there was still that gender bias here; for a woman, a B.A. was enough. I hope that that's changed for women on this campus.

Saunders: That's the way all colleges were in those days. But when I went here it was a good school, and it was cheap. Eleven hundred dollars a year, and there was a cap on it.

But the point is, [having attended Macalester is] a burden. It's a debt. That's why my wife and I are doing what we're doing. The only reason that we're able to choose between activism and another career is because we had that opportunity.

D. Schwartz: I don't think there's anything special about '60s people. Traditionally, by the time people get out of school and make sure they can afford to eat and they've got a house to live in, people start looking back and say, 'Cheez, we got a lot out of our education, and somehow or other have to put something back into society.' Look at the endowment history of private colleges. Statistically, I think people from the '60s and '70s are on the weak side of financial support.

Baldwin: But how about paying back society?

Saunders: I wasn't talking about finances, really. It's more like—I feel a real sense of wasted time. I wish I had applied myself a lot more carefully when I was here. This was a privilege, and we were gaining experiences here that could benefit all of society. We are members of a democracy, and most of us simply take. We need to give to a democracy as members.

Baldwin: And my sense is that there are a lot of people who are doing just that: They are not involved in paying back; they are very isolationist.

Vandenberg: Are you disappointed in our generation? all of us Yuppies?

Baldwin (laughs): You're too young to be a Yuppie! I'm disappointed in my own generation, not in you. A lot of them seem to be saying, 'We tried something in our 20s, and it didn't work out.' I don't feel very satisfied with what we accomplished. Having put all that energy into the peace movement, I remember exactly where I was on the day that we pulled out of Saigon. A Vietnam vet who lived down the street in St. Paul came running over to my house, leapt over the balcony of my apartment, and said, 'Guess what! We're pulling out of Saigon!' And the first thing I said was, 'Were we still there?' That's how far I had drifted from '68 to '76. And then I went and stood on the bluff overlooking downtown and just felt this tremendous despair at my own political process—that we were not successful in important ways.

Saunders: In a sense, the '60s didn't jell because it didn't allow room for working-class people. It was too intellectual, too collegic, too one-dimensional. It was without working-class wisdom. And it doesn't seem like that's changed. The farm movement and the labor movement don't have the time to take their people and say, 'Okay, this is our college agenda. This is what we're going to do here.' And the colleges don't say, 'Okay, this is how we're going to involve these movements.' It's not articulated as part of the problem.

Baldwin: I am truly glad Tina said she's here because of what happened in the '60s—that there were ways in which the '60s were successful. But Tom's right—we just didn't penetrate the culture.

Saunders: I hope what we're about today is, 'How do we do it better next time?' And the way you do that is by being critical, analytical, about what's happened. If all of this higher education means anything, it has to be about sorting through and throwing out those things which are clearly wrong. And there were things that were clearly not okay. I mean, we don't need to be so openminded that our brains fall out.

Ohman: And remember, we did accomplish this: Now, you are not unpatriotic purely because you criticize what your government is doing in a time of war. I don't know if that sounds like a whole lot to you, but it's important.
Forty years of freshman faces

Prof. Roger Blakely muses on Macalester activism over the years.

by Rebecca Ganzel

Having taught English to three generations of Macalester students ("which makes one feel quite aged," he says), Roger K. Blakely '43, a veteran of World War II, has a long perspective on the "typical" Macalester student. Twenty years ago, Blakely says, activist students got the spotlight, but he adds that there has always been a quieter, more conservative faction in the student body. Both kinds of students, he says, are equally fun to teach.

Macalester has always had a core of students who are very reliable, very valuable, solid citizens, but not given to lively vocal enthusiasm and protest. They tend to be a little bit more establishmentarian; many of them major in the sciences. Then, I think, you'll always find the wilder, more speculative students who are interested in politics, interested in the problem of power, and are incensed by injustice wherever they see it.

In the '60s there was a whole generation of students who were very much involved in politics and protest. Many of them didn't know what their major was going to be, or majored in a field close to these temporary enthusiasms and concerns of theirs, such as political science. Some of them even neglected their studies for the sake of protest—community activity, and marches on Washington, and so on and so forth.

Students were not as career-oriented then as they are now. They probably didn't feel the kind of competition for jobs that they think they feel now. They were perhaps a little more willing to risk going without employment for a year or two after college. On the other hand, college expenses weren't what they are now, and kids didn't graduate with the kind of indebtedness that many of them now face. So there's more economic realism currently. I don't think it means more selfishness or self-concern; it means a more practical and knowledgeable grip on the world outside.

In some ways the 1960s people were a lot of fun to teach. They were vigorous and lively and unconventional. Of course, many of them thought that protests in gesture were meaningful even if not backed up by solid information. But their protests were effective, although they were scattered and got a bad press. Responsible people in politics [were led] to question the Vietnam War, and the whole idea of a war conducted by presidential fiat rather than based on public decisions.

I like both kinds of students. The steady souls you can depend on to finish a piece of work that they start, to be regular in their assignments, and in class discussions to be a kind of moderating force or anchor. The others are apt to be wild and intuitive and imaginative, and often they can be undisciplined—they can talk fluently about a book after reading half of it, but they won't have all the facts right. Ideally, I guess, this is the kind of mix we have in life too. And since both groups probably can learn something from each other's qualities, I would say let's have both.

Rebecca Ganzel is managing editor of this magazine.
as a scholar educated during and after the social explosions of the 1960s, Macalester anthropologist Anna Meigs shapes her courses around current social issues rather than classic old texts. She believes this approach helps her students better understand and apply the principles she teaches.

