

SARAH LAWRENCE COLLEGE

Archived News

1999-2000

News articles from 1999-2000

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Harold Aks, Faculty Emeritus, Dies

Date: Jun 30, 2000

News Release

Harold Aks, emeritus member of the Sarah Lawrence faculty, who taught music and directed the College's chorus and chamber choir from 1954-1992, died on June 30, 2000.

Aks taught music theory, choral conducting, music history, choral and symphonic analysis, and vocal chamber music at Sarah Lawrence, a small, academically rigorous liberal arts college known for its integration of the creative and performing arts into the curriculum. As director of the Sarah Lawrence European Chorus, Aks took groups of students on performing tours of Europe and the Middle East, appearing at many of the major European festivals.



"Harold Aks was a central figure in the history of the College," said Barbara Kaplan, Dean of the College. "His talent and ability were legendary, bringing international attention to the College's chorus and chamber choir, and earning the love and respect of generations of students over the years."

As a choral director and teacher Aks attempted to dispel the myth that children could be tone deaf. "We have young children who do not reproduce sounds well being told not to sing," he said in an interview in 1963, offering advice on how to improve a child's ability to sing. "This is like telling a child who is nearsighted not to look, or a child who hasn't learned reading yet not to read."

During his career he conducted and lectured at the Mannes College of Music, the Juilliard School, Mills College, the Walden School and the new Lincoln School. He was conductor of the chorus and lecturer at the Dalton School for fifty years as well as conductor of the Dalton Alumni Chorus. Aks was also musical director and chief lecturer of the St. Moritz International Choir Festival for 16 years and served as guest conductor with symphony orchestras in the United States and Europe. He had conducted the New York Interracial Fellowship chorale for many years.

Aks was a graduate of the Juilliard School of Music in New York and studied composition with Wallingford Riegger, choral conducting with Robert Shaw and orchestral conducting with Pierre Monteux.

Art of the String Quartet Course Open to the Public

Date: Sep 8, 1999

News Release

The Art of the String Quartet, a Sarah Lawrence College music course will be open to the public to audit, free of charge. Beginning September 15 and continuing throughout the year when school is in session, the course takes place on Wednesdays from 12:30 - 1:30 in Reisinger Hall. Teaching the course, which will explore the complete string quartet works of Ludwig van Beethoven in a historical context, are the members of The Laurentian String Quartet, in residence at the college. Registration is not required. Brown bag lunches are welcome. For more information, please contact (914) 395-2412.



Harriet K. Cuffaro, Ed.D. To Lecture

Date: Jul 10, 2000

News Release

Harriet K. Cuffaro, Ed.D., a leader in the field of early childhood progressive education, will speak on educational standards in a democratic society at Sarah Lawrence College on Monday, July 10, 2000 at 11:30 a.m. The lecture, sponsored by the College's Child Development Institute, is free and open to the public. For more information and reservations please call (914) 395-2412.



Cuffaro is recognized nationally for her insights into education. Her academic interests include teacher training, research on teaching, curriculum development and evaluation, classroom observation, block building, and creating democratic communities in schools.

Cuffaro received her doctorate in education from Teachers College, Columbia University and taught as a member of the graduate faculty at the Bank Street College of Education for 30 years. Among her numerous published writings is *Experimenting with the World: John Dewey and the Early Classroom* (1995).

The lecture is part of The Child Development Institute's Empowering Teachers Program, established in 1989 as a forum for professional development and support for teachers, administrators and other professionals working with children in early childhood and public elementary school settings.

Poetry Slam

Date: Sep 9, 1999

News Release

No sooner have classes gotten underway than creativity begins to percolate on campus. Student organized poetry slams are expected to be de regueur this year and the inaugural slam (9/9/99 at 9) led off the year with a raucous start. More than 100 students crowded Titsworth Lecture Hall to cheer on Marty McConnell***, a first year grad student, to first place, Arisa White '01 to a close second, and Ilana Weissman '00 to third place. For the uninitiated, poetry slams tend to be raunchy, irreverent, satirical performance competitions in which the poets recite their verse to a rousing audience encouraged to be vocal in their approval or disdain. A panel of judges, appointed from the audience, rates each poetic performance and determines the "winner." Audience participation in the form of jeering, cheering, cackling, and generally being boisterous is an integral part of the experience. At a typical slam students register and then show up to read, recite, or perform their own chosen work. And take their chances...

Robert Elstein '00, code name Keystone to those who have witnessed his performances, has planned a series of slams, roughly one every three weeks, for the year. Theme nights are also on the docket, including a "dead poets" slam, coming up next.

***N.B. Marty McConnell and 4th year student Michele Johnson will read in the City at one of the hottest poetry slam venues, Bar 13, on Monday, September 20 at 7 p.m. Readings by the SLC students are scheduled as part of a series titled House of Woman. Bar 13 is located at 35 East 13th Street in Union Square, Manhattan.

Learning About Social Justice In Nicaragua

Date: Aug 1, 2000

News Release

Seven first and second year students traveled to Nicaragua in May to participate in Sarah Lawrence's international service learning trip. For two weeks they lived in urban and rural communities and learned about the country's political and economic history and present situation. With the help of ProNica, a Quaker organization based in Managua they took part in social change and organic agricultural projects and women's cooperatives.



Whenever possible, the students worked along with their Nicaraguan hosts, whose warm hospitality was abundant throughout their stay. Sarah Penniman, a first-year student, shared some of her impressions in a letter to her church community.

Sarah wrote that these students were guided by the sentiments of Lila Watson, an Australian aboriginal woman; "if you have come here to help me you are wasting your time. If you have come here because you know that your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together." Sarah's letter is excerpted here:

"We went to Nicaragua not to grace its poor, powerless people with the charity and mercy of our hands, but as humble pupils of a people whose strong hearts and spirited souls have led them through the most heinous trials imaginable.

During our two week stay, we saw people join together in decaying church buildings for Mass, to celebrate the wonder of life; a self-sustaining cooperative called Potters for Peace that makes ceramic water filtration systems for communities without safe drinking water; one of many Christian based communities embracing Liberation Theology and uniting a political and spiritual poor people's movement against oppression; San Marcos, a farm and home for street kids where children for the first time discover childhood; a village struggling with its own poverty yet taking up a collection to provide food and supplies for hurricane victims; Nueva Vida, a community of people rendered homeless by the hurricane who are helping one another rebuild houses; student activists struggling fiercely to bring more money into schools; people organizing to end sweat shop exploitation; a women's center and clinic, healing and empowering women; communities working together to build libraries and schools; people who know the strength of song and sing long into the night; the mesmerizing beauty and diversity of the Nicaraguan landscape, the breathtaking mountains and lush forests; people proud of their simple cement houses with dirt floors, who feel the strength of the land, and know what real wealth is. I had the privilege of stepping out of my environment into one of the very richest countries in the hemisphere."

Early Childhood Scholarship Awarded

Date: Oct 1, 1999

News Release

A recent graduate of Westchester Community College's Early Childhood Program, Maura Clancy of Katonah, NY, is the second recipient of a special scholarship awarded by Sarah Lawrence College to a promising graduate of the two-year institution. Ms. Clancy is pursuing a BA from the college's Bachelor of Arts Program for Adults. She will continue in Sarah Lawrence's Art of Teaching graduate program in elementary education.



The full tuition scholarship is unusual in the field of early childhood education. The scholarship fund was raised from alumnae/i, in honor of the 35th anniversary of the Center for Continuing Education at Sarah Lawrence, two years ago. It is currently sufficient to award two-year scholarships to one student each year, for at least four years. "Many students are reluctant to take on large education debt when planning a career in what is unfortunately a low-paying field," said Alice Olson, director of the Center for Continuing Education, which administers the scholarship fund. "This scholarship will allow us to make a difference in the field, student by student."

While at W.C.C. Ms. Clancy did her fieldwork in the Early Childhood Center at Sarah Lawrence, one of the nation's top laboratory preschools, and at the Virginia Marx Children's Center. A licensed practical nurse in psychiatry, Clancy practiced nursing at a psychiatric hospital in Essex, England, having graduated from the Romford College of Nursing and Midwifery in Essex. She emigrated to England from Northern Ireland at the age of 17, and then to the United States when she won a green card in a U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service lottery for Irish citizens.

A formal articulation agreement between the public and private institutions, easing the transfer of credits for students who earn an Early Childhood Associate's degree at Westchester Community College to Sarah Lawrence College, has been in place since 1996. "The Early Childhood Program at Westchester Community College is exceptionally fine, and provides students with a strong background in developmental psychology and educational practice," said Sara Wilford, director of Sarah Lawrence's Early Childhood Center and the Art of Teaching program.

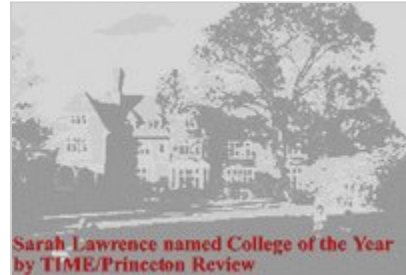
SLC honored for writing program

Date: Aug 1, 2000

News Release

Sarah Lawrence College was named as the liberal arts College of the Year in the 2000 edition of The Best College for You, a co-publication of TIME magazine and The Princeton Review.

According to TIME/ The Princeton Review, Sarah Lawrence was honored as the Liberal Arts College of the Year for developing an intense writing program within any chosen field of study. One of the smallest, artsiest, and most liberal, Sarah Lawrence is also widely considered one of the inkiest, according to the editors. The quantity and quality of writing required at Sarah Lawrence are grueling.



"Writing is the coin of the realm here," says college dean Barbara Kaplan. "It permeates the whole atmosphere rather than being compartmentalized into a single course or slapped on as a series of skills." At Sarah Lawrence, it's important because, "We believe writing is the tool of thinking," says Sarah Lawrence president Michele Tolela Myers. "The best way to learn to think is to read a lot of good writing and write a lot about what you've read."

This year, the editors focused on "Writing Across the Curriculum" (WAC) programs, which teach students to use writing as an exercise in clear thinking, regardless of their field of study. TIME/Princeton Review named four different types of institutions as Colleges of the Year.

"We are very pleased that Sarah Lawrence College has been selected as TIME and The Princeton Review's College of the Year among liberal arts colleges. This is such a wonderful tribute to our faculty, students and our pedagogy", says Myers. "What makes us most pleased is not just our being honored, but also that this award focuses on writing and the communication of ideas, which are central to all disciplines whether one is in college or the workplace. One of the most important skills in the digital age is, in fact, one of the oldest --writing," she added.

