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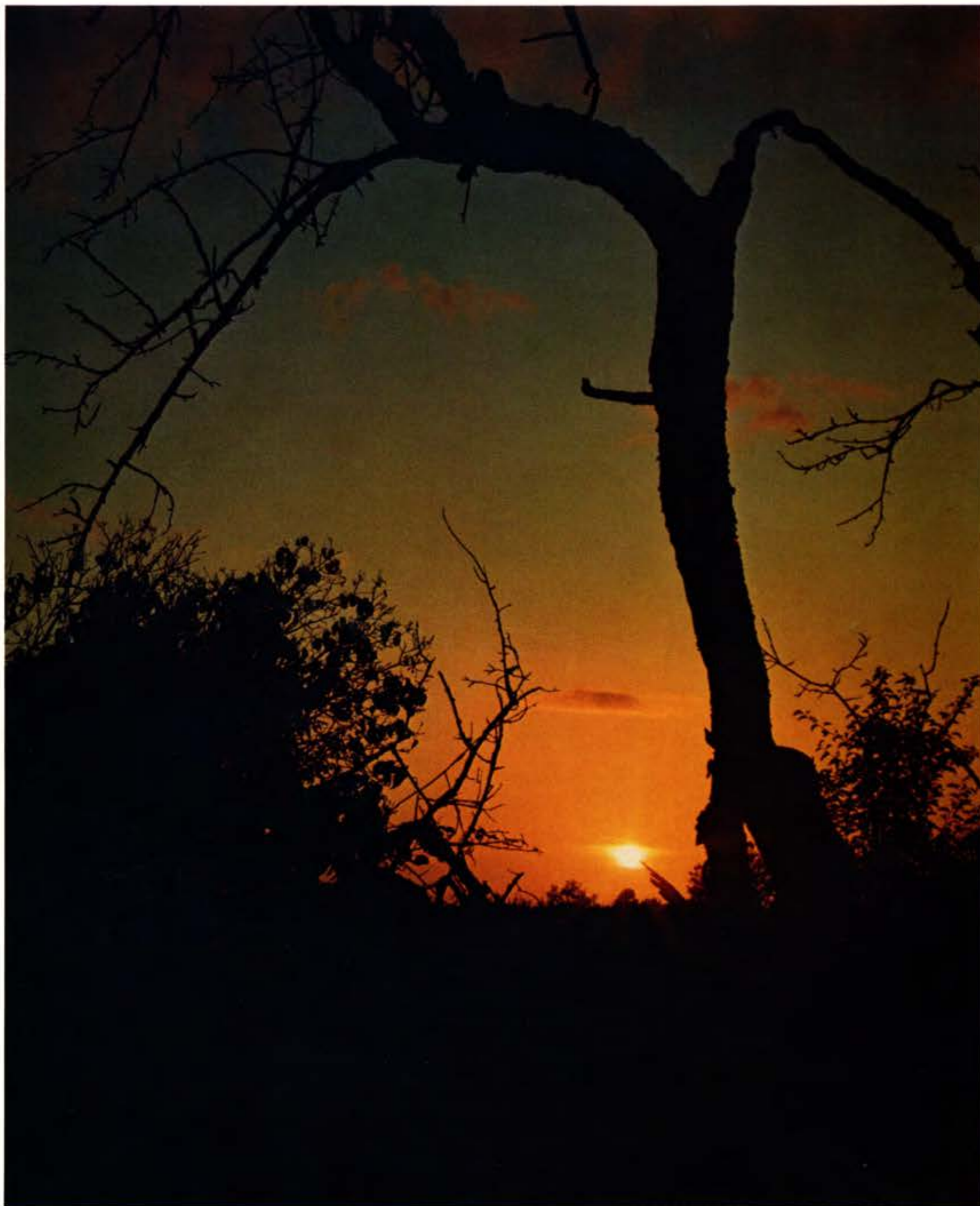
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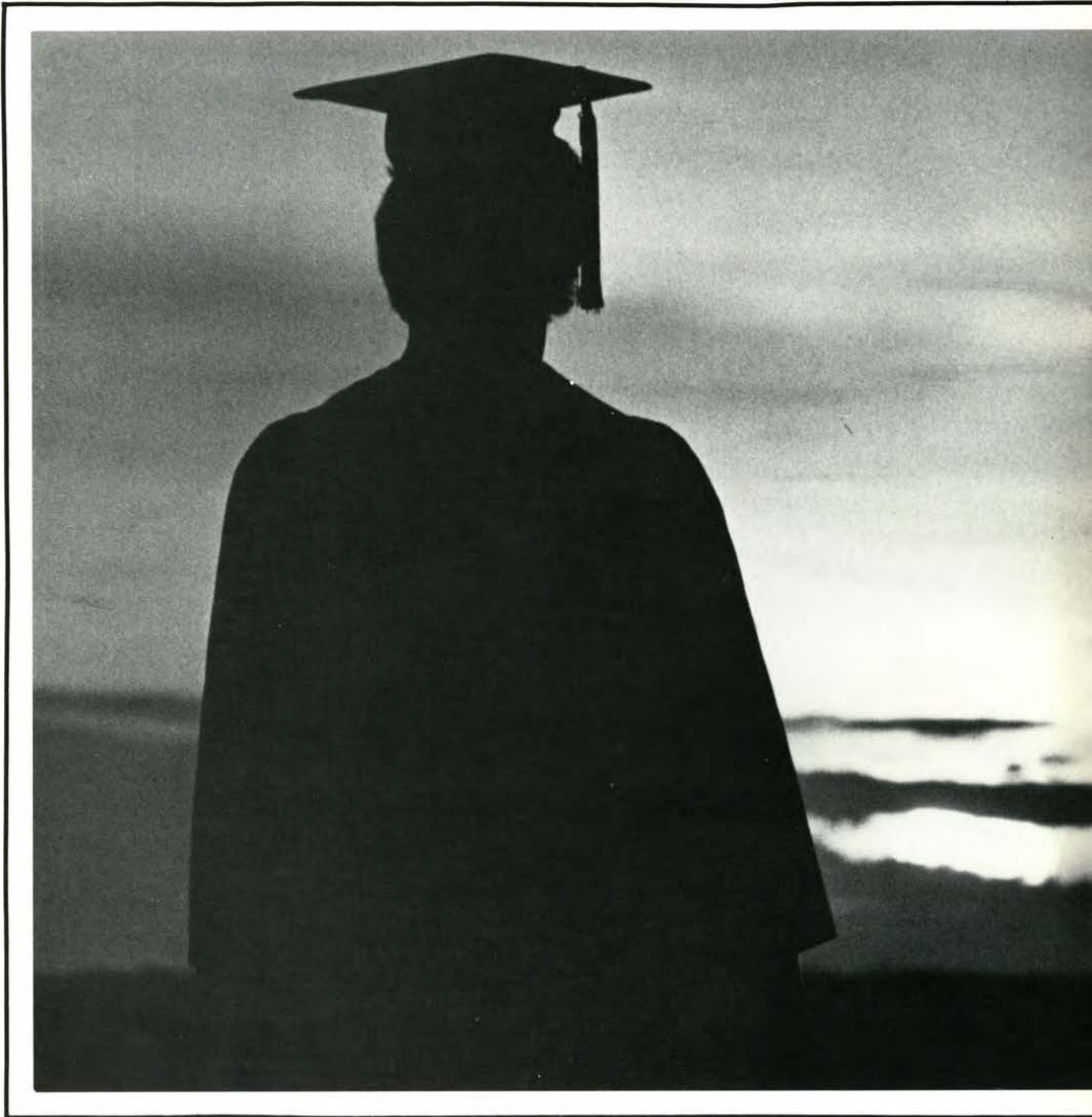
Klipsan

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Klipsan is a Lummi Indian word meaning beautiful sunset.

June 1977



Klipsun
June 1977

Volume 7
Number 5

The College Experience

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The College Cuppa

by Sarah Arney



College. Whoever decides to attend college has their own reasons. Every year as many new reasons arise as new students arrive. In one year a certain five people came from various places. Except for Joe and Bonnie, they were each unaware of the others' existence. Their paths met initially and continued to meet in the Miller Hall Coffee Shop. What they had in common was a starving need for knowledge and a bite to eat.

Joe wasn't alone, as the others were. A sweet young thing named Bonnie was tucked carefully and just slightly behind his left shoulder. They had come from a small town high school and they entered the coffee shop for the first time, together, on that first full day of classes.

"Joey, look at that weird looking guy with the briefcase. He sure looks mean. Either he's a teacher

or some roughneck looking for trouble. He must be a rough neck because teachers don't wear cowboy hats and shitkickers. Do they?" Bonnie was just a little leary of this college business and she was glad she had Joe to take care of her.

"Why don't you go get another coke for me, Ay Bon? Oh yea, Bon, Jim and I are playing tennis this afternoon."

As Joe and Bonnie moved arm and arm through one door, another door opened across the room to let in a little wisp of air named Laura. Laura floated in on the tailwind of the ever-busy Professor Wilburn. He held the door open for her without a thought of her existence, because his mind was far ahead of his eyes as they skated through the coffee shop looking for familiar faces that might appreciate his company. Instead, he sat alone nodding greetings to numerous

passersby, still not aware of Laura who sat across from him hovering over page one of *Basic Biology*. However, his mental grinding wheel did slip one gear when she flashed her pure white wonderbread sandwich into his gaze. Their eye contact embarrassed her, so she adjusted her chair to be facing the wall.

He looked away and noticed a fellow professor. He threw his head back to empty the riches of the styrofoam cup into his mouth, then stood up to greet his colleague.

"Well, Harold, are you ready to start sculpting another set of minds from this great source of raw material?"

Harold could only roll his eyes with skepticism as he thought how much Wilburn had to learn.

The big fellow wearing a cowboy hat and boots glanced with curiosity at the two professors. He wondered as he strode across Red Square how this guy planned to sculpt a set of minds. The cowboy was on his way to the bookstore to stock his empty briefcase with books and paper. He was ready to begin his pursuit of knowledge.

