

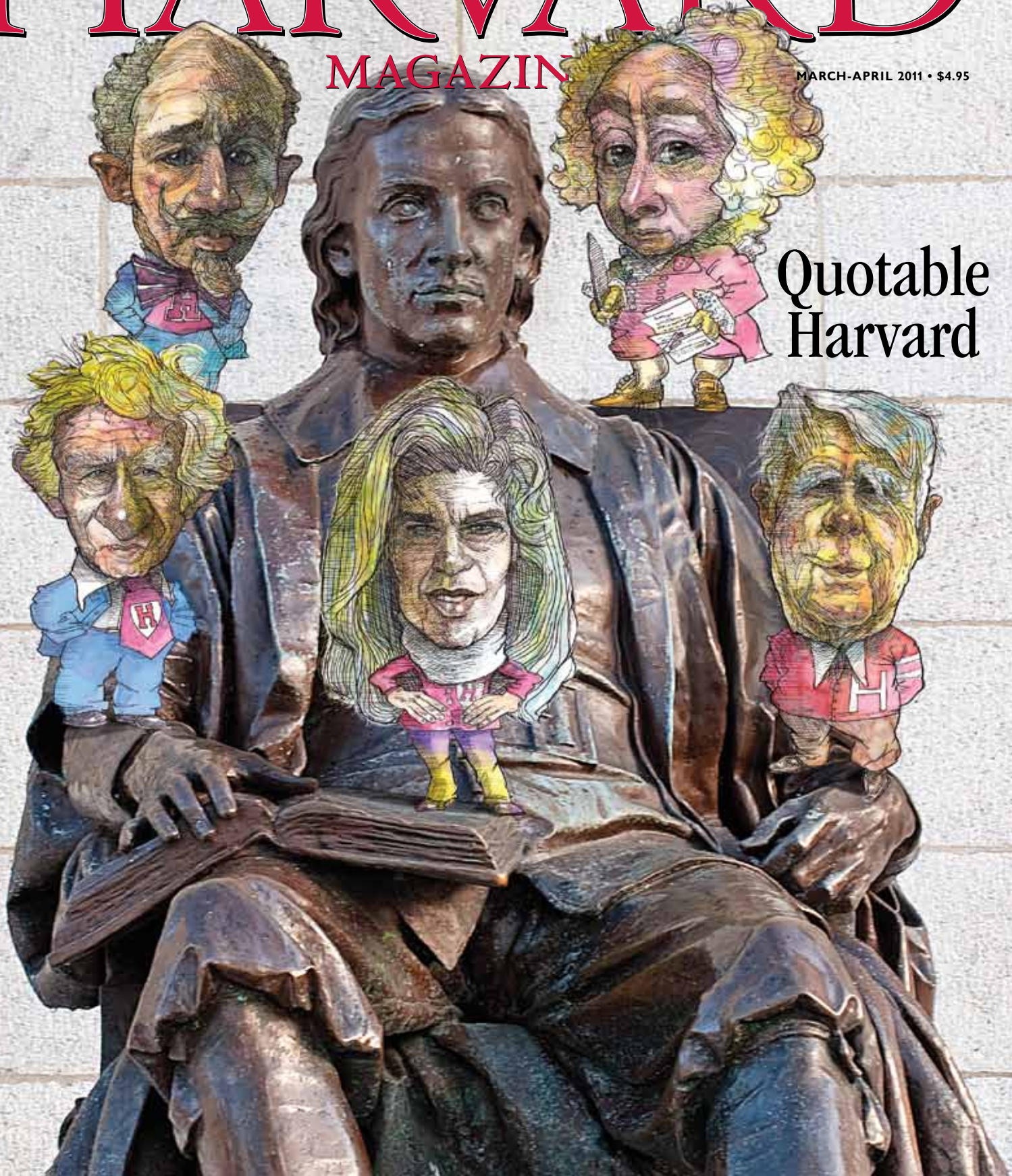
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JIM HARRISON

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Cambridge 02138

Coup in Iran, Obama's democracy, squash

SUICIDE

ELIZABETH GUDRAIS's otherwise excellent article on Matthew Nock's research on suicide and self-injury ("A Tragedy and Mystery," January-February, page 32) contains a significant omission: the centrality of the therapist-patient relationship in treating the suicidal patient.

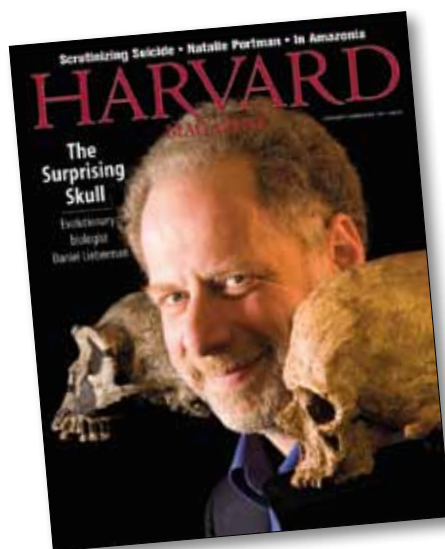
Competent, experienced psychodynamically oriented therapists explore the suicidal patient's inner world with dispassionate, nonjudgmental interest that conveys several therapeutic meta-communications: what you are feeling is not unspeakably bad, it is human; I'm interested in whatever you are thinking or feeling; I appreciate the distinction between self-destructive thoughts, feelings, and fantasies and action; your anguish is not as devastating to me as it is to you; my strength will be here for you to borrow if you need to; your therapy is a place where your destructive urges can be understood rather than judged; I will try not to leave you alone with your despair. And therapists also use the feelings their patients evoke in them for therapeutic purposes.

Nock advocates cognitive behavioral therapy and dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT) for the treatment of the suicidal patient. While DBT does address the emotions of the (suicidal) patient, it does so by providing strategies the patient may use to control and contain painful and destructive feelings. Psychotherapies in which the therapist-patient relationship is seen as the primary therapeutic agent should be added to Nock's list of treatments for the suicidal patient.

JEROME S. GANS, M.D. '62
Wellesley, Mass.

KERMIT ROOSEVELT

I WAS AMAZED that *Harvard Magazine* would publish such an unbalanced look at



the "achievements" of Kermit Roosevelt (Vita, by Gwen Kinkead, January-February, page 30). Charming as he may have been, he helped engineer a coup in Iran designed to punish a newly formed socialist democracy for its nationalization of Iran's oil industry.

Prior to Kermit's coup, Iran's oil had been controlled (since the 1920s) by British, French, and American oil interests who took from Iran more than they returned. In setting up the violent destruction of Iran's nascent democracy, Roosevelt and the CIA recouped economic and political domination of Middle Eastern oil, violated basic rules of national sovereignty, and provided a model for CIA-driven overthrows of democratically elected governments in Guatemala (1954) and Chile (1973), leading to dictatorships headed by people like Augusto Pinochet and Iran's own Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi.

As a piece of journalism, Kinkead sets her brief profile against a complex and violent U.S. foreign-policy precedent. Her once-over seems unprofessional, particularly given her stature as journalist and a historian. Whether Iran's new prime min-

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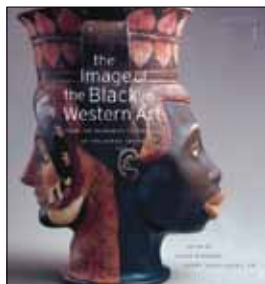
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Harvard Magazine (ISSN 0095-2427) is published bimonthly by Harvard Magazine Inc., a nonprofit corporation, 7 Ware Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02138-4037, phone 617-495-5746; fax 617-495-0324. The magazine is supported by reader contributions and subscriptions, advertising revenue, and a subvention from Harvard University. Its editorial content is the responsibility of the editors. Periodicals postage paid at Boston, Mass., and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to Circulation Department, *Harvard Magazine*, 7 Ware Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02138-4037. Subscription rate \$30 a year in U.S. and possessions, \$55 Canada and Mexico, \$75 other foreign. (Allow up to 10 weeks for first delivery.) SUBSCRIPTION ORDERS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE INQUIRIES should be sent to the Circulation Department, *Harvard Magazine*, 7 Ware Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02138-4037, or call 617-495-5746 or 800-648-4499, or e-mail addresschanges@harvard.edu. Single copies \$4.95, plus \$2.50 for postage and handling. MANUSCRIPT submissions are welcome, but we cannot assume responsibility for safekeeping. Include stamped, self-addressed envelope for manuscript return. Persons wishing to reprint any portion of *Harvard Magazine's* contents are required to write in advance for permission. Address inquiries to Irina Kuskina, acting publisher, at the address given above. Copyright © 2011 Harvard Magazine Inc.





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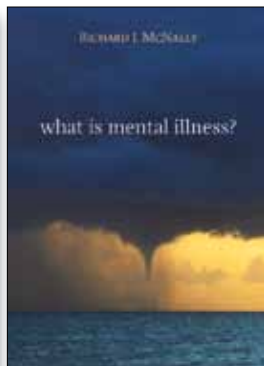
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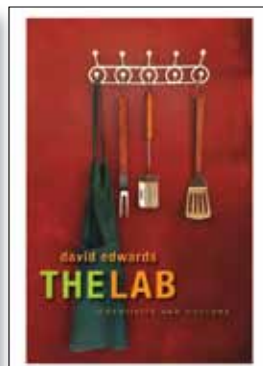
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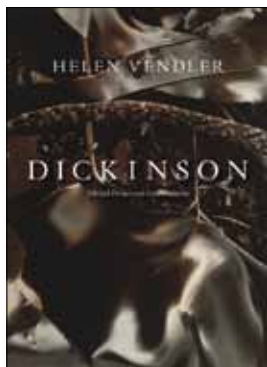
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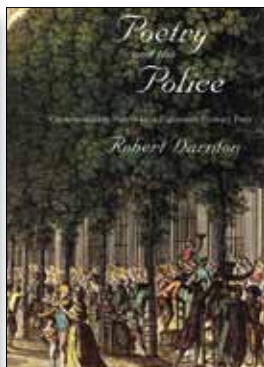
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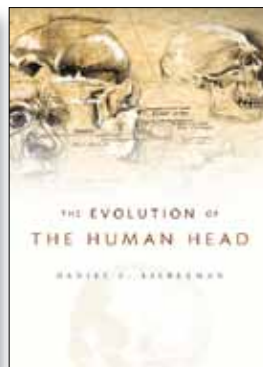
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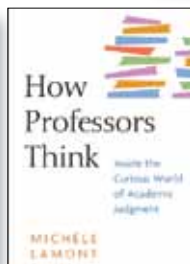
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ister, Mohammed Mossadegh, was “elderly” seems irrelevant compared to Dulles’s assertion (quoted by the author) that Mossadegh was “a madman.” Demonization is an old trick that is still practiced by American governments in the name of American interests. But Kinkead glosses over it all.

Nor does the author, in her flighty romp through Roosevelt’s life and work, back up her claim that Iran’s election was “semi-democratic.” Consider the source, not only of the comment, but the author’s and the magazine’s seemingly thoughtless decision to allow simplistic banality.

CHARLES F. DEGELMAN ’66
Los Angeles

THE PROFILE of Kermit Roosevelt overlooks the consequences of his campaign to overthrow Mohammed Mossadegh, the secular democrat who might have led Iran into a future of peaceful co-existence.

The author notes that Roosevelt laid the groundwork for the coup, the U.S. government’s first regime change. His tactics included bribery, murder, and “yellow journalism” in coordination with the British.

More important, Kinkead caricatures Mohammed Mossadegh as “an elderly lawyer with ulcers who often conducted business in pajamas.” He was a skilled attorney with a doctorate of law from Switzerland who spoke several languages. In the heat of the Middle East, many wore loose-fitting garments, the erroneously described “pajamas.” As a member of the Majlis, the Iranian

parliament, he emphasized democracy and self-reliance.

Did he nationalize Iran’s oil industry, the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company? Yes, but Kinkead ignores the underlying cause, the rapacity of the British. The 1919 Anglo-Persian Agreement reduced Iran to the status of a British protectorate under a vastly unequal revenue-sharing agreement. The company failed to honor a 1933 agreement to improve conditions for workers. Iranians at the Abadan refinery were paid 50 cents a day. They had no vacation pay, sick leave, or disability compensation, and lived in a shantytown with no running water, electricity, or sanitation. In the winter, the plain flooded; in the summer, torrid heat descended. In the British section, there were air-conditioned offices, lawns, rose beds, swimming pools.

In 1946, violent workers’ protests erupted. The British rejected all attempts at financial compromise, and the Iranian public pressed for nationalization. On March 15, 1951, the parliament voted unanimously for nationalization. Mossadegh became prime minister, the hero of self-determination and resistance to foreign power.

Forgetting that Britain was, at the same time, nationalizing major industries, the West reacted with shock and attempts to undo the inevitable. Roosevelt then led the U.S.-British Operation Ajax that unseated Mossadegh; the shah returned. Iranian fury at the U.S. interference in domestic matters still rages. It led first to the hos-

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Remembering Max Hall

Max Hall died in Cambridge on January 12 at 100 years of age. He was a writer, teacher of writing, journalist, editor of scholarly books, and for many of his many years, a contributing editor of this magazine. Each of his numerous articles was a model of the ABCs of good journalism: accuracy, brevity, and clarity. His books include *The Charles: The People’s River*, which grew out of a cover article for the magazine; *An Embarrassment of Misprints: Comical and Disastrous Typos of the Centuries*; and *Harvard University Press: A History*.

Max was employed as a journalist in Atlanta, New York, and Washington, D.C., including nine years with the Associated Press. He was awarded a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard in 1949-50 for his labor reporting. In 1960 he came back to Cambridge with his family for a long stint at Harvard University Press as social sciences editor. He brought his editorial skills and Southern manner to the task of persuading academics that they could improve their writing. He had successes. He was a member of the board of directors of this magazine in the mid 1990s, and an incorporator from 1992. When he was a director, he volunteered to take the minutes of board meetings, and did so with such accuracy, brevity, and clarity that when his two terms had expired, the board asked him to stay on as clerk on an informal basis, which he did. An obituary notice appears on page 56A.

~The Editors

tage crisis of 1979 when militants seized the U.S. embassy in Teheran. It strengthened the prestige of the Ayatollah Khomeini and the political power of those who supported theocracy. It continues today with the opposition to normalization of relations with the West.

All of this Kermit Roosevelt helped to engineer. His claim of being “appropriately proud” of his career seems questionable.

CASSANDRA CHRONES MOORE '56, A.M. '58
Palo Alto

Gwen Kinkead responds: In a short profile of Kermit Roosevelt, the fascinating Mr. Mossadegh, unfortunately, could not be covered in equal depth. As Cassandra Moore notes, he championed Iran's democracy, self-determination, and pluralism; sought to weaken its monarchy; and wrested its vast mineral wealth from the rapacious British. Would he have led an increasingly democratic Iran had the coup failed? It's tantalizing to speculate.

Charles Degelman mistakes a factual account of how and why Roosevelt overthrew Iran's constitutional democracy for

condoning the coup. The story notes that the consequences included Iran's Islamic Revolution. There were more consequences, too, many disastrous; Degelman is correct that the coup set a pattern for others—at least 10 by the CIA in the following decades.

OBAMA'S DEMOCRACY, REDUX

RECENTLY I have to believe that the letters in *Harvard Magazine* prove that a Harvard degree should not be considered an automatic indication of character or critical thinking skills. The letters in the January-February 2011 issue written in response to James Kloppenberg's article on President Obama (“A Nation Arguing with Its Conscience,” November-December 2010, page 34) seem to confirm my conclusion.

Charles Block accuses Kloppenberg of “selecting favorable evidence and ignoring other sources” and writing “biased... propaganda.” Accusing a tenured professor of ethical lapses and scholarly laziness should be accompanied by something besides vague attacks. George

Burditt made the astonishing claim that “Obama's Democracy” is a red flag to most Americans. His ‘democracy’ is not ours.” While Obama's approval rating is hovering around 50 percent in most polls, you'd be hard pressed to find any poll or study that showed that the “majority of Americans,” whom Burditt claims to represent, believe that Obama's vision of pragmatic governing is antithetical to their values. And then there's David McKenna, who argues that Obama's off-the-cuff response to Joe the Plumber in a town hall meeting in 2008 is better evidence of Obama's intellect than the thousands of pages of political writings and speeches he has penned in the last 20 years—that Obama simply “pretends to be” a “deep thinker.” This sort of baseless, ad hominem insult is what I expect in subpar political websites, and it saddens me to see such discourse in *Harvard Magazine*.

Yes, I disagree with the politics of these letter writers. But that is beside the point. One of the hallmarks of an excellent education, which Harvard is supposed to provide, is the ability to argue with skill.

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LETTERS

These letters are insults and invective masquerading as argument, and as someone who shares an alma mater with the writers, I am embarrassed.

TED GIDEONSE '96
San Diego

LETTER-WRITER George Burditt apparently neglected math while studying law at Harvard. He claims that "Obama's America" was objectionable to "most" Americans and objects to it "on behalf of a majority of Americans." Leaving aside the arrogance of claiming to speak for 155 million people you don't know, I call Burditt's attention to the fact that he and those like him constituted only 45.7 percent of those who voted in the last presidential election, which hardly constitutes "most" or "a majority." Even I, as one of the 1.5 percent who voted for someone other than Obama or John McCain, can acknowledge that it was Obama, with 52.9 percent of the vote, who was supported by the majority of voters.

Burditt makes the strange claim that "[Obama's] 'democracy' is not ours." Has Obama been ruling by decree, and somehow we missed it? Or have new laws been enacted by senators and representatives elected by people like Burditt and myself? Given the role of money in the elections and in the political process in general, not to mention legal and regulatory restrictions on third parties and the undemocratic practice of the filibuster, with its resulting tyranny of the minority, I would personally argue that American "democracy" is a mockery of actual democracy. But those things have nothing to do with President Obama, and somehow I doubt they're the things Burditt is objecting to, anyway.

STEVEN L. PATT, PH.D. '75
Cupertino, Calif.

THOSE letter writers who complained about the partisan nature of the excerpt from Kloppenberg's article on President

Obama's political philosophy could not have missed its point more. The excerpt (and the book) trace the intellectual sources of Obama's thinking, and indeed of America's unique contribution to that particular philosophy. One can disagree with that philosophy or contest whether Obama manifests it, but one searches in vain for either comment in the critical letters. What they seem to complain about, rather, is that the article casts the President in an intellectually alive light.

To call that partisan says more about the critics (and their candidates, perhaps), than about the editors of this magazine.

BRUCE A. MCALLISTER, LL.B. '64
Palm Beach, Fla.

FOOTBALL AND RACE

BEFORE MYTH permanently replaces history, let me offer some corrections of the College Pump's account of the 1947 Harvard football team's trip to Virginia (January-February, page 64). Yes, Chester Pierce, the only African American on our team, broke the color barrier; almost everything else in the story is untrue based on my personal experience. I had the privilege of being Chester's substitute, my locker was next to his in Dillon Field House, and I was at his side during much of that trip. I can be seen standing behind Chester in the photograph that appeared in *Time* magazine back then.

First, our captain was Vincent Moravec, not Kenneth O'Donnell as reported. Moravec, a bruising fullback, tore up his knee that day and was on crutches the rest of the season. But he limped out for the coin toss in our subsequent games. O'Donnell, an uncanny pass defender, was elected captain the next year. That correction is easily verified; as to the rest I can only offer my personal memory. I cannot swear that Kenny O'Donnell did not write to the Virginia football team insisting on Chester playing, but I can say that was definitely not his style. Furthermore, no one I knew on the team was aware of such a letter at the time. Nor were any of us told that the Virginia team had in response voted to let Chester play. I am more certain that the team never changed to a "black hotel" and we were never required to enter the back door of a restaurant in solidarity with Chester. In short, the citizens of Charlottesville, a university town, did not behave like Jim Crow bigots, nor did our

SPEAK UP, PLEASE

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Harvard team behave like civil rights activists. Perhaps the College Pump might better serve “veritas” by focusing on the institutional racism at Harvard in 1947 that made Chester the only African American on our team. The mythical self-congratulatory version retailed in *Harvard Magazine* was, I believe, created out of whole cloth by members of the press many years after the actual events.

ALAN A. STONE

*Touff-Grueck professor of law and psychiatry
Cambridge*

The editors note: Professor Stone is correct that Mark F. Bernstein’s *Football* (quoted in the College Pump) wrongly identifies Kenneth O’Donnell as captain of Harvard’s 1947 football team. Other sources, in particular an article by George Sullivan in the October 5, 1997, *New York Times*, provide details of the other incidents resembling those in the Bernstein excerpt.

CRIMSON IN CONGRESS

IN REFERENCE to “Crimson in Congress” (January-February, page 60; and see page

55), I observe that there will be some 32 members with Harvard degrees in Congress, and that 29 are Democrats. If the reader counts only the members with College degrees, there will be 13 members of Congress, 12 Democrats. The development of independent and critical thinking in undergraduates should be a major goal of an education, otherwise the process is indoctrination. The statistics on the political affiliations of the incoming Congress suggest that this is not happening at Harvard College. Could this be a reflection of the ideological imbalance of the faculty?

PETER MCKINNEY ’56

Chicago

SQUASH

TO SEE the statement “For years, college squash’s juggernaut has been Trinity College, where recruiting and admissions policies, and other guidelines, differ drastically from the Ivy League’s” in the article on Mike Way, the new Harvard squash coach (Harvard Portrait, January-February, page 45), surprises me for its harshness. I would not have thought that such a

critical opinion would be expressed without any support. A little restraint in the wording could have helped.

ALBERT F. GORDON ’59

New York City

THE Harvard Portrait on squash coach Mike Way had a predictably disparaging and condescending reference to an athletic competitor: the Trinity College squash team that has dominated for over a decade a sport that Harvard had long claimed and thought it owned. Over the years, I have known a number of these Trinity players—an extraordinarily talented group of student-athletes on the courts and in the classrooms at a rigorous institution of higher learning. Yes, I have read similar negative comments in the past by the *Crimson* when the opposition outperforms John Harvard. But how unfortunate it is that *Harvard Magazine* descends to the same level of hypocrisy, suggesting that “drastically” differing recruitment and admissions policies are the sole reason for differing performance.

Anyone familiar with Ivy League athlet-

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LETTERS

ics knows to raise an eyebrow when Harvard plays the “admissions card”...as the undersigned did in reading those unfortunate and ill-advised comments.

THOMAS D. LIPS, J.D. '69
San Miguel de Allende, Mexico

Craig Lambert responds: There's more to Trinity's success than differing policies, of course. However, Harvard's athletic programs must operate within the Ivy League's quite stringent guidelines, including a prohibition of athletic scholarships; clear beginning and end dates for seasons; highly defined and limited off-season activities; an “academic index” that benchmarks the academic qualifications of incoming athletes to the institution's freshman class; and others. None of these Ivy rules need impinge on Trinity's *modus operandi*. Trinity matriculates some students in January, including squash stars who may play varsity matches within days; Harvard, with rare exceptions, enrolls students only in the fall. Trinity began pursuing a strategy of achieving dominance in squash in the mid 1990s, using all the tools at its disposal, and has clearly achieved its aims in this sport.

AMPLIFICATION AND ERRATUM

“THE POWER of Touch” (Right Now, November-December 2010, page 15) seems incorrect to suggest “smooth sailing” is a “metaphor of touch.” As any sailor knows, this refers to the sea state—the surface of the water is smooth and the boat sails smoothly, unlike when the surface is rough. The sea state is something experienced primarily visually and with the vestibular system (hence seasickness), and to a lesser extent with hearing, touch, smell, and taste (if you have ever been in a storm on a sailboat, you will know what I mean). But even if touch plays a small role, in my view this cannot properly be called a “metaphor of touch.” The primary *touch* experience of both smooth and rough water is that it is wet, and warm or cold as the case may be.

MAURY SHENK '88
London

THE PHOTOGRAPH of four researchers indoors at Duche on page 41 of our January-February issue (“Models—and Mud—in Amazonia,” page 36) misidentified the individual standing at the right. He is Henrique Sawakuchi. We regret the error.

Right Now

The expanding Harvard universe

ONE TRUTH

A Revolution in Corporate Reporting

GARY KELLY, CEO of Southwest Airlines, is famous for saying, “I want one version of the truth.” The philosophy behind this simple statement accords with his firm’s recent move to integrated reporting—a new format for reporting on all of a company’s activities—that if broadly adopted could lead to profound change not only in the way corporations do business, but even in the way they view their role in society.

“Companies—which in some cases have revenues that rival the gross domestic product of small nations—are starting to think more about how they use financial, natural, and human resources, and to take account of the positive and negative externalities their decisions create,” explains Robert Eccles, a professor of management practice at Harvard Business School. Integrated reporting, which unites traditional, mandated corporate publications such as annual reports to shareholders with voluntary, nonfinancial disclosures, is an obvious way to consolidate and discuss all dimensions of business performance in one place.

In the past, reports on environmental, social, and governance performance, risks to a compa-

ny’s operations (encompassing everything from a host nation’s political stability, to regulatory costs, to a company’s image in a community), corporate social responsibility, and information on the sustainability of a firm’s business practices have been published separately, often with diverse audiences in mind. Now, says Eccles, “Environmental consciousness, increasing recognition of the importance of human

capital and social issues, awareness of natural-resource limitations, a financial system that keeps blowing up, and a better sense of the importance of managing and reporting on risk, have come together and given the concept of integrated reporting a spontaneous, widespread boost.”

Eccles has written a case about Southwest Airlines’ transition to an integrated report, as well as three books on corpo-



Illustration by James Kaczman

rate reporting including, most recently, *One Report: Integrated Reporting for a Sustainable Strategy* (Wiley). Although only a few American companies—including United Technologies and American Electric Power, in addition to Southwest—have so far adopted the practice, these firms “are coming to it for the same reason,” he says. “It is like moving from an externally driven sustainability strategy of being ‘green,’” meaning that a company operates in a way that is environmentally responsible as defined by regulation or social expectations, to “a sustainability strategy for the company”: a strategy that recognizes and accounts for the durability of a company’s activities over long periods of time. How long, for example, will regulators allow a coal company to operate without accounting for the social or environmental costs of pollutants? Integrated reporting, Eccles says, “is going to lead to better resource-allocation decisions that will create value over the long term, while allowing companies to take a more holistic view of their role in society.”

Eccles says companies find that one of the first benefits of this emerging practice is that it “enables them to take a more disciplined and integrated approach across all the different organizational silos.” That allows them to “improve the way they are managed, to ensure that they have a sustainable strategy that will enable them to create long-term value for shareholders and society.” Southwest Airlines, for example, discovered that it didn’t have an easy way to track water and electricity usage in all its facilities. Now it has a system in place to capture those data.

Improved management is one reason for moving to integrated reporting, but external forces can also play a role. Socially responsible investors increasingly demand information about environmental performance, and government regulation may even require it. South Africa has mandated integrated reporting for the 450 publicly traded companies on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange and on January 25 released a first-draft South African Framework for Integrated Reporting. According to Harvard Business School dean Nitin Nohria, “Integrated reporting is a big idea and the kind of idea HBS should support and practice.”

Putting all a company’s (or a city’s or a university’s) information in one place

is not without risk, Eccles acknowledges, because it forces tough decisions and conversations. A corporation might buy electricity generated by nuclear power to reduce carbon emissions, but produce radioactive waste instead. Integrated reporting rapidly leads to the realization that “you can’t satisfy everybody,” he explains. Ultimately, the resolution of such trade-offs requires corporations to think

about their role in society. “Integrated reporting,” he says, “instills the discipline to be much more specific about the relationships between financial and nonfinancial performance, and this will benefit all stakeholders.” ~JONATHAN SHAW

ROBERT ECCLES WEBSITE:

<http://drfd.hbs.edu/fit/public/faculty-Info.do?facInfo=ovr&facId=126059>

FRIENDING FARMING

An African Breadbasket?

REPORTS OF FAMINE in Africa are so common that it becomes easy to assume the continent will always face food shortages. But Calestous Juma, professor of the practice of international development at the Harvard Kennedy School, says Africa could feed itself—and even become a net exporter of food—within a generation.

Despite worldwide advances in agricultural technology, food production in Africa has actually *fallen* in the last 40 years—even as aggregate global food production has more than doubled. Although the majority of the continent’s population derives its income from farming, “only 4 percent of Africa’s crop area is irrigated, compared to 39 percent in South Asia,” Juma writes in his book *The New Harvest* (Oxford). Fertilizer use per hectare in Africa is less than 10 percent of the world average. Fully 70 percent of the population lives more than two hours’ travel time from a market.

In Juma’s eyes, that means there is plenty of room for improvement. Inadequate infrastructure (transportation, communication, energy) has hampered large-scale agricultural production, but he notes that this handicap also presents an opportunity for innovative solutions. To take

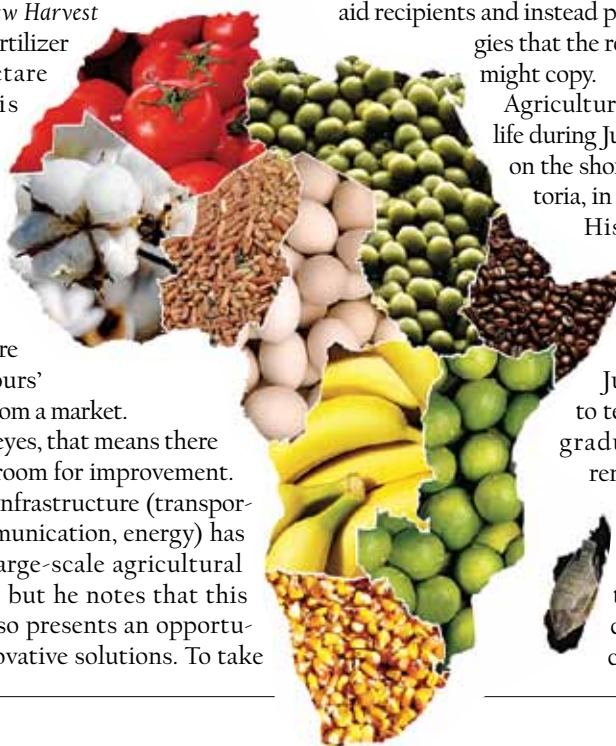
one example, a partnership between mobile phone companies, governments, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) is creating a network of 5,000 automatic weather stations across Africa; the data they gather, when disseminated via mobile phone, will help farmers and fishermen in their trades.