The three other schools named include Cornell University in Ithaca, NY as the private research university, Longview Community College in Lee's Summit, MO as the two-year college and Clemson University in Clemson, SC as the public university.

New York New Music Ensemble Begins Residency

Date: Oct 24, 1999

News Release

The New York New Music Ensemble, one of the world's premiere twentieth-century music groups, begins a performing and teaching residency at Sarah Lawrence College this year. Their first concert will be held October 24, 1999 at 4 p.m. in Reisinger Hall. Tickets are \$10; \$8 for senior citizens. Reservations are not required. For more information or directions, please call (914) 395-2411.



"The Sarah Lawrence Music Program is both honored and excited that the Ensemble will be in residence at the College this year," said Chester Biscardi, director of the College's music program. Along with presenting three concerts of new music in the College's Concert Series, the members of the Ensemble will work individually with instrumental students as well as participate in readings of new works by student composers. Students will also gain direct professional experience by attending Ensemble rehearsals, developing both deeper insights into the music being performed and a greater working rapport with Ensemble members. "This is the first time that the College has had a mixed ensemble of such distinction, expertise and vision, dedicated to the music of our time," said Biscardi. "Faculty and students alike are looking forward to an enthusiastic and productive season."

Hailed by *The New York Times* for producing acoustic and electronic chamber music concerts that sound "extensively rehearsed and emotionally charged," the Ensemble has for 24 years inspired, commissioned, performed, and recorded music of the most important composers of our day. In addition to performing the "classics" of our century, the Ensemble's commitment to contemporary music has prompted a rigorous commissioning program of almost 80 new works by established composers, such as Milton Babbitt, Arthur Berger, Andrew Imbrie, Ralph Shapey and Charles Wourinen, and talented young composers, including Melinda Wagner, David Froom and Arthur Kreiger. This quintessential mixed ensemble, consisting of flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano and percussion, integrates theatre and interactive and live electronics with interdisciplinary virtuoso performances involving graphics, movement and the spoken word.

The program on October 24, *Electricity in the Air: Current Sounds for Musicians and Machines*, will feature *Girlfriend*, for ensemble and electronics, by Julia Wolfe (east coast premiere), *Spasm for Bass Clarinet and Tape*, by Michael Lowenstern, *Micro-Concerto for Percussion*, by Steven Mackey (world premiere), *Work* by Mario Davidovsky, and *Thirteen Loops*, for ensemble, and electronics, by Rand Steiger.

The Ensemble has thirteen recordings to date, including *New Electro-Acoustic Music*, *Near Distance*, *Music of Carter*, *Davies*, and *Druckman*, and *Schoenberg's Pierrot Lunaire*. Significant performance sites have included the Kennedy Center, Avery Fisher Hall under the auspices of the New York Philharmonic, as well as museums and universities across the country. The Ensemble features Daniel Druckman, percussion; Christopher Finckel, cello; Stephen Golsing, piano; Jean Kopperud, clarinet; Jeffrey Milarsky, conductor; Linda Quan, violin; Jayn Rosenfeld, flute.

Central to the Ensemble's success is the conviction that contemporary music, thoughtfully programmed and imaginatively performed, can reach both the specialist and an uninitiated audience. Each member of the Ensemble is a virtuosic solo performer, yet at the heart of the group is the cooperation and mutual inspiration that the players receive from each other. The Ensemble has garnered critical applause in recent years for increasing audiences for contemporary music, supporting composers through commissions and performances and making lasting records of important music.

Lecture on Science and Society

Date: Oct 26, 1999

News Release

Who should care about how and why mice are used in scientific research? What are the practical, political and ethical issues behind the creation and use of laboratory mice? What lessons can we learn for future relationships between science and society from the use of mice in biomedical research? Karen Rader, Sarah Lawrence Faculty member and first holder of the Marilyn Simpson Chair in Science, Technology and Society, will explore these questions in a lecture titled "The Mouse's Tale: Standardized Animals in the Culture and Practice of Technoscience."

The lecture will be given on Tuesday, October 26, in Titsworth Lecture Hall, at 6:30 p.m. and is free and open to the public. For information please call 395-2411.

Parents Weekend '99 Schedule Highlights

Date: Nov 5, 1999

News Release

Friday, November 5

3:00-6:00pm	Registration
3:00-5:00pm	Open House-Counseling Office
	Dinner on your own
8:00-10:00pm	Swing Dance (sneakers required)

There will also be additional events scheduled on campus this evening-check the SLC Weekly Calendar for times and locations.

Saturday, November 6

9:00am-12:00noon	Registration
	Light Continental Breakfast provided
9:30-10:30am	Welcome
	Opening Discussion

10:45-11:45am	Discussions: Choose One
	Internships and Service Learning, Study Abroad, Continuing Education at SLC, Open Rehearsal in Dance, Supporting Your First Year Student
12:00-1:30pm	Buffet Brunch for Parents and Students
1:30-2:15pm	Coffee and Dessert with First-Year Studies Teachers
1:45-2:45pm	Chamber Music Recital
12:00-1:30pm	Buffet Brunch for Parents and Students
	Tours of Campus and Campbell Sports Center
3:00-4:00pm	Faculty Seminars
4:15-5:00pm	Parents Council Meeting
5:00-6:00pm	Reception for Parents, Students and Faculty
	Dinner on Your Own
8:00-9:00pm	Theater-Open Rehearsal

9:30-11:00pm

Nightcap: An Evening of Student Performances

DETAILS TO FOLLOW CALL 395-2575 FOR MORE INFORMATION

Life and Work of Grace Paley

Date: Nov 10, 1999

News Release

The Sarah Lawrence College Writing Program will hold a celebration honoring the life and work of acclaimed author Grace Paley, who taught writing at Sarah Lawrence for many years, on Wednesday, November 10th at 8 p.m. in Reisinger Hall.

Paley is author of three highly acclaimed collections of short fiction: *The Little Disturbances of Man*, *Enormous Changes at the Last Minute*, and *Later the Same Day*, a collection of poetry, and a memoir, *Just As I Thought*. She is the recipient of an award from the National Institute of Arts and Letters and the Edith Wharton Award and is a member of the Executive Board of P.E.N.



Speaking about Paley and her influence on their lives and work will be Wesley Brown, author of *Darktown Strutters* and *Tragic Magic*, Rosellen Brown, author of *Before and After* and *Civil Wars*, Eva Berliner Kollisch, faculty member emerita of Sarah Lawrence College who taught German Literature at the College from 1964-84, and Vera Williams, an author of children's books including *More More More Said the Baby: 3 Love Stories*, who collaborated with Paley on *Long Walks and Intimate Talks*.

Paley herself will conclude the program, addressing the audience and reading from her work. A reception will follow.

Orchestra to Celebrate 133rd Birthday of Erik Satie

Date: Nov 14, 1999

News Release

Two of Erik Satie's most important and amusing works will be performed as a 133rd birthday tribute to the early 20th century French composer by the Sarah Lawrence College Orchestra. The mixed media event will take place on Sunday, November 14, 1999 with a lecture and slide show at 3 p.m. and concert and film beginning at 4 p.m. in Reisinger Hall. The event is free and open to the public. For more information please call (914) 395-2411.

In a rare occasion, the classic 1924 film "Entr'acte" by filmmaker René Clair will be shown while the orchestra performs the score written by Satie. The orchestra will also play *Parade*, Satie's ballet, first performed in 1917 with sets and costumes designed by Picasso. Gerrit Lansing of the College's art history faculty will give a pre-concert lecture entitled "Parade and French Popular Culture." The talk will include slides of Picasso's original visual art.

Works by John Cage and Maurice Ravel, which reflect Satie's profound influence on much of the 20th century's musical thought, will also be performed. These include Ravel's *Bolero* (1924) and John Cage's *Concert for Piano and Orchestra* (1958), the piano solo to be performed by 1998 Sarah Lawrence alumnus Marty Demarest.

Making his debut as conductor of the Sarah Lawrence College Orchestra is Martin Goldray, pianist and conductor, a member of the Philip Glass Ensemble who has conducted the premières of several Glass operas. Goldray has worked with many composers including Milton Babbitt and Elliott Carter.



Eleanor Smeal Spoke of Activism in the Women's Movement

Date: Nov 15, 1999

News Release

Eleanor Smeal, president of The Feminist Majority Foundation, spoke at the College about the challenges and restrictions women face around the world in a lecture, titled "Beyond Boundaries: Feminists Worldwide Fighting the Backlash," on Monday, November 15. The event was co-sponsored by the Women's History Graduate Program and the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

In her lecture, Smeal, a renowned feminist leader for nearly three decades, focused on the backlash against feminist concerns as well as the progress both here in the U.S. and abroad. Among the concerns she raised is the campaign to stop gender apartheid in Afghanistan. She offered insight into how far society has advanced in the struggle for equality and the action needed to combat what she sees as a backlash against women, people of color and lesbians and gays.



Smeal asked the students in attendance to form a campus delegation to the Feminist Expo 2000 for Women's Empowerment scheduled for March 31 - April 2 in Baltimore.

Smeal, the longest standing president of the National Organization of Women (NOW), led the campaign to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. She played a pivotal role in the passage of such landmark federal civil rights legislation as the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, Equal Credit Act, and the Violence Against Women Act. In 1987, she founded The Feminist Majority Foundation, an organization that combines policy research with social action to develop strategies for the political, economic, and social empowerment of women.

Ecologist Speaks on the Myth of Sustainability

Date: Nov 17, 1999

News Release

Noted ecologist William Rees delivered the inaugural lecture of the Barbara B. and Bertram J. Cohn Professorship of Environmental Studies at Sarah Lawrence College on Wednesday, November 17 at 5:30 p.m. in Titsworth Lecture Hall. Dr. Laura Westra, inaugural holder of the new professorship at Sarah Lawrence introduced Dr. Rees. His talk, titled "The Myth of Sustainability," addressed public policy implications of global environmental trends and the necessary ecological conditions for sustainable development.

Professor and Director of the University of British Columbia's School of Community and Regional Planning, Rees is co-author of *Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing Human Impact on Earth*. He is also co-director of the University of British Columbia's Healthy and Sustainable Communities Task Force. Dr. Rees developed the "ecological footprint" concept, an analytic tool that provides land-based indicators of economic sustainability, or unsustainability, and has lectured on sustainable development and ecological foot-printing around the world.



