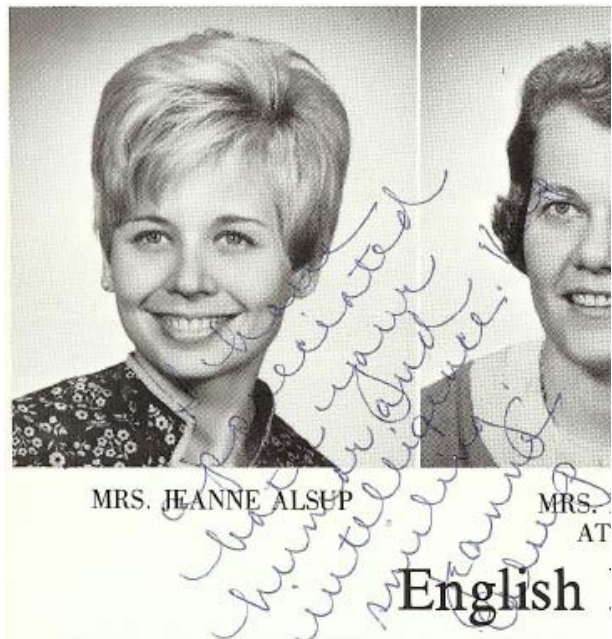


Happy Retirement, Mrs. Alsup!



1968



2014

From
Your 3rd and 4th Period Junior English Classes
Richardson High School
Richardson, Texas
1967-1968

Stories have been placed here unedited. Only the respective authors are responsible for content.

Perhaps you'll understand why we make this disclaimer after you read some of the remembrances of how you affected the boys.

David Cordell, Bob Fleming, Tommy Thomas
May 25, 2014

Steve Alford
alford@nova.edu



1968

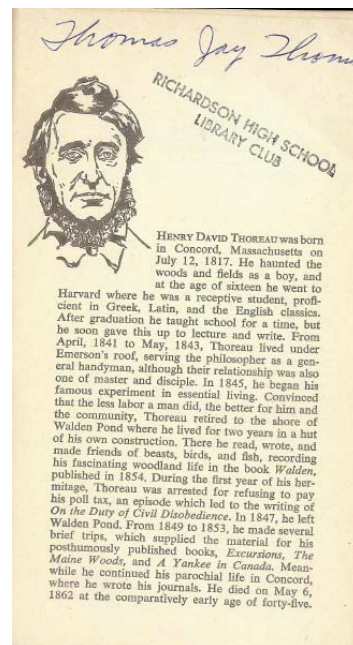
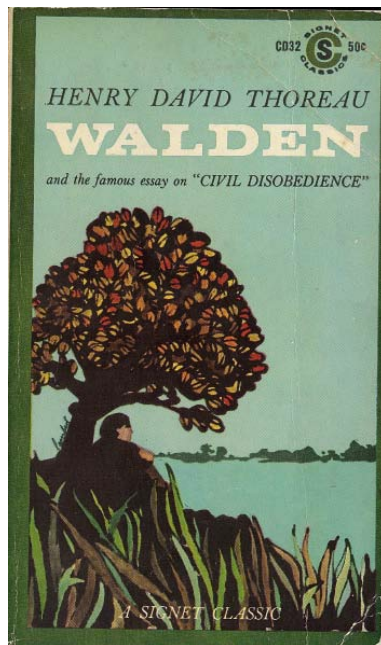


2014

MzAlsup

I was required to write a paper on Walden and felt myself quite clever in titling it “A Thorough View of Thoreau.” I got the paper back, happily expecting to be congratulated for my verbal wit. Unfortunately, I spelled “thorough” as “through”: A Through View of Thoreau. Ms. Alsup diffidently pointed out my error.

At the time I thought Walden one of the most boring books I ever read. Now, over the course of thirty years of teaching, I have taught the wonderful, insightful, book of many depths, Walden, to a number of students. I point out that the first time I was forced to read it I, too, found it tedious and unrelentingly mundane. The worm has turned.



I remember dancing next to Hull Barbee in front of a visibly polite but slightly stunned Ms. Alsup at a party for her, I think, pregnancy, and feeling like most white boys do while trying to dance, much less in front of one of their teachers. More important, I was captivated by Hull's dancing skill, which in retrospect, was one of the first baby steps he took on the road to becoming the principal dancer with the New York City Ballet. Congrats, Hull!

Ms. Alsup saw *The Graduate* before any of us, and I was impressed by her recommendation of a "racy" film to a group of high school students.

After all these years I remember Ms. Alsup not only as a Total Babe, but also a dedicated and encouraging teacher who emphasized the importance and value of humanistic learning as an end in itself, an experience that has helped shape me intellectually, along with who knows how many other students. Not bad for a hot chick.

Hull Barbee
bhullb2002@yahoo.com



1968



2014

Mrs. Alsup,

We wanted to celebrate the end of school and I think it was your last year to teach at RHS. We were all sitting around the school trying to decide something appropriate to do for you and someone said how about serenading you with song.

So we decided on the song Mariah and a parody of Thanks for the Memories. We wrote it that day and I put it to music.