Juma bases his arguments on initiatives like this one. “Most studies of Africa tend to be theoretical,” he said in an interview. “They’re based in models. But people can always construct a model that shows a different outcome.” He believes innovative projects are showing how African countries, through agriculture and the science, technology, and entrepreneurship that support it, can leave behind their role as aid recipients and instead pilot new strategies that the rest of the world might copy.

Agriculture was a part of life during Juma’s childhood on the shores of Lake Victoria, in western Kenya.

His father was a fisherman; his mother grew (and still does grow) cassava.

Juma first went to teachers college; graduate work on renewable energy at the University of Sussex led to his interest in agriculture. “You can’t study fuel



alcohol,” he says, “without studying how cane is produced.” In 1988, he founded the African Centre for Technology Studies, the continent’s first NGO dedicated to promoting the application of science and technology to sustainable development. Now, at Harvard, he directs the Agricultural Innovation in Africa Project (funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) and teaches courses such as “Technology and Sustainability” and “Innovation, Development, and Globalization.”

He believes African countries must rethink the assumptions that underpin their education systems: agriculture should be treated “as a skill to be learned, valued, and improved upon from early childhood through adult careers,” he writes, *not* “as a last resort for people who cannot find the resources to move to a city and get an industrial job.” He calls for creating more universities of science and technology that

Students from Costa Rica and Uganda learn about agriculture at EARTH University in Costa Rica. Juma points to the school’s hands-on learning approach as a model.



integrate research and teaching, as well as practice; as it stands, he says, most African education in agriculture includes no hands-on experience.

As a model for what is possible, he points to a non-African example. Costa Rica’s EARTH University, founded in 1990 with international aid and foundation money, converted an existing banana plantation on its campus to sustainable and socially responsible farming practices (buyers include the Whole Foods supermarket chain). Students get hands-on experience on the university’s farm and through internships with local producers. An entrepreneurship program offers loans for students’ ventures, and they keep their profits after repayment.

Juma cites initiatives within Africa as well. Turning from educational reform to the benefits of improved infrastructure, he lauds a project in Uganda that increased agricultural productivity by building roads to link rural areas to markets, focusing on secondary roads, which boost economic development more than the ribbons of new highway that may make a country *appear* more developed. Moving on to technological innovation, he notes that the use of genetically modified *Bacillus thuringiensis* corn and cotton has reduced pesticide use and increased crop yields in Burkina Faso, South Africa, and Egypt. In catalyzing such changes, he believes



Farmers often have to travel several hours to reach a village market like this one, in King’ori, Tanzania.

ELIZABETH GUDRAIS

multinational regional bodies should play a role, citing the West African Power Pool, through which the 14-member Economic Community of West African States cooperates on energy production and infrastructure, and an effort by the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa to bolster the inland fishing industry by supporting development of new products, such as fish burgers for export to Europe.

Juma says he wrote the book as a sort of instruction manual for African governments; he mailed an autographed copy to each African president. One critic noted that with the grab bag of solutions the book offers, it’s difficult for an African nation to know where to start. Juma’s response: “It doesn’t matter where you start, so long as you get started.” ~ELIZABETH GUDRAIS

AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION IN AFRICA
PROJECT WEBSITE:

http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/project/60/agricultural_innovation_in_africa.html

POLYGYNY IN PRACTICE

Multiple Wives, Substandard Lives

ON TV SHOWS like *Big Love* and the documentary *Sister Wives*, polygyny—the practice of a man marrying multiple women—looks like a pretty good deal for everyone. Sure, it may be challenging to orchestrate meals with so many kids, or to schedule a husband’s time evenly among his wives, who occasionally feel jealous of each other. And in the United States,

where plural marriage is illegal, family members have to be careful about whom they share their polygynist identity with. But the wives on screen claim the benefits of their marriages outweigh the risks, particularly when it comes to parenting. If it takes a village to raise children, these polygynists argue, then they have an edge on mainstream society: There’s always a

mom around to take care of the kids.

But who’s taking care of the moms?

Rose McDermott, the 2010–2011 Bessell Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute and a professor of political science at Brown, has spent the last decade accumulating data and stories from across the globe bearing on this and other questions about polygyny, and has found evidence to con-

tradict such rosy views. Her research shows the practice is often linked to higher maternal mortality, lower life expectancy, sex trafficking, and increased domestic violence. In addition, she says the phenomenon is tied to a propensity for violence between nations.

She started her research after a 2001 conversation with Moore professor of biological anthropology Richard Wrangham, who asked her to test the idea that the male control over women that exists in many countries rests on practices like polygyny. "I thought it would be easy," she says. "But it turned out the data were almost impossible to obtain, particularly for poor regions of the globe." In 2002, she joined the WomanStats Project, a collaboration of researchers from several American and British universities who study gender inequality. (The project database, available at <http://womanstats.org>, now includes nearly 70,000 data points from 172 countries for more than 260 variables related to women's security.)

McDermott devised a five-point scale that weighs law and practice pertaining to polygyny in a given country: zero means the practice is illegal and extremely rare, 4 that it is common and legal under customary/religious law, with more than 25 percent of women in polygynous marriages. The data used to code each country come from hundreds of sources, both statistical and qualitative. Analyzing her scale against other variables in the WomanStats database, McDermott found relationships between polygyny and a wide range of outcomes, including health problems for women and children, female genital mutilation, and lower rates of education among children. Polygynists, she says, "are investing less in the children they have" than parents



BAZUKI (MUHAMMAD) REUTERS/CORBIS



STEPHAN GLADIEU/GETTY IMAGES

Top: Mohd Miqdad, a second-generation Malaysian polygynist, with two of his three wives and five of his six children. Bottom: Joe, a polygynist living in Utah among monogamist families, has three wives and 21 children.

in monogamous relationships.

Anecdotal evidence bears out the fact that polygynist communities don't always take care of their own, she explains. "One of the problems with polygyny is that it leaves out too many boys." Members of Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints polygynist enclaves in rural Utah and Arizona, for example, sometimes toss boys out once they reach puberty because there simply aren't enough wives to go around. The outcasts from these largely agrarian communities often end up on the street, poor

and unskilled. "They're a high-risk group," says McDermott, noting that young, unmarried men are more prone, statistically, to committing violent acts.

She has found that many countries with high rates of polygyny, including Afghanistan, Barbados, and Nigeria, also have large numbers of young people. This can mean many young men won't find a spouse, and "these societies have to do something with these men," she says. Governments may encourage them to join monasteries—or to become guns for hire, and thus contribute to an increase in interstate conflict.

McDermott says banning polygyny outright is the most efficient way for countries to address the negative consequences of the practice, but admits that doing so could drive groups into hiding. Another approach—increasing literacy among women—is important, she says, but insufficient. She notes that South Africa has taken a different tack: amending its laws to protect women in plural marriages by giving them rights to property and child custody. Such changes won't prevent polygyny, she says, but could help a woman leave her marriage if she wants to. Her goals for her own work, which she plans to publish later this year, are modest. She hopes other researchers will use the WomanStats database to explore other issues related to women and children. And, she says, she wants to "highlight some of the more subtle sources of violence against women."

~KATHARINE DUNN

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ROSE MCDERMOTT WEBSITE:

www.psych.ucsb.edu/research/cep/McDermott/McDermott.html

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REGIONAL SECTION



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SEASONAL

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www.americanrepertorytheater.org
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- Through March 13

Ajax. Sophocles examines a warrior's reaction to violence and the trauma of war.

- Through March 25

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617-496-2222 or 617-495-8683
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• March 25-26 and April 1-2 at 8 P.M.

Dancers' Viewpointe 11: Point, View, Voice. Collaborative works combine concert dance with performance art.

MUSIC

www.ofa.fas.harvard.edu/boxoffice
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- March 5 at 8 P.M.

The **Harvard Wind Ensemble** plays works by Alan Hovhaness. Lowell Lecture Hall.

- April 16 at 8 P.M.

The **Harvard Wind Ensemble** and the **Sunday Jazz Band** offer works by undergraduate composers. Lowell Lecture Hall.

Sanders Theatre

www.ofa.fas.harvard.edu/boxoffice
617-496-2222; all concerts begin at 8 P.M.

- April 1

Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum performs Handel's *Israel in Egypt*.

- April 9

Forty Years of Jazz at Harvard University features the **Harvard Jazz Bands** and guest jazz masters Benny Golson, Eddie Palmieri, and Roy Haynes.

- April 23 at 8 P.M.

617-496-2222

The **Harvard-Radcliffe Chorus** performs Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*, along with motets by Bach and Schütz.

NATURE AND SCIENCE

The Arnold Arboretum

www.arboretum.harvard.edu; 617-495-2439

- March 12 through April 24; opening day reception with the artist, 1 P.M. to 3:30 P.M.

Tree Pieces: Painted Fabric Collages by **Merill Comeau** features large-scale interpretations of the natural world that use a variety of castoff materials.

The Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics

www.cfa.harvard.edu/events/public_events.html; 617-495-7461

60 Garden Street

- March 17 and April 21 at 7:30 P.M.

Skywatching, weather permitting, and lectures. Free and open to the public.

FILM

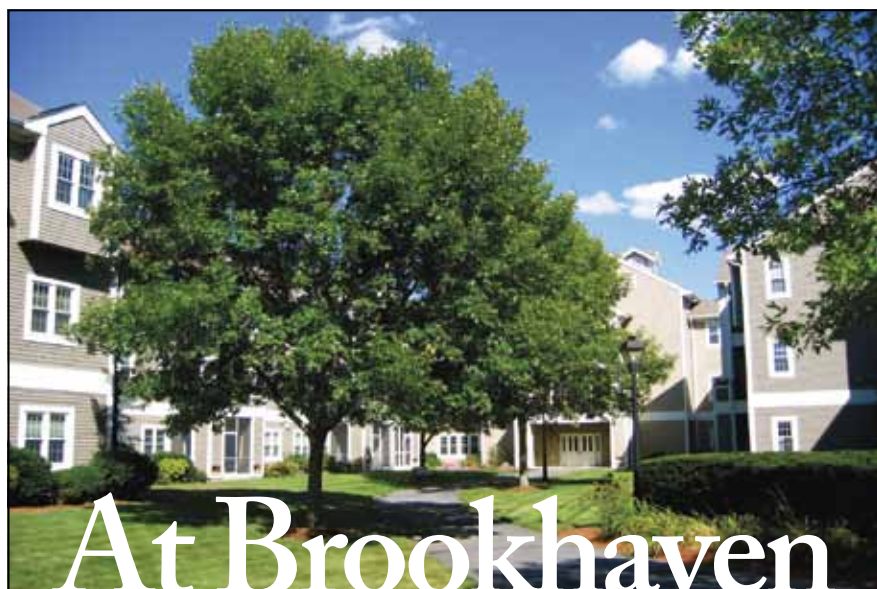
The Harvard Film Archive

<http://hcl.harvard.edu/hfa>; 617-495-4700
Visit the website for complete listings.

- March 11 through March 25

The Murderous Art of Claude Chabrol includes both New Wave titles and 1960s Hitchcock-esque thrillers.

Left to right: From *T.R. in Cartoon: The Art of Joseph Keppler*, at Pusey Library; from *Les Bonnes Femmes*, part of the Harvard Film Archive's festival *The Murderous Art of Claude Chabrol*; and a detail of a collage by Merrill Comeau at the Arnold Arboretum



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HARVARD ART MUSEUMS



The Dog Wallah, circa 1825, from *Company to Crown: Perceptions and Reactions in British India*, at the Sackler

• March 26 - 27

Screening of the restored seven-part series, *Hapax Legomena Cycle*, by experimental filmmaker Hollis Frampton.

EXHIBITIONS

Carpenter Center for the Arts

www.ves.fas.harvard.edu

617-495-9400/2317

• March 1 through April 10

FAX is a traveling exhibition that reveals wide-ranging conceptions of the machine as a thinking and drawing tool.

• March 3 through April 7

Muntadas: On Academia

The Spanish artist Antoni Muntadas created a site-specific video project for Harvard that examines the "problematic relations between the production of knowledge and economic power."

Harvard Art Museums

www.harvardartmuseum.org; 617-495-9400

• Opening April 8

Company to Crown: Perceptions and Reactions in British India highlights a hybrid Indo-European painting style.

• Through April 2

I Was Not Waving but Drowning features 14 photographs that capture Indian artist Atul Bhalla's submergence in the Yamuna River.

Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology

www.peabody.harvard.edu; 617-496-1027

• March 27, from 4 P.M. to 6 P.M.



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CAMBRIDGE, MA

Mid Cambridge – Beautifully renovated 9-room Mansard Victorian. Details include a gracious floor plan, large gourmet eat-in-kitchen with stainless & granite, 3 beds, 3 ½ baths, 3 fireplaces, bays, deep crown moldings, custom millwork & French doors. Media room, C/A & heated driveway. \$1,595,000



CAMBRIDGE, MA

West Cambridge - Exquisitely designed & meticulously renovated 14-room home w/ custom details and finishes throughout set on about 1/3 of an acre of landscaped grounds. The state-of-the-art systems, masterfully thought-out floor plan, and attention to detail make this a truly unique offering. \$3,450,000



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Harvard Square - This well designed, attached 3+ bed, 2 ½ bath single has a dramatic 2-story Living room w/ fireplace & wet bar; library loft, and custom built-ins. Set back from the street, it has a 20' deck is surrounded by lovely landscaped grounds with a Japanese garden and has a 2-car garage. \$1,385,000



CAMBRIDGE, MA

Charming 5-room, 2 bed, 1 ½ bath, renovated cottage, circa 1898. Features include a lovely covered front porch, living room, dining room w/ built-in china cabinet, an eat-in-kitchen; a Master bed w/ cathedral ceiling & French doors to a deck. Parking. \$539,000



ARLINGTON, MA

Jason Heights – This is a completely renovated 7+ room attached home set on a beautifully landscaped lot. There is a 27' living/dining room; large eat-in kitchen w/ maple, stainless & granite; master suite w/walk in closet & 4 piece bath; 3 beds, 3½ baths; deck & patio, c/a & garage parking. \$725,000



CAMBRIDGE, MA

Avon Hill – C. 1880, wonderful 10-room single family on a lovely corner lot. Living room w/ fireplace & built-in bookcases; Dining room w/ large bay & built-in cabinets; eat-in-kitchen ; 5+ beds & 2 ½ baths. 22' front porch. Convenient to Harvard & Porter Squares, "T", shops & restaurants. \$1,185,000



CAMBRIDGE, MA

Cambridgeport – Completely renovated charming worker's cottage w/ 2 beds, 1 ½ baths located close to Central Square & the "T". Open Living/Dining; kitchen with granite counters & stainless steel appliances. Central air conditioning; landscaped grounds & stone driveway. \$487,000



CAMBRIDGE, MA

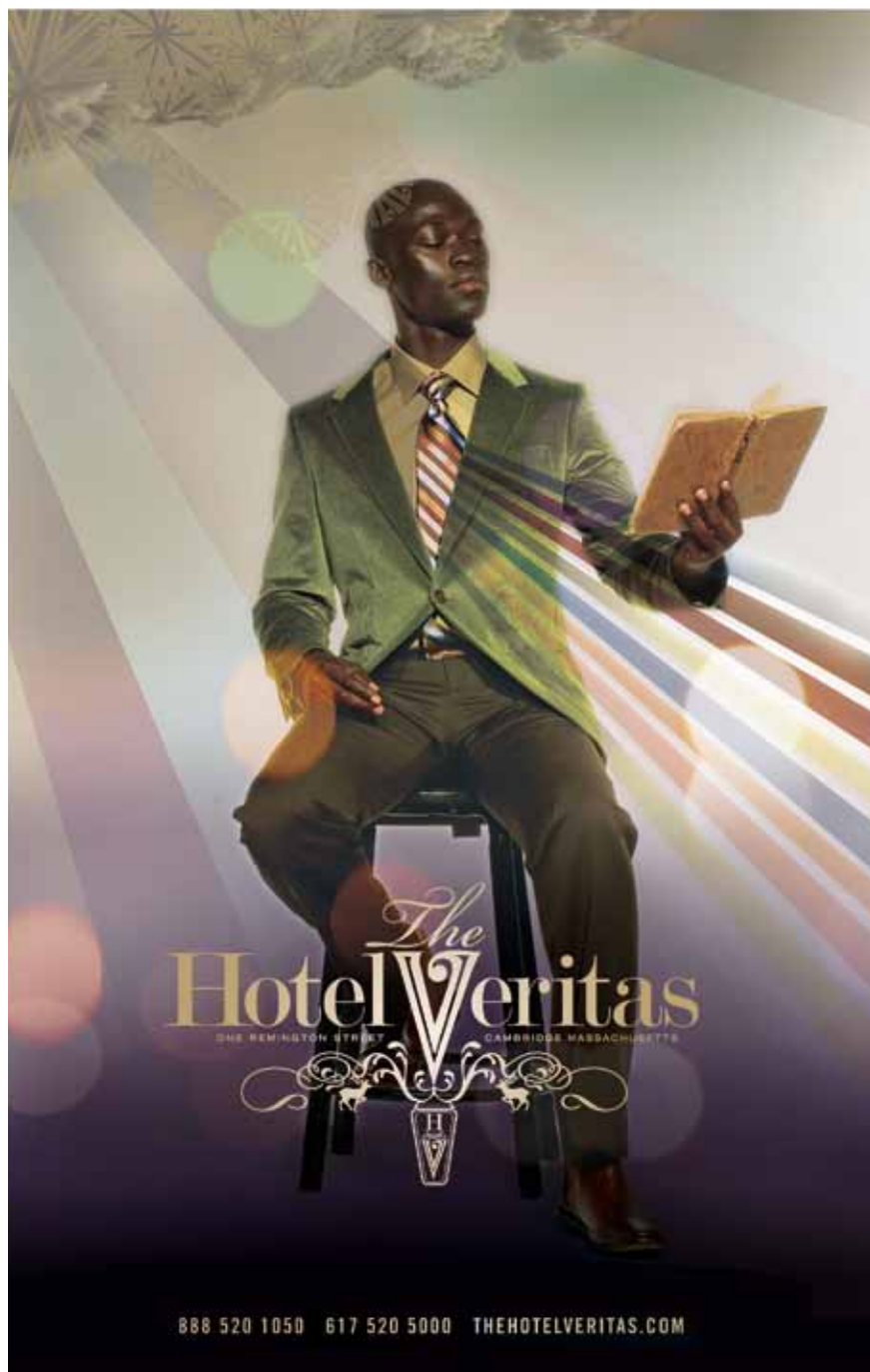
Mid Cambridge – Secluded 2+ bed, 2 ½ bath townhouse. Striking 2-story living room open to Dining room & kitchen. Sliding glass doors to patio & landscaped gardens; 17' Master with Bath en suite; Loft/Office overlooking living room. Central air conditioning and garage parking. \$485,000



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NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL SECTION

Artist, cartographer, and author Ian Graham talks about his lively journey through Mayan sites, chronicled in his book *The Road to Ruins*.

• April 20 at 5:30 P.M.

The museum's "Visible Language" lecture series offers "A Brief History of the Spectre of the Internet and the Death of Writing." Visit the website for details.

Harvard Museum of Natural History

www.hmn.h.harvard.edu; 617-495-3045

Oxford Street

• March 31 at 6 P.M.

Anne Whiston Spurr '69, author, photographer, and professor of landscape architecture at MIT, discusses "New Directions in Eco-Planning."



HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY

Portrait of George Washington with a plan of the city that bears his name, from *Toward a National Cartography: American Mapmaking, 1782-1800*, at Pusey Library

LIBRARIES

www.hcl.harvard.edu/info/exhibitions

617-495-2417

Pusey Library

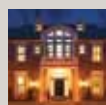
• Continuing: *Toward a National Cartography: American Mapmaking, 1782-1800*.

• Continuing: *T.R. in Cartoon: The Art of Joseph Keppler*.

Events listings also appear in the University Gazette, accessible via this magazine's website, www.harvardmagazine.com.

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When Grass Isn't Greener

Alternatives to the “perfect” lawn, at home and at Harvard • Nell Porter Brown



FACED WITH LARGE, unhealthy pine trees that grew too close to their home and had to come down, Hillary Wyon, A.L.M. '08, and her neighbors joined forces to redesign their abutting yards—nixing the ubiquitous suburban lawn. “The people who lived here before us had the perfect lawn; they were very much the Roundup mentality,” says Wyon, who lives in Belmont, Massachusetts. “But we wanted to be chemical-free because it’s better for our pets and vegetable gardens. And watering lawns is such a waste.”

Wyon and her partner, Paul Williamson, had researched indigenous drought-tolerant grasses and ground covers, along with moss lawns. In the end they planted a combination of chamomile, thyme, and mint. “It’s really soft, low-growing greenery,” Wyon notes. “And when you walk on it, the leaves get crushed and produce fragrance.”

The two couples also added to the existing low- and high-bush blueberries and raspberries, and put in serviceberry and chokeberry trees, which birds love. On their part of the property, Wyon ripped up most of the rest of the turf in front and on the side and put in two raised-bed vegetable gardens. She plans to do the same in the backyard, using marigolds and other natural deterrents to animal cohabitants like rabbits, skunks, and squirrels. “I don’t like dandelions as much as anyone,” Wyon explains, “but getting rid of them is not worth pouring chemicals on the land that get into the air and the water and the environment.”

Botanist Peter Del Tredici, senior research scientist at the Arnold Arboretum, notes that Americans’ “ideal lawn”—that shimmering expanse of velvety emerald softness first manifest around English manor homes in the beginning of the 1700s—is, in fact, an artificially enhanced monoculture. It is a purely cosmetic landscape that

NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL SECTION

“goes against the more heterogeneous natural landscape and requires tons of fertilizer, herbicides, pesticides, gasoline for mowing, and water, to be maintained,” says Del Tredici. “Which is horrifying.”

Think of the scale. Of the 116 million American households, only about 25 percent do not have yards or grass to take care of, says Bruce Butterfield, senior researcher for the National Gardening Association in Burlington, Vermont. If the typical suburban lawn is 5,000 square feet, he says, that translates into a *huge* portion of the American landscape, even if most are individual “postage-stamp-sized” yards. According to an analysis of NASA satellite data, turf covers about 49,421 square miles of American land—representing three times more acreage in the nation than irrigated corn.

Think of the money. In 2009, individuals spent about \$20 billion on lawn care in the United States—which is only a fraction of what the industrial, athletic, and other

commercial entities spend on perfecting *their* turf, he adds. Why? “Lawns are often about self-image; the identity with a manicured lawn suggests higher status,” Butterfield asserts. “People think of golf courses and country clubs and mansions. The big fertilizer companies really play into this with their commercials. The message is: If you have dandelions in your lawn, you’re a bad person; you’re lazy and you’re an eyesore in the neighborhood and you should be ashamed of yourself.”

LAWNS have been around in America in some form since the turn of the eighteenth century, although they were minimal and there to feed (and were maintained by) grazing animals. Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, among other well-off landowners, were influenced by the majestic grounds of contemporary English gentry and aspects of those landscapes, including lawns, turned up on their own estates.

Grass, which grew much more easily in

England, was critical to animal husbandry. “During the eighteenth century, European pasture plants including timothy and fowl-meadow grass and the legumes red clover and alfalfa were common as pasture grasses throughout the colonies,” according to *Redesigning the American Lawn: A Search for Environmental Harmony*, by F. Herbert Bormann, Diana Balmori, and Gordon T. Geballe. Native New England grasses were not as easily grown or digestible by livestock, so seed combinations were often imported from England. With the coming of the Industrial Revolution, newly middle-class families who could afford to moved out of the cities, and detached housing soon prevailed, preferably surrounded by a green yard, which the owners believed created “reservoirs of clean air and healthy home environments.”

The lawn, carrying the English connotations of nature with it, became a symbol of prestige in nineteenth-century suburbs. Similarly, centers of towns in



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New England, the old “commons,” which had been the setting for such useful activities as rope-making, hay-growing, military drills, and town fairs of the eighteenth century, were transformed from bare stamped earth, cultivated fields, or cemetery grounds into lawned and treed parks, now called “greens.”

In her 2008 *New Yorker* article, “Turf War,” Elizabeth Kolbert credits Andrew Jackson Downing, a nursery owner, with publishing the first landscape gardening book for Americans in 1841, encouraging people to beautify their front yards through careful plantings and sculpting of the landscape—ideas that influenced Frederick Law Olmsted’s grand lawns of Central Park, as well as planned suburban communities like Riverside, Illinois. The prevalence of the more expansive, individually mowed lawn appeared in the later nineteenth century (the first push mower became available in 1870), along with the burgeoning American suburb.

“The big thing is to get people to stop thinking that the turf has to be made up of one species of grass.”

The Garden Club of America, founded in 1913, also promoted tidy personal lawns and yards, running contests and publicity drives to promote “a plot with a single type of grass with no intruding weeds, kept mown at a height of an inch and a half, uniformly green, and neatly edged,” reports Virginia Scott Jenkins in *The Lawn: A History of an American Obsession*. Also significant, Peter Del Tredici points out, was the collaborative research venture between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Golf Association that resulted, by 1930, in feasible combinations of lawn grasses that would grow well in a variety of American climates. The marketing of herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers came later, sometimes in

conjunction with chemical research associated with World War II.

ANTI-LAWN SENTIMENT has been building during the last two decades, however, given the climate crisis. Motivated by books like *Redesigning the American Lawn* and Sally and Andy Wasowski’s *The Landscaping Revolution: Garden with Mother Nature, Not Against Her*—and by research on the effects of petrochemicals on drinking water and air quality—many people are calling for a radical rethinking of our entrenched aesthetic views. “The big thing,” maintains Del Tredici, author of *Wild Urban Plants of the Northeast*, “is to get people to stop thinking that the turf has to be made up of one species of grass.”

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He would argue that there is no true functional, natural, vegetative substitute for the “soft carpet” of a well-maintained lawn: “Ground covers and meadows do not fit in that category.” Instead, he favors the “freedom lawn” concept discussed in *Redesigning the American Lawn*. That calls for a green expanse composed of a community of plants that “sort themselves out according to the topographical gradient that is most peoples’ lawns,” he explains. There are varying soil conditions, and spots that are sunnier or shadier, or wetter or drier, areas closer to trees and other root systems, et cetera. The freedom lawn is not all grass, or even one kind of grass: it has dandelions, clover, and buttercups, too. “You can plant crocus and violets and ajuga. You can still walk on it and let them spread on their own with minimal mow-

ing and no petrochemicals,” Del Tredici points out. “Before herbicides were invented and promoted, people accepted dandelions and clover and other flowers as the inevitable reality they are.” The problem is not the lawn, per se, he emphasizes, but all the petrochemicals and water used to keep it green and weed-free.

Bruce Butterfield also sees this centrist approach to lawns as constructive. “To me, there is a continuum from a highly manicured ‘golf course’ lawn to one that is not cared for at all,” he says. He recommends Cornell University’s website, www.gardening.cornell.edu/lawn/index.html, for its reasonable guidance on lawn care. Butterfield himself lives on 150 acres in northern Vermont, having moved from Burlington “because it was beginning to look like New Jersey.” He keeps about

three acres of lawn mowed and uses no chemicals. “The primary question is, ‘How do we approach this in a balanced way so our landscape looks good and is good for the plants and earthworms and animals and people?’” he adds. “Because for many people in America, it’s not a choice whether they’re going to have lawn. It’s ‘How are we going to manage it?’”

Harvard University faces this very question when confronting its 80 acres of turf in Cambridge. Landscape manager Wayne P. Carbone has overseen a significant change in lawn care practices since 2007, when a test patch in the Yard showed that organic techniques produced better results in terms of soil improvements and enhanced microbial activity. That, in turn, generated turf that was healthier and had a deeper root system because it was less dependent on fertilizer and irrigation. “It really opened my eyes,” says Carbone, who had been schooled in and practiced conventional, synthetic, chemical landscape maintenance for more than two decades. “At home now I use compost ‘teas’ and have eliminated synthetic fertilizers.”

Most people do not understand what cool-weather grass needs to grow healthily, says the Arnold Arboretum’s manager of horticulture, Steve Schneider, A.L.M. ’10. By using too much fertilizer and water, and mowing the turf too often, Schneider says, they hurt root development—and shallower, weaker roots are more vulnerable to pests and invasive species and cannot winter over properly. “When people think their lawns don’t look good, it’s often not because of grubs or insects or weeds, it’s because of poor watering and mowing practices,” he reports. “But people don’t realize this, and tend to water more and fertilize more. And they don’t really think about what that means: chemicals leaching off into the water supply and bacterial ‘blooms’ that kill fish. Ultimately, this leads to polluting our resources. It’s a vicious cycle all because people want lawns—which are not necessary.”

Carbone has found that alternative organic practices—focused on soils management, moisture retention, aeration, composting, and optimizing nitrogen and nutrient cycling through microbes and fungi—have not only enabled his crews

Greener Than Grass

For alternatives to the idealized, traditional lawn, try these options.

Fescues. Closely related to ryegrass, fescues often come mixed into lawn grass seed bags, but can be planted themselves for a wide range of effects. Some varieties are small and wispy, while others have a bolder look and help curtail soil erosion. They do not need fertilizers, herbicides, et cetera, to thrive. They are also fairly shade-tolerant and often grow in more interesting textures and forms than does Kentucky bluegrass.