Bari-Ellen Roberts, Lead Plaintiff in Roberts vs. Texaco, to Lecture

Date: Jan 17, 2000

News Release

Bari-Ellen Roberts, the lead plaintiff in the landmark racial discrimination lawsuit against Texaco, will share her research on the case on Tuesday, January 25 at 6:30 p.m. in Titsworth Lecture Hall on the campus of Sarah Lawrence College. The lecture is free and open to the public.

In March of 1994, Roberts, a senior financial analyst at Texaco, became the lead plaintiff in the largest discrimination suit in U.S. history. As a result, in November of 1996, Texaco agreed to pay \$176 million to approximately 1,400 African American employees nationwide. Her book, *Roberts VS. Texaco: A True Story of Race and Corporate America*, has been widely hailed as a compelling testimony of the battle against discrimination in corporate America.

Hailed as a modern-day Rosa Parks, Roberts' book is currently being adapted for film and will be shown on the *Lifetime Network* later this year. In the last three years, she has also been the recipient of numerous awards and honors, and given keynote addresses and led diversity workshops for dozens of prestigious institutions and organizations.

Roberts is currently president of Bari-Ellen Roberts, Inc., a management training firm that focuses on diversity, sexual harassment and violence in the workplace. In addition, she recently joined the faculty of Fairfield University of Connecticut as an instructor in the Business School, teaching a course on Corporate Social Responsibility.

For more information regarding the lecture or directions to the campus, please call (914) 395-2411.

Annlynn Miller in Concert

Date: Jan 23, 2000

News Release

Annlynn Miller, internationally acclaimed pianist of Viennese classics, will perform works by Schumann, Schnittke and Beethoven with Ulrich Schmid, cellist, on Sunday, January 23, 2000 at 4 p.m. in Reisinger Hall at Sarah Lawrence College.

Hailed in the U.S. and Europe as a dynamic and sensitive pianist, Miller performs widely with orchestras, in recital, and in chamber music formations throughout Europe where she has lived and taught for the last twenty-three years. Miller is a graduate of Sarah Lawrence College, studied at Juilliard and received a diploma with highest honors from the Akademie fuer Musik in Vienna where she studied with Professor Bruno Seidlhofer. She is also a former member of the music faculty at Sarah Lawrence.



The program on the 23rd includes Schumann's Adagio and Allegro Op. 70, Sonata for Cello and Piano 1978 by Schnittke, and Seven Variations on the Duet from the Magic Flute and Sonata in A Major, Op. 69 for Piano and Cello by Beethoven.

Admission is \$10/\$8 for senior citizens and students. For more information please call (914) 395-2411.

Photographs are available to the press.

Vision Warrior Strikes at the Heart of Substance Abuse

Date: Feb 2, 2000

News Release

Vision Warrior, a powerful and dramatic lecture-presentation by actor Scot Anthony Robinson that strikes at the heart of substance abuse, will take place on Wednesday, February 2 at 7 p.m. in Reisinger Hall on the campus of Sarah Lawrence College. The presentation is free and open to the public.

Robinson, who conceived this project, leaves audiences spellbound as he inspires them to identify with him on this incredible theatrical journey. Drawing on Shakespeare, character transformations, great music, and most importantly, his own harrowing story, Robinson draws spectators into a life that, in 1993, found him addicted and homeless on the streets of New York City.

Over 250,000 young people have already experienced Vision Warrior in high schools, universities, community centers, correctional facilities, Off-Broadway in New York and all across the nation.

Maria Cuomo Cole, Chairperson for the nationally acclaimed organization, H.E.L.P., wrote to the Chancellor of NYC Schools, "I feel strongly that every school would benefit from his (Robinson's) work. His message is one we can not afford to let bypass our young people."

In the presentation, Robinson addresses such issues as fear, self-esteem, peer pressure, curiosity, experimentation, family dynamics and relationships. One of the key aspects of Vision Warrior is Robinson's interaction with the audience during the question and answer forum. Audience members share their fears and sentiments with intriguing questions, often challenging Robinson on issues he has raised. He also makes his "800" number available to those who wish to speak to him privately.

Audiences often recognize Robinson from his work in such films and television shows as "Malcolm X," "New Jack City," "All My Children," "Clockers," and "New York Undercover." He has also had his Vision Warrior work featured on ABC-NY NEWS and PBS.

Robinson has become a youth ally, helping young people understand the real life and death consequences of drug and alcohol abuse. "I can tell I'm making a difference when people come up to me afterwards with tears in their eyes, sharing their pain and expressing their struggles. If I can move people to look at themselves and make better decisions for their future, I not only help them, I help the entire community."

Health Advocacy Program Awarded Grant by Pfizer

Date: Feb 7, 2000

News Release

The Health Advocacy graduate master's program of Sarah Lawrence College has been awarded a \$50,000 grant by Pfizer, Inc. to do research in a special area of health literacy. The study, "Health Literacy And End Of Life Decisions: Consumer Understanding Of Advance Directives," seeks to understand why so few adults have executed "advance directives," such as living wills or health care proxies.

The primary purpose of this research is to identify why only 10 to 25 percent of Americans have an advance directive of any kind despite the 1990 Patient Self Determination Act (PSDA), government mandates, and widespread acceptance by health professionals and the public of the importance of these formal directives.

The study aims to determine the level of literacy about advance directives in the adult population to understand the comprehension barriers to executing them and to develop recommendations for the design of appropriate educational materials to overcome these barriers. A survey instrument and a health literacy test adapted to measure literacy regarding advance directives will be used to interview 200 respondents aged 50 to 75 from urban, suburban and rural areas.

The funded research will build on work that students began in the Health Advocacy "Evaluation and Assessment" course in the fall of 1999. Pat Banta, RN, MA, a December 1999 Health Advocacy graduate, and Lois Steinberg, Ph.D., who completes her Health Advocacy studies this spring semester, will co-direct the study. Other students will participate as interviewers. Marsha Hurst, Ph.D., Director of the Health Advocacy Program, will act as Principle Investigator supervising the work.

Sarah Lawrence College offers the nation's only master's degree program in health advocacy, training professionals to promote patients' rights in an increasingly complex health care system. Graduates of the program have become leaders in the health care industry, working in diverse professional capacities as patient representatives and administrators, on ethics committees and medical policy boards, at hospitals and consumer health agencies.

Black History Month Events

Date: Feb 1, 2000

News Release

Events include performances by Dance Theater of Harlem and the Columbia Gospel Choir

LECTURE BY BROTHER DAVID MUHAMMED

Thursday, February 3, 7 p.m.

Titsworth Lecture Hall

Free

Black Muslim David Muhammed will speak at Sarah Lawrence College as part of Black History Month at 7 p.m. on Thursday, February 3 in Titsworth Lecture Hall. The lecture is free and open to the public. For more information please call (914) 395-2411.

DANCE THEATRE OF HARLEM AT SARAH LAWRENCE

Friday, February 4, 8 p.m.

Reisinger Hall

Free

The celebrated dance company performs a program entitled Dancing Through Barriers on Friday, February 4 at 8:00 p.m. at Reisinger Hall on the Sarah Lawrence campus. The program uses "the art of dance to ignite the mind," breaking through racial, economic, personal and geographic barriers. Founded in 1969 by Arthur Mitchell and Karel Shook, Dance Theatre of Harlem (DTH) remains a major dance institution of unparalleled acclaim 30 years later. Education and outreach have long been cornerstones of DTH. For more information please call (914) 395-2411. The program is free and open to the public.

PERFORMANCE BY COLUMBIA GOSPEL CHOIR

Monday, February 7, 9 p.m.

Reisinger Hall

Free

The Columbia Gospel Choir will present a program as part of Black History Month in Reisinger Hall at Sarah Lawrence College. The performance, which is free and open to the public, takes place on Monday, February 7 at 9 p.m. Please call (914) 395-2411 for further information.

Ensemble Galilei Performs Ancient and Celtic Music

Date: Feb 20, 2000

News Release

The acclaimed Ensemble Galilei will perform a program of ancient and Celtic Music on Sunday, February 20 at 4 p.m. in Reisinger Hall on the Sarah Lawrence campus. Tickets are \$10; \$8 for senior citizens. Reservations are not required. For more information or directions, please call (914) 395-2411.



Specializing in Celtic music, early music, and original compositions, the ensemble melds the elegance of chamber music with the energy and excitement of traditional music. They will perform works from their new release on Telarc Records, *Come, Gentle Night*. Featuring music of Shakespeare's world, the group did considerable research to find pieces that could conceivably have been used as actual incidental music in the plays of the Bard. The result is a captivating selection of 16th and 17th century lute-songs, jigs, reels, and country dance tunes that relate by text, title and spirit to Shakespeare's works.

Intermingled with the authentic music of the period is an assembly of evocative original compositions by the women of Ensemble Galilei. From the plays and the poetry, from the tragedy and the laughter, the women drew lines from Shakespeare's world to their own. The resulting original compositions include *No Longer Mourn For Me and Death's Second Half*, derived from Shakespeare's sonnets, and *The Asp and Fire, Burn, and Cauldron Bubble*, from his plays. A highlight of the program is a performance of the recording's haunting title track, which uses underlying text taken from *Romeo and Juliet*.

Founded in 1990, Ensemble Galilei takes its name from the composer Vincenzo Galilei, whose influence, some 400 years ago, helped restore a vital element of passion to the music of his day. The group includes both classically-trained and folk-trained musicians, from Liz Knowles, fiddler on the national tour of *Riverdance*, to Carolyn Anderson Surrick, who has an M.A. in musicology and has performed early music on the viola da gamba for 23 years. Other members of the ensemble include Jan Hagiwara, percussion; Deborah Nuse, Scottish small pipes and fiddle; Sue Richards, Celtic harp; Sarah Weiner, oboe, recorder, and penny whistle.

Photographs are available to the press.

Film Festival

Date: Feb 25, 2000

News Release

All films are shown in the Film Viewing Room in the Charles DeCarlo Performing Arts Center.

For more information about the festival call the Office of College Events at (914) 395-2411.

Sponsored by the Student Senate, the Office of the Dean, The Foreign Languages Departments and the Esther Raushenbush Library.

Admission is free



FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Before the Revolution 6:00 pm

Bernardo Bertolucci/Italy/1964/115 min

The 22-year old Bertolucci explores a young man's dilemma: will he embrace a life of social and political radicalism, or submit to the bourgeois status quo. In Italian with English subtitles.

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I, The Worst of All 8:30 pm

Maria-Luisa Bemberg/1990/Argentina/105 min

In this adaptation of an Octavio Paz book, The Traps of Faith, 17th-century Mexican poet Sor Juana develops a passionate but chaste relationship with the wife of the Spanish viceroy and writes love poems to her. The archbishop persecutes Sor Juana, burns her books and condemns her work. It examines the tension between church and crown, as the viceroy supports Sor Juana. In Spanish with English subtitles.

