

Blacks At Barnard

A survey of Policy and events

By Andrée L. Abecassis '60

In the late fifties, they called themselves "The Holy Twelve" and it was the pet name for a private observation: there at that time were rarely more than 12 Negroes at Barnard, scattered throughout the four classes.

In the sixties, things are different, in the nation and at the College. No longer Negroes, now blacks, Barnard's black students are highly visible, vocal and proud. They are also organized and demanding recognition as a group in the College community.

How did Barnard's black students go from private observation to public demands?

If, as Admissions Director Helen McCann '40 reports, the earlier lack of black students on campus was "unconscious," the sudden increase in their numbers was no accident.

In the spring of 1964, the College made two deliberate, distinct, decisions: to increase the number of black students and to recruit promising high school seniors (not just blacks) who had good school records and high motivation despite poor college board scores. Obviously, not all special students would be black, nor would all the black students be specials. The new policies were related in their aim to provide a Barnard education to more young women disadvantaged for various reasons. But there was, of course, no assumption that all black applicants would lack Barnard's entrance requirements or that all potential white students would meet the College's admission standards.

Miss McCann credits former President Rosemary Park with the initial decision to recruit actively both black and special students.

"About the same time," the admissions director recalls, "a Negro student dropped by to see me and asked, 'why do we have a black quota at Barnard'?"

Miss McCann says Barnard never had any sort of quota, but the question, in the right place at the right time, brought about a change of approach.

It took more than a year to implement the ideals of the spring. In the fall of 1965, Barnard admitted 18 black students to the freshman class. The previous year, there had been eight black freshmen. Since 1965, each entering class has had between 19 and 22 black members.

That same fall semester saw the first special students. [Not counting those in Barnard's first class, in October, 1889, at 343 Madison Avenue. That class included 22 specials, so named because they lacked the entrance requirement in Greek.]

The special status of the 1965 group was based in part on these provisions: specials could take a lighter program; tutoring would be available; even commuter special students could get

dorm space, and the specials would have the option of working for the degree in six years—the University's maximum time—instead of four. But the major concession to the special students was that they would be eligible for financial aid for the full six years.

Since 1965, 36 special students have been admitted. Today, 34 remain and they are doing quite well. The first group of six will graduate on schedule next month in the Class of 1969. To begin with, Miss McCann explained, special students were not to be singled out publicly. After the first semester brought out some academic troubles, some faculty members insisted that the special students be identified.

The administration insists it is only coincidental that the drives to recruit black students and special students started at the same time. But since special students are often black, the lack of clarity on the separateness of the programs has been a source of friction on the campus. The entire specials program, including its name, its recruiting goals and who-knows-what-about-whom is now undergoing revision.

The College opened this fall against this background of a rising number of black students; more special students; the tense national election campaign, and the events at Columbia the previous spring. There were 80 black students on campus, including four Africans. During last spring's student strike, the Columbia blacks had not only taken over Hamilton Hall, but they also had done it by themselves, refusing help from white brothers in the Students for a Democratic Society. Columbia had an active black student group on campus and its significance was not lost on their sisters across the street.

One day in October, signs appeared on the Barnard campus calling all black students to a meeting. It was the first of a series in which the black students got together as a group. That group later emerged as BOSS—the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters.

"If you're black, you're automatically a member—everyone belongs although there's no formal membership," explains one senior. Opinions on campus vary as to just how many of the 80 black students BOSS really represents. But the consensus is that it represents the majority, even though only a few do most of the work.

One of the soul sisters remembers that at the time the black students first started meeting officially "there were these white chicks on campus sponsoring a series on the 'black experience.' They never came to us. They acted as if we were not there. They are completely oblivious to blacks. They invited Rhody McCoy [the black administrator of New York's controversial

Ocean Hill-Brownsville demonstration school district] to speak without telling us, thus negating our right to tell the story ourselves. It's the blind leading the blind. How can the white students relate to Ocean Hill-Brownsville without relating to their sisters on campus? We see each other in class. It was a deliberate insult. They're in a white middle-class school and they didn't come to us because they don't see us."

Not long before BOSS was formed, Mrs. Lemoine P. Callender joined Barnard's administrative staff, another move about which the black students—then unorganized—claim they were not consulted. At the time, Mrs. Callender was the only high-ranking black person in the Barnard administration. She is Assistant to the Dean of the Faculty.

"We didn't know she was coming until we read it in the newspaper," one black sophomore complained. "I think the administration got scared that something was going to happen, so they're sending in mediators."

Just what Mrs. Callender's job is depends on whom you ask. "Callender? I don't know what she does, ask her!" says one member of the administration. "At last the black students have someone to talk to," says another.

"Lemoine Callender," offers a fellow member, "handles the least ruffle we have from community relations to race to some kid flunking math. And it's not just the blacks. The kids go see her because they like her."

In the Fiske wing of Milbank Hall, Lemoine Callender has an office looking out on the placid concrete flank of the new science tower which has grown where once there were tennis courts. She sits surrounded by gleaming yellow walls, chic in deep purple, looking for her appointment book, answering frantic telephone calls and muttering about investing in roller skates.

Officially appointed in June, 1968, she has refused to let the Public Relations Office announce her arrival "until there is something to say."

"When I was asked if I could consider a position at Barnard," Mrs. Callender recalled, in an interview she had patiently consented to at her home, away from her busy office, "I thought about it; I thought of the challenge. I felt that sight unseen, any college that has no black faculty or administrative people in it makes a statement. The fact that they were now looking for someone told me that on some level, someone had given some serious thought to the needs of Barnard, to have some understanding of what it meant to be in the 20th century. I was under no illusion that my appointment was for any other reason than to help interpret the principles and the processes of social

change as it affected the College."