Sedge lawns, which are increasing in popularity, need only one initial mowing a season (but can take more to create a more manicured look). They require no fertilizer or other chemicals, says Kristin Desouza, senior horticulturist with the New England Wildflower Society. The organization sells *Carex pennsylvanica*, the sedge variety native to the Northeast, which grows up to 10 inches tall, and withstands sun, shade, and a fair amount of trampling.

Meadows. The Society has also favored installing a native flower meadow. But Peter Del Tredici says urban and suburban gardeners need to know that establishing a really good-looking meadow takes work: “You cannot just buy a seed packet and sprinkle it on the soil and sit back.” Meadows require soil preparation and consistent irrigation early on “or these little seeds all dry out.” It’s more effective to put in the plants themselves, although that is more expensive. But once in place, a meadow, even a small one, is natural, looks great, and attracts birds, butterflies, and bees. People can also walk in it, have picnics, or take a nap—but golf and soccer are out of the question.

Ground covers such as *Pachysandra terminalis* and *Vinca minor* can be a good solution as long as they can dominate the landscape. Otherwise, says Del Tredici, “weeding the ground covers is a lot more work than mowing the grass every two or three weeks.”

Edible gardens. First lady Michelle Obama, J.D. ’88, is among the increasing number of Americans bent on turning their turf into food. A National Gardening Association survey found that seven million more households planned to grow their own food in 2009 than in 2008, a rise of 19 percent. (See, as one example, the Edible Estates project, www.fritzhaeg.com/garden/initiatives/edibleestates/main.html.)

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to give up synthetic chemicals, but have also significantly reduced mowing and irrigation rates. “The grass is not growing as vigorously as it did when you’re applying 36 percent nitrogen fertilizer on top of it. And our water use is down by about three million gallons in Harvard Yard,” he reports. “We now take all the yard waste to the Arnold Arboretum and compost it with different recipes, depending on what we want to do with the soil.” (The crews use only nominal amounts of coffee and vegetable waste from the dining halls for composting; much of that uneaten food is trucked to a pig farm. To read more about Harvard’s program, visit www.uos.harvard.edu/fmo/landscape/organiclandscaping.)

The Arboretum has minimal manicured grassy areas, which are mown but not fertilized. But arboretums and botanical gardens have more leeway for experimentation and “messy” landscapes than do corporate headquarters, golf courses, and

universities, where expectations about containing nature run high. “It’s a lot easier to run a mower over a surface and be done with it than manage a water garden or perennials or even a wildflower meadow,” Schneider says, especially “when you’re dealing with stakeholders who are walking by the site and don’t know it’s supposed to be an educational experiment, or an environmentally friendly lawn, and start screaming that ‘Someone hasn’t mown the lawn!’ Changing ideas about the perfect lawn is really about re-educating people to think in a completely different way.”

Most of the grounds surrounding the Arboretum’s new Weld Hill research facility consist of a new “metropolitan meadow mix” that includes various grasses and hardy wildflowers. Schneider says that it can be planted on any scale, “but would Harvard Yard buy into it? Probably not, because in that setting it could look ‘unkempt’ because, psychologically, peo-

ple still expect to see green grass.”

A more sustainable alternative to the usual lawn has been installed outside Harvard’s LEED-certified 46 Blackstone Street building in Cambridge. The space is hilly and contains various fescues—hay-like grasses—that are low-mow (three times a year) and drought-resistant. But the new look has taken some getting used to; not everyone adores the less controlled look, or the ryegrasses that were also planted initially and grew two to three feet high. “It could look like a hayfield, and people joked that I should get some goats out there,” Carbone reports.

Meanwhile, with the lawn mostly gone from the front of her house, Hillary Wyon says her goals—“to not use so much water, use indigenous plants or those that grow easily here, and plant more fruits and vegetables”—are being met. “There are a lot of alternatives,” she adds, “for having a nice green space that is more natural than a lawn.”



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DEUXAVE'S INTERIOR has a well-ordered, modernist feel that belies a wildly enthusiastic reaction to its food.

The large space is clad in shades of dove gray and walnut brown, with nearly floor-to-ceiling windows that look out onto Massachusetts Avenue, not far from the Harvard Club of Boston. Chandeliers and table candles make the plethora of stemware glitter, and all is warmed by a gas fireplace and the bottles of wine displayed as if in someone's private cellar. It is an elegant, well-designed environment befitting once-in-a-lifetime celebrations, intimate dinners, or casual drinks with well-heeled friends at the marble-topped bar, open until 1 A.M.

Named for the two avenues on which it sits, Deuxave was opened last September

by co-owners Christopher Coombs (the executive chef) and Brian Piccini, who opened dbar in Dorchester. And although the menu seems pretentious in spots, and uses some culinary terms unfamiliar to many diners, the mainly French-style food itself is not overly fussy—just exceptionally good.

Start with the Scituate lobster with juicy bites of gnocchi (\$19), an unusual dish with an Asian tinge that combines mushrooms, curried walnuts, pearl onions, and green grapes in a delicate citrus sauce. Also outstanding is Nine-Hour French Onion Soup (\$12), served with tantalizingly silky ribbons of onion, bobbing beef-marrow croutons, and a thick layer of bubbling Comté cheese, which lent a hint of sharpness.

Deuxave also offers inter-

nationally inspired entrées, ranging from the Italian tagliatelle “Bolognese” with veal, beef, pancetta, and foie gras (\$21) to the lighter roasted monkfish served with German spaetzle, Savoy cabbage, and Russian “borscht” sauce (\$28).

We opted for the innovative Moroccan spiced lamb saddle (\$29) and the New York strip beef (\$39), which were equally terrific. The lamb was encrusted with parsley, garlic, and other herbs and then rolled in toasted pistachios—a luscious combination of gamey flavors, fresh greenery, and downright satisfying crunch. The meat came cooked in its natural juices, with sides of tangy tabbouleh, minted cucumber raita, and a mélange of baby carrots, beets, and turnips. The Black Angus steak, aged for four weeks and expertly cooked, was served atop a garlic soubise and Bordelaise sauce with bone marrow, alongside perfect goat-cheese-and-potato croquettes with an ideal crusty and velvety contrast, a tangle of slightly vinegary mushrooms, and sweet, colorful baby carrots.

Desserts at Deuxave are just as creative. Pastry chef Olivier Maillard takes the modest pumpkin and spins it into a wondrous plate of custard with an almond crust, accompanied by pumpkin-seed brittle, a mound of milk and ginger gelée, and *glace* of rum raisins and tonka bean, a South American legume with complex flavors of vanilla and cinnamon (\$12). Or try the novel elderflower-yogurt mousse (\$13), served with an ultra-airry sponge cake, a citrus mélange with fresh grapefruit and preserved bits of orange, lemon sorbet, and an alluring pomegranate foam. It's a bit of haute cuisine, but not over the top. And this is the balance that makes Deuxave so appealing: its ambitions are satisfyingly delectable. ~N.P.B.

Above: Deuxave's elegant ambiance. Inset: New York strip beef with croquettes

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places this orchestra squarely at the center of cultural and intellectual discourse.”

The Philharmonic sounds better than it has in decades, too, because Gilbert has improved morale, changed the seating plan, and worked on details of tone and balance—even the much-reviled acoustics of Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center sound

less jagged now. The conductor is also prepared to be surprised: to him, his job is both to lead and take in what the musicians are offering.

**Alan Gilbert
conducting
the New York
Philharmonic
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Hall in Lincoln
Center**

The unexpected hit of his first season was Ligeti’s avant-garde opera, *Le Grand Macabre*, in a staging by visual artist Doug Fitch ’81, a friend who had tutored art in Adams House when Gilbert was in college. To publicize the opera, Gilbert appeared in three homespun videos that the Philharmonic posted on YouTube; Death, a principal character in the opera, was his costar in all three. In one, Death sported a makeshift Halloween costume and ate an ice cream cone—“Pistachio,” he confided to Gilbert, who pointed out that Death had spilled some. In another, Gilbert and

Pizzazz on the Podium

Alan Gilbert’s music that should be heard

by RICHARD DYER

LIKE HIS celebrated predecessor Leonard Bernstein ’39, D.Mus. ’67, Alan Gilbert ’89 seems to enjoy whipping up a whirlwind and then taking it for an exhilarating ride. Though only in his second year on the job, the second Harvard-educated music director of the New York Philharmonic has shaken things up at an orchestra that had grown a bit stodgy under previous conductors Kurt Masur and Lorin Maazel. Gilbert has freshened the repertoire with new and unusual works by composers

as diverse as György Ligeti and Wynton Marsalis, named a composer-in-residence (Magnus Lindberg), and started speaking informally to the audience, as Bernstein sometimes did. His programs are full of interconnections and his seasons add up; Gilbert has said that every piece tells a story, and every program should, too. His stated intention is “to play the widest range of orchestral repertoire as well as it can be played, while at the same time taking risks, striving to add to New York City’s artistic landscape in a way that

Death staged a musical duel using instruments from the popular music video game Guitar Hero. One can hardly imagine old-school maestros like Masur or Maa-zel doing such a thing (though Bernstein might have). In truth, Gilbert has been omnipresent in the media: he told the *New York Times* where he buys his bagels, and has begun writing “Curiously Random,” an entertaining and informative blog that appears irregularly at www.musicalamerica.com.

The young music director is a New

York Philharmonic insider; both his parents played violin in the orchestra, and his mother, Yoko Takebe, still does (his father retired a few years ago). A child violinist, Gilbert studied music both at Juilliard in New York and Curtis in Philadelphia. At Juilliard, he had his first chance to conduct during a reading session of the first movement of Dvořák’s Sixth Symphony. “That was a crucial experience, a powerful experience, an eye-opening experience,” he says; Ronald Braunstein, the conductor of the pre-college orchestra, told him, “I

think you have something.” Today, Gilbert is director of conducting and orchestral studies at Juilliard.

In college, Gilbert joined the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra and concentrated in music, even though “there were still people in the department who paradoxically believed that music should be seen and not heard,” he recalls. “I gravitated toward the faculty who were active in composition and performance—Earl Kim, Leon Kirchner, and Peter Lieberson.” As a senior, he conducted the Bach Society Or-

O P E N B O O K

On Behavioral Ethics

In the wake of troubling decisions—cooking the books at Enron, going to war in Iraq on suspect grounds, making mortgage loans to indigent borrowers and passing the risk on to others—scholars in many fields are examining how individuals and organizations conduct themselves relative to ethical standards. In *Blind Spot: Why We Fail to Do What’s Right and What to Do about It* (Princeton, \$24.95), Straus professor of business administration Max H. Bazerman and Ann E. Tenbrunsel, Martin professor of business ethics at Notre Dame’s Mendoza College of Business, seek answers not in philosophy, but through analysis of cognition and behaviors, such as “ethical fading.” This excerpt is from chapter 1.

Could the financial crisis have been solved by giving all individuals involved more ethics training? If the training resembled that which has historically and is currently being used, the answer to that question is no. Ethics interventions have failed and will continue to fail because they are predicated on a false assumption: that individuals recognize an ethical dilemma when it is presented to them. Ethics training presumes that emphasizing the moral components of decisions will inspire executives to choose the moral path. But the common assumption this training is based on—that executives make explicit trade-offs between behaving ethically and earning profits for their organizations—is incomplete. This paradigm fails to acknowledge our innate psychological responses when faced with an ethical dilemma.

Findings from the emerging field of *behavioral ethics*—a field that seeks to understand how people actually behave when confronted with ethical dilemmas—offer insights that can round out our understanding of why we often behave contrary to our best ethical intentions. Our ethical behavior is often inconsistent, at times even hypocritical. Consider that people have the innate ability to maintain a belief while acting contrary to it. Moral hypocrisy occurs when individuals’ evaluations of their own moral transgressions differ substantially from their evaluations of the same transgressions committed by others. In one research study, participants were divided into two groups. In one condition, participants were required to distribute a resource (such as time or energy) to themselves and another person and could make the distribution fairly or unfairly. The “allocators” were then asked to evaluate the ethicality of their actions. In the other condition, participants viewed another person acting in an unfair manner and subsequently evaluated the ethicality of this act. Individuals who made an unfair distribution perceived

this transgression to be less objectionable than did those who saw another person commit the same transgression. This widespread double standard—one rule for ourselves, a different one for others—is consistent with the gap that often exists between who we are and who we think that we should be.

Traditional approaches to ethics, and the traditional training methods that have accompanied such approaches, lack an understanding of the unintentional yet predictable cognitive patterns that result in unethical behavior. By contrast, our research on *bounded ethicality* focuses on the psychological processes



that lead even good people to engage in ethically questionable behavior that contradicts their own preferred ethics. Bounded ethicality comes into play when individuals make decisions that harm others and when that harm is inconsistent with these decision-makers’ conscious beliefs and preferences. If ethics training is to actually change and improve ethical decision-making, it needs to incorporate behavioral ethics, and specifically the subtle ways in which our ethics are bounded. Such an approach entails an understanding of the different ways our minds can approach ethical dilemmas and the different modes of decision-making that result.

Gilbert on the podium with the Philharmonic last year



CHRIS LEE

chestra. “The great thing about the Bach Society and about Harvard was that I had to create opportunities for myself; I got to do all kinds of things as a conductor and a performer that I would never have had the chance to do at Juilliard—not to mention coming up with plans, finding rehearsal space, arranging advertising and ticketing, and all the other administrative jobs

the adventurous Haddonfield Symphony (now Symphony in C) in Camden, New Jersey, from 1992 to 1997. He was also assistant conductor at the Cleveland Orchestra and an active guest conductor in both the United States and Europe before taking the baton of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic from 2000 to 2008—while working as well as music director of the Santa Fe

that are involved beyond creating an artistic event. I emerged with a sense of ownership, and all that experience has stood me in very good stead.”

After graduation, Gilbert played violin as a substitute in the Philadelphia and Santa Fe orchestras and served as music director of

Opera for three years, beginning in 2003.

His goal, says Gilbert, is to make a human and spiritual connection between the music and the audience “in a natural and handmade way that is also sophisticated and elegant. It is more important to make this kind of connection than to try to get everything right.” He adds, “The decisions I am making here at the Philharmonic, good or bad, are a function of being myself. When decisions are made by committee, you can feel it. It is possible to determine what people want and give it to them, but that is not the function of art, which is to lead. A great orchestra like the Philharmonic is a large operation, but you do not want people to think of it as impersonal. The responsibility of an American music director is to give the orchestra a face.”

Richard Dyer, A.M. '64, was for many years classical music critic for the Boston Globe.



Visit harvardmag.com/ extras for links to Alan Gilbert's Philharmonic videos.

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The poet's portfolio, enlarged

by ADAM KIRSCH

SOME WRITERS HAVE an uncanny way of becoming more prolific after their deaths than they ever were while living. Elizabeth Bishop, who was born 100 years ago and taught poetry at Harvard from 1970 to 1977, published only four slim collections of poems before she died in 1979. But love for those poems—which include twentieth-century American masterpieces like “The Fish,” “Questions of Travel,” and “One Art”—has made readers eager for everything from Bishop’s pen. Her fiction and essays, several volumes of her letters, even her watercolor paintings have all been posthumously collected in books. Most controversially, in 2006, a trove of Bishop’s unpublished and unfinished poems appeared in *Edgar Allan Poe and the Jukebox*, edited by Alice Quinn (see “Iambic Imbroglia,” January-February 2007, page 20). Porter University Professor Helen Vendler, writing in the *New Republic*, voiced strong doubts

about this fattening of Bishop’s carefully dieted body of work: “Had Bishop been asked whether her repudiated poems, and some drafts and fragments, should be published after her death, she would have replied, I believe, with a horrified ‘No.’”

Now, to mark Bishop’s centenary, Farrar, Straus and Giroux is adding three more titles to the list. *Elizabeth Bishop and The New Yorker: The Complete Correspondence* documents her decades-

Elizabeth Bishop, 1956



J.L. CASTEL/BETTMANN/CORBIS

long relationship with the magazine that published much of her best work. And the standard collections of her poems and

prose—long familiar to readers in their salmon-pink and pale-green covers—are being replaced by new, substantially expanded editions. *Poems*, edited by Saskia Hamilton, includes everything that was in *The Complete Poems: 1927-1979*, and adds a group of “selected unfinished manuscript poems” as an appendix. As Vendler predicted, most of these 28 items add little to Bishop’s stature, though “It is marvellous to wake up together” does offer a rare glimpse of her as an erotic poet:

It is marvellous to wake up together
At the same minute: marvellous to hear

The rain begin suddenly all over the roof,
To feel the air suddenly clear
As if electricity had passed through it
From a black mesh of wires in the sky.
All over the roof the rain hisses,
And below, the light falling of kisses.

On the other hand, the “unfinished” work in *Poems* does not detract from Bishop’s masterpieces, either. Really, its purpose is to offer a tantalizing glimpse into Bishop’s poetic workshop. This effect is heightened by the way *Poems* offers facsimiles of Bishop’s manuscripts—in one case,

to comic effect. In 1971, Bishop inscribed some light verse on the title page of *The Fannie Farmer Cookbook*, in which she pokes fun at Claude Levi-Strauss’s recent anthropological study, *The Raw and the Cooked*:

You won’t become a *gourmet* cook
By studying our Fannie’s book—
Her thoughts on Food & Keeping
House
Are scarcely those of Levi-Strauss...

The *Prose* has grown even more than the *Poems* in this new edition. It incorporates the full text of a book on Brazil

M E N U

Kosher Delights

Last summer, Dawn LaRochelle, J.D. ’96, catered a 250-guest Jewish wedding in the Berkshires of western Massachusetts. The bride, the daughter of a Reform rabbi, was a vegetarian and many of the groom’s ultra-Orthodox family kept strictly kosher. “When the bride said she wanted an all-dairy wedding, my heart sank,” says LaRochelle, owner of Bete’ Avon!, the only kosher caterer in the region. “Most seriously observant Jews don’t consider it a celebration unless there is some sort of meat.”

LaRochelle, who is Jewish and keeps “nominally kosher” at

home, founded Bete’ Avon! (Hebrew for *bon appetit*; <http://beteavonkoshercatering.com>) in 2007 to serve a niche market: a substantial local Jewish population, including summering New Yorkers, that wants to keep kosher despite the lack of Orthodox stores, restaurants, or synagogues nearby. (She also runs the non-kosher Apogee Catering and Perigee, a restaurant in South Lee.)

After five fairly uninspiring years practicing law in Manhattan, she and her husband, Dennis LaRochelle, J.D. ’96, moved to the Berkshires right after 9/11. When the kosher-catering idea hit, she was 36, had three little boys, and had never cooked professionally. She had been her family’s chef growing up, however, and wined and dined classmates in Cambridge, co-founding the Harvard Law School Food and Wine Society. “Despite a lack of knife skills,” she says, “I can make anything taste and look fantastic.”

Annual sales of kosher food in the United States are about \$14 billion; most of the consumers are not Jewish, but Muslims, Seventh-day Adventists, vegetarians, those with lactose or gluten intolerance, and health-conscious people who believe kosher food is of higher quality because it is more heavily vetted. Beyond the familiar rules—“No pork or shellfish,” “No meat and dairy served together”—*kashrut* laws can be complicated, and not just in reference to what parts of which animals to eat, who does the butchering, and when and how. Grape products made by non-Jews are prohibited, for example, including baking powders that contain cream of tartar, a by-product of winemaking. “But any cuisine in the world can be prepared under kosher law,” LaRochelle avers, and with the right ingredients.

Last summer’s client eventually decided that every dairy item at the wedding had to pass an even stricter measure of *kashrut*—*cho-lov Yisroel*—followed by about 1 percent of Jews. “It means that at certain parts of the processing of the dairy products, only an observant Jew was involved,” says LaRochelle. “The products are very hard to find and very expensive—and the bride wanted a lot of different cheeses.” So LaRochelle drove for hours through traffic and summer heat to the Orthodox Jewish community of Crown Heights, Brooklyn, to the only qualified store whose cheese met her own standards for taste. She also had to acquire new wedding china, “because

Too many cooks in the kitchen? Not for LaRochelle and her staff, who are preparing citrus-marinated grilled mojo chicken with apple-raisin chutney for a wedding banquet.



GREG NIESBIT

that Bishop wrote for a series published by *Life*, as well as a selection of her translations from Portuguese. (Both are fruits of the many years Bishop spent in Brazil with her partner Lota de Macedo Soares.) For Lloyd Schwartz, Ph.D. '76, a poet, music critic, and professor of English at the University of Massachusetts at Boston, editing the *Prose* is the latest expression of a lifelong dedication to Bishop and her work. Schwartz was a graduate student in English in the 1970s, when Bishop was at Harvard (see *Vita*, July-August 2005, page 34), and he got to know her over one Christmas break

The “unfinished” work in *Poems* does not detract from Bishop’s masterpieces, either.

when she was sick in Stillman Infirmary.

“No one else she knew was in town,” Schwartz recalls, “and I came to see her every day, all day, bringing her mail, and just chatting about anything but poetry: movies, records, mutual acquaintances.” Later, Schwartz suggested that he write his Ph.D. thesis on Bishop’s work: “To my surprise, because she never talked about her work, even with friends, she not only agreed (I think it was her motherly instinct), but also offered to meet with me regularly and answer any questions I had about her poems!”

Bishop was often more self-revealing in prose than in verse; her stories “blur the distinction between fiction and mem-

oir,” as Schwartz writes in his editor’s note. “In the Village,” with its terse recollection of the way her childhood was shadowed by her mother’s mental illness, tells you more about the emotional origins of Bishop’s poetry than anything else she wrote. She makes the point herself in the most significant new material to appear in *Prose*: her exchange of letters with Anne Stevenson, the English poet who wrote the first book-length study of Bishop. Here, Bishop confirms that “‘In the Village’ is accurate—just compressed a bit”; when Stevenson mentions a “sense of loss” in her work, Bishop replies, “...it is probably obvious where it comes from.” These letters also include what is perhaps Bishop’s best statement of her poetic—and more than poetic—creed: “Lack of observation seems to me one of the cardinal sins, responsible for so much cruelty, ugliness, dullness, bad manners—and general unhappiness, too.” The three new volumes testify to Bishop’s lifelong obsession with seeing things clearly.



HEATHER KATSOULIS

people who keep *cholor* refuse to eat off kosher china that is not also *cholor*.”

At 5 A.M. on the wedding day, the *mashigah*, who certifies that Bete’ Avon!’s events are kosher, had to “kashify” the large outdoor kitchens with industrial-strength blowtorches because the site’s generators had been down Friday and he could not work on Shabbat. (Typically, this entails running ovens at top heat for an hour, shutting them off, and leaving them closed all night.) In the end, the feast—including lemon truffle lollipops, zucchini ribbon rolls, pomegranate-honey glazed salmon, and summer vegetable and feta turnovers—was

enjoyed by all. Clients “won’t get borscht, chicken soup, or gefilte fish from me, although I love these foods and do them very well,” LaRochelle declares. “They’ll get Delmonico steaks with roasted fresh figs and sherry parsley sauce—and they won’t even notice it’s all kosher!”

~NELL PORTER BROWN



Visit harvardmag.com/extras to see a video of Dawn LaRochelle at work.

And the War Came

At its sesquicentennial, a fresh, revealing narrative of the advent of the Civil War

by MICHAEL T. BERNATH

WE ARE IN THE MIDST of a perfect storm of new Civil War books. With the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln’s birth in 2009 and this year’s sesquicentennial of the beginning of the conflict itself, historians have kicked into overdrive, threatening to overwhelm even the most voracious readers. Still, Adam Goodheart’s engrossing 1861: *The Civil War Awakening* will not be lost in the crowd. Many already know Goodheart from his frequent—and these days, it seems, almost daily—historical pieces in the *New York Times*, but this book permits him to demonstrate the full range of his narrative powers.*

Its title notwithstanding, the book is

*A former Undergraduate columnist for this magazine, Adam Goodheart '92 now directs the Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience, at Washington College.

actually the history of 10 crucial months across two calendar years, October 1860 to July 1861, as the nation—soon to become two nations—teetered on and then crossed over the verge of revolution.

Rather than begin his story with the firing of the first shot on April 12, Goodheart purposefully opens his book months earlier as Major Robert Anderson raises the Union flag over Fort Sumter, in Charleston Harbor, following his garrison’s secret removal to the fort in the dead of night, under the noses of hostile and heavily armed South Carolinians. Goodheart’s reasons for doing so say much about the book as whole.

For one, he wants to give the United States, not the Confederate States, the initiative in the forthcoming struggle for na-

Adam Goodheart '92, 1861: *The Civil War Awakening* (Knopf, \$28.95)

Off the Shelf

Recent books with Harvard connections

Brunelleschi's Egg: Nature, Art, and Gender in Renaissance Italy, by Mary D. Garrard, A.M. '60 (University of California, \$60). A monumental, and copiously illustrated, gendered reading of the interplay of art and nature in the Renaissance, by the American University professor emerita of art history. The delights range from the egg-shaped domes of the major cathedrals to a Titian chalk of a mother bear licking her cub.



Queen Elizabeth I in Coronation Robes, from the National Portrait Gallery's collections

Elizabeth I: The Voice of a Monarch, by Ilona Bell '69 (Palgrave, \$26 paper). This volume in a series on "Queenship and Power" studies Elizabeth through her own words: speeches, reported conversations, poems. The author, Clarke professor of English at Williams College, finds the young monarch creating her own reign and marriage—provocative acts, with consequences for both England and English.

The Big Ditch, by Noel Maurer, associate professor of business administration,

and Carlos Yu (Princeton, \$35). A political-economic history of, as the subtitle puts it, "How America Took, Built, Ran, and Ultimately Gave Away the Panama Canal." A story of large-scale American in-

frastructure, colonial ambition, successful public management, diplomacy, and successful for-profit management. A very big ditch indeed.

Quiches, Kugels, and Couscous, by Joan Nathan, M.P.A. '76 (Knopf, \$39.95). The latest from PBS's Jewish cooking expert, this time on "My Search for Jewish Cooking in France." It was a circuitous route from the Kennedy School to this, via New York's Ninth Avenue Food Festival, but the results—both narratives and recipes—are enticing.

Music for Silenced Voices: Shostakovich and His Fifteen Quartets, by Wendy Lesser '73 (Yale, \$28). An unusual biography of the "often dubious and always divided" composer through his less-studied chamber music, by the editor of the *Threepenny Review*.

Health Care Reform and American Politics: What Everyone Needs to Know, by Lawrence R. Jacobs and Theda Skocpol, Thomas professor of government and sociology (Oxford, \$16.95 paper). For those who have already forgotten, a brief review of how the health-care bill was enacted in 2009-10, and a primer on what it means and how it would have to be implemented: useful reminders for those who will litigate or legislate against it, those who will try to put it into effect, and the 300-million-plus other Americans who are affected.

Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World, by Maya Jasanoff, Loeb associate professor of the social sciences (Knopf, \$30). A groundbreaking global history of the 60,000 Loyalist refugees who fled the newly independent United States for Canada,

the Caribbean, India, and beyond. It begins with George Washington's triumphal entry into New York City on November 25, 1783, and bracingly proceeds to the losers' tales.

The Future of Power, by Joseph Nye, Distinguished Service Professor (Public Affairs, \$27.95). The power of narratives, and narrative power, on the world stage, now concern the author, former dean of the Harvard Kennedy School. As the United States faces shifts in economic, military, and political power, this perspective—historical and analytical—is important, if not always reassuring.

Short Cuts, by Alexander Humez, Nicholas Humez '69, and Rob Flynn (Oxford, \$19.95). Readers will be glad that the authors determined to commit an amusing book-length exploration of "miniature forms of verbal communication"—from oaths and ring tones to ransom notes and famous last words.

Thinking in an Emergency, by Elaine Scarry, Cabot professor of aesthetics and the general theory of value (Norton, \$23.95). A small book on a large topic: why democracies, in times of emergency, unthinkingly opt for action and executive power—and why thinking and rapid action are in fact compatible, and consistent with the principles of democratic governance.

The Use and Abuse of Literature, by Marjorie Garber, Kenan professor of English and of visual and environmental studies (Pantheon, \$27.95). At a time of instrumental thinking, a full-throated defense of reading and of the enduring value of encountering literature as a deep, human experience.

The Zombie Autopsies: Secret Notebooks from the Apocalypse, by Steven C. Schlozman, assistant professor of psychiatry (Grand Central, \$19.99). If your kids (and perhaps you) are going to watch that trash, might as well let the "avid observer of the living dead" teach you something via these purported diagrams and lab notes. For example, "Spleen is enlarged and displaced." And how.

tional existence. Accounts that begin with the first shot, he maintains, make the “Union side into simply the passive target of the Confederacy’s aggression” and tend to glorify “the ‘lost cause’ at the expense of the one that would win.” Goodheart’s book is certainly not guilty of that, for though white Southerners do inhabit his pages, his primary interest and sympathy lie with those who would wear the blue, not the gray.

And Goodheart wants above all to emphasize the extreme uncertainty of these troubled days. The exchange of cannon fire in April would bring war, but also clarity to a very murky situation. It is the murkiness that he relishes. He is less interested in advancing a new argument or uncovering new evidence than in trying to recapture a unique moment, a feeling, a sense of fundamental crisis. His is a story of possibility—of terrifying, revolutionary possibility “when almost everything hung in the balance.” That



The entry of Major Anderson's command into Fort Sumter, as depicted in *Harper's Weekly*

tension is palpable on every page.

