

## CONTENTS

## EDITORS' NOTE

**Co-ed Dorms: An Intimate Campus Revolution** 32

Colleges across the country are liberalizing living arrangements among boy and girl students. At Oberlin the new arrangements are a marked success.

Photographed by Bill Ray

**Ode to the Man Who Was France** 42

The death of General de Gaulle. By Romain Gary

**Ordeal on El Capitan** 46

Climbers spend three weeks on a sheer rock wall

**The Isolation of a King** 50

A visit with Jordan's King Hussein after the bloody civil war in his country. By Jordan Bonfante.

Photographed by Pierre Boulat

**Who Painted Those Keane-eyed Kids?** 57**Meet Shaky, the First Electronic Person** 58B

The fearsome reality of a machine with a mind of its own. By Brad Darrach

**Dutchman in a Box** 71**Dustin Hoffman at Age 121** 75

For a part in *Little Big Man*, Hoffman puts on a century or so with the help of a makeup artist.

Photographed by Ernst Haas

## DEPARTMENTS

THE PRESIDENCY De Gaulle and three Presidents. 4  
By Hugh Sidey

GALLERY A ballet of skates' eggs by Nina Leen 8

REVIEWS 12-20

Architecture Critic Walter McQuade finds the Kennedy Center a deadly place for the lively arts

Harold Clurman on Lewis Mumford's despairing survey of our life with the machine

*Little Fauss and Big Halsey*, a film reviewed by Richard Schickel

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS 26A

PARTING SHOTS Watch out, here comes progress 81

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COVER-BILL RAY 3-RALPH MORSE 4-cartoon by LURIE 8, 9-NINA LEEN 12-STAN WAYMAN 16-ELMER NEWMAN 20-PARAMOUNT PICTURES 30-LIFE COLLECTION exc. bot. CARL MYDANS 42, 42A-RAY WILSON-LIAISON, CAMERA PRESS from PIX 42B, 42C-ERICH LESSING from MAGNUM, NICK DE MORGOLI from PIX 42D, 43-PARIS-MATCH from PICTORIAL-DOMINIQUE BERRETTY, PIERRE BOULAT, HANK WALKER, JOHN OLSON, PIERRE BOULAT 44-HOWARD SOCHUREK 46, 47-DEAN CALDWELL and WARREN HARDING 48-RALPH CRANE 54-KEYSTONE 57, 58-BOB PETERSON 58B, 58C-RALPH CRANE 68-AMPEX CORP. 71, 72-HUBERT LE CAMPION 75-ERNST HAAS from MAGNUM 76, 77-ERNST HAAS from MAGNUM exc. t. h. MEL TRAXEL 78, 79-ERNST HAAS from MAGNUM 81-HILMAR PABEL 82, 83-IL. JEHANGIR GAZDAR-IASS from SOVFOTO; cen. R.S. CHIANG for TIME-courtesy RUTGERS UNIVERSITY, UPI; rt. DAVID CUPP for THE DENVER POST 84-MIKE CONNEALY

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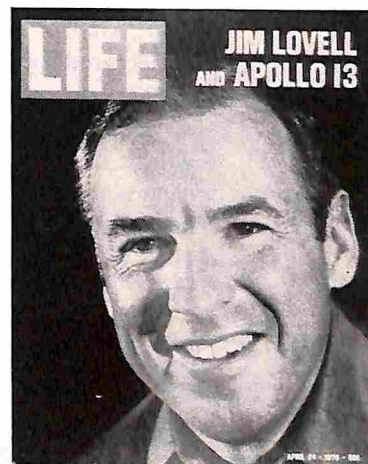
## Why a LIFE cover seldom makes everybody happy

This week's cover of a boy and girl living in a co-ed dorm at Oberlin College will, I know from experience, bring anguished letters from some readers. Although co-ed dorms are a major phenomenon on the American campus, accepted as a fact of life by many faculty members, students and parents, some readers will protest that we are "celebrating" or "endorsing" or "glorifying" a controversial situation by putting it on LIFE's cover. I hope LIFE's pictures and reporting in the stories accompanying our covers are clear to all who read them. The cover itself doesn't necessarily celebrate or endorse or condemn. It simply says: we think this matters this week.

I am frequently asked: "Even if it's true, should it be on the cover?" Well, yes. It seems to me that a LIFE cover should depict somebody or some situation that is in the news and is of interest to a wide cross section of our readers. We don't think of this as "glorification" but as importance. Today, if someone is important enough to be interesting to many people, the odds are large that he or she is controversial. Life isn't simple in this country these days, and you can get an argument at the drop of almost any well-known name. As examples: Muhammad Ali, Spiro Agnew, Martha Mitchell, movie-maker Dennis Hopper, Teddy Kennedy, Angela Davis, Bebe Rebozo, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Richard Nixon. All have been on LIFE's cover this year. And then there are those events and trends guaranteed to arouse highly opinionated discussion and disagreement at any dinner table of more than four people: the Kent State shooting, population control, the traffic in drugs, the midi, the spread of pornography, the women's lib movement. These, too, have been represented on LIFE's cover this year—and the response has shown just about the same degree of amiable unanimity of opinion that you find at your dinner table.

In my version of the ideal world, all our readers approve a LIFE cover even if they don't always like the news it proclaims or the person involved. But in reality, a cover lively enough to evoke response almost invariably evokes argument as well. The last cover I can remember that won universal approval from everyone was the one that marked the successful return of Apollo 13 from its abortive and perilous moon mission. That week (April 24) everybody loved Apollo Commander Jim Lovell. LIFE's cover on him was indeed a celebration in the sense that some readers expect a cover to be every week: hooray, and no controversy. That's how we all felt that week. But I'm afraid that even if we chose to ignore important things that are happening and published 50 noncontroversial covers a year, the result would be, alas, dull.

Next week: Nikita Khrushchev.



A NONCONTROVERSIAL COVER

*Ralph Graves*  
RALPH GRAVES  
Managing Editor



# ELLE

## CO-ED DORMS

An intimate revolution on campus

### THE GRANDEUR OF DE GAULLE

Rod Singler and  
Cindy Stewart  
in their dorm  
at Oberlin

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