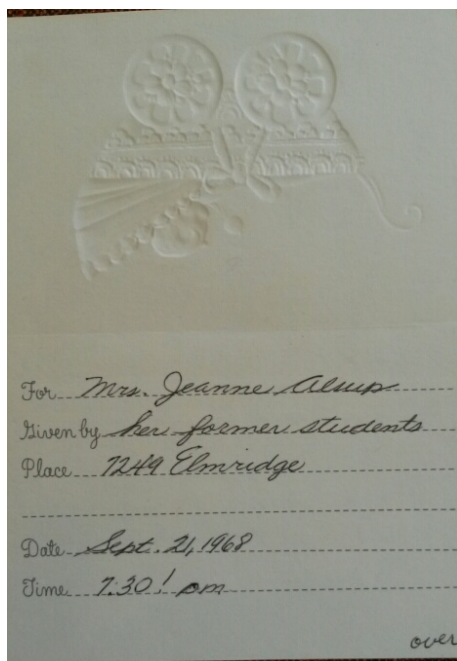
I remember the first two verses, but someone else will have to remember and tell you the third verse. Here's how the first two verses go:

Thanks for the memories,
For Edgar Allen Poe
For Henry David Thoreau
For all the subversive philosophies you thought we ought to
know,
For the memories.....many thanks

Thanks for the memories,
For Queequeg and Dimsdale
The ministers black veil
And all the various forms of sin springing from Hester Prinne,
For the memories.....Thanks a bunch

As I remember, we first sang Mariah and then sang this song to
you at the party at your house. But I remember Cordell saying he
wanted the "last thanks" and decided a blown kiss would be
appropriate after the third verse.

So I brought my guitar to the party and off we went. I dare say we
were a hit. And, Mrs. Alsup, you blushed at the kiss.



David Cordell
cordelldm@aol.com



1968



2014

Like all of the other sixteen-year-old boys, I judged Mrs. Alsup first by her appearance. She was--is--so very pretty and was dressed tastefully and coiffed perfectly. Her smile brightened everyone's first day of school. This would be a fabulous year. Then the real Jeanne Alsup emerged--the one who demanded much but expected more. Yikes! This would be a tough year.

One of my clearest memories concerns her teaching us the proper creation of a composition, step-by-step. Everything had to be completed methodically. We couldn't simply start writing. We had to prepare an outline so the paper would be, like, you know, organized or something. One of the steps required that we submit a set of bibliography cards that had to have precise punctuation.

When I submitted my bibliography cards, I was quite certain that they were perfect. To my dismay, Mrs. Alsup was less certain, and she marked down my cards unceremoniously for want of a comma. A comma? Are you kidding me? It became obvious that this was a woman for whom every comma had to be perfectly placed just as every hair on her head had to be perfectly placed. What a nightmare!

Let's eat grandpa.
Let's eat, grandpa.

**correct punctuation can
save a person's life.**

Oh, and then there was some conflict. It was an ongoing battle about symbolism. She believed in it, and I didn't. I thought *Moby Dick* was a story about a big white fish. She was convinced otherwise. Go figure.

The last time I saw Mrs. Alsup was at her farewell party when she was leaving Richardson High School. Three of us guys sang *They Call the Wind Mariah* from *Paint Your Wagon*. It would have been fabulous except for the fact that only one of us could really sing,

and the other two of us overpowered him. Once in awhile I hear a ringing in my ears. I am pretty sure that the sound is actually a horribly off-key note that I sang, and that it wanders through the cosmos, returning just often enough to make sure that I never forget it. To her credit, though, Mrs. Alsup didn't flinch too much when that note emerged.



Anyway, even if we didn't fully realize it then, we certainly realized later what a gifted teacher Mrs. Alsup was. She was very bright and very dedicated. She truly worked diligently at her profession, and she insisted that we work diligently on the path toward finding ours.

Somewhere along the way we learned about man's inhumanity to man, hubris, and other thematic elements in literature. And I finally realized that *Moby Dick* was not just a story about a big white fish. It was a story about a big white mammal. And some other stuff.

Moby-Dick; or, The Whale

MOBY-DICK;

OR,

THE WHALE.

BY

HERMAN MELVILLE.

ATTORNS TO

"TIGER," "ORION," "REVEREND," "HALL," "WHITE-JACKETS."

NEW YORK:

HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS.

LONDON: RICHARD BENTLEY.

1851.

Thanks, Mrs. Alsup!

Pat Cowlshaw
pcowlshaw@jw.com



1968



2014

I remember it like yesterday . . .

A crisp late fall 1967 morning.

Mrs. Alsup, sensing distraction, tells us she will put aside deconstructing A Scarlet Letter and allow us to share our views on Vietnam.

Bill Moore and Steve Alford protest, "But we are really drawn to this narrative of serial sexual misconduct layered under a network of nearly impenetrable intellectual artifice." Mrs. Alsup, sensing something deeper is at work here, assures them we'll come back to Mr. Hawthorne.

Now, she says, we need an opening proposition. Cordell's arm nearly comes out of its socket in an effort to speak first, last, and

in between. "Apply all available force. Bomb 'em. Conventional if its enough, use the Bomb if needed. We cannot let the first domino fall. There is no quarter in war. Citations to LeMay follow. Gardner joins in, with the authority of a lawman's son, "hear, hear."

Jimmy Baker and Mark Adkins cheer.

No, says Fleming. You've got it all wrong. We have no business there. Peace is the answer. We must turn the other cheek. Citations to the Prophet and Matthew follow. Gail Dickenson and Virginia Hawes know that Bobby is right, but say nothing.

Jimmy Baker and Mark Adkins cheer.

Jean Ward murmurs, "No, be patient, and go about your own business. If we aren't careful, soon enough China will be an economic superpower threatening America on the capitalist stage, Vietnam will be in its sphere of influence and an economic power of its own, and we'll all read about it on little telephones with TV screens that the Chinese will manufacture and that will contain thousands of times the computing power of the NASA computer we use for moon missions. The messages will be transmitted over an electronic internet that will connect us all."

Apart from Jimmy Baker and Mark Adkins, who cheered, and a few giggles, no one paid much attention, because Jean was smart but maybe a little removed from reality.

Tommy and I sensed our opportunity. With a careful balance of intellect and good humor, sensitivity and appeal to country, we steered a middle course, with one eye on Mrs. Alsup and the other on the attractive girls in the class, who were many. Who

knows what we said, but Mrs. Alsup treated us like we were being thoughtful and, when we had stolen a few smiles from our target audience and saw notes passing among the girls, we knew that we had . . . won.

Jimmy Baker and Mark Adkins cheered again. Bless the two of 'em, they just liked all of us, and life itself.