In telling such a large story, Goodheart faces some very real challenges, and his greatest achievement is his ability to contain this chaotic period within a coherent and masterfully written narrative. The “full story” of the beginning of the Civil War, he tells us, is not to be found in Charleston and Washington alone. Rather, “it is necessary to go much farther afield: to the slums of Manhattan and the drawing rooms of Boston, to Ohio villages and Virginia slave cabins, and even to the shores of the Pacific.” Hence, each chapter opens in a different locale, as Goodheart takes readers

on a whirlwind tour of Civil War America (the northern two-thirds of it at any rate). By looking beyond the East Coast, and especially by incorporating events on the frontier and California, he brings a valuable new perspective to the crisis—that

of fretful western Americans who watched, waited, and, in some cases, schemed from the other side of the continent.

But while the geographical sweep of the book is expansive, the focus is very much on the specific—on individuals. At heart, Goodheart is a storyteller, and the stories that fascinate him are those of “how individual Americans—both ordinary citizens and national leaders—experienced and responded to a moment of sudden crisis and change as it unfolded.” The book explores the greatest crisis in American history from the perspectives of well-chosen representative men and women who are not just the usual cast of characters. Abraham Lincoln, Robert Anderson, and other key political and military leaders are here, of course, but so are the craggy 104-year-old Mainer and American Revolutionary War veteran Ralph Farnham; the cerebral and idealistic James Garfield; the runaway, recaptured, and then ran-away-again Virginia slave Lucy Bagby; the indomitable and brilliant Jessie Benton Frémont; the flamboyant and ill-fated Elmer Ellsworth.

Goodheart is the master of the poignant vignette. In the anecdote that opens chapter 2, for instance, he unpacks an 1861 advertisement in the *Daily National Intelligencer* announcing the public sale of “One Negro man” and “Also, one Gold Watch” to reveal the details of how this unfortunate slave, Willis, came to find himself on the auction block following the death of his master, a longtime Washington fixture, Judge George M. Bibb. The writing here beautifully illustrates the injustice and the callousness of slavery even in places like the nation’s capital, where it supposedly had been abolished.

Using small incidents like Willis’s sale, Goodheart explores the larger historical context surrounding his figures, and in so doing seamlessly incorporates political,

Chapter & Verse

Correspondence on not-so-famous lost words

More queries from the archive:

A request for the text of a short story called “The Field of Purple Bloom,” originally read in serial form in a Midwestern farm journal.

And: “They are exiles when we invite them to dinner and refugees when we raise money for them.”

Also: “And by the way, whenever Cruelty is in town, they have him over for a sumptuous feast.”

“**Stranger, go, tell the Spartans**” (September-October 2010). Making use of the *Index of American Periodical Verse*, David Myatt has identified the poem “News from Thermopylae,” by Howard Lachtman, originally published in the 1972 winter issue of *Poet Lore* (67:4; 345).

“**Lust is the lamp that lifts the gloom**” (January-February). Both Dan Rosenberg and Wendie Howland sug-

gested as the original of this misquoted couplet (first printed in the November-December 1995 issue) the lines “Love, which is lust, is the Lamp in the Tomb./ Love, which is lust, is the Call from the Gloom,” which begin section xxi of the title poem in William Ernest Henley’s collection *Hawthorn and Lavender: Songs and Madrigals*.

“**No longer able to listen to the music of Mozart**” (January-February). Dan Rosenberg traced this query from the March-April 1996 issue back to a *Saturday Review* column (42:3; 1959) by Cleveland Amory ’39 that relates the story of an overzealous reporter querying Albert Einstein about the impact of nuclear war.

Send inquiries and answers to “Chapter and Verse,” *Harvard Magazine*, 7 Ware Street, Cambridge 02138, or via e-mail to chapterandverse@harvardmag.com.

social, economic, cultural, and intellectual history into his narrative. For the lay reader, he provides a reasonably comprehensive treatment of the salient themes and issues of the late antebellum period. But his greatest contribution lies in his ability to recreate the texture, the sharp

detail, of the everyday life and experience of nineteenth-century Americans. He demonstrates well the strengths of narrative history at its best: its accessibility, its artistry, its ability to engage readers intimately with the past, its capacity to synthesize a tremendous range of materials

and voices, its expansive vision, its seductively authoritative perspective.

But there are limits to narrative history. By their very nature, narratives are progressive and linear. With the benefit of hindsight, they impose a trajectory on the past. This is what makes them so com-

P E R F O R M A N C E

Volleys in F# Major

The musical guns are blasting on *Broadsides: A Miscellany of Musical Opinion*, the new CD from singer-songwriters John Forster '69 and Tom Chapin. In ragtime, rock, and reggae, the pair explore a gamut of social ills, from the specter of a "Zombie Bank" to the outsourcing of wars to private corporations ("Total Security Solutions, Inc.") to white-collar crime, in "The Chief Executive Chain Gang."

The album began in 1999, when National Public Radio (NPR) invited Forster, an accomplished songwriter and shrewd satirist, and Chapin, a singer known for his music for kids, to submit songs to accompany segments of NPR's "Morning Edition" news program. The radio network laid down two strict guidelines: the songs couldn't be partisan or one-sided, and there had to be a news hook. (The latter was a given, but to a satirist, the former is a tight rein indeed.) "After we wrote the first few songs," Forster says, "we realized that the invitation provided us an opportunity to create a very rare kind of album, one composed entirely of topical songs." They went on to write dozens, 14 of which are on *Broadsides*.

The new CD, Forster and Chapin's first collaboration for adults (they have recorded 10 children's CDs), follows a tradition of populist storytelling and commentary that dates back to sixteenth-century England, where such ballads, printed on single-sided long

sheets called "broadsides," took root. These songs were played and sung in public. "Some were romantic," says Forster, "but many were satirical or just plain critical, reaming anyone from the hat-checker to the king."

Their twentieth-century equivalents are protest songs from folk masters like Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger '40, and later Phil Ochs, Tom Paxton, and others who served as paradigms for Forster and Chapin. The CD's eponymous opening number salutes these artists and the broadside form itself, calling it "A tough, melodic weapon/Packed with values we affirm." Another muse is legendary satirist-songwriter Tom Lehrer '47, A.M. '47. "What Lehrer was doing, and what we've done here," says Forster, "is what I call, 'op-ed pieces with key signatures.'"

The two men sought subjects that were timely but not ephemeral. "You try to get some perspective," Forster says, "and write something big enough that it won't be out of date a year from now." Consider the track "Econo-Me-Oh-My," a wry take on the business cycle, with spoken asides, which the songwriters presented to their NPR editor while the economy was thriving. "She told us to hang on to it, and about six months later, AT&T announced they'd laid off 10,000 people," Forster says. "We called her and said, 'Remember that song?' And it aired the next day."

In a career that encompasses humor, children's music, and theater, with Grammy nominations and compositions recorded by artists ranging from Faith Hill to Judy Collins to Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen, Forster remains hooked on songwriting. "A song is an amazing thing," he says. "By combining an idea with the emotion of music, you can feel a thought. It's a magical process."

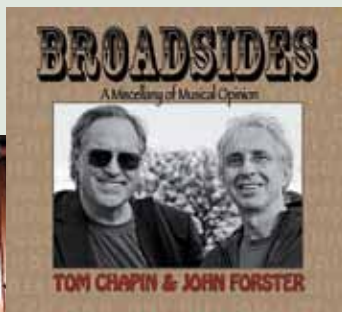
But can it make a difference? Though *Broadsides* will keep listeners chuckling and mulling, Forster and Chapin hope for more. "When you write topical stuff," says Forster, "you always come across that underlying question: can a song change the world? Yeah, right. There's a problem in Rwanda—we'll write a song about it and everything will be great. No! But what part did 'La Marseillaise' play in the French Revolution? And think about 'We Shall Overcome.'"

In the track "Broadside," Forster and Chapin toast that song: "'We Shall Overcome' finally overcome," they write, "'cause everybody sang along." Forster explains: "The song became a component of the zeitgeist. It really can happen."

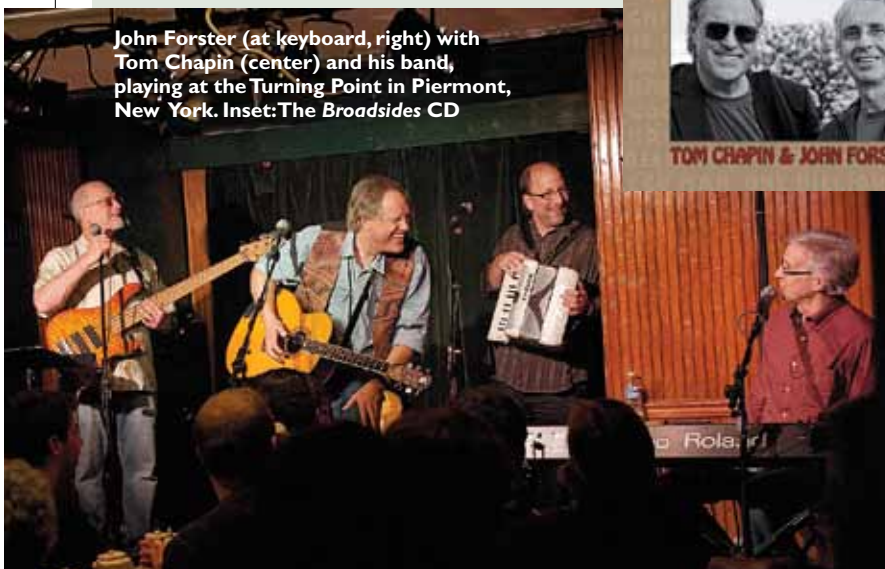
—SUSAN HODARA



Visit harvardmag.com/ extras to listen to tracks from *Broadsides*.



John Forster (at keyboard, right) with Tom Chapin (center) and his band, playing at the Turning Point in Piermont, New York. Inset: The *Broadsides* CD





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

A Baltimore "Southern belle" shows her loyalties, wearing a dress sewn with a Confederate flag, *Harper's Weekly*, September 7, 1861

elling, but it can also lead to distortion. In Goodheart's case, his story is of the beginning of something—a "Civil War Awakening"—which prompts the question: the beginning of what? In answering it, he understandably gets a little ahead of himself. Northern victory, emancipation, and a "new birth of freedom" for a greatly strengthened and united American nation seem almost foregone conclusions by July 1861 in this telling. Goodheart can hardly be criticized for foreshadowing—the very title of his book demands it—but it must be pointed out that there is a certain degree of ahistorical distortion at work here, and it is ironic—given his passion for highlighting the uncertainty and revolutionary nature of the conflict's early days—that the book tends to downplay the contingency and revolutionary impact of the cataclysmic events that would follow.

That caveat aside, Goodheart's book is an impressive accomplishment, a delightful read, and a valuable contribution that will entertain and challenge popular and professional audiences alike. Even for those of us very familiar with the period and the events and figures he describes, it is refreshing to have them presented in this fashion, and Goodheart's narrative draws connections that might otherwise be missed. ▢

Michael T. Bernath, Ph.D. '05, is Tebeau assistant professor at the University of Miami and the author of Confederate Minds: The Struggle for Intellectual Independence in the Civil War South (University of North Carolina Press, 2010).



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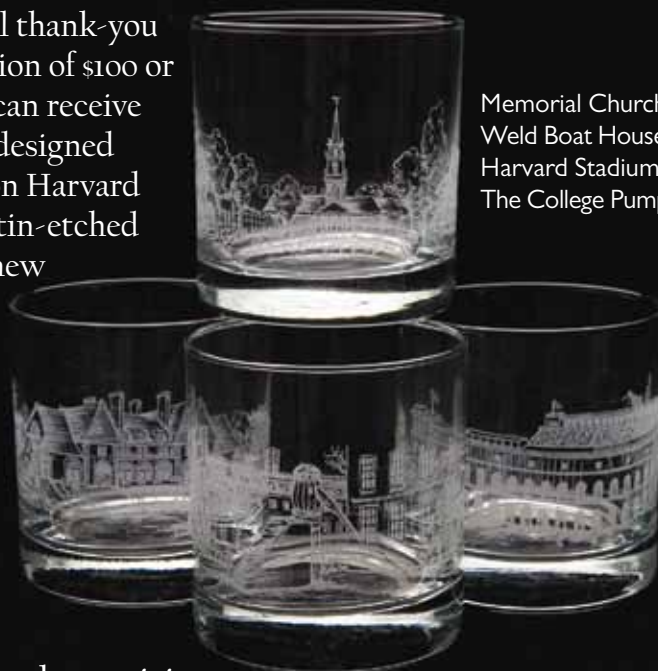
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A photograph of Louis Kunkel, a middle-aged man with a receding hairline, wearing a green sweater over a light blue collared shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. He is in a laboratory setting, with various pieces of equipment, including a large piece of machinery with a pink and green base, visible in the foreground and background. The background is slightly blurred, showing more lab equipment and a window.

Louis Kunkel in
his laboratory at
Children's Hospital

The Gene Hunter

Louis Kunkel's 30-year quest to diagnose
and cure muscular dystrophy

by Victor K. McElheny

LOUIS M. KUNKEL is a wiry man of medium height with a lot of energy, quiet passion, and notable persistence. The professor of pediatrics and of genetics has very little interest in publicity, but nevertheless became a hero in the 1980s when he discovered not only a marker for the Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD) gene, but the gene itself and the protein it specifies, thereby facilitating the diagnosis of carriers and afflicted fetuses. Working at the nexus of lab research and clinical application during his 30 years at Children's Hospital Boston, he is still in touch with DMD patients and their families whom he saw long ago. Their suffering has impelled him to push the use of genetics and genomics in his quest to devise improved methods of diagnosis and treatment. His story is a sobering tale of how high the barriers still are for scientists striving to put genomics to work to attack a genetic disease.

DMD, the most common and severe of the two-score types of muscular dystrophy, condemns its victims—almost all boys—to a succession of surgeries, as well as a course of steroids that can do nothing more than delay their inevitable confinement to a wheelchair around the age of 10. They die in their twenties or thirties when their heart and respiratory muscles fail. A third of the victims also experience mental retardation. An added tragedy is that the disease emerges only gradually, becoming evident at the age of four or five when a child has trouble getting up or running. As Kunkel quietly told a group of visiting journalists in 1998, “Most Duchenne families are desperate. It’s pretty sad to interact with them. I saw a boy at five. He’s now 19, in a wheelchair, and needs a respirator. I took part in a benefit for his family. It’s unusual for a basic research laboratory to interact with patients. It puts everything in perspective. It adds a dimension other than intellectual curiosity.”

Despite that passion, Kunkel’s search for a cure for DMD underlines how challenging the grand promise of genomics—to lay bare the causes of disease, and discover remedies—remains 10 years after the first human genome sequences were drafted. His work also illustrates the determination of a rapidly growing number of researchers around the world to intensify, not slacken, the search for genome-based therapy and prevention. Biologists working with those data seek the molecular causes, not just the symptoms, of diseases rare and common, in order to produce specific methods for combating individuals’ illnesses.

But despite huge advances in understanding the functions of many of the 20,000 human genes, researchers are finding that the underlying genetic causes of a single disease may lie not only in simple substitutions of DNA subunits, but also in much larger deletions, insertions, reversals, and variations in the number of copies of repeated sequences. They are learning that diverse biochemical pathways in the living cell can lead to the same result. They confront the paradox that the multiplicity of causes may complicate understanding of a disease—and yet may open up more opportunities to control or prevent it.

The bewildering array of genetic abnormalities that can impair a biological system means that understanding disease from a genetic perspective will require scientists to sequence the genomes of vast numbers of individual patients—and then aggregate, store, and link such data to individual medical histories on a massive scale. As Kunkel and many others have realized, this re-

search paradigm raises competing ethical concerns over privacy and patients’ rights to know whether they harbor a predisposition to an illness. The moment to resolve these big issues is nearer at hand than most people know.

WHEN KUNKEL BEGAN hunting for disease-related genes in the early 1980s, he focused on one of the several thousand rare diseases linked to mutations in single genes, not common diseases like cancer or diabetes. But the conviction among scientists and the public alike that genetics accounts for a large share of human disease risk was already common. Prenatal testing, starting with such diseases as Down syndrome and Tay-Sachs, began spreading in the 1970s, and intensified in the 1980s after the isolation of genes linked to Huntington’s chorea, cystic fibrosis, breast cancer, and hundreds of other afflictions, including Kunkel’s target: DMD. All this was happening barely a decade after biological science had learned to isolate genes, to transfer them from one organism to another for research and industrial purposes, and to spell out the subunits of the code of life embedded in DNA. Speaking to a group of reporters in 1989, Kunkel said that medicine had to that point focused on diseases caused by factors invading from outside, and was only beginning to understand hereditary diseases and cancers that arise within us.

Kunkel, in fact, is one of the researchers whose success in finding disease-related genes helped crystallize the idea of a Human Genome Project, the international drive to spell out all the subunits of human DNA. This largest of focused efforts in the history of biology has indeed produced an intellectual explosion full of surprises, such as a myriad of newly discovered genetic controls in the genome itself and the proteins that wrap around it. Accompanying technological advances are already enabling researchers to sample the genetic endowment of thousands of people and to read completely the DNA of hundreds of individuals, not only to pin down more causes of disease but also to begin guiding therapeutic decisions in the clinic. Last October, *Nature* published a survey of 93 major genome centers around the world that are using, in all, some 1,250 of a new generation of ultrafast sequencing machines. The journal estimated that 2,700 human sequences would be complete by the end of that month—and 30,000 by the end of 2011. Nonetheless, there is much impatience with the painfully slow emergence of genomics-based medical applications, resulting in criticisms that the whole enterprise has been hyped.

In 1986, after Kunkel and three of his Children’s colleagues cloned the gene for DMD, they immediately pressed forward on a year-long hunt for the gene’s product, a protein that they named dystrophin. The mutation leading to DMD prevents the manufacture of this molecule—a crucial member of a complex of molecules that repairs muscles after the stress of frequent contractions. Without dystrophin, muscles tear and wear out prematurely as they flex, and can’t be regenerated, leaving DMD patients with virtually no muscle at the end of their short lives.

As the Kunkel group discovered, dystrophin—like all the body’s tens of thousands of proteins, including those involved in hundreds of genetic disorders—is made up of its own unique combination of the 20 types of small molecules called amino acids.

These amino acids are arranged in order according to the genetic code of DNA, itself spelled out by the four “bases” called ad-

enine, thymine, guanine, and cytosine (A, T, G, and C) that are strung along at right angles to the twin sugar-phosphate strands of the DNA double helix. Triplets composed of these four individual bases form code words, or “codons,” each signifying that a particular amino acid is to be installed at that point in the chain-like protein. There also are codons for starting and stopping, like the capital letter at the beginning of a sentence or a period at the end. The string of DNA codons spelling out a particular protein is copied into a “messenger” (made of the related chemical RNA) that moves out of a cell’s nucleus to the globular protein-assembly platforms called ribosomes.

Dystrophin, composed of some 3,800 amino acids, is a cruelly easy target for genetic mutations. Its DNA sequence is encoded by 79 separate stretches—called exons—that are scattered along two and a half million of DNA’s three billion “letters.” In DMD patients, a mutation adding or subtracting just *one* DNA letter shifts the “reading frame” so that the rest of the message becomes gibberish.

Because dystrophin is such a barn-door of a genetic target, new kinds of mutations keep springing up. In the 1980s, one-third of the 600 or so boys born with DMD in the United States each year were victims of a “sporadic” genetic change arising in their mothers. In the remaining cases, the mother had inherited the defect from *her* mother. An estimated one woman in 5,000 is a carrier, but many still do not know that. Parents-to-be often lack a family medical history that might alert them to have themselves or a fetus tested. By the time a boy is diagnosed with DMD, the physician’s sad duty is to tell the parents about the expected course of an illness with no cure. (Kunkel recalls one mother bringing her affected four-year-old to the clinic at Children’s, with a younger, as-yet-undiagnosed son in tow.)

Kunkel and his colleagues’ search for a cure, in rivalry and cooperation with scientific groups across the world, focused on finding a way to supply the missing protein. But how? Injecting the normal form can’t work because dystrophin is so huge it cannot penetrate the walls



Below: Difficulty getting up from the floor is one of the early signs that a boy has DMD. Weakened quadriceps force the child to first raise his posterior from a position on his hands and knees, and then walk the hands up the legs to raise his upper body, in a series of steps called Gowers’ maneuver. Above: By age 15, due to scoliosis of the spine and contractures of the hips, knees, and ankles that freeze the joints, the boy is wheelchair-bound.

of muscle cells. Several forms of cell-transfer or gene therapy have also been tried; all have failed. As with many rare but catastrophic inherited diseases, the quest has been urgent, but has proven long and frustrating.

In the early 1980s, Kunkel’s group had confronted almost-universal predictions that it would be impossible to map the X chromosome, already known to be the site of the genetic defect implicated in DMD. The old-fashioned molecular techniques for gene mapping were cumbersome and lengthy. DNA extracted from cells was handled and measured directly, and all the data were punched into computers by hand. To locate the specific site (which turned out to be on the short arm of the chromosome), they began “walking” in both directions along the strands of DNA, constantly comparing each stretch to the corresponding area of normal DNA to find missing sections.

After three years, the first fruits were “markers” near the culprit sequence; three years later, the gene itself was found.

In the past 30 years, Kunkel’s ways of teasing out genetic contributions to disease have changed dramatically, from a “wet” world of handling DNA samples to a largely “dry” one of automated instruments, computers, and elaborate software. These technological advances, certainly, have helped bring the finish line in the race for solutions closer. But the exponentially increasing volume of electronic data is creating huge challenges in interpretation.

Kunkel admits that he never expected it to take so long for therapies to emerge. Yet he and many others in academia and the pharmaceutical industry keep at it. Today, they focus much attention on the very genetic machinery that has gone wrong. Using a form of gene therapy that Kunkel calls “gene correction,” they hope to trick the protein-synthesizing machinery of muscle cells into creating at least a truncated form of dystrophin. In one current approach, researchers add special chemicals as an enzyme copies the DNA into messenger RNA instructions for making the pro-



Even though progress in finding a *treatment* for DMD has been slow, one area has benefited enormously: the process of locating and sequencing the genes and their proteins has had a swift, dramatic, and increasing effect on the quality of *diagnosis*.

tein; that induces the copying enzyme to skip past enough of dystrophin's 79 exons to restore the correct reading frame of the rest. The resulting shortened dystrophin, ideally, would modify the severity of the patient's disease from the Duchenne variant to another, called Becker, that allows a longer and less painful life. (Becker victims are born with shortened dystrophin proteins.)

Other approaches judged promising are the use of chemicals to force the DNA to "read through" a premature stop codon, so that it makes a more complete protein, and an effort to boost the body's natural production of a related protein, utrophin, that might do at least some of dystrophin's work. Several of these methods have entered clinical trials in the United States and elsewhere.

Recently, Kunkel's lab has focused on another important front in seeking cures or palliation for DMD. This involves expanding the number of suitable laboratory "model organisms"—in which possible muscular dystrophy treatments can be tested—beyond genetically engineered mice. He and colleagues, including Jeffrey R. Guyon and Genri Kawahara, were excited to find that a form of muscular dystrophy occurs in one of the most-used organisms in developmental biology: the prolific, short-lived zebrafish, whose transparent embryos offer clear views of the effects of mutations on muscle. Seeking to reverse the zebrafish disorder, Kunkel's lab is testing a library of some 4,000 closely studied but outmoded or shelved drugs and has already found several that look promising.

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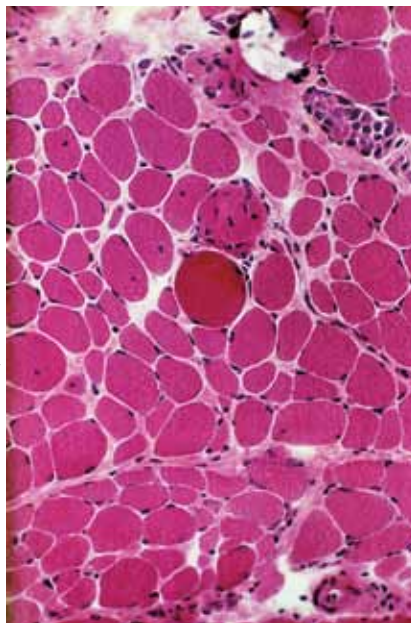
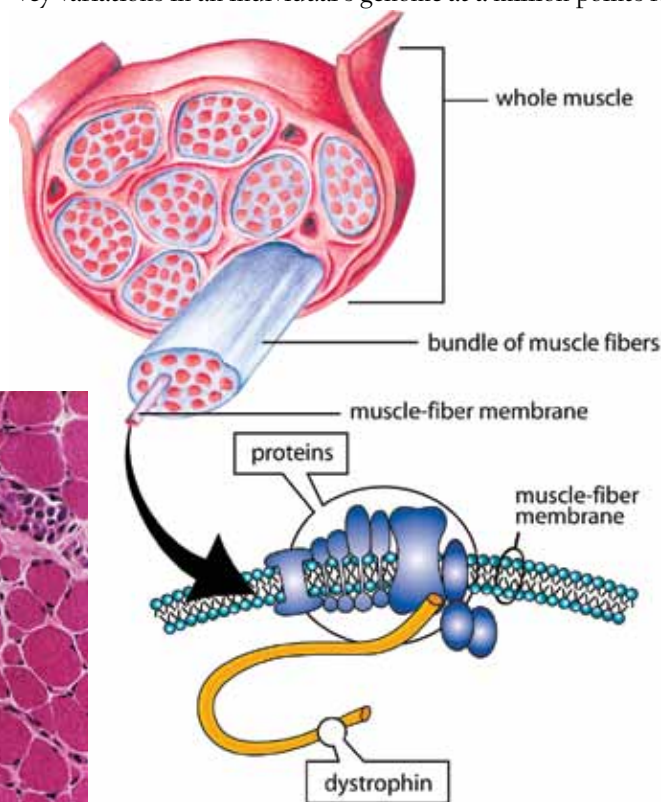
In medicine, where diagnosis tends to come before a cure, identifying a gene and its protein opens hitherto unavailable options. A woman who is a carrier of DMD, Kunkel points out, may

have seen her brother die of the disease. She can now have an in utero test and, if the male fetus is normal, carry it to term. In-vitro fertilization, including genetic diagnosis before an egg is implanted, is increasingly available. Genetic understanding has also made diagnosis less painful and risky: muscle biopsies of newborns and young children can be replaced by simple DNA studies. This progress has led to a sharp rise in the proportion of American women who know they are carriers of the critical defect in DMD.

As a consequence, the frequent "sporadic," *de novo* mutations involved in DMD now account for more than half the live-births of victims, up from one-third a quarter-century ago.

Genetic diagnosis has been driven by new tools for exploring the body's hereditary endowment. One of these is the "DNA chip" (a small glass rectangle with a vast array of microscopic wells—a "microarray"—containing DNA samples that can survey variations in an individual's genome at a million points for

Right: Dystrophin is one of a group of proteins that surround muscle fibers and keep them working properly. The protein's absence in DMD patients leads to loss of muscle function. Below: A light micrograph of a section through muscle tissue affected by DMD shows wasting where healthy fibers (bright pink) have been replaced by fibrous tissue (light pink).



a cost of a few hundred dollars). Another is the DNA sequencing machine. The attendant computers and software have been increasing in speed and precision at a dizzying rate, rapidly reducing the cost of making a complete sequence of a person's genome. Less than a decade ago it was on the order of \$100 million or more. (The first complete sequence of a named individual, DNA co-discoverer James Watson, cost Connecticut-based 454 Life Sciences and its partner, the genome center at Baylor College of Medicine, \$1 million or so in 2007.) At a pace even faster than that in electronics, several generations of competing new technologies have cut the original price by four orders of magnitude to \$10,000, with a further cut to \$1,000 expected within a couple of years. (In 2010, San Diego-based Illumina cut its charge of \$48,000

down to \$19,500 for an individual, \$13,500 per person for a group of five, and \$9,500 when prescribed by a physician.) Several academic centers have also begun using a shortcut: sequencing only the “exome” DNA that codes for proteins—at a cost of about half that of a complete sequence—to find the exact genetic change causing an illness. Soon the cost of sequencing a person’s entire genome will likely equal the price now paid to test for a single genetic defect, promising further wholesale advances in the scale of genomic analysis.

THESE RAPID DEVELOPMENTS have convinced Isaac S. (Zak) Kohane—a colleague of Kunkel’s at Children’s and director of the Countway Library at Harvard Medical School—and their co-workers that medicine is entering a world in which tens of thousands, even millions, of patients are likely to become participants in long-term genetic research. This trend intensifies concerns that first troubled Kohane in the 1980s, when he was simultaneously pursuing an M.D. at Boston University and working toward a doctorate at MIT in artificial intelligence as it related to medical decision-making. He became convinced that a patient’s medical data from all care providers must be not only centralized and easily available to the patient, but also easily accessible for research

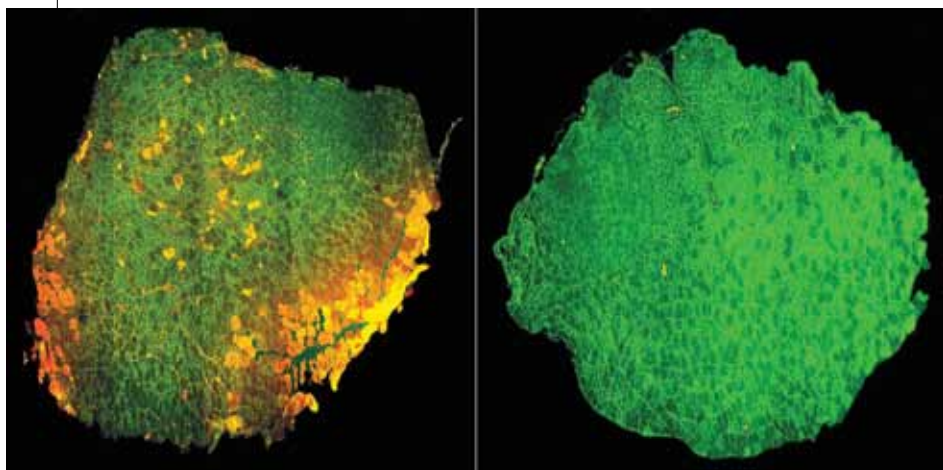
participant model. Now Children’s has created the Gene Partnership, in which participants will be able to see their results if they wish. The program began enrolling participants last spring, starting with the hospital’s own developmental medicine department, and by late fall had recruited some 650 volunteers. The aspiration, Kunkel says, is to sign up a total of 10,000 within “a year or two.”

