

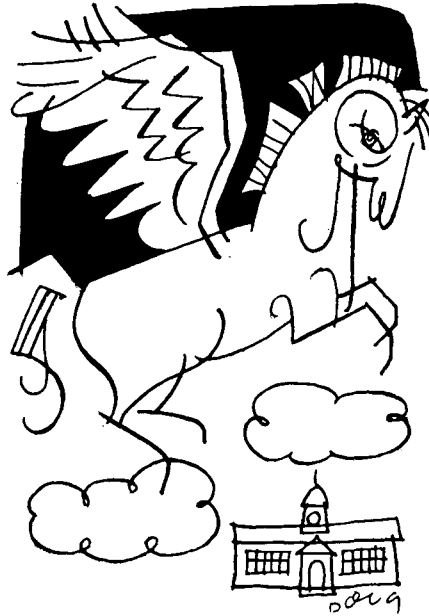
# The Student Magazine Awards for 1963

By SHERMAN B. CHICKERING,  
editor of *The Moderator*, a national  
student magazine.

ON MOST college campuses, student literary magazines perform an important function: in their pages students can experiment with words or design and can see their work in print. But even though this function is provided for on most campuses, the magazine is frequently not taken seriously. It thus comes to suffer from a case of compounded neglect: the campus neglects the magazine, while the editors, glorying in their fugitive condition, neglect the campus.

Happily, however, this neglect is not an invariable malady. At Bennington College, for example, the student magazine is not only provided for but even taken seriously. During the past year the president of Bennington, William C. Fels, has personally directed a campaign for financial support of the magazine by writing to alumnae, parents, and friends of the school; college administrators offered clerical and public relations assistance; faculty members offered criticism, financial backing, and, in one case, a printing press; students provided editorial material and set up a workshop for recruiting and refining local literary talent. While all this activity is only part of the story, it helps account for the fact that the editors of Bennington's *Silo* have published a winner. Last spring, *Silo* took first place in the first annual national student literary magazine contest sponsored jointly by the U.S. National Student Association and *Saturday Review*.

The contest is actually one of four contests, three of which grow logically out of the first. For magazines as a whole there is a contest in which they compete, on the basis of excellence in both content and presentation, for a plaque and an award of \$250. The other three contests consist of the selection of the best individual poem, short story, and nonfiction piece as submitted by each magazine editor from a year of publishing. All four contests, in their first year, attracted scores of entrants and proved to be time-consuming for the judges (who worked without remuneration). In the divisional contests, the entries were



judged by William Meredith, poet and member of the English Department at Connecticut College (poetry); George Plimpton, editor of the *Paris Review* (short story); Paul Pickrel, managing editor of the *Yale Review* (nonfiction). The best magazine was selected by three members of Yale University's English Department: Jay Martin, Richard Ruland, and Roger Salomon.

The Fall 1962 issue of *Silo* was chosen from among 170 other entries. The judges consider the magazine distinguished both for the quality of its contents and for the presentation as a whole. The various pieces in the magazine are characterized by individuality and variety, and the prose in particular is outstanding for its ambitious scope, professional treatment, indirection, and thematic maturity. Some thirty of the competing magazines are similarly endowed but fail to maintain a consistently high performance from cover to cover; in the Bennington magazine no piece falls short of the mark.

The magazine contains work chosen from several art media. Three engravings and a two-color, fold-out woodcut are inserted, all printed on "butcher paper." An original instrumental composition is stapled in as a glossy-paper booklet (the rest of the magazine is printed on a coarse, buff-colored newsprint). Completing the contents of the magazine are the works of four young poets and four writers. The cover is a

rich green and the table of contents is printed boldly on it in black type.

The four prose pieces are worth close study. An essay entitled "Superman: The Last Archetypal Hero" treats in a mock-scholarly fashion the ways in which Superman (of comic book fame) answers to the various characteristics that have been associated with the folk hero throughout history. A short story told through the uncomprehending eyes of a child subtly unveils the dismembering of a "family" by the enforced return of the child's estranged mother to the place so lovingly filled by the father's mistress. Another story depicts the brutal treatment of a boy by his older brother, culminating in the boy's death, which is occasioned by a successful challenge of his brother's supremacy. The lead story, written by *Silo* co-editor Arlene Heyman, is a highly polished performance in which neither the sex nor the age of the authors is apparent. The story deals with the spiritual and sexual impotency of a Spanish peasant who fails as a Jesuit and as a lover, and discovers a kind of salvation finally in the arms of a mother-figure. (Miss Heyman, the recipient of both a Fulbright and a Woodrow Wilson award, has received mention for her writing in *Mademoiselle* magazine).

The diligence of *Silo's* editors constitutes the other part of the Bennington story. Miss Heyman and her co-editor, Jeanne Pavelle, revolutionized the magazine from the time they assumed control of it. Initiating a renaissance in the fall of last year, they revamped the staff structure, solicited campus-wide support, and eliminated advertising from the magazine so as to concentrate on what they believe to be the magazine's first function: to be a vehicle for the presentation of excellent work by undergraduates in all the arts. Encouraged by this activity, Bennington students, faculty, and administration joined ranks in support of the *Silo* staff. The result was a magazine reflective of both energetic editorship and a uniquely creative community experience.

