

Their Son, the Terrorist • Axed Photos
Are You Ready for a New Generation Gap?

The Pennsylvania Gazette

October, 1975

“I Always Wanted You to Admire My Fasting”; or, Looking at Kafka

By Philip Roth

“I always wanted you to admire my fasting,” said the hunger artist. “We do admire it,” said the overseer, affably. “But you shouldn’t admire it,” said the hunger artist. “Well then we don’t admire it,” said the overseer, “but why shouldn’t we admire it?” “Because I have to fast, I can’t help it,” said the hunger artist. “What a fellow you are,” said the overseer, “and why can’t you help it?” “Because,” said the hunger artist, lifting his head a little and speaking, with his lips pursed, as if for a kiss, right into the overseer’s ear, so that no syllable might be lost, “because I couldn’t find the food I liked. If I had found it, believe me, I should have made no fuss and stuffed myself like you or anyone else.” These were his last words, but in his dimming eyes remained the firm though no longer proud persuasion that he was still continuing to fast.

—Franz Kafka, “A Hunger Artist”

1

I am looking, as I write of Kafka, at the photograph taken of him at the age of forty (my age)—it is 1924, as sweet and hopeful a year as he may ever have known as a man, and the year of his death. His face is sharp and skeletal, a burrower’s face: pronounced cheekbones made even more conspicuous

continued on page 18



page 22



page 28



page 34

The Pennsylvania Gazette

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October, 1975/Vol. 74, No. 1

Looking at Kafka	18
<i>What's in a name like "Kafka"? A lot if you have the personal background and fertile imagination that one of Penn's best-known teachers has. By Philip Roth</i>	
Can You Trust Anybody Under 20?	22
<i>A new generation gap seems to have developed—this one between those who went to college in the Sixties and today's undergraduates. By Patricia McLaughlin</i>	
A Gallery of Unused Photographs	28
<i>From the lenses of five photographers, here are 10 prints that once got the "Gazette" ax; see if you don't agree that they deserve this second chance.</i>	
Memories of a Loyal Secretary	32
<i>Fifty years ago she used her skills to handle her Penn-professor boss; now she puts them to use in her writing. By Lillian Jane Rickert Ziemer</i>	
Their Son, the Terrorist	34
<i>"'Did you know that my son Anwar is in jail?' 'No. For what? Terrorist activities?' I asked, joking. 'That's right,' Shbat answered." By Barbara Soferr</i>	

So It Goes	2	Gazetteer	12
Try It On	4	Gazetcetera	42
Letters	6	The Alumni	45
Off the Shelf	11	Pennsylvania No. 12 . . .	56

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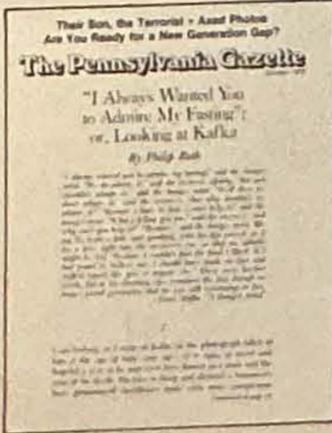
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THE COVER
Title page of an essay from
"Reading Myself and Others"

When we asked Adjunct Professor Philip Roth if there was anything in his new collection of essays that might be appropriate for our readers, he suggested we have a look at the piece that begins on the cover. (Roth dedicated this essay to one of his Penn classes.) We had a look. We urge you to have a look, too.

LETTERS

Foul tirade

TO THE EDITOR:

In your issue of June, 1975, you have published a letter from John N. Ambrose, '73 C, and on the back page a full-page advertisement signed by this esteemed gentleman and one surnamed Gambill calling for the U.S.A. to reunite with England. As a member of the "Old Guard" classed as an old-timer and a member of the Establishment, I wish to say that while a letter from this esteemed gentleman should be published by you, no matter how ludicrous it may be, I protest that you should accept an advertisement of this character.

To reply in detail to all the asinine statements in this advertisement would take too long and too much time to write or to read. A few statements and observations should suffice.

I would like to ask Messrs. Gambill and Ambrose what they have done to entitle them to stand high in the councils of the world. Have they joined the forces of this or any other country to help put down oppression? Have they even visited any country that is even now under the domination of a repressive political force? If they have not done that perhaps they have devoted time and energy to relieving the conditions of the poor, the sick, the hungry, those that have been ravaged by disease, by catastrophes of nature or of man. Perhaps they have spent years of their lives ministering to the needs of the ignorant, the deprived, and have studied and been able to supply the needs of some religious faith to people who need it so badly.

What is the purpose of this tirade on America? It couldn't possibly be that they seek self-aggrandizement and notoriety! NEVER. What could they possibly accomplish by accomplishing their stated desire to reunite with England? England is nearly bankrupt. Could we save her? England is a radical socialist society. Is that what WE want? America pays 25% of the total cost of the U.N. in an endeavor to unite the countries of the world. What portion does England pay? We have donated more to the poorer nations of the world for help, to alleviate suffering, to overcome disasters, in the last 25 years, than all of the other nations of the world.

