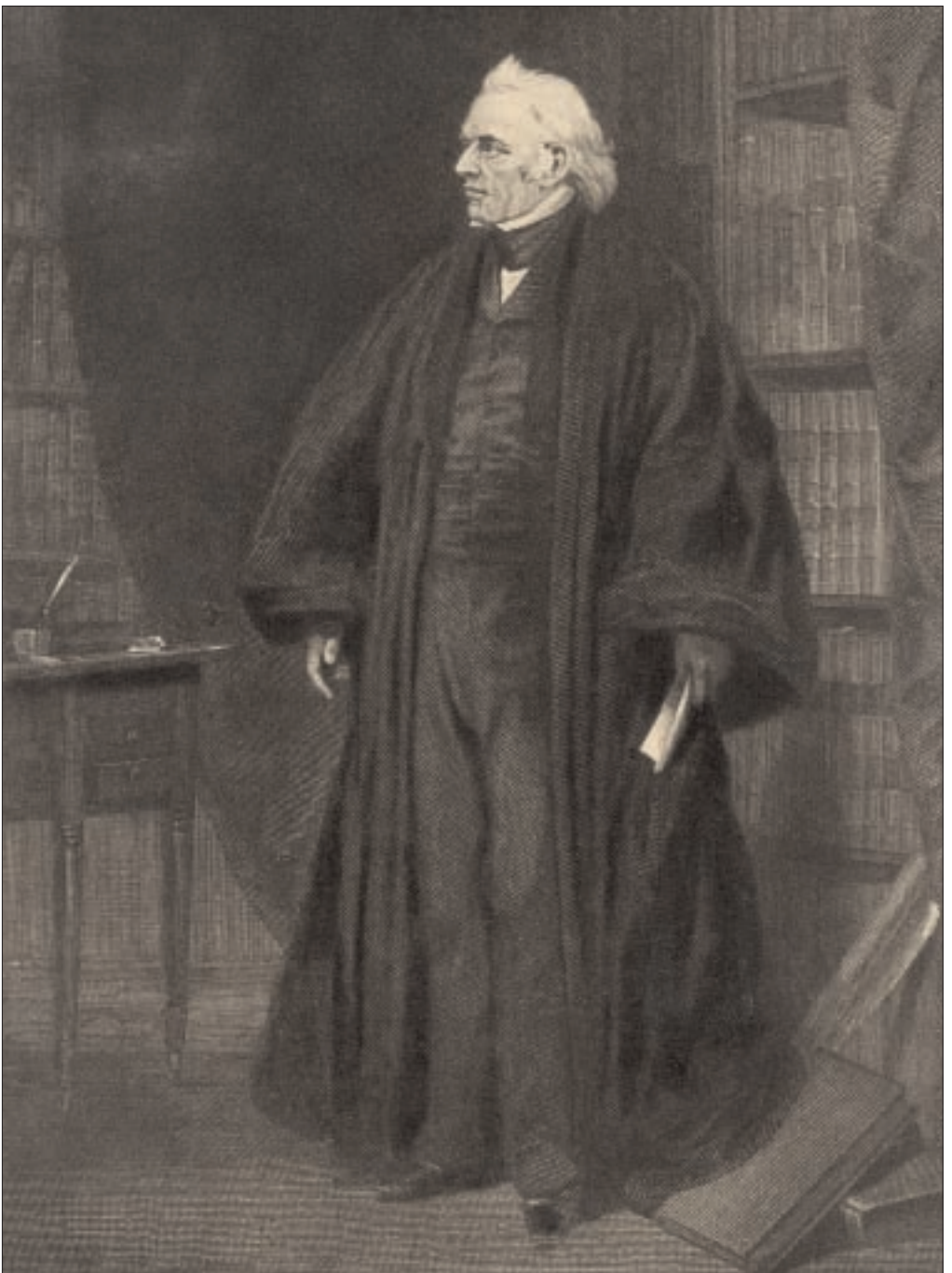


HARVARD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

letters

SPRING/SUMMER 2006



In this issue:

On the Cover:

