

job is the ultimate professional achievement. But the working class sees work devotion as narcissism, and change as loss. Elite women may look down on working-class housewives, but job-applicant studies show that non-elite women get more callbacks than elite women, who are perceived as flight risks who will leave their own jobs, once they have children, to engage in the intensive mothering and “concerted cultivation” now expected in affluent circles.

IF THE BOOK is strong, albeit rather sweeping, on diagnosis, it is weaker on solutions. Williams calls for better civic education, which many have fruitlessly called for in the past. Perhaps her ideas about videos in which citizens extol what government has done for them could help. She’s on firmer ground in calling for elites to realize the folly of their, well, elitist ways and to offer policies that would actually help the working class, not just the poor (such as effective industrial policy and job credentialing). She also advocates new coalitions embracing common interests, observing that immigrants and the white working class share the same values of hard work and family, that progressives and the working class share an interest in marshaling government to fight against overreaching corporate interests.

More queries from the archives:

“Nothing is more likely to propel us headlong down the path to barbarism than a single-minded obsession with the concept of spiritual purity” and “Feigning deafness may be forgivable, but taken to extremes, it may cost one’s life”—two remarks cited by Japanese author Jun Ishikawa without precise attribution.

“When the action gets heavy, keep the rhetoric cool.”

Chapter & Verse

Correspondence on not-so-famous lost words

“the boredom of living versus the suffering of being”

“When you see the word ‘primitive,’ always substitute ‘complicated’”

“The dew...In down-soft slippers...the dew has seemed like teardrops ever since...”

Send inquiries and answers to “Chapter and Verse,” *Harvard Magazine*, 7 Ware Street, Cambridge 02138 or via email to chapterandverse@harvardmag.com.

In sum, Williams offers an effective tour of working-class resentments arising from structural forces and the snobbery of the elite. She draws widely on research in sociology and psychology (relegated to footnotes to maintain readability) and throughout shares amusingly telling examples of class cluelessness that she received in reaction to her *HBR* piece. The account might have been further enriched with the relevant political-science research as well (such as the extensive literature on the “hidden welfare state” of social policies implemented through the

tax code, such as the home-mortgage interest deduction, that are costly, invisible, and disproportionately benefit the affluent). But in the end, Williams offers a concise, witty, and thought-provoking account of the powerful resentments underlying contemporary American politics. ▽

Andrea Louise Campbell '88, Sloan professor of political science and chair of the department at MIT, is the author of Trapped in America's Safety Net: One Family's Struggle, reviewed in the September-October 2014 Harvard Magazine.

ALUMNI

Widening the College Pipeline

The Posse Foundation aims to develop a “new national leadership network.”

by NELL PORTER BROWN

SOON AFTER Jwahir Sundai started at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, she began searching for “any resources I could get that would help me get into a good college.” A visiting admissions recruiter told her about The Posse Foundation, an unusual college-access and leadership program through which high-achieving students attend top-tier institutions within supportive groups—posses—of like-minded peers. The selection process is rigorous (typically fewer than 5 percent of

the applicants are chosen) and uses a “dynamic assessment” process to measure qualities like boldness, resilience, creativity, and ability to work in a team, rather than relying on the traditional standardized test scores, class rankings, and GPAs.

Sundai’s guidance counselor nominated her as a candidate, and she soon found herself “acting like a chicken,” along with all the other Boston-area applicants. “During the first round, we did different activities that took us out of our comfort zones,” she

recalls, laughing. In another task, she helped build a LEGO robot and run a discussion lab “to test how we were in a group, and how we would work as a posse.”

Each year, the foundation takes students from 10 metropolitan areas across the country (the others are Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York City, San Francisco, and Washington D.C.) and places them at 57 partner educational institutions. The year Sundai applied, she got one of the 10 spots allotted to Boston-area

high-schoolers at Bryn Mawr, where she is now a rising junior studying global health. On campus, she is not only part of her own class's Boston posse—a group that has grown close through working, socializing, and learning together during the last three years—but also part of the school's larger Posse community. Because Bryn Mawr takes two posses per class, there are always, theoretically, up to 80 members on campus to whom Sundai says she can turn for anything: “Posse allows us to have a community in our schools that supports us both surviving and thriving at the undergraduate level—and beyond.”

More than 3,500 Posse students are currently enrolled in four-year undergraduate programs, says Posse founder and CEO Deborah Bial, Ed.D. '04. (There are 74 partnerships in all because a third of the partners take more than one posse in a class.) Students receive full-tuition scholarships and extra support from on-site mentors/advisers and from Posse staff members before, during, and after their undergraduate years, along with connections to research opportunities, internships, and comprehensive career guidance. There's also a network of more than 4,000 Posse alumni.