A primary goal of the Gene Partnership is to zero in on the actual mutations that contribute to disease. But to muster the statistical power necessary to detect these needles in a haystack, Kunkel, Kohane, and their colleagues know that they need to persuade very large numbers of patients to enroll in similar studies. Researchers around the globe will need to be able to share such data widely, comparing patients’ medical histories with their genetic profiles, while simultaneously recognizing Kohane’s concerns: that stockpiling vast quantities of intimate biological information—the key to this new kind of medicine—in turn raises new ethical dilemmas.

The Gene Partnership team foresees that when large numbers of people learn more about their risks of contracting specific diseases and their sensitivity to medications, they will likely engage in new kinds of conversations with their medical caregivers. One significant issue will be whether genetic-test results offer false alarms or hide real problems. This issue sharpened for Kunkel when a study of autism that he and Kohane were conducting seemed to show that two of the participating children had a mutation associated with leukemia. Kohane recalls losing “two nights of sleep” over whether or not to tell the parents. Although retesting the data revealed that the apparent leukemia link resulted from an experimental artifact, Kohane, Kunkel, and their co-workers began thinking about the practical details of a system that would convey risk information to patient-participants while maintaining privacy.

The group has raised these issues repeatedly in print. A 2007 article in *Science*, in particular, advocated “reestablishing the researcher-patient compact” by advocating what has become the Gene Partnership. They envisioned patients adding samples and information as they wished, or withdrawing from the cohort if they chose. The patients would receive their own medical records (as already happens at some healthcare facilities, including those operated by the Veterans Administration). Patient-participants would control when they were contacted by choosing when to “tune in” to alerts about discoveries and their potential clinical impact. These “broadcasts” aimed at the anonymous subjects of the Gene Partnership would incorporate carefully described characteristics

that recipients would recognize. The alerts might also include requests from the researchers for additional information or samples. To make the scheme work, Kohane and the others admit, would require tackling problems of low “health literacy,” lack of access to the Internet, and hammering out principles of what to tell participants and when.



PATRICK LANDMAN/PHOTO RESEARCHERS, INC.

In the forelimb of an experimental mouse with DMD, orange and yellow areas indicate dead muscle fibers where dystrophin, indicated in green, has disappeared. After treatment with a type of gene therapy known as exon skipping, the mouse regained normal dystrophin levels and muscle function. The technique has not yet been tried in humans.

and treatment—even as the patient’s privacy is respected.

In a medical world with millions of patients participating in genetic research, prime goals of years and decades of cooperative study would be to tune treatments to people’s inherited characteristics, to keep track of whether people actually come down with a disease to which they are predisposed, and to unravel the true mixture of genetic and environmental influences on disease. In contrast to the usual practice in today’s genetics studies, participants would be able to retrieve their personal data if they want to, and receive genetic counseling. The aim is a new deal between volunteers and genetic researchers. Kohane and his colleagues feel that this new deal is both imperative and technically attainable—if researchers and physicians will acknowledge that participants *are* capable of processing complex medical information.

Kunkel, who serves as a principal adviser to the Muscular Dystrophy Association, a U.S. patient-advocacy group with a \$160-million annual budget, and also directs the genomics program at Children’s, has been a strong advocate for such a patient-

In the last five years, through “genome-wide association studies,” researchers using DNA chips have uncovered several hundred genetic factors linked to common diseases—but most of these add only a small percentage to a person’s risk of a particular disease.

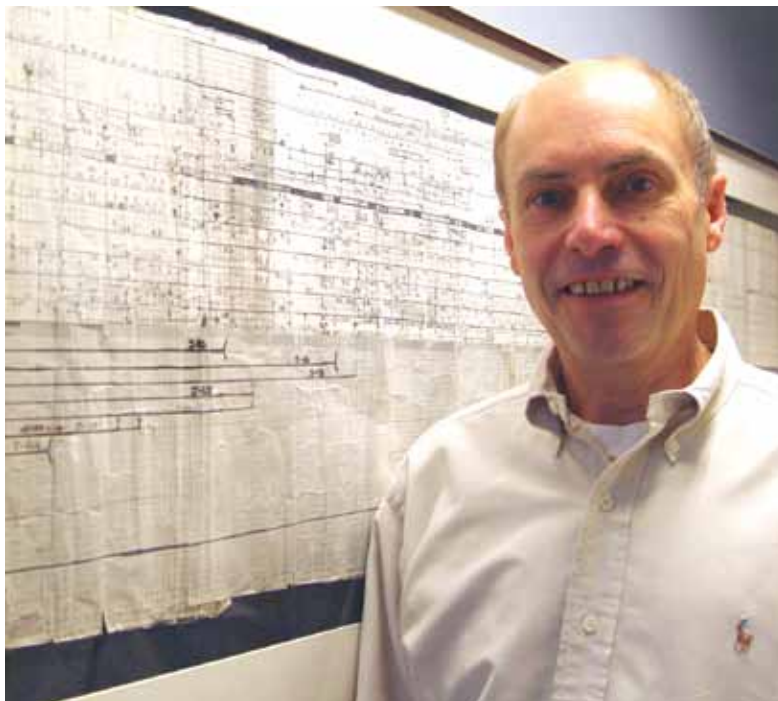
These plans are taking shape amid much skepticism about personalized medicine. Critics pointedly ask whether the readouts from people’s genomes (early commercial versions are now available) are truly medically useful. Common diseases are linked to several, even many, interacting genes, and to a complicated battery of controls that are just beginning to be studied. The functions that many genes specify are still not clear. In the last five years, through “genome-wide association studies,” researchers using DNA chips have uncovered several hundred genetic factors linked to common diseases—but most of these add only a small percentage to a person’s risk of a particular disease, and most are just neighbors of the real suspects. Attention is turning to the idea that the real villains are rare but “penetrant” mutations, still largely undetected, that require a more powerful “microscope” than the chips provide. Thus, complete sequencing of all or part of many individual patients’ genomes, at prices near that of a CAT scan, is looking more and more attractive, even though understanding the full impact of the genome on health lies in the future.

DESPITE the slow implementation of gene-based treatment in clinical settings, a firm belief in genomic medicine continues to drive both private and public sequencing research. The main unknown remains simply *when* large-scale changes will occur in medical care. Of course, this was also the case when the organism responsible for tuberculosis was discovered in 1882, 40 years before a countervailing vaccine, and 60 years before a countervailing drug, were developed.

The push toward medical applications looks difficult today not only because of the biological complexities of disease, but

Fixing Every Muscle

THE ARTICLE “Mother Courage: A family tragedy and a scientific crusade,” by John Colapinto, in the December 20, 2010, issue of the *New Yorker* (www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/12/20/101220fa_fact_colapinto), describes Patricia Furlong’s efforts to raise public awareness of muscular dystrophy, and funding for research, and covers the trials of drugs designed to fight the disease. Both her sons were diagnosed with, and later died from, DMD. A cure is probably decades away. As Lee Sweeney, scientific advisor to Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy, the foundation Furlong created, told Colapinto, “It’s not just fixing one muscle. It’s fixing every muscle in the body. That’s the problem. Getting the cells to the right place and then getting them to do the right thing—it’s a daunting engineering problem as much as anything else.”



COURTESY OF MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY ASSOCIATION

also because of the structure and regulation of the pharmaceutical industry. The preferred pharmaceutical product is a “blockbuster” drug that can be used by millions—a market big enough to defray the vast investments of time and money needed to develop drugs and carry them through complex tests of safety and efficacy in animals and then humans. Rare diseases such as DMD are not profitable under this regime.

But this calculus may be overturned someday; research in genomics increasingly indicates that there is a genetic influence on the *effectiveness* of various drugs, from those used for cancer chemotherapy to blood thinners like Plavix. The trend toward what is called “genetic stratification,” a subject of increasing interest to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, runs against blockbusters, pointing instead to a much more fragmented market in which drugs are tailored to the genetic characteristics of subgroups. In cancer treatment, for example, insurance companies may increasingly see the point of genetic testing if a \$50,000-a-year drug regimen works on only a subset of the patient population. Two major centers of cancer treatment, Massachusetts General Hospital and Sloan-Kettering in New York, have already begun implementing plans to extend genetic testing gradually to all their cancer patients, and partial or complete sequencing of a person’s genome may eventually become the gold standard for patient care.

The genetic basis of most diseases is still not fully known, but the finer sieve of whole-genome sequencing is already useful in diagnosing and addressing afflictions, like DMD, that involve rare but significant genetic changes. That is why the global genomic enterprise is exploding in numbers, dollars, research sites, and commercial commitment. Looking back at his career, Kunkel says simply, “The promise was there. I never said it would be easy.” ▢

*Victor K. McElheny ’57, NF ’63, is the author of the recently published *Drawing the Map of Life: Inside the Human Genome Project* (Basic Books).*

Bao Luong

Brief life of a Vietnamese revolutionary: 1909-1976

by HUE-TAM HO TAI

ONE SPRING DAY in 1927, 18-year-old Nguyen Trung Nguyet took advantage of her parents' absence to travel alone to Saigon, covering the 160 miles from Rach Gia by sampan, boat, and train. She called herself Bao Luong ("Precious Honesty"), the pen name she adopted when she began writing poetry under her father's tutelage. At her age, most young Vietnamese women were expected to be married, but, raised in a patriotic family, she wanted to help overthrow French colonial rule. Such sentiment was running high then: a year before, students had been expelled from school for wanting to stage a national funeral for a noted reformer. Growing up at a time of strict sex segregation, when few girls received an education, Bao Luong was eager to fight for the emancipation of women and the liberation of her country.

In Saigon, she lived with a relative whose husband, Ton Duc Thang, headed the southern section of the Vietnamese Revolutionary Youth League. (Headquartered in Guangzhou, China, the league had been created in 1925 by Ho Chi Minh as a first step toward forming a Vietnamese Communist Party; he judged that few Vietnamese then understood the meaning of revolution, or what kind of society to strive for.) After four months, during which her potential was surreptitiously assessed, Bao Luong was accepted for revolutionary training. With several male comrades, she stowed away on a boat, dressed as a boy, and arrived in Guangzhou that September.

Her single state nevertheless created awkwardness with her fellow revolutionaries; she was repeatedly urged to marry in order "to settle her status." But when Nguyen Bao Toan, the liaison between Guangzhou and activists at home, asked her to marry him, she refused. "Our generation cannot afford to think of love," she explained. "The promise we must make is not of marriage but of commitment to the revolution."

She returned to Saigon in late November and threw herself into the task of recruiting women into the league. Pretending to sell fabric, she traveled throughout the Mekong Delta, finding other young women who shared her feminism and patriotism. Ironically, they, like Bao Luong, enjoyed the full support of their families even as they called for the downfall of the patriarchal system: their revolutionary zeal owed much to family love and loyalty. To them, women's emancipation meant access to formal education and freedom to choose their husbands. They hatched plans to campaign against colonial rule through pamphlets, demonstrations, and public speeches. "How about an assassination?" one asked.

A year later, an assassination occurred. A young recruit complained that she had been pressured by a senior league member to become his mistress. When he was criticized for this and other transgressions, he threatened to go to the Sûreté (police). Bao Luong

chaired one of the meetings where the group decided to eliminate him, and her cousin was one of three men who carried out the deed. Her own role in the murder is ambiguous; in her memoir, which she wrote in old age, she is vague about her movements that day.

The Sûreté might never have learned who was involved in the "Barbier Street crime," but revolutionary politics intervened. The murder preceded the refusal of southern members of the Revolutionary Youth League to disband and join the new Communist Party, whose program they did not know and whose effectiveness was unproven. Months later, a letter to the Sûreté betrayed the league members, including Bao Luong. She suspected her former suitor, Nguyen Bao Toan. Ordered to liquidate the league, he had put the revolutionary cause as he saw it above everything and everyone.

Bao Luong was incarcerated for months while the Sûreté tried to beat a confession out of her; she then spent a year in the Saigon Central Prison awaiting trial. At the trial, she objected fiercely to the slurs cast on her comrades by the French judges. Challenged to explain how she, as a woman, was oppressed under colonial rule, she retorted: "We women are the worst off. We are not allowed to go to school." Her rebelliousness added another three years to the five years' hard labor on which the judges had originally decided. Her cousin and two other men were condemned to death. Bao Luong was unrepentant: "Loving one's country is not a crime," she told her lawyer. She was undaunted by the prospect of prison: "She had only seven more years to go," her memoir ends. "She had no reason to give in to self-pity."

When Bao Luong was released in 1938, she married the male prison nurse who had cared for her as she suffered from maltreatment and malnutrition. As she had once explained to Nguyen Bao Toan, marriage was not compatible with revolution, and her own marriage put an end to her revolutionary career, for she believed in the traditional responsibilities of a wife and mother. Few who met her in old age could imagine that she had once been willing to go against accepted notions of female decorum for the sake of revolution and women's emancipation. She died only a few months before the two halves of the country were united as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, with her former mentor, Ton Duc Thang, as president. The woman who had endured torture so as not to betray her comrades took to her grave whatever regrets and remorse she might have felt. ▢

Hue-Tam Ho Tai is Young professor of Sino-Vietnamese history. Her biographical study of her aunt, Passion, Betrayal, and Revolution in Colonial Saigon: The Memoirs of Bao Luong (University of California Press), was published last spring.

MAIN IMAGE: COPYRIGHT FRANOM (ARCHIVES NATIONALES D'OUTRE-MER, FRANCE);
GOUVERNEMENT GÉNÉRAL DE L'INDOCHINE, SÛRETÉ, DOSSIER 66536; TWO SMALLER IMAGES COURTESY OF HUE-TAM HO TA



Ng. Trung Nguyet 198889
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Three images of Bao Luong: at right, Nguyen Trung Nguyet ("Faithful Moon") circa 1926, about a year before she left home; at left, in the early 1970s; and center, after her arrest in 1929.

Quotable Harvard

Selected by FRED SHAPIRO / Illustrations by TOM MOSSER

Though he edited both the Yale Book of Quotations and the Oxford Dictionary of American Legal Quotations and is an associate librarian and lecturer in legal research at Yale Law School, Fred Shapiro, J.D. '80, attributes his interest in quotations partly to experiences he had while at Harvard Law School. "Far from a model student," he neglected his studies to haunt the Widener stacks, where he stumbled upon a collection of old books on sports and games and became interested in tracing the origins of common pastimes. That enabled him to "antedate" the earliest uses of many sporting words as given in the Oxford English Dictionary, and he became a significant contributor to the dictionary's Supplement. A few decades later, he decided to apply the historical methods used by the OED to the compilation of a comprehensive quotation dictionary, having noted that existing collections, such as Bartlett's Familiar Quotations, and Oxford's own Dictionary of Quotations seemed to do little research into the first occurrences of sayings that lacked well-known starting-points. For his own collection, he used traditional methods but was also "lucky enough to be compiling amid an explosion of searchable historical text collections and online tools such as Google Books, ProQuest Historical Newspapers, Newspaperarchive, and Eighteenth Century Collections Online." As a result, he says, his Yale Book of Quotations was able to "revolutionize our knowledge of quotation origins."

Now, as a "token of gratitude to the University that has assembled all those great old books

in the Widener basement," he has assembled 25 quotations by Harvard alumni. At the editors' urging, he eschewed the most famous alumni soundbites—"Ask not what your country can do for you..." "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself," "Speak softly and carry a big stick," "Taxation without representation is tyranny," "Love means never having to say you're sorry"—and emblematic Harvardisms like "You can always tell a Harvard man, but you can't tell him much." He chose less familiar examples that seemed provocative, amusing, or otherwise striking.

"Some may find the list below revealing of my biases," he writes. "In particular, there is a tendency toward liberalism. In my own defense I note only that it is not easy to find quotations of a conservative nature by Harvard people. There are some—such as 'Any one may so arrange his affairs that his taxes shall be as low as possible...there is not even a patriotic duty to increase one's taxes,' from Learned Hand, LL.B. 1896, or 'States like those [Iraq, Iran, and North Korea] and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, aiming to threaten the peace of the world,' by David Frum, J.D. '87, in a speech written for George W. Bush, M.B.A. '75—but they are few and far between. I leave it to others to explain what historical and sociological factors may underlie a Crimson slant to the left, or whether there is some inherent correlation between political and quotational innovation in general." ~The Editors



What is your favorite quotation by a Harvard person, or about the University? Visit harvardmag.com/quotations to share your selection and see what other readers have submitted.



MARGARET ATWOOD

We may have democracy, or we may have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we cannot have both.

—Louis D. Brandeis, LL.B. 1877, quoted in *Labor*, October 14, 1941

There may be said to be two classes of people in the world: those who constantly divide the people of the world into two classes, and those who do not.

—Robert Benchley, A.B. 1912, *Of All Things* (1921)

Nobody dies from lack of sex. It's lack of love we die from.

—Margaret Atwood, A.M. '62, Litt.D. '04, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1986)

I must study Politicks and War that my sons may have liberty to study Mathematicks and Philosophy. My sons ought to study Mathematicks and Philosophy, Geography, natural History, Naval Architecture, navigation, Commerce, and Agriculture, in order to give their Children a right to study Painting, Poetry, Musick, Architecture, Statuary, Tapestry, and Porcelaine.

—John Adams, A.B. 1755, LL.D. 1781,
Letter to Abigail Adams, May 12, 1780

A memorandum is written not to inform the reader but to protect the writer.

—Dean Acheson, LL.B. '18,
quoted in the *Wall Street Journal*, September 8, 1977



GERTRUDE
STEIN

In the United States there is more space where nobody is than where anybody is. That is what makes America what it is.

—Gertrude Stein, A.B. 1898,
The Geographical History of America (1936)

Our inventions are wont to be pretty toys, which distract our attention from serious things.... We are in great haste to construct a magnetic telegraph from Maine to Texas, but Maine and Texas, it may be, have nothing important to communicate.

—Henry David Thoreau, A.B. 1837,
Walden (1854)

What we've got here is failure to communicate.

—Frank Pierson '46,
screenplay for *Cool Hand Luke* (1967)

Not even a Harvard School of Business can make greed into a science.

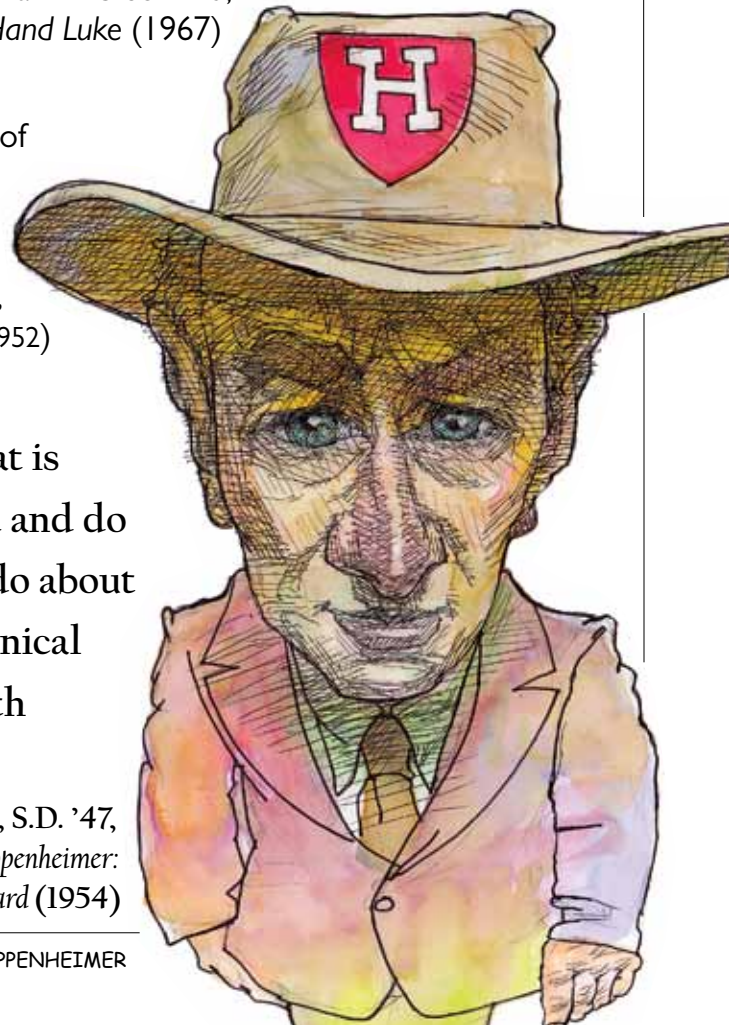
—W.E.B. Du Bois, A.B. 1890,
Ph.D. 1895,
In Battle for Peace (1952)

When you see something that is technically sweet, you go ahead and do it and you argue about what to do about it only after you have had your technical success. That is the way it was with the atomic bomb.

—J. Robert Oppenheimer '25, S.D. '47,
quoted in *In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer*:
USAEC Transcript of Hearing Before Personnel Security Board (1954)



FRANK
PIERSON



J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER



JOHN
UPDIKE

To say that war is madness is like saying that sex is madness:
true enough, from the standpoint of a stateless eunuch, but
merely a provocative epigram for those who must make their
arrangements in the world as given.

—John Updike '54, Litt.D. '92,
Self-Consciousness (1989)

Taxes are what we pay for civilized society.

—Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., A.B. 1861,
LL.B. 1866, LL.D. 1895,
*Compañía General de Tabacos de Filipinas v. Collector of
Internal Revenue* (dissenting opinion), 1927

In my youth...there were certain words
you couldn't say in front of a girl; now
you can say them, but you can't say "girl."

—Tom Lehrer '47, A.M. '47, G '66,
quoted in the *Washington Post*, January 3, 1982



TOM LEHRER

Meek young men grow up in libraries, believing
it their duty to accept the views, which
Cicero, which Locke, which Bacon, have
given, forgetful that Cicero, Locke, and
Bacon were only young men in libraries,
when they wrote these books.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson, A.B. 1821, LL.D. 1866,
The American Scholar (1837)

Go to where the silence is and say something.

—Amy Goodman '84, on accepting an award
for coverage of the 1991 massacre of Timorese by
Indonesian troops, quoted in the
Columbia Journalism Review, March/April 1994

Presidents of two
different oil companies.

—Bob Shrum, J.D. '68,
on the Republican Party's idea
of diversity on their ticket,
quoted in the
Los Angeles Times, July 27, 2000

Poetry is what is lost in
translation. It is also what is
lost in interpretation.

—Robert Frost,
class of 1901, Litt.D. '37,
quoted in Louis Untermeyer,
Robert Frost: A Backward Look (1964)



AMY GOODMAN

Writing is easy. Just put a piece of paper in
the typewriter and start bleeding.

—Thomas Wolfe, A.M. '22,
quoted in Gene Olson, *Sweet Agony* (1972)

What pornographic literature does is precisely to
drive a wedge between one's existence as a full
human being and one's existence as a sexual being.

—Susan Sontag, A.M. '57, Litt.D. '93,
"The Pornographic Imagination" (1967)

The king was pregnant.

—Ursula Le Guin '51,
The Left Hand of Darkness (1969)

What religion a man shall have is
a historical accident, quite as much
as what language he shall speak.

—George Santayana, A.B. 1886, Ph.D. 1889,
The Life of Reason (1905)

Summer afternoon—summer afternoon;
to me those have always been the two most
beautiful words in the English language.

—Henry James, Law School 1862-63, Litt.D. 1911,
quoted in Edith Wharton, *A Backward Glance* (1934)

Although the special manifestations of religion
may have been absurd (I mean its creeds
and theories), yet the life of it as a whole is
mankind's most important function.

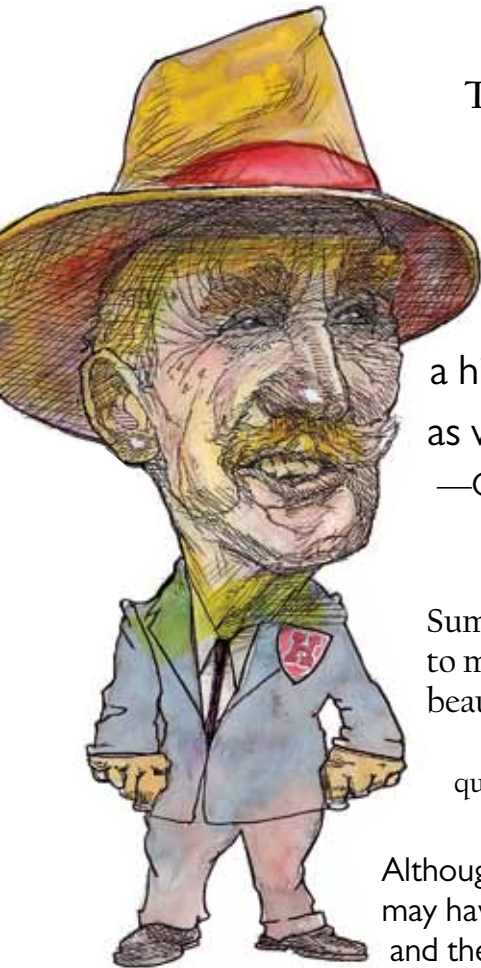
—William James, M.D. 1869, LL.D. 1903,
Letter to Frances Morse, April 13, 1900

A democracy—that is, a government of all the people,
by all the people, for all the people.

—Theodore Parker, Divinity School 1836,
speech at Anti-Slavery Convention, Boston, May 29, 1850

All the security
around the American
president is just to
make sure the man
who shoots him gets
caught.

—Norman Mailer '43,
quoted in the *Sunday
Telegraph*, March 4, 1990



GEORGE
SANTAYANA



THOMAS
WOLFE



Famous Comedian, “Dangerous” Playwright

Ubiquitous on film and TV, Wallace Shawn writes plays that pack the house—with 20.

by CRAIG LAMBERT

THOUGH INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED as a “character” actor in comedy roles, in real life Wallace Shawn ’65 acts deliberately, thoughtfully, and with a native New Yorker’s intensity. Both a playwright and stage actor, he has been one of the busiest performers in contemporary film and television, with no fewer than 135 credits since 1979, when he played Diane Keaton’s ex-husband in Woody Allen’s film *Manhattan* and was in Bob Fosse’s *All That Jazz*. The next year he appeared in Louis Malle’s *Atlantic City*, beginning a film relationship that would continue in *My Dinner with André* (1981) and last for the rest of the French *auteur*’s career. Shawn has worked with directors ranging from James Ivory (*The Bostonians*, 1984) to Rob Reiner (*The Princess Bride*, 1989).

He’s made scores of television appearances on programs ranging from *The Nanny* and *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* to *Sex and the City*, *Desperate Housewives*, *Family Guy*, *ER*, *The Daily Show*, and *Gossip Girl*.

Then there is his playwriting. Shawn does not take things lightly, tackling his projects with a seriousness that might inspire awe. He has written only five plays since *Marie and Bruce* (1979), which will be re-staged this March off-Broadway at the New Group’s Acorn Theatre on West 42nd Street with Marisa Tomei and Frank Whaley in the title roles. Shawn’s stage works include *Aunt Dan and Lemon* (1985), *The Fever* (1990), and *The Designated Mourner* (1996), which was also filmed with Mike Nichols and Miranda Richardson reprising the lead roles they took in the play. His only new play since *Designated Mourner* has been *Grasses of a Thousand Colors* (2008). Between plays, he usually takes a few years off or, he explains, “I would be repeating myself.”

Shawn wrote his first play and decided to get involved in theater in 1967. (“One of my favorite people growing up was very upset when I started writing plays,” he says. “She said, ‘Wallace, you would have made such a wonderful judge!’”) Though acting has become his livelihood, at the outset he wasn’t interested in a performing career. But he felt that as a playwright he should learn some-

thing about acting and so took nine months of classes at the HB Studio in Manhattan. “Technique, scene study, voice, movement, speech, and singing,” he recalls. “If I had known I would become a professional actor and make a living at it, I probably would have been ambitious—I would have learned fencing, gone to the gym, lost my speech defects. I’d have studied Shakespeare and today I’d be trying to get someone to let me play King Lear. I’ve acted more than an awful lot of people who went to drama school. But on the other hand, if someone today said, ‘I think you *should* play King Lear,’ I’d feel that I’ve never studied it and I don’t know how to.”

On the TV teen drama *Gossip Girl*, Shawn appears as the lawyer Cyrus Rose, the stepfather of one of the privileged Upper East Side private-schooled girls who anchor the series. “When they want me for an episode, I’m overjoyed, jumping for joy,” Shawn says. “I very much enjoy being an actor—I love it. If the project is not fun, it’s less fun. But I’ve been very lucky. When I was more popular I had the opportunity to turn down more things, the ones that were sickening. Now, I’m not offered much, and not offered much that is sickening. I’m a known quantity in some ways and people don’t imagine me in certain things. What comes easiest to me is natural comedy, so I did some wonderful sitcoms: the *Cosby Show*, *Murphy*

Brown, Taxi—that suited me very well. *Clueless*—the movie and a year of TV episodes—I think I did a pretty good job in all of those.”

THOUGH SHAWN’S COMEDIC ACTING has made his face familiar to millions, his plays are much less well known. They aren’t light comedies, but disturbing works that challenge audiences, and he considers them his most important creations. In a 2009 review of *Grasses of a Thousand Colors*, the *New Yorker*’s theater critic, John Lahr, called Shawn “...a singular American talent who had been marginalized in his own country. In the United States, Shawn, as a playwright, is a relatively unknown quantity without an artistic home; in England, his works, which prey on both consciousness and conscience, are published under the rubric of ‘contemporary classics.’”