Joseph Story

Engraving from an original painting
by Alonzo Chappel (1828–1887)
undated

Legal Portrait Collection
Harvard Law School Library

Joseph Story shaped the future of the Harvard Law School more profoundly than any other individual in its history. Born in Marblehead, Massachusetts, and educated at Harvard College (AB 1798), Story was admitted to the bar in 1801 and practiced law in Salem before serving in the Massachusetts House of Representatives (1805–1808) and in Congress (1808–1809). In 1812, he became an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, the youngest person ever nominated to the office. A brilliant lecturer, sometime poet, scholar, and author in the fields of commercial law, the Constitution, conflict of laws, and equity, Joseph Story became Dane Professor of Law in 1829, when the 12-year-old Harvard Law School was struggling for its very existence. Story revitalized the School by broadening its curriculum, building its library, and recruiting students nationwide, thus placing it on a footing where its future would never again be seriously in question.

The Harvard Law School Library houses what may be the largest collection of legal portraiture available anywhere in the world. This collection includes more than 3,400 images of lawyers, jurists, and legal thinkers dating from the Middle Ages to the late 20th century. Although much of the collection has been available for decades—having been acquired in large part by Librarian Eldon R. James and Dean Roscoe Pound in the first quarter of the 20th century—it has been largely inaccessible to patrons.

Thanks to a grant from the University's Library Digital Initiative, the entire collection is now available online. As a result, the collection's value, not only as a record of legal tradition, but also as a source of general historical, cultural, and artistic insight has finally been made available to all. To browse the collection online, visit <http://www.law.harvard.edu/library/collections/special/online-collections/portraits>.

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A Letter from Dudley Fishburn, Chair of the Overseers' Committee to Visit the University Library



Dudley Fishburn

Stephen Mitchell/Harvard News Office

Dear Friends,

As I end my tenth year of tenure as chairman, I want to reflect on the work of the Visiting Committee, on our accomplishments, and on some of the challenges that we face. The magic, the authority, of this Visiting Committee lies in its legitimacy, and its legitimacy rests on its heritage. There has been a “Committee to Visit the University Library” for over one hundred and fifty years. And continuity creates authority.

In 1847, the Visiting Committee came to call. This is how, according to Nancy Cline’s predecessor, John Sibley, the visit was conducted. I quote from his diary.

“All the books are called in about three weeks before the visit.” That is, for the avoidance of doubt, all of the books in the University. “The Librarian arranges them on the shelves in order. The Committee is divided in couples, one member holds the Catalogue, the other counts the books and examines. Generally there have been twelve persons or thereabout present. Last year each shelf was carefully examined. There is no compensation but the courtesy of a dinner is extended to the Committee.”

Such change! Such continuity! But of these two, the more remarkable, in my judgment, is the continuity. Continuity confers authority, and that is now going to be reinforced by our new chair, Frances D. Fergusson AM ’66, PhD ’73, a Harvard Overseer and, until June 30, the president of Vassar College.

In the ten years that I have peered—with privilege—at the Harvard library system, I have been amazed to see the renovation of:

- Andover–Harvard Theological Library
- Baker Library at Harvard Business School
- Countway Library of Medicine
- Gutman Library of the Graduate School of Education
- Harvard Law School Library
- Harvard–Yenching Library
- Loeb Library at the Graduate School of Design
- Radcliffe’s Schlesinger Library
- Widener Library—the jewel in our crown.

We have seen the extension of the Harvard Depository, which now stretches to some 50 miles of books. And we have experienced the re-launch of the HOLLIS catalog on the web, and the addition of web-based catalogs for visual, archival, and geospatial materials.

Each of these projects—huge, ambitious, daring logistical exercises in their own right—has come in on budget and on time. Not one has gone awry. In the ten years that I have chaired the Visiting Committee, the University has invested some \$300 million of capital in the Harvard Libraries.

Not everything has been put right, nor would we wish it so. Much work lies ahead. The big bits of unfinished business are the Fine Arts Library, founded in 1874,

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which will be temporarily located in the Littauer building, and which needs to be seen safely installed in a new home with the guidance of this committee. And Lamont Library—intensively used, open 24/5, and in so many ways at the center of undergraduate life.

