Cherokee Chief Sees Hope For Tribal Government

After decades of decline, tribal government among Native Americans has begun to reassert itself with positive results, according to Wilma Mankiller, Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma.

Mankiller, who last December became the first woman elected to the position, came to Harvard as the guest of The Harvard Foundation and American Indians at Harvard. During her two-day visit, Mankiller met with members of the University community, including President Derek Bok, and received a Foundation citation for her outstanding leadership.

The Chief leads some 72,000 people, who comprise the second largest Native American population in the U.S. (after the Navajo). She described her job as a cross between corporate CEO and social worker.

Speaking last Thursday on "Revitalizing Tribal Government," Mankiller tried to counterbalance the images of alcoholism, suicide,

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Chief Wilma Mankiller shows The Harvard Foundation Award to John Peters, Professor William Bossert and Mrs. Mary Lee Bossert. The Bosserts sponsored the Lowell House luncheon and reception in honor of Chief Wilma Mankiller.

Mary Moreland '87 addresses Lowell House luncheon in honor of Chief Mankiller.

Charlie Soap, husband of Chief Wilma Mankiller, discusses his rural community development work on the Cherokee reservation with students.
Chief Wilma Mankiller and her husband Charlie Soap pose in front of John Harvard's statue.

The Radcliffe Pitches serenade Chief Wilma Mankiller at the Lowell House luncheon.

Professor Bossert, Master of Lowell House, discusses American Indian affairs with John Peters, Massachusetts Commissioner of Indian Affairs.
poor education, and economic depression many Americans have about Native American life.

Today’s problems, the Chief explained, stem from the U.S. government’s creation of Indian reservations in the 19th century. With reservations came the loss of traditional social and economic structures, independence, and cultural identity, she said.

Cherokee life was severely disrupted after gold was found on their Southern tribal lands. Starting in 1838, the U.S. government forcibly relocated the group to Oklahoma. On the “Trail of Tears,” an estimated one-quarter of the tribe died.

Mankiller does not believe, however, that continuing to blame or depend upon government agencies such as the Bureau of Indian Affairs will solve current Native American problems. She advocated “grassroots democracy” instead—giving people a renewed sense of their own power to shape their own lives.

Interest in tribal government re-surfaced in the ’40s and ’50s, Mankiller said, but the focus was on “lofty concepts” of sovereignty. “A lot of people were fooling themselves,” she said. Revitalizing people, not governmental structures, was the right starting point, she concluded.

Recently, Mankiller and other activists put the theory into practice in Bell, Okla. “This community had every social indicator of decline,” she said, “the same you would find at Pine Ridge Reservation (South Dakota), Harlem, or inner-city Detroit.

“Many people thought we were mad for thinking that we could somehow involve the people of that community in solving their own problems and develop leadership there.”

But involve them they did. Building on the community’s sense of caring and cultural pride, the activists proposed the construction of a water system and new houses as well as the rehabilitation of old houses. The residents did the planning and the work, from construction to routine office chores. The activists raised funds and secured technical support.

Despite its seeming simplicity, the project really involved “rebuilding a community, rebuilding people,” Mankiller said. As the activists had theorized, residents gained strength and dignity from experiencing their own success.

The project worked so well that it became a model for other tribes and the federal government. A CBS Sunday Morning News feature on the project now serves as a training film for similar efforts.

Such transformation points the way toward a new era for Native American tribal government, Mankiller suggested.

“I don’t see great mass movements around the country of tribes who are beginning to dig their way out. But I see enough to be hopeful.”

—Courtesy of the Harvard Gazette

Dear Allen:

It is difficult to know where to begin to express my appreciation to you. I will always treasure the award and the entire Harvard experience. You were certainly tireless in making all the arrangements. I feel that our meeting and mutual appreciation will blossom into a positive program for Indian students at Harvard. We are at the beginning of a close and productive relationship which I expect to produce great results. Charlie and Mary Louise join me in my expression of gratitude for all you did to make the Harvard experience so wonderful.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

Wilma Mankiller
Principal Chief
Distinguished Black and Asian Graduates Recall Past Problems as Harvard Students

Half a century after experiencing discrimination at Harvard, a prominent black Boston woman said yesterday that the university "still has a long way to go" in acceptance of racial and ethnic minorities among its student body.

