

The Phillips Brooks House Association (PBHA)¹

Our Mission

PBHA strives for social justice. As a student-run organization, we draw upon the creative initiative of students and community members to foster collaboration that empowers individuals and communities. Through social service and social action, PBHA endeavors to meet community needs while advocating structural change. PBHA seeks to promote social awareness and community involvement at Harvard and beyond.

Our Model

The Phillips Brooks House Association (PBHA) is a student-run, community-based, nonprofit public service organization at Harvard University. PBHA is the umbrella organization for 86 student-directed programs, supported by full-time staff members. Together, these programs strive for change on multiple levels in the Boston and Cambridge communities. PBHA's dual focused mission is to provide vital resources to local communities and grow public service leaders. Often called "the best course at Harvard," PBHA programs provide students with experiences and wisdom that cannot be learned within classroom walls. At the same time, by utilizing student initiative and working in close collaboration with constituents, our programs meet genuine community needs in innovative ways.

¹ Accessed June 30, 2015, <http://pbha.org/about/>.

PHILLIPS BROOKS HOUSE

It shall be my endeavor briefly to set before the readers of the MONTHLY the work at Phillips Brooks House as a sane and natural product of Christian philanthropic endeavor free from all religious cant and doctrine. We are frequently told that religion and Harvard are as incompatible as oil and vinegar: they refuse to be mixed; but if we look more deeply, we see that this is not entirely the case, and that the religious life at Harvard is expressing itself in a thousand different ways.

Phillips Brooks House to-day consists of five constituent societies, each having a definite object, so that their fields of action border but never infringe upon each other. They are the Christian Association, the St. Paul's Society, the St. Paul's Catholic Club, the Harvard Mission, and the Divinity Club. . . .

Phillips Brooks House has a very definite purpose in the University, namely, to train men in unselfish Christian service. In a community of some three thousand students, the majority of whom are not only strangers but transient strangers, it feels that it needs offer no excuse for its existence. Its object is by no means visionary; the inevitably practical nature of its work indeed makes visions far too infrequent. Men frequently ask why Brooks House is not more coherent in its organization and less profuse in the variety of its efforts. But we find at Harvard personalities so vastly at variance with each other that its channels must be all-inclusive. It might, it is true, become merely evangelical in spirit, merely philanthropic, merely theological, did it regard itself as a training school in which the elective system is held dear. Like the gymnasium for physical development, the library for intellectual, Brooks House offers itself for the growth of moral worth, whether it be primarily through religious or primarily through philanthropic motives. Whether or not philanthropy divorced from religion is abortive is not a fundamental issue, although works without faith are likely to be but half-hearted.