Laura folded her brown paper sack, excused herself to no one, and slipped out of the coffee shop unnoticed. She slipped out of the coffee shop into Miller Hall for her first exposure to the profundities of Professor R.H. Wilburn in Soc. 100. Wilburn greeted Laura, along with the other college freshmen who walked into his classroom on that sunny day in September.

"Before I say anything about Sociology I want to introduce myself. I want you all to know exactly why I'm here. Knowledge is the basis for a fulfilling existence. That is why I am teaching. I feel I can contribute most to society by helping youth understand the strength and power available to them. If all of you learn one thing from me it will be that you have control of your own destiny . . ." He talked for the full hour without a breath. When the students walked out of there they were more than ready for a good stiff cup of coffee. Those who didn't stop at the coffee shop were undoubtedly bound for the registrar to drop the class. The next day only half the class showed up and Wilburn wondered why.

In time these college freshmen adjusted to the college life; they made new friends, gained weight, lost virginites, and learned to like coffee. Spring sprung along with a group of newly corrupt coffee-addicted college students. They deserted the coffee shop for the sun-warmed bricks of Red Square.

"Hey Joe, are you going to the Kegger tonite?"

"You know it."

"Hey Joe, you gonna be at the baseball game this afternoon?"

"You bet."

"Joey, will I see you this weekend?"

"Sure, Hon."

"When?"

"Well, after tennis tomorrow morning I really have to study. You know, I have that psych paper due Monday. Oh, and I promised some guys I'd be at their housewarming party Saturday night. How about Sunday? You could type my paper for me."

Bonnie's heart sank but all she could say was, "I've got to go to class." She walked to Miller Hall 164 with styrofoam in hand. She joined Laura, a weird girl whom Bonnie liked for some reason unbeknownst to Joe and the gang. Laura made Bonnie feel important but more than that, she was kind. Bonnie liked the compassion Laura transmitted, it was something she hadn't experienced before.

"Hey Laura, what do you think of this Wilburn guy?"

"Well, he's not as bad now as he was last September, but he still fogs my mind a bit. He seems like a nice guy but he's too philosophical for me." Laura had dropped the class back in September along with all the other frightened freshmen.

"Do you like him?"

"If he'd cut his hair and put on some clean clothes he might be OK."

Wilburn interrupted with, "Today we will discuss the compatibility of religions within an urban environment."

They nudged each other and rolled their eyes in disbelief.

For an hour Bonnie sat staring at Wilburn's stringy shoulder length hair and his decomposed suit coat. She wondered how anyone could appear in public with threads hanging from a worn-out elbow. Her mind dissolved from the elbow to Joe. When Wilburn stopped talking she was surprised to discover a neatly stacked pile of styrofoam bits sitting in her lap. She quickly hid them in her purse and turned to Laura.

"Do you want to go for coffee?" Her fingers were craving for the slick polished surface of another styrofoam cup, her dry throat and sleepy eyes wanted the caffeine rush. "A year ago I would've thrown up at the thought of coffee. Now I don't think I'd make it through the day without it. Laura, I just don't know what to do. Joe doesn't seem to care a cent about my feelings anymore."

Laura, having never been in love, didn't know what to say to Bonnie — beautiful lucky Bonnie. In fact, she felt very uncomfortable seeing Bonnie on the

verge of tears. Bonnie, the image, the existence that Laura had always dreamed of living.

"I really want to marry him. I'm sure he'll marry me if I can just hang on to him for the next few years. He loves me, I know he does. He needs me. Maybe if I learn how to play tennis he'll be nicer to me."

Laura quietly sipped on the coffee she didn't really like, envying and pitying Bonnie simultaneously.

The pity disappeared when Professor Wilburn asked to join them. She could see the look of adoration in his eyes when he looked at Bonnie. They were both rather surprised that a professor would sit with them in public, and they twitched in their seats wondering what he would say. Bonnie worried that Joe would come in to see her talking to two weirdos.

Wilburn looked at Bonnie, "I couldn't help noticing your perfect execution of a styrofoam cup during my lecture. Are you having problems you'd like to talk about?"

Photo by Christopher C. Plourde



"Oh no, well yes, not really . . . it's just that my boyfriend is being mean and I am afraid. All I want is to marry him. I wish we could get married now, then there wouldn't be any problems."

Wilburn gulped, then choked on his coffee. He realized then, even if she never loved him he at least had to save her from such a fate. Wilburn had seen Joe with Bonnie several times, usually with a baseball hat on and short muscular legs proudly exhibited.

The three talked a while, and watched the traffic flow through the coffee shop. In one door, up to the counter with a hello and fifteen cents for the lady behind the counter, and out the other door with coffee in hand; a ceaseless flow of traffic similar to the current of the Nooksack River.

At 10:30 the clockwork appearance of the guy with the Stetson and briefcase captured their attention. Their eyes followed him through the room until he passed by their table, and he nodded recognition to Professor Wilburn. When the door closed behind him, Laura and Bonnie breathed in unison, "Who is that guy?"

"John Smith, they call him Big John."

Spring quarter ended, and another spring quarter ended and another spring quarter ended, and all of a sudden these college freshmen are seniors. They still meet at Miller Hall Coffee Shop but changes have occurred. They had some fun, some hard times, they learned of life, love, skepticism, and apathy. They even learned a bit of mathematics and some sociology. Proof of the foregoing years exists in such forms as tuition receipts, debts, shelves of books and empty beer bottles. Both good times and bad left scars on their souls.

Ask Bonnie and Joe and Laura and Big John. Ask Professor Wilburn about those scars. He loved and hated those students for creating and destroying his dreams. His love for Bonnie never replaced her foolish love for Joe. (Joe and Bonnie lived together off and on and talked of marriage.) Whenever Joe was on the courts or in the gym Bonnie shared her time with the professor, now known as Will, and Laura. Big John's blank papers were filled with thoughts and intellectualisms, and Laura had learned to love the fruit flies of Biology. They all had decisions to make at this crucial point in their lives and the possibilities were discussed in the Miller Hall Coffee Shop.

"Hey Joe, are you graduating this year?"

"Yeah"

"What are you gonna do?"

"Work"

"What kind of job do you want?"

"Whatever I can get."

Big John continued his 10:30 coffee break but he switched to chamomile tea. His plans for June involved a trip to New York to sell his manuscript and anthropology degree to Harper and Row. After hours in the coffee shop contemplating mankind with Will, John decided his greatest contribution to society would be through publishing.

"Do you explicate falsity in the terms of the absence of a set of facts?"

"That can be a legitimate starting point but the real proof of falsity is in the presence of negative truths." Will and John could go on for hours until their normal interest in women interrupted.

"Bonnie, Laura, over here."

Laura had learned to hold her head off her chest soon after she discovered the fascinating world of biology. She carried her Scientific American like many Christians carry a Bible. They all liked Laura, but they still chuckle everyday at lunch when she flashes her shiny white wonderbread sandwich onto the table.

"Laura, are you still eating those godawful sandwiches? How do you keep the process cheese from sticking to your tonsils?"

"Butter," she replies. "I wouldn't say much, Big John, you and your peanut butter and pickle on wheat berry bread."

"Do you still believe wonder bread builds bodies twelve ways?"

"I'm not stupid you guys. I've been eating these for eleven years because I like them. I gave up hope of body building after the seventh year when my body still wasn't built. I'm going to check on my fruit flies. See you later."

Big John looked at Laura tenderly. As she stood up he tilted his dark brown Stetson releasing sprigs of curly red hair. As she slipped out the door and across Red Square he wondered if the structure of that wispy life might someday fit into the overall plan of his own life.

"John, goddammit, you know you have the power to control your destiny. You can't just hope Laura will jump in bed with you. Buy her flowers or a new fruit fly culture, anything, just do something!"

John focused on Will out of the blue. He was embarrassed but pleased that Will knew him well enough to know what he was thinking.

"You're right of course."

"Listen you guys." Bonnie interrupted. "Get your minds off women and talk to me a minute." Their eyes met with a gleam — how can you talk to beautiful Bonnie without thinking about women?

"Did you want some coffee, Bonnie?"

"No, haven't you heard? I quit the coffee habit. It

was destroying my body. Carrot juice is the answer. Do you want some?"

"Ah . . . No thanks."

"There's something I want to ask you two."

"OK"

"Do you think I'm a typical broad?"

"Maybe last week, before you started drinking carrot juice. Why?" They glanced at each other wondering what was up.

"Joe says I am typical and boring."

"Hey look woman, don't talk to us about good ol' Joe College. You know how we feel about him."

"But I love him."

"Why?"

She stopped, without an answer.

"Don't worry." Will teased her with a wink. "The carrot juice will save you."

"Oh shut up" and they all laughed as Bonnie unpacked her lunch — the curly green alfalfa sprouts contrasting sharply with her shiny red fingernails. "You know, I wish we could convince Laura to eat whole wheat bread. Do you know she eats KIX for breakfast? You'd think a biology nut like herself would realize the importance of eating right." (She finished her salad and packed up ready to leave.) "Oh by the way, I am leaving Joe. I'm going to join the Peace Corps. I have a job teaching in Sierra Leone." And beautiful Bonnie walked out of Miller Hall Coffee Shop on her three inch platform shoes.

"I wonder when she'll realize those shoes are a threat to her existence," Will thought aloud.

John jumped up, grabbed the door and called to her, "Need a ride somewhere? I'm going to the florist." Wilburn stayed in the coffee shop smiling until he noticed Joe come in with some friends. He heard this conversation:

"Hey Joe, I haven't seen Bonnie with you lately. What's up?"

"She's going to Secoma Lonone or something like that," he shrugged.

"What are you going to do, Joe?"