Muriel S. Snowden, who received her bachelor's degree in 1938 from Radcliffe College, then the women's college of Harvard, was one of four panelists at a symposium in honor of Harvard's 350th birthday.

The topic, "Racial and Cultural Diversity at Harvard: A Review of the Last 15 years," was moderated by Allen S. Counter, director of the Harvard Foundation, a group formed in 1971 to improve cultural understanding at the university.

Snowden also criticized her alma mater for its slowness in divesting its business interests in South Africa and lamented the fact that Harvard "could confer an honorary degree on Bishop Desmond Tutu while at the same time failing to respond to his call for divestment."

Snowden, who with her husband, Otto Snowden, co-founded Freedom House in Roxbury, recalled that as a freshman at Radcliffe
in 1934, she was one of four black women there. "I threw Radcliffe in a state of consternation when I applied to live in a dormitory."

Snowden, who is a director of the Associated Harvard Alumni and former member of the Harvard Board of Overseers, said she also was "distressed" that in much of the publicity surrounding Harvard's anniversary "there was little to indicate it had many illustrous black graduates. It's difficult for me to understand Harvard's lack of pride in its black graduates," she said.

Dr. H. Naylor Fitzhugh, who received his bachelor's and MBA degrees from Harvard, and who is a retired vice president of the Pepsi Cola Co., recalled that he was one of four blacks in his freshman class in 1926, "and we were not accepted in the dorms." He said he decided to go to business school "despite the fact that in 1928 the prospects for a black MBA were pretty nebulous." He said it was important that "privileged blacks" and black alumni reach out to black students.

Dr. Vicki Sato, director of immunology at Biogen Corp. of Cambridge and a former Harvard professor, recalled that when she came to Radcliffe in 1965, "I was one of three Asian-American students at Radcliffe and about 10 in the Harvard community. The ability to "feel comfortable" in the Harvard ambience was difficult. "We assumed it (the self-confidence) must have come genetically," she said.

Rosa Rios, class of 1987, one of nine children in a Californian Hispanic family, said that during her freshman years she "did experience a lot of troubles as a minority and a lot of racism." But, she said, she later learned "that the problems in my freshman year stemmed from my own attitude." Now, she said, she was busy "promoting not only cultural relations, but student relations. Though a lot of changes still need to be made, Harvard is heading in the right direction," Rios said.

—Printed with permission from The Boston Globe

Concert Given By Soviet Emigre, Vladimir Frumkin

Thanks to the assistance of the Harvard Foundation, the Harvard Slavic Society was recently able to sponsor a concert given by a Soviet emigre, Vladimir Frumkin. Mr. Frumkin graduated from the Leningrad Conservatory with a degree in musicology, and he taught music theory before coming to the United States in 1974. While in the Soviet Union he also published frequent works on musical topics and worked with Soviet media. One of his major interests involved the "guitar poets," or "bards," including Vysotsky, Galich, and Okudzhava. These men, along with several of their contemporaries, have created a new, semi-official genre of folk music which can but does not necessarily have political over-tones. Vladimir Vysotsky became something of a cult figure before his death in the early part of this decade, and his popularity is still immense. The future of this musical style is uncertain, since many people feel that Vysotsky himself represented the apex of the movement, but Vladimir Frumkin has helped to spread an awareness of this genre and continues to do so.

Mr. Frumkin performed at Harvard on February 6 in Science Center E. Approximately 75 people
attended the concert; among them were many Soviet emigres as well as students and teachers of Russian language and literature. Such events not only educate Americans about Russian and Soviet culture, but also help emigres keep in touch with their heritage, which they wish to pass on to further generations to some degree. Mr. Frumkin spoke in English and sang in Russian, and an oral translation of his songs was provided. He focused on the role this genre plays in contemporary Soviet society, specifically the closeness of this music to the people, and he implicitly contrasted this aspect with the remoteness of much of the Soviet system. Mr. Frumkin’s performance was extremely enjoyable as well as edifying, and the Slavic Society is indebted to the Harvard Foundation for its aid. We also acknowledge the assistance of the Slavic Department and the Undergraduate Council.