So thanks, Mrs. Alsup, for letting us debate.

. . . What I actually remember, and know with 100% confidence, is that we were out-of-our-minds, undeservedly lucky during those years to be taught by the likes of Ellen Fleming, Lucy Ann Gant, Marilyn Ward, Gloria Snyder, Lillian Mankus, Otis Ratliff, many others to whom my omission is an injustice, and Jeanne Alsup.

Mrs. Alsup's star shown as bright as any. Whatever worthwhile we have thought, spoken, written and done in the years since, we owe in no small part to them. So many thanks and all good blessings to you, Mrs. Alsup.

Pat Cowlshaw

Mid Memory Book Pop Quiz

At the end of the book Moby Dick, did Gregory Peck throw the harpoon with his left hand or his right hand?

In Punography Limited's first release "Betcha Can't Eat Just One," who was holding the *Playboy* magazine in your classroom and what was it concealing?

What did the narrator of Moby Dick want people to call him?

- A. Ishmael
- B. A stud
- C. Just plain old Dick
- D. Carnac The Magnificent

Consider the book The Scarlet Letter.

- a) Why did Miss Scarlet write a letter?
- b) Did Colonel Mustard also write a letter?
- c) Write the lyrics to the Box Tops' 1967 hit The Letter.

Captain Ahab orders you to immerse your arms in the barrel of whale sperm to massage the lumps of blubber. This leaves your hands smooth and moisturized, but what does it do to your manicure? Elaborate, using specific examples of nail polish from 1968 to the present.

Was *The Great Gatsby* really all that great? (1 word)

Moby Dick was a white whale and the protagonist in *Jaws* was a white shark. What is the relationship, one to the other? Which do you believe is the most ferocious and why? (200 words)

Bob Fleming
bob.fleming@ymail.com



1968



2014

**My Memories of Mrs Alsup's Class at Richardson High School
1967-68**

Bob Fleming

(I cannot vouch for the veracity of these musings. Time distorts our memories and places, names, and events fade and grow dim. On the other hand, I now have perfectly clear memories of things that never, ever happened. With that disclaimer, I offer these memories.)

My first inkling that something special might be brewing came when my friend Fred Zeiller came running up to me the first day of school and asked if I had Mrs. Alsup for English. I did. Fred informed me that he had heard that she was very, very pretty, or

words to that effect. (Somewhere in there I think he may have said that she was a good teacher too. I can't remember.)

I remember the first class as Mrs. Alsup stood in front of us. I recall three things. First, Fred was right. Mrs. Alsup was as advertised. Second, she was cool. Third, with the unerring accuracy of a high school kid in these matters . . . I knew that she was "on our side."

And she was our English teacher!!

I consider that Mrs. Alsup taught me the meaning of literature in one particular class on one particular day. The lesson was on Moby Dick and the use of simile and metaphor.

She explained that some human matters are so complex and hard to describe that they cannot be talked about literally. She went on to say that these matters can only be approached or even begin to be understood by the use of simile and metaphor. Then she read this passage from Moby Dick (I still have my high school copy):

"Whenever I find myself growing grim about the mouth;
whenever it is a damp, drizzly November in my soul; whenever I find myself involuntarily pausing before coffin warehouses, and bringing up the rear of every funeral I meet; and especially whenever my hypos get such an upper hand of me, that it requires a strong moral principle to prevent me from deliberately stepping into the street and knocking people's hats off – then, I account it high time to get to sea as soon as I can."

Up until that time I guess I thought that simile and metaphor were just exercises in using language; just a way to show off. Why didn't people just say what they meant?

But my father had died not that long ago and this passage hit me like a thunderbolt. I remember thinking to myself, "Oh, I get it." And that's the day I became a reader and student of literature really.

With Mrs. Alsup we were constantly given exercises in descriptive, narrative, or didactic writings and all tests were of course composed of essay questions. Apparently our class was full of budding logical positivists, future information management specialists, and data-driven investment advisers. We demanded multiple choice tests! After much discussion - and I think false protest and resistance on Mrs. Alsup's part - we got our wish. (I believe that somewhere in the Catholic pantheon there is an obscure Saint of Happy Circumstances somewhere whose job it is to save us from our own wishes and desires. He was not with us that day!)

Mrs. Alsup proceeded to produce the "most God-awful multiple choice test known to man" on Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*. We'd been had!

Many of my fellow students gave up; put down their pens and quit. Many began to protest vocally to Mrs. Alsup rather than continue. I am proud to say that I remembered my coaches who never allowed us to quit until the game was over. I played on until the whistle blew . . . er, the bell sounded.

The next day (multiple choice tests are easy for teachers - not students - we learned to our chagrin) we received our grades. My grade was middling – an 84. But that was the highest grade in the class!

Not only that . . . I was the only one in the class that correctly answered this question, “In the *Battle of the Ants* described in *Walden*, did Thoreau compare events to the a) Battle of Waterloo, b) Jena, c) Austerlitz, or d) Hastings? The correct answer . . . obviously . . . was Austerlitz.

Our senior class had 15, that’s right, 15, National Merit Finalists among us . . . many if not all in Mrs. Alsup’s classes. In a room full of geniuses . . . the highest grade was mine. I still consider this the highest academic achievement of my lifetime.

O glorious day!

Mrs. Alsup went out of her way to educate us outside of our classroom.

She was the teacher sponsor of the self-organized and rather anarchic student film group – rare indeed in those days – known as Punography Limited AND was the only adult honored with parts in its two feature films *Bet You Can’t Eat Just One* and *Son of a Betcha*. But that’s a story for others to tell.

She also took it upon herself to introduce us to drama and all 70 of us trooped to the Dallas Theater Center to see *Spoon River Anthology*. We were also enrolled in various student writing contests along the way.

But my favorite was the time Steve Alford and others took it upon themselves to organize a student debate on the legality of the Vietnam War. They asked Mrs. Alsup for cover.