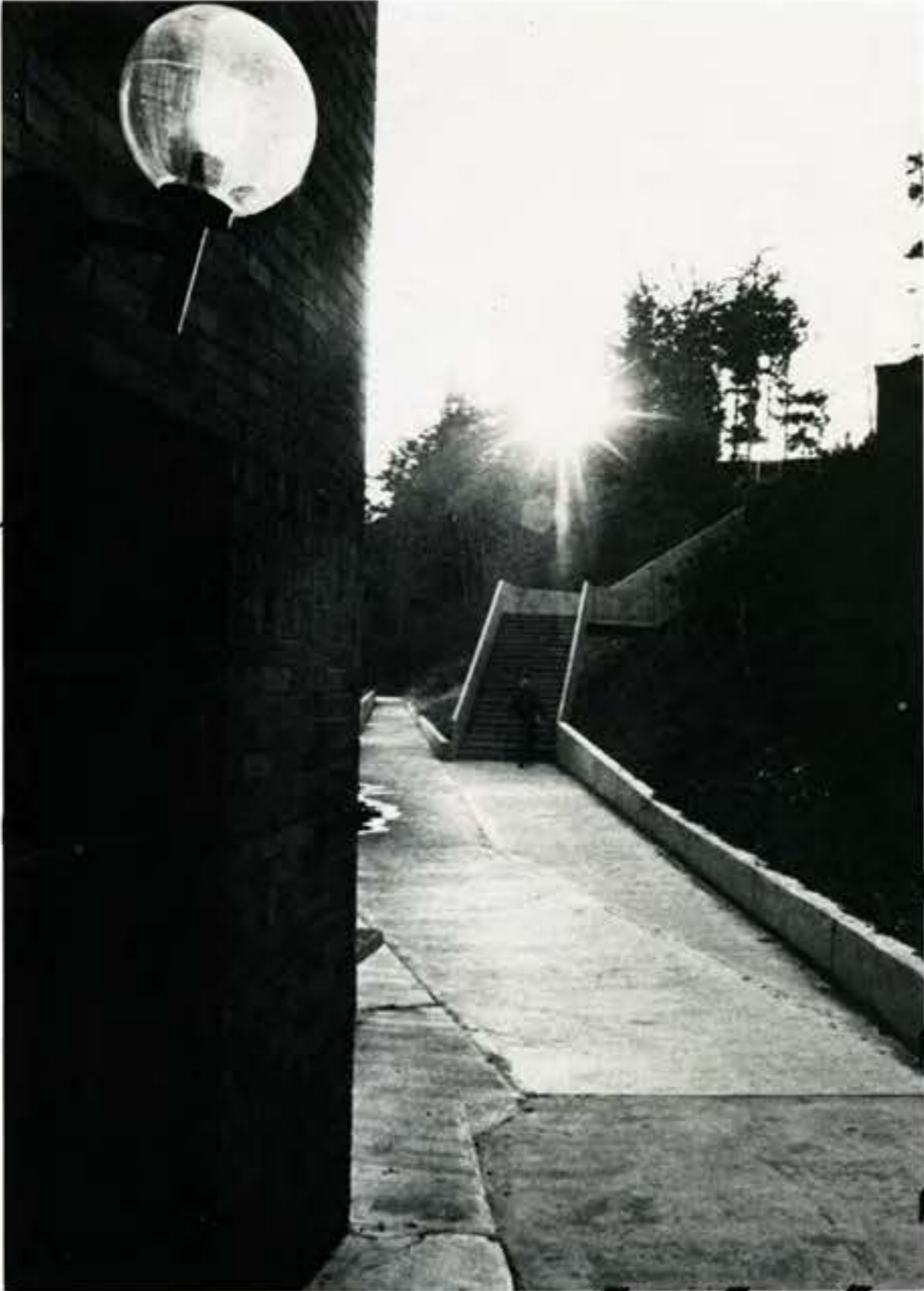
"I'll be working for the YMCA as a recreation director."

"Congrats for the job ol' boy and sorry about the lady. Wanna go out for a beer?"

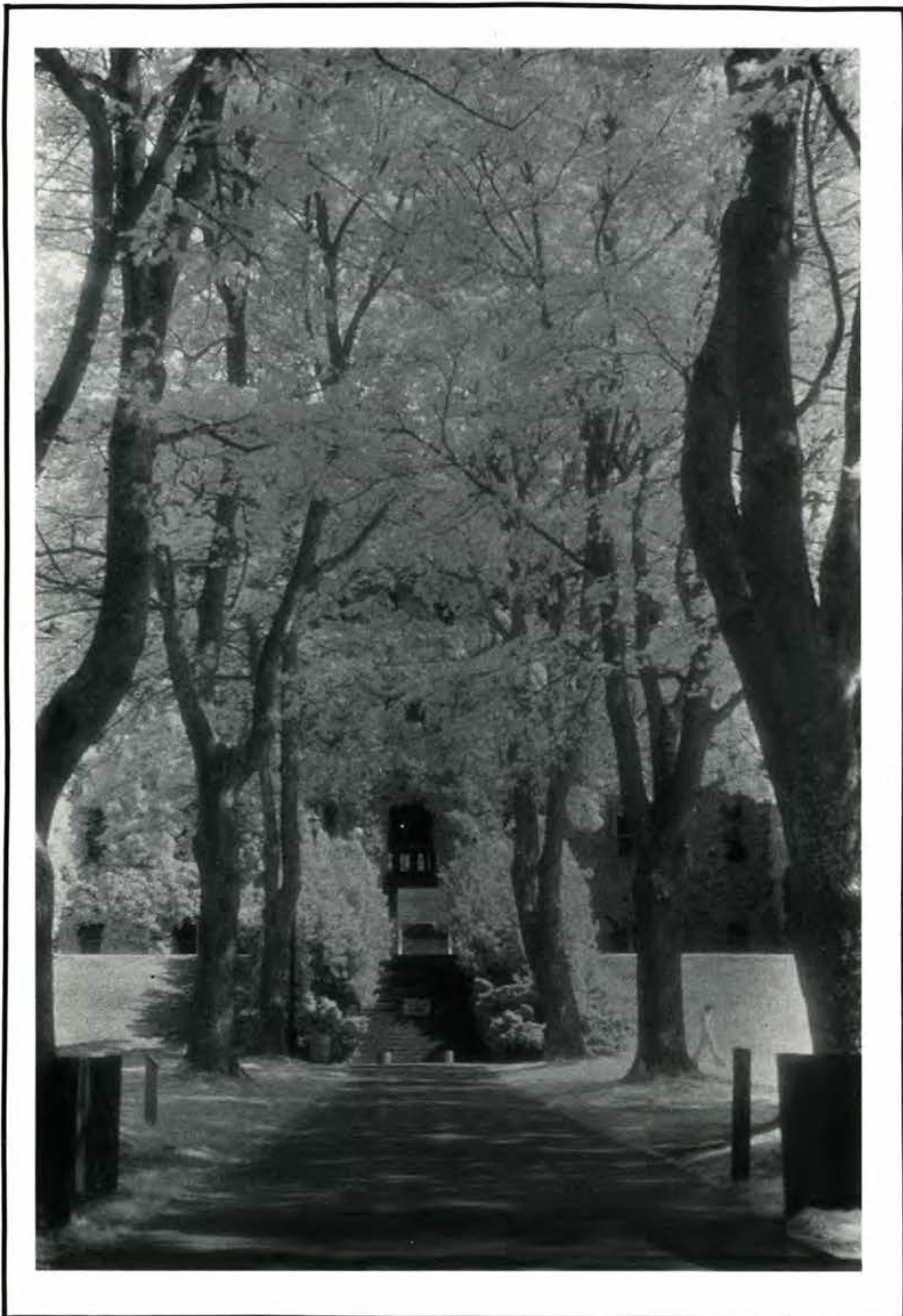
"No thanks. I've got my reputation to protect you know, gotta set a good example for those young kids, the future rulers of the world."

Professor R.H. Wilburn turned around as he walked toward the door of the coffee shop. He flashed a glance at Joe and walked out into Red Square.*

Tore Oftness



Brian Higgins



Charles Roper

Russell Van Buren Pays a Debt

by Jim Harrison

Perhaps allegiance to one's alma mater isn't as popular as it used to be, but there are still those who feel they owe a debt to the institution that helped mold their future. By his own account, Russell Van Buren is one of these. Last month he completed his term as president of Western's Alumni Association.

What makes a person want to be active in an alumni association, especially to the point of becoming president? "It's strictly the love of the institution," Van Buren says. "I went into it more or less as a continuing education experience." Pressed to explain, he describes his participation in the association as repayment for what the school gave him — the good times he had, the counseling, the advice, the education and all the extracurricular fun and games.

Recently, Van Buren talked with an acquaintance about his role as an alumnus and his continuing relationship with Western. Sitting in the coffee shop of the Renton Sheraton, amid the Formica decor and jumbled conversations of businessmen, company officials and other white collar workers, he seemed quite at home. It had been his idea to meet there.

As he explained his alumni involvement, other factors in his decision to become president began to surface. Actually, he said, he was initially kind of talked into it. He was having a few beers with a friend and past president one night and was convinced to try for the job himself. Since then he has not regretted the decision, he said.

"The Alumni Association five years ago was zilch," he said. Although he would like to see it continue to expand, its influence has already grown considerably. The Association is represented in a number of college government organizations, including the All-College Senate and the committee that selected College President Paul Olscamp.

The Association's relationship with Olscamp has been somewhat "strained" lately, Van Buren said hesitantly, thinking out loud that "strained" might be too strong. Apparently, disagreement centers on the issue of university status for Western. The Association favors the name change, Van Buren said, but it is worried that Olscamp's claims there will be no accompanying financial changes may not be true.

One important function of the Association is lobbying. Six hundred dollars of its annual budget goes to its legislative committee, and Olscamp would

like to see the Association actively support the name change.

The Association's \$2,500 annual budget comes from the Western Washington State College Foundation, a private, non-profit organization that raises money for the college. The money pays for the Association's monthly publication, *Resume* (a round-up of college news and alumni information sent to all Western graduates), legislative activities and a program to introduce high school students to Western.

Alumni donate their time and are paid only for expenses, which they usually donate to a scholarship fund for alumni offspring. Van Buren said he is confident the Association will eventually get more money to expand and improve its services.

Money is an important part of the stereotypic alumni image — the well-to-do college graduate who has been assured a slot in leisure-time society. In this view, the alumni organization is a strong fraternity in which membership is an important measure of social standing.