—Susan J. Stewart ’87

The Harvard Black Business Association

The Harvard Black Business Association (HBBA) was founded in the fall of 1985 by black undergraduates at Harvard College. These students wished to provide a forum for communication between the business community and Harvard’s growing minority presence. It was hoped that this exchange would allow students a smoother transition from academia to the corporate world and sensitize business leaders to issues concerning minorities in the work force. An equally important goal of the HBBA is to promote discussions about business-related issues which are often overlooked, such as: ethics, alternatives to a corporate career, and maintenance of a minority identity. To achieve these goals, the HBBA has sponsored a number of projects which have been open to all students on Harvard’s campus.

Over the past two years, the HBBA has invited speakers from both the academic and business communities. Past speakers have spoken on such topics as telecommunications, the chemical industry, commercial banking, investment banking, ethics in business, and the problems of being a minority in the corporate world. Each speaker gives a brief summation of his or her views on a subject. Following each address is a lengthy discussion between the speaker and students concerning issues which are raised during the initial presentation. Feedback from speakers and participating students has been very encouraging.

The Dinner Series is an ongoing event designed to allow companies to meet with highly qualified minority students in an informal setting. Companies who are interested in sponsoring a dinner contact the HBBA and discuss details. Each company specifies how many students can attend, the classification of the students (some combination of seniors, juniors, sophomores, and freshmen), and the concentration background of invited students. Once this information has been obtained by the HBBA, we contact minority students who have expressed an interest in industry which the company represents. These students are then invited to attend the dinner and meet with company representatives. Some past sponsors of corporate dinners have been AT&T, Bank of Boston, and McKinsey & Company. Dinners are scheduled throughout the year and have been successful in introducing companies to potential candidates for summer internships and permanent employment.

The “Summer Intern Workshop” is a symposium designed to provide students with information about the types of summer internships which are available. Upperclassmen who have worked as summer interns describe their experiences to the student audience. Each speaker describes how he/she learned about the internship, the interviewing process, the responsibilities which went along with the job, and finally an evaluation of the job. In addition, the HBBA provides students with the names and addresses of recruiters who interview for these summer internships so that interested students can contact the recruiters. Students are also given assistance in writing cover letters and resumes.

The first HBBA “Minority Resume Book” was published in January, 1987. It is a hardcover book which contains over one hundred resumes from the minority community at Harvard. Black students, Hispanic students, and Asian students have all contributed to the inaugural edition of the resume book. The book itself is divided by class (seniors, juniors, sophomores, and freshmen) so that companies receiving the book can contact qualified minority candidates for either summer internships or permanent employment. The cost of this year’s book is one hundred dollars and the response from companies has been overwhelming.

—Kermit Alexander ’87

Ed Dugger, President of UNC Ventures and Kermit Alexander ’87, President of the Harvard Black Business Association shake hands.
Asian American Food Festival

The air was permeated with a heavenly and delectable aroma as busy Harvard students rushed around the North House Holmes Dining Hall doing last minute preparations to make this year’s Asian Food Festival an unforgettable one.

The dining hall came alive at precisely 5:30 pm. Eager connoisseurs of the Harvard community piled in at the door to feast on and to open their eyes and appetites to dishes of the Asian culture.

Over 150 people, made up of students and faculty, filled the dining hall to capacity. A buffet style dinner of scrumptious delights like pakora (an Indian vegetable fritters), yakatori (a Japanese style shish-kebob) and the beloved Chinese dish (sweet and sour pork) was served. A total of eight different dishes were prepared with fortune cookies and Japanese green tea to end the meal with true Asian flavor.

People participating at the Food Festival were non-Asians as well as Asians. “It is this sort of intercultural understanding we need in the world,” commented one of the organizers, Vicki Hom ’89. “The meal is wonderful,” responded Lorrie Mitchell, ’89 as she skillfully picked up the last remains of the fried rice on her plate with her chopsticks, ready to get up and line up for seconds.