Posse screens for students “who are already really driven and motivated, the kids we think of as leaders,” says Bial, who established the foundation in 1989. “There are a

The Posse Foundation “identifies particularly talented kids, kids who would blow you away, kids you'd want in any classroom.”

lot of college-access programs in the United States and many focus on minorities and diversity,” she continues. “They focus on a deficit: ‘poor,’ ‘underprivileged’; something is wrong that the program is addressing. Posse does *not* do that—and this is really important. It underlies everything we do. Posse is a strength-based model that, although it also addresses diversity, identifies particularly talented kids, kids who would blow you away, kids you'd want in any classroom.” The ultimate goal, she clarifies, is “to build this new national leadership network in the United States,” to shepherd students who “can become senators and CEOs, who can run the hospitals and newspapers and sit at the table where the decisions are made.”

BIAL, a 2007 MacArthur Foundation fellow, has a spot at the table herself, having built the foundation into a force for social change with 10 offices around the country, 170 employees, and \$80 million in assets (including a \$50-million endowment). Partnering educational institutions foot their students'

scholarship bills, “which is why we are able to be so big,” Bial explains, while Posse relies on contributions and grants to operate.

The foundation has always been headquartered in Manhattan, where Bial lives with her husband, former *New York Times* op-ed columnist Bob Herbert, and across the river from her hometown of Teaneck, New Jersey. Her father played the bassoon and contrabassoon for the New York Philharmonic for 38 years, and her mother was “the public-relations person” at the New York State Psychiatric Institute.

At Brandeis University, she majored in English, then worked briefly as a paralegal before taking a job at the nonprofit CityKids Foundation. There—and Bial has told this story often—she met a young man who had dropped out of an Ivy League college, who said, “I might have stayed if I'd had my posse with me.” That's the whole concept. “If you grew up in the Bronx and you wind up in Middlebury, Vermont, or Greencastle, Indiana, without anyone you know or your family, it's not surprising that you might say, ‘Forget it, I'm going home,’” she says. “The culture shock is tremendous. But if you manage to figure out a way to find your niche in that community, and a group of friends who can back you up, it changes the whole equation. I think everyone needs a posse.”

Within a year, at 23, she had started the foundation as “just an idea.” Vanderbilt's Peabody College “took a chance on a program with no track record,” she says, and accepted five New York City students in 1989—“And the idea worked. That first group of kids was incredible.” For the next decade, Bial and a small team focused on designing the “dynamic assessment” tool and a pre-collegiate program for successful applicants, then added new partners—Brandeis, Middlebury, and DePauw, among them. (During this time the foundation officially incorporated, with Michael Ainslie, M.B.A. '68, as the inaugural board chairman.) Bial herself returned to school in 1995, earning a master's de-

Deborah Bial



Centennial Medalists

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL of Arts and Sciences' Centennial Medal, first awarded in 1989 on the occasion of the school's hundredth anniversary, honors alumni who have made contributions to society that emerged from their graduate studies. It is the highest honor GSAS bestows, and awardees include some of Harvard's most accomplished alumni. The 2017 recipients, announced at a ceremony on May 24, are: Russell A. Mittermeier, Ph.D. '77, a primatologist, herpetologist, and conservation advocate; Sarah P. Morris, Ph.D. '81, a classicist and archaeologist; Thomas F. Pettigrew, Ph.D. '56, an expert on racism and intergroup relations; and Richard Sennett, Ph.D. '69, a sociologist who writes about cities, labor, and culture. For more about the medalists, see harvardmag.com/centennial-17.



Graduate School of Arts and Sciences honorees (from left) Mittermeier, Morris, Pettigrew, and Sennett

gree, and later her doctorate, at Harvard while simultaneously fine-tuning the foundation. In 1999, she began replicating the Posse model, opening a second office in Boston.

Further expansion, between 2007 and 2016, under the board leadership of Jeff Ubben, co-founder and CEO of the San Francisco-based hedge fund ValueAct Capital, brought 47 new partnerships and increased foundation assets to \$80 million. Today, alongside additional financial supporters, Bial has well-connected advocates within higher education, including former Harvard president Derek Bok, who serves on the national advisory board.

These resources help fund the on-site support for Posse students that Bial considers critical. At Bryn Mawr, Sundai meets regularly with posse friends to talk, share meals, study, hang out. On her very first day on campus, she recalls, "People I didn't even know came up and hugged me and told me,

"Welcome home." They were other, older Posse members at Bryn Mawr. Especially important is her go-to Posse mentor, professor and chair of mathematics Leslie C. Cheng. Sundai's had challenges, like deciding whether to pursue STEM studies and/or humanities, and says, "I don't know who I would talk to if I didn't have Leslie. She is supportive, patient, dedicated, amazing—she has helped me so much in my time here."

