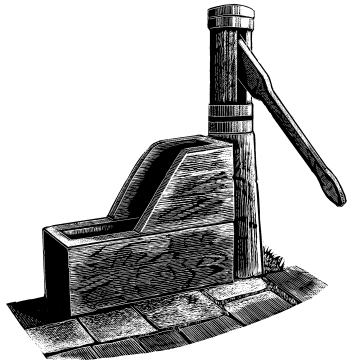


# Drat Those Vandals!



“Your wooden arm you hold outstretched to shake with passers-by.”

AS THE KEEPER for the meantime of “The College Pump” column, Primus V naturally cares about the well-being of the genuine article, which sits massively in the Old Yard east of Hollis Hall. Strolling by the pump one day this past fall, he was pained to observe its once-burnished oak graying in the weather, one side of it scarred by graffiti, and its handle—gone. He made urgent inquiry of people in Physical Resources.

“The handle on the pump was stolen about four years ago,” reported Zachary M. Gingo ’98. “We replaced it, and about three months later it was stolen again. Thus began a saga of Harvard facilities staff versus unknown vandals. Over the next two years, the pump was damaged (and subsequently repaired and refinished), and several attempts to pry the handle loose failed, but did require repairs. For about the past two years, the handle remained in place. It was stolen most recently probably in mid to late October. We are working with a local contractor to fabricate new pump handles, as we have gone through our spares. We expect to have a handle in place late in the fall semester.”

Indeed, the pump *does* have a handle as of this writing (although its barrel and trough could still use a clean-up

and a couple of coats of polyurethane come spring.)

Today’s iteration of the iconic eighteenth-century apparatus was built by William Brouwer in 1987 and was a gift from Radcliffe to help celebrate Harvard College’s 350th anniversary, along with a red oak tree planted nearby. The tree has fared well. Let there be an end to shocking doings at the pump!



AHEM: The day before Chief Justice John G. Roberts ’76, J.D. ’79, swore in Barack H. Obama, J.D. ’91, the *Boston Globe* quoted an ebullient Loeb University Professor Laurence H. Tribe ’62, J.D. ’66, seen at a Washington, D.C., reception: “Watching John Roberts, who’s one of my students, swearing in another of my students, will blow my mind.” In the event, the two flubbers—one responding prematurely to a prompt, the other misplacing his “faithfully”—must have taught Tribe a lesson: even one’s most promising students sometimes blot their copybooks.

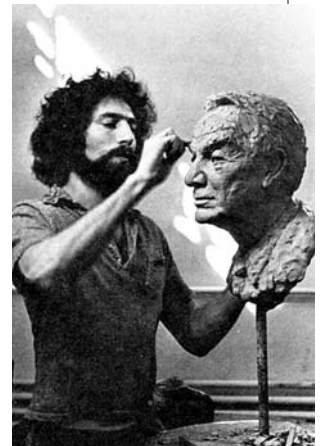


VALUED RIDDLER: “In teaching the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, [the late Professor John H.] Finley gave me a feeling for the cause and effect of momentous decisions...,” writes Mark E. Shwayder ’73, of Franklin, Michigan, in his thirty-fifth anniversary class report. “He tried to make us realize that our lives would be a stumbling series of choices taken in the half darkness, in the fog of combat. I remember being riveted as he spoke movingly about a scene of Achilles walking alone on the beach of Troy, listening to the hissing of the ocean,

wracking his brain trying to see into the misty future and chart his course. Finley was trying to tell us that all of our decisions, taken out of strength and charity and hope, or avarice and cowardice and weakness, would act as the hands that wove the tapestry of our lives. Finley knew that he had to try, at the very least, to teach us to recognize the fateful effects of every decision we would make, to see the threads as they were woven....

“I have thought of Professor Finley many a time,” writes Shwayder, who left college as a sculptor but became by perceived necessity owner of a small family manufactory of landing-gear components for military, police, and emergency medical helicopters. “He was the only teacher I ever visited at Harvard. I used

to love to go into his musty office in Widener and talk with him, ostensibly about Homer, but really because I craved some ancient wisdom and guidance and hope. I always had the feeling that he knew in a general way what awaited us and I desperately wanted that knowledge. But it was like visiting the Sphinx; he could only answer in riddles, but riddles he knew we must unravel to find our way.” ~PRIMUS V



Mark Shwayder works in 1973 on part of his senior thesis in visual and environmental studies, a portrait sculpture of Professor John Finley.