Oblomov 10:30 pm

Nikita Mikhailov/USSR/1981/145 min

A production of the classic Goncharov novel about a symbolically inert Russian aristocrat, whose childhood friend helps him find a reason for action. In Russian with English subtitles.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26

War and Peace (Part I) 5:00 pm

Sergei Bondarchuk/USSR/1968/233 min

This is the definitive film version of Tolstoy's novel. A dazzling work, it was the Oscar winner for Best Foreign Film. In Russian with English subtitles.

Gospel According to St. Matthew 9:15 pm

Pier Paolo Pasolini/Italy-France/1966/135 min

Unconventional, austere film, with an amateur cast, on the life and teachings of Christ, based solely on writings of the Apostle. In French with English subtitles.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27

Spider's Strategem 3:00 pm

Bernardo Bertolucci/Italy/1970/100 min

A young man visits the provincial town where his anti-Fascist father was assassinated 30 years earlier and is rejected by the populace at every turn. Stunning color cinematography, by Vittorio Storaro, enhances this exceedingly atmospheric puzzler from a Jorge Luis Borges short story. In Italian with English subtitles.

War and Peace (Part II) 5:30 pm

Sergei Bondarchuk/USSR/1968/170 min

Keita: The Heritage of the Griot 8:30 pm

Dani Kouyate/Burkina Faso/1994/94 min

Based on one of the most important works of African oral literature, The Sundjata Epic, the film frames its dramatization of this legend within the story of a contemporary young African's initiation into the history of his family. When a master griot, or bard, arrives mysteriously to teach the meaning of his name, the boy and griot are brought into conflict with his Westernized mother and a schoolteacher, who have rejected African tradition. In Jula and French with English subtitles.

O Amor Natural 10:30 pm

Heddy Honigmann/Brazil/1997/76 min

Brazilian poet Carlos Drummond de Andrade (1902-87) wrote erotic poems he chose not to have published in his lifetime, afraid they would be thought pornographic. Honigmann takes the poetry into the bars, markets, and beaches of Rio de Janeiro and asks a number of elderly locals to read the poetry for her camera and comment on the imagery. In Portuguese with English subtitles.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28

Faust 6:00 pm

F. W. Murnau/Germany/1926/117 min

The classic German silent is based on the legend of Faust, who sells his soul to the devil in exchange for youth. Based on Goethe's poem, and directed by Murnau. This is a classic example of German expressionism.

Faust 8:30 pm

Jan Svankmajer/Czech Republic/1994/97 min

This is an astounding version of the myth of Dr. Faustus. Merging live action with stop-motion and claymation, the filmmaker has created an unsettling universe presided over by diabolic life-sized marionettes and haunted by skulking human messengers from hell.

The Jew 10:30 pm

Jom Tob Azulay/Portugal/1996/85 min

A portrait of 18th century playwright, Antonio Jose da Silva, whose family was forcibly converted from their Jewish faith by the Catholic church. Living in Lisbon, da Silva founded a puppet theater for which he wrote comic operas. Eventually condemned for heresy, he was executed by the Inquisition in 1739. In Portuguese with English subtitles.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 29

The Saragossa Manuscript 9:00 pm

Wojciech J. Has/Poland/1965/174 min

This romantic, fantastic and witty tale chronicles the adventures of a Walloon guard under the king of Spain. He must pass numerous tests in order to prove his courage, honesty and honor in order to become a member of the powerful Mauretanian family. It is based on Jan Potocki's *The Manuscript Found in Saragossa*. In Polish with English subtitles.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1

The Kaiser's Lackey 6:00 pm

Wolfgang Staudte/1951/Germany/103 min

Young Diederich is frightened of everything, but as he grows he realizes that he has to serve the powers-that-be to gain power himself. His new motto: bow to those at the top and tread on those below. In this way he achieves success in school and in business and finds a chance to do his beloved Kaiser a favor. Based on Heinrich Mann's *Der Untertan*, the film unmasks in stinging fashion who again and again has himself roped in for military and war efforts. In German with English subtitles.

The Tin Drum 8:00 pm

Volker Schlöndorff/Germany/1979/142 min

Mesmerizing adaptation of the Gunter Grass novel. Three-year-old Oskar ceases to grow physically as the Nazis take power in Germany and beats out his anger on his drum. Deservedly won a Best Foreign Film Academy Award. In German with English subtitles.

Salo, or The 120 Days of Sodom 11:00 pm

Pier Paolo Pasolini/Italy/1975/117 min

Controversial, disturbing adaptation of de Sade's novel, set during World War II in Italy, where Fascist rulers brutalize and degrade adolescents. A painful exploration of sadism, scatology, and debauchery. This was Pasolini's final film. In Italian with English subtitles.

THURSDAY, MARCH 2

The Lower Depths 5:30 pm

Akira Kurosawa/Japan/1957/125 min

Kurosawa's adaptation of the Gorky play about the inhabitants of a low-rent hovel makes use of the conventions of Noh theater. In Japanese with English subtitles.

La Belle Noiseuse 8:00 pm

Jacques Rivette/France/1990/240 min

The connections between art and life are explored in this beautiful drama about an aging, creatively crippled painter. When a younger artist and his beautiful lover come for a visit, the painter, newly inspired, makes the young woman the model for his unfinished masterpiece, *La Belle Noiseuse*. The film details every nuance of his work, and examines the battle of wills between artist and model over the symbiotic creative process. Based on a Balzac novella. In French with English subtitles.

FRIDAY, MARCH 3

Lancelot of the Lake 4:30 pm

Robert Bresson/France/1974/85 min

The Knights of the Round Table return to the court of King Arthur after a long, bloody and fruitless search for the Holy Grail. Rivalries and jealousies debase the heroes as Lancelot struggles with his feelings for Queen Guinevere. In French with English subtitles.

Ashik Kerib 6:30 pm

Sergei Paradjanov/USSR/1988/75 min

Wandering minstrel Ashik Kerib falls in love with a rich merchant's daughter, but is spurned by her father and forced to roam the world for 1001 nights. Adapted from a story by Mikhail Lermontov, the film employs a series of visually ravishing *Tableaux vivants* overlaid with Turkish and Azerbaijani folksongs. In Georgian with English subtitles.

Orpheus 8:00 pm

Jean Cocteau/France/1949 French/95 min

This compelling cinematic allegory is set in modern times with poet Jean Marais encountering the Princess of Death; it explores their mutual fascination. In French with English subtitles.

Solaris 10:30 pm

Andrei Tarkovsky/USSR/1972/165 min

Mind-bending, metaphysical science fiction film about a psychologist who is sent to a space station to investigate mysterious deaths and discovers supernatural phenomena. This is a hypnotic tour de force by Tarkovsky, who also cowrote the screenplay. In Russian with English subtitles.

SATURDAY, MARCH 4

Mother Joan of the Angels 4:00 pm

Jerzy Kawalerowicz/Poland/1960/108 min

A priest is investigating demonic possession among nuns in a 17th century Polish convent. The exorcist and the Mother Superior become attracted to one another. This is a powerful allegory of good vs. evil and chastity vs. eroticism. It is based on actual events, as well as a variety of literary and operatic sources, most notably Huxley's *The Devils of Loudun*. In Polish with English subtitles.

The Mahabharata 6:00 pm

Peter Brook/France-England/1989/318 min

Adapted from the myths and folklore of ancient India, this version of the nine-hour stage play is the story of a devastating war between two powerful clans. Sections are "The Game of Dice," "Exile in the Forest," and "The War."

SUNDAY, MARCH 5

The Idiot 3:00 pm

Akira Kurosawa/Japan/195/166 min

An updated version of the Dostoyevsky novel, transported to postwar Japan, about a prince and his friend who love the same woman. Coscripted by Kurosawa. In Japanese with English subtitles.

Aguirre: The Wrath of God 6:00 pm

Werner Herzog/Germany/1972/94 min

Powerful, hypnotic tale of a deluded conquistador who leads a group of men away from Pizarro's 1560 South American expedition in search of seven cities of gold. In German with English subtitles.

Wend Kuuni 8:30 pm

Gaston Kabore/Burkina Faso/1982/70 min

Set in Burkina Faso before the coming of Islam or Christianity, a mute and memoryless child is found by a peddler and adopted by the peddler's village. One day the boy finds a body hanging from a tree. Shocked, he recovers his speech and tells the story of his tragic past, when he and his mother were cast out of their own village. When his mother dies, the boy is bereft of family and tradition. Without these ties to his history, he lost both memory and speech. In More with English subtitles.

Don Quixote 10:00 pm

Grigori Kozintsev/1957/USSR/135 min

This is an excellent and faithful adaptation of the Cervantes novel. Nikolai Cherkassov brings to the tragi-comic knight a level of demented dignity. Location scenes, resembling the Iberian plain, were shot in the Crimea. In Russian with English subtitles.

Photographs are available to the press.

Alumnae Vera Wang and Ruth Abram Honored

Date: Mar 2, 2000

News Release

Vera Wang, fashion designer to the stars and America's brides and Ruth Abram, founder and president of the Lower East Side Tenement Museum received alumnae/i citations for achievement at the College on March 2. The honor is given to those whose work embodies the values and ideals of the College's distinctive brand of education; education that encourages creativity, risk-taking and the pursuit of passion in one's work. William Rubin, faculty member from 1952 to 1967, a leading scholar of modernism, received the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters at the celebratory event.



Vera Wang entered Sarah Lawrence as a pre-med student with a career as a championship figure-skater behind her. After her studies, which included art and languages, she changed direction and moved into the world of fashion, beginning a career at Vogue that lasted 16 years. She began her career as a designer working for Ralph Lauren, but she found her niche when in 1989 she designed her own wedding gown, dissatisfied with what was available to her. The rest is fashion history.

In true Sarah Lawrence spirit Vera Wang has revolutionized the design business from wedding gowns to the breathtaking dresses designed for the academy awards to Olympic skating fashion. She has created a place for herself in the fashion industry that no one else has done," said Barbara Kolsun, president of the alumnae/i association, who nominated Ms. Wang for the association's distinction. "Sarah Lawrence teaches you to be fearless and creative and Vera Wang's position in the world of fashion certainly demonstrates that," she said.

Fellow alumna Nancy Reeder who nominated Ruth Abram for the award stated that, "One of the hallmarks of a Sarah Lawrence education is to be a thinker, be creative, have a vision. Ruth's enthusiasm and determination truly embody that tradition."