Mrs. Callender's relationship to BOSS is obvious, unofficial and flexible. She doesn't attend BOSS meetings regularly, although she did spend a lot of time with the group this fall, finding out from the students, first hand, just what it was like to be black at Barnard.

The black students continued meeting through the fall. By Christmas, they had named themselves BOSS and by final exams in January, the students had elected a steering committee of three sophomores: Carmen Martinez from the Bronx; Alma Kinney from Texas and Clara Hayley from Georgia. The group's first proclamation was a manifesto, which signaled the coming struggle.

As BOSS was organizing, the College announced an Urban Studies major to be instituted in the fall and a spring lecture series to probe the problems of the cities. Early in December, the College also announced the election as trustee of Barbara Mae Watson '39, the first Negro to hold that position. When Miss Watson, a lawyer, who is Assistant Secretary of State, later addressed a group of students at a Thursday Noon Meeting, she was pressed by both white and black students who wanted to know what was being done to make the College "more relevant" to society. She admitted:

"The mere fact that I've been elected to the Board of Trustees is proof of change. I'm here as a representative of the black community. It's not because I'm beautiful or brilliant. I have a special role."

When asked if she objects to playing this role, she replied: "Not at all. You recognize the facts of life."

Meanwhile, the College was refining and revising the program for special students, too.

In January, the Committee on the Developing Student sent to President Peterson a proposal which recommended that Barnard's program for "educationally disadvantaged students," (the specials) be significantly expanded and revised.

Then, in March, the committee proposed ". . . that the program be known as *Barnard's Program for Developing Students* (PDS). We understand that the phrase 'educationally disadvantaged students' can include those of all racial backgrounds. In making this recommendation we affirm the College's urgent responsibility for making available, especially to young women in the New York metropolitan area, more opportunities for quality undergraduate liberal arts education. PDS students are individuals whose special qualities and unusual potential lead the Committee to believe that they can successfully meet Barnard's degree



Black students at lunch at the "soul table" in the Hewitt Dining Room. They generally eat together at this table, a large round one in the southwest corner of the dining room. Some people on the campus point gloomily to the table as an example of black separatism. Others point out that table cliques are traditional to college life, like the "football table" at a men's school, for example.

requirements, but who may not meet Barnard's admissions requirements in the traditional way. We regard this proposal as a sound educational venture that will enhance and enrich Barnard's position as a leading women's undergraduate college in a major urban community. We also urge the College to intensify its efforts to attract non-white students who meet Barnard's admissions requirements in the traditional way."

The focus in January was not on black and special students alone. The curriculum, too, was being examined. President Peterson called together department heads and asked for a list of current and projected Barnard and Barnard-Columbia courses treating African and Afro-American material. From these talks, still another committee emerged to discuss an Afro-American major.

To some it seemed in January, 1969, that there was a lot of positive activity at Barnard taking place between blacks and whites: an Urban studies major had been established; proposals for an Afro-American major were being explored; a Negro trustee had been appointed; an urban lecture series was planned. But the events at Barnard were not without precedent; the College, while active, was not exactly breaking new ground. In November, 1968, Columbia had announced a major course in black civilization; in January, Harvard announced a degree in American Negro studies. All winter, the press was filled with stories about Afro-American courses and black students at other colleges: Wesleyan, Radcliffe, Princeton.

The spring semester started quietly. Instead of giving a State of the College address, President Peterson planned a convocation of students, faculty and administration. She would make a general speech about "the major changes at Barnard" past and future and then the group would break up into smaller town meetings so students could participate directly in discussions about "the present state and future possibilities of college government and college services," and "the present state of the College's academic program."

Miss Peterson never got to deliver the speech she wrote for Monday, February 10, 1969. The night before, a blizzard dumped over a foot of snow on the city and the meeting was cancelled. It was rescheduled for Monday, March 3, three weeks later.

Shortly before nine a.m., on February 24, a week before the new convocation, a group of black students gathered outside President Peterson's office. Moments later they were ushered inside. One black student stepped forward and presented and read a list of ten demands of the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters. Before the students left, they demanded Miss Peterson

reply at the convocation. She agreed.

Miss Peterson's reply to the demands at the convocation seemed to win the support of Barnard's majority white students. Then Carmen Martinez, one of the BOSS leaders, took the microphone, denounced the President's "insensitivity," and announced BOSS's total rejection of her reply.

The white students were confused and upset; even the most optimistic worried about a breakdown of communications between whites and blacks at Barnard.

Later, however, the black students issued clarifications of their stand and called meetings of faculty and students in the various residence halls to explain the BOSS position. Many white students and faculty members came and were receptive.

In her reply to the Ten Demands at Convocation, Miss Peterson said she would ask for progress reports on all fronts by March 17. In mid-April as we went to press, she reported that the Program for the Developing Student—the new name for the special student project—would include more tutoring and counseling, and an orientation program. The financial aid committee was developing ways to make its program more adaptable and better understood. The black students, it was hoped, would be able to live together as they wished, providing the rights of other students to live as they wished were not violated. (Ironically, the College cannot strictly meet the demand for separate housing because of state and federal anti-discrimination statutes.)

Academically, things are moving more slowly, the president noted, because of the desire of students and faculty to make new courses and programs solid ones. It is proving difficult to hire black teachers because those known to be qualified are in great demand and competition is stiff.

BOSS was not so optimistic. One member of the steering committee, Carmen Martinez, said that the administration was not asking black students to participate in the processes of change.