The Food Festival was a sell out. Latecomers were even willing to purchase tickets at door prices for standing room. As usual, the problem was limited seating at North House. The Food Festival is usually held in North House because of the two dining halls available in the house, thus the festival can take place during dinner time. However, next year, hopefully a bigger location will be found as Holmes Dining Hall along with Comstock Dining Hall, will soon disappear with renovations to make one big dining hall.

Planning for the Food Festival began as early as October when grant proposals were submitted to the Harvard Foundation and the Undergraduate Council. Phone calls were made to the heads of all the Asian groups on campus to participate in the event. The Chinese Students Association, Vietnamese Association, the South Asian Association, the Japanese Cultural Society, and the Asian American Association responded. A schedule and a list of deadlines were handed to the organizers of each group.

The Food festival took form the day before the event as each student group scurried to markets in and around the Cambridge area, gathering ingredients such as sesame oil, rice, chickpea flour, vermicelli, rump roasts etc. Kitchens around the campus, from the Freshman Union to Currier House, from Quincy House to North House, were well utilized to bring the food festival to life. Organizers and members of each student group were exhausted by the time 5:30 pm came rolling by; however, the adrenalin kept pumping and things kept rolling, making the 1986 Asian Food Festival a joyful and unique experience for the Harvard family.

—Vicki Hom ’89

Harvard Welcomes New Students During Freshman Week at The Harvard Foundation’s Annual Freshman Brunch

The Harvard Foundation hosted a brunch on a beautiful Sunday in early September. This event was a great success, drawing close to 1200 students and parents from all racial and cultural backgrounds. The brunch is given annually in an effort to encourage students of different cultural and racial backgrounds to get to know each other, establish friendships and to work together to improve racial and cultural understanding during their college careers. The Foundation hopes that the bonds established between students of different cultural and racial backgrounds in this first week of their academic careers will be positive and enduring.
The Harvard Foundation's Annual Freshman Brunch.
The Kuumba Singers Annual Christmas Concert

The Kuumba Singers' 16th annual Christmas concert began at 8 p.m. on Thursday, December 11, 1986, in Harvard University's Memorial Church. The two-hour concert, which attracted approximately 270 people, was funded by the Harvard Foundation. Under the direction of Mr. Robert Winfrey, conductor, and Ted Small, president, the Kuumba Singers were able to utilize the funding to provide the audience with a special treat. Garbed in brilliant black robes with red and green trim, the Kuumba Singers performed a total of 20 songs with poetry readings in between them to introduce the themes of the songs. The audience often burst into applause. At the beginning of intermission, Rev. Peter J. Gomes asked the responsive audience to give donations to Kuumba. For the second part of the concert, the singers strutted to the stage wearing African dashikis. The president then informed the audience that the name of the group, Kuumba, is an African word meaning creativity and is one of the seven principles of Kwanza, a celebration of a new African harvest. The Kuumba Christmas concert was not only creative, but was inspirational as well. At the end of the concert, former members of Kuumba joined current members to sing "The Lord Bless You and Keep You" as they encircled the audience in the church. Rev. Gomes invited the Kuumba Singers to his nearby home for a reception honoring them for a job well done.

— © Ted Small '89
The Seventh Harvard-Radcliffe Black Independent Filmmakers Film Festival

On February 5, 6, 7, the Harvard-Radcliffe Black Cinema Society presented the 7th Black Independent Filmmakers Film Festival. Over 200 people attended the festival which featured dramas and documentaries from the Caribbean, Africa, as well as the United States.

"Women's Night," Friday, February 5, launched the festival off with two films dealing with the experiences of Black women. The first film, Echo (1978), by Joy Shannon, dealt with the experiences of three black women struggling against racism and sexism at different periods in American history. Also shown was Black Girl (1969), the first film by the world-acclaimed Senegalese filmmaker, Ousmane Sembene, which dramatized an African woman's tragic experience working as a maid in the home of a French family.