Growing up in the south of the 50's Ruth Abram had first hand knowledge of prejudice, both from the perspective of the civil rights movement – her father is Morris Abram, the civil rights lawyer – and that of a Jewish girl barred from the cotillion. "What is so remarkable about Ruth is that she took a deeply rooted belief in the importance of all those who had been marginalized and she did something about it -- creating a museum whose mission is to promote tolerance and historical perspective," reads the citation she will receive.

The museum, which recently came under the aegis of the National Park Service, has also been designated as a site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Abram's citation continues, "In only twelve short years she has turned a shoestring operation into an important New York cultural and educational institution to tell the story of the American immigrant experience to visitors from all over the world. By creating and running the only tenement museum in the United States, Ruth has helped to change forever the idea of what is important to preserve in our history." In awarding the honorary degree to Rubin, College president Michele Myers said: "William Rubin defined the discipline of modern art history, and mentored Sarah Lawrence students and faculty with brilliance, decency, and rigor. As a trustee of the College and public figure he served as a compelling advocate for the visual arts and its history. As director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art he continued to bring his sense of daring, discovery and delight in modern art to all."

Concerto Competition Winners Perform

Date: Mar 5, 2000

News Release

Winners of this year's Sarah Lawrence College Concerto Competition will step out in front of the orchestra on Sunday, March 5 at 4 p.m in a special concert featuring each of the five students in solo performances. The annual competition is sponsored by the College's Music Program.

Early and late Romantic concertos will be performed by Chloe Allen, playing the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto and Colette Alexander, playing the first two movements of the Elgar Cello Concerto. Performing works from the twentieth century, Susanna Quilter will play the first movement of the Flute Concerto by Soviet composer Aram Khachaturian, Emily Scott will play Swedish composer Lars-Erik Larsson's Concertino for Trombone, and Elizabeth Gustin will perform Aaron Copland's jazz-influenced Clarinet Concerto.



The Sarah Lawrence College Orchestra is open to all students and members of the college community by audition. Performances this year have included a concert of Erik Satie's works performed as a 133rd birthday tribute to the early 20th century French composer. The classic 1924 film "Entr'acte" by filmmaker René Clair was shown while the orchestra performed the Satie score. The orchestra also played Satie's ballet, Parade. A concert by the Chorus, Chamber Choir and Orchestra for the New Millennium featured the world premiere of A Mass for a New Millennium, composed by faculty member John Yannelli, Haydn's Nelson Mass, and two Christmas pieces by Britten and Victoria. A fully staged presentation of Stravinsky's L'histoire du Soldat (The Soldier's Tale) in collaboration with the dance and theatre programs will be performed in April.

Music faculty member Martin Goldray conducts the College orchestra.

President Myers in The Washington Post

Date: Mar 21, 2000

News Release

The Washington Post
Tuesday, March 21 (page A25)

CyberU: What's Missing



The scramble is on to respond to the easy access to knowledge and financial opportunities that computers can provide. Earlier this year the U.S. Department of Education reported that distance education programs had almost doubled in the past three years. Every week another college, university or private individual seeks to establish online education whether for-profit like Michael Milken's online University, Unext, or Michael Saylor's new non-profit on-line University whose motto is "free education for everyone on earth, forever."

If education were only as simple as reading, then libraries would have replaced schools long ago. We educators are in the business of forming minds-not just filling them.

Gutenberg's invention of printing in the 15th century essentially ended up removing priests as the only gatekeepers of information and knowledge. In the same way, the computer and the Web are allowing larger and larger numbers of people direct access to more information and may well take the more traditional middlemen and gatekeepers (our teachers and educators) out of the system. Readily available technology is good for society and good for education because it will bring ever more information from the wider world to everyone. Every academic institution will clearly want to embrace this new technology to enhance the learning experience in the classroom and to reach those who do not have the money or time to attend school.

The principal role of a university or college is not, however, to transmit information. If it were, then our goal would be the most "productive" way of passing on information. Logically, the larger the auditorium, the better, with one teacher lecturing hundreds of students. Distance learning and virtual education are clearly even better vehicles for transmitting information, with the computer screen delivering a prepackaged syllabus to thousands, possibly millions at a time. It makes great economic sense, and predictions may be right that classrooms will go the way of the hand-scribed text.

But higher education in the 21st century is in a different business--a business made even more imperative precisely because of the ubiquity of information technology. More than ever, we need to teach our young people to learn how to learn, to sort and evaluate information, to make judgments about evidence and sources. They must learn how to separate the important from the trivial, and most important, they must learn to think analytically and creatively, to have ideas, to write and speak intelligently about ideas, and to know how to go from ideas to actions. It is not enough for our students to know, rather, they should know what to know and have the capacity to imagine.

There is no better way to form good minds than in one-on-one interactions. Research tells us that the two most significant factors that contribute positively to learning among college students are their interaction with each other and their interaction with teachers. Is there any doubt that for children and adolescents, face-to-face time is important? Parenting and teaching both require human physical contact and creative individual responses to a singular individual to be most effective.

More than ever then, we are going to need liberal arts preparation at the undergraduate level, the kind of education liberal arts colleges are best positioned to offer. This kind of education may not be the most efficient, but it is clearly the most effective. A liberal arts college offers the most contact time between teachers and students. It offers time for students to actually practice writing, speaking, arguing, evaluating and researching in

small classes with real professors who care about them as individuals and care about their work, who will critique them and hold them accountable. It is here that students hone their skills to communicate effectively-- the number one quality that corporations seek when they are interviewing candidates. No computer can sharpen the mind as well as a cross-fire discussion among students with their teacher. In human affairs, there is ultimately no substitute for real human contact.

The emergence of computers challenges us to know what our business is. We must respond that we are in the business of ideas, not information, of forming minds, not filling them.

Michele Tolela Myers
President
Sarah Lawrence College

SLC Initiates Academic Exchange Program with Cuban University

Date: Mar 22, 2000

News Release

The president of Sarah Lawrence College and the vice rector of the University of Havana today took the first step to establishing one of first formal exchange programs between academic institutions in Cuba and the U.S.



Michele Tolela Myers, President, Sarah Lawrence College and Lourdes Tabares Neyra, Vice Rector, University of Havana signed a formal letter of intent outlining plans for academic cooperation between the two institutions. These include a semester abroad program for Sarah Lawrence students beginning August 2001, faculty exchanges, collaborative programs for academic research and conferences, and opportunities for intercultural learning and cultural exchange.

"An educated person in the 21st century must be a citizen of the world," said Myers. "This means students must learn about the world, be willing to be a part of it, contribute to it and must develop a deep knowledge of countries beyond their own," she continued noting that Sarah Lawrence has always had a strong commitment to international programs.

The exchange program has been developed by Eric Popkin of the Sociology faculty who came to Sarah Lawrence two years ago with a specialization in Latin American studies. The program with Cuba is part of Sarah Lawrence's interest in building its international programs in that region of the world.

"We are lucky indeed to have this opportunity to collaborate with our esteemed colleagues from the University of Havana – one of the preeminent universities in Latin America today," stated Myers. Referring to the relaxing of federal regulations making academic exchanges possible, Myers said: "We will be one of the first programs in the United States to walk through these newly opened gates between our two countries. It is always exciting to be among the first and to be among those who are willing to innovate, create and take risks."

"One of the most important aspects of the program is that the Sarah Lawrence students will be fully integrated into life at the University of Havana. They will take classes and live in dormitories side by side with Cuban students," Myers continued.

When the planned exchanges begin, Sarah Lawrence will already have experience sending students to the Caribbean nation. Like a growing number of college students Sarah Lawrence undergraduates have already had one short-term study visit. Another group will travel to Cuba for a short-term study trip in April. But based on the in-depth academic preparation and continuation of their experiences through independent study, the high percentage of participating Sarah Lawrence students who speak Spanish, and the collegial relationships developed by Popkin, Sarah Lawrence College has become one of the first undergraduate institutions invited to develop substantive, collaborative academic programs with the University of Havana.

"With the signing of this letter of intent we will become educational pioneers," said Margot Bogert, chairman of the Sarah Lawrence College Board of Trustees.

Students Organize First Experimental Film Festival

Date: Mar 30, 2000

News Release

All events take place in the Film Viewing Room of the Performing Arts Center

Thursday, March 30

7:00 pm

Filmmaker Vanessa Renwick, from Portland, Oregon, will be discussing experimental film and her own work.



Awards will be presented for winning films shown tonight

Films Begin

- **Untitled:** Keith McCulloch 10 minutes
A white on black animated piece about a depressed bear at a bar. Black and white 16mm optically printed.
- **Blonde:** T. Scott McDonald 6 minutes 45 seconds
"BLONDE addresses the dissatisfaction with the self image and the contradictions of self improvement." Color 16mm.
- **Sincerely, Joe P. Bear:** Matt McCormick. 4 minutes
"A movie about a heart broken polar bear that is dealing with rejection. Using optical printing to combine footage from a 1960's television newscast with hand painted film, "Sincerely Joe P. Bear" is a heartfelt letter from a lonely bear." Color 16mm.
- **While You Were Gone:** Alex Kreit. 4 minutes
"This piece explores a close friendship using video of two people that was shot over a number of years." With an original soundtrack by Alex Kreit. Video.
- **Roar Kitty Roar:** Michael Velliquette. 3 minutes
"Explores the 'culture of collars' and the young men who wear them. It's experimental narrative structure is a cross between a music video and a nostalgic queer porn stag loop -- with a hi-camp musical twist." Video.
- **16 Things I Hate About Myself:** Matt Lancit. 5 minutes
An exploration of one boy's neuroses including his fear of the mole in his belly button. Black and white 16mm. Video Print.
- **Meatfucker:** Sean Durr. 28 minutes
Mother said "boys who eat meat are bad." What's a sexually confused vegetarian boy to do when his meat eating roommate is having sloppy sex with a girl in the next room, and the 6 lb chicken is just sitting there asking for it? Digital Video.

Intermission

Films Resume

- Dancing In The Show Tonight: Samantha Vincenty. 2 minutes 15 seconds.
"A ringmaster a clown with man-boobs and a few of their friends kick out the jams." 16 mm.
Animation. Video Print.
- Queen Nelora And The Fantastic Courting Yard: Tara Mateik. 15 minutes
"An animated documentary about the relationship between Amelia Earheart and Eleanor Roosevelt." This clever film combines puppetry with hand made sets to create an intriguing world which mimics children's television yet contains a very subversive subtext." Video
- The Vyrotonin Decision: Matt McCormick. 7minutes 15 seconds
"A post-modern disaster epic featuring thirty six appropriated television commercials from 1971." Experimental animation using found footage and handmade film techniques like the hole puncher. Color 16mm.
- Yesterday's Wine: Robert Ariganello. 10 minutes
"...a found footage film that explores the nature of filmmaking by deconstructing the violence common to commercial, narrative cinema." Found Footage, 16mm.