That seems to be just the sort of approach author and education critic Allan Bloom has in mind when he says educators have abandoned the old standards of excellence in favor of a new and empty “relativism.” Bloom, a
University of Chicago professor, is the most prominent among a new group of conservative critics who claim that the forces of the 1960s have changed scholarship and teaching for the worse.

In his 1987 book, *The Closing of the American Mind*, Bloom argues that the classical education has been neglected, and that its basic building blocks — history, mathematics, science, grammar — have been allowed to deteriorate.

Anna Meigs and many other Macalester faculty members agree that teaching and scholarship changed as a result of the 1960s. But unlike Bloom, most of the faculty we interviewed welcome those changes.

While Bloom and conservative educators decry the winnowing away of educational standards, the professors with whom we spoke see an expansion of opportunities, a broader interpretation of their disciplines. The issues that emerged into the public consciousness 20 years ago — civil rights, free speech, Vietnam, feminism — are still important to them. In fact, it was these concerns that drew many of them into their chosen disciplines.

Provost and history professor James Stewart, for example, studied history partly because of his interest in race relations in his native Cleveland. As a graduate student at Case Western Reserve University in 1967, Stewart says, he possessed a healthy skepticism of the old standards — or, to put it in ’60s vernacular, The Establishment.

Meigs, assistant professor of anthropology, says it was the 1960s “do your own thing” trend, coupled with her fascination with other cultures, that lured her into anthropology.

And history professor Norman Rosenberg came to see his peers’ struggles for civil rights and free speech in the context of his chosen fields, American history and popular culture.

This same passionate involvement with issues, 20 or so years ago, led today’s professors to approach their teaching in new ways. “In the ’60s, people did not come into their disciplines with any sort of notions of established theories and postulates,” Stewart says. “The idea was to come in with new insight and new ideas” — ideas that challenged traditional ways of doing things.

Some say we are losing our standards,” Stewart says. “I say just the opposite.

“[Before the ’60s,] there was a certain trust in the standards and views of the past, and teaching was done along fairly traditional models,” he continues. For example, most historians explored black culture by employing the “hero model” method: finding individuals to exemplify the struggles or successes of black America.

“But over the ’70s and ’80s, I think we’ve become more sophisticated,” Stewart says. “We’re not looking for role models; we’re trying to see people in terms of race, culture, ethnicity, and environment. One of the big developments of the decade was the importance of knowledge as a set of self-liberating philosophies.”

Norman Rosenberg elaborates: “Basically, the traditional approach to the pursuit of knowledge was based on Western European knowledge, and in many ways it utterly failed to address what a really educated person needed to know,” he says. Arguments like Bloom’s are dishonest, he says, because “they assert that tradition was saving us from barbarism,” when in fact it encouraged a kind of boiler-plate education.

Says J. Michele Edwards, an associate professor who joined the music department full-time in 1978: “I certainly don’t think something has to be written in a previous era to be valid, or written in German or Latin to be valuable. I’m not prepared to disregard our past — but I’m also not willing to remain there.”

Anna Meigs sees her own education as a case in point. Undergoing a “traditional” education made her resolve to teach her students differently, she says. As an undergraduate at Wellesley, from which she graduated in the mid-1960s, “I was fed to the eyeballs on the classics,” Meigs says. “I didn’t think it was a very good way to educate me then, and I don’t now. So one of my goals is to teach anthropology through issues. I teach about Micronesia, which is a U.S. test site for nuclear weapons. I think [students] have a responsibility to know about it.’”

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Anna Meigs

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I think [students] can not only relate to that better, I think they have a responsibility to know about it. There is nothing they can do about the Trobriand Islanders; there is something they can do about nuclear testing in Micronesia.

While liberal arts courses offered considerable leeway to try different approaches and alter content, the sciences were "rather fixed, almost formal in presentation," according to Kathleen Parson, acting chair of the biology department and associate professor of both chemistry and biology. She believes science teaching has changed less dramatically as a result.

Parson has seen Macalester life from both sides of the lectern. Before she graduated from Macalester in 1967, "I walked through the tear gas on the way to class," she says. Parson says that science students of the '60s (she majored in chemistry) often complained about the protests — "they kept us from getting our work done," she says with a laugh.

That disciplined and pragmatic approach seems to fit Parson's personality today. The study of science, she says, often demands so much "day-to-day attention" that the greater problems of society become secondary.

That's not to say that the social issues rooted in the '60s have been missing from the sciences, Parson hastens to add. At Macalester, she teaches an elective course on genetic engineering, which explores science's political and philosophical implications; the course also examines academic vs. industrial use of science breakthroughs, the role of government agencies, and regulation.

"I do attempt to bring in the social aspects as well as the purely scientific," she says.

The emerging feminist movement has played a significant role in expanding curricula, edging education away from the classics, Meigs says. Traditional, pre-1960s education was geared toward white males. One mark of the change education has endured is that a feminist viewpoint is no longer seen as radical in academic circles, Meigs points out; it's become part of the accepted standards.

"The feminist movement has had a profound impact on the way I teach," Michele Edwards says. "I cannot now even think of teaching a course that did not include women; that's beyond comprehension."

In fact, Macalester's gender-studies program, which Meigs heads, uses gender to examine the treatment of nearly every discipline.

As subject matter changed, so did the relationship between student and teacher. For instance, Meigs says, there's less emotional distance between the teacher and the student. Meigs attributes this in part to the feminist movement.