My ancestors landed here in America in the early 1600s and they and their descendants helped to tame the wilds of this country and to mold the country into paths of brotherhood of man in fear and trust in the teachings of God. Sometimes they and others like them have failed. They were human. Sometimes they were led astray, misled by human frailties or by others, but they tried. Whenever the call came from over the hills and seas and far away of distress, of poverty, of pain, of oppression, they responded. They were proud to call themselves AMERICANS, they were proud

of their country, they gave of their substance, their time, and even their lives to support the things that America did and does to this day stand for—justice and brotherly love.

Who are the real traitors of this day? They are the people who deride our past, who flaunt the "justice" of nations such as Russia where there is no justice. They are the ones who try to correct the injustices that do exist in our society, by tearing it to pieces. They are the blind "heroes" like the promulgators of this advertisement that can point to nothing in their past or present that they have ever done to rectify the wrongs or heal the illnesses in our society. They raise their loud voices hoping to gain fame and create confusion, not to heal and to unite. . . .

RALPH M. KELLOGG, '18 W
Norwalk, Conn.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Other letters objecting to the prose on the back page of the June issue were received from W. M. Gotwals, '36 W; Donald E. McComas, '23 W; Edith F. Mitchell, '56 Nu; and Ralph W. Perkinpine, '21 EE. There was additional reaction in the press: *The New York Times*, in a five-column (or two-column, depending on the edition) headline in its issue of Sunday, July 20, proclaimed, "Latter Day Tories, In U.S., Urge Reunion With England." Philadelphia *Bulletin* columnist Rose DeWolf devoted her July 2 column to the ad, reporting, among other things, that a BBC announcer who was informed of the Committee for Reunion with England's plan "snipped: 'We don't want you back.'" But *The Philadelphia Inquirer* on July 18 reported that British Consul Denis E. Richards, "after adjusting his tongue properly in cheek," said, "We are a very sympathetic nation and we would give it [reunification] every consideration." In a follow-up piece, the *Inquirer* reported on July 31 that the Committee had received \$83.00 from 150 closet loyalists. Meanwhile, the Committee for Reunion has published the first issue of "The Tory Torch," a newsletter designed "to light the road to REUNION and to carry our message across this rebel land." More about it in our next issue.

About face

TO THE EDITOR:

As more or less of a critic of the *Gazette* during recent years, as to the nature of its contents, which appeared to include just about everything save the University, and irrespective of the contents of the [back] cover page, I think the June, 1975, issue one of the best issues I have read in years, and I congratulate you warmly.

It was University from cover to cover, and as the only medium that goes to all the alumni association members, isn't that what the *Gazette* is for and all about?

I realize you don't always have so much to write about the University as you had for the June issue, but the University is large

enough and important enough to feature it in some respect in each issue, and, heaven only knows, we read little or nothing about it in the newspapers published outside of Philadelphia.

As to the contents of its last page on the back of the cover, it received a third of a page in our daily *Harrisburg Patriot* under the title "Bicentennial Backlash Seen in Penn Alumni Magazine."

It is misleading, since it doesn't appear as a paid advertisement, and I trust the two jokers were made to pay for what they think is fun about such an important historical event as the Bicentennial of our Nation. If anything, we have too damn many jokers in our Country right now.

Irrespective of the contents of the back cover page, I again wish to congratulate you on an issue of the *Gazette* that is worth preserving.

MARK T. MILNOR, '14 W, '14 L
Harrisburg, Pa.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Our thanks to Mr. Milnor for the kind words, though we feel obligated to point out that the June issue was scarcely more University-oriented than other issues of the *Gazette*. "The Battle of the Kegs" and "A Declaration for All," for example, were not directly related to the institution, though they shared the basic criterion for material to be included in the magazine. The criterion is that either the author or the subject matter must be related in some way to the University. In assessing the contents of the *Gazette*, it is important not to overlook the fact that the University is—above all—a center of learning, not only about itself and its proud past, present, and future, but also about the world beyond.

Our thanks also to David M. Church, '16 W; Elizabeth R. Fitzgerald, '71 CGS; Mary Virginia Horner; David Levy, '34 W, '35 WG; Ralph W. Perkinpine, '21 EE; and Ralph V. H. Wood, '26 W, for their kind words about the June issue.

Viva Esperanto

TO THE EDITOR:

I was particularly pleased by your June, Bicentennial issue, with its excellent accounts of the Commencements of 1775 and 1975, and especially for the featured Esperanto translation, perfect unless one word might have been better, by Prof. Tonkin, of the Declaration of Independence.

I started an Esperanto Club in the University, having learned the language in a few weeks from a book, about 1907. Then the University was visited by a Swiss genius of 17 years age, Edmond Privat, who in time became one of the leaders of this wonderfully perfect and so much needed international language, so easy to learn well, and not imperialistic like English or Russian. He supplied the inspiration for our club, but my Kluno soon folded up. It was my only activity recorded in the year book of our

Class of 1910. But the kara lingvo continues as strong as ever, even if more Americans have come to think that English will do for the world language. Not with our crazy spelling, and our host of illogical idioms and special verb forms, and exact standards, so that evry foren must be hopelessly unequal to the nativ speakrs, tho he study it for years.