Friday, March 31

8:00 pm

Videomaker and Performance Artist, Miranda July, (of Kill Rock Stars) will speak.

Awards will be presented to winning films shown tonight

Films Begin

- Subverting Media: Paper Tiger Television. 25 minutes
A short documentary focusing on three alternative media sources: 'Zines, poster art and graffiti, featuring the work of Spanish Harlem artist James de la Vega. Video.
- Movie With No Sound And No Title: Lauren Krueger. 2 minutes
A scratch animation piece exploring the relationship of the viewer to the subject and vice versa. 16mm. Video Print.
- Eve Of Separation: Biff Juggernaut. 5 minutes 45 seconds
"This is not a fictional work. It is about you. About your weaknesses. Fuck racism. Fight segregation. Don't free your mind... at the expense of others."
- Knuckle Down: K8 Hardy and Sarah Marcus. 9 minutes
Shot on super 8 and video with an extremely layered soundtrack of old motivation tapes, repeated dialogue, and some hip hop beats. The video hunts within identity and searches through what some may call post modern feminism.
- Homecoming Queens: Paper Tiger Television. 29 minutes.
A documentary made by the residents of Green Chimney's Gramercy Residence in collaboration with Paper Tiger Television, this video presents "...a first hand account of life within one of only two programs in the United States that provide residential services for Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/ Transgender/Queer youth. Through interviews and testimonials these youth provide a moving account of the friendships and emotional supports that they have created for themselves within the residence." Video.

Intermission

Films Resume

- Hour, Minutes, Seconds, Frame: LeAnn Erickson. 6 minutes
"I'm sleeping, dreaming and the time passes...hours, minutes, seconds...Constructing a dreamscape of image and sound, the artist explores issues of loss and memory surrounding her mother's death from cancer. Video.
- Spectres Of The Spectrum: Craig Baldwin. 88 minutes.
"This near-future found footage fairy tale spins out a critical review of military-industrial take-over of electromagnetic research from the tragic-comic tribulations of a young telepath's Airstream-trailer-powered time travels." Color 16mm.

"Born in Oakland and raised in Sacramento, California, Craig Baldwin attended the University of California at Santa Barbara, University of California at Davis, and San Francisco State University (M.A., 1986). In the Department of Cinema there, he studied under Bruce Conner and became increasingly drawn to collage film form. His interest in recontextualization of found imagery led him to the theories of the Situationist International and to various practices of copy-art, mail art, 'zines, altered billboards, and other creative interventions beyond the fringe of the traditional fine-arts curriculum." Flicker.

Saturday April 1st

7:00 pm

Amy Taubin, film columnist for the Village Voice, will be lecturing on Experimental film.

Awards will be presented to winning films shown tonight.

Films Begin

- Perico: Maria Jose Muniz Barreto. 10 minutes
"Isolated. Unfamiliar with human civilization. Communicating with those who don't speak. Once a month, one man on the furthest point of the world needs to kill in order to survive. I have traveled to the south of Argentina to document life." "I'm from Argentina and have been living in NYC for the past four years, studying film and video at the School of Visual Arts. I grew up in the farm, and this ritual has always been a part of my life. I simply documented my memories, and didn't use my powers as a film-maker to manipulate reality. What you see exists with or without my participation. I have brought a woman's perspective into a male's long established tradition. Each woman collaborator added her own individual layer, allowing other points of view a free path into the making of this film." Video Print.
- Site Visit: Maia Cybelle Carpenter. 15 minutes
"Gauging, mapping, and tracing only to find that what is there cannot be found, and instead must be invented." 16mm.
- Two Tales Of Turmeric Border Marks: Christina Choe. 15 minutes
"An experimental documentary taking place in modern Seoul, Korea, where an intersection becomes two stories of migration, globalization, hybrid identity, cracked mirrors, and turmeric (a yellow spice powder). A young Korean-American college student voyages back to the motherland where she meets South Asian migrant workers. These parallel stories illuminate and question our assumptions of identity and culture, as well as power and resistance. Through interviews, spoken word, super-8 imagery, and a bizarre Bangladesh wedding scene over a speaker-phone, we witness a changing world, and a twist to the word, "post-modern". Video.

Intermission

- The Manipulators: Claire Rojas and Andrew J. Wright. 3 minutes
An animated piece using a woman's magazine to make light of society's need for beauty and clear skin. Color 16mm.
- A Fragmentary History Of The 21st Century: Roger Beebe. 18 minutes
"Schizophrenic film. Scenes from the daily life of the new millennium. Science fiction without spaceships. Experimental parables. 2 pets, 3 TVs, an ocean of cars, a lucky penny. Lots of people receiving electric shocks for no good reason. A picture in 19 parts of the coming century." 16mm.
- Hi Mom, Hi Dad, This Is Your Son, Rich: Genevieve Mercatante. 6 minutes.
Super 8 sound home movies edited to create an experimental narrative exploring family and friends, as well as memory and the discourse of nostalgia. Video.
- Toogie: Maria Jose Muniz Barreto. 6 minutes
"A human story of a wannabe cat". A documentary about a cat and it's human family. Video.
- The Wait: Michael Velliquette. 3 minutes
"Experimental video short that takes a nostalgic look at 'first love' experiences, romantic fantasy, and physical desire between men." Video.

For more information contact the festival organizers at: (914) 323-6702

MusicFirst! 2000 Celebrates Faculty and Students

Date: Apr 16, 2000

News Release

MusicFirst!, Sarah Lawrence College's annual spring music festival, takes place April 16 through May 9. All concerts are free and open to the public. For more information or directions, please call (914) 395-2411.

The festival was inaugurated in 1995 as a celebration of all the performing groups, musicians and composers who make up the Sarah Lawrence College Music Program, noted Chester Biscardi, director of the program. Music First! spans three weeks and showcases concerts devoted to solo song and solo piano recitals, multiple guitars, chamber music, early music, improvisation, jazz, electronic and acoustic contemporary music, orchestral and choral music, and world music.

Highlights of the festival include the debut and ritual dedication of Sarah Lawrence's new Gamelan Angklung, a Balinese percussion instrument built especially for the College and a fully staged performance of Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat*. A complete schedule of MusicFirst! follows:

MUSIC AND DANCE OF BALI

Sunday, April 16

4 p.m.

Reisinger Hall

A traditional Balinese dedication ceremony will introduce the shimmering sounds of Gamelan Angklung Sarah Lawrence College's new bronze-keyed percussion orchestra. Directed by Kristin Taavola of World Music Ensemble, I Made Lasmawan and Friends are the featured guest artists.

LAURENTIAN STRING QUARTET CONCERT

Friday, April 21

4 p.m.

Reisinger Hall

The Laurentian String Quartet will present Haydn's *The Seven Last Words of Christ*, op. 51, Nos. 1-7, a special Good Friday concert.

L'HISTOIRE DU SOLDAT

Tuesday, April 25

8 p.m.

Reisinger Hall

Free

The Sarah Lawrence College Orchestra, under the direction of music faculty member Martin Golday, and in collaboration with the dance and drama programs, will perform a fully staged presentation of *L'Histoire du Soldat* (The Soldier's Tale) by Igor Stravinsky and C.F. Ramuz. Barrie Gelles-Hurwitz and Belinda Smith, senior theatre students, are co-directing the piece under the advisement of Shirley Kaplan, director of the theatre program. The choreographer is Rashaun Mitchell, a senior dance student, working with dance program director, Sara Rudner.

SMALL ENSEMBLES I: PIANO VOICES AND CHAMBER MUSIC

Wednesday, April 26

8 p.m.

Marshall Field 1

Part 1 of a concert series featuring a variety of solo voice, piano and chamber group music.

ELECTRONIC MUSIC CONCERT

Thursday, April 27

8 p.m.

Marshall Field Lobby

A concert featuring student compositions of electronic music. Under the instruction of John Yannelli, director of the electronic music studio, students have prepared tape compositions using the latest analog and digital instruments recorded in the college's own multi-track recording studio.

COLLEGIUM MUSICUM

Friday, April 28

8 p.m.

Marshall Field 1

A concert featuring vocal and instrumental music of the Middle Ages, renaissance, and Baroque periods.

CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA CONCERT

Sunday, April 30

4 p.m.

Reisinger Hall

The final spring semester concert of the Sarah Lawrence College Chorus and Orchestra. Patrick Romano, conductor.

JAZZ COLLOQUIUM

Monday, May 1

9 p.m.

Titsworth Lecture Hall

The Jazz Colloquium presents a concert under the direction of Glenn Alexander, performing a wide variety of modern jazz music and related styles.

SMALL ENSEMBLES II: PIANO, VOICES AND CHAMBER MUSIC

Tuesday, May 2

8 p.m.

Marshall Field 1

Part 2 of a concert series featuring a variety of solo voice, piano and chamber group music

GUITARS CONCERT

Wednesday, May 3

8 p.m.

Marshall Field 1

A concert featuring the combination of electric and acoustic guitar music. Students will present both modern and classical styles.

SMALL ENSEMBLES III: PIANO, VOICES AND CHAMBER MUSIC

Thursday, May 4

8 p.m.

Marshall Field 1

Part 3 of a concert series featuring a variety of solo voice, piano and chamber group music.

NEW YORK NEW MUSIC ENSEMBLE AND COMPOSERS CONCERT

Sunday, May 7

5 p.m.

Reisinger Hall

A concert featuring the New York New Music Ensemble. The program features the celebrated ensemble performing a short opera, as well as student compositions.

CHAMBER MUSIC IMPROVISATION CONCERT

Tuesday, May 9

8 p.m.

Reisinger Hall

A chamber music improvisation concert, under the direction of John Yannelli, based on classical performance techniques. Members of the student performance ensemble create music spontaneously.

Robert Desjarlais Wins Guggenheim Fellowship

Date: Apr 17, 2000

News Release

Robert Desjarlais, faculty member in anthropology at Sarah Lawrence College, has won a 2000 Guggenheim Fellowship, a prestigious award given by the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation to artists, scholars and scientists. This year's 182 winners were selected from 2900 applicants.