The Countway Library of Medicine, so expertly renovated, raises important questions. Do doctors and scientists want to read books or do they prefer to receive real-time information online? Which leads inevitably to a conundrum that the Visiting Committee has addressed: what is a science library? We have not yet found the answer to this question, but it will receive great consideration before Harvard decides on the nature of any science library for Allston.

The greatest change or challenge will come from the next stage in the digital revolution. At every stage so far, and let us date it back 20 years, the printed word, fixed in a book, has triumphed. As we all know, each digital advance—in cataloging, in reproduction, in retrieval, and in speed—has led to an increase in the number of books being drawn down off our library shelves.

It is tempting to think that this victory of the published page (our first love and loyalty) is permanent. But the digital world is in its very infancy, its progress is accelerating. It is certain that at some time in the very near future, say another 20 years (or, twice the time that Google has been in existence), new digital developments will challenge the traditional book. Expect, for example, the entirely flexible, paper-thin screen; the Google-isation of every work ever printed; instant printing of entire books on your desktop.

Who knows? The one thing I do know is that the convention of the page printed at a specific time and in a specific place by a known owner of the work, is, however welcome to an old conservative like myself, not going to be a lasting affair. Whatever does come will offer a yet freer, more open access to the accumulated wisdom to the world.



Dudley Fishburn

Dudley Fishburn '68 completes his tenure as chair of the Overseers' Committee to Visit the University Library on June 30, 2006. He has served as the executive editor of *The Economist* and as a member of Parliament for Kensington.



Sidney Verba and Dudley Fishburn during the April meeting of the Overseers' Committee to Visit the University Library

Sidney Verba: “On Libraries, Books, Equality—and Google”

Equality, especially equality of opportunity, is a dominant value in the United States. And higher education is one of the great engines of that equality. Folks move up the economic ladder and the social ladder through higher education. They also move up another ladder—an intellectual ladder. That is certainly what we who teach in colleges hope: that our students will become more knowledgeable and wiser—better educated—by rich exposure to the sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities.

Not all colleges are equal. They vary in prestige, which is an overrated value. But they also vary in the resources they can make available for a student’s education. This makes higher education also an engine of inequality. Seniors in high school are not all equal at the starting line for the race to college. Some have been to better high schools. Some cannot muster the financial resources to attend the “better” colleges, even in an age of widespread financial aid.

The prestige ratings of colleges are not necessarily indicators of quality. Many schools lower on the list give as good, often better, education than those above. But the difference among schools in terms of educational resources can be quite large. One of Harvard’s greatest resources is its library—millions of books, collected over hundreds of years, and all available to its students, teachers, and researchers. My students can read widely and can do research papers utilizing the riches of the Harvard collections. Fine teachers and smart students are available in many places, but collections such as Harvard’s are available in only a limited number of great research collections.

Harvard and a few other large research libraries—the New York Public Library, and the university libraries at Stanford, Michigan, and Oxford—have entered into



Joann DeFurrow/News Office

agreements with Google to make millions of books from our collections available to students, teachers, and researchers.

Working with Harvard, Google will scan a substantial proportion of the University’s books, which will then be accessible on the Internet. The full text will be searchable to find books one wants, the books will be readable online, and Google is committed to making it possible to print out a copy for use. Our rich collections will be available in all schools and colleges; indeed to anyone connected to the Internet.

I hasten to add that the millions of books the participating libraries hope to make fully available come from those works in our collections that are in the public domain. It would be a clear violation of copyright law to provide such full access to books in copyright. This is a serious limitation. But we have millions of public-domain books, and such books are the least likely to be found in smaller libraries.

It is Harvard’s hope and it is Google’s ambition eventually to scan all the books in our libraries, including those in copyright. The text of the books in copyright would not be fully readable. Rather, a reader would enter a few words or phrases into a search and see several “snippets”—some few lines of text containing those words—as a guide to

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whether that book is of interest. If the book seems interesting, then Google is committed to aiding the reader in finding it, if it is available in a local library, or in finding a bookseller where it can be bought.