"We've come to a standstill at this point," she said in mid-April. "When we first sent out the demands, I was flooded with communications from the administration. Lately, I haven't heard anything at all. I don't know what they're doing."

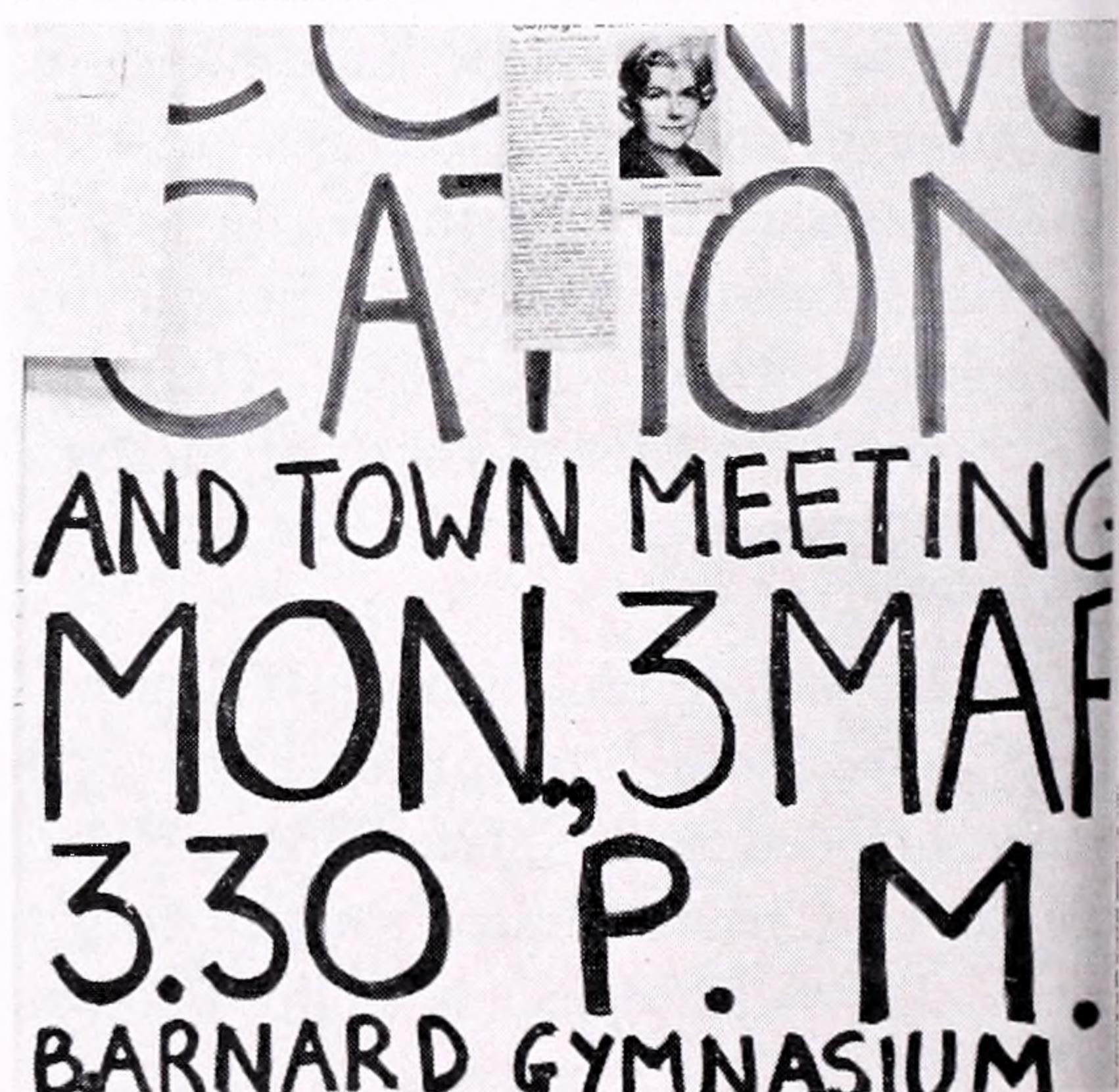
Still Miss Peterson said she is hopeful that progress is being made. She finds that while, in the fall, "everything one person said was mistrusted by the other," the year has been spent in "building back a base of mutually accepted goals." Members of the college community, she hoped, were leaving behind "grandiose world-saving notions" to "come to terms with what it is possible to do."

Manifesto Of the Barnard Organization Of Soul Sisters

December 18

The only educational relevancy Barnard has to the black student is to demonstrate successfully institutionalized racism. Barnard's courses serve simply to reinforce the European cultural heritage, as a look at the Barnard catalogue will aptly testify. Those courses which are purportedly relevant to blacks deal with them only as problems, *i.e.*, "ethnic and minority problems of adjustment." The first course instituted in the entire history of Barnard which is potentially relevant to blacks — "English 40," or, "Books in the Black Experience" — had to be expanded so that more than two black students could experience the course. It is being taught by a white professor who admits that she needs help in teaching this monumental course, which is projected as covering not only black literature, but black history and black sociology also. All rolled up into one little black course. This ignorance of the real black experience in the midst of such academic fortitude is hardly surprising when one becomes acquainted with the attitudes of the faculty and administration at Barnard. A book could be written on the black experience at Barnard — like:
a member of the sociology department states that "blacks cannot conceptualize;"
a member of the philosophy department states that jazz is "frivolous and culturally worthless;"
contemporary economics and contemporary novel courses which do not deal with blacks at all;
art courses which do not deal with sub-Saharan or Afro-American art;
the fact that no African language is offered at Barnard and no student can take an African language without demonstrating its inclusion in her major;
the fact that President Peterson had the nerve to tell a black student that what Barnard needed to do was have students go west to recruit Indians (later for Harlem). When a dean of faculty was approached by black students with the notion of black studies, he finally replied that there were