Russell Van Buren only partly fits this image. Expanding on the reasons for his involvement in the Association, he said, "A lot of it has to do with my work." His employer, Puget Sound Power and Light, encourages participation in community affairs, he said.

Since 1972, a year after graduating from Western, he has been in residential sales, serving the company as a marketing representative. He makes about \$19,000 a year, has a wife and two small children and a home in Bellevue. (Seventy per cent of Western alumni live in Snohomish, King and Pierce counties.)

It is a modest stature befitting an alumnus of a modest state college.

But Van Buren, a 1963 graduate of Bellingham High School, describes himself as a small town boy. The job with Puget Power was more or less a fluke of the post-graduation search for employment. He was driving around looking for work, when he saw an empty parking space in front of Puget Power's Bellingham office. Seeing he had a good Dutch name, he said, they sent him out to Lynden to read meters.

What does this and his current job have to do with the liberal arts degree in history and political science he received at Western?



Many times his liberal arts education has helped him communicate in his work, he said. By no means was it a waste. A home economics class, "The Pre-school Child in the Family," has helped him relate to women customers he has encountered in the course of his work, he explained.

His grades were not spectacular. "I think I graduated with about a 2.2," he said of his grade point average. "I was probably one of those that wasn't meant for a college education." Yet he said he is grateful he did it. And it is easy to believe him when he says an active social life was probably his main failure academically.

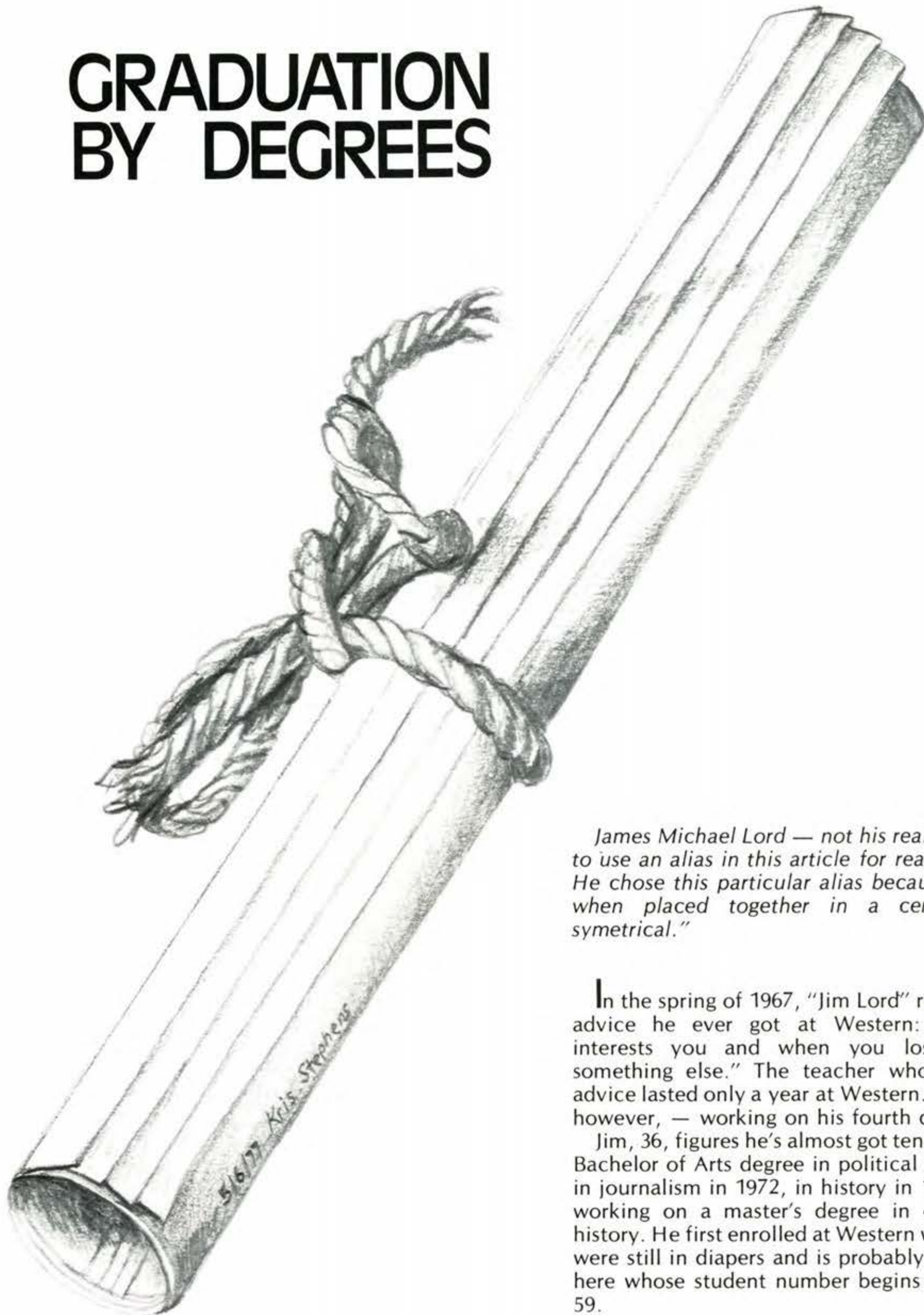
He is an easy talker, and his background in sales shows its influence. Praise of the Alumni Association and the college occurs unobtrusively in the casual conversation and amid school-days anecdotes about a rough hockey game and a friend's license plate-switching scheme for drinking trips to Canada.

Asked how money should be spent to bring more students to Western, he said the college needs more advertisement of its physical charms. It already has an outstanding faculty, and he would not consider as a high priority using more money to attract distinguished faculty, he said.

Fuller utilization of the "wealth of talent in the Alumni Association" is another important resource the college has, he said. Western's alumni board has 45 positions, and he suggested that expression of interest is about all it takes to become involved. Anyone who graduates from Western is a member of the Alumni Association and eligible for board membership.

If interest in the Association is flagging, Van Buren did not say so. It is too soon to tell how much allegiance to Western the most recent graduates will feel. But the Alumni Association's increasing strength and influence is an indication "love of the institution" is not dead. *

GRADUATION BY DEGREES



James Michael Lord — not his real name — chose to use an alias in this article for reasons of privacy. He chose this particular alias because “the initials, when placed together in a certain way, are symmetrical.”

In the spring of 1967, “Jim Lord” received the best advice he ever got at Western: “Do whatever interests you and when you lose interest, do something else.” The teacher who gave him the advice lasted only a year at Western. Jim is still here, however, — working on his fourth degree.

Jim, 36, figures he’s almost got tenure. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science in 1967, in journalism in 1972, in history in 1973 and is now working on a master’s degree in communications history. He first enrolled at Western when many of us were still in diapers and is probably the only person here whose student number begins with the figures 59.

BY PATTI JONES

The professional student with traces of white in his chestnut-brown hair and side-burns said he is "quietly astonished" everyday at the changes that have occurred over the last 18 years. Back in '59 tuition was \$88, women wore dresses 95 per cent of the time, there was no such thing as civil rights (or at least they weren't talked about) and — no doubt about it — the U.S. was Number One. Perhaps most importantly, there was "more certainty then," Jim said. During this time, he felt horribly alone in his uncertainty.

"Not knowing what direction to go in bothered me then. But it doesn't now," he said with a slight grin as he half reclined on the brick ground near the music building, basking in the sun which highlighted the red in his hair. His smiling, brown eyes were covered by sunglasses, his mouth almost covered by his thick mustache and his chin nearly immersed in his soft neck.

"Now everyone is uncertain. I kind of dig it." He tugged lightly at the tuft of hair which fell below his sharp nose and above his lower lip. "Well, at least they're verbalizing their uncertainty more. They're not so sure they really want to get out of college and plug in with the gray flannel suit set."

The transition came in the mid-sixties — during the anti-war era, according to the "uncertain," three-time graduate who was dressed in a jean jacket and blue jeans. Everybody began questioning everything, he said, and some basic beliefs were proved false. The late sixties were trying times for the college administration, because it had no idea how to handle "radicals," Jim said wryly. In about 1968, for instance, then-President Flora ordered the seizure of activities calendars on which had been printed an anti-Vietnam war cartoon. (Flora is now in a "zoologist retirement home near Shannon Point," Jim said with a Cheshire cat grin.)

Because of his inability to make a complete break from the fortress on the hill, Jim may seem to be trying to escape from reality — and he does not deny that this is the case, or at least part of it.

"Sure I'm escaping," he said and then took a deep drag off his cigarette. "Everybody has to escape. This way you may get lung cancer, but not sclerosis of the liver. This form is the most rewarding — to ask questions and find answers . . . and more questions."

The Whatcom County native who often divides the

world into "up here" and "down there" said that what he is escaping from is "inert material," empty ritual and possibly the despairity of being in the ranks of the unemployed.

"History gives you an identity. If you are unemployed, you just sit at home; you have no identity."

Jim quoted the findings of a recent Gallop poll: 42 per cent of the population would like to change their jobs. While he lives in this academic buffer zone, Jim does not have to risk getting caught in something he doesn't like. Here, he said, he can "sample everything" in his search for "self-realization."

The unassuming scholar said he realizes "the complexity of the subjects" he is studying and is "in constant fear that someone will find out how lazy and ignorant [he] really is."