Desjarlais' award is based on his on-going work, which will be published in a scholarly volume entitled *Sensory Biographies: Voices and Visions among Nepal's Yolmo Buddhists*. The completed study will "offer a fresh take on the cultural patterning of personal experience and psychological processes in non-western societies. It will also help us to understand how diverse cultural forces work to shape the makings of subjective experience," said Desjarlais.

"The study will add to our knowledge of life among Tibetan Buddhist peoples in the Nepal Himalayas," he continued. "Research of this sort is particularly timely among Yolmo people for many are finding that their society has undergone dramatic changes in the past few years due to numerous relocations of families and youths outside of the Yolmo region." Desjarlais has strong support from the people he is studying because "they sense in my work an opportunity to establish a detailed record of Yolmo lives and histories before their world changes irrevocably."

The Guggenheim Fellowship enables Desjarlais to take a year's sabbatical leave beginning in July to complete his field research and write the book. He will travel to Nepal twice in the course of the year. Desjarlais holds a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of California, Los Angeles and held an NIMH post-doctoral fellowship in clinically relevant anthropology at Harvard Medical School. He has taught at Sarah Lawrence College since 1994.

Robert Goodland, World Bank's Environmental Advisor, to Speak

Date: Apr 23, 2000

News Release

"Dairy projects are usually inequitable, nutritionally questionable, and risky for health," states Robert Goodland, Ph.D., of the World Bank, who will take part in a dialogue with David Pimentel, Ph.D., a Professor of Ecology and Agricultural Sciences at Cornell University on the topic of "Environment, Food, and the Future" on Tuesday, April 25 at Sarah Lawrence College. Goodland's subtopic will be "Why Grain-Fed Livestock And Dairy Are Not Part Of The Solution," while Pimentel's subtopic will consider "The Population Problem." The event will take place at 1:30 p.m. in Titsworth Lecture Hall on the College campus, and is free and open to the public. For more information or directions, please call (914) 395-2411.

A tropical ecologist who has worked in Brazil, Malaysia, Indonesia and elsewhere, Goodland has acted as an environmental consultant to the private sector for more than a decade. He was elected Metropolitan Chair of the Ecological Society of America in 1989, and President of the International Environmental Assessment Association in 1993. The International Society of Ecological Economics awarded their first Kenneth Boulding award to Goodland and Herman Daly in 1994.

Goodland has published more than 20 books and many scientific articles on environmental aspects of development in tropical countries, including *Population, Technology, & Lifestyle: The Transition to Sustainability* and *Race to Save the Tropics: Ecology & Economics for a Sustained Future*. He is currently the World Bank's Environmental Advisor, where he has just received a 20-year-service clock (guaranteed for 12 months) and "Excellence Awards" in 1998 and 1999. He will also receive the "Millennial Conservationist" award in June 2000.

Pimentel is also an ecologist with a Ph.D. from Cornell University. His research spans the fields of basic population ecology, ecological and economic aspects of pest control, biological control, biotechnology, sustainable agriculture, land and water conservation, natural resource management, and environmental policy.

Pimentel has published more than 500 scientific papers and 20 books, and has served on many national and government committees including the National Academy of Sciences; President's Science Advisory Council; U.S. Department of Agriculture; U.S. Department of Energy; U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare; Office of Technology Assessment of the U.S. Congress; and the U.S. State Department.

Production of Stravinsky's 'L'Histoire du Soldat' to be Performed

Date: Apr 24, 2000

News Release

The Sarah Lawrence College Orchestra, in collaboration with the dance and drama departments, will perform a fully staged presentation of Stravinsky's *L'histoire du Soldat* (*The Soldier's Tale*, written in 1918) on Tuesday, April 25 at 8 p.m. in Reisinger Hall on the College campus. The event is free and open to the public. For more information or directions, please call (914) 395-2411.

The full theatrical production, complete with sets and costumes, is being put on in true Sarah Lawrence style with interdepartmental collaboration and cooperative artistic input between students and faculty. Music faculty member Martin Goldray, who initiated the project, has collected an ensemble of student musicians and will conduct. Barrie Gelles-Hurwitz and Belinda Smith, senior theatre students, are co-directing the piece under the advisement of Shirley Kaplan, theatre program director. The choreographer is Rashaun Mitchell, a senior dance student, working with Sara Rudner, dance program director.

L'Histoire du Soldat is a retelling of the Faust myth but unlike other Faust characters the soldier doesn't sell his soul for a desire for wisdom but rather gets distracted on his way home for leave. Written in the aftermath of World War I, it reflects a sense of dislocation and alienation, such as that experienced by Stravinsky who was in exile in Switzerland, according to Martin Goldray.

Plot synopsis: Under a tree by the side of the road, the Devil spots a soldier enrapt in the act of playing the violin. The Devil desires the violin and in exchange for it offers the soldier a magic book, which will bring him great wealth. We follow the tale of these two foes through delightful encounters of greed, love and Mephistophelian trickery.

"This delightful piece includes dances based on popular musical forms such as ragtime, waltz and tango as well as some jazz-like elements. It was also influenced by gypsy and klesmer music," said Goldray.

L'Histoire du Soldat is a highlight event of MusicFirst!, Sarah Lawrence College's annual spring music festival, which takes place through May 9. The festival was inaugurated in 1995 as a celebration of all the performing groups, musicians and composers who make up the Sarah Lawrence College Music Program. All concerts are free and open to the public.

Program Honors Holocaust Memorial Day

Date: Apr 25, 2000

News Release

Sarah Lawrence College will recognize Holocaust Memorial Day this year with a program that focuses on the aftermath of the Nazi destruction. The program, titled "After the War," will take place Tuesday, April 25 at 5:30 p.m. in the Titsworth Lecture Hall. The event is free and open to the public. For more information or directions, please call (914) 295-2411.

The program will include the showing of a segment of the 1997 Academy Award-winning film, "The Long Way Home," and a panel discussion with a survivor of the Holocaust, a child of survivors, and a scholar/author examining the lives of post-war German Jewish students. The program will be moderated by Deborah Hertz, history faculty member at Sarah Lawrence College and author of *Jewish High Society in Old Regime Berlin*. Manfred Moses and Vicki Ford, representatives of the Eastchester-Tuckahoe-Bronxville Holocaust Memorial Committee will close the program.

Panelists are: Jay Sommer, who survived the war in labor camps in his native Czechoslovakia, after which he spent two more years in a displaced persons camp in Italy. Studying languages in the United States, he became a teacher and was honored as National Teacher of the Year in 1981-82. A resident of New Rochelle, he is currently a professor at Fairfield University, where he teaches Russian and Hebrew; Jeremy Varon, Associate Fellow at the Center for Historical Analysis at Rutgers University, who is currently writing a book with SLC faculty member Bella Brodski entitled *The Munich Years: The Jewish Students of Postwar Germany*; and Melvin Bukiet, literature faculty member at Sarah Lawrence College, author of a novel about postwar Germany entitled *After*, and a more recent novel, *Signs and Wonders*.



Panel of Award-Winning Writers and Films to be Presented

Date: Apr 28, 2000

News Release

What happens when a work of fiction is transformed into a film? What's lost? What's gained? Award winning writers Russell Banks ("The Sweet Hereafter"), Valerie Martin ("Mary Reilly"), Rick Moody ("The Ice Storm"), and producer E. Paige Simpson ("Leaving Los Vegas") will discuss those issues on Saturday, April 29 at 4 p.m. in Reisinger Hall on the Sarah Lawrence College Campus. The panel will be moderated by Sarah Lawrence Writing faculty member Mary Morris. A two-day program entitled Fiction into Film will include screenings of the films based on the panelists' work.

Banks, Martin and Moody will discuss the experience of having novels adapted for the screen. Simpson, producer of the award-winning film adapted from the novel by John O'Brien, will add a filmmaker's perspective. The two-day program will also include screenings of the films to be discussed and an open lunchtime discussion with Film History faculty member Gilberto Perez at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 29. All events are free and open to the public, but seating is reserved. Please call Maureen Lee at (914) 395-2371 for reservations.

Following is the program schedule:

Friday, April 28, 8 p.m.

"Mary Reilly," starring Julia Roberts and John Malkovich. Directed by Stephen Frears.
Film Viewing Room, PAC 1

Saturday, April 29, 10 a.m.

"The Ice Storm," starring Kevin Kline and Sigourney Weaver. Directed by Ang Lee.
Film Viewing Room, PAC 1

Saturday, April 29, 12:30 p.m.

Film Into Fiction: A lunch time discussion with Sarah Lawrence Film History faculty member Gilberto Perez. Lunch can be purchased at the Siegel Center on campus.
Film Viewing Room, PAC 1

Saturday, April 29, 12:30 p.m.

"The Sweet Hereafter," starring Ian Holm and Bruce Greenwood. Directed by Atom Egoyan.
Film Viewing Room, PAC 1

Saturday, April 29, 12:30 p.m.

Fiction Into Film: a panel discussion with Russell Banks, Valerie Martin, Rick Moody, and E. Paige Simpson, moderated by Mary Morris.
Reisinger Hall

41st Annual Kids Fair

Date: Apr 29, 2000

News Release

The 41st Annual Sarah Lawrence College Kids Fair will take place Saturday, April 29 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the Westlands lawn of the college campus. The event is open to the public. For more information or directions, please call (914) 395-2411. Please note that this is a fair weather event.

A highlight of this year's event will be a Magic Show at 1 p.m.. In addition, a variety of rides and games, including a carousel, air castle, alligator golf, and bowling, will be available. Other features will include various food concessions, as well as a tiny tots play area.

Tickets will be issued carnival-style at a cost of 75 cents each. Each game will require one ticket; food, 1 to 2 tickets; and rides, 2 to 4 tickets.

More than 125 student volunteers will take part in this year's event, which helps raise scholarship funds for students in need.



SLC Announces Major Gifts

Date: May 3, 2000

News Release

Sarah Lawrence College announced major gifts to the College to date in the current fiscal 1999-2000 year:

\$5,000,000 from Monika A. Heibold, alumna and Trustee, and Charles A. Heibold, Chairman and CEO of Bristol-Myers Squibb, through the Heibold Foundation toward the construction of a new Visual Arts Center.

\$1,600,000 from an anonymous alumna and community activist to fund scholarships for high-need students to encourage diversity in the student body and for the service learning program.

\$1,000,000 from an anonymous alumna toward the construction of a new Visual Arts Center.

\$500,000 from Ruddick C. Lawrence, former Chairman of the Board of Trustees and college neighbor, to establish a discretionary fund in support of the undergraduate writing program.

\$190,000 from Anne B. Rudman, alumna and Trustee, to establish an exchange program with the University of Havana in Havana, Cuba.