We believe that such discovery will benefit publishers and authors. It would whet but not satisfy the appetite for the book. Many publishers and authors agree, but a number do not. The issue of whether such digitization of copyrighted books is legitimate under copyright law is currently in the courts.

When we digitize our public domain books and, even more so, if we go on to digitize our copyrighted books, we will have contributed to the equalization of scholarly resources. The educational divide will be reduced.

There is one more divide that will be diminished—that between the library and the Internet. Most parents of teenagers and most teachers know that many young people believe that all knowledge is on the Internet and available via search engines. Of course, that is false. Libraries contain a depth of knowledge in books well beyond the instant search results from our computers. The glory of the Harvard–Google Project is that young people who begin with an Internet search will be taken to the world of books and into the rich resources of great libraries.

Sidney Verba, Carl H. Pforzheimer University Professor and Director of the Harvard University Library, teaches political science. He is the author of a number of books on issues of equality.

In Brief: The Harvard–Google Project

Building on a successful pilot conducted throughout 2005, the Harvard–Google Project will benefit students and scholars regardless of where they are. Google has launched related projects with Oxford, Stanford, the University of Michigan, and the New York Public Library.

Harvard users will be able to find and retrieve books in the Harvard Libraries more efficiently. Users elsewhere will be able to discover books that they might not otherwise find, to locate booksellers or local libraries where desired books might be available, to read out-of-copyright books online, and to print out copies.

For each out-of-copyright work that Google scans from its collections, Harvard will receive a digital copy to use in a variety of ways that advance its educational and scholarly mission. Libraries are unique in their charge not only to acquire, organize, and disseminate information, but also to preserve it for future generations. The presence of these digital copies can help to ensure that the intellectual content of these works—many of which are aging and fragile—would remain available in cases of unforeseen decay or catastrophic situations such as fire.

Over time, Harvard also intends to use the digital copies of these public-domain works in its teaching and research activities, which increasingly take place in a digital environment. Through its Library Digital Initiative, Harvard has developed a technical infrastructure to acquire, store, and deliver a wide range of digital library materials to library users. The University expects eventually to integrate digital copies of the books scanned by Google into that infrastructure and to extend its capabilities. This is a large and challenging undertaking, but in due course should yield substantial benefits for education and research.

Notwithstanding the benefits of having digital copies, the Harvard University Library remains committed to the preservation, stewardship, and continued growth of its physical library collections. The digital copies will not supplant books, but rather will facilitate and complement their use.

Harvard First-Years Work Hands-On with Houghton's Illuminated Manuscripts

Harvard students who participated in last fall's Freshman Seminar 39g—entitled “The Book of Hours: Picturing Prayer in the Middle Ages”—bypassed some common research barriers for young scholars. During their study of medieval art history, the ten freshmen received unlimited access to rare 15th- and 16th-century manuscripts, became published scholars, and mounted a six-week exhibition at HCL's Houghton Library.

Jeffrey F. Hamburger, professor of history of art and architecture, set out to expose his students to primary source materials in Houghton early in their academic careers. “The rare book library is as much their library as is Lamont Library, or as is Widener,” said Hamburger. “They should take advantage of it.”

Hamburger's seminar, ostensibly a course in medieval art history, ultimately became a multifaceted experience in the history of reading, the history of prayer, the history of religion, and study of the cultural context in which these books were used. All of which only increased the challenges presented to the students in writing 10- to 12-page analytical papers, beginning with the full technical descriptions of individual manuscripts.

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Annunciation scene from a book of hours made in Rouen (Normandy) circa 1440



Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Jeffrey F. Hamburger, professor of history of art and architecture, in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences



Jim Hanson

William Stoneman, the Florence Fearington Librarian in HCL's Houghton Library

Hamburger, who plans to add the course to his regular rotation of classes beginning this summer, hopes the course had a significant impact on his first-year students. “I’m convinced that it will have been, you might say, a conversion experience for them. That’s in a sense what you hope for—whether someone’s going to go on or not, whether they discover something entirely new and find a lasting enthusiasm. That’s really what you live for as a teacher.”