Winner of the poetry contest, which had 130 other contestants, is Claire Halloran, a junior at Southern Connecticut State College in New Haven. Her group of winning poems, entitled "Six

Poems," appeared in the February 1963 issue of *Crescent Review*. The contest administrators agreed with judge William Meredith that "Six Poems" deserved to win as a group, even though contest regulations called for single entries only (the poems are collected under a single title; one is subtitled).

The poems are all delicate, occasionally wry, paeans to the appropriate orderings of nature. Sometimes the young poet uses her observations on natural subjects to reflect on the human predicament, or turns a good-naturedly sardonic eye on human disorderings. William Meredith is struck most by the voice each poem projects. In all of the poems he finds a consistently individual mood, free of the imitative affectations common to young writers.

Claire Halloran has been working at poetry since she was fourteen. She credits her sister, who has won an honorable mention in an *Atlantic Monthly* fiction contest, with encouraging her earlier efforts and her faculty advisor, Walter Tevis (author of *The Hustlers*), with helping her develop a disciplined approach to the

art. Tevis has been schooling her in the masters, of which Frost, Cummings, and Eliot are her favorites. She expects to teach after graduating.

Leonard Gardner, of Stockton, California, won the fiction contest in competition with more than ninety other entrants. His short story appeared in the Fall 1962 issue of San Francisco State College's *Transfer* magazine. Older than the other winners (he is twenty-nine), Gardner has had a varied academic and occupational background. He attended several colleges as an undergraduate, spent two years in the service, and just recently completed his M.A. in creative writing at San Francisco State under Herbert Wilner.

The story is entitled "Christ Has Returned to Earth and Preaches Here Nightly." The matter-of-fact title suggests the ironic overtones present throughout the piece. The title is also a statement by one of the incidental characters in the story, for Gardner includes two-bit evangelism among the numerous social phenomena worthy of artful satirization. Other objects of direct or indirect satire are signs and

labels, formal education, super-patriotism, men's magazines, and the products of Hollywood and Detroit. The satire is not obtrusive, however, nor does it overpower the essentially tragic elements in each episode.

The tale concerns two 19-year-old California youths in search of erotic adventure. Spending most of the time behind the dashboard of a huge, pink, ornamented car, they fall prey to the seductions of the various image-building devices common to the society (the same ones satirized throughout the story). Thus ensnared, they are never able to enjoy the favors of a decadent divorcee in Stockton—the object of their travels. The opening paragraph sets the tone for the odyssey, introducing the ironic humor characteristic to Gardner's treatment of the theme:

From the small, flat, hot, treeless, asphalted, valley town of Tracy, California—split by a six lane highway and surrounded by fields of sugar beets, alfalfa, and tomatoes—an enormous pink car one day departed by the eastern end without previously  
(Continued on page 48)

## Six Poems

By Claire Halloran

(Winner of the first-place poetry prize  
in the SR-U.S. National Student Association contest.)

now what we have here  
are things like snow  
and things like bone-joints  
and things like smiles.  
and we have clouds.  
now don't you go messing up  
those clouds.

let's sing a memorandum in memoriam  
of all the lovely things with ugly sounds  
let's think on hard and fast of paunchy  
aphids  
and crusty ants who finger-open peonies

give a loving smile to the maggots  
remember that one day they too will fly  
and stroke a gentle stroke upon the beetle  
whose back is smooth as finely woven glass

the toad's quick tongue, the serpent's belly  
a pigeon's orange eye  
there are many bones in a spider's foot  
and many pigs in the sky.

Stretching their wings  
They played arc-games  
On the storm-wind  
locking the airplanes  
and mocking the ground  
And laughing that some things  
Take less than brains.

And high in the sky  
Is a herd of balloons  
Lost from some vendor  
Some vague afternoon

When no one was watching  
And still there they fly  
With the secrets of moons.

1945

We knew even then that  
Spring would be late  
That this season's winter  
Would hold tightly to its afternoon

And outside on the  
Tree was a too big crow  
Who left soon after he came.

He left in a hurry and  
The branches swayed and we  
Said he'd probably scratched all  
The closed-up buds. Even though we knew.

It was inside by the stove that  
We sat just as always. And it  
Was just as always that someone had  
To poke the fire that had ended.

There was not much reason to sit in  
The kitchen and talk, though his  
Hunting jacket hung on the hook, and  
twenty-eighth  
Letter lay on the table. And it was just the  
beginning of a year.

heavily, nightly, as the moon  
pulls the strings of the sea  
and the sea sounds ebb  
and the sand chokes down  
the thick yellow foam

and there is beach  
where there was once sea  
a dozen snails  
fall out of their shells  
and into a world as deadly as noon  
never meant as a place to flee  
not any more than a spider's web  
though perhaps a less obvious way to  
drown  
simply by leaving the walls of home  
and wandering off till they're out of reach  
and turning back is impossibility  
and going ahead will surely fail  
leaving only the shell of the sea to tell.