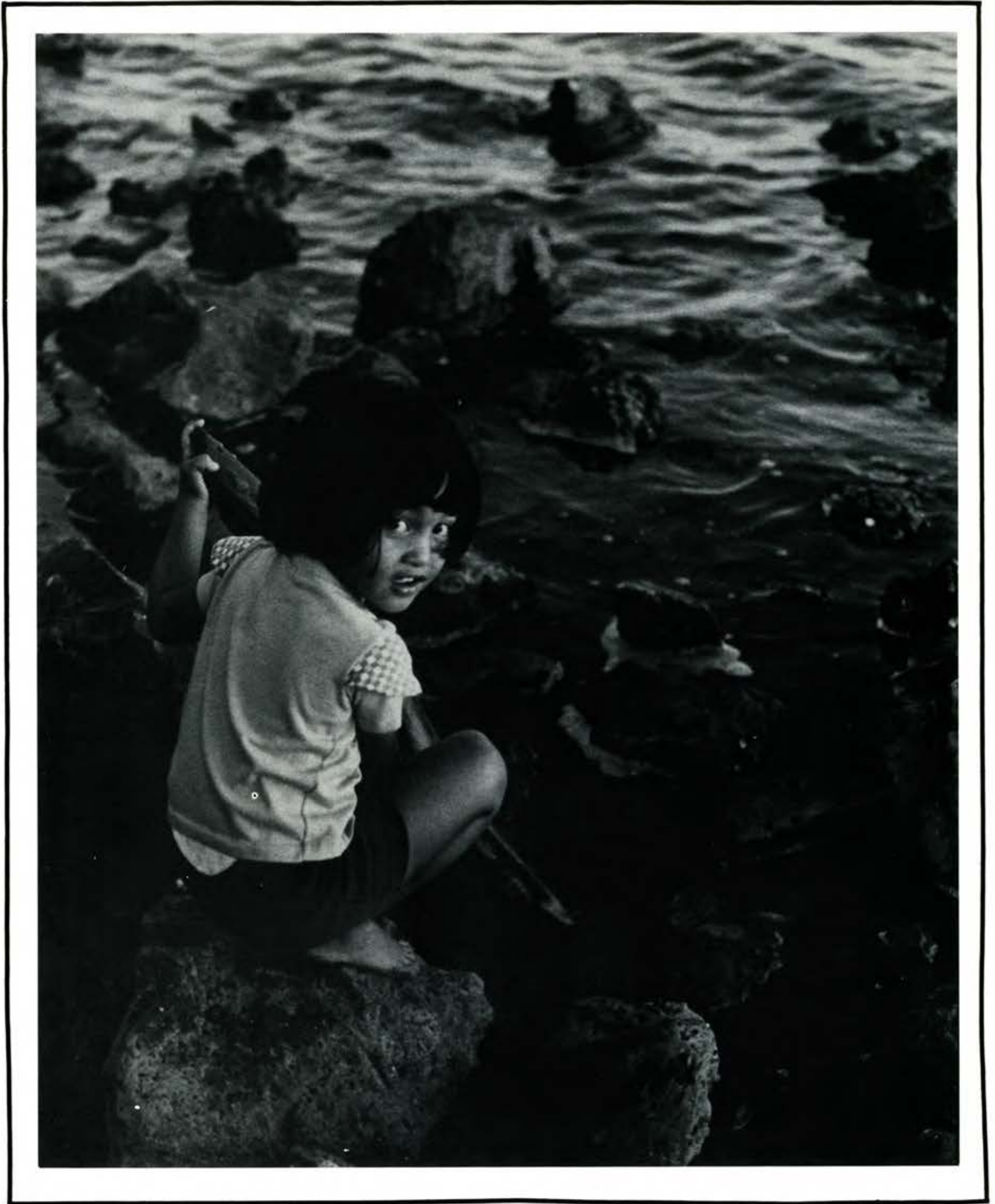
A student with a grade point average a bit over 3.2, Jim studies on Chuckanut Mountain because there are no distractions up there. Not that he lives with a number of people; in fact, he lives alone with two cats and two dogs. It is the television, the stereo and his beckoning library which distracts him. He often watches TV, listens to the radio and reads books all at the same time, so as not to "miss anything," he said. And too, "it fills the gaps of silence."

Jim plans to stick around for about two years longer — "a mere twinkling of the eye" for him, he said — before splitting for Los Angeles where he hopes to write or edit books, as well as try to get work in a motion picture archives. He said he has always been intrigued by the motion picture business because of its division between fantasy and reality.

"I love looking at sets and behind the screen, and contrasting it with what is projected on the screen," the scholar, who hopes to write a text on how the demands of the economic arena have affected motion picture art, said.

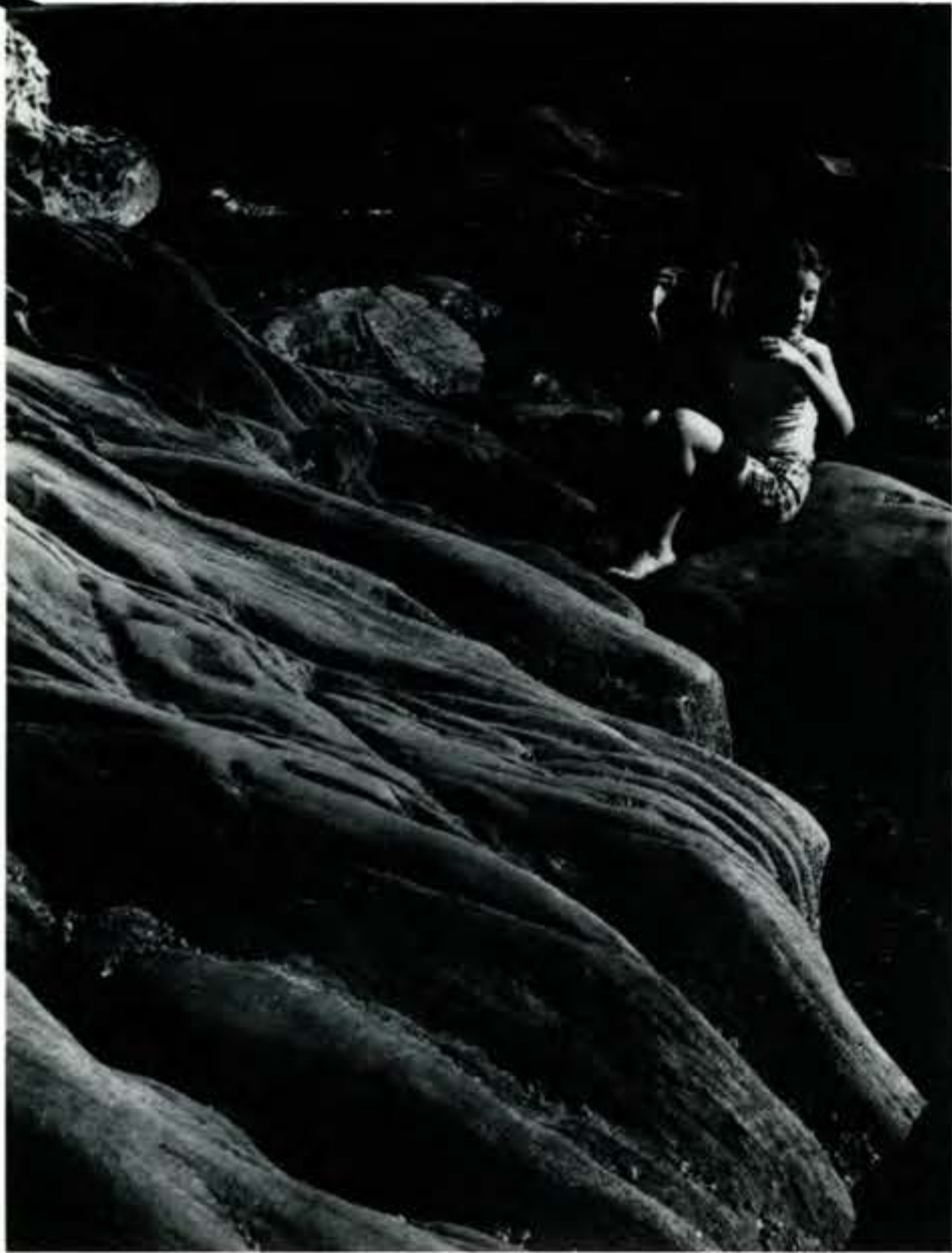
Although he is "looking forward to getting out" of school (and has already taken a few trips to L.A. in search of job prospects), Jim does not expect his absence from the academic world to be anything more than "temporary." His plans for the future include getting a doctorate in communication history and eventually teaching.

"I like to be able to see what is reality and what is fantasy," he said, "and that is one of the basic tenets of higher education." *



Vic Davis

Karen Ostrander



Christopher C. Plourde

From the Land of Education...

by Angelo Bruscas



Photo by Darrell Butorac

Dana Rust will never teach school. His masters degree in education from Western sits in the back of a cluttered drawer at his home in Edison, Washington now just another worthless piece of paper. However, Dana is not a failure, and his life is a story of success.

At 33, contentment radiates from Dana. With his brother Mike as a partner, he has just purchased a commercial fishing boat and will soon make the final

payment on his hardware store-turned house near the end of the Skagit Valley. He is at peace. But beneath his six-foot, three-inch frame, rusty red whiskers and eyes which seem filled with the magic of an old sailor, lies a scar. A scar inflicted by his futile effort to become a school teacher.

Dana spent most of his years at Western, from 1967 to 1972, in pursuit of that goal. He worked his sophomore year teaching in a one room school in Montana. He worked as sports editor and campus editor of the old Western Collegian. He majored in English, and in 1970 he received his B.A. It seemed he had all the qualifications necessary to become a teacher.

After graduating in 1970, Dana embarked on his masters program and later gained a student teaching fellowship at Seattle Community College. The official title of his internship was: Communication Specialist for the Metropolitan Inner City Community College. He never was allowed to finish the program.

"I was terminated from my fellowship with just two quarters left before I would finish it," Dana said. "One day I was called before the head of the program and was notified that they were getting rid of me. At the time I had no idea that I would be fired."

He said there were three lengthy and complicated reasons given for the termination which were based on his performance as communication specialist. The school, he said, contended that he had neglected certain responsibilities of the job and that his work had been unsatisfactory. However, Dana is convinced the actual reason for the termination was because he was considered to be a political dissident who "didn't fit into the system" and expressed views which were controversial and radical. One of these views, Dana explained, was that he felt the inner city program should be involved only with inner city and minority people, and not people from the suburbs. This conflict of views ultimately resulted in the termination of the fellowship and the end to Dana's teaching future.

"I was completely shocked at the whole situation. It just blew me away . . . my whole life up to that point revolved around school and it all ended just like that. It really pissed me off," he said.