I have always wondered how a 24-year-old teacher marched into the principal's office in 1968 and convinced him that it was a good idea to organize such a debate, hold it in the school auditorium, and invite parents and students alike. It happened!

(It turns out that no student wanted to defend the affirmative on the issue of legality; in a decision that probably reverberates to this day, Mrs. Alsup prevailed upon her husband to fill that role.)

I also remember that several of us were chosen for and enrolled in an interscholastic league writing contest in the Dallas area. The contest was on a Saturday morning and I was tired. I did badly . . . as did all of my teammates. We felt awful . . . we knew we had let Mrs. Alsup down. She told us that she had read our papers and that the judges were correct . . . we did not do well. She went onto tell us that we didn't take the competition seriously, that she probably hadn't prepared us well, and that we were tired and that even very, very good writers have bad days.

We of course heard only the "very, very good writers part" . . . and were endeared to her all the more.

There was also the time that an evaluator came to our class and "hid" in the back of the class. Many of us honestly didn't know she was there. I don't know why or how it happened but we were awful. On this day . . . with a class in which she normally exercised complete management control . . . we had embarrassed her. The next day she told us so. Never has a class of adolescents,

particularly adolescent boys, been so penitent. Mrs. Alsup finally said that she told the evaluator that this is what happens when you put 35 extremely intelligent students in one class. Same result . . . we heard the “extremely intelligent part” and were completely and forever won over.

Finally, there was the time we raised hell before the show and at intermission of Spoon River Anthology at the Dallas Theater Center. Basic high school lunch room comportment. We were called out the next day. No redeeming bon mots this time. It turns out that Mrs. Alsup can “rip you a new one” if she has to.

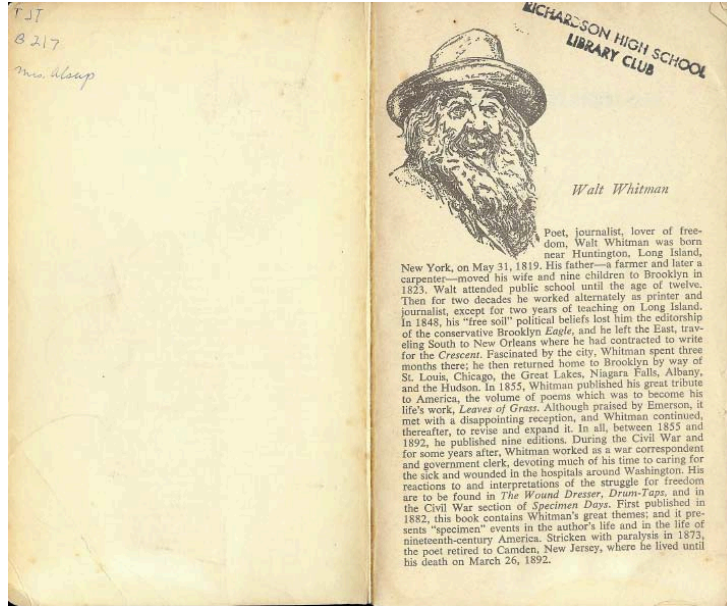
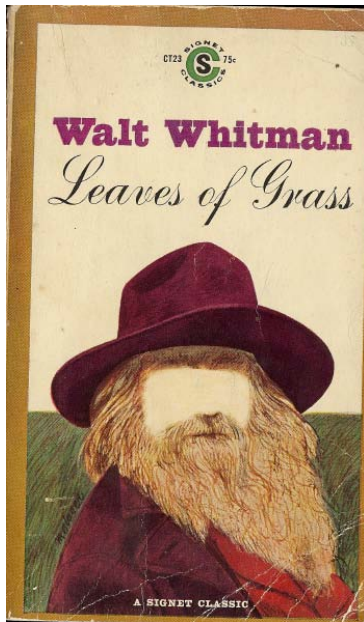
Well . . . I have gone on too long. I want to talk of all the books we read and what we learned. There was *The Scarlett letter* and *Moby Dick* and *The Great Gatsby* and *The Crucible* or was it *Death of a Salesman*, and, I think, *A Farewell to Arms*. But instead I will just offer this.

I continually read and re-read *Song of Myself* by Walt Whitman to this day. I consider it to be an ongoing intellectual challenge. Perhaps in the same way that many regard T.S. Eliots’s *The Wasteland*. (Oh . . . and don’t think Mrs. Alsup shied away from the more controversial of Whitman’s poems.)

Well . . . as I say, I continually read and re-read the poem that Mrs. Alsup offered up to us.

It contains my favorite line of poetry. “*And whoever walks a furlong without sympathy walks to his funeral drest in his shroud.*” (Stanza 48) I carry this line in my wallet to this day. And I sometimes want to ask, “Mrs. Alsup, what’s your favorite line in the poem?”

And when I read this line *“Walt you contain enough, why don’t you let it out then?”* (Stanza 25), I sometimes sing out, “so let it out and let it in, hey Jude, begin.” And I sometimes want to say, “Mrs. Alsup, did you know that John Lennon “ripped off” Walt Whitman?”



And when I read the last lines of Cormac McCarthy’s novel No Country for Old Men as the old sheriff recounts ¹a dream about his own father. And I recall Tommy Lee Jones and his completely compelling rendition of the lines in the movie.