André Gregory ’56, the theater director, actor, and playwright who has been Shawn’s friend as well as professional collaborator ever since they first met in 1970 (when the *New Yorker* writer Renata Adler, A.M. ’66, a mutual friend, arranged for them to meet), has directed him in two of Shawn’s own plays and in Chekhov’s *Uncle Vanya*. Gregory

calls him “our very finest playwright and one of our greatest character actors. I do not know, except for Molière, of a great playwright who is also a great actor.” When Gregory was in London to direct *Grasses of a Thousand Colors*, British critics and theater people told him that they regarded Harold Pinter, Arthur Miller, Caryl Churchill, and Wallace Shawn as the four greatest contemporary playwrights working in English. “There’s always a strong frightening element in his plays, about the shape of things to come,” Gregory says. “*The Designated Mourner* was about someone like George W. Bush and his administration, although they weren’t here yet. *Grasses* is about the destruction of the environment. Wally has a clarity about whatever the dangers are that are coming.”

Playwright and author Robert Brustein, founding director of the American Repertory Theater and senior research fellow at

Harvard, agrees that Shawn has written some of the best plays in America, and calls *Marie and Bruce* his masterpiece, but notes that Shawn “doesn’t jump to mind when you think of our 10 best playwrights” because each one of his plays is different from the others. “He’s elusive,” Brustein says. “It’s so hard to identify him—he hasn’t developed his own distinctive and unique style. I don’t know why he isn’t more respected, because his work is as intelligent as anything being written today.”

For Frank Whaley, a seasoned stage, film, and television actor who will play Bruce in *Marie and Bruce* this spring, Shawn “is overlooked in general, and it’s completely unfair. There’s nobody like him. He talks about things that are usually shied away from—in *Marie and Bruce*, the way people really feel about each other, the gritty truth, the gnawing facts. Nobody else writes

that way, and the language is really juicy. There are 100 other people who write like David Mamet, but no one else writes like Wally.” Whaley feels that *Marie and Bruce* “is dangerous for an actor. It’s a huge challenge. These are not what one would think of as likable characters, and they are in the death throes of their marriage. It’s something you

can jump into and not know what you’re going to find when you hit the pool; for an actor, that’s hard to come by these days.” Gregory calls *Marie and Bruce* “one of the most moving and harrowing plays about the relationships between men and women. I’d compare it to Bergman’s *Scenes from a Marriage*.”

Shawn himself suggests that the quality of his audience matters more than its size. “I have a little coterie, mostly people I know personally, whom I have persuaded to look to me in the same way that society as a whole would look to Philip Roth or David Mamet, or any other respected author,” he says. “To me, these people are ‘the public,’ and they actually *are* eagerly awaiting my next work, although their friends and loved ones may laugh at them for that, and find it rather sad that they follow a false prophet.” He notes that “there’s a very large gap between my arrogance and the world’s opinion of my work.”

Gregory calls him “Our very finest playwright and one of our greatest character actors. I do not know, except for Molière, of a great playwright who is also a great actor.”



Shawn performing in his play *Grasses of a Thousand Colors* in London in 2009, with actresses Emily McDonnell, Miranda Richardson, and Jennifer Tilly

Still, consider the dedication embedded in a marathon project Shawn and Gregory began in the late 1990s. For 13 years now, they, with other players, have been rehearsing a new version of Henrik Ibsen's *The Master Builder*, using Shawn's adaptation of Ibsen's script. They have yet to perform it in public, though that may happen sometime this year. "André and I both like to take scripts [like *The Master Builder*] that are not written in a naturalistic style, and make them seem as believable as kitchen-sink realism," Shawn explains. "That's an exciting challenge."

"In a play, there's a certain amount of dog work—physical labor—in delivering your performance to an audience," he continues. "There's the performance, and then there is the 'UPS' aspect of *delivering* the performance. In a film there's just the performance."

I'm a lazy person and don't particularly enjoy the UPS aspect, so in general, I'd rather be in a movie or on TV. But the stuff I have done with André is in a completely different category; the UPS aspect is just not there."

Gregory and Shawn strive to create a theatrical ambiance that feels to the audience like unmediated reality. "Movies are called a realistic medium, but you are not really looking at people, you're looking at a very specific selection of shots," Shawn explains. "Somebody else is telling you where to look—and not just suggesting it, but *enforcing* it. A play can be much more engrossing and exciting: you can actually see people changing in front of your eyes. Theater is potentially an incredibly thrilling medium—as close as you can come to being able to watch life. If we were, say, having dinner in a restaurant, it would be impolite—unthinkable, really—for me to stare at you in the focused, possibly even cold way I can stare at a person in a play. And I can't stare at *myself* because it is impossible. I couldn't watch the scenes that happened in my family between me and my brother and my parents, because I was in the scene. But when I go to *A View from the Bridge*, I can watch that family and observe them very closely in a way that I wish I could have done with my family, but couldn't."

The collaborations of Shawn and Gregory are different from almost any play you are likely to see in a large theater. Both men are drawn to "a sort of very small-scale hyperrealism in acting," Shawn says. "We share an interest in an indefensible and somewhat outrageous form of artistic activity: theater in which the style of acting is more like film acting." He elaborates: "In a large theater, the actors must either have microphones or 'project' their voices. Now, there are a lot of people who will tell you that actors who have been trained properly can be heard in the back row, without shouting the lines. And I concede that there

are certain individual actors who can do that unbelievable thing. I'm just going to say that when I go to the theater, in most cases it sounds like they're shouting, so I can't take the characters too seriously. I grew up on movies and television [where actors speak in normal tones]—and I can't believe [theater] is real life, because in real life, people are not 'projecting' their voices, much less shouting. The type of theater we do really can't be done for a big audience. And you have to admit, it can't pay for itself. It can't be seen by thousands and thousands of people because there's a limit to how many times you can perform. So it's sort of indefensible, but if you happen to see it, you might admire it."

For their play *Vanya on 42nd Street*, Shawn and Gregory spent many months, spread over three years in the early 1990s, rehears-

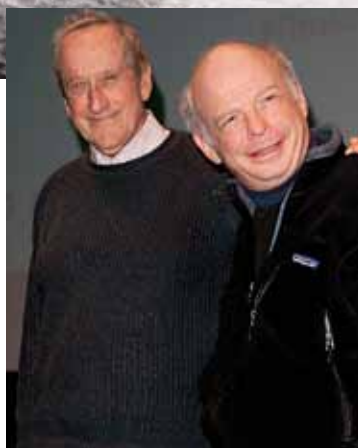
ing Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*, mostly in rented lofts; they eventually performed the play in an abandoned, run-down theater on 42nd Street in Manhattan. "We never intended to do it onstage," Shawn says. "Well, we *did* do it, but only for 20 people at a time. We acted the way we would have if there

was a camera there." And eventually there was. As his final cinematic work, Louis Malle directed *Vanya on 42nd Street* (1994), a film of the theatrical production that Gregory directed; the screenplay was credited to Chekhov and David Mamet, with Shawn in the title role. "That's a performance of a different order from all of Wally's other performances," says screenwriter and lyricist Jacob Brackman '65, a friend of Shawn's since college. "His normal self-consciousness has completely receded and he becomes the character, the way actors are supposed to. I told Wally this, and he said, 'Louis tricked me.'"

One of Shawn's best-known turns is in *My Dinner with André*, in which he and Gregory play characters based on themselves. The movie memorably captures the two men's relationship on celluloid, distilled in an exhilarating 90-minute dialogue conducted over a meal, ranging across topics including experimental theater, the role of art in the world, the somnambulism of American life, mysticism and spirituality. "We decided to do a film that would be talking heads, based on ourselves," Shawn recalls. "The jumping-off point would be André's years of self-exploration and my complicated reactions to that. So we met with a tape recorder a few times a week for several months. We thought perhaps we could do a TV film, and had a grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting—which was quite artistically adventurous at that time—to transcribe those conversations. The script took off from those transcripts and we memorized it and rehearsed it for many months. Before



JOYCE FRAVIA/CORBIS OUTLINE



DARIO CANTATORE/GETTY IMAGES

Top: Director Louis Malle, Shawn, and actress Julianne Moore on the set of the film *Vanya on 42nd Street*, in 1993. Above: André Gregory and Shawn at a screening of their conversational film *My Dinner with André* at Lincoln Center in 2010

the shooting we did three weeks of performances for audiences of 60 at the Royal Court Theatre in London. We tried to fool you, to make it look spontaneous. As with *Uncle Vanya*, all of that rehearsal allows you to achieve a certain spontaneity. It produces a type of acting I like to see. It feels natural. I don't like to see actors struggling. I like to feel that it is easy, and to see actors not tense, but relaxed."

"YOU'RE NOT AWARE of the unusual characteristics of your childhood until it's over and you can look back on it," Shawn says. He grew up on Manhattan's Upper East Side, the firstborn child of William Shawn, editor of the *New Yorker* magazine from 1952 until 1987. His brother, Allen Shawn '70, is a composer based at Bennington College; the two have collaborated on an opera. (Allen's twin sister, Mary, diagnosed with both autism and mental retardation, has been institutionalized since age eight; his new book, *Twin: A Memoir*, tells that family story and explores several issues it raises.)

William Shawn, a man of delicate sensibilities, became squeamish even at the mention of bodily functions, as Allen Shawn writes in his 2007 book, *Wish I Could Be There: Notes from a Phobic Life*. "Seeing one of Wally's early plays, like *Our Late Night* [1975], performed in the round with William Shawn seated in the front row, had Oedipal overtones," says Brackman. "Mr. Shawn was being subjected to this extreme material—like a three-page monologue on masturbation, the kinds of things that would never appear in his *New Yorker*. At the same time, he was being subjected to the scrutiny of his colleagues and subordinates at his son's premiere. It must have been an ordeal for him."

"I was raised very, very gently," Shawn says. "My parents did not believe in toughening up children, exposing them to the brutal reality of life. The brutal realities of life have been a tremendous shock to me. Obviously, I am not a mature adult. I have the mind of an adolescent—in my mind I am still 15 years old and trying to figure out what to do—and I am still shocked that things are rougher out there than they were in our living room."

A signal event took place at pubescence. "I went away to camp at age 13," he says. "I was so shocked to find that there were brutal people out there. I had never before encountered an adult who swore or used bad language. I thought this was a gallery of the most grotesque criminals gathered in a nightmarish hell—but

they were regular folks! One day, one of the boys in my cabin left a can of soda pop lying around and when it came time for inspection, our cabin was marked down for it. The counselor in charge, an adult, instructed us to go and beat up that boy who had left the soda can out! I couldn't believe such a thing could occur

on planet Earth—and then it turned out it was the norm! I don't think I've recovered from it still—I'm walking around every day saying, 'Is this really true? Is it really like this?'" John Lahr's review of *Grasses* quotes a powerful moment from *The Fever*: "What do

you think a human being is? A human being happens to be an unprotected little wriggling creature...without a shell or a hide or even any fur, just thrown out onto the earth like an eye that's been pulled from its socket, like a shucked oyster that's trying to crawl along the ground. We need to build our own shells."

Shawn attended Manhattan's Dalton School, which at that time was "very progressive, bohemian." Progressive education continued at the Putney School in Vermont; being in the country was another shock for the New York boy, but Shawn fell "ecstatically in love with the landscape" and liked Putney's coed atmosphere ("I've never been happy in an all-male atmosphere and don't really like to be with more than two men if no women are present. Things degenerate.") and its practice of having students do farm work, including chores like mucking out the stable.

His father, who dropped out of the University of Michigan after one year, "had a very, very romantic view of Harvard,"

"I'm happy to say that those were the worst years of my life. They say that old age is no fun, so something worse than Harvard may be looming in my future."

Wallace explains. The elder Shawn imagined Harvard to be like "ancient Greece...a place of learning where people selflessly did quiet scholarly work in this rustic, leafy landscape." Wally arrived in Cambridge in 1961 as a devotee of John F. Kennedy '40, filled with idealistic ambition to serve humanity, but on his first day in the Yard was rudely awakened by the *Crimson's Conf Guide* to Harvard courses. "It mocked the learned scholars and openly derided scholarship in favor of taking courses that would be easy to pass—if you had to work hard, that was a bad thing rather than a good thing," he recalls. "And so many of the students seemed to be athletically minded young men who scorned the 'eggheads'—I was completely nonathletic myself. The way

the boys talked about women was utterly flabbergasting to a student from Putney, which was founded by a very radical woman, Carmelita Hinton. It was as shocking as going back to a plantation where slavery was practiced. I'm happy to say that those were the worst years of my life; all subsequent years have been better. They say that old age is no fun, so something worse than Harvard may be looming in my future."

Shawn concentrated in history, played violin in the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra, lived in Kirkland House with five roommates, and can recall going on only one date as an undergraduate. (Several years after college, he settled down with the fiction writer Deborah Eisenberg, who has sometimes acted in his plays; they have lived together since 1972, and have no children.) "I was a very, very unhappy recluse," he says. "I stayed in my room and read books." His history honors thesis, which took the then-innovative approach of writing a biography of an ordinary person of the early twentieth century, scored with one reader but got thumbs down from two others, one of whom wrote, "This isn't history, it is a little vignette or a *New Yorker* profile."

Nonetheless, he did attend his twenty-fifth class reunion despite a "Pavlovian response" to "terrible memories" in Cambridge—in much the same way, Shawn says, that he would be upset "if I visited the Pentagon. There are (please turn to page 65)



Visit harvardmag.com/ extras for links to Wallace Shawn film clips and interviews.

JOHN HARVARD'S JOURNAL



**Steven E.
Hyman**

Back to the Lab Bench

STEVEN E. HYMAN, M.D. '80, a neurobiologist who has served as University provost since 2001, announced in December that he would relinquish the post at the

end of the academic year. The office was created in its modern Harvard form under President Neil L. Rudenstine in 1992; Hyman's decade of service makes him the longevity champion, and gave him the opportunity to define the position, now at

the center of the University's efforts to facilitate collaborative, interdisciplinary research and teaching. Hyman plans to take a sabbatical year at the Broad Institute, the Harvard-MIT genomics center—he is a member of the Harvard Medical School (HMS) faculty—to explore returning to active science, and to create a course for undergraduates on neuroscience, ethics, policy, and law. The search for a new provost began in January (see page 40).

"I have deeply valued my partnership with Steve," said President Drew Faust in a statement as part of the news release

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about Hyman's decision. "He has spurred fresh thinking and important initiatives in areas ranging from the sciences to the humanities, from the museums to the libraries....In all of these areas and more, he has approached his role with intelligence, passion, and wit, and with a devotion to the highest academic standards."

Early in his career, Hyman was a professor of psychiatry at HMS and served as the first faculty director of the University's Mind, Brain, and Behavior Initiative. He was subsequently appointed director of the National Institute of Mental Health (1996-2001); during that initial period of administrative service, he maintained a laboratory and continued to publish scientific papers (activities he has had to put aside during his decade as provost). The interfaculty initiative served as a useful introduction to Harvard's interdisciplinary, multischool programs and projects—a principal focus for his work as provost. Of late, he has been associated with such University-wide initiatives as the effort to rethink the libraries' operations and administrative organization (for budgetary reasons and to adapt to digital technolo-

gies); in early December, he was named to chair the new board of directors for the Harvard library system. (For more on the libraries, see "Harvard Library's First Director," page 41.)

IN A CONVERSATION in his Massachusetts Hall office on December 14, Hyman described his decision to step down as he entered "the tenth year of a five-year commitment" in personal terms. He indicated to Faust last July, he said, that he thought this should be his last year as provost. During his service, he said, "I have mostly stayed out of searches for other positions outside of Harvard," and had arrived at the decision that he did not want another administrative position, at least for the near term. "I fell down the administrative well rather early, in mid career" as a scientist, he said. During his sabbatical year at the Broad, he said, he hoped to "see what I can do effectively in the sciences" after a long layoff from the laboratory bench; he conceded, smiling, "I may not be rehabilitatable."

The time also seemed suitable, he continued, because "You shouldn't walk away

from something in bad times," and the University has emerged from its recent financial challenges with "a very effective president who is in command and a very strong staff—including the vice presidents and certainly with the addition of [executive vice president] Katie Lapp. And we have a remarkably strong cadre of deans." Later he noted that with a large University capital campaign in the offing, "President Faust deserves in whoever will be provost someone who will serve for the duration, in mint condition."

When he became provost, Hyman recalled, the office was new at Harvard and consisted of a "collection of projects," not yet resembling the post of chief academic officer that the title signals at other research universities. Today, he said, it is "well on its way to becoming a modern research university provost's office, but with a Harvard flavor." That Crimson coloring strongly reflects the traditional decentralization of the University's schools. They retain their autonomy, and the provost's office has strong, direct interactions with each, Hyman said, but "the most important thing we do is to work tirelessly across schools and across disciplines."

There is a "lot of life left in the disciplines, and lots of rigor," he added—but it would be curious if inquiry today aligned entirely with departmental and professional-school boundaries established a century ago. Thus the provost's office supports the departments and schools (for instance, through University-wide efforts to encourage faculty diversity, to support international research and learning, and to oversee research—all of these now directed by vice provosts), but seeks "not to allow them to become limiting intellectual silos. It falls to the provost's office to facilitate bottom-up efforts at boundary crossing." Some 30 interdisciplinary efforts now receive funding.

In his letter to the community announcing his decision, Hyman wrote, "The world well recognizes Harvard's overall academic strength, but less well understood is the collaborative spirit of our faculty members and students and their desire to pursue important intellectual and practical problems wherever they lead—often across the boundaries of disciplines or of individual schools."

As examples, he cited the first inter-school department (Stem Cell and Regen-

Wanted: Corporation Members, Provost

In the wake of the Harvard Corporation's early December decision to increase its membership from seven—the President, Treasurer, and five Fellows—to 13 (see "The Corporation's 360-Year Tune-Up," January-February, page 43), nominations for candidates to serve on the senior governing board are now being sought. An early-January announcement from President Drew Faust and Senior Fellow Robert D. Reischauer solicited ideas and names from the Harvard community at large; they may be submitted to corporationsearch@harvard.edu or by mail to Corporation Search Committee, Harvard University, Loeb House, 17 Quincy Street, Cambridge 02138; all communications will be held in confidence.

Consistent with the Corporation's earlier steps to include members of the Board of Overseers in its review of its governance structure and procedures, the search for new Corporation members will include three Overseers: Joshua Boger, Ph.D. '79, founder and

former CEO of Vertex Pharmaceuticals and chair of the Harvard Medical School Board of Fellows; Diana Nelson '84, director of the Carlson Companies and former co-chair of the Harvard College Fund; and Robert Shapiro '72, J.D. '78, a partner at Ropes & Gray, past president of both the Harvard Alumni Association and the Harvard Law School Association. (Shapiro also served on the governance-review committee.)

Faust and Reischauer reiterated their earlier expectation that the Corporation's expanded membership would be put in place within the next two to three years.

A week later, Faust announced the appointment of a faculty advisory committee to help her search for a successor to Provost Steven E. Hyman. Comments from the wider Harvard community on the provost's role and nominations of candidates may be sent in confidence to provostsearch@harvard.edu or by letter addressed to her at Massachusetts Hall, Harvard University, Cambridge 02138.

Harvard Library's First Director

Helen Shenton, an experienced innovator from the British Library who was deputy director of the Harvard University Library this past year, became executive director of the new, consolidated Harvard Library in mid January. "What we will be doing," she said in an interview at Wadsworth House, "is creating something new...the concept of *one* Harvard library." Recalling visits to Harvard's 73 libraries when she first arrived at the University a year ago, she said she noted "a lot of enthusiasm" for the idea among library staff, who "want to work together in better ways" but have struggled to do so across "false boundaries." Patrons, she added, also seek simple ways to access *all* of the collections once they are in a library or logged in to the system.

Under a management structure more than a year in the making (as part of a provost-initiated review of Harvard's libraries), Shenton will report to and work with a new library board that has been given "strategic and decision-making authority for the whole of the Harvard Library. That's very radical," she said, when compared to the coordinated decentralization of the past. But during a "revolutionary time" in which people are changing how they access and use information, she explained, "We have got to not only respond, but be ahead of it, for the good of pedagogy and learning and research."

Shenton credited a yearlong effort by the Library Implementation Workgroup (chaired by Divinity School professor of philosophy and theology David Lamberth) for gathering tremendously useful information about the entire library system, "which had never been looked at as a whole." In order to effect necessary changes, she has identified several "strands of work" that, as of late January, were being pulled into a transition plan—involving issues of governance, funding, information technology, organization, and use of space—under the supervision of provost Steven E. Hyman and executive vice president Katie



Helen Shenton

Lapp. Shenton, who focused on collection care at the British Library during an analogous period of consolidation, reiterated that "We must do this for the benefit of our patrons. It is for now, but it is also very much for the future."

She emphasized that even as the planning continues, local decisions will remain important. "We need to balance shared services with the best of the local," she said, "because the libraries have incredibly knowledgeable, specialized staff who work extremely closely with academic programs and with faculty, and know their subjects well. We must keep that whilst moving to some element of harmonization."

Shenton has wasted no time in taking action, announcing in late January that Harvard would be joining Borrow Direct, an interlibrary loan program among the Ivy League universities that gives users access to a catalog of 50 million items for delivery in just four to five business days. "Borrow Direct," she explained, "strongly reflects the aspirations that guide the new Harvard Library."

erative Biology, under the Harvard Stem Cell Institute); the interdisciplinary Wyss Institute for Biologically Inspired Engineering (linking HMS, affiliated hospitals, the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, and Faculty of Arts and Sciences departments such as chemistry and physics); and an increasingly University-wide Humanities Center, building on humanities efforts in each school. (Hyman's own career is an archetype of boundary-crossing. A 1974 Yale graduate in philosophy and the humanities, he then journeyed to the University of Cambridge as a Mellon Fellow in the philosophy of science, earning B.A. and M.A. de-

grees, before turning to medicine.) These collaborations, he said, are "what I am proudest of."

Hyman also oversees affiliated cultural institutions, ranging from the museums to the American Repertory Theater (ART)—a responsibility not common to provosts elsewhere. He cited with enthusiasm the reconstruction of the Fogg Art Museum, now under way, to "create a true teaching museum," and the activities of the ART; both institutions' directors were appointed through searches under Hyman.

Finally, he said, "The greatest privilege for me is chairing committees related to faculty promotion." Although decisions on

tenure ultimately rest with the president, the provost now runs "somewhat more than half" of the review committees, he said—in the heady days before the recent economic difficulties, one per week, across all the faculties. He marveled at "what you can learn" as provost from engaging with the faculty members through those reviews.

LOOKING AHEAD, Hyman said his most important piece of unfinished business is ensuring that the restructuring of the library system proceeds and gains momentum. The new University library board has been appointed, an executive direc-

tor named, and work will continue to implement the recommendations arrived at during the past year of reviews of the library system's operations and collecting needs and practices.

What was most fun about the position? First, Hyman said, "working with some remarkably talented and dedicated

colleagues who care about institution-building" and about securing the future of the University. Second, he said, defying external views of Harvard as "terminally siloed and tied down like Gulliver," when instead the University is creating new interdisciplinary units—"that feels really, really good." And third, he said, is an op-

portunity not formally part of the job: teaching "breathtaking" undergraduates. He cited his freshman seminars, a neurobiology lecture course, and, more recently, a neurobiology junior tutorial. Those experiences underlie his plan to develop a new neurobiology course for the College's General Education curriculum.

Tackling Teaching and Learning

FOR THE THIRD TIME in a decade, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) is addressing its educational mission. During the December 7 faculty meeting, dean Michael D. Smith talked at length about "teaching and learning," initiating both a website dedicated to the subject (www.fas.harvard.edu/home/content/teaching-and-learning) and what he hopes will be discussions intended to "identify how best to support pedagogical and curricular excellence today and for the future."

Smith drew on the work of the Task Force on Teaching and Career Development, a 2006-2007 effort during the interim presidency of Derek C. Bok and deanship of Jeremy R. Knowles, the result of which was the faculty's "compact on teaching and learning" (see "Toward Top-

Tier Teaching," March-April 2007, page 63). The task force succeeded the earlier review of the undergraduate curriculum. That extended review had led to change in course *content*, as the Core curriculum was succeeded by the new General Education offerings and course requirements for students. But it focused little on *pedagogy* per se, beyond advocating smaller section sizes and alternative classroom layouts to accommodate new teaching styles.

Smith's decision to highlight teaching and learning anew illustrates both the importance of the subject and the difficulty of defining what that means, measuring performance, and effecting improvements. His starting point—"Harvard is an institution of truly great teachers"—set a high standard for what he described as the progress the faculty had made since the compact was promulgated, and for its aspirations. He placed those aims in two larger con-

texts. The first is as an FAS academic priority in the forthcoming University capital campaign (alongside House renewal, see page 44, and goals such as financial aid and scholarly initiatives). The second is the national debate over the effectiveness of higher education—as for-profit schools expand, public universities' budgets shrink, and parents and students examine the costs and benefits of a wide range of private institutions. "Overall," Smith told colleagues, "my goal is to establish in the public consciousness our position as an undisputed leader in pedagogical and curricular excellence in America today."

IN A recent conversation, Theda Skocpol, who chaired the 2006-2007 task force, said that the compact aimed to recast the prevailing view of teaching as an essentially private, individual activity: an art for which one had or lacked the knack. Instead, said the Thomas professor of government and sociology, the compact's premise is that teaching, like scholarship, can advance through peer review, inquiry into effective instruction and learning, and incentives—all aimed at promoting evaluation and continuous improvement. Skocpol was then dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS), a post affording perspective on graduate education, the training of teaching fellows for their significant role in undergraduate classes, and her own College courses.

During a late-January interview, Smith reviewed progress in implementing the compact. Faculty members' annual self-reports on their activities now request much more detailed accounts not only of their research, but also of their teaching, mentoring and advising, and pedagogical innovation. Deans and department chairs use those data in setting salaries, he said. In making faculty appointments and promotions, Smith said, "We ask a *lot* more" about teaching, drawing on the *Q Guide* (student course critiques) and depart-

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Nabokov's Butterfly Theory

The Russian author had a passion for butterflies; new findings from Harvard biologist Naomi Pierce confirm his theory about the winged creatures' migration and evolution.
harvardmag.com/nabokov-butterflies

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mental evaluations of lecture, seminar, and graduate-student teaching. Dossiers accompanying tenure proposals now include a “teaching statement” so candidates’ work as educators can be assessed. Finally, he said, in a few departments, “peer support” was under way: a first step toward the compact’s recommendation that faculty members invite colleagues to their classes to monitor, evaluate, discuss, and learn from effective teaching techniques, or to correct deficiencies.

The effort is far from systematic to date: Smith characterized the measures overall as “lots of little things,” all of which need to be pursued to effect broad improvements in teaching.

Along the way, all sorts of complicated issues arise. A basic one is the proper expectation for teaching in a research university. During the review of the undergraduate curriculum, then-FAS dean William C. Kirby wrote, in his 2005 annual letter, “We can equal the best small colleges in teaching and inspiration.”

There are no exact metrics for determining such rankings: the best, crude measure is students’ response to “satisfaction” surveys—but those available give the nod to learning contexts where students have most contact with faculty members, and where professors’ obligations are most focused on teaching. Harvard’s senior survey, reported recently in the *Crimson*, generally shows greater satisfaction in smaller concentrations, with smaller classes, than in the very largest ones, with greater reliance on large lectures. The 31-member Consortium on Financing Higher Education surveys student satisfaction with academic experiences at select, private schools (including Harvard and the other Ivies). The results are confidential, but those who have seen them say liberal-arts colleges score higher than universities, and institutions like Princeton—with lesser commitments to professional schools, and a culture focused on undergraduate teaching—rank higher than peers. Although reliable data are scarce, much of the teaching in FAS is conducted by people other than tenured or tenure-track faculty: a 2010 study of “non-ladder” appointees indicates that nearly 50 percent of arts and humanities enrollments were taught by lecturers, preceptors, and others (for instance, in language classes, Expository Writing, and many tu-

HARVARD PORTRAIT



Gregory N. Connolly

Surprisingly, the director of the Center for Global Tobacco Control at the Harvard School of Public Health was once a smoker himself. Working with emphysema patients at Boston’s Carney Hospital inspired him to quit. He has since taken up healthier hobbies—he and his wife, Susan, have a 70-acre farm in Vermont and, he says, “I could cut wood all day long”—but he’s devoted his career to freeing others from nicotine addiction. His work has taken him all over the world to advise countries on curbing smoking. Although that is his long-term goal, he admits that places like Greece and Armenia, with some of the globe’s highest smoking rates, are “nirvana” for researchers. (In Massachusetts, where only 14 percent of people report smoking daily, doing research “is really, really hard. We just don’t have the subjects.”) Connolly has led studies in settings from pubs (measuring airborne particles pre- and post-smoking ban) to playgrounds (using GPS data to show that tobacco companies were targeting children with billboards). He has lectured to Major League Baseball players about the dangers of smokeless tobacco—earning the nickname “Dr. Chew” from one team. He spent 17 years with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, overseeing a comprehensive tobacco-control campaign, including ads that became a national and international model, and leaving just before the state enacted its 2004 ban on smoking in public places. He soon ran afoul of the ban in his new role as professor of the practice of public health: to allow smoking in his lab, so he could study new theories of nicotine addiction, he recalls, “We were told, ‘You’re breaking state law.’ We had to get an exemption.”



Visit harvardmag.com/extras to see anti-smoking ads that aired in Massachusetts and Armenia.

torials)—and these figures may *understate* the actual role of teaching fellows and assistants.