Dana tried desperately to get back in the program. In 1972, he took his case to court and brought suit to get his internship re-instated. He claimed in his suit that there had been no legal grounds for the termination, and that he should be allowed to finish the fellowship. However, after two years of appeals at various levels of the state court system, a decision was handed down in favor of the school on the basis of a technicality: Dana's lawyer had made an error in filing the appeal. Losing the court battle was the final

blow to Dana, leaving him out of the internship, out of school and out of a chance to ever teach.

"I guess if I had it to do over again, I wouldn't go to school," he said. "I feel like I was blindfolded by the system. They saw education as strictly a mechanical process which was separate from the mental process. The system just stifles instinct," he said.

Nevertheless, in 1973 Western sent him his masters, despite being almost two full quarters short of the necessary requirements for the degree. This remains a mystery to Dana.

"One day my degree just came in the mail, all rolled up," Dana said. "I'm sure that I was short of credits and it seems that sending me a degree without them is illegal as hell. Maybe they felt it was some sort of compensation for what they'd done to me. They were wrong and they knew it," he said.

But even with the degree, Dana could not find a teaching job. He applied for jobs throughout the Northwest and even as far north as Canada, but no one would hire him. The reason, he explained, was because of the termination of his internship and the grade he received for it on his transcripts.

...to the Sea of Instincts

"I never had a chance to look at my records, but I've been told that I received an F on my transcripts for the fellowship," he said. "Employers rarely even bother to consider someone with a C in a graduate program so you can imagine what they would say to an F," Dana explained. "It really hurt me."

Dana took a deep breath and leaned back in his wooden chair. His wife and two young daughters had been gone for the better part of an hour, and he wondered out loud where they could be. It obviously has been difficult for Dana to tell of his conflicts with Western and the system of education, although he is still very bitter. But he has not stopped in his quest for education, and it is this quest which helps ease the bitterness. In the four years since the end of his court battles, he has become the pupil of a much more rewarding education and teacher: the education of the land and the instructor in the hands.

"I've learned so much more since I've been out of the school system," Dana said. "There is another

beautiful world out there which has to do with nature and the hands. It is a world full of imagination and vitality which you just can't experience through the system of education."

After receiving his degree, Dana moved his family to the hardware store in Edison. Edison is at the foot of the Skagit Valley, and is a town of less than a few hundred people, mostly retired, with a bar, a grocery store which also serves as the post office, and a rural, all-grade school building. It seems hardly the sort of place for a person with a masters in education to live, but it has been the ideal place for Dana to have learned to work with his hands.

He started making a living there by tearing down old barns and houses with his brother. They called themselves "King Kong Demolition." Dana also became interested in growing earthworms as a hobby, and this eventually led him into starting his own worm business. Now he makes a profit selling the worms to farmers and fishermen and estimates that he has over a million worms in his farm. But the project which brings Dana the most pride is the conversion of the hardware store into a home for his family.

Working slowly with the old building he has built a living room, kitchen, bathroom and he has partially

Photo by Darrell Butorac



finished working on an outdoor deck. Dana has also completed a large picture window which looks out on an unobstructed view of the San Juan Islands. Late in the afternoon or early evening it is possible to see the sun set from almost any position in the house, adding a picturesque highlight to the end of a day. The rest of the house is not near finished yet, but Dana is a persistent pupil and it will be completed one day. He is sure of it.

"Sometimes work on the place goes slow because I can be clumsy and will take my time," Dana said, "but it is amazing how much you can do with your hands if you take the time to learn. Basically, I just follow my instincts."

Dana's instincts led him to take the most important step in his life. He has invested several thousand dollars and his future in a sea-worthy, commercial fishing vessel, built half-a-century ago in 1912 and christened as the "Pacific Breeze." In late May, Dana will set off in the boat to fish for salmon out of Point Roberts; something he has had very little previous experience doing. But Dana trusts his instincts, and they tell him that his fishing adventure will be another education worth learning.

Dana Rust does not brood over his valueless masters degree, or over his struggle with the educational system he once wanted so much to be a part of. For he is now too content with learning with his hands, and studying the land and the sea.*

Photo by Darrell Butorac



"I just follow my instincts."



Photo by Vic Davis

For Mary Anne Tyson-Perry the road to graduation has been long and arduous. Even more valuable than the degree she is receiving from Fairhaven this spring, she says, is her sobriety.

The path to alcoholism was a natural one for Mary Anne, known to her friends as Sunshine. "I was predisposed to alcoholism," she said, "I grew up with it all around me." Emotionally, she was a prime candidate for alcoholism.

Sunshine was born on May 26, 1940, in Aberdeen, Washington. Her father, a logger, was killed as the result of a logging accident when she was five weeks old. The first five years of her life were difficult. While her mother worked she was bounced around — to relatives, neighbors, babysitters and grandparents.

"I had a very unsettled existence during my childhood," she said. A poor childhood is a common rationalization among alcoholics as to why they drink. "Many moan and groan 20 to 30 years later because they were weaned from the left breast instead of the right."

Sunshine's drinking started early. "I made my first drink — a screwdriver — for myself when I was 13," she said. "Being predisposed, I think I was an alcoholic before I ever had my first drink. I was a

From Barstool to Baccalaureate

by
Martha May

sitting duck, a prime candidate for the disease to progress." Alcoholism ran in her family, she said, "And children of alcoholics are more likely to become alcoholics than children of non-alcoholics."

The disease progressed through high school, when she dated boys who were a little older, she said. "I really liked the ones who had beer." She moved to Olympia during high school, with her mother and stepfather, and she had trouble being accepted by the "in" crowd there. "I had been popular in junior high in Grays Harbor," she said, "but I felt left out in Olympia. I was pissed. I couldn't get in with the bunch, and I was resentful. I felt inadequate."

She says of herself that she was not well-adjusted during high school. She was impulsive and extremely extroverted to cover up her feeling of inadequacy. She would do well in classes she liked and poorly in those she didn't like. "I was constantly late and truant, especially as a senior. If someone said 'let's go drink beer' I was gone. I was a bit of a disturber."

Her spirit of adventure got her from high school in Olympia into the Marines. "It was a vehicle out of town — and I was quite patriotic at the time. I attribute it to too many John Wayne movies. I fancied myself a modern day Joan of Arc, off to war. People were still pro-war at that time — 1958 — it



Photo by Vic Davis

was right after the Korean conflict. It was an honorable thing to do."

"I liked the Marine Corps very much because of the regimentation; the consistency of it. I knew what was expected of me and I did it. I liked the stability. I felt focused at that time," she said. "The discipline of my home life was very inconsistent. I thrived on the discipline of the Marine Corps."

Still the drinking continued. "I was thrilled to death to find the legal drinking age to be 18 in Parris Island, South Carolina," her first duty station. "That meant I was a cosmopolitan woman of the world. I had arrived."

"I never felt a part of anything. I felt very much alone. I felt no cohesiveness. For the most part I was quaking with inadequacy. But when I had my liquid guts, when I had two drinks in me, I turned into a combination Marilyn Monroe, Ginger Rogers and queen of the ocean. Someone told me around that time that I was a very shallow person — and I was — but I was devastated."

When Sunshine got out of the Marine Corps she moved to San Francisco. There she found her tolerance of alcohol was increasing and she needed bigger and bigger doses of her "sedative-depressive drug."

In 1963, at age 22, Sunshine married Joe Perry, a merchant seaman. "I tried to do most of my drinking when he was out to sea. That worked in my 20s, but by the time I was 30 I had no choice. The booze chose, controlled and directed my life for me."

"Ironically, as my tolerance for alcohol increased, all areas of my life diminished, insidiously. There was less and less socially, culturally, sexually, financially, spiritually, as I drank more and more."

Sunshine worked as a hairdresser, cosmetologist and beauty school teacher while she was in San Francisco. She called herself "Miss Adrienne — because I sure as hell hated Mary Anne. Most alcoholics know how society feels about them and they loathe themselves more and more."

"I would not endure any unpleasant state of being, anger, boredom — I wouldn't cope — I stunted my emotional growth. How did I cope?" she asked rhetorically, "I didn't, I drank, I retarded my emotional growth a good 10 years by drinking, but," she adds, laughing, "that's o.k. That makes me 26 today instead of 36."

"I was completely irresponsible," she says of herself at this time. "I lost two jobs in San Francisco due to drinking. I just comforted myself with the fact that they were assholes and I was perfect."

"Sometimes I would make the midnight move and skip out on the rent. I didn't want to spend the money I did have on anything as mundane as rent. I wanted to spend it on booze."

"I got arrested for drunk one October somewhere in the early 60s. I was offended — right on the street — I was indignant. Just like them firing me. I was above it all — way above, most of the time. On moon ten in my alcoholic stupor. All of these things speeded the process. I got lots of speeding tickets, but I was drunk every time they wrote one."

In 1966 Sunshine divorced her husband, although they remarried one year later. "I got tired of fighting with my husband all the time — about everything. Alcoholics like to play the game of uproar. Then you can storm out of the house mad, thinking well, he made me mad. I'll fix him. It's immaturity."

"Joe didn't know how sick I was. He still doesn't really understand alcoholism. My husband deserves to be commended for his loyalty. Nine out of 10 men leave a drinking wife, although only one out of 10 women will leave a drinking husband."

Joe did not understand Mary Anne's problem. "He just knew that I was zany and fun. He didn't know I was a juice head," she said.

"I didn't acknowledge my own alcoholism until I was 28, when I started thinking I was out of control. That's standard. Most alcoholics know they are alcoholic for three to five years before they ever do anything about quitting. If they ever do anything."

She went to an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting in San Francisco in 1970. "Only I B.S.'d myself, said I was only going as moral support for a friend. My first two years in AA I would drink off and on. I called it my windshield wiper syndrome."

"I always wanted to go to college," Mary Anne continued. "All through my drinking I used to fantasize what a wonderful thing it would be to go to college. Sometimes my thinking would be so foggy I could hardly remember my own name, but I valued it, getting an education."

At the end of 1971 the Perrys moved to Seattle. In August, 1972 Mary Anne decided to collect her G.I. bill money "And make it look like I was doing something with my life, because I sure as hell hadn't been. Ever one to dream the big dream," she said, "I decided to stay sober for a while and go to college."