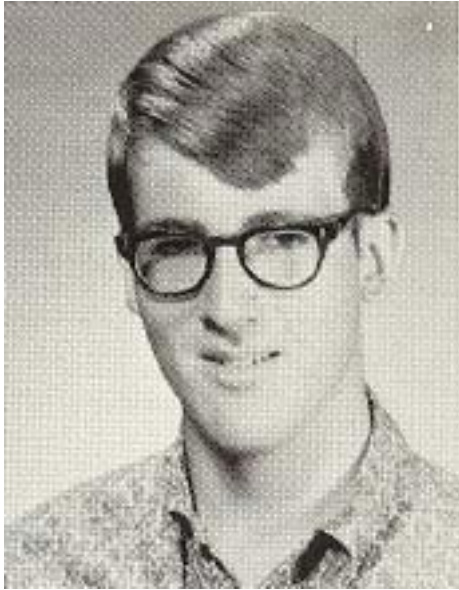
“And in the dream I knew that he was goin on ahead and that he was fixin to make a fire somewhere out there in that dark and all that cold and I knew that whenever I got there he would be there.” And I remember Whitman’s very last lines, *“Failing to fetch me at first keep encouraged/Missing me in one place search another/I stop somewhere waiting for you.”* (Stanza 52) “Mrs. Alsup, did you know that even Cormac McCarthy borrowed from Walt Whitman?”

Mrs. Alsup taught me to appreciate literature. And, as I say, she taught me about simile and metaphor. So . . . let me try to end with a soft, sweet one.

“That Bob Fleming; he’s crazy. It’s 46 years later and every day he still goes to Mrs. Alsup’s class.”

Her class still haunts me.

Steve Gardner
steve@consumerhelper.com



1968



2014

If you recall, Ms. Alsup's third-period honors English class had taken to writing pithy/pretentious sayings on the blackboard for us to see.

Our first response was the one-off "underground" newspaper.

Then the Thirdies (a name I just made up but wish we had used then) did something (which I don't recall, probably due to its utter insignificance, but perhaps someone on this email was a Thirdie and can let us know), and we decided, "Fuck it, let's make a movie!"

A somewhat disproportionate response perhaps, but so was Vietnam.

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO THE GALA PREMIERE
OF THE INITIAL EFFORT BY PUNOGRAPHY, LIMITED, A
DIVISION OF THE ENORMOUS MOVING PICTURE GROUP,
ON THE FOURTH DAY OF MAY, NINETEEN HUNDRED
SIXTY EIGHT, AT THE HOME OF MR GARY HUFFHINES,
7057 ELMRIDGE DRIVE, DALLAS.

FESTIVITIES WILL COMMENCE AT 8:30 PM. AND WILL
TERMINATE PROMPTLY AT DAWN.

RSVP--\$.50 DONATION MANDATORY 235-4103 STEVE
239-2159 BILL

semi-formal

It was a time of disproportionate behavior generally, not all of it in a bad way.

Punography; Fun

What started out last year as an effort of Mrs. Jeanne Alsop's third period English class to upstage her fourth period class, rapidly blossomed into a dynamic movie production company known as Punography Limited.

The original members - Steve Gardner, Tommy Thomas, Steve Keene, Bill Moore, Kerry Martin, and Phil Huber - have since added to their staff several "menials", such as Bill Scott, Eddy Norton, Kelly ("Gut") Haralson, and Ralph Stolow. Marshal Netherland was added as a "menial" when Kerry left for SMU.

The company has already completed and shown to over

200 of the movie-going public one of what the members of Punography Ltd. call "the most original idea in entertainment since Laugh-In" - "Fruit of the Loom".

They have completed production on a second picture - "Beicha Can't Eat Just One" - and have scheduled the premier for November 2. They are now selling tickets, which may be purchased from any member.

Punography To Show Film

Richardson High School's Punography Limited will host a second showing of its most recent production, "Beicha Can't Eat Just One," Nov. 23 at Churchill Way Presbyterian Church.

Tickets for the show, set for 10:15 p.m., are priced at \$50 each.

Members of the 3-year-old "film for fun" production company are Steve Gardner, Tommy Thomas, Steve Keene, Bill Moore, Phil Huber, Bill Scott, Marshal Netherland, Ralph Stolow, Eddy Norton and Kelly Haralson.

November 7, 1964



PUNOGRAPHY LIMITED DIRECTORS Bill Moore, Tommy Thomas, and Steve Gardener enjoy refreshments at an open house after the premiere while Eddy Norton surveys the action. (Fluber Photo).

Punography Film Captures Crowd

By BILL SCOTT

Over 200 budding young socialites cannot be wrong. These enthusiastic guests gave a rousing reception to Punography Limited's second massive production, "Betcha Can't Eat Just One" at its gala premiere at Churchill Way Presbyterian Church Sat., Nov. 2.

The film, which featured a cast of thousands, served as the highlight to an evening of festivities which could become the focal point of RHS social life.

The 10 Punography directors, assisted by a powerful sound system, a short display by Aurora Borealis, and a responsive audience were able to present their most successful production to date.

Festivities after the showing included the crowning of Terry Mitchell as Punography

Sweetheart in the true Homecoming tradition, the presentation of door prizes with the grand prize, a door, going to lucky Jean Renard Ward, who screamed out a short acceptance speech, and an open house after the premiere.

Work on the script and screenplay for the third Punography Limited production has already begun and shooting will commence in several weeks.

Now, having read Pat's memory of the Vietnam War debate, which he sent to me so that I could correct his grammar, I have the following response:

Pat, this is one of the funniest things I've read in a while (as I just said in an email forwarding this to Alford and Suzanne for their reading pleasure).

I'll allow you to have your own memory, but I did not chime in in favor of David's position, although I might have yelled out "where where". That's probably the point of confusion.

And my only salient memory of this event was that we went on to consider putting the USA on trial for war crimes, something Bertrand Russell had recently done, but no one would agree to take the side of the USA (David was probably at a more important meeting) so it fell to either you or Steve A to grudgingly volunteer to do so. I think it was you, but it could have been Steve (and that's to both of your credits).

However, as it turned out, no one had to belly up to that bar as, after this intellectual growth spurt, nothing came of our Grand Plan. No trials, war or otherwise.

Steve

Steve Keene
keestp@aol.com



1968



2014

I remember the chalkboard that I spoke to you about. I remember asking you what you thought of euthanasia and you said something like "a little brighter than the kids in Africa, I think." (Tommy's note: I think Steve was thinking of me.)