On Friday night the Society screened the Reggae classic Rockers (1978). Set in the slums of Jamaica, Rockers told a "Robin Hood-style" story of a Rastafarian drummer's adventures as he tries to break the "Mafia's" grip on many Reggae music stars. The screening of this film brought in requests for the Society to screen other films dealing with the Reggae music world.

The film festival ended with the screening of two features dealing with issues and people popular in the media. The Two Rivers (1985), film by Mark Newman and Edwin Wes, provided a perspective on South Africa usually unavailable to the public. This visual and poetic film, narrated by a poet from a tribe of the Venda people, gave a history of the culture, traditions, and troubles of the indigenous, African people. Spike Lee's Joe's Bed-Stuy Barbershop: We Cut Heads (1981), ended the film festival. A thesis project by this up-and-coming filmmaker, Joe's Bed-Stuy Barbershop told the tale of a Brooklyn barber's struggle against the Numbers racket. Although meant to be a drama, this film managed to get more than a few laughs.

—Dina D. Strachan '88

Response

Response is the campus rape and sexual harassment hotline and drop-in center. The drop-in center, located in the Lowell House basement, houses the Response library, which loans to all Harvard/Radcliffe students. Response has a collection of about 100 books, focusing on rape, incest, harassment, physical and emotional abuse, women's health, sexuality, and fiction dealing with these issues. Response used the Harvard Foundation grant to improve our library by including works by and about women of non-white backgrounds. Before we had the books from the Harvard Foundation, all of our library books assumed a white, non-ethnic "norm" for the women they are reaching.

Our library is an important resource for both Response staffers and interested students in the Harvard community. Our sixteen staffers counsel on issues related to rape and harassment, and our library books can give us information our callers may need, and also new perspectives on counseling, by helping us to understand how our callers may feel. Yet, while the community we serve is diverse, coming from many racial and ethnic backgrounds, our literature was written solely from the white, middle-class perspective. This was a disservice to our staffers (who themselves come from different racial backgrounds), to their ability to counsel effectively, and to students who may be looking for resources on rape and harassment, either for personal or academic reasons. We know that rape can happen to all women, but our library did not yet reflect that knowledge.

This was a serious omission because a woman's personal background greatly influences her own experience and feelings about having been raped. Cultural attitudes about sexuality, virginity, violence, and protection all influence how she may feel. Since we recognize that there is not one set of values, but as many different values as there are cultural backgrounds, we have an obligation to learn about diverse cultural backgrounds, and experiences of rape and harassment from a cultural perspective, with which we may not be immediately familiar. We now have the resources to do that, and they are available to all of the student body as well.

Among the new titles purchased from the Harvard Foundation grant are: Chain Chain Change: For Black Women Dealing with Physical and Emotional Abuse; Women, Race, and Class; Major Sola Que Mal Acompañada Para La mujer Golpeada; For the Latina in an Abusive Relationship; This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color; and Black Women in White America.

—Andrea Page '88
La Hora Latina

La Hora Latina continues to be one of a handful of Latin American music radio programs in the Boston area. It is broadcast every Wednesday on WHRB 95.3 FM from noon to 2:00 p.m. Diana Davila ’88, La Hora Latina’s producer and host, truly believes that the outstanding success of the program is due to its great musical variety which has wide appeal. Each week, she features an entertaining mix of all styles of Latin American music—from Mexican rancheras and cumbias to Puerto Rican salsa and merengue, from Tejano music to music of the Andes. Furthermore, Diana accents the show with valuable information and announcements of interests to the ever growing and quite diversified Latin American community in Boston. The bilingual commentary on La Hora Latina is an unique aspect that attracts many non-Spanish speaking listeners.

Last semester, through the financial assistance of the Harvard Foundation, many projects to promote and improve La Hora Latina were made possible. Successful poster- ing on campus increased student awareness of the program. Such publicity was done with two things in mind: first, that more students would listen to the program and perhaps give Diana feedback; secondly, that another bilingual student would join WHRB and be trained to assist Diana with the broadcast.

During the first week of the fall reading period, the WHRB Folk Department sent out letters to approximately four hundred record companies requesting promotional copies of folk recordings and Latin American music.