In the Fall of 1972 she started school at Highline Community College. "I utilized their counseling facilities to the hilt. I had a very compassionate counselor — Allan. I virtually lived at the college from morning 'till night because I was afraid to be alone. I could not predict my behavior. I lived in AA meetings, too, going almost every day for two years."

"I went to dances at the AA club in Seattle and it took me three months of feeling very awkward to be able to dance without the liquid guts. I had to unlearn and relearn everything. I AA'd myself to death the first two years. Sometimes I went to three meetings a day — on Sundays."



Photo by Vic Davis

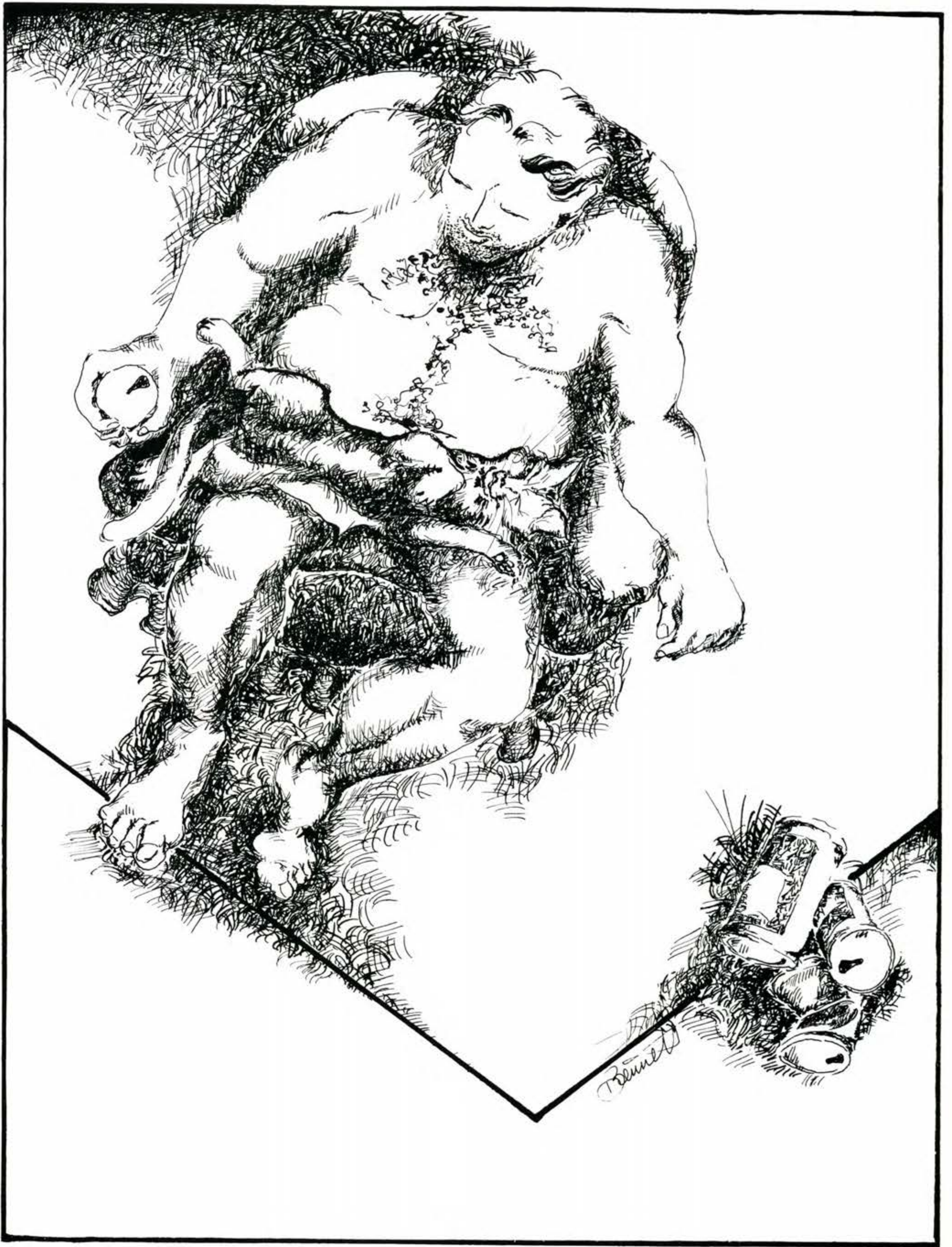
Her grades improved steadily after she went through withdrawal, which took about six months. "Little by little as my confidence improved and I saw I could get some decent grades, my self-esteem and self-image improved. I discovered, much to my surprise, I could do many things well, whereas before I had considered myself a failure."

Some of her teachers at Highline encouraged her to go on and get a bachelors degree. "I thought 'what the hell, what's the worst that can happen?' I figured there were plenty of dummies walking around with bachelors. I should be able to get one too."

In the fall of 1974, having completed her degree from Highline Community College in Hotel Management, she came to Fairhaven College. "There were many gentle people at Fairhaven," she said. "It's a very therapeutic place to get well. It's healthy."

She took a variety of classes at Fairhaven and Western, including making a trip to Europe with Fairhaven's Art History class, but her studies were focused on the Alcoholism Studies/Counseling Concentration which she has just finished this Spring.

She plans to keep going now and get a Ph.D. in Alcoholism Rehabilitation. She hopes someday to have a private practice. But as Sunshine says, "This is all icing on the cake. Nothing means more to me than my sobriety." *



Beine

UNDER THE ROCK

by D. Starbuck Goodwyn

The name Johnny True will not be on his diploma when he graduates in June, but it will serve well enough for this article. He has a good reason for not wanting to be properly identified. He is a real person and a candidate for June graduation. This is his story. It reflects his four years at WWSC and his change of attitude during those four years.

Johnny True sat throwing beer cans at his cat. It was no cruel sport. The cat was as bad as Johnny True. He was a big, mean, one-eyed alley cat that adopted John as the only human being worth his time.

The cat was a malevolent grey that shed his dirty hair on John's furniture out of spite. His name was Numb Nuts and he worshiped John.

Numb Nuts liked thy game. As John said, "It beats the hell out of sitting on the window sill and pissing on the plants." The cat dodged another empty beer can and grinned at John wickedly with his one yellow eye. He stretched lazily off his stool, strolled over to John and with all the innocence of a cherub caught masturbating behind a cloud, and laid four razor-sharp talons across the leg of the object of his affection. John ignored the four ugly welts and the cat's insolent exit.

John was pondering a question. He scratched his grizzled grey chin. "What do I remember most about my years on campus? Hell, there's a lot of memories from Western I'll carry around for a long time.

"I guess some of the best memories are the bull sessions in the coffee shop. Those times when you happen to get a bunch of good minds and free spirits around one table and you know there's a lot of people that have a lot to say." He stopped speaking momentarily. When he spoke again his face and voice reflected thought.

"Maybe that's what the whole scene here is about. Like a forum . . . you know, a place where ideas can come together and expand and grow on each other. Yeow, I got a lot out of the good old coffee shop rap sessions."

"I don't know how much I really learned here, I mean cold hard facts that will help me get through

life. A lot of the profs were really fuzzy brained shit-heads. In most cases those were just the people who had never been in the real world. Intellectual philosophies are fine, but if you're going to put 'em on, you ought to go out and wear them to work and see if they'll hold up in the every day world."

His intensely blue eyes kindled warmly as he riffled the files of his memory. He stroked the cat gently. "It's kind of sad to go into a class that you're paying money and time for and draw a prof that's about as physically and mentally active as a vampire that's been drinking tired blood. But thank God for the good ones. I had a hell of a slug of really good teachers. People that made the class think. People that stimulated thought. One good class with some one like that made up for two or three tinsel, tenure termites, so I guess it all kind of balanced out."

The telephone rang. Some one from one of the dorms was apparently inviting John to a card game. He said he'd be there with beer. The caller wished him luck and John replied easily that he didn't play on luck, and hung up. He came back to his remembrances.

"Oh, I always enjoyed sitting around Red Square on sunny days just watching the population all laid back and soaking up Sol."

"I saw a lot of theater here, and some of it pretty damned good too.

"I absorbed a lot of music. I remember when the old Fairhaven Tavern was going full blast and I used to drop in there any time I knew there was live music. Nine-tenths of the people there would be from Western and we'd drink wine and pick up on the crazy ideas we'd left at the coffee shop. Fairhaven should have been named WWSC South. It was really kind of an extension of campus life.

"And some of the crazy things I'll remember. I won't forget the streakers in Miller Hall and the Square. Sail boats in the fountain and the whiskey still in the Chemistry Department."

"When they hand me that piece of paper I'll walk away with a lot of memories. I'll hang on to the good ones and put the bad ones in the dead file."

John has other memories, not so pleasant, like his difficult transition to college life. "Hell Man, you see

me like this and there's no way you're going to believe me four years ago. I was fresh out of the military and I guess I tried to bring my command along with me. I had some very — I mean VERY — strong ideas about how a society should run, I figured I had the pattern and it was the only pattern that would work."

It was rather hard to imagine Johnny True with a military background, seeing him "like this." Like this, was a fat man with an awful lot of curly hair on his chest and belly, a pair of stretched jock shorts, largely covered by stomach, and all that glory topped off by a set of love beads.

"I've lifted up the rock that
I would never before
look under."

His moving target gone, he flipped a beer can that spun three times, nailed the door knob neatly and dropped precisely into a paper sack under the knob.

He picked up the conversation. "This four years has meant one hell of a lot to me. I've lifted up the rock that I would never before look under. I've lifted it up, had a good hard look and I like a lot of what I see there.

"When I first got here it was a hard scene. I mean, what the fuck, I had been in WWII when I was fifteen. I had a battle field commission before I was twenty. I was a POW in Korea and I was in Nam twice." He belched a couple of times and picked up the cat that crouched beside him.

"I figured that everybody here was going to be against me. You know, I figured the kids and rug-head intellectuals would come down on me for what I'd been. Tight! I'll tell you about up tight. I was like a blind dog in a meathouse for the first few weeks on campus . . . just running around trying to find ME!"