"There's a dramatic difference between the way I was taught and the way I teach," she says. "As a woman professor, I was extremely uncomfortable in the role of authority, in which I was supposed to come into the room and say, 'This is the way it is.' The '60s, and especially the feminist movement, legitimized authority roles that were less authoritarian, and less distanced."

Professor Charles Green, who joined the political-science department in 1965, says professors' increased contact with students outside the classroom also helped knock down the formal barriers between students and faculty.

"One of the things the '60s did was to get you to see a lot of students in a nonacademic setting," Green says. "You also saw them work well on civil-rights issues, women's rights, and in political campaigns, and in some cases they were doing a better job than you were."

With his wide-open office door and easy manner, Green himself encourages students to drop by outside the classroom. He says he's come to treat his students as adults. "My generation didn't think of students as children any more.

"Students at Mac today negotiate a whole lot," says Green. "They [ask for extensions,] miss deadlines; there's a little squiggling about everything. I know I shouldn't say this, but I kind of see this as a good thing. Yes, it can be interrupting, but we don't have to give in. It's legitimate. This feeling..."
that learning is partly under their control is positive."

Some professors think the breakdown of traditional student-professor roles went too far in the '60s. Rosenberg, for example, characterizes as "blatant dishonesty" the practice of having classes sit in a circle to signify complete equality between student and professor. In fact, he says, it often inadvertently underscored inequalities: "The ones who thought fastest and spoke loudest participated more."

The idea of complete academic equality was also "phony," Edwards says. She says people ended up valuing any opinion for its own sake, rather than learning to distinguish between informed and uninformed opinions.

Edwards agrees with other members of the academic community that the 20 intervening years have tempered the era's educational informality. Professor and pupil have shifted back into clearer, more comfortable roles. Still, the 1960s left its mark on classroom teaching. As journalism professor Ronald Ross puts it, no one wants to go back to the time "when students stood up and saluted when the teacher came into the room."

The idea that students should participate in their own education led to more experimental avenues of learning in the '60s and '70s. Internships, Macalester's Interim term, and individually designed majors — all evolved from the elevation of the students' role in the college. And, significantly, all paved the way for the institution and the student to become more involved in the community around them.

Another legacy, Stewart adds, is the habit of soul-searching that grew out of the activism of the era. Today's hot topics on campus — such issues as divestment of stock in South Africa — are direct descendents of concerns voiced 20 years ago, Stewart says. "They are student efforts to make the administration, and themselves, make morally responsible decisions. That's something you could never see happen now if not for the reference point of the '60s."

James Stewart

"Students work to make the administration, and themselves, make morally responsible decisions. That's something you could never see happen now if not for the reference point of the '60s."

Ronald Ross, who covered Vietnam as a newspaper correspondent and who teaches an Interim course on the Vietnam era, notes that the the Vietnam War and Watergate disillusioned a lot of people.

"I think it's led to a lot of questioning of money for government research on campuses," he says. "Professors [at some universities] are now turning down money for Star Wars research. I think that's threaded back to the '60s."

In short, the decade introduced "a set of sophisticated ideologies that came to influence all areas," Stewart says. "The best part of the '60s legacy that has remained is the idea that we're not hidebound by tradition. [We retain] the notions of equality and sharing and somehow being a community."

The Closing of the American Mind has become a convenient target of some educators' outrage at the rebirth of traditionalism, Ross says, but in some ways it has deflected what ought to be colleges' real goals. Academia's task, he says, is to reassess the educational innovations of the 1960s and stick steadfastly to those that worked.

"I think we have to try to make sure that American colleges continue as living things," Ross says. "We have to make sure our arteries don't harden."

Parson says she feels a sense of déjà vu when she hears talk of requiring students to read texts and study ideas popular in the 1950s and before. Ross, too, wonders if the legacy of the '60s is secure.

"I sense a tremendous pessimism and a desire in academia, and on the outside, to turn the clock back — to return to the kind of cookie-cutter mode of people like Bloom," Ross says.

"But I think the pendulum analogy is dangerous, because I don't think the pendulum really ever swung. Remember, at the very height of the '60s, the American people elected Richard Nixon, and all he stood for."

Jon Tevlin, who graduated from the eighth grade in 1972 — two of his English teachers were conscientious objectors during the Vietnam War — is a free-lance writer based in Minneapolis.
The Well-Travelled Rhodes

For Macalester's seven Rhodes Scholars, 'smug' and 'unctuous' became words to live by.

by Micheal J. Thompson '81

In 1904, Macalester sent its first Rhodes Scholar across the Atlantic. Since then, and especially in the past two decades, the 5,500 miles between Old Main and Oxford University have been a well-trodden path for Macalester graduates.

The world's first Rhodes Scholars—two Rhodesians, five South Africans, and five Germans (all white)—were chosen in 1903. The next year, 43 Americans were among the 72 recipients, including Macalester College's Benjamin Wallace. Wallace, the son of then-Macalester president James Wallace and the brother of Reader's Digest founder DeWitt Wallace '11, went on to become a prominent economist. But when he died in 1947, Macalester was still 20 years away from its second Rhodes Scholar. Finally, in 1967, philosophy and English major Michael Fredrickson took the prize. Since then, five more Macalester seniors have
won Rhodes Scholarships—a record that surpasses all but a handful of other liberal arts colleges.