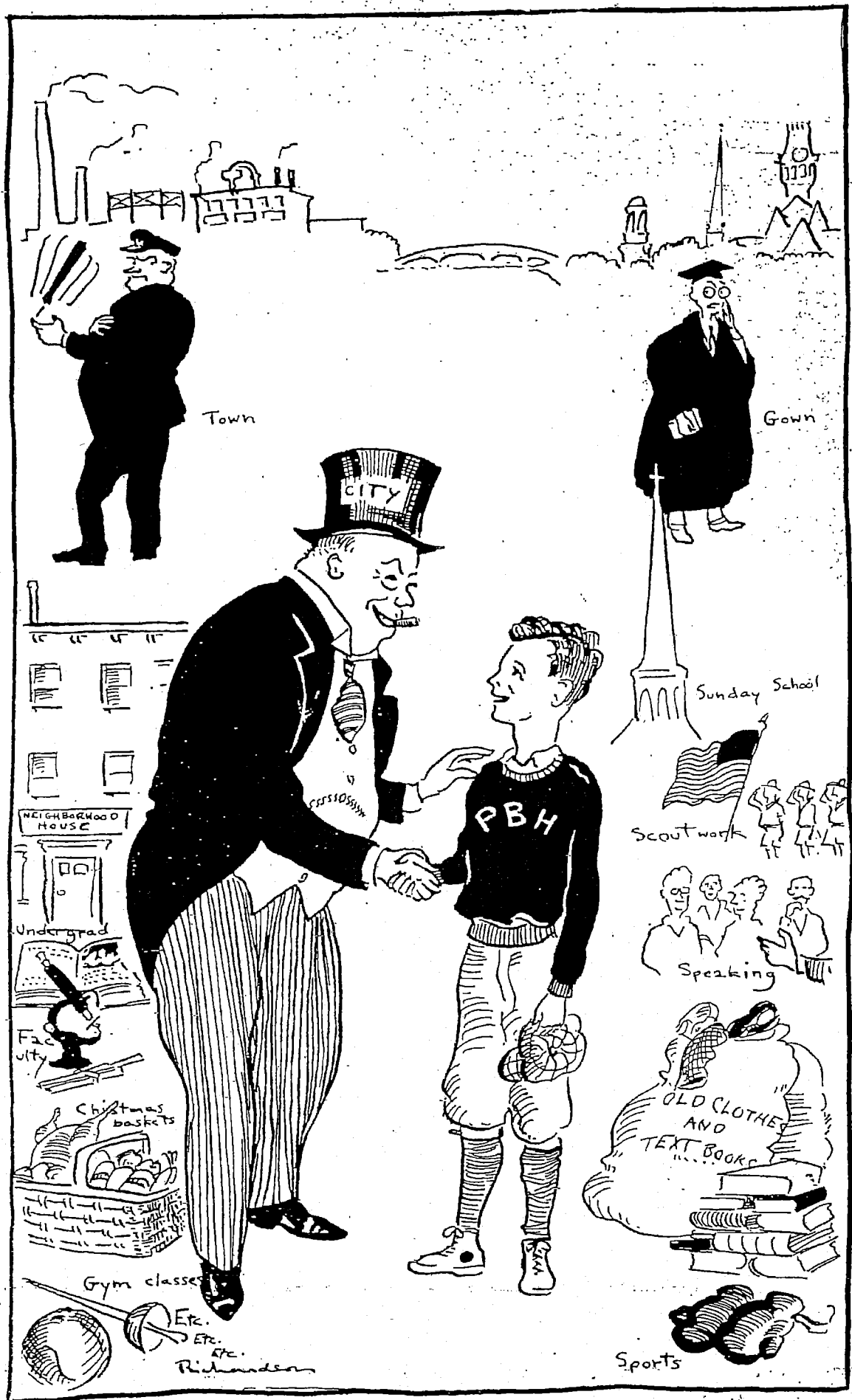
Phillips Brooks House Association, "House Ideology and Goals," Spring 1974¹

The activities and programs of Phillips Brooks House and committees within the house should be based on the two following fundamental goals of the house;

A. Given a people's or community's fundamental right to self-determination and control of their collective lives, house activities must direct themselves at combatting forces which deny people this right, and using our skills and talents, we must help communities regain the power to control their lives and livelihood by providing services where appropriate, and the tools to gain such power where they are needed.

B. We recognize that a Harvard education lacks any experiential component, that it removes the student from the social issues of the society at large as well as from the communities immediately surrounding the University, and that Harvard itself through its relation to surrounding communities, reflects and reinforces many of the social inequities in our society. Therefore we must undertake through community work and other channels, to fill this vacuum in the educational process by providing volunteers and other undergraduates with a greater understanding, through experience, of power and inequity in our society.⁸⁵

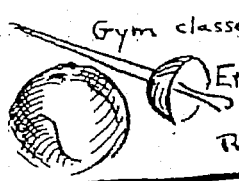
¹ As cited in Donald Henry Gips, "Babbling Brooks: A History of Phillips Brooks House Association" (bachelor's thesis, Harvard University, 1982), 123.



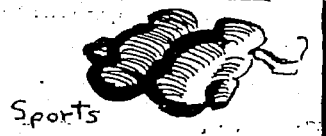
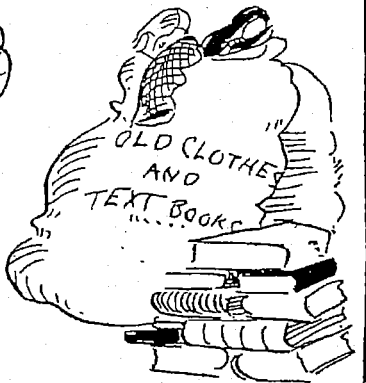
Town



Gown



Etc.
Etc.
Etc.
Richardson



Sports

**"P.B.H. Opens War Against All Sorts of Panhandlers Here:
Cambridge Police and, Colonel Apted Launch Attack on Bums,"**

Harvard Crimson, October 4, 1937, accessed June 24, 2015,
<http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1937/10/4/pbh-opens-war-against-all-sorts/>

Declaring war on Square panhandlers, Phillips Brooks House has appointed a special committee to investigate the problem of bumming, it was revealed last night. The committee consists of Schafer Williams, new personnel man, and Calvin Stillman '39, chairman of the library committee of the House.

