

The West Harpur Other

In 1968, before the existence of Co-Rec Football, and the Hinman Little Theater, and before the rise to prominence of the Hinman College Council, Hinman began experimenting with print media publications. This first foray into the news services was called *The West Harpur Other*. For unknown reasons, this paper seems to have failed, but a new publication almost immediately took its place. This new newsletter was called *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* and was written almost completely by then Faculty Master Pete Gruber. Like its predecessor, this newsletter did not last long and was ultimately replaced by a new Hinman magazine with a rather confusing name change. This new magazine was officially called *W.H.O.: The Other Other*. However, on its masthead it still referred to itself as *The West Harpur Other*, with the abbreviation listed underneath.¹ The third issue of this new publication has this to say about the importance of the newsletter:

This is the beginning of what is expected to be a great step in the development of Hinman College. No community can exist without a reliable means of communication. The larger the community, the more mass produced the medium (and coincidentally, the more sophisticated the method of reproduction). This is a relatively small community, less than 1/3 of the total university, so this newsletter will be unsophisticated: no illustrations, especially photographs, for a while; no super glossy paper with heavy black ink, no nationwide syndicated columnists. But, with the resources available, we will strive to bring to the residents of Hinman a readable news letter with editorials, articles, and chronicles of events of interest to West Harpur.²

Furthermore, that very same first issue, had this to say about the issue of its name:

Lest some be struck by the originality and ingenuity of the staff preparing this news letter, a word on its name seems appropriate. The West Harpur Other [sic] was founded a year and a half ago by a student interested in producing a creative magazine for the then just emerging Hinman College, and was takeoff on the East Village Other. The original West Harpur Other was an assemblage of creative efforts by students who wanted to write, and anything that was written was printed. This was the tragic flaw of WHO, for the fifth in a series of sporadically produced issues was deemed too “dirty” by the off-campus printer and the interruption proved too great an obstacle to overcome. But the spirit of WHO lives on, and—with the necessity of a newsletter bearing down on us—is

revived, even if in and [sic] adulterated form, with this: West Harpur Other, the Other Other.

The West Harpur Other, Who Too, The Other Other, or whatever you'd like to call it had humble origins. Their first office was located in Smith Hall suite 226 C and its editorial board consisted of two people, Bruce Laubacher and Sandy Lazar. Others contributed to some of its articles, but for the most part, this small community newsletter was held together by only a few individuals.

Within the pages of *The West Harpur Other*, one can see the beginnings of a true community newsletter. The writers for the newsletter kept their readers abreast of the goings on (or lack therefore as the case often was) with HCC. They announced programs and campus activities. They reported the current events both in Hinman and the greater campus community. While each issue was no more than a few pages long, it still served its purpose and fulfilled its mission statement that it announced in its very first issue. This paper would last until at least 1970. What exactly happened to *The West Harpur Other* is unclear, though it appears to have been replaced by another publication that will be spoken about later in this chapter. While *The West Harpur Other* may have lasted only a few years it laid the foundation for all future Hinman publications that were to follow. When it all looked bleak it also offered the inspiration for other Hinman publishers to continue. As an inspirational message, this newsletter's first Assistant Editor, Sandy Lazar, wrote this as an inspiration to all current and future newsletter publishers in Hinman and the Hinman community at large:

As an individual in the college community, you have the opportunity to determine the kind of academic and social life that you want or sit back and let others do it for you. That choice is yours.

You may choose to become involved; or you may choose to be a spectator.

You may choose to commit yourself to your goals; or you may choose to sit in frustration over your failure to reach them.

You may choose to work constructively to promote your ideas and ideals; or you may continue to despair of the world around you.

You may choose to help to redefine the goals of the college, the student, and society; or you may accept the outmoded clichés so often accepted.

In short, you will choose to be a spectator or a participant, an individual who shapes his college life, or one who lets it shape you.

But before you become committed to one of these alternatives, look at them all carefully. Don't rely on someone else's view of the situation, for many have stopped looking.

The challenge to create a new college community lies with you.³

In those early days of Hinman College, everything was an experiment, everything was new and groundbreaking. Everyone, from the lowliest of students to the professional staff members, to the Master of Hinman College himself, everyone was involved in redefining what a residential college was all about. For *The West Harpur Other* and those who worked on it, they more than anyone else in those early days, were contributing to a new and challenging experiment called Hinman College.

¹ C.P. Gruber et al., "Entertainment and Miscellaneous Student Services," *Brief Overview of Hinman College Development: September 1967-February 1970*, February 16, 1970, on file in the Hinman Archives.

² "Who Too?" *The West Harpur Other*, Vol. 3, No. 1, September 1969.

³ Sandy Lazar, *The West Harpur Other*, Vol. 3, No. 1, September 1969.