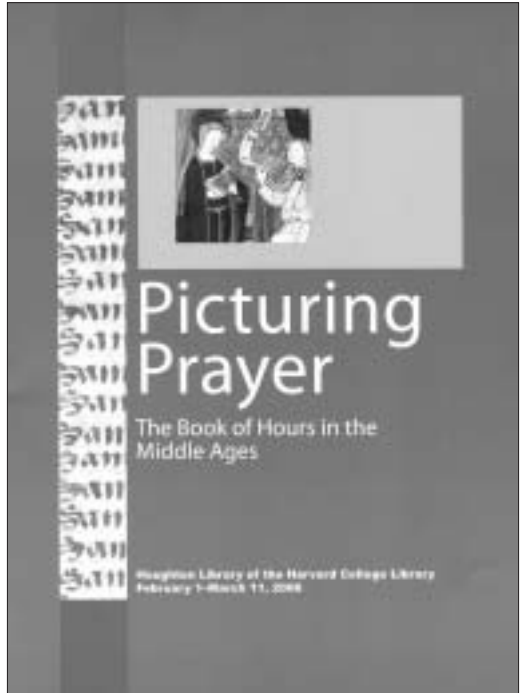
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Students spent many hours in Houghton learning to handle the fragile, priceless texts and to interpret them. “There’s really no more direct way of coming into contact with the past than, with all proper care and precautions, to take a book or any ancient artifact in your hands and puzzle it out and to see just how intractable they are,” said Hamburger. “It’s very, very different from seeing one reproduced in a textbook where it’s ostensibly explained and given a label.”

The original research produced by the students, and the manuscripts they used, became the basis for an exhibition in Houghton entitled “Picturing Prayer: The Book of Hours in the Middle Ages.” The initial suggestion and encouragement for the exhibit came from William Stoneman, Houghton’s Florence Fearington Librarian, who helped make the rare texts available to the students.

As part of Houghton’s outreach program, staff members keep college department and faculty members aware of the resources and services that the library has to offer. Last year, Houghton hosted 126 class sessions. These classes are occasionally led by Public Services staff and curators, and Stoneman himself co-teaches classes with faculty.

“Harvard librarians collect, preserve, and provide access to all kinds of special collections so that they can be used by Harvard students and faculty, and by the scholarly community outside Harvard,” said Stoneman. “My colleagues and I are pleased that Houghton Library has played such an integral role in this core function of the University.”



During their study of medieval art history, the freshmen mounted “Picturing Prayer,” a six-week exhibition at HCL’s Houghton Library that ended on March 11. The exhibition catalog, shown above, was published with assistance from the Charles J. Tanenbaum Fund, with additional support from the George L. Lincoln Publication Fund.

Frances D. Fergusson to Chair Library Visiting Committee

Beginning July 1, 2006, Frances D. Fergusson AM '66, PhD '73, will chair the Overseers' Committee to Visit the Harvard University Library. Fergusson recently completed a dynamic 20-year tenure as president of Vassar College, during which she invigorated Vassar's academic offerings, added strong multidisciplinary programs in environmental and Jewish studies, oversaw the comprehensive integration of technology into disciplines across the curriculum, and inspired unprecedented growth in contributed support to the 146-year-old college.

On her watch, Vassar gained significant new facilities and renovated many of its historic buildings. Notably, Fergusson oversaw a significant expansion of the Vassar Libraries by the noted architect Hugh Hardy. An architectural historian and a passionate advocate for liberal arts education, Frances Fergusson is a graduate of Wellesley who earned her master's and doctoral degrees in art history at Harvard. She was a Radcliffe Institute Fellow in 1974–1975. She succeeds Dudley Fishburn as chair of the Visiting Committee.

“The importance of the Harvard Libraries cannot be overstated,” Fergusson recently remarked. “The range and the depth of the collections are central to the academic experience of every Harvard student. At the same time, the library holdings are indispensable for scholars around the world. The Harvard Libraries, then, have



Wit Faller/Vassar College

Frances D. Fergusson has become chair of the Library Visiting Committee following a dynamic, 20-year tenure as president of Vassar College.

a dual mission. As a result of advanced technology, that mission is evolving rapidly. For all of us on the Visiting Committee, the coming years will be a voyage of discovery as we seek to guide the Harvard Libraries for the long-term future. I will look forward to sharing my findings with you.”