proposals in order for a major in urban studies, but that to his knowledge they did not deal with the black experience, nor were any courses to be taught by black professors. The excuse given was that black professors were too hard to find and were, in fact, really not necessary. When this same dean of faculty at Barnard was informed that black students did indeed have a list of black Ph.D's, the dean suggested that they "do anything you like" with it. An administrator of the government department, when interviewed said that "it was the white middle class that needed to be made aware of the problem — therefore no black professors are needed." He was not interested in presenting, he said, "some militant's point of view." However, he conceded, "If some famous black specialist could convince" him "that there was enough good literature for a course in black politics," then he would have to teach it himself. He then told the undergraduate interviewer, who did have such a list of "good literature," to bring it to him. The ignorance of the faculty and administration is indicative of their own racist education, which they obviously intend to propagate. Due to their own limited life-experience with blacks, their knowledge of black women is limited to the master-servant relationship they have with the black women they hire to maintain their households.



The Ten Demands

*Proposals presented to
President Peterson by the Barnard
Organization of Soul Sisters
on February 24.*

Where there is a need to act and the individual fails to act, then the individual is responsible for the consequences that flow herefrom. We, the black students, believe that the educational structure at Barnard supports the status quo. We recognize the need for change. The demands which we are presenting are an earnest effort by the black students of Barnard College to initiate that change.

We feel that in the past the Barnard College administration has exhibited a lack of sensitivity and a lack of understanding concerning the problems of black students. Therefore, we demand that the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters have the sole power to institute the following changes including the hiring of personnel and selection of committees and committee members. It is understood that all of the following programs will be funded in total by Barnard College.

We seek and expect a relevant education.

We seek and expect a relevant education which we are not getting and which we are not alone in realizing the need for. White students have also felt the alienation. In a first step toward the establishment of a "more meaningful education" the black students at Barnard propose the foundation of an inter-departmental major in Afro-American studies. This major is to be fashioned after the Urban Studies major already proposed, but will call for the addition of several new courses in nearly all of the departments. A committee of faculty members, i.e., the chairmen of the departments, and students should be immediately established to implement this. It is taken for granted that black students chosen by the black community at Barnard will serve both as advisors in planning the curriculum and as members of the committee which renders the final decision. We do not recognize any parallel committee, and demand the immediate dissolution of the committee established by the administration.

We feel a need to undertake a nationwide recruitment program wherein more black students will be admitted to the college. *We feel that Barnard's black enrollment must be increased. We feel that such an increase should come through a nationwide recruitment program sponsored financially by the college in which presently enrolled blacks will educate prospective black applicants as to the relevance of an education at Barnard. The relationship between recruiter and applicant will thereby be a more intimate one, with the applicant being thoroughly informed of the true policies of Barnard College.*

We demand that the policies of the financial aid office be made more flexible, taking into consideration the special needs of the black students.

We do not feel that we should have to deal with the present financial aid office which continuously fails to recognize our individual needs and prefers to dictate to us what we ought to need. Most black students at Barnard depend on financial aid and have the right to know on exactly what terms and by what criterion financial aid is given. We feel that the unrealistic policies of financial aid need to be revamped.

We want periodicals, books, and records relevant to our black culture in the Library.

The Black Women of Barnard College demand periodicals, books, and records which are relevant to black culture to be placed in Lehman Library as a necessity for making the educational structure of this college relevant to the black student, and for educating the uninformed non-black Barnard student body.

We demand an orientation program designed for and administered by black students.

The establishment of such a program is essential to entering black freshmen for a smooth transition into college life in general, and into the often-times tense and alienating environment in which we find ourselves. We contend that such a program can only be meaningful and truly successful if directed and carried out in its entirety by black students who have had the experience of living in a predominantly white institution in New York City. We feel that it is our duty as black students to assist each black student in obtaining a meaningful and complete education of what the city can offer us, and what adjustments must (and those that need not) be made for a fruitful experience here.

We demand the total reconstruction of the "Special Student Program."

We feel that the Special Student Program should meet the specific and individual needs of those students who have been saddled with the burdensome label of "Special Students." This reconstruction must involve organized programs geared toward the cultural, academic, and financial needs of the students.

We want immediate lounge and office facilities in BHR and Plimpton until we can move into permanently designated rooms in the Student Union Building [the McIntosh Student Center].

I The Ten Demands

As black students we feel the need of a central location from which we can work. Having a culture separate from that of the non-black student body we feel that such an area would provide an outlet from strains imposed by our existence in the white structure at Barnard.

We want selective living for black students at Barnard.

It is a strain—academically, socially, and therefore psychologically for us, black women, to live apart from one another in the dormitories. We have no desire to assimilate into the white society at Barnard. We want sections of BHR, Plimpton, and 616-620 to be designated "for blacks only" so that we may have the option of living instead of merely existing.

We demand Soul Food in the cafeteria.

As students from a significantly different background (culturally and socio-economically) we feel entitled to be served dishes con-

sistent with our background, i.e., Soul Food. Because we pay for the food we eat, we'd like to be served some familiar foods. If certain other minority groups can have fish on the line to supplement their diets because of religious beliefs, we feel that black students can also have some Soul Food. Presently, the food service is biased and discriminatory.

We want an immediate end to harassment by campus security. There have been many instances in which the black students at Barnard have been unnecessarily asked to produce Barnard identification. We feel that such practices are discriminatory and we will not tolerate them.