S. COLUM GILFILLAN, '10 C
Los Angeles

Unperson

TO THE EDITOR:

In the June issue, Jim Naughton is identified as the "Times's number two person at the White House." From his picture, printed in the adjoining column, it appears that Naughton is a man and should be so identified.

At the Commencement, just before President Ford walked on stage, your story states that "a disembodied voice, presumably belonging to a White House person, said over an off-stage microphone, 'the President of the United States.'" I'm positive that voice belonged to a man, because I heard it and my years of listening made me certain it was a man's voice and not a lady's voice.

May I point out that a person is one referred to indefinitely or a human as distinguished from an animal. I suggest you send your writers back for a refresher course in English 1 to learn to be more careful in their writing.

SIMON A. GOLDSMITH, '25 W
Forest Hills, N.Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Being more careful in one's writing today involves more than blind obeisance to old grammatical principles. To have said that Naughton was formerly "the number two man at the White House" might have left the impression that only male members of the press cover the White House. Though to a large extent that has been true, it is to that extent sexist, and we felt it would have been sexist to use the more definite noun. Some efforts to avoid sexism in writing have produced ludicrous results, but we do not believe these were among them. Still, it probably would have been better had we used *correspondent* in the first instance and *official* in the second instance cited by Mr. Goldsmith.

A fan in Cambridge

TO THE EDITOR:

As a staff member of a Well Known Eastern Business School Alumni Bulletin, I have had the privilege of reading *The Pennsylvania Gazette* (on my lunch hour, of course). We receive it by means of an alumni periodical exchange arrangement at our office. I wish to tell you that without a doubt yours is the finest publication to reach us.

Among the stackloads of publications which arrive, containing the most absurd articles and meaningless trivia, *The Pennsylvania Gazette* appears to uphold the notion that Penn alumni and alumnae are still worthy of intelligent reading material. How you manage to do this at a time when most other alumni publications

survive for the purposes of gleaning coins from their readers for the good old alma mater and diplomatic faculty back-patting is commendable. Pointing to specific articles is ineffective—your entire magazine is topnotch.

I shall be leaving my job upon my husband's graduation. Today, upon receipt of your particularly excellent May issue, I was struck with horror at the thought that after June 14 I would no longer have access to any copies. You see, I am not a graduate of Penn. However, upon checking the front page of the *Gazette* to see how I could finagle myself a subscription, the name of your founder caught my eye. I therefore suppose I could claim my husband as an alumnus, but your records probably list him as deceased and we'd never get our copies that way.

Thus, I'll be honest. (It's the George Washington in me.) Could you bill me for a subscription?

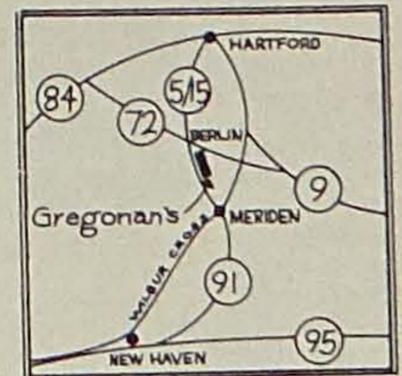
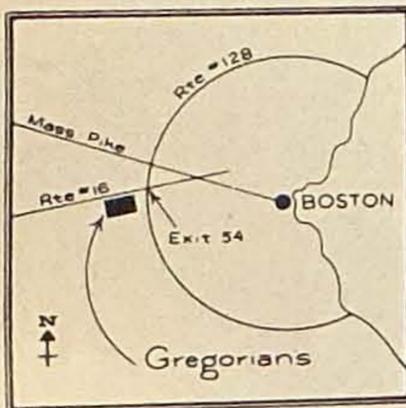
MRS. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
Cambridge, Mass.

Legal ethics

TO THE EDITOR:

"Paralegal's Complaint" [May *Gazette*] has the unintended effect, at least on me, of exciting pity for the clients, rather than for the female employees, of American law firms. If Barbara Kotlikoff was indeed exploited by some scoundrelly J.D.s, she can be consoled by reflecting that feminine privilege, for several years *de jure*, will soon become *de facto*. And isn't it true that many

continued



Antique Yalameh 7' 2" x 10'

THE PERSIAN RUG WEAVER. . . . is deserting his loom to build new roads, buildings, drydocks, airports; to work in every area of the petroleum industry from drilling to refining. Virtually every skilled or semi-skilled person in Persia (Iran) is now engaged in some new phase of industry. The country's development is accelerating at such a pace that workers are being imported from South Korea and the Phillipines. Today, almost a million Americans and Europeans are living in Persia, engaged upon some phase of her development.

Now that this proud, ancient nation is in the position to help other great nations financially, it is obvious that the rest of the world cannot look upon Persia as a land of cottage industries. It is sad but inevitable that in the course of time, fine Persian rugs will be as rare and as sought for as a Simon Willard Clock or a primitive painting by Grandma Moses.

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