I remember Bill Moore writing a satire while we were studying Animal House about Blue Frogs not getting along in the pond with the Green Frogs and Black Frogs (Friggers?) and a heated racial discussion arose. (Tommy's note: I think he means Animal Farm.)

I remember us writing essays on all the issues of the day. Most of you guys were liberals and I always seemed to be the odd man out. I think Ms. Alsup was pretty liberal, too because you all made A's and I got a lot of B's. Could have been my study habits. We

had those little chairs with the desks attached and the storage underneath. I was three rows back on the far left next to the chalkboard.

I remember something about us giving the teacher an apple to enhance our grades in Punography film and I am pretty sure when Ms. Alsup put it in her drawer there were a lot of surprising other items in there.

My most cherished memorabilia from that time is the hall pass that Mrs. Alsup gave me to attend to a Punography screening.

Corridor Pass or Transfer

STUDENT Steve Keene

FROM B212 TIME LEAVING _____

TO B217 TIME ARRIVING _____

REASON Show special film

TIME RETURNING _____ DATE 5-13-68

Alsup
(PERSON OR TEACHER ISSUING PASS).

FORM 3558 ★ ★ STECK-VAUGHN COMPANY If convenient

My favorite skit from Punography was actually shot in your 4th period class. You agreed to be the star in which a recalcitrant student (Bill Moore) disrespectfully read a Playboy magazine right in front of you during your lecture. When you had finally had enough, you walked over and yanked the Playboy out of his hands only to reveal the math textbook that he had been reading all along.

Here are a few screen shots of that skit:









To see the actual film, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdMgOqKu7to> to see Punography Limited's film "Son Of A Betcha, Part 1." The clip starts at 2:38. Since the original footage was shot on Super 8 film in 1968, then transferred to VHS tape in the 1980s, and then transferred to digital in the 2000s, please excuse the degradation of quality!

Laura Kirklen
laurakir22@nsb-pklake.com



1968



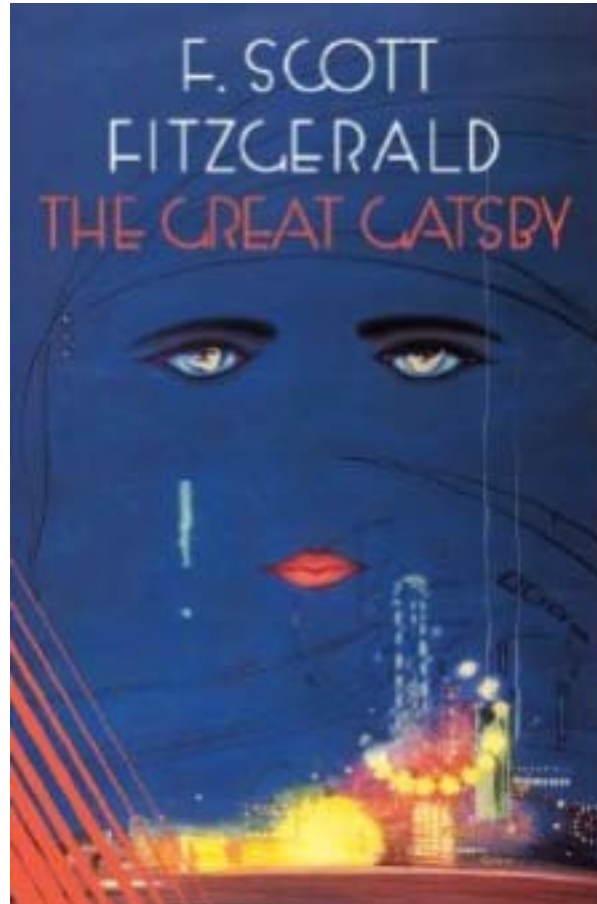
2014

Hi, Mrs. Alsup!

I am delighted to share some of my memories of your class at RHS:

You introduced us to J.D. Salinger, reading aloud several passages from "Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters & Seymour."
Without having looked at his works in decades, I still remember you reading "A Perfect Day for Banana Fish" and the description of a hair growing out of a mole (or at least that's my recollection) – crazy the things that stick with you!

I remember the optometrist's sign of the large blue eyes surrounded by glasses in "The Great Gatsby" and that Thoreau went to the pond "to live deliberately."



I especially remember either Steve Alford or Kerry Martin writing "I, too, saw Goody Alsup with the devil" on the blackboard as the Salem witchcraft trials were underway in "The Scarlet Letter."

You taught us symbolism and stimulated critical thinking – the latter, a skill that was definitely *not* lacking in our class – which is one reason why your class and Carole Becker's World Lit. still stand in my mind as my favorites.

For one assignment, you had us write character descriptions of someone sitting near us in class, then told us that your husband

had said that these bordered on libel. He was also cited as the legal advisor in the movie credits that some of the students created (I wish I could remember who) – all examples of the creativity and excitement that you inspired.

As this was the 60s, I remember you recommending “The Graduate” to us, quoting the career advice given to Dustin Hoffman: “Plastics!”



You had an exchange with Kerry Martin, who was probably starting to experiment with drugs, about the false perceptions that someone can have when under the influence, like “viewing the world through rose-colored glasses.”

Your sheaths were sleeveless and the windows were always cracked for fresh air, even in winter. I remember visiting you in the hospital after Trey was born, and you were as lovely as ever.

Your class was inspirational, exciting and always impactful...and I thank you for the experience! I have retained an abiding love of

literature and the most wonderful memories of the dynamics of our class.

Wishing you all the best in retirement and thank you again for everything you gave me.

Kindest regards,

Laura Kirklen

Debbie Mabry
debmip@yahoo.com



1968



2014

Dear Jeanne (more formally Mrs. Alsup),

Happy Retirement!

I had no idea you were in Houston at Kinkaid. I'm sure you've taught several of my friends' children. I, too, lived in Houston for some time in my 30's. I hope your retirement is everything you want it to be and more.