Giving to Harvard Libraries

Beginning with John Harvard's 1638 bequest of 400 books, gifts have proven essential to the growth of the Harvard Libraries. Today, the generosity of alumni/ae, friends, foundations, corporations, and other organizations is a dynamic and inspiring force among the University's libraries, their services to students, and their renowned collections.

Much More Than Books

The need for library support is greater than ever. The expansion of resources to include photographs and other visual images, music, poetry, and other audio recordings, as well as a growing number of resources that exist only in digital formats, has placed increasing demand on the Harvard Libraries. In addition to acquisition of both traditional and new formats, today's library must preserve its collections and make them accessible both in reading rooms and online.

Unique Opportunities

A gift to the Harvard Libraries gives you the unique opportunity to make a gift to an area of personal interest or intellectual commitment. The extent of Harvard's library collections, in combination with evolving faculty and student needs, creates an almost limitless array of gift opportunities.

Harvard seeks to increase funding for the Libraries in four crucial areas:

- preservation and conservation
- access and technology
- collections
- positions

Examples of current needs in the Harvard Libraries include

- support to digitize library resources and make them freely available on the web
- acquisition funds for resources in new areas of study and research, including South Asia and Africa, life sciences, and jazz
- gifts designated to preserve Harvard's rare and unique materials, including illuminated medieval and Renaissance manuscript collections

Meaningful Gifts

The Harvard Libraries will work with you to create a gift that is meaningful to you and meets true needs. Endowment opportunities begin at \$25,000. Gifts of any size are greatly appreciated for current support. If you are an alumnus/a, you will receive full class credit for your library gift or pledge.

All gifts to Harvard's libraries are tax deductible under the full extent of the law. You may receive additional tax benefits by making a gift of securities. Please contact the Harvard Management Company at 866.845.6596 or security_gifts@hmc.harvard.edu.

Giving to Harvard Libraries

You may make your gift online by visiting the web site <http://www.haa.harvard.edu>, clicking on "Make a Gift," and selecting the appropriate option.

Planned gifts provide an opportunity for you to make a significant gift to the Harvard Libraries while preserving income or principal for yourself or your heirs. To learn more about these opportunities, contact the University Planned Giving Office at 800.446.1277 or <http://www.haa.harvard.edu/pgo>.

Thank you for your generosity.

Please send your gift or pledge commitment to:

Peggy Davis Molander
Director of Development
Widener Library 110
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA 02138

“For Harvard to continue its exceptional research and teaching programs—where topics span all areas of the globe, from time immemorial to the science of the moment—requires that its libraries collect well beyond established research publications, regardless of format. It is through specialized primary resources and difficult-to-obtain items that a student can understand the conflicting viewpoints between a majority position and that of an independent observer, can delve into a level of detail, or explore the complex historical events that have led to contemporary social, political, and economic conditions in different regions of the globe.”

Nancy M. Cline

Roy E. Larsen Librarian of Harvard College



Correction

1898 is the correct date for the Schlesinger Library's photograph of Maud Wood Park, which appeared on the cover of *Library Letters* for October 2005. The date had been given in error as 1848.

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Carl H. Pforzheimer University Professor and Director of the University Library

Sidney Verba

Associate Director of the University Library for Administration and Programs

Barbara Graham

Director of Publications and Communications

Peter Kosewski

Director of Development

Peggy Davis Molander

Editorial Assistant

Catherine Blatz

Design Consultants

Sametz Blackstone Associates, Boston

Contributors

Beth Brainard, Dudley Fishburn, Jennifer Tomase, Sidney Verba, David Warrington

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Jeff Kosmacher and Vassar College

Online Edition

<http://hul.harvard.edu/publications.html>

E peter_kosewski@harvard.edu

T 617.495.7793

F 617.495.0370

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