Over the December holiday break, Diana was also able to purchase records both from Texas companies near her home and a few shops in the Boston area that promote Spanish music. The increased number of records available has greatly enhanced the variety and quality of music played on the show. In addition, promotional fliers and information were sent to area newspapers, Harvard organizations, and community service organizations in Boston which might be interested in La Hora Latina.

Diana, who understands the importance of maintaining and sharing all aspects of one’s culture, is grateful to the Harvard Foundation for its support of a radio program dedicated to music from many Latin American countries. The significant increase in the number of phone calls during each show is proof enough of the many more who, through such efforts at publicity funded by the Foundation, are now enjoying La Hora Latina each week.

—Larry Nagel ’89

Diana Davila ’88 announcing over the air and starting records for WHRB radio station.
Asian American History & Experience Workshop Series

On November 13, the Asian American Association (AAA) of Harvard and Radcliffe students held a workshop on Asian American History. This workshop was probably one of the best discussion meetings AAA has had in the recent past. Approximately thirty students came to the event and although most of the participants were Asian Americans, the group was actually quite diverse—with students from different generational, ethnic and family backgrounds.

While the workshop opened with discussions on the people's immigrant history, it quickly moved on to show how some of their experiences related to the history of Asians in America since the late 1800's. Through a videotape, the participants were introduced to one chapter of Asian American history—the process by which Chinese immigrated to the U.S. They learned about the coolie trade, paper sons, paper bridges, and Angel Island.

For all the participants, regardless of their racial background, the workshop was a learning experience. For the Asian American participants, not only was the history intellectually interesting, but also personally relevant. Knowing their own history gave them the sense that they had roots in America. At the end of the workshop, people expressed that they were really glad these workshops were offered and wanted them to continue. In addition, some pointed out that they wished the course, Asian American History and Experience (a seminar offered sporadically through the houses), was offered regularly.

Seeing that people were interested in Asian American courses, AAA chose Asian American Studies as the next workshop topic. Held on December 3, 1986, this workshop involved a panel discussion. On the panel was Suzanne Lee (speaker from Asian American Resource Workshop), Professor Wei-Ming Tu (professor who has taught the Asian American History seminar) and Annette Chin '88 (student who took the seminar last spring). Each presented their own perspective of what Asian American studies constitute and mean to them.

For Annette Chin, having taken the course helped her understand her family's and her personal experiences and to put these experiences in a theoretical framework. In her friendly anecdotal style, Suzanne Lee discussed with us how she campaigned for Asian American studies many years ago when she was at Brandeis University. Pointing out that Asian American history, literature and current issues are not included in most high school and college curriculum, she emphasized the importance for students to campaign for courses that cover these material. As a professor who taught an Asian American studies course, Professor Tu discussed the significance of Asian American history and experience in a global context, as part of the Asian American studies program.

During the question/answer period, participants discussed in greater depth issues such as why an Asian American studies course should be offered, what courses can be offered at Harvard and what programs are being offered at other Universities.

Once again, this workshop went smoothly and gave Asian American students a forum for constructive conversations. Approximately twenty-five people attended, most of whom were Asian Americans. Unlike many AAA events which draw only undergraduates, this program attracted graduate students and alumni as well. In part, this discussion helped to launch the committee (which was recently formed under AAA) to explore the possibility of getting the Asian American history and experience course offered regularly at Harvard.

—Catherine Tse '87
"Master Harold...and the boys"

Black C.A.S.T. (Community and Student Theatre) in conjunction with the Harvard Foundation and the Lowell House Drama Society presented Athol Fugard's "Master Harold...and the boys" on November 13–16 and 20–22 in the Lowell House Junior Common Room. Directed by Kenneth Johnson '87, the play focused on a day in the life of three South African men in the 1950's.

