

## GET HIP ON STUDYING

In the early morning hours of October 17 the curious students of the University of Maryland gathered at the site of the memorial to the legendary Sara Bellum. They were unable to suppress little excited cries and jostlings as they waited. Sara Bellum was rumored to be on her way for her annual inspection of the campus. This beloved student leader and advisor, author of In My Fancy and Other Essays, customarily issued an augury at the beginning of her journey having to do with integrity in the curriculum and other matters of undergraduate education.

She appeared at exactly 6:01 a.m., an impressive figure, well over five feet tall. "I'd Rather Be Studying," she muttered, cuffing a campus senator who scurried by.

She paused dramatically, then plunged one hand into her spiffy backpack. After some time, she drew out a copy of "Promises to Keep: The College Park Plan for Undergraduate Education." As she carefully consulted its recommendations a look of simultaneous worry and determination recomposed her flaccid features.

"I am simultaneously worried and determined," she said. "Our ranks have been thinned by the beer joints on the one hand and the self-indulgence of careerists on the other. American universities are choked with those unfortunates who are either cutting the fool or grovelling for careers. Learning is at a new low."

"What can we do?" a despairing voice cried. "Say something!"

"Students do not live by facade alone," Sara said combatively. "Learn something. Study." And so saying she signalled to a disheveled sociology professor loitering nearby in the shrubbery who proceeded among the throng distributing pamphlets about the advantages of studying and crying "down with facades, down with the grunted."

"Who are the grunted?" a voice queried.

"Obviously," said Sara, "the grunted are the enemy, those who are not disgruntled, the pseudostudents who party but never study."

"Study! Get hip on studying," cried a student as they bore her aloft in the true tradition of those who have found new hope.

This essay was written by John Pease in 1988 and was published in The Diamondback as part of a column entitled "The True Story of Testudo" (January 27, 2006).