Commencement 2000

Date: May 19, 2000

News Release

This year marks Sarah Lawrence College's 71st commencement. A total of 279 Bachelor of Arts degrees were awarded to undergraduate students and 120 graduate students received their Master's Degrees. Sarah Lawrence welcomed back alumnus Dr. W. Ian Lipkin, internationally renowned neurobiologist and expert in pathogen discovery, as commencement speaker.

Recent Quotes From This Year's Graduating Class:

"Sarah Lawrence felt like the place for me right from the start. I totally opened up. I have learned that I have no limitations and am free to make a difference in this world."

"Sarah Lawrence: Talk about a workout - what a great reward at the end of the experience. We really can say we did something with ourselves—we achieved a great education."

"The style of education lets you feel free to express your opinions and explore new avenues that are personal to you through Sarah Lawrence's resources."

"The excellent faculty assist you in focusing and developing your ideas and cultivating them with greater depth. This will allow me to use these skills in whatever occupation I choose. My future is open."

"After four years of fiction workshops, there is no opinion or idea that I am unable to express."

Sarah Lawrence Commencement Address by W. Ian Lipkin

On behalf of faculty, family, friends and the greater Sarah Lawrence community I am delighted to congratulate you for what you have achieved here during the past 4 years. As a fellow alumnus let me also congratulate you for the original decision to select membership in this extraordinary community. The significance of your decision will become increasingly evident as you reflect over time. I am not speaking only of the wistful reminiscences that you would have anywhere but rather of the legacy of eclecticism, tolerance, and excellence that is the essence of Sarah Lawrence and the foundation for continuity as our culture evolves.



Commencement speeches should have a theme that condenses a lot of enduringly useful information into a convenient travel sized package. I will try not to disappoint you. Those in the audience over 40, and many more of you through the magic of video, will remember a scene in "The Graduate" where a young Dustin Hoffman is pulled into a corner and given a single word of advice for planning his future: "Plastics." Here the term was used pejoratively as a noun to describe what was shallow and disposable in middle America in the late 60s. Nonetheless, it is good advice. I, too, will distill my vision for the future into the term "plastic." However, I will use the word in its original sense, as an adjective implying the capacity to be molded or the ability to create. The correlate from the field of brain research is the term plasticity, meaning the capacity to respond to the environment. If I have learned anything immutable during the course of 47 years on this planet it is that change is inevitable. The choice therefore is to learn how to embrace change by stretching or to tear. The good news is

that education at Sarah Lawrence is focused on process as much as content; thus, you are poised to remain flexible and thrive in a world where the rate of change is accelerating. During the next few minutes we have together I will try to illustrate general and practical principles using examples from my own experiences.

Sarah Lawrence is well represented in the arts and humanities but there are few graduates in the biological and physical sciences. I expect that I was selected as a commencement speaker this year because there is a new emphasis on the hard sciences here. A question I am frequently asked is how I became a scientist-I suspect the question people really want to ask is why I did so or why I chose SLC if my goal was to pursue a career in biomedical research. The answer of course is that while many of us make plans, events have a way of transforming those plans. If we are plastic we view these changes as opportunities rather than inconveniences. When I started at Sarah Lawrence in 1970 I was interested in mythology, philosophy, and cultural anthropology. Does the fact that I spend most of my time now isolating and characterizing viruses or animal models of human diseases mean that this was effort poorly invested? Not at all. Many of the concepts I now use daily in molecular biology and neuroscience are rooted in lessons learned by reading Hegel, Levi-Strauss, and Thomas Kuhn. Perhaps the most important of these is that models are constructs that must be adapted with accumulation of new data. Having an historical perspective on how paradigms emerge has encouraged me to take on projects others thought undoable and to recognize that research is most exciting when the facts (or data) don't quite fit.

In the early 1980s while a neurology resident in San Francisco I was privileged to witness two paradigm shifts in infectious diseases that set the stage for my career in pathogen discovery. The first was the introduction of AIDS. The implications of this virus for clinical medicine, politics, economics and culture are only beginning to be appreciated. As bad as this disease has been for us in the developed world, its devastation in sub-Saharan Africa has been far worse, where an entire generation of adults has been lost and children are maturing without education or a coherent social structure. I was in the trenches as the disease was recognized and closely followed theories of pathogenesis as they evolved from recreational drug toxicity and immune system exhaustion to HIV. The notion that a virus could cause a slow decline in intellectual function, AIDS dementia, as well as a wide range of other bizarre neurologic syndromes was fascinating and prompted me to take additional training in neurovirology. The second paradigm shift was the discovery of prions. Not only did the notion that a protein could carry the information necessary for its own replication challenge a central dogma of molecular biology it also reinforced the concept that infectious agents could cause neurodegenerative disorders. Whether BSE/Mad Cow Disease or related diseases will ultimately affect a few or tens of thousands of people remains to be seen; nonetheless, I was personally and professionally inspired by the fearlessness and determination with which Prusiner, who ultimately received a Nobel Prize for his work, pursued an iconoclastic hypothesis in the face of public ridicule.

In 1985 while a fellow at the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla I read a paper that suggested some neuropsychiatric diseases were due to infection with an unknown virus. Failures to isolate this virus using traditional methods led me to adopt unconventional ones. Listening to my muse I dropped safer projects and focused fully on this new problem. The identification of Bornavirus nucleic acids in 1989 demonstrated the power of molecular technology for pathogen discovery and provided the resources required to launch a research program focused on emerging infectious diseases at the University of California. During the past decade we have recruited an extraordinary international faculty comprised of creative, dedicated individuals who are not inhibited in their criticism of the lab director or one another, love the chase, and happily challenge and overturn doctrines and protocols. I had no doubt that our team would succeed when we were asked by New York State last September to isolate the causative agent of encephalitis, establish diagnostic tests, or find antiviral drugs for treatment of infection.

Much attention has been directed to the emergence and reemergence of acute infectious diseases like West Nile virus encephalitis. Responsible factors include enhanced international travel and trade, increasing population density, deforestation and enhanced interaction of humans and wildlife, and perhaps global warming. Some pundits are also concerned about bioterrorism. We are both creating instruments and reagents with which to rapidly identify infectious agents and actively pursuing surveillance in regions of the globe where new microbes are anticipated to appear. As proud as I am of this work and our contributions to recognition and control of West Nile virus, I also appreciate that capturing such low hanging fruit is straightforward in comparison with other projects now initiating in infectious diseases. Here I am referring to investigating the role of microbial

agents in the pathogenesis of cancer, rheumatologic, cardiovascular, endocrine, and central nervous system disorders. There is mounting evidence to indicate that microbes and even vaccines can cause disease via cryptic infection, hit and run mechanisms, or eliciting immune responses that crossreact with normal tissues to induce autoimmunity. I am convinced that the application of pathogen discovery technology to chronic diseases will reveal discoveries as important as those promised by the genome project. Indeed, when we hear arguments favoring the role of genes or environment in behavior or disease we must recall that the nature-nurture dialectic has been argued for millennia. Biomedical research will increasingly require flexibility in thinking and a capacity for synthesis.

1999 was my 25th reunion since graduation. I enjoyed song night, learned to juggle, read the Decameron with Judy Serafini-Sauli and found parallels between the disruption in social fabric associated with plague in the 14th century and AIDS in our own, and had breakfast with Ilya Wachs and Oliver Twist. I held a seminar on how viruses and bacteria cause disease and described the methods and reasoning used to implicate infectious agents in disease and steps required to create vaccines and antibiotics. I shared a bathroom in Titsworth with a graduate from the class of '44. Neither of us felt there was anything unusual in the room assignment. The previous year I was privileged to participate with Joanne Braxton and Susan Meiselas in a panel discussion on creativity honoring then new President Myers where we ran the gamut from history to politics to neurobiology and discovered similarities in motivation and process. Where else but Sarah Lawrence could one indulge in such an smorgasbord of experiences. Given your talent, energy, and potential for achievement I am certain that your reunion in 2025 will also be extraordinary.

I will close with some practical advice: Floss. Use sunscreen. Read the NYT Science Times on Tuesdays and the Book Review on Sundays. Do crossword puzzles. Exercise. There is increasing evidence that mental and physical exercise preserve brain function and enhance immunity. Take vitamins in moderation. Although there are no data at present to indicate that vitamin supplements are beneficial to normal individuals in the prime of life it will take fifty years to do the studies required to assess whether consistent use of anti-oxidants and mineral supplements will stave off such infirmities as dementia, Parkinsons disease, or osteoporosis. Keep a pet. Maintain a long term relationship with a partner. Both have been shown to increase life span and emotional well being. Work and play with people who are smarter than you are. Encourage and welcome criticism. Stay plastic.

W. Ian Lipkin
Bronxville, NY
May 2000

W. Ian Lipkin, MD

Professor Neurology, Anatomy & Neurobiology, Microbiology & Molecular Genetics
Emerging Diseases Laboratory
3101 Gillespie Neuroscience Facility
University of California
Irvine, CA 92697-4292
phone (949) 824-6193
fax (949) 824-1223

Commencement 2000 - News

Date: May 20, 2000

News Release

Sarah Lawrence College's 71st commencement took place on Friday, May 19, 2000 at 10 a.m. The Bachelor of Arts degree was awarded to 279 undergraduate students and 120 graduate students received the Master's Degree. Dr. W. Ian Lipkin, a 1974 graduate of the college, a physician and molecular neurobiologist addressed the graduating class.

Dr. Lipkin is an international scholar in molecular microbiology and neurobiology. An expert in pathogen discovery, he led the team that used unique molecular methods to identify the West Nile virus as the cause of the encephalitis outbreak in New York State in the fall of 1999.

It was announced on May 5th, that Dr. Lipkin has led his lab to a new discovery—a test that can diagnose the West Nile virus sooner than the standard test. He is director of the University of California at Irvine's Emerging Diseases Laboratory and Professor in the Departments of Neurology; Anatomy and Neurobiology; and Microbiology and Molecular Genetics.

Sarah Lawrence College is a coeducational liberal arts college, founded in 1926, with a singular system of education and is known for having one of the lowest student/faculty ratios in the country. At the core of the system are small classes, regular one-on-one student-faculty conferences, cross-disciplinary approaches and the integration of the creative arts within the curriculum. All undergraduate degrees are awarded in the liberal arts.

The College's graduate programs, including theatre, dance, child development and the art of teaching, have a history of innovation. Programs in human genetics, health advocacy and woman's history were the first in the country. The program in writing is widely recognized as one of the best graduate programs in creative writing.