Numb Nuts worked out a precarious position between John's flowing belly and fat legs and dozed. "After awhile I began to wonder if I wasn't being some kind of snob. I wasn't trying to be . . . I was just socially scared. I was 'fraid that if I tried to get friendly with the kids, they'd snub me, so I kept hanging back."

We were interrupted when some one came to his door to ask directions. I looked around his apartment. It reflected the man and his life.

An intricate Persian rug covered the floor. The walls were hung with some really good art, broken by

souvenirs picked up around the world. A Chinese opium pipe hung over a Philippine bolo knife. On another wall a Turkish samovar sat in a recess of the wall, flanked by two Japanese samurai swords. Then the books started and they went on and on, and they were all good, or at any rate, by authors I considered good, and they were all shelved carefully and precisely and looked used.

He came back, rolled a joint and took a couple of heavy tokes and passed it to me. It was good stuff. I asked him where he got it and he just shrugged his shoulders. "The thing is, I was really fucked up in my head about Vietnam. I'd been laying my ass on the line over there for two years. I figured that anybody that couldn't see we were right to be there, had to be wrong about everything."

With barely a perceptible effort he reached down beside his chair, picked up a powerful looking water gun and filled it from a conveniently located jar. Without seeming to take aim he pointed the gun in the general direction of a pot of hanging fern and pulled the trigger. The water described a graceful arc and hit the fern square on. He spoke to fern. "Now grow you little bastard I want to hear them roots a'poppin."

He lazily replaced the pistol and said, "Gotta talk to 'em before they'll grow. That one was a runt before I got it. Look how healthy it is now."

He switched the subject to his reason for starting college. His voice was deep, vibrant and very positive. "I never finished high school . . . a couple of wars got in my way. Then after I came back from Nam the last time I got to puzzling over all the people in this country who were against the war. It seemed to me there were just too damned many to all be wrong."

Numb Nuts was tromping around on John's vestige of a lap trying to find a more comfortable spot. John reached down to stroke the cat and was awarded a swift swat and a baleful one eyed glare. He ignored it and went on talking. "Then a terrible thought started creeping in my head. Hell, maybe I was wrong. I wanted to find out. It seemed to me that most of the real action against the war had centered on the campuses so I thought that was the best place to go to get in people's heads.

"I guess the really surprising thing was the way the kids accepted me. Here I was, a walking, talking symbol of the things they abhorred, but nobody tried to tar and feather me. They didn't go out of their way to make friends and they didn't condescend, they just accepted me as a human being. When I realized that, I started listening to them."

He grinned at a memory. I noticed that he had a really good face. When he smiled the well formed planed and a strong nose gave him an almost handsome look. I wondered why I hadn't noticed before. I supposed it was because John just seemed a bit too big for life.

"I remember the first time I was offered pot. I thought that stuff was worse than incest, but I didn't

want to be rude and stiff necked. I felt like a lost ball in the high grass but took two or three drags on it. I didn't get off that time, but the Devil didn't come up and immediately claim my soul . . . at least I don't think he did."

The moment of lightness passed as he coupled his thoughts. "It's funny, but so damned much of this stuff ties together. Like conservation. Conservation of nature and man. I'd never thought much about it. In fact I had pretty well devoted a life to destruction of both.

"After I got here I started listening and thinking and I realized that if we don't put the brakes on soon and hard, we're all going down the shit chute like a greased owl on a slippery slope. We're depreciating the hell out of our planet and it's the only one we've got. There's no damned spare."

He sat silently staring at the dart board on the opposite wall. He was in a world where I wasn't invited. Without looking down, he reached to the cluttered table beside his chair and his fingers closed unerringly on a precision dart. With a total economy of movement he swung his arm, his wrist flicked decisively and the dart smacked the bulls-eye across the room.

"... we can't hit the things
that are destroying us."

"I said, "Nice." He frowned. "That's the problem. That's the problem and somehow we've got to work together and find an answer. We can hit the target on physical things. We're a friggin' planet of target hitters. We can hit the moon. We can hit other nations and we can hit each other with expert accuracy. But damnit, we can't hit the things that are destroying us."

He got up and poured us a drink. As he moved across the room his muscles, under a layer of fat, rippled coordinately. He saw me looking at him and slapped his overhanging belly. "Just got fat after I came up here. Too much of the good life I guess."

"That's what I'm trying to talk about though. The Four Horsemen of Apocalypse are so damned close to us we can smell their stinking breaths and we keep expending our energies making more money so we can buy more labor saving electric gadgets, eat more rich food and spend all of our nights erotically fuckin' without making babies or taking on other unwanted responsibilities."

He threw another dart and almost ruined the first one. He looked at me quizzically. "Who's guilty? Hell who's innocent? Sure as hell not me. I ran off and left a wife and a kid. Now I feel like a fourteen

karat prick about it, but old T. Wolf was right when he said 'you can't go home no more.' I sure as shit can't belly-ache about other people, so where are we. Maybe we're all in a ship that somebody just pulled the plug on and we're all having too much fun to bother about putting it back in."

He was interrupted. Numb Nuts was knocking a metal feeding pan around demanding instant nourishment. John opened a can of pork and beans and dumped them unceremoniously in the pan. "That silly-assed cat loves pork and beans. I just give them to him because they make him fart and that embarrasses him. It's the only way I can bother him."

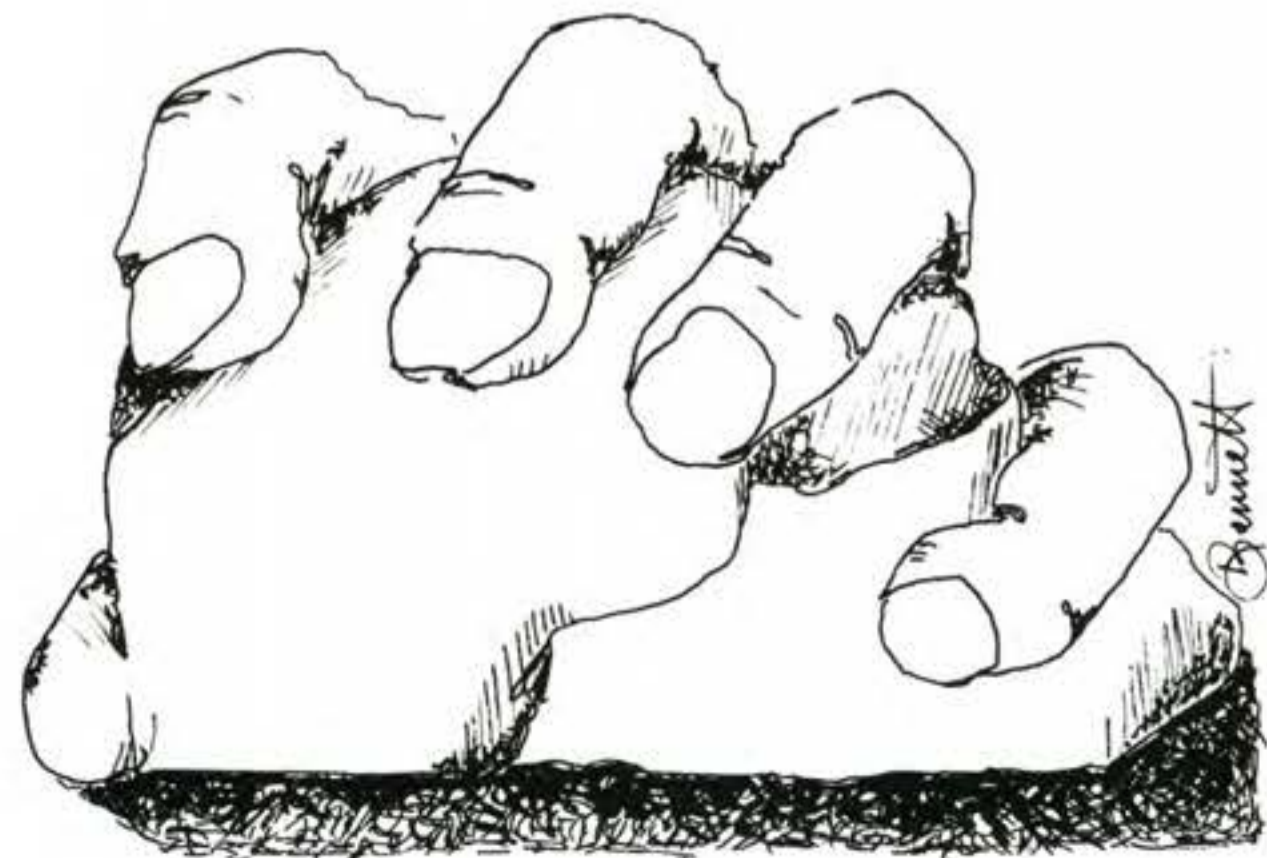
Johnny True was getting tired of talking. His eyes grew restless. "Hell, I don't know. Seems like we've all got the answers but maybe they're to the wrong questions. Them damned horses can't hear. It's going to take some good strong kicks in the ass to turn 'em around."

He switched the subject abruptly. Or maybe he didn't. "Anyway, you asked me what this four years has meant to me, and I've gone a hell of a long way around the outhouse to try to explain it. Like I said it made me look under the rock. It gave me a good look at what a lot of people, young and not so young, are thinking. I don't want to sound like Ann Landers in a confessional booth, but I'm a hell-of-a-lot better equipped to deal with young people. I know more about their values and I've looked inside a lot of their frustrations."

He looked speculatively at the dart board. I had the feeling he wasn't seeing it. His next words came uneasily. "Hell of a thing for a man to say, but I guess when I came here four years ago I didn't like youth. I'm not carrying on a romance with them now. I'm not courting them. I just understand and respect them a lot more."

He smiled and it was pleasant. "If that's what the four years were all about, it was damned well worth it."

He walked me to the door and as I was leaving he said, "I'm graduating in June . . . but I'm not dropping the rock." *



Christopher C. Plourde



Vic Davis



Christopher C. Plourde



Darrell Butorac