We demand a response from President Peterson and the Board of Trustees by March 3, 1969 and further demand that President Peterson speak directly to these demands in an open meeting on March 3, 1969.



Students waiting for the convocation to begin, March 3.

Miss Peterson Replies

*At Convocation
March 3*

... I shall be speaking primarily today to certain issues raised last Monday by the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters. Before addressing those issues let me state why it is appropriate at this time to concentrate on those issues; let me also make a few general statements about criteria which apply in making policy at Barnard College.

The issues raised by the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters last Monday are ones of pressing personal concern to anyone who is a part of the world that is in 1969. They are the questions which black students must ask now about their relationship to their college. They emerge from a unique historical context which all of us must recognize. Because these questions are important to a part of our student body they should be considered thoughtfully by all of us, white or black, student or faculty, young or old. We have a rare opportunity to weigh these issues in a manner appropriate to a college community. I am grateful that we have had a week for discussion, review and careful re-examination of our policies. I shall do my best to present the recommendations of those who have reacted voluntarily or at my request to the issues raised. The replies are addressed to specific issues. The policy determining the replies applies equally to issues that concern all of us at Barnard.

The criteria for decision-making at Barnard are rather easily stated; they are not so easily applied. The three questions we must ask are:

Is the decision appropriate to the kind of college we are?

Does it strengthen the quality of teaching and learning?

Have we the resources to afford it?

Barnard is a small liberal arts college for women, a part of Columbia University in New York City. It has a tradition of high academic quality, of heterogeneity and independence in its faculty and student body. It has less money, a smaller, more limited campus than most colleges with which it compares favorably academically.

These are both limiting and challenging facts of life for us.

It is as difficult to measure how a recommended change affects the quality of teaching and learning. But any change must be measured by how much it contributes to improving what and how teachers teach and students learn. By trustee delegation the responsibility for curriculum and faculty personnel rests primarily with the faculty, but the quality of curriculum and faculty affects all of us and we therefore have an inescapable obligation to assist the faculty according to our own abilities as they develop the curriculum and select new staff members.

The final criterion of whether we have the resources to do what we hope to do is one that must finally be answered by the trustees. I believe that we can find in time the space, money and personnel for any educational program that makes sense for the students of the College. But these realities cannot be ignored.

The heart of the request from the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters is that they be given assurance that proposals they work out in the specific areas be accepted: that they be in charge of their own lives and be able to make the changes they desire. I would not be honest if I were to say we can grant all this unequivocally because I would be promising what I cannot do. The faculty of the College must approve the curriculum and does recommend all faculty appointments. I have not one iota of doubt about the approval of a recommendation for an Afro-American Studies major, worked out by chairmen of departments and students who care. But I cannot promise that approval, nor do I wish to, for I believe in faculty responsibility for curriculum and academic staff. I would not be honest either if I were to say that we will serve soul food in the dining room under any and all circumstances. We can and will meet student requests for menu variety, provided it costs no more than the amount budgeted for food, and provided it can be prepared

within the limits of our facilities. The staff welcomes menu suggestions.

In other words, I cannot give a blanket assurance that all requests of the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters or any other group will be immediately put into effect because they are made. But I have no doubt about our ability to accomplish any recommendation that is sound educationally and practically feasible.

Let me turn then to the specific requests of the Barnard students which we consider today, measured against these criteria.

The first request is for a relevant education, specifically an Afro-American interdepartmental major like the Urban Studies major. This is not only a reasonable request, but one we should seek to implement as quickly as we can, bearing in mind that student thinking is needed in the development of this major. The major itself must, of course, be approved by the faculty to be an official major at Barnard. The chairmen of all concerned departments have not only indicated their willingness, but their desire to work with students in developing the major. I therefore invite, even urge, the Soul Sisters who wish to work with the faculty on such a major to meet as soon as it is possible to begin discussion. The chairmen have designated Mr. [Peter H.] Juliver, Chairman of the Political Science Department, as their representative to arrange such a meeting at everyone's convenience.

The second request is for an increase in the number of black students and assignment to black students the responsibility of recruitment of others. Miss Helen McCann, who is Director of Admissions and who is responsible for the coordination of all high school relations, welcomes such a proposal and invites those students who are interested to see her. She hopes that a plan can be developed for spring vacation.

The third request is for revision of the Financial Aid policies and practices, with, I assume, additional money for financial aid. In the remarks of February 10 I spoke to

this need. I reaffirm that statement here. The Financial Aid Committee, chaired by Mrs. Barbara Schmitter, has been meeting almost weekly since January 1, first to develop a clear understanding of present policies; secondly to consider revision, and finally to put a price tag on these revisions. They have finished their first task—a review of present policies; they now are studying revisions of present policies. On February 18 they mailed cards asking those students who had ideas for changes to meet with the committee. Mrs. Schmitter and the committee invite the members of the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters and any other group of interested students to meet with the committee to prepare modifications in present financial aid policies. The final recommendation on cost will have to come to me and to the trustees, but there is no point in seeking funds until we know what we need. What we need depends on what we want and should do. One alarming aspect to the funding of a financial aid program is the indication that the Congress may reduce sizeably the funds available for NDSL, OEO grants and Work Study. If that happens, Barnard will not only need whatever new funds are suggested, we will have to find a way to replace those federal funds that are withdrawn. Mrs. Schmitter has prepared a fact statement on federal support and urges those of you who are interested in encouraging the Congress to continue aid to students, to be in touch with her.