Macalester's recent Rhodes Scholars are:

- Michael Fredrickson '67, an attorney with the Boston firm of Hill & Barlow who studied medieval literature at Oxford on the Rhodes.
- James Braden '72, the only one of the five we were unable to track down. He was most recently a lawyer in San Francisco; his field at Oxford was the human sciences.
- Daniel Lips '77, a Missouri physician whose Rhodes fields were psychology and physiology.
- Douglas Tilton '82, completing his doctorate at Wolfson College, Oxford.
- Lois Quam '83, currently a research analyst with Partners National Health Plans in Minneapolis. Quam completed a master's degree in economics at Oxford.
- Eric Olson '86, who spent last summer teaching English in Leningrad and is in the middle of his second year studying Russian literature and social history at Merton College, Oxford. When he returns to the United States this spring, Olson plans to enroll in medical school.

Together, Macalester's seven Rhodes Scholars follow an 84-year tradition of all-around excellence.

Nineteenth-century British colonialist and philanthropist Cecil Rhodes intended the Oxford scholarship he founded to go to “decent fellows, because decent fellows are the best fellows for composing the world,” he wrote. To assure the selection of these good men, his 1902 will mandated some qualifying characteristics. In short, successful candidates were to be distinguished generalists.

“You know,” Rhodes wrote to a friend (British journalist W. T. Stead), “I am against letting the scholarships merely to people who swot over books, who have spent all their time over Latin and Greek.” So Rhodes’ will instructed selection committees to choose candidates excelling in four quaintly named categories: “smug” (academic achievement); “tact and leadership”; “unctuous rectitude” (character); and “brutality” (sports).

Though the vocabulary has changed, the categories that Cecil Rhodes specified in his will still provide the basis for selecting scholarship winners. (It took an act of the British Parliament in 1975 to open the “decent fellows” brotherhood to women.) And the 78 students across the world—32 of them Americans—who win the scholarship each year still get two expense-paid years at Oxford University, where they can study just about whatever subject they choose.

One reason for Macalester’s 20-year string of successes, says A. Truman Schwartz, DeWitt Wallace professor of chemistry, is that the college turns out well-rounded students, a vital characteristic in the stiff Rhodes competition. “The best candidates,” Schwartz says, “are well-rounded with a bulge.”

Schwartz, himself a 1956 Rhodes Scholar from the University of South Dakota, has served on several Rhodes Scholarship state and regional selection committees in the past 25 years. So has associate professor of English W. Harley Henry, who won his Rhodes as a senior at Kenyon College in 1959. Together, the two professors advise Macalester seniors on the process of applying for the Rhodes. According to Henry and Schwartz, the committees are careful to follow Cecil Rhodes’ mandate in selecting candidates who are well-prepared in three categories, and outstanding in at least one.

A prime example of Macalester candidates’ versatility is the career of Minnesota native Michael Fredrickson ’67, now an attorney with a Boston
firm. At Macalester, he was involved in dormitory government, the Toastmasters' Club, the "Ambassadors for Friendship" program, and—to my horror, he now says—the Young Republicans. Like many Macalester students, he had spent some time abroad (in Yugoslavia), but he was hardly an example of Cecil Rhodes' "brutality"; in fact, he failed P.E. one semester.

"Well," he says, "it was Social Dance at 8 a.m."

He credits English professor Patricia Kane with encouraging him to apply for the Rhodes, although at the time they both considered his interview to be simply "good practice."

"I don't think anyone thought there was a chance," he says. "I was no jock—I wasn't involved in any varsity sports. And I had a beard."

In winning the competition, Fredrickson believes, he may have become the world's first bearded Rhodes Scholar.

After his two years at Oxford, where he earned an honors B.A. in English, Fredrickson returned to the United States at the height of the Vietnam War. As a protest against the war, Fredrickson mailed back his draft card to the Selective Service. "Having no sense of humor," he says, "they drafted me anyway."

So Fredrickson moved to Canada, where he enrolled in a master's program in English at the University of Toronto. He went on to teach at a university in New Brunswick.

"I disliked it quite a bit; it was a third-rate place," he says. He quit in 1972 to become a farmer, mechanic, construction worker, and woodcutter. Five years later, he moved back to Minneapolis, where as a guitarist and singer he played many West Bank bars and coffeehouses. There, he also started what he describes as the state's first singing-telegram service.

"Being a Rhodes Scholar certainly made career moves easier," Fredrickson admits.

After two years and 2,000 "Sing-O-Gram" songs, which included a 1978 appearance on NBC's "Today Show," Fredrickson embarked on yet another career by enrolling in Harvard Law School. From 1982 to 1983, he worked at the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C.; he is now an attorney with the Boston firm of Hill and Barlow.

As Fredrickson and his Macalester Rhodes descendants discovered, the Rhodes application and interviews can be harrowing. Before advancing to the final interview, students must successfully complete three levels of competition. First, candidates must write an essay detailing "why they need Oxford to achieve their ends," as one scholar puts it. They also need no fewer than eight personal recommendations. Then follows a grueling series of interviews at the college, state, and regional levels.

(In the U.S., there are eight regional committees that choose up to four winning scholars apiece.)

According to Eric Olson '86, the most recent graduate to receive the award, Macalester's small size has a lot to do with the college's remarkable Rhodes record. It all comes back to Truman Schwartz's idea of the "bulge."

"Macalester has a great tradition of personal accountability," Olson says. It's a simple equation, he adds: Macalester provides a broad education while inculcating concerns for social, political, and philosophical issues. At Macalester, ideas matter—and the college's flexible program helps students develop the discipline to put those ideas into action.