That quality—tending "to look external when they're challenged, to think in terms of teams solving a problem," Bial says—is often a factor that differentiates successful students, and is something the foundation looks for in candidates. "They are more likely to succeed than the kid who locks herself up in a room and withdraws, who thinks she is the only one she can rely on. We tend to think of leaders as individual success stories, but they are successful because they know

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how to build relationships.”

It’s also why access to internships and career help is built into the program. Generous backing led to this spring’s announcement of a new Posse summer-fellowship program, honoring Jeff Ubben, for five high-performing scholars annually. These “once-in-a-lifetime” internships come with \$7,000 stipends,

Bial explains; the inaugural fellows have positions in the offices of U.S. congressman and civil-rights leader John R. Lewis, LL.D. ’12 (“He’s my hero,” she adds); film producer Jason Blum (*Whiplash*, *Kicking and Screaming*); and Nobel Prize-winning economist and Columbia University professor Joseph Stiglitz, among others.

What’s next? By 2020, Bial expects to have a 6,000-strong Posse alumni network and 26 more educational partnerships, which would bring the number of Posse students in the pipeline and on campuses at any given time to about 5,000. In addition, she is expanding another cohort of the Posse population, which began in 2012: post-9/11 military

The 2017 Harvard Medalists

THREE ALUMNI received the Harvard Medal, for extraordinary service to the University, at the Harvard Alumni Association’s annual meeting on the afternoon of Commencement day. They are:



Henry N. Cobb

Henry N. Cobb ’47, M.Arch. ’49, a former professor and chair of the architecture department at the Graduate School of Design (GSD) and former president of the GSD Association. Cobb designed several local buildings, including the terra cotta-clad Center for Government and International

Studies (CGIS) complex on Cambridge Street. CGIS is “representative of Harry’s contributions to the University and the Harvard community, and of his vision as an architect,” says GSD dean Mohsen Mostafavi. Cobb still teaches occasionally at the school as a visiting lecturer, serves as an honorary member of its campaign committee, and contributes actively to Pei Cobb Freed & Partners LLP, the architecture firm he helped found in 1955.

Visionary architect with an eye for building community, you have helped shape Harvard both physically and pedagogically as a designer, writer, educator, and leader for the Graduate School of Design—enhancing the beauty of the built environment on campus and around the world with works of subtle elegance and profound eloquence.

Warren Masters Little ’55, who has devoted decades of service to Harvard’s alumni, athletic, and other organizations. “Renny” Little has served on numerous HAA committees since 1977, including the Happy Observance of Commencement Committee for 33 years—18 as its secretary. “An avid Harvard fan, he served as vice president and is an advisory committee member for the Harvard Varsity Club. He is an active



Warren Masters Little

member of the Friends of Harvard Track and rarely misses a home meet, or football, or women’s hockey game,” according to a statement from the HAA. “For Harvard’s 350th, he created an exhibit of Harvard’s athletic memorabilia. The pro bono curator of the Lee Family Athletic Hall of History, Little has collected Crimson treasures, refurbishing many for display.” A former executive director of both the Cambridge Historical Society and the Higgins Armory Museum, he was also a director of education at the New England Aquarium and a teacher and coach at the Rivers School. Little has also long served as secretary for his College class.

Dedicated volunteer, poetic orator, mentor to many, and friend to all with a keen sense of history and humor, you have selflessly carried the baton for your class, Crimson athletics, and the entire Harvard community—equally comfortable in a top hat and tails at Commencement or a raccoon coat at The Game, and always wearing your H on your sleeve.

A. Clayton Spencer, A.M. ’82, who assisted four different Harvard presidents across 15 years. She was a senior administrator during the late 1990s and early 2000s, a period of significant change for the University, and was involved in the merger of Harvard with Radcliffe College and the resulting creation of the Radcliffe Institute; the creation of the financial-aid initiative, which made the College tuition-free for low-income families; and other high-profile University projects. Since 2012, she has been president of Bates College—President Drew Faust spoke at her installation ceremony. Drawing on her extensive experience, Spencer reviewed *Lesson Plan: An Agenda for Change in American Higher Education*, by William G. Bowen, for *Harvard Magazine* (September-October, 2016, page 64).



A. Clayton Spencer

With conviction and humility that underscore your fierce commitment to higher education, you have served as an astute and forthright advisor to four Harvard presidents, providing the driving force and steady hand behind transformational University moments, including the launch of the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, and the expansion of financial aid.

veterans. “These are people with a lot of experience already, who are returning to college for degrees, and the average age is 27,” she reports. “Their first choice is not to go to school with a bunch of 19-year-olds out of high school. But to have other vets with you? That changes the whole thing.” Some 80 Posse veterans are enrolled at partner schools Vassar, Dartmouth, and Wesleyan, with another 30 arriving this summer, and Bial wants to bring at least eight more partners on board.