Williams and Stillman contacted Cambridge police chief Timothy Leahy over the weekend, and although he agreed that the subject was a good field for investigation, he referred the matter to Colonel Charles R. Apted, '06, Superintendent of Caro-takers. The latter was also all for the idea but turned the job back to chief Leahy, in whose dominions panhandlers fall.

Actually faced with problem, Chief Leahy put his department to work on clearing the Square of bums. He reiterated Apted's demand that while the subject is being treated, students should under no conditions give money to strangers.

Leahy mentioned the two particular species of bums who, he figures are the most persistent trouble-makers. The first type he said, are the professional ones, natives of Cambridge. But the second type, the out-of-town part-timers, give most annoyance, he said. "They come mostly from Brighton and Brookline, and they come to Cambridge because Harvard is easy-pickings," he stated.

Tips To



Pictures on pages 12 and 13, courtesy Boston Boys' Clubs.

1. The leader's best approach to the boys is in the natural relationship of a friend or older brother. To maintain a certain dignity and control is important, but it is also important to be a boy among boys and enjoy the things which interest them.
2. The group should not be dominated by the volunteer. His role is rather that of an advisor, supervisor, or counselor. His personal appearance, general conduct, open-mindedness, and manners leave their impression on the boys.
3. The volunteer should be intimate, but not familiar with the boys; sympathetic and companionable, but not condescending; just and impartial; firm, but always gentle. The boys should be able to go to him for advice and assistance without hesitation.
4. The volunteer must realize that there is a certain responsibility attached to taking over a club. He should never drop the work without giving it at least one month's trial; for some, it takes time to get the swing of the work. He should never cut his class or club. Nothing is so demoralizing or harmful to the group. In case of unavoidable absence, he should notify the committee, or try to get a substitute at least a day in advance.
5. A sense of humor is a prerequisite in dealing with boys. The volunteer must be able to see the amusing side of ordinarily discouraging situations.
6. He should also be honest and sincere with the boys, for they are the first to find him out. He should never make a promise he does not plan to carry out.
7. For those volunteers who are interested, investigation of boys' home background presents a fascinating sideline to volunteer work. It is also extremely helpful in analyzing much of the boys' behavior.
8. Results of the volunteer's work are often intangible, for one cannot expect remarkable changes in a boy within a year's time. Therefore, patience is a desirable quality in the leader.

Volunteers

9. The volunteer should not be lofty but should speak their language — no profanity or grammatical errors accepted.
10. Volunteers should plan to spend a little time with the boys outside and apart from the regular club meeting. He should feel assured that problem boys who flaunt all authority may be ejected with full support of the boys' worker.
11. The leaders should consult often with the boys' worker and talk over plans and problems with him, since that is his job. If difficulties arise, contact the Social Service Committee.
12. The leader should co-operate fully with the agency to which he is assigned by taking care of equipment which he uses, making sure he leaves everything in the condition he finds it; by not opposing staff members on important matters of policy; by knowing the house rules and regulations.
13. The volunteer should be on time if he expects the boys to be punctual.
14. Preparation and planning are essential parts of a good club program. It is well to map out in advance a tentative schedule to be used as the nucleus of the following meeting. The boys' worker should be consulted about this, and the interests of the boys should be considered before the planning of the program.
15. The volunteer should keep in mind that boys are usually interested in club organization and parliamentary procedure. A short talk on adventure, science, or sport is also popular. Bring your friends to a meeting occasionally, especially any well-known athlete.
16. Let the volunteer go ahead persistently and patiently, using the best of his resources and getting what help is possible from the most responsive boys and the experienced workers with whom he comes in contact. There can be no doubt about the ultimate result — a better man of the boy, and a more manly man of the leader.

NOTE: Complete information on programs, games, sports usable in volunteer work may be obtained at Phillips Brooks House upon request.