The story centers around Hally, a white South African teenager played by Andrew Sullivan, Lowell House Drama tutor. Hally's family owns a small restaurant where they employ two black servants: Sam, played by Senior John Keene, and Willie, played by Sophomore Tim Benston. Willie and Sam, in particular, have been father figures for Hally, fulfilling the role that his own drunk and crippled father could not. The story unfolds when Hally learns that his father, who has been recently hospitalized, is planning to come home. Hally realizes that he loves his father, but can no longer tolerate his handicaps and the attention that they demand. In a powerful one-act that is both amusing and unsettling, we see that Hally displaces his anger and frustration and takes out his aggression on Sam, who has tried to teach Hally that he has no reason to be ashamed of his father or himself.

The production ran for two weekends, one of which was on the Harvard-Yale weekend, an effort to draw audiences from both campuses, especially from Yale which presented the original production, staged by the Yale Repertory Theatre. The show sold out on most nights, with standing-room-only crowds. This was a definite compliment to the talents of all the actors and to Kenny Johnson, who was directing for the first time. The show received very favorable reviews from on-campus papers and was a great success for all those involved.

—Inger Tudor '87

For Jeanny

ROAD NEAR ISIRO
(after a photograph of the Congo rainforest)

From a streamlike path, brilliant with shade
They come, a dozen-odd blacks and one white man
(In white) near-deified on assback beneath
A sweat of glory in the upper leaves.
One cannot make out expression in their
Faces—at best one sees concessionary
Poses for the distant lens that scales
Them to the brush of Chinese landscape. Only
The trees have particularity
—That loftiest of benedictions a silk-cotton,
No doubt, amid the lightning barks that bolt
Earth to vanished sky.

What are they doing,
This faceless crew? What does the man think
He has them (thinking they are) doing on his
Expedition to their land?

It
Is 1913.
I intrude like a road.

© By Marvin Hightower
In Memory of David Aloian

The students and staff of The Harvard Foundation and I mourn the passing of our dearly revered Associate, David Aloian, former Master of Quincy House. His loss is greatly felt by all of us who believe in the dignity and worth of all human beings. We express our deepest sympathy to his wife Mimi and his family.

David Aloian was very close to The Harvard Foundation from its inception. The level of success we enjoy today is due in large measure to David Aloian and other fine people in this community who took an interest in The Harvard Foundation early on. He played a special role in the development of The Foundation’s initial programs, its vision, and in bringing the agency to its present position in the Harvard community.

David was a deeply sincere and caring person who put nothing above his commitment to Harvard students and the development of proper attitudes about racial tolerance and harmony among them. He also demonstrated his concern for improved racial understanding in his work with the staff and alumni of the University. On numerous occasions, as Master of Quincy House, David made extraordinary efforts to support the projects of The Harvard Foundation by sharing his personal time and interest, and through the hosting of special events and Foundation guests, such as Javier Perez de Cuellar, Secretary General of the U.N., Henry Cisneros, Mayor of San Antonio, Author, James Baldwin, and others. David helped us establish the model that we presently use for collaborative projects with the various Harvard Houses. In his work as Director of the Alumni Office, he made affirmative efforts to involve minority alumni in the activities of the University and Harvard Clubs throughout the country and frequently called upon this office to assist in that task. He had a very appealing and calming way about himself in his approach to any matter. I learned a great deal from David, but most of all, I learned to respect and appreciate him. Mimi Aloian shared his graciousness and his kindness and I know of no other couple who exemplified the philosophy of The Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations better than they. They were our role models of what Harvard House Masters should be.

A piece of the Harvard Community has been taken from us and this will not be as good a place without our dear brother, David Aloian. But the principles he represented and his philosophy of racial and cultural understanding are still with us, just as he remains with us in spirit. And in my own small way, I shall try to keep that spirit alive by establishing the annual David Aloian Harvard Foundation Lecture.

With fondest memories,

S. Allen Counter
Director of the Harvard Foundation
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Karla Martyn ’87
Robyn Roman ’87–88
Gary Epperley ’88

The Staff of The Harvard Foundation
Clockwise from upper left: Michelle Davila ’88, Senior Student Assistant; Sean Brady, ’89, Student Assistant; Yi-Fun Hsueh ’87, Student Assistant; Kate Rubin, Foundation Staff Assistant; Rakhi Roy, Foundation Fellow.

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