Should that be otherwise? Skocpol points out that there are all kinds of teaching excellence—that Harvard should *not* aspire to emulate a Williams or an Amherst, and that some of the classes students like most are large, successful lectures. FAS faculty members are explicitly charged with leadership in research, graduate education, developing doctoral students' teaching skills, *and* undergraduate teaching. Diker-Tishman professor of sociology Christopher Winship, who

thinks a great deal about teaching, says that he envisions his role in a course more as a producer—creating a framework for the subject, assembling an array of guest speakers and other sources of information, and marshaling technology—and only secondarily as a performer at the front of the class. And Michael S. McPherson, speaking bluntly, puts the matter this way: “Good undergraduate education is not Harvard’s most important product,” compared to its role in fostering world-changing ideas. McPherson—former professor of higher-education economics and dean at Williams, president of Macalester College,

and now president of the Spencer Foundation, a leading supporter of education research—has a particularly broad perspective on just these issues (and helped organize a Harvard forum on innovation in higher education; see “A Collage of Colleges,” January-February 2006, page 57).

That said, FAS can find plenty of opportunities to challenge itself. At Harvard Business School, the compact task force noted, junior faculty members’ teaching is rigorously evaluated by senior colleagues, through classroom observation and follow-up reviews—a prerequisite for tenure. Throughout the professional schools

Prototyping House Renewal

Renovation of the 12 undergraduate Houses—likely the College’s highest physical priority, and its most costly and logistically complex—will advance under a plan, announced in mid January by Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) dean Michael D. Smith, to empty and redo “Old Quincy,” one part of the Quincy House complex, at the corner of Plympton and Mill streets.

During the test project, which is expected to require 15 months—a full academic year and the summers before and after, beginning in June 2012—180 students will reside in swing spaces from the Harvard Real Estate inventory of nearby properties.

According to the announcement, “Old Quincy House, about half the size of most of the neo-Georgian Houses and without its own dining hall or master’s residence, provides a valuable opportunity to test design concepts, while limiting disruption of the House community.” Preliminary plans have been drafted by the architectural firm KieranTimberlake (whose many higher-education assignments include the recent renovations of six undergraduate residences at Yale); they will now be reviewed with House constituencies and made final. Then, according to the announcement, Smith expects to present a funding plan for the work to the Corporation this fall, and to proceed to construction in mid 2012.

In a briefing for the faculty last October, Smith identified House renewal as his principal building objective for a University capital campaign (see “Time to ‘Change the Channel,’” November-December 2010, page 63). He called the Houses the “cornerstone” of the undergraduate experience, and stressed that they needed to be reconstructed to make them fit for twenty-first century education and life.

While physical and programmatic planning for House renewal has continued, and now may proceed to this pilot project, full construction is not yet scheduled. The new announcement makes clear that system-wide House renewal would be tied directly to the availability of funding. The dean said in the release:



In preparation for this project, we have identified a funding plan composed of a mix of University investment and donor support. The upcoming University campaign will be critical to our ability to enlist the donor support we would need to launch the larger project of renewing all the Houses. As was true when the Houses were built, this project will require philanthropy on a transformational scale.

The full construction program—expected to cost more than \$1 billion during an extended period in which undergraduates would have to be successively relocated—has been postponed in the wake of the financial and market reverses in 2008 that reduced the value of the endowment and caused budget cuts to be instituted throughout FAS and the University. Because FAS took on considerable debt to build large science laboratories during the middle of the last decade, reducing its financial flexibility today, Smith has sworn off further substantial borrowing for capital projects; hence the need to raise funds for this long-anticipated undertaking.

Old Quincy (originally Mather Hall) was erected as an addition to Leverett House. The U-shaped, Georgian Revival structure, built in 1930, was transferred to Quincy House when its larger, modern companion building was constructed in 1958.

HARVARD MAGAZINE

(and in GSAS), faculty members or teaching appointees are expected to do their own teaching and grading of students' work (unlike the delegation of grading to teaching fellows in many College courses, and the greater reliance on ancillary appointees for much teaching). And at institutions like Williams and Macalester, McPherson says, student evaluations of each teacher precede consideration for tenure; the process, he says, is "taken very seriously" by students and faculty alike. Some of these processes may be useful for FAS, others not. As Smith observed, the faculty will have to move forward with the steps its members endorse.

Even within the teaching-oriented elite colleges, McPherson says, it is "not common" to find systematic efforts to enhance teaching. In the annual report on his interim presidency, Derek Bok (who had recently addressed teaching and learning in his book *Our Underachieving Colleges*) noted professors' interest in new courses and other innovations but observed, "Unfortunately, faculties show much less initiative when it comes to seizing chances to adopt more effective teaching methods or to look for other ways to enhance student learning"—for instance, by embracing "active, problem-based instruction." (See "Taking Teaching Seriously," November-December 2006, page 60, and Bok's report at harvardmag.com/bok-report).

Of course, there are individual champions of innovative teaching. Cabot professor of biology Richard M. Losick, who is also head tutor in molecular and cellular biology, has been funded by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) to enhance science education. He and colleagues have revised the introductory life-sciences course; pioneered ways to illustrate problems and principles with graphics and animated tools; and paired entering students from relatively less strong secondary schools with faculty members for shared research, cementing the undergraduates' interest in studying science to a remarkable degree (see "The Excitement of Science," July-August 2006, page 56).

In "Changing the Culture of Science Education at Research Universities" (*Science*, January 14), Losick and fellow HHMI professors wrote about overcoming the valorization of research at the expense of

Yesterday's News

From the pages of the *Harvard Alumni Bulletin* and *Harvard Magazine*

1911 Harvard College dean Byron S. Hurlbut notes in his annual report that students in the past year averaged more than 30 class absences apiece. The *Bulletin's* editors remark that all colleges contain students too stupid to gain anything near a perfect course grade, "but even stupidity is no obstacle to perfection in regularity of attendance."

1926 The athletic authorities of Yale, Princeton, and Harvard agree to charge \$5 a ticket for their football games, prompting an alumnus to write: "I decidedly revolt against the idea of a son of mine...going to a college that is symbolized by a \$5 football ticket."

1951 Burlesque queen Sally Rand appears at the Freshman Smoker and lectures the class of '54 on the evils of Communism.

1956 With women now admitted to morning prayers in Appleton Chapel, the Preacher to the University reports that attendance is up so sharply, he may move the service to Memorial Church.

1971 The Harvard Corporation sanctions the Harvard-Radcliffe "non-merger" merger previously approved by the Trustees and Council of Radcliffe. The plan is designed to facilitate "full and equal participation of Radcliffe students in the informal as well as the academic life of the College." Concurrently, Radcliffe president Mary I. Bunting announces plans to resign in 1972.

1976 The Lampoon celebrates its centennial with "a weekend extravaganza," seceding from the Union, designating itself the State of Lampoon, and applying for membership in the United Nations. (Secretary General Kurt Waldheim allegedly refuses admission on the grounds that the UN is "enough of a circus already.") Undaunted, the State of Lampoon presents the Funniest Professor of the Century Award to John Kenneth Galbraith, who receives a purple-and-gold Eldorado Cadillac, a trip to Las Vegas, and \$10,000.

1986 In an article on "Building Better Professionals," the editors note that the M.B.A. candidates graduating in June are the first class required to use personal computers for assignments.

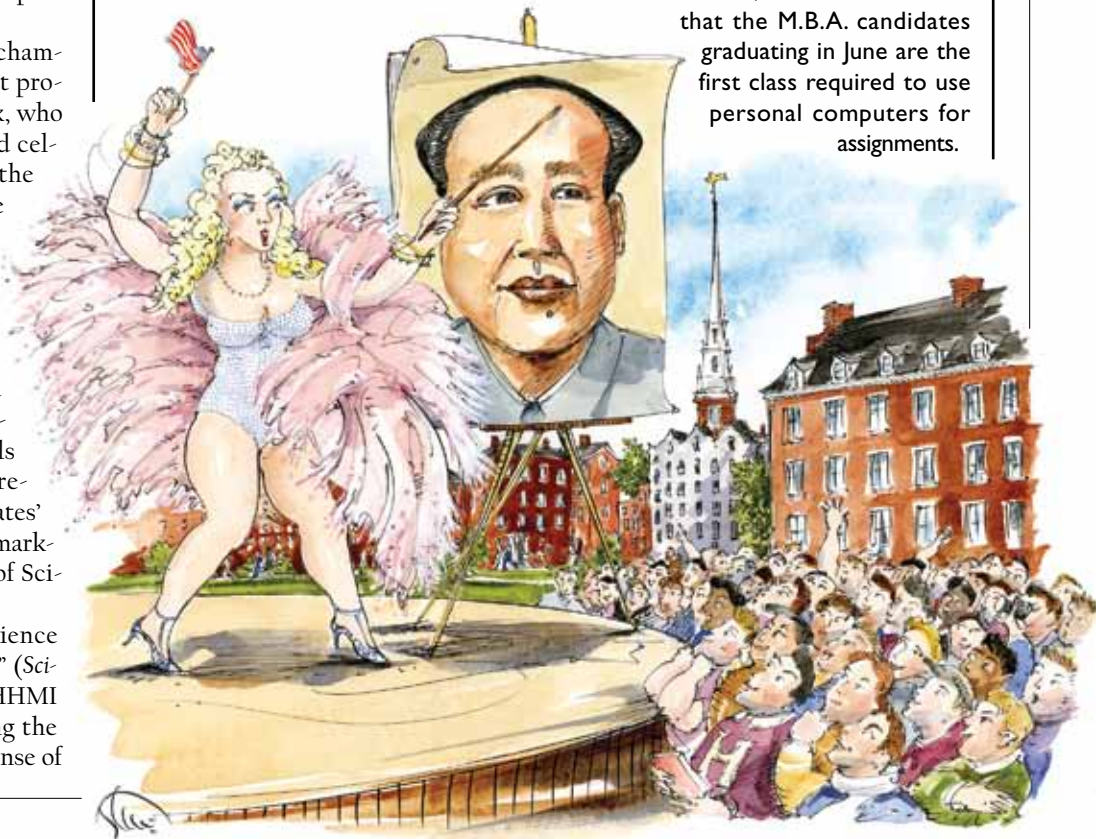


Illustration by Mark Steele

teaching. They noted the common use of the derogatory term “teaching load,” and the recognition and rewards associated with research breakthroughs versus the relative neglect of distinguished teaching. “Educate faculty about research on learning,” was their first recommendation. “No scientist would engage in research without exploring previous work in the field, yet few university educators read education research. Universities can demonstrate that they value teaching by treating it as a scholarly activity...predicated on... education theory, tested practices, and methods to assess learning.”

In a conversation at the Biological Laboratories, Losick amplified: “We spend a lot of time at Harvard talking about *what* students should learn, and far less about *how* they should learn and what they *do* learn.” He hoped to see Harvard “known not only as outstanding in science, but in science education.” One way forward would be to invest in a program on college-level learning at Harvard Graduate School of Education and then disseminate the findings. Similarly, he said, insights from psychology professors who understand cognition and learning ought to inform campus educational practice. And teaching ought to be tied to rigorous assessment far beyond the *Q Guide*.

Losick’s department is one of the few where “peer review” of teaching practice is in place. The results, he said, benefit not only the junior professors who are developing their classroom skills, but also tenured professors who are exposed to colleagues’ successes. Deploying such practices broadly and making the most of the University’s potential as a center for educational excellence, he suggested, depends on “inspiring leadership” by department chairs, deans, and the president.

Smith is betting on faculty initiatives to spur enthusiasm for improved teaching. His address to the faculty meeting, his website, and an associated catalog of teaching and learning innovations put his personal stamp on the subject. His online presentation refers to harnessing research in education, neuroscience, and cognitive psychology to advance teaching. He highlights the potential for the Bok Center for Teaching and Learning to be revived, under faculty leadership, as a center for research on education, and for delivering services to apply that research—a vision that could fulfill some of Losick’s hopes. (That

may await capital-campaign funding: the center’s initial spend-down gift is exhausted, Smith notes, and its activities now focus on helping teaching fellows acquire basic skills, and offering remedial help for faculty who have encountered some problem.) Finally, Smith is sponsoring a series of faculty discussions this semester, where professors will share their experiences in various classroom approaches.

In a national context, the Spencer Foundation’s McPherson points to early indicators of success in promoting better teaching. Faculty members in biology and physics, he says, have done a notable job in advancing the cause. One missionary is Nobel laureate in physics Carl Wieman, who has devoted most of his time since 2007 to the University of British Columbia and the University of Colorado at Boulder, leading science-education initiatives, rather than emphasizing further research (see www.cwsei.ubc.ca). McPherson says Wieman has set the standard for immersing himself in the social-science literature on pedagogy and applying its lessons rigorously to devise effective teaching approaches informed by clear focus on what students should learn, how they can best do so, and assessments of the results. That example may be particularly effective in a community of research-minded professors like Harvard; Losick says a Bok Center appearance by Wieman drew a large and rapt audience.

At the other end of the spectrum, McPherson said, there is evidence from Carnegie Mellon and elsewhere that “really high-quality” interactive, online instruction may, in some instances, be more effective than the best classroom teaching known. That, he suggests, may be a useful spur to reflection and innovation among interested professors. However Smith’s teaching enterprise unfolds, McPherson says, what happens in Cambridge matters: “Harvard is one of the few places that can actually change the common definition of high-quality education.”

DOING so will also require addressing learning. Christopher Winship emphasizes

that students are responsible for academic engagement, too. He cited research published last summer by Philip Babcock and Mindy Marks (of the University of California’s Santa Barbara and Riverside campuses) indicating that students spend approximately 50 percent less time studying than they did four decades ago. In a January *Doonesbury*, a professor lamented that “most of you are either online or texting right now”—puzzling given that “the lecture you’re not listening to right now is costing you or your parents \$175.” It was an amusing take on a problem that is not unknown in the College: students using their laptops to e-mail or search for airfares for a ski trip. More seriously, *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*, by sociologists Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa, published in January, depicts four-year college students doing so little writing and reading that nearly half show no gain in critical thinking and reasoning skills after two years of higher education, and more than one-third score that poorly after four years.

Whatever the relevance of the Arum-Roksa sample to students like those at Harvard, the issue of assessment is rising to the fore. During the past year, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* has highlighted debates over educational outcomes. But as Bok wrote in 2007, “efforts to promote assessment at Harvard (and other universities) have encountered much passive resistance.” He signaled interest in the subject by arranging to have the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA, the tool used in *Academically Adrift*) administered on a trial basis to a cohort of students, as well as a vehicle for measuring writing competency. The experiment in using the CLA—the efficacy of which is contested, particularly at the most selective schools—has not been repeated, but writing assessments, and an evaluation of the General Education curriculum, are being planned or discussed.

Dean Smith acknowledged the student side of the relationship, noting that some faculty colleagues thought his initiative ought to be called “learning and teaching.” Students, he said, “have to put in *their* effort in the same way the faculty have to put in theirs.” How should learning be measured? The *Q Guide*, he indicated, is “important but not sufficient.” Although questions remain about what metrics will



Harvard Magazine invites alumni, faculty, and students to share examples of innovative teaching, effective learning, or suggestions for improvements the University should pursue: harvardmag.com/teaching-and-learning

ROTC after DADT

In the wake of the U.S. Senate's vote on December 18 to end "don't ask, don't tell"—the policy that kept openly gay people from serving in the military—President Drew Faust issued a statement observing, "Because of today's action by the Senate, gay and lesbian Americans will now also have the right to pursue this honorable calling, and we as a nation will have the benefit of their service," consistent with her earlier remarks on the issue (see harvardmag.com/rotc-revisited). As a result, she continued, "I look forward to pursuing discussions with military officials and others to achieve Harvard's full and formal recognition of ROTC." Most other universities that had refused to sanction ROTC officially while military policy conflicted with campus antidiscrimination policies also moved toward official recognition, either administratively or by faculty legislation; among them are Brown, Columbia, Stanford, and Yale.

Admissions Angst

Harvard College received about 35,000 applications for admission to the class of 2015, according to data released in mid January—a nearly 15 percent increase over the 30,489 applications received last year. With a targeted freshman class size of approximately 1,640, it is conceivable that the admissions rate (6.9 percent last year) will decrease to less than 6 percent—a painful measure of the pressure facing applicants to the most competitive colleges and universities. Among other schools reporting, Brown received about 31,000 applications (up about 3 percent); Columbia 34,587 (up 32 percent); and Stanford 34,200 (up about 7 percent).

Higher-Education Update

Columbia University has won final appeals concerning the use of eminent domain for the assembly of its 17-acre campus expansion in Harlem. The multi-

Brevia



PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSOR: Paul Farmer, M.D. '88, Ph.D. '90, has been appointed the first Kolokotronis University Professor. He had been Presley professor and chair of the department of global health and social medicine at Harvard Medical School and a professor in the department of global health and population at Harvard School of Public Health. Farmer has worked on community strategies to deliver healthcare; health and human rights; and the role of social inequalities in determining disease and health outcomes. He is widely known as co-founder of Partners in Health, which has been particularly involved in delivering care in rural Haiti and in addressing AIDS and tuberculosis among poor populations—work described in the bestselling book *Mountains beyond Mountains*, by Tracy Kidder '67 (excerpted in these pages in November-December 2003). For a more detailed report, see harvardmag.com/farmer-appointment.

decade plan envisions new laboratories, education and arts facilities, and housing. Henry R. Kravis, the private-equity leader, pledged \$100 million to the university's business school to support construction of its new facilities on the planned new campus. Having raised \$3.9 billion toward a \$4-billion capital campaign goal a year ahead of schedule, Columbia raised its sights to \$5 billion and extended the effort two years, to 2013.... Yale announced that it would underwrite the "New Haven Promise," raising

new funds (up to \$4 million per year will be required) to pay public higher-education costs for any local public-school student who meets academic, attendance, and public-service standards. Yale is also exploring a joint venture with the National University of Singapore to establish a new residential liberal-arts college there....The five-year, \$1.75-billion Aspire campaign at Princeton had raised \$1.26 billion as of the end of September....Cornell received an \$80-million gift for a center that will underwrite interdisciplinary research on sustainability, spanning 220 faculty members and 55 academic departments. The gift, from Cornell alumnus David R. Atkinson and his wife, Patricia Atkinson, is the largest from an individual to the Ithaca campus....Stanford has dedicated a 200,000-square-foot stem-cell research building at its School of Medicine. The facility, underwritten with a \$75-million gift and funding from the state's regenerative-medicine institute, has space for 33 research labs; it is described as the largest of its kind in the country.

Nota Bene

SOUTH ASIA'S SCHOLARLY STATUS. The Faculty of Arts and Sciences on December 7 unanimously approved a new identity for the former department of Sanskrit and Indian studies. Effective July 1, it will be known as the department of South Asian Studies. The motion, presented by department chair Diana L. Eck, is more than terminological, she explained. The field at Harvard has grown from a single office in Widener Library and a focus on instruction in a few languages to burgeoning expertise in literatures, culture, history, anthropological inquiry, and a still widening array of humanities and social-science disciplines extending across the dynamic subcontinent as a whole (see www.fas.harvard.edu/~sanskrit for the detailed faculty and course listings).

SHUTTERBUG HONORAND. The Office for the Arts has announced that photographer Susan Meiselas, Ed.M. '71, will receive the Harvard Arts Medal during the annual Arts First Celebration (this year, April 28-May 1). Meiselas, whose work has documented New England carnival strip-pers, Nicaraguan Sandinistas, and the Kurdish people (see *Harvard Magazine's* November-December 2010 profile, "A Lens on History"), will receive her honor from President Drew Faust on April 29 in a ceremony at the New College Theatre.



Susan Meiselas

PROFESSOR SUMMERS. Upon completion of his service as director of the National Economic Council at year-end, Lawrence H. Summers resumed his position as Eliot University Professor, based at the Harvard Kennedy School (HKS), where he will also become co-director, with HKS executive dean John A. Haigh, of the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government.

MINISTERING TO THE MINISTER. The Reverend Peter J. Gomes, Plummer professor of Christian morals and Pusey Minister in the Memorial Church, suffered a heart attack and subsequent stroke in early December, and was being cared for at Mas-



Peter J. Gomes

sachusetts General Hospital and, subsequently, Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital. The Church announced the Reverend Wendel W. Meyer had rejoined its staff as associate minister for administration to fill in during Gomes's absence. Gomes is widely known for his benedictions at the Morning Exercises each Commencement, where he reads a prayer that he had concealed in his cap.

MISCELLANY. Harvard Business School's Coleman professor of financial management Peter Tufano '79, M.B.A. '84, Ph.D. '89, will become dean of the University of Oxford's Said Business School, effective July 1. Tufano's research has focused on consumer behavior and the use of incentives and regulations to help unsophisticated investors and poor citizens save safely and effectively (see "Save Yourself," March-April 2009, page 8). He also conceived the new Harvard Innovation Lab, in Allston, and is a member of the three-person Allston Work Team, seeking alternatives for development of Harvard-owned property there (see harvardmag.com/innovation-allston). Michael P. Burke, formerly HKS director of admissions and registrar, has been appointed the new registrar for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Trey Grayson '94, a two-term Kentucky secretary of state, has been appointed director of the Institute of Politics; the state's term limits prevented him from running again,



Peter Tufano

and he was defeated in the Republican primary for Kentucky's open U.S. Senate seat last year....Knafel professor of music Thomas Forrest Kelly has been decorated as a *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters) of the French Republic, that nation's highest recognition for significant contributions to arts and literature....Dennis M. Ritchie '63, A.M. '65, G '68, who concentrated in physics and then switched to applied mathematics as a graduate student, was awarded the Japan Prize in January, along with Ken Thompson, with whom he developed the UNIX computer operating system in 1969, when they were both researchers at Bell Labs....Villa I Tatti has conferred the I Tatti Mongan Prize—for scholarship in Italian Renaissance and other arts—on Elizabeth Cropper, dean of the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts at the National Gallery of Art. The prize is named in honor of the late Agnes Mongan, curator of drawings and then director of the Fogg Art Museum, and Elizabeth Mongan, a connoisseur and curator of prints....Adam Wheeler, who notoriously forged his academic record to gain admission to the College and later plagiarized essays and used them to win prizes and research grants, in December pleaded guilty to 20 counts of larceny, identity fraud, and other charges. He was sentenced to 10 years of probation and ordered to make restitution of nearly \$46,000 to the University; he must continue in psychological treatment.



Dennis M. Ritchie

COURTESY OF DENNIS M. RITCHIE

PUBLISHING A NOBELIST. Harvard University Press will publish the first English-language anthology of writings by the imprisoned winner of the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize, the Chinese democracy advocate Liu Xiaobo. The collection, compiled by his wife, Liu Xia, herself under house arrest, and by Independent Chinese PEN Center president Tien-ch'i Liao, is scheduled for release in September. In the photo, the chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee, Thorbjørn Jagland, sits next to the diploma and medal placed on the empty chair in Oslo City Hall December 10, 2010, to honor Liu Xiaobo in absentia during this year's Nobel Prize award ceremonies.



HEIKO JUNG/ASSOCIATED PRESS

work, he noted that there are “faculty proponents for being much more explicit about learning outcomes.”

Until consensus forms on some standard measurements of learning, home-grown assessment tools might be the way to go. Gale professor of education Richard J. Light has been developing such protocols with colleagues at the Harvard Kennedy School (HKS), where he also teaches. Light has long collaborated with Derek Bok on research aimed at understanding undergraduates’ experiences at Harvard—the basis of his popular book *Making the Most of College* (see “The Storyteller,” January-February 2001, page 32)—and with Michael McPherson on the college-innovation project. His recent work, described in a January conversation, is based on the premise, Light says, that “innovative pedagogy” is not the same thing as “what students are learning.” Changes in a curriculum, or new course content, or even updated ways of delivering that content, cannot be *assumed* to affect learning. The only way to know, he says, is to assess the results rigorously.

HKS dean David Ellwood and academic dean Mary Jo Bane have supported a Strengthening Learning and Teaching Excellence (SLATE) initiative, as part of which—in a professional-education context—Light and colleagues have begun trying to assess learning. For example, they are administering “before” and “after” exercises: at the outset of an academic year or course, they present the students with a complex problem in public administration (how to respond to an offer to purchase a municipal asset, how to assume leadership of an early-education program). The results are evaluated, on a blind basis, by outside readers. The same exercises are administered at the end of the class, and then evaluated again. The differences in scores are analyzed statistically to determine whether the students recorded a “gain” in proficiency, and if so, how large. (In the early trials, happily, the value added by the classes has been very large; but, Light says, he and his colleagues would have been equally interested to learn that the courses required revision.)

Such experiments will not, by them-

selves, transform education at Harvard overnight. But Light reports that other faculties are showing interest: the Graduate School of Education’s dean Kathleen McCartney, for instance, and the FAS administrators involved in evaluating General Education. An emerging theme, he says, is a serious effort to devise statistically valid assessments that can drive sustained improvements in teaching and learning.

The challenges are great enough within the relatively focused professional schools. They are greater still in FAS, with its

dozens of disciplines, with diverse methodologies and forms of knowledge, and with the dual obligations of undergraduate education and graduate training in academic scholarship. In making teaching and learning a focal priority, Dean Smith says, he is “starting to see the recognition” among colleagues that the faculty can and want to understand the opportunities better, to determine “what works within the Harvard culture,” to undertake projects that advance educational effectiveness, and to spread the successes across the professoriate as a whole.

UNDERGRADUATE

The Frisson of Friction

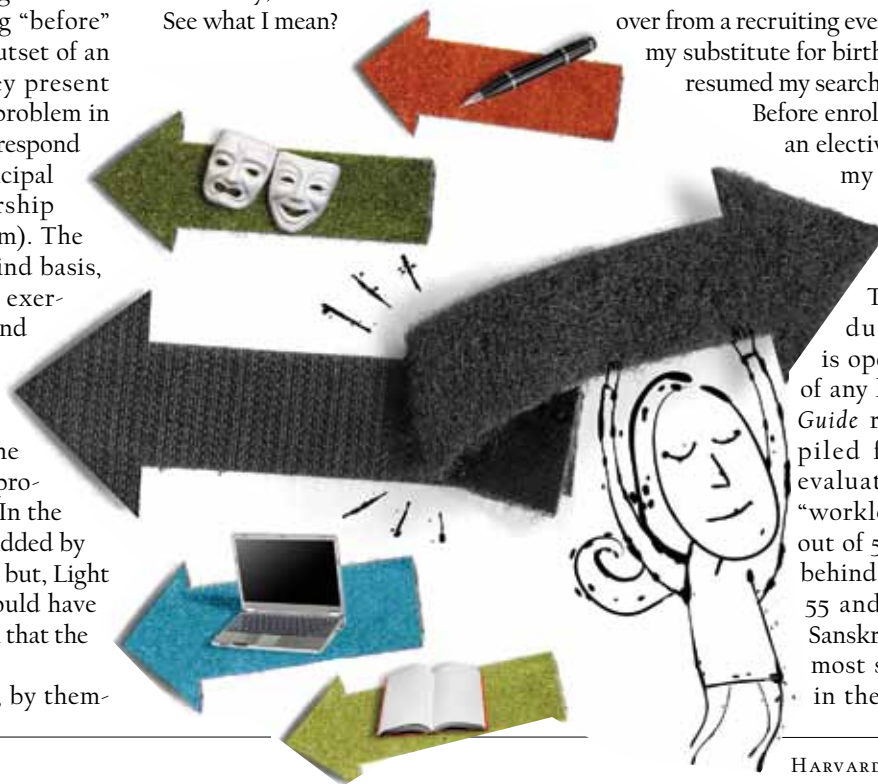
by SARAH ZHANG '11

ON THE EVENING of my twenty-first birthday, I was in the basement of the Science Center searching for a misplaced semicolon. If you think editors are sticklers about semicolons, try dealing with a computer. In many programming languages, semicolons mark the end of a line of code, so a single misplaced semicolon will cut off every;

See what I mean?

The clock was ticking past midnight, and I was still at work on a problem set for Computer Science 50: “Introduction to Computer Science I” (CS 50). Hopelessly mired in code, I had set up camp at the course’s office hours in the Science Center. (Semicolons were only one of my many bugs.) A teaching fellow had brought cupcakes with Microsoft logos emblazoned in the frosting, probably left over from a recruiting event. I took one—my substitute for birthday cake—and resumed my search.

Before enrolling in CS 50 as an elective this past fall, my programming experience amounted to exactly zero. The large introductory course is open to students of any level, but its *Q Guide* ratings (compiled from student evaluations) boast a “workload” score (4.1 out of 5) only slightly behind those of Math 55 and Intermediate Sanskrit I. And unlike most survey courses in the General Edu-



cation curriculum, CS 50 is also the gateway course for prospective concentrators. It has “hacker”-level problem sets for the programming whizzes among my classmates. This is Harvard. Of course there would be programming whizzes.

Each fall I'd bookmarked CS 50 as a course option, and each fall I'd found some excuse to put it off. The real reason was my reluctance to take a course in which I felt behind even before it began. My initial fears were somewhat allayed by David Malan's first lecture. He did something that no instructor I've had before ever did: he encouraged us to take his course pass/fail. He invoked his own trepidation when, as an undergraduate in 1996, he had enrolled in CS 50. “Even I probably wouldn't have taken it if I hadn't taken it pass/fail,” he told us. “I literally switched it to letter-graded on the last possible day.” Of course, now he teaches it.

Among Harvard courses, CS 50 is fairly unusual in being both demanding and entirely accessible to the beginner, which is Malan's goal. He made clear that the course was not graded on a curve. Even the existence of those “hacker” problem sets speaks to the course's aim of catering to students of all levels. Last year, Malan proposed having CS 50 graded satisfactory/unsatisfactory for all students. Though unsuccessful, that did send a message about the course around campus. “I think at Harvard there just isn't a culture of taking courses pass/fail,” he says, “and there just isn't a culture of exploring courses beyond your own field of concentration and areas of interest.”