May I turn here to a request related to the Special Student Program. There are 34 students at Barnard who entered under this program. There is agreement that it must be revised. The Committee for the Developing Student, chaired by Mrs. [Mirella de] Servodidio, has prepared a proposal for revision. The proposal is available for discussion by any group who wishes to see it. Mrs. Servodidio's committee would like the opportunity to explain the intent of their proposal to groups who are interested. Such a discussion might lead to a better proposal or to acceptance of this one. We

urge the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters to examine this proposal, to criticize it, to meet with the committee to develop a sound program.

I must point out that this is a case where financial resources may limit our aspirations. I computed the cost of the proposal from the Committee on the Developing Student to be \$4,000,000 for 10 years. We do not have that kind of money. There will be those who will say we should not have it because a tax-supported institution can do more with less money. The issue here as I see it is not how to get \$4,000,000. The issue is for the Special Students, who know why the present program is inadequate, to speak to the kind of a program that will make educational sense for themselves and for students who come to Barnard in the years ahead under similar circumstances. Then we will seek money.

The Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters asks for books, periodicals and records relevant to black culture in the Library. This request fits Barnard's policy for library acquisitions and should be possible without delay. Mr. [Robert B.] Palmer, the Librarian, and Mr. [Barry] Ulanov, Chairman of the English Department, are prepared to receive recommendations and start the purchase process with present funds for materials which we should purchase. It may be that some are on order or recently received.

Now may I turn to an exceedingly difficult question.

There are among us those who believe strongly and honestly that any move toward separation in students at Barnard by race,



Carmen Martinez



Miss Peterson accepts congratulations of white students after her speech

creed or color, is a step backward. The black students who have requested such separation describe eloquently their unhappiness in the present situation and their need for unity in order to be at home in the College. The best campus community will be one built on good will and respect for each other; but that does not mean we need to deny the right of the individual to live as she prefers, provided she makes her decision with full knowledge of the choices available, and provided her choices do not prevent others from having the same privilege.

I therefore accept the request of black students for selective living. For practical and legal reasons we cannot set aside a floor in any dormitory; we can have such policies in room assignment that guarantee that students may live with and near whom they wish. Miss [Blanche E.] Lawton, the Director of Housing, is prepared to implement that policy.

The same kind of a policy applies to a Black Orientation. Mrs. [Elizabeth Y.] Meyers and Dean [Helen P.] Bailey are advisers to the Student Committee on Orientation. There are certain activities of Orientation work that must be shared by all students in order to get the College started. Other groups, including the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters, are invited, even encouraged, to design and administer additional orientation programs to which the Barnard freshmen about whom they are concerned may be invited.

I do not know where we have an inch of free office or lounge space, but a group of students should be able to have office and lounge area if it is needed for their program. I urge the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters to request the space they need from Miss Lawton who is responsible for allocation of space in dormitories. If this space can be made available without violating the rights of others or even by compromise between groups where conflicts occur, we will do it.

Now may I make a request of the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters. Because so many disagree with you philosophically on

separatism and because I find it difficult to answer satisfactorily questions put to me, will you consider arranging an open meeting for discussion of the philosophic differences. Such a discussion, arranged by the Organization, would be a major contribution to our progress as an institution where individuals who differ can do so and yet speak reasonably to one another.

The final issue is that of discrimination by guards and watchmen in seeking identification of students. Harassment of an individual, is, of course, totally unacceptable. But if guards are to be of any use they must challenge those they do not know. I wish this were a safe enough community to forego challenges. It is not. We will therefore have to develop procedures that provide as much safety as we can for all without demeaning the dignity of any person. I plan to accept this as a personal responsibility and invite those who have suggestions on procedures or specific complaints, to be in touch with me.

I have not asked Barnard's trustees for approval of these statements. Such action is not appropriate at this time. Barnard trustees have received a copy of the requests of the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters. They will receive a copy of my reply. But the trustees expect the students, faculty and administration to work out the details of the kind of questions raised here. Specific recommendations on funds and policy changes must in time go to the trustees, but only after they have been carefully considered and agreed upon by all of us. We are not at that point yet.

I am sure the statements made here are not as definite an answer as members of the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters hoped for. I am sure there are others in this room who feel that they have rights too that have been overlooked. I believe I have been clear on principle and have reflected the opinions of those who are responsible for the administration of policies under the principles. This is, in fact, a progress statement which is made because one group

of students who felt strongly that their viewpoint was being overlooked, asked with seriousness for consideration of their point of view. All individuals and groups in this community can expect that consideration of requests which are made after thoughtful discussion.

These remarks are available as a position paper. They should be outdated as soon as the first Barnard committee makes a recommendation that is supported by those who are responsible for its consequences, for that then will be our new policy.

These policies must always respect the rights of the individual, be based on reason and strengthen the college as a place for learning.

What is the next step? Those who wish, in the next hour or so in modified town meetings, may discuss these and other matters related to curriculum, housing, college government, financial aids, even food in the dining room. I hope the Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters will seriously study my reply and will designate as many of their group as they wish to meet with those faculty and staff members named in these remarks to particular responsibilities. My office will be glad to arrange a time and place of meeting if we know who is to be invited. It might be simpler to get started if the students talked directly with the faculty or staff member. I plan to ask for a report of progress by March 17 from each person who has been named as a College representative. I ask each committee or ad hoc task force to invite me to meet with them when their recommendations are ready or when they are faced with problems they cannot handle. I quote from the statement given me last Monday: "Where there is a need to act and the individual fails to act, then the individual is responsible for the consequences that flow therefrom." We have unlimited opportunities and responsibilities. We could be a model for colleges across the country if each of us has the determination to carry his or her responsibilities intelligently and with good will. I invite you to join me in trying....

| BOSS Rejects

The Barnard Organization of Soul Sisters would like to elucidate and clarify their total rejection of the open statement made by President Peterson at the Convocation on March 3, 1969. President Peterson's response to the BOSS proposals was either one of astonishing ignorance or deliberate underhandedness calculated to distort the issue.