Bial revels in continuing to build the organization and hone the “dynamic assessment” process that asks candidates to build those LEGO robots, offering examples of the knotty questions posed to applicants: Are you more proud of how you think or how you act? Do you generally give people a second chance? Explain.

Challenged to answer one herself—What does happiness feel like?—she responds: “I’m a pretty happy person. I like movement, so I want to always feel like I’m learning and I want to feel that Posse is always contributing, always learning and growing. I want to feel like I am of value.”

Kids do, too. This past April, Bial was at a Posse event in Chicago with Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg ’91, M.B.A. ’95, and Wharton School of Business professor Adam Grant ’03, co-authors of the new book *Option B*, which examines how people overcome hardship and obstacles. “Adam was talking about how kids really need to feel they matter,” Bial reports. “Posse’s job, our job, is to make that clear—not just to them, but to the world we’re in.”



Leon Starr

The Senior Alumni

RHODA LESSER DIAMOND ’42, of Martha’s Vineyard, and Leon Starr ’40, of Rye, New York, were the oldest Harvard and Radcliffe alumni present on Commencement Day. Each wore rain gear and had seats on the Tercentenary Theatre stage (to avoid the sloppy weather) during the afternoon program, when they were publicly honored by Harvard Alumni Association president Martin J. Grasso Jr. ’78. “I was here 70 years ago when George Marshall delivered his famous speech that saved the world,” noted Starr, “and now we’re here and going to hear from Mark Zuckerberg about the Brave New World.” Starr turns 99 in June and was accompanied by his wife, Jacquie, and his son, Jonathan ’69. Asked about how he’s lived so long, and so well, Starr credited

“clean living, lots of exercise. I played tennis and squash. And the love of two good women.” (“He means me, and his first wife,” a smiling Jacquie piped up.) Nearby, the 96-year-old Diamond said she had traveled from her island home “to celebrate my seventy-fifth reunion.” She was flanked by her sons, Paul ’82 and John, a Yalie, who quipped: “We’ve always been a Yale-Harvard family—but we’re more Harvard today.”



Rhoda Lesser Diamond

New Harvard Overseers and HAA Elected Directors

THE NAMES of the new members of the Board of Overseers and elected directors of the Harvard Alumni Association (HAA) were read during the HAA’s annual meeting on the afternoon of Commencement Day. For Overseer (six-year term):

Paul L. Choi ’86, J.D. ’89, Chicago. Partner, Sidley Austin LLP.

Mariano-Florentino Cuéllar ’93, San Francisco. Justice, Supreme Court of California.

Darienne B. Driver, Ed.M. ’06, Ed.D.

’14, Milwaukee. Superintendent, Milwaukee public schools.

Carla Harris ’84, M.B.A. ’87, New York City. Vice chair of wealth management and managing director, Morgan Stanley.

Leslie P. Tolbert ’73, Ph.D. ’78, Tucson. Regents’ professor, department of neuroscience, University of Arizona. For elected director (three-year term):

Martha Abbruzzese Genieser ’91, London. Director of philanthropy, Alan Howard Family Office.

Sangu Julius Delle ’10, J.D.-M.B.A. ’17, Accra, Ghana. Chairman and CEO, Golden Palm Investments Corporation; founder and president, cleanacwa.

Sachin H. Jain ’02, M.D. ’06, M.B.A. ’07, Cerritos, California. President and CEO, CareMore Health System.

Elena Hahn Kiam ’85, New York City. Co-owner and creative director, K-FIVE LLC d/b/a lia sophia; co-owner and non-executive marketing director, Cirrus Healthcare Products.

Ronald P. Mitchell ’92, M.B.A. ’97, New York City. CEO, Virgil Inc.

Paola A. Peacock Friedrich, S.M. ’06, Ed.L.D. ’14, Marblehead, Massachusetts. Human capital management consultant, AchieveMission.

Cambridge Scholars

FOUR SENIORS have won Harvard Cambridge Scholarships to study at Cambridge University during the 2017-2018 academic year. Halah Ahmad, of Milwaukee and Currier House, a comparative study of religion concentrator, will be the Lionel De Jersey Harvard Scholar at Emmanuel College; Ezinne Nwankwo, of Los Angeles and Winthrop House, an applied mathematics concentrator, will be the William Shirley Scholar at Pembroke College; Eesha Khare, of Saratoga, California, and Leverett House, an engineering sciences concentrator, will be the Charles Henry Fiske III Scholar at Trinity College; and Kevin Xiong, of Cambridge and Cabot House, an economics concentrator, will be the John Eliot Scholar at Jesus College.