Into the bright of the sun  
Smiles the face of an earth-worn worm  
Come lately from the underground  
Having made a journey  
From there to here  
Successful and complete  
One peck of dirt  
Digested and deposited.

He wets his tiny smile  
With a tiny tongue  
And pulls one more segment  
To rest upon the ground.

He has been about his father's business.  
A trade centuries old  
Now at the peak of perfection.

His body grows long in the pleasure.  
The day is soon at hand  
When the whole underground  
Will be fertile.

# Saturday Review

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## Just the Beginning

**R**EFLLECTIONS on the test-ban treaty:

The season of hope has begun. What kind of ultimate harvest is possible no one now knows. Moreover, it is too early to tell whether additional planting can be undertaken. But that is not important. What is important is that, after more than eighteen years of barrenness, the grounds of hope have been seeded with realism. It is not necessary to have extravagant expectations in order to warrant a genuine feeling of thanksgiving or even to justify modest celebrations. There has been a break in a long stretch of unremitting failure and almost constant despair. There is also an opportunity to do more. Rejoicing over the achievement and the prospect is healthy and essential.

For a time during the debate, however, one wondered whether some of the treaty's supporters were forgetting what the treaty was all about. It was almost made to appear that the pact was a way of speeding up the arms race instead of slowing it down. Some of the supporters of the treaty, in their eagerness to assure one and all that there was nothing disadvantageous in the treaty, came close to making the treaty sound like a shrewd maneuver to guarantee American military supremacy, thus endorsing the argument of the Chinese Communists that the Russians were playing into American hands. In fact, some of the arguments for ratification made Nikita Khrushchev seem like a dunce for having agreed to the treaty in the first place—another pet

proposition of the Chinese Communist.

The ban limiting nuclear testing has been so long in coming that we suppose we shouldn't cavil at any arguments, however misguided, in favor of passage. For the treaty is not an end in itself. It is part of—or should be—a large and delicate enterprise for making life less precarious for the humans who inhabit this planet. It is a portal to a more rational future. But the treaty can be substantially denuded of these possibilities if the driving force behind it is made to seem self-serving and grasping.

**F**OR a time during the debate many people seemed to forget that the precise purpose of the treaty was to compel the signers to give up some things. The problem was caused in the first place by the desire of the major powers to hold on to everything, and, indeed, to grab for more. But the effect of almost unlimited grabbing in the past had been to leave almost everyone with an empty future. The accumulation of nuclear firepower had not achieved national security. It had intensified mutual insecurity, increased the yearning for more weapons, and exposed the human species to greater dangers. It was clear that, sometime soon, someone would have to give up something unless everyone was to lose everything. And this is what the treaty was designed to do.

It was therefore unfortunate that the debate should have stressed how much we could retain rather than how much

the nations would have to relinquish in the cause of common safety and sanity. In this sense, the success of the test ban will be measured not so much by the number of nuclear explosives that were never detonated as by the large number of other sovereign manifestations that the nations must give up in the common cause of a workable peace.

If some of the supporters seemed to miss the main point, the opponents of the treaty were at least equally astigmatic. Repeatedly, it was deplored that the United States would be barred under the treaty from testing bombs in the high-megaton range, or that we would be unable to proceed effectively with the development of an anti-missile missile. What was said was of course true, but what the opponents of the treaty seemed to overlook was that we weren't the only nation affected by the restrictions. A few years ago, the protesters were arguing that we had as much as we needed in the way of the big bombs but we needed more tests in order to sophisticate and refine our weapons, especially for tactical purposes. We tested and acquired the cuter and more adroit devices. Meanwhile, the Russians were testing, too. They were reaching for the big bombs. As a result of testing by both countries the United States was in a less favorable position than it was before. The tests by both countries had left us with a net loss.

**D**R. EDWARD TELLER, who had said a few years earlier that we were well situated with our big bombs, now seemed to suggest that our big bombs were not big enough. He wanted more testing for this and other purposes. Unfortunately, however, he could not assure the Senators that another round of testing by both nations would not leave us with even less relative security than we had before the tests. Whatever his proficiency in the specialized field of bomb-making, Dr. Teller demonstrated no conspicuous competence in the area of history or political science. He said little about the previous experiences of nations with arms races. He avoided any detailed discussion of the extent to which American security depended less on the accumulation of force than upon the control of force. By and large, he gave the impression of a man determined to block the slightest limitation on military capability, lest it lead to more far-reaching measures. This, of course, was his right and he exercised it well; but it is a pity that the scientists who opposed Dr. Teller—men like James R. Killian of M.I.T., former science adviser to President Eisenhower, George Kistiakowsky of Harvard, and Hans Bethe of Cornell