The issue of the BOSS proposal was not the specific demands, but, as the proposal clearly stated, "the power to institute" the demands. President Peterson did not address herself to this issue. In fact, she ignored this point entirely and addressed her speech, very subtly, and tactfully, to the specific changes. BOSS wanted a simple statement by President Peterson. Would she grant BOSS the *power to institute* these relevant changes, including the hiring of personnel and selection of committees and committee members? The present faculty and administration are blind to our needs and ignorant of our history and therefore should be advised as to exactly what steps to take. It is obvious that black students have neither the time and resources nor the experience to institute these changes, *but we do have the right to select those who can implement them*. Since President Peterson chose to ignore this right, BOSS must unequivocally reject President Peterson's totally irrelevant response.

President Peterson not only had our demands but she had an outline of the specific proposals for carrying out each demand. She purposely put on an act of naivete in order to elicit unwarranted sympathy. Those measures offered to BOSS by President Peterson were merely the itemization of the existing channels for so-called change. These channels have been persistently pursued by the black students at Barnard and proved to be totally

ineffective. President Peterson has merely run down to us a list of people to whom "any interested students" may offer suggestions for change.

We want a concrete vehicle, organized and selected by the black students at Barnard, for the express purpose of implementing programs to deal with the needs of the black students, including the ten demands.

| ... and Clarifies

The BOSS rejection of President Peterson's response to the ten demands caused confusion and, BOSS believed, misunderstanding of its position on the campus. The group held explanatory meetings in the dorms, a rally on March 6, and, on March 12, published this clarifying statement in the Bulletin:

We have been repeatedly questioned as to our separatist attitude. We are not racists. Racism by definition includes the exclusion for the purpose of subjugation of another group. We, in no way, see that as our goal at Barnard.

Our demand for the power to have control over our environment is an extension of the movement of blacks throughout this nation towards self-determination. There can be no integration, assimilation, call it what you will, between two groups unless they are on equal footing. It is clearly recognized that blacks in this country are not on equal footing with whites. This can only be reversed by blacks developing a sense of community and a consciousness of themselves, which cannot be fully achieved when we are thoroughly enmeshed in the white community. Blacks need to close

ranks, to consolidate with and behind their own, and to take full part in the decision-making processes which affect their lives. When blacks learn to better deal with themselves, they will be better able to deal and relate to whites.

We have been asked, "Why did you come to Barnard if you feel that way?" We came for the same reason you did—for an education. Black colleges are largely inadequate and nothing more than an imitation of white-establishment colleges. And just as education is important, so is control of the educational process which affects blacks. That is what we are asking for specifically at Barnard which calls for the power to hire personnel, to institute changes in curriculum and in other parts of the college which affect us—financial aid, recruitment and orientation, and even the food we eat. Supposedly life must be relevant to man for him to adequately perform in it. At this point in our lives our education is the most important part, and it, too, must be relevant. Without relevancy a group is created which feels it has nothing to lose in dealing with society since it has no part in it. And when this happens both parts of society lose. We do not want this to happen to us or to you.

Barnard, in the past, like the rest of this society has proven itself to be unable, either consciously or unconsciously, to bring about these changes in an effective way. The channels available to us at Barnard, and to which President Peterson redirected us in her convocation speech, have been persistently pursued by us and have proven to be unfruitful. Therefore, we must do it ourselves. We want a "concrete vehicle" organized and selected by the black students at Barnard for the express purpose of implementing programs to deal with our needs.

... because I was black

By Deborah Perry '72

(continued from front cover) needs of the black students. We were treated as whites too—which may sound fine and dandy—but this type of treatment is a kind of racism in itself. The administration, the student sponsors, everyone was so willing to “overlook” the fact that we were black and to ignore the different cultural and social background that is black people's. Barnard's lily-white faculty and courses of study emphasized even more the lack of concern or interest on the part of the “powers that be” about the needs or interests of blacks. There were courses in the lives of Ancient Greeks and Romans, in Russian history, in Oriental Studies, but the contributions and considerations of black people in history, in literature, in everything that had to do with the shaping of this country, were skillfully omitted.

This kind of insensitivity and unconcern forced the issue of separation among the blacks by creating an atmosphere which ignored our existence, treated us as insignificant, and just generally carried on that “grand old American tradition” the school is so steeped in—or should I say mired?

It has been put forth as an excuse that the white administration and students know nothing about us and therefore cannot possibly understand what it is that we want, or why we are dissatisfied; in other words their treatment of us results from ignorance and is not their fault. I contend, however, that it is. They have taken neither the time nor the initiative heretofore to learn anything about black people because the “subject” either did not interest them or did not seem important. Black people, on the other hand, know just about everything there is to know about white people.

At this particular point in history, when suddenly everyone and his brother wants to know what the black person is thinking, and why, we have been accused of shutting off the communication lines. “How are we to know what you want us to do, unless you talk to us?” is the cry that I and other black students have heard time and again from administration, faculty, and students here. The answer is, I think, that we no longer want to have things done “for” us, we want to do them ourselves. We are willing to have dialogue, but to protect ourselves, we must dictate the terms.



Deborah L. Perry

Comments In Crisis

By Lemoine P. Callender

Across America, colleges and universities which are accepting more and more black students are finding themselves unprepared to deal with the needs and potential of those students. Many old formulas are turning out to be misconceptions; new ways of understanding are urgently needed. This fall, Barnard added to its administration an Assistant to the Dean of the Faculty, Lemoine P. Callender. Her appearance on the campus coincided with the awakening group consciousness of Barnard's increasing number of black students.