That discipline helps Macalester students perform well in the difficult application process, Olson says. It also becomes important in Oxford University's eccentric and rigorous academic environment.

"Many of the North American students at Oxford are amazed at the tutorial system there, which demands a great deal of originality and self-discipline," he says. He notes that adapting to Oxford's tutorial system is easier for students who are used to working very closely with their teachers.

"Mac's small classes gave me and my professors the chance to really see what I could do," Olson says.

Since 1967, six Macalester seniors have won Rhodes Scholarships—a record that surpasses all but a handful of other liberal arts colleges.
English professor Harley Henry says Macalester students are successful candidates primarily because of their community awareness.

"Students at Mac become consciously aware that their abilities and educations can be put to some coherent work in the world," Henry says. "The emphasis of the institution is carrying out the responsibilities of an educated person. And when you become involved in the community around you, you tend to have higher expectations and ambitions for your life beyond the college."

Henry, Schwartz, and Olson agree that when it comes to Cecil Rhodes' four categories, Macalester's strength seem to be in the area of "unctuous rectitude," or character. Fortunately, both Schwartz and Henry say, this is the most important criterion that Rhodes committees consider.

"The committees try to pin one thing down," Eric Olson says. "They want to know if their money will be wisely spent. Macalester seems to breed a special kind of character: not so much more intelligent, but more unusual. Mac students do well in the Rhodes because they aren't all doing the mainline things. They combine a lot of outside interests with their curricular interests, and they take advantage of the flexibility of the program."

"You really have to congratulate the Mac admissions office for picking people who are interesting and unusual," Olson adds. "That's really why we do so well."

Schwartz says that building character is an integral part of Macalester's institutional values.

"If there is one area in which Macalester students have an edge in the competition, it's here," Schwartz says. "There's a definite difference about Mac—our program inspires experimentation and creative thinking."

Macalester encourages "demonstrated caring" on the part of its faculty and students, Schwartz says: "The place nurtures an environment that attracts and encourages people with broad interests and social concerns." He adds that Macalester's candidates can point to specific instances that demonstrate their "unctuous rectitude"—tutorial programs, volunteer work, and other community and personal involvements.

"To win," Henry says, "you've got to like to compete. In many ways Macalester is a pretty laid-back place, but our students are highly competitive. They want to win."

Not only do Macalester students win a lot of Rhodes Scholarships, Schwartz and Henry say, but Macalester is by far the most successful college in Minnesota in placing students in the state competition, a major step on the way to the award.

Macalester's very success in the competition gives present-day candidates an advantage, Olson says, by demystifying the process for the students who apply.

"We try to help our candidates become informed," Henry says. "There is no reason for them to be scared. The competition is tough, but the fact is that the Macalester candidates are some of the best in the country."

Macalester students tend to be intellectually "agile," he adds—they can move comfortably from one subject to another. "They can think on their feet, and they can think for themselves."

"My interviews were very intense," Olson explains. "The committees kept asking questions that were obviously designed to force me to reveal my values and then defend those values. I couldn't have done very well if I hadn't been put into similar situations many times as a Mac student."

Although Macalester seems to build the requisite character in its students, the college's candidates are also capable in academics, leadership, and (sometimes) athletics.

As for academic achievement, Schwartz says, the selection committees look for students "who really think about things. They're more interested in the breadth and depth of the student's academic interests than in the simple grade-point average."

Macalester candidates' broad interests might be one reason for their success: Michael Fredrickson
To win, you've got to like to compete. In many ways Macalester is a pretty laid-back place, but our students are highly competitive. They want to win.

Daniel Lips '77

was a double major in English and philosophy. Daniel Lips majored in both biology and psychology. Lois Quam excelled in political science, taught an Interim course as part of her honors project in public policy, and was active in student government, community issues, and the American Lutheran Church. Doug Tilton double-majored in history and political science, served as Community Council president, cofounded Macalester's Anti-Apartheid Coalition, and was active in the United Presbyterian Church, Amnesty International, and other organizations. Eric Olson studied both chemistry and Russian, worked as a researcher in a University of Minnesota physiology lab, and was a disc jockey for Mac's student radio station.

As Schwartz says, Macalester's Rhodes Scholars, like many Macalester students, "are more than just good grade-getters."

The leadership criterion requires selection committees to examine candidates' motivations and nonacademic interests. "Does this person have a genuine desire to be of some service?" Schwartz asks. "Does the candidate have a balance of perspectives? We try to ascertain whether the person has some potential for leadership.

"Not many Rhodes scholars, for instance, are introverts," Schwartz continues. "Most of them are willing and able to make themselves heard, which is a characteristic that they share with most Macalester students!"

And as for "brutality"—well, Schwartz and the Rhodes committees are sanguine about their broad interpretation of Cecil Rhodes' athletic mandate.

"Not too many All-America athletes become Rhodes Scholars nowadays," Schwartz says. "Most of those people are too busy with their sport to be really well rounded." And though the public perception of Rhodes Scholars as outstanding varsity athletes lingers, reality is somewhat less glamorous.

"I take a practical viewpoint," Schwartz explains. "Does the candidate have sufficient vigor and stamina to make it through an Oxford winter? The weather is lousy, you know."

With standards like that, perhaps Macalester's snow-swept students have a natural edge over the competition.

Micheal J. Thompson '81, whose Macalester career included a stint at Cambridge University, contributed a review of a novel by Charles Baxter '69 to the November issue. He teaches English and journalism at Johnson High School in Saint Paul.