What an inspiration you were to me coming to RHS my Junior year from San Antonio where I currently reside. Not only did you offer excellence in teaching, but I never could wait to see your wardrobe for the day!

One of my favorite memories is a major theme paper we did and mine was on the Reformation. The lead in caught your fancy and you read it to the class. It was an A+ paper...wow!

Our school class website has enlightened me about the boys, their musical overtures to you and whatever. I think I was in the wrong class!

With sincere hope for all your happiness on the road to come from a student that you made a huge impression on, I thank you very sincerely.

Debbie Mabry

Linda Longacre Sullivan
linda042551@gmail.com



1968



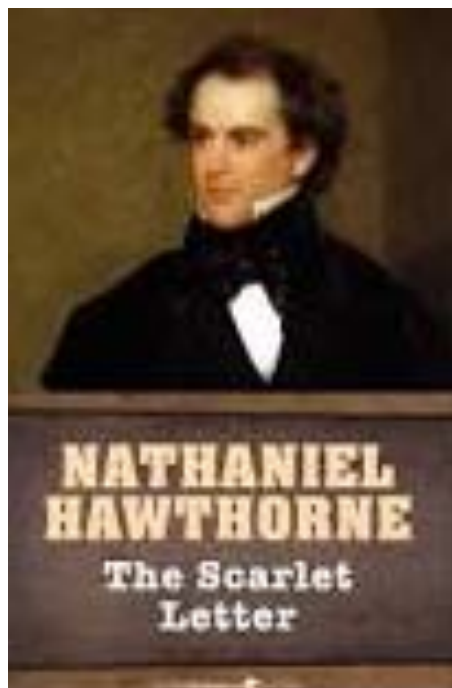
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Hi Mrs. Alsup, (couldn't call you Jeanne if I wanted to!)

I was in your Jr. Honors English class at RHS - class of '69 - just a FEW years ago. 😊 David Cordell sent an email about your retirement from The Kinkaid School in Houston. I remembered that you left RHS, but didn't remember anything else. Funny, as my daughter's children have begun to reach school age, she found the Kinkaid School website with no thought of being able to send them there, but thought it a wonderful school. I have heard of the school for years. (She ended up enrolling her 1st grader at Trinity Classical School of Houston and she has flourished!)

As I am approaching retirement age soon myself, I realized that my thoughts years ago of you just being a few years older than the students in my class was probably correct! Interesting how the years dissolve boundaries as we age.

I moved to Richardson from Joplin, Mo. my sophomore year - a horrible time to move from a small town to a large city. Many of my high school memories revolve around concert choir, the spring musicals Oklahoma! and L'il Abner, Madrigal Singers and Joe Figg, the choir director. But NO academic memory is as fun, vivid or memorable as my junior English class - The Scarlet Letter (with "Alsup" starting with the dreaded "A"), A Tale of Two Titties, Moby Dick (is not a social disease!) etc. I really remember the literature because of the way you had of pulling discussion out of us. You made learning interesting, tolerable, exciting, and sometimes even fun. And although I didn't think you were "a babe" like the guys did, I did admire your fashionable style and "with-it" personality!



I remember down-playing the subject matter and content of the movie The Graduate, knowing that my parents would not let me see it if they knew. By telling them my English teacher wanted us to see it, I was able to pull it off! Sunday afternoon at Northpark Cinema watching The Graduate with our class always comes to

mind when that movie surfaces. Kind of a "where were you when" scenario.



And oh, the film debut complete with limo arrival! And the surprise baby shower complete with baby bed! Such fun memories!

Thanks for them all, and I'm sure a huge number of students in years following 1968 echo my thoughts.

I entered education first as a teacher of hearing impaired children, then as a dyslexia therapist in private practice for many years. I currently train teachers using an Orton-Gillingham multisensory reading, writing and spelling program and also train at the Region Service Centers for the assessment of dyslexia in the public schools.

Hope you have a wonderful retirement celebration and a fabulous retirement! I plan to join those ranks in 3 years! Always know that you touched many lives - many that you haven't heard from in over 40 years!

Sincerely and with gratitude for a fun learning environment,

Linda Longacre Sullivan

Tommy Thomas
tommy@oppositestrengths.com



1968



2014

Two life changing events happened to me in 1967.

The first was traveling unchaperoned throughout Europe in the summer of 1967 (The Summer of Love) with my friend David Cordell. So many wonderful experiences opened my eyes to the world.

The second was being placed in your Junior English class in the fall of 1967. You opened my eyes to the world in so many other ways.

It was so refreshing to have not only a young but also beautiful woman for a teacher (the most appropriate term for which is “hot

babe”). And then to find out that you brought so many wonderful new experiences – through school all of places.

I remember that you really loved Simon & Garfunkel. *The Sound of Silence* was poetry to your ears and transformed into poetry for me too. I’ve always loved these words and visit them often to see what new meanings can come from them.

*Hello darkness, my old friend,
I've come to talk with you again,
Because a vision softly creeping,
Left its seeds while I was sleeping,
And the vision that was planted in my brain
Still remains
Within the sound of silence.*

Then Scarborough Fair became the hit song of the movie *The Graduate*, combining your favorite poets with your favorite movie. Priceless.



In the spring of 1968 Eugene Locke was running for Texas governor using a snappy jingle with the words “Eugene Locke should be governor of Texas, the governor of Texas should be Eugene Locke.” Our fellow student Jean Ward was well known to argue a point well after its demise. One day your frustration with him reached the breaking point and you began saying to him, “You, Jean Ward, should blah, blah, blah. And you, Jean Ward, should blah, blah, blah.” The intersection of the jingle’s tune, the cadence of your admonishment, and the homonyms from the two created a spontaneous combustion of several other students (including me) singing “You Jean Ward should be governor of Texas, the governor of Texas should be you Jean Ward.” Well, laughter is the best medicine, and I can safely say that your quick smile certainly saved Jean from certain intellectual defeat in front of everyone. (And I still can’t get that damn jingle out of my head.)