Her job, as she sees it, is "to assist the College as an urban institution in relating to the crisis of the cities and to the processes of social change in this country. The "Comments in Crisis" on the opposite page were written by Mrs. Callender in the midst of the events described elsewhere in this issue. The comments are not meant as a unified article, but rather as a series of ideas, designed to provoke thought, feeling and discussion. We hope they will provoke your replies to the magazine.

Lemoine P. Callender was "born, bred and buttered in Harlem." She attended the public schools and was graduated in 1955 from Brooklyn College. Later, she earned an M.S. with distinction in guidance and school counseling at Hunter College. Mrs. Callender began her professional career in 1955 as a teacher, and later guidance counselor, in the Harlem public schools. In 1965, she became a counselor and college instructor in guidance at the School for Intellectually Gifted Students at Hunter College, where she remained until she came to Barnard. Among Mrs.

Callender's current extra-curricular activities is The New Lafayette Theater on 135th Street, where black actors will produce plays by black authors. This spring, she is teaching "Identity in Times of Change" at St. Peter's Lutheran Church on 54th Street and Lexington Avenue. With her husband, Eugene, a former Presbyterian minister, now the Deputy Administrator of the city's Housing Development Administration, she gives a course for city employees on the history and culture of black and Puerto Rican peoples. (Eugene Callender, who was director of

the New York Urban League before he joined the Lindsay administration, turned down the post of Assistant Secretary for Labor Standards in the Nixon administration, citing unfinished work in the city.) At home, on the 16th floor of Lenox Terrace looking out over Harlem, the city and the horizon, Mrs. Callender is an avid indoor gardener and a Sunday painter. The Callenders have two children, William, 14, and Leslie, 12.

—J.Z.R.

■ There are people and there are white people. White people can be distinguished most easily by their inability to relate to blacks beyond their blackness. This is especially true of those who relate to themselves as liberals.

■ The real concern is not why black students are in crisis on campus, but why some of the country's most intelligent adults have found it necessary to let the crisis develop. How is it that educators with centuries of learning behind them and daily lessons did not know of the need for serious and creative reform? Part of the answer lies sadly in the depth of the racial sickness to be found in the history of white America; the disease that most people prefer to think only cripples blacks. Another clue is to be found in the unconscious recesses of white minds, if only because of their education—that condition of latent guilt that arranges public punishment for its own expiation.

■ By their insistence, black students have drawn dramatic attention to the evidence of cumulative racial pathology. Their scholarships should be equated with teachers' salaries, for they will have taught at least as much as they have learned in college by the time they graduate.

■ Much of the white student rebellion on campuses grew out of the resolve of blacks that whites forget integrated efforts and instead direct their energies toward helping their own grow up. Without blacks as mentors, the energies and militancies of white students got discharged into a search for a cause.

■ Too much of the black-white confrontation is still watched like entertainment—a kind of latter-day minstrel show.

■ White has been an identity that was not black, and that was considered good. To be black meant not being white and that was bad, vulgar, colored, inferior, substandard, ghetto, illegitimate and all the other reference cues found in the back of every text under the word "Negro."

■ What is now recognized as black culture had at its base the unique strengths of the black family and the black church, which was an extended family in the deep sense. In these communities of brethren, blacks breathed and removed the masks they were made to wear in the white world.

■ Black people have always known that in order to survive in a nation which legislated them non-persons they had to feign an adaptation which would permit them to live and maintain their sanity. The difference between this posture and schizophrenia is that they were constantly aware of their pretense and developed cultural institutions and forms of expression which permitted them regularly to be real.

■ As members of the seventeenth generation of black people in America with ancestors here *before* the Pilgrims, black stu-

dents demand a firm acknowledgement of *their* peoplehood. They reject curricula which present European culture as the model. They consider this a criminally incomplete education for any student and want no degree which certifies that they or anyone else has acculturated to this American myth. White credit cards have expired. For a long time, only black professors will be acceptable as instructors in black history.

■ All groups, except those that are non-white, are reinforced and encouraged in their nationalistic worship of non-American grandparents. A European language is called the American "mother-tongue." European years abroad are included among the choices available to Ivy League students. But "rebel" and "traitor" are screamed at a black student who wants to be taught about the Afro-American experience and outside agitators are blamed for his rage. There is no such thing as an American. Everyone in this country came here originally as something else and clings to that something else, and that is good.

■ Black people have been a problem to everyone but to themselves. To someone, they are either a risk admission, a special student, a disruptive child, a child without a father, or an unwed mother.

■ Black educators, by their contributions to a new history, a new literature, and a new American culture, will redefine the concept of a meaningful education for all students within the next ten years.

■ The mammy syndrome still operates in this country where the blacks have been left to care for the domestic needs of this nation. Because domestic problems engulf us all, there are responsibilities upon us all for ourselves and for each other.

■ Whites seem curiously and severely threatened when blacks prefer their own company to integration: whites were most relaxed when the law required that very separation.

■ White institutions have about five years, at most, to gain an understanding through interracial means, for the educated and talented black person sees much among his own people that requires his skill and commitment.

■ Only the most frightened and insecure see black consciousness as anti-white, for it is not.

■ White people seem to need the crutch of some intimate experience with blackness before they can find their role in the current crisis—a kind of regular black memo that reminds them that they did write American history and that it is in our mutual self interest that they learn quickly from the lessons of daily racial conflict. The ignorance and fright of whites equals the anger and impatience of blacks.

■ Campus crises and confrontations are born of collisions between people, their images of themselves and of each other.



Lemoine Callender