Daniel Lips '77
Alumni will gather during choir's concerts in west

Macalester’s 30-member Concert Choir will tour western states from March 24 to 30. Alumni in Sacramento, San Francisco, Portland, Eugene (Ore.) and Seattle will receive information on Macalester concerts and alumni gatherings. Alumni and parents in these areas willing to help plan events and host visiting Macalester students are asked to call the alumni office, 612/696-6295.

Denver alumni, parents, and friends recreated a down-home “Prairie Home Companion” evening, complete with potluck supper, in January. Club contact: Matt Flora ’74, 303/388-3476.

Boston area alumni have planned a weekend of skiing and winter fun at a country inn in the Berkshires. They are gathering at the Charlemont Inn Feb. 5–7. Earlier this year, Boston’s historic Parkman House was the setting for an elegant and animated gathering of alumni, parents, and friends. Attendees’ connections to Macalester spanned the years 1931–1986. Club contact: Anne Harbour ’63, 617/236-4628.

History professor Norman Rosenberg was slated to explain the workings of the U.S. Supreme Court at a January gathering of the new Minneapolis alumni club.

Early December found Chicago alumni and parents at the famed Newberry Library; Macalester English professor Susan Toth, acclaimed for her two autobiographical books, read from her newest work.

Alumni from all over Texas gathered in San Antonio in November to cheer as Macalester defeated Trinity University in football. At a reception and dinner following the game, alumni were joined by the players, coaches, several players’ parents, President Robert M. Gavin, Jr., and vice president Catherine Reid Day. Attendees came from Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Austin as well as the San Antonio area and Minnesota.

Chef Leslie Revsin ’66 invited New York area alumni, parents, and friends to her new restaurant, Peccavi, in October. Attendees had a chance to visit with President Gavin and Provost James B. Stewart and to renew acquaintances with classmates. Another event is planned for March 12. Club contact: Deb Walker ’73, 201/828-4463.

Against a background of holiday greens, Macalester tartans, and superb music, Saint Paul and Minneapolis alumni clubs gathered in December to enjoy the festive music of the Macalester Concert Choir under the direction of Kathy Romey, director of choral activities at Macalester.

In September, Saint Paul alumni met for an old-fashioned potluck supper and “singdown” in Macalester’s Alumni House. This lively group has developed a newsletter to let local alumni know about club and college happenings. Club contact: Jim Horn ’74, 612/690-3051.

Alumni Clubs take shape; start-up hints available

Would you like to get together with other Macalester alumni—perhaps to talk about career paths, to discuss a thought-provoking book, or to enjoy a purely social outing?

If you live in an area with no Macalester alumni club, the Alumni Association will help you organize an event or start a club. A packet of “helpful hints” will help you get started, and a new committee of the Alumni Association board will lend a hand. The committee is especially interested in areas where 200 or more Macalester alumni live; these areas include Seattle, Los Angeles, and Saint Louis.

In addition to helping organize new alumni clubs, the committee will help existing clubs plan programs that reflect current alumni interests. The possibilities are as diverse as are the alumni of Macalester College. Clubs from Seattle and San Francisco to Boston and New York are organizing job networks, setting up community involvement projects, hosting speakers on a variety of topics, and introducing a lot of interesting people to one another.

To receive a packet of information about starting an alumni club, contact the alumni office at 612/696-6295.

—Julie Stroud ’81, Saint Paul chair of alumni clubs committee

Committee members:
Regina Cullen ’73, Seattle • Matt Flora ’74, Denver • Betty Haan ’43, Saint Paul • Dianne Phillips ’58, Cambridge, Minn. • Charlotte Sindt ’34, Afton, Minn. • Kurt Winkelmann ’78, San Francisco
A reforged link in alumni-admissions chain

Macalester alumni aren't only the college's best boosters—they're often the school's best recruiters.

With that in mind, Macalester's Alumni Association and the admissions office's alumni-admissions committee have recently embarked on a joint effort to increase alumni activity in recruiting new students.

Alumni have a long history of helping to recruit Macalester freshmen. An alumni-recruitment program that began in 1974 now has about 500 members in all 50 states and in some foreign countries. The program is headed by 65 regional coordinators, who provide members with up-to-date information on the college, as well as names of prospective freshmen in their area.

During the program's early years, the committee members' role was primarily to tell prospective students (usually by telephone) about the college and their experiences while at Macalester. But recently, some committee members have taken a more active part—participating in on- and off-campus events with prospective students, and even conducting interviews for the admissions office.

In talking to prospective students, alumni volunteers give their perspective on the college and encourage those who might do well at Macalester to apply. They also make follow-up phone calls to students who've been admitted, and often host summer gatherings of new and current Macalester students.

The two organizations—the committee and the Alumni Association board—met together for the first time last fall, when they held a weekend training workshop at the college. (Other activities of the Alumni Association and the alumni-admissions committee remain separate, alumni director Karen McConkey says; the groups are "holding hands" to help the school in its burgeoning recruitment efforts.) The meeting marked the first phase of a high-profile drive to promote alumni leadership both in recruitment and in Alumni Association activities.

The changing role of alumni recruitment efforts reflects the changes facing Macalester's admissions program, according to Macalester dean of admissions William Shain.

Applications at Macalester have doubled in the past five years, and the college receives an average of 20,000 inquiries annually from prospective freshmen (up from 14,800 for fall 1983). That's put increased pressure on the admissions office, prompting the college to involve more alumni in recruiting.