One day you left class to meet with some parents including my mother. You admonished us to study quietly while you were gone for a few minutes. I had watched Johnny Carson do his famous Carnac skit the night before and remembered the lines. So, as soon as you left, I got up in front of the class and did my best Carnac imitation. You returned to class prematurely and mock scolded me.

At dinner that evening my mother said you had met with the parent group with a smile on your face and told her what you found me doing when you came back to class and how funny you found it. That story sung in my mother’s heart for the rest of her life as she proudly told it time and again. I can’t thank you enough for being the kind of teacher you are.

I believe that even fond memories fade with time. But each of them leaves a shadow of the emotion that accompanied them.

When we remember people, memories of the events fade but the memory shadows remain to remind us of the emotional tenor those people created with us. You have created more lasting smile-generating memory shadows than you will ever realize.

Thank you for being my teacher.

Tommy

Bill Walton
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1968



2014

Congratulations Mrs. Alsup,

It is an honor that you consider our classes as some of your favorites. You were certainly one of my favorite teachers.

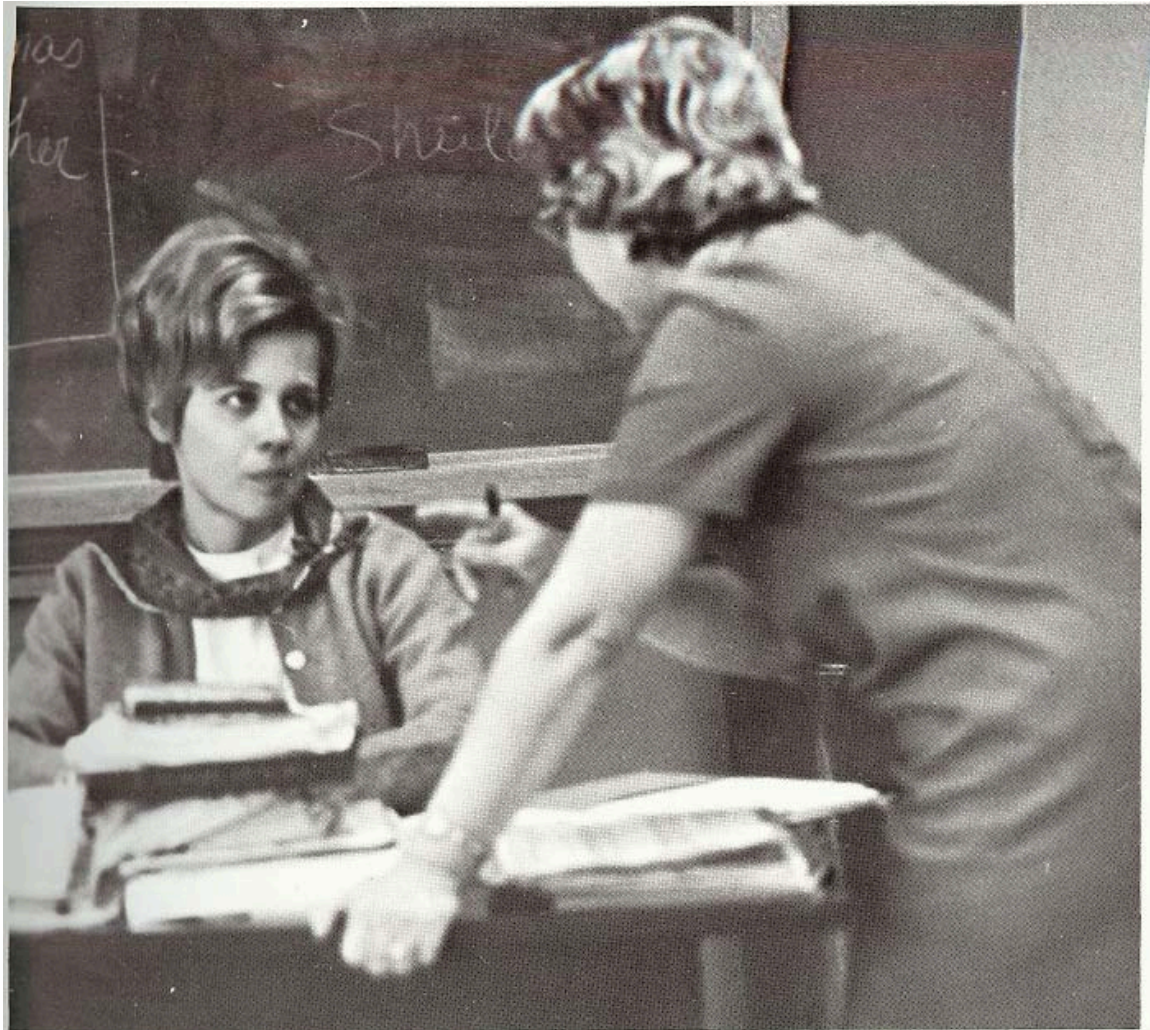
My story probably will not be in your memory bank, but I think of it often. I was giving an oral presentation and was very nervous. One of the “cool guys” in the class had done his presentation and had elicited many laughs. In an insecure moment I copied one of his silly gestures. You stopped me right there and lectured me and included the rest of the class that we should not worship at the altar of the “cool guys”. I was embarrassed but realized that

you were disappointed in my insecurity and I took that as a compliment.

I have attained some positions where I wonder how I was chosen and am overly impressed with the people in the group. I was elected as the Texas representative on the American Dental Association's Council on Ethics, Bylaws and Judicial Affairs. When I am on 22nd floor of the ADA building in Chicago and I wonder what a dentist from Clyde, Texas is doing there; I remember that you thought I should just be myself.

Thanks,
Dr. Bill Walton

Mrs. Alsup Annoyed at Teacher with Seniority



"Look, I have been here longer than you have."