The off-campus interviews are just one example of that, Shain said. Last fall, for the first time, Macalester wasn't able to provide on-campus interviews for all prospective freshmen who asked for them. As a result, college alumni conducted about 25 interviews; the number will double annually, he said.

Shain welcomes alumni involvement in recruiting efforts, saying alumni "provide a visible local presence" for Macalester. They also provide a service for high-school students and their families, he said.

"People should feel like they've had a good hearing and a good experience," Shain said of the discussions between high-school seniors and college alumni. "I would hope alumni would talk to all kinds of students, even those who don't get in."

Alumni who have assisted in recruiting say it's a worthwhile experience, and they cite a number of reasons for their continued involvement. Alumni-admissions coordinator Nancy Mackenzie '69, one of the founding members of the alumni recruitment program in 1974, said, "It's simply fun to talk to high-school kids. They give you faith in the future."

Schoolteacher Wendy Butler-Boyesen '72 coordinates Macalester's recruitment efforts in Oregon, where she lives. A longtime member of the alumni-admissions committee, Butler-Boyesen now also serves on the Alumni Association board.

Being involved in the program is "one of the best ways for recent graduates to give something back to their college," she said, recalling her first years out of Macalester as a graduate student at the University of Boston. Like many alumni just finishing college, Butler-Boyesen found it easier to give time, rather than money, to the college.

"[Recent graduates] are often the best and most enthusiastic recruiters," she said.

Shain hopes alumni recruiters' positive experience will rub off on prospective freshmen—spreading the kind of school loyalty and friendliness for which Macalester is known.

—Christopher Herlinger '81

Alumni interested in information on the alumni-admissions program should write Nancy Mackenzie, Alumni Admissions Coordinator, Macalester College, 1600 Grand Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105.
Excursions into memory inspire award-winning novelist

by Jeremiah Creedon

The man who might be Minnesota's best living writer lives here only part time, and even then only in his imagination.

He is Tim O'Brien ['68], the foot soldier turned novelist known by many readers for his writing about the Vietnam war—works like Going After Cacciato, his second novel, which won the National Book Award in 1979, or "The Things They Carried," a short story given [the 1987] National Magazine Award in fiction.

O'Brien's excursions into memory are not limited to the mountain jungles of Southeast Asia. From his home in a small town north of Boston, he's recently been travelling back to the northern lake country of his native Minnesota—the setting of his novel-in-progress.

"What I write really isn't about 'politics' or 'society' on a grand scale, but about how these forces have a great impact on individual lives," O'Brien says. "These concerns are probably going to be a constant throughout my life.

"It may be a function of growing up in Minnesota and going to a college like Macalester, where there's a strong tradition of viewing man as a social animal," he says. "Everything I've written, and anything I could imagine writing, will be connected to how individuals fit into larger social relationships—usually governmental relationships—but I'm also interested in how people get trapped by them, as in the case of war."

The conflict between social duty and saving one's own skin appears throughout O'Brien's work. It has also shaped his life.

O'Brien, 41, was born in Austin, Minn., and moved with his family to Worthington some years later. [At Macalester,] he studied political science and was elected student-body president his senior year. Shortly after graduating in 1968, he was drafted into the Army. Despite doubts about the war, O'Brien felt driven by honor and obligation to enter the service. He has said he naively thought his college degree would keep him out of combat.

It didn't. O'Brien soon found himself fighting.

Paul Berlin, as he endures a long night on watch. "Reality" is divided in this book between a soldier's tough world and the fantasies the same soldier entertains to escape his misery. Neither realm, as O'Brien constructs them, can lay sole claim to being the one in which people live.

This divided reality and the divided characters who populate it are recurring fascinations for O'Brien. He constantly explores the tie between the real and the imagined—how people determine their future and how they order their past through fantasy and remembrance. Along with his interest in people's nature as social beings, it roughly describes what O'Brien calls the thematic "matrix" of his work.

These themes reappear in his third novel, The Nuclear Age, published two years ago. The main character is another man torn by conflicting loyalties during the Vietnam war. But unlike Paul Berlin, or O'Brien himself, this character chooses to dodge the draft and go underground. O'Brien intended the book to be comic—a goal made difficult by the main character's obsessive fear of nuclear war.

O'Brien has been working two years on his new novel, which he said would be a departure from the Vietnam-era milieu that dominates Cacciato and influences The Nuclear Age. Set in northern Minnesota, it's the story of a man whose political ambitions have been thwarted. The author will say little more.

Seven or eight years ago, O'Brien looked harshly on attempts to put the Vietnam war on film. Since then, there has been a wave of movies set in Vietnam, including [1987]'s "Platoon" and "Full Metal Jacket." He hopes to see them someday, he said. Hollywood recently bought the film rights to both Cacciato and The Nuclear Age, and his opinions on those projects are less evasive.

"The three scripts I've seen for 'Cacciato' were just awful," O'Brien said.

"But as long as they keep sending option checks and as long as they never make the film, that's great."
The nitty-gritty of nuts and bolts

by Terry Andrews

Like many college students in the 1960s, Gilbert Baldwin wasn’t sure what he wanted to do once he graduated from college. At Macalester, he settled temporarily on a sociology major, but he kept searching for a career that would satisfy his growing ambition.

The summer after his junior year, he found his niche—managing a small business—through a DeWitt Wallace scholarship to attend a six-week summer program in Utica, N.Y.

“It was for up-and-coming businesspeople,” Baldwin recalls. “We were given a simulated business with a product to sell and were taken through the whole process, from packaging to selling. It was a hands-on experience.”

When he looks back now, Baldwin calls the program “the seed that started me thinking about a career in business.”

Several years and a few careers later, Baldwin finally put his experience to work in 1983, when he and partner Paul Mann founded Columbia Precision Machine Corporation to produce prototype machine parts. Baldwin is president of the firm. In 1986, because of the firm’s success, he was named Minnesota’s Minority Small Businessperson of the Year by the Minneapolis district office of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The 38-year-old Baldwin is self-effacing about recognition, quick to point to his partner and to the contributions of his firm’s five employees. “Paul Mann is an excellent partner. He’s one of the most skilled machinists I know. He’s the technical end of the business; I’m the business end. It’s a nice marriage.”

Columbia makes short-run machine parts for several large corporations, including Unisys, Deluxe Check Printers, and Honeywell. “We make a few hundred parts, as opposed to several thousand,” Baldwin says. “We make the parts to test designs and the feasibility of producing the part.”

He pauses for a moment. “Almost everything in this country is made by machine. We [Columbia] make the nuts and bolts for many different machines, from computers to carburetors.”

The company usually works with a design engineer to make changes necessary for a prototype machine part. One recent computer frame involved 32 design changes.

“We have to hold tolerances that are very close, like .005 inch; the human hair is .007 inch,” Baldwin says. “The difficulty is that while what we’re doing is a science, the employees themselves often have to be artists. Paul and I are sticklers for good workmanship. We’ll only sell what we’d want to buy…. Our buzzword is ‘zero defects.’ That’s what we strive for.”

Machinist Gilbert Baldwin ’71.

This attention to quality has made the company grow, Baldwin says. The first year, he remembers, their gross revenues were $18,000 (“I wondered where the closest bridge was where two people could jump off,” he says ruefully). By last year, however, the company had gross revenues of $373,000. Projected sales for 1987 near the half-million-dollar mark.

Baldwin did not complete college, leaving before his senior year to try his hand at Hollywood. He wrote scripts for “Sesame Street” and the “Pearl Bailey Variety Show” for a while, decided he was too young to make a go of it there, and returned for one more semester at Macalester. Then he took a teaching job at the Performing Arts Center in Saint Paul, teaching drama to high-school students.

He left that for a blue-collar job—working on a loading dock—which he remembers for its “great camaraderie.”

Driven by restlessness and a still-present desire to succeed, he went through two more jobs before, as a fluke, he began work in a metal-plating shop.

“I thought I’d stay two weeks,” he says. “I stayed five and a half years.”

It was his entree into a whole new way of life. “All of a sudden I walked into a world I knew nothing about,” he says. “I didn’t know an oxide tank from a zinc tank.” His job was strictly manual labor, but Baldwin made it his business to learn everything he could about the business, even enrolling in a vo-tech class on blueprint reading to enable him to identify machine parts after they were made.

“I wouldn’t have gone to a college like Macalester if I didn’t have some brains,” he says, “so I used my brains to learn about the metal shop and the related field of machining.”

He also began to make friends with people in the industry, which led to his meeting Paul Mann, “the best mill man in town,” Baldwin says. At the time, Mann was running a small machine shop out of his garage in the Minneapolis suburb of Burnsville.

“I said, ‘If you can do that, I can go out and get customers,’” Baldwin recalls. So the two established their new firm in Burnsville.

With 700 machine shops registered in the state of Minnesota, competition is keen. But Baldwin has been willing to work hard to make the business grow. He routinely puts in long days; this winter brings his first vacation in more than four years.

“When you start a company, you don’t know whether it will succeed or not. But I like to put everything together so that it does succeed,” Baldwin says.

His experience at Macalester, Baldwin feels, gave him self-confidence. “It had such a diversity of students, from rich to smart to not-so…. I’d better not say that. My friends will say, ‘Are you talking about me?’

Macalester taught me to relate to all groups of people. When you run a business, that’s what you do. That’s what business is. Mac really gave me the edge that has helped me be successful.”

Baldwin knows from experience that the lack of an established network can hit minorities hardest in his business. “A lot of what we know is from friends,” he says. “There’s no role model to emulate.” He hopes to help change that.
Reunion Weekend
June 17–19, 1988

A full weekend of education, reminiscence, and fun—faculty-taught short courses, campus and city tours, music, family activities, recognition of distinguished alumni, and much more. Everyone's welcome!

Watch your mail in early April for a full schedule.

At the heart of the weekend, special reunion dinners for featured classes: '23, '28, '33, '38, '43, '48, '53, '58, '63, '68, '73, '78, and '83. Contact old friends and plan now to be on campus for the weekend!

You'll hear from classmates about your dinner, and you'll receive a full weekend schedule in April.

Macalester College Alumni Weekend • June 17–19
REUNION 1988
One snowfall last winter brought this tall visitor to the sidewalk in front of Macalester's admissions office. Accompanying him, clockwise from upper right: Kristin Meyer '90 (Evanston, Ill.), Ronda Hedger '87 (Edina, Minn.), Doma Tshering '90 (Thimphu, Bhutan), Pall Hardarson '88 (Reykjavik, Iceland), Sarah Lyman '90 (Madison, Wis.), Marika Arndt '90 (Stillwater, Minn.), Catherine Pierce '90 (Council Bluffs, Iowa), James Carlson '87 (Carolina, P.R.), Kerstin Broockmann '90 (Libertyville, Ill.), and Andrew Schmidt '89 (Lake City, Minn).