The clichéd advice we all received at high-school graduation was that college is a time to explore. At times though, like Malan, I've found a mentality at Harvard that subtly discourages this. It is not a lack of opportunity—opportunities compete for space on every poster board on campus—but perhaps a way that high-achieving Harvard students tend to think.

It comes down to opportunity cost. In high school, each of us found things we were relatively good at, and it made sense to continue pursuing those things until we became great at them. (Programming is not one of those things for me.) We have limited time at Harvard, so why jump into something new—something we probably *aren't* good at by virtue of its being new? Harvard usually caters to the very best. This is why comping the most esteemed

extracurriculars is so competitive and why being a math concentrator without having taken calculus in high school seems nigh impossible.

Yet there are exceptions. My friend Riva Nathans is a theater geek who can always find an occasion to quote from her favorite play, Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*. So I was surprised to learn that she had first read *Arcadia* the summer after her sophomore year, and that only after falling in love with that play did she begin doing theater in earnest. Prior to and for the first couple years of college, Riva danced, and it was through dancing that she got her first theater role. “In dance, I wouldn't worry about auditioning and not getting anything,” she said. “But when I went to theater, in which I

“The real reason was my reluctance to take a course in which I felt behind even before it began.”

had no experience, I had the first experience of failing at auditions.” She felt conflicted between what she was good at and what she wanted to do.

At the start of fall semester, Riva was fretting about her application to a creative-writing class—another area at Harvard in which the high barrier to entry can discourage beginners. By then, she had worked on several shows and stage-managed a very successful production of *The Pillowman*. She got into the class. At the end of the semester, she said to me, “I finally turned an idea I had into a play for my writing class and realized that is what I would like to be doing—more than anything else.”

WHEN I WAS AT HOME over winter break, reflecting on the past semester and bored enough to pick up magazines for which I am decidedly not in the target audience, I ran across an article in *GQ* about Silicon Valley start-ups. Programmers like to talk about friction as a measure of difficulty—the number of clicks it takes to register for a service, for example—so the ultimate goal is to reduce friction. This is the wrong way of going about things, says the article's author, Devin Friedman, while noting that the people he meets in

Silicon Valley—the creators of technology—seem extraordinarily happy: “The act of creation is maybe the most frictive thing going. Using the stuff is meant to be frictionless, but making it isn't. And their happiness comes from friction. Most happiness probably comes from friction.”

Indeed there were times for me when the process of fixing a bug scraped along like sandpaper. When I read the article over winter break, I was working out a few kinks in my CS 50 final project because I wanted to publish it online for other people to use. My project is an extension for Google's Chrome, a Web browser that allows users to search and visualize their own browsing histories. There are thousands of such Chrome extensions available for download, most created by individuals for free. Last I checked, there are just over 100 users of my extension. This is far fewer than the number of people using the most popular extension (AdBlock, with 1,626,216 users at that point), but also far more than the number of people who usually read my papers (my TF, 1). The hours I spent on the project, both before the due date and after, over winter break, far exceed the amount of time I've spent on any other final paper or project. There was also a lot of friction.

Plenty of people could have coded the same extension more elegantly and in less time. I will never be as good a programmer as—to set the standard absurdly high—Mark Zuckerberg. But accomplishments can be measured in terms relative to ourselves, rather than to others. Rather than sticking to what we're already good at as the surest path to résumé-worthy achievements, we should see the value in novel challenges. How else will we discover possibilities that lie just beyond the visible horizon?

I eventually found the misplaced semicolon that night. With the bug fixed, my program was finished. I would properly enjoy my twenty-first birthday the following weekend, but I had another occasion to celebrate on the actual date. Even the best birthday cake is no substitute for the deep satisfaction of accomplishing what we had previously deemed impossible—whether it's writing a program or writing a play. Also, that cupcake was pretty good. ▢

Berta Greenwald Ledecy Undergraduate Fellow Sarah Zhang '11 usually prefers em dashes to semicolons—not a choice when coding, though.

Strokes in Parallel

Tennis co-captains Rosekrans and Cao converge on the court.

BORN ROUGHLY A YEAR APART on opposite sides of the Pacific Rim—one in Woodside, California, near Palo Alto, and one in Shanghai—Samantha Rosekrans '11 and Holly Cao '12 developed as tennis players in parallel ways. They now co-captain the Harvard women's varsity and have enjoyed considerable success as a doubles team in the past two years, though they partner with other teammates as well. The pair reached the round of 16 at the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's (ITA) Northeast Regional tournament last fall, and in its preseason poll, the ITA ranked them at number 40 nationally. Currently, Cao plays in the top singles position for the Crimson, while Rosekrans competes in the fourth slot.

Both are tall: Rosekrans stands 5 feet, 11 inches; Cao is 5 feet, 9½. Their games complement each other in doubles. "Normally, I just hit hard from the back, and Sam finishes at the net," says Cao, who owns a ferocious two-handed backhand. "She has great volleys." Rosekrans confirms that strategy: "Holly excels at her groundstrokes, and I prefer taking charge at the net. When we're in a groove, I'm able to be intuitive and read where she'll hit it—we can be very much in sync. I can sense when she lobs."

Rosekrans's mother, Pam, actually played tennis on the very day Samantha was born (*prior* to delivery, to be sure). Both her parents were rated in their younger years at 5.0 on the United States Tennis Association's official scale, placing them among the elite of club tennis players. Peter Rosekrans, a landscape architect, first put a racquet in his daughter's hand when she was five years old. By age seven, she had found Jeff Arons, the tennis coach who has been with her ever since.

Cao (pronounced "cow") first touched a racquet at age six, the day after she first set foot in Australia. (She was joining her parents, Charlie Cao and Sylvia Yang, who had emigrated seeking a better life, leaving her for three years with her grandpar-

ents.) Cao, too, has had a one-coach career, mentored entirely by her father. Both her parents were university lecturers in China, and her father played on the university volleyball team. He wanted his only child to become a professional athlete.

For a while, Cao seemed headed that way. She played her first tournament at seven, only nine months after hitting her first ball. Before long, she made the quarterfinals of a state tournament in New South Wales, where the family lived, and "Dad said, 'Next year, you're going to win this tournament.'" She did. She also won a national 12-and-under event at Melbourne Park, site of the Australian Open, and played in junior events at the Open itself. By 2006 she had become the top-ranked junior girl in the country, and even had a professional ranking of 699 after playing a few events on the Women's Tennis Association schedule. "Up until I was 15, my goal was to go pro," Cao says. "So college didn't even enter my mind." (In Australia, as elsewhere outside the United States, intercollegiate athletics do not exist.)

Around age 15 or 16, however, having played a few international junior tournaments, "I realized that I was not good enough. I wasn't up to scratch," Cao says. "And also, I didn't love tennis as much as I should to pursue it at a pro level. I was keeping up with my studies and doing well at school. I decided that furthering my education and playing tennis at the same time would be the best option for me." Australian player Melissa Anderson '06 (see "Down-Under Dominator," July-August 2006, page 72) mentioned playing for the Crimson, and Cao contacted then-Harvard women's

coach Gordon Graham. Before long, she was unpacking her bags in the Yard.

Meanwhile, Rosekrans was prospering in American junior tournaments, reaching the finals of the national "Little Mo" tournament of the Maureen Connolly Brinker Tennis Foundation each year from ages eight to 11. As a teen, traveling to tournaments on weekends meant, of course, "a big sacrifice in your social life," she says. Still, she became one of the top juniors in northern California, and at 16 was among the nation's top 20. She was friendly with former Harvard varsity player Stephanie Schnitter '08, and "knew I wanted to end up here," she says.

She did, and it has worked out. As co-captains, Rosekrans and Cao feel they can lead this squad to an Ivy championship, something the Crimson last tasted two years ago when they shared the title with Princeton. The pair get on well both on and off the court, on occasion getting to a movie or a play together. In tennis style, Cao hits the ball flat, whereas Rosekrans favors a topspin forehand, but when you grow up on separate continents—well, there are bound to be some differences. ~CRAIG LAMBERT



Holly Cao (left) and Samantha Rosekrans

Air Afghanistan

Radio news and the “journalism of hope” thrive in a dangerous place.

IN MANY WAYS, Afghanistan's outlook is grim. The war with the Taliban drags into its tenth year, and is merely the latest episode of what can sometimes seem like a history of war interrupted by anomalous intervals of peace. To many Afghans, Hamid Karzai's central government is illegitimate. Corruption is so deeply and widely ingrained that, according to one United Nations report, Afghans paid \$2.5 billion, nearly a quarter of their GDP, in bribes in 2009.

Nonetheless, “in the last few years, one of the few bright spots is the media,” says Masood Farivar '94. “The long-term role that media outlets play in terms of public education, unifying the country, offering people an outlet to air their differences rather than resorting to violence—these things are extremely important.”

To be sure, Farivar (fah-ree-VAR) has seen his share of violence. In *Confessions of a Mullah Warrior* (Atlantic Monthly Press, 2009), he describes two teenage years when he fought as a guerrilla against the Soviet occupation. But Farivar also calls himself a born optimist. “Afghans are believers, people of faith,” he says. “But the way things have been going for the last couple of years does not inspire a lot of confidence in the future. It might even drive some people to give up, and it's important to prevent that. The negativity that you see so much of in the media can put journalists out of touch with their audience.”

Farivar is general manager of Salam Watandar (the phrase means, roughly, “Hello, countryman!”), a radio-program-producing organization that serves a network of 42 news-oriented stations around Af-

ghanistan. It's often called “the National Public Radio of Afghanistan,” with 10 million listeners (close to a third of the population) within broadcast range. Several of its affiliated stations rank at the top of their markets, and several more are the *only* radio stations in their areas. Four are completely female-staffed. Internews (www.internews.org), the international media-development organization that founded Salam Watandar, is considering not only spinning it off as an independent Afghan organization during the course of this year, but also launching a television version. (California-based Internews, founded in 1982, is a nongovernmental organization that has worked in more than 70 countries; major funding for its Af-

ghanistan endeavors comes from the U.S. Agency for International Development.)

The media revolution in Afghanistan has been dramatic. In 2001, with the Taliban in charge, the country had only one radio station—the government-operated Voice of Sharia, dominated by Islamic programming—and television was banned. Today, dozens of radio, TV, and telecommunications antennae sprout from the highest point in Kabul, known as “TV Hill.” Around 80 percent of the nation's households own radio receivers, and half that many have television sets. Afghanistan now boasts more than 300 print publications, more than 100 radio stations, and more than 30 television outlets. Because about three-quarters of the citizens are illiterate, radio, followed by TV, is the primary way Afghans get their news. “One problem is that each faction and each warlord tries to establish its own publication—TV, radio, or newspaper,” says Abdul Wahid, an Afghan and a current Nieman Fellow at Harvard. Since 2001, Wahid has worked as a Kabul-based local reporter for the *New York Times*. To have some kind of independent news medium like Salam

Watandar, he says, “is extremely significant for the country.”

“Not a week goes by now without a radio station being set up somewhere in Afghanistan,” Farivar notes. “But given our tough terrain and geography, there is still no shortage of areas without access to independent media. They're all FM stations, whose signals cover 40 to 60 kilometers from the source, and they are clustered in cities and small urban areas. Internews has always focused on underserved areas and remote parts of the country, so our stations are mostly in provinces and distant places where they're often the sole source of news and information.”

Although Salam Watandar emphasizes news and public affairs, its programming runs the gamut. Farivar took six months to develop an agricultural version of *Car Talk*, National Public Radio's long-running hit in which two brothers, Boston-based mechanics, banter with callers and solve auto problems.



Masood Farivar

Their Afghan counterparts are not brothers, but “they have the right chemistry,” he says. “They’re very funny, entertaining, and extremely knowledgeable. That show is one of my proudest achievements—we’re going to take it on the road, and record it in the provinces.”

“No doubt we have one of the freest, if not the freest, press in the region,” Farivar adds. “Of course, governments, even democratically elected governments, don’t always like having a free press. It’s a tricky issue. There is some self-censorship, some lines you cannot cross. Islam is a subject that you cannot touch: you can’t piss off the mullahs, can’t offend people’s faith. And sometimes you can’t offend the powers that be. But Afghan journalists continue to push the envelope. The satire writers are at the forefront. We have a very funny satire show that takes on powerful people. It exposes fraud, ineptness, corruption. At times some satirists have landed in jail.”

Afghanistan is one of the world’s most challenging environments for journalists. “It can be a dangerous business to get into,” Farivar explains, “but there are far more dangerous places for journalists. After three decades of war, Afghan journalists have the street smarts to avoid getting killed.”

Shortly after Farivar arrived at Salam Watandar, a news anchor told him, “I can’t do this any more—everything I read is violence, bombs, explosions, suicide attacks. I’ve become numb.” Farivar condoled with the man, then told him, “There’s more to news than bombs and war. There is another aspect that’s not being reported—let’s also cover stories that give people hope.”

I have come to call it ‘the journalism of hope.’ In a country at war, journalists have a moral obligation to report on things that give people hope.”

Take sports. “This year, we carried the first-ever live radio broadcast of a cricket match in Afghanistan,” Farivar says. “Cricket is a big sport in South Asia: Afghan refugee kids brought it back from Pakistan. And Afghanistan has an up-and-coming



Farivar enjoys watermelon with a U.S. diplomat and, at right, gives U.S. ambassador Karl Eikenberry a tour shortly after the latter’s arrival in Afghanistan.



team: they rose from number 130 in the world to number 14 in the span of 16 months—remarkable! We knew the broadcast would be well received, but we were not ready for the voracious response—during each match, hundreds would call us to cheer for the national team and to thank us. They couldn’t believe their ears. The moral of the story is that listeners are interested in hearing about more than violence. The calls we got came in from all over the country.”

WHEN HIS PREDECESSOR suddenly departed in 2007, Farivar, with no radio experience, became general manager of Salam Watandar after only two months

at the network. But he did have a strong track record in journalism, a Harvard education, and a native’s understanding of his country. Born in 1969 to a middle-class family (his father is a Soviet-educated Afghan, a petroleum engineer), at 13 he

moved with his family to Pakistan as refugees from the Soviet invasion. Enrolled in a madrasah, a religious school, he lived in two worlds there, he says: the deeply religious one of his grandparents, and the far more secular one of his parents.

In 1987, at 18, he returned to Afghanistan to join the resistance as one of the anti-Soviet insurgents known as mujahedin. He was given a gun and participated in about a dozen hit-and-run guerrilla missions in the countryside over the next two years. “It was exciting, and frightening,” he recalls. “I also felt I had a mission and a duty to take part in a jihad for God and country. I was moved more by patriotic feelings than religious ones.

“That’s been the history of Afghanistan for 2,000 years: fighting off invaders,” he continues. “That lesson, unfortunately, has not been heeded by foreign forces with designs on Afghanistan. As soon

A Special Notice Regarding Commencement Exercises

Thursday, May 26, 2011

Morning Exercises

TO ACCOMMODATE the increasing number of those wishing to attend Harvard’s Commencement Exercises, the following guidelines are proposed to facilitate admission into Tercentenary Theatre on Commencement Morning:

- Degree candidates will receive a limited number of tickets to Commencement. Parents and guests of degree candidates must have tickets, which they will be required to show at the gates in order to enter Tercentenary Theatre. Seating capacity is limited, however there is standing room on the Widener steps and at the rear and sides of the Theatre for viewing the exercises.

Note: A ticket allows admission into the Theatre, but does not guarantee a seat. Seats are on a first-come basis and can not be reserved. The sale of Commencement tickets is prohibited.

- Alumni/ae attending their reunions (25th, 35th, 50th) will receive tickets at their reunions. Alumni/ae in classes beyond the 50th may obtain tickets from the College Alumni Programs Office by calling (617) 496-7001, or through the annual Tree Spread mailing sent out in March with an RSVP date of April 29th.

- Alumni/ae from non-reunion years and their spouses are requested to view the Morning Exercises over large-screen televisions in the Science Center, and at designated locations in most of the undergraduate Houses and graduate and professional Schools. These locations provide ample seating, and tickets are not required.

- A very limited supply of tickets will be made available to all other alumni/ae on a first-come, first-served basis through the Harvard Alumni Association by calling (617) 496-7001.

Afternoon Exercises

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the Harvard Alumni Association convenes in Tercentenary Theatre on Commencement afternoon. All alumni and alumnae, faculty, students, parents, and guests are invited to attend and hear Harvard’s President and featured Commencement Speaker deliver their addresses. Tickets for the afternoon ceremony will be available through the Harvard Alumni Association by calling (617) 496-7001.

~Jacqueline A. O’Neill, University Marshal



Above: Farivar, at right, with Northern Alliance leader and vice president Marshal Fahim. Right: Interviewing former NATO commander Dan McNeill

COURTESY OF MASOOD FARIVAR

as you're seen as an occupation force, your future in Afghanistan is doomed." Eventually, Farivar involved himself with a news-gathering outlet set up by the U.S. government ("Soviet atrocities were not getting enough exposure") where he worked with other mujahedin as reporters—his first exposure to journalism.

A Briton of Greek descent, the late Carlos Mavroleon '82, a convert to Islam who worked as a Wall Street trader before going to Afghanistan to join the mujahedin, met Farivar on a military operation and encouraged him to consider a Harvard education. He enrolled at the Lawrenceville School in New Jersey as a 20-year-old "postgraduate" student, and found the experience "overwhelming. The culture shock was immense." There were many changes from the strict schooling he'd had in Pakistan. To take one small example, at the madrasah, he had never played sports, but at Lawrenceville he joined the track team (though he was too old to compete),



Visit harvardmag.com/ extras to hear an excerpt from the Masood Farivar interview.

and picked up Ultimate Frisbee.

In 1990, he arrived in Harvard Yard as a 21-year-old freshman. He did not see his homeland again until 1999. Harvard's course catalog overwhelmed him with its richness and variety, a stark contrast with the narrower, far more prescriptive system in Afghanistan: "Amazingly, intellectually, I could pursue anything I wanted to," he says. He concentrated in history and wrote his senior thesis on the Islamic influence on Saint Thomas Aquinas. He tried rugby and briefly joined the Harvard Republican Club. ("I liked Ronald Reagan.

He was a staunch supporter of the Afghan cause.") One summer, he worked for the Harvard Student Agencies' travel guide *Let's Go—The Southwest United States*.

Commencement Day in 1994 was anticlimactic, Farivar says: "I felt I had completed my American mission and would go home to serve. But in 1994 there was a



vicious civil war in Afghanistan and it was too dangerous to go back." (His parents and three sisters had relocated to England.) So he made a postgraduation choice that sounds classically American: he took a year off to drive cross-country with a classmate, doing things along the way like working at a youth hostel in Arizona.

In 1995, Farivar landed his first full-time job, with a news-sharing joint venture run by the Associated Press and Dow Jones, publisher of the *Wall Street Journal*, in New York City. Though the job was "the fastest track to becoming a foreign correspondent," Farivar's work visa didn't allow him to go abroad on stories. He did the next best thing and covered the United Nations; he also wrote a daily column on the energy market for both the *Journal* and the Dow Jones news wires. His international background and language skills helped: in addition to English, he knows classical Arabic, Uzbek, Urdu, and the two Afghan national languages, Dari and Pashto. He spent 12 years as a single New Yorker, living in Brooklyn and then Jersey City, developing a good circle of friends, taking weekend jaunts outside the city, going to several World Series games, enjoying the nightlife, cultural life, and "great restaurants and bars."

In 2007, he decided that he'd "better move back to Afghanistan now, or it wouldn't happen." There was some pressure from his family to marry, and after completing his book he finally returned to Kabul, taking a 25 percent pay cut to accept a

job with Internews: teaching journalistic skills to young Afghan reporters. That soon morphed into his position at Salam Watandar. The next year he settled into an arranged marriage with his wife, Malalai. They named their son, born in 2010, after an American: "Muhammad Ali—The Greatest," says Farivar. "He is one of my heroes, as an athlete and as a champion. Ali is very well known as a Muslim. We are a Muslim family, and I'm proud of it."

Farivar's assessment of his countrymen's mood now is that "No one wants the Taliban back. That was a brutal regime. I think there's still a great deal of support for the U.S. presence in Afghanistan. It's important for American officials to separate the long-term civilian commitment to Afghanistan from the military involvement."

Kabul, which he characterizes as a boom town, "goes through phases," Farivar explains, "but it is generally not as dangerous as it seems from afar. The attacks you hear about are targeted, not random, so unless you're in the wrong place at the wrong time, you're generally safe. There was a major attack in January [2010] that happened less than a hundred yards from our office—of all the windows in the building, the only one blown out was in my office. I was woken up at 6:00 A.M. that day and directed the coverage from home. There was also a big attack on the Italians, only 150 yards away from where I live. I went home and found that all the windows on our block had been shattered. The window-makers made a killing that day."

Yet life goes on. He used to put in 12-hour days; since his marriage, he has managed to cut them down only to 10- or 11-hour days, six days a week. "I gave up an active social life in New York, but

Return to Harvard Day

THE HAA invites all reunion-year alumni and their families to return to the College to experience the full academic day of an undergraduate on April 6, 2011. Attend classes and lectures, have lunch in the House dining halls, tour the campus, attend a student-led panel discussion on undergraduate life, then wind down the day by joining students in the Cambridge Queen's Head pub. For details, contact the HAA at 617-496-7001.

it doesn't bother me not to have much of a social life in Kabul—I went there to work,” he says. “I draw an enormous amount of satisfaction from my work. I feel I have the best job in the world, doing exactly what I always wanted to do. If we can, through our reporting and programming, put a smile on someone's face or prevent a potential suicide bomber, or inspire hope in a young person, then we can go home at the end of the day feeling good about ourselves.” ~CRAIG A. LAMBERT

Vote Now

THIS SPRING, alumni will vote for five new Harvard Overseers and six new elected directors for the Harvard Alumni Association (HAA) board. Ballots, mailed by April 1, must be received back in Cambridge by noon on May 20 to be counted. The results will be announced at the HAA's annual meeting on the afternoon of Commencement day, May 26. All Harvard-degree holders, except Corporation members and officers of instruction and government, may vote for Overseer candidates. The election for HAA directors is open to all degree-holders.

For Overseer (six-year term), the candidates are:

Flavia B. Almeida, M.B.A. '94, of São Paulo, Brazil. Partner, The Monitor Group.

Richard W. Fisher '71, of Dallas. President and CEO, Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas.

Verna C. Gibbs '75, of San Francisco. General surgeon and professor in clinical surgery, University of California, San Francisco.

F. Barton Harvey '71, M.B.A. '74, of Baltimore, former chair and CEO, Enterprise Community Partners.

Carl J. Martignetti '81, M.B.A. '85, of Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts. President, Martignetti Companies.

Nicole M. Parent '93, of Greenwich, Connecticut. Co-founder and managing partner, Vertical Research Partners, LLC.

David J. Vitale '68, of Chicago. Executive chairman, Urban Partnership Bank.

Kenji Yoshino '91, of New York City. Chief Justice Earl Warren professor of constitutional law, New York University School of Law.

For Elected Director (three-year term), the candidates are:

Rohit Chopra '04, of Washington, D.C. Policy adviser, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

Tiziana C. Dearing, M.P.P. '00, of Bedford, Massachusetts. CEO, Boston Rising.

Katie Williams Fahs '83, of Atlanta. Marketing consultant/community volunteer.

Peter C. Krause, J.D. '74, of New York City. Investment banker and real-estate investor.

Charlene Li '88, M.B.A. '93, of San Mateo, California. Founding partner, Altimeter Group; author.

Sonia Molina, D.M.D. '89, M.P.H. '89, of Los Angeles. Endodontist.

James A. Star '83, of Chicago. President, Longview Asset Management.

Patric M. Verrone '81, of Pacific Palisades, California. Television writer, producer.

George H. Yeadon '75, of Pittsford, New York. Managing consultant, Kodak Solutions for Business.

Alumni Awards

HAA CLUBS and SIGs (Shared Interest Group) Committee Awards honor both individuals who provide exemplary service to a Harvard club or SIG, and clubs and SIGs that organize exceptional programming. Awards were presented to the following recipients at the HAA Board of Directors winter meeting on February 3.

David A. Chen, M.Arch.-M.A.U. '99, of Radnor, Pennsylvania. As immediate past president of the Harvard-Radcliffe Club of Philadelphia, Chen used the HAA's online system to increase club membership in innovative ways. He has also served cheerfully in many other roles: event coordinator, menu planner, Web designer, membership-verifier, last-minute-problem-solver, and even chief label-maker.

Nicolas J. Ducote, M.P.P. '98, of Argentina, and **Carlos A. Mendoza** '88, M.P.P. '90, of Panama. As HAA directors for Latin America, Ducote and Mendoza have strengthened the network among 19 clubs, energizing and inspiring members to share a deeper sense of community and openness to collaboration, and expanding participation in regional club leaders' consultations. Both are also responsible for innovative programming in their own clubs, and helped create the new Harvard

Latin American Alumni and Friends SIG.

The Harvard Asian American Alumni Alliance, founded in 2008, has established SIG chapters in major U.S. cities that engage alumni through online and in-person events. Its first summit meeting, last October, drew 400 alumni, students, and guests from around the world (see “A Milestone for Asian American Alumni,” January-February, page 63).

The Harvard Club of South Carolina, through membership efforts, programming, and outreach, has effectively expanded statewide alumni engagement. The club's board involves new members as soon as they join, and the club also fosters a close relationship with local undergraduates thanks to frequent barbecues and other student-planned, club-related events.

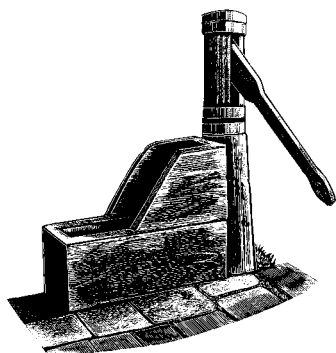
Crimson in Congress, II

OUR LIST of Harvard matriculants in the 112th Congress (January-February, page 60) accidentally omitted Michael R. Pompeo, J.D. '94, a new Republican representative from Kansas. Then on February 8, Jane Harman, J.D. '69, D-Calif., the only woman in the contingent, announced her resignation to head the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. The total for the new session is again 31: three Republicans and nine Democrats in the Senate; two Republicans and 17 Democrats in the House.

Comings and Goings

HARVARD CLUBS offer many social and intellectual events. Among early spring offerings: McKay professor of computer science Harry Lewis discusses “Life, Liberty, and Happiness after the Digital Explosion” with the Harvard Club of Cincinnati (March 22); Kennedy School associate Charles Cogan details “The Wartime Role of Charles de Gaulle” for the Harvard University Club of Ottawa (March 23); the Harvard Club of New Bedford ponders “The Role of Media in Politics” with Timothy McCarthy, director of the human rights and social movements program at the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy (March 30); and professor of English and of African and African American studies John Stauffer elucidates “Rebellion, Reconstruction, and Restoration: 150 Years Since Secession” for the Harvard Club of Tallahassee (April 8). For details, contact your local club; call 617-495-3070; or visit www.alumni.harvard.edu.

Mysteries



"Your wooden arm you hold outstretched to shake with passers-by."

DARTING a glance at the structure at right, avian visitors to Randolph Courtyard at Harvard's Adams House might tweet with delight that so impressive an edifice had been provided for their use this nesting season. But inspection reveals that the building is not up to birdhouse code. The entrance hole is too large for exclusivity and protection from predators. As a feeding station, it is not effective either. Sean Palfrey, the co-master of Adams House, has put thistle seed in it, but to no great acclaim from the birds.

And that isn't the house's role in Thailand, where it was made.

"Many homes and workplaces in Thailand and surrounding countries," Palfrey explains, "have beautiful spirit houses outside them as a traditional way to keep happy the spirits that are part of their age-old belief system of animism, later existing side by side with Buddhism in many places in Southeast Asia. People believe that the spirits can bring both good and bad luck and need to be acknowledged and honored."

"Adams House likes to celebrate all sorts of belief systems," says Palfrey. "I searched and found several sources for a spirit house in this country, and Jorge Teixeira, our superintendent, put it up for us with its front door facing east toward the rising sun. Randolph Courtyard is a beautiful garden and



KRIS SNIBER/HARVARD NEWS OFFICE

should be a good place for most creatures, spirit or otherwise."



NECKTIE SPEAK: Primus has had an edifying letter from Warren M. "Renny" Little '55, of Cambridge.

"Chester M. Pierce '48, M.D. '52, proudly wears his football tie in his portrait lecturing in the Ether Dome at MGH [The College Pump, January-February, page 64]," writes Little, "although artist Stephen Coit has taken the license of lengthening the notoriously short original tie. When Pierce was in college, ties and coats were required on campus, and varsity letterwinners in major sports were easily recognized by their black knit ties with distinguishing red stripes. Minor sports had a generic striped knit tie. It was not difficult to identify the major sport being represented when there were only five (football, track, hockey, crew, and baseball), but as new sports obtained varsity status (and now there are 41), the number of stripe combinations proliferated bewilderingly. Fashions and dress codes changed, however, and my guess is that by the mid 1980s, these knit ties were no longer being made or often worn. A few old grads still sport their ties, although the iconography of them escapes today's undergraduates." ~PRIMUS V

Neckties distinguished athletes in 14 major sports, with a generic tie for all minor sports, says Renny Little, curator (pro bono) of the Lee Family Hall of Athletic History. Here (from left) are those for football, soccer, cross country, track and field, ice hockey, swimming, basketball, wrestling, lacrosse, baseball, lightweight crew, golf, and minor sports. Missing are those for heavyweight crew and squash.

JIM HARRISON

**FAMOUS COMEDIAN,
"DANGEROUS" PLAYWRIGHT**

(continued from page 38)

creepy vibes coming out of there." Jacob Brackman recalls walking around Cambridge with him at that reunion. "Each gate, each street corner, or little square was the scene of some horrible humiliation or painful, wincing memory for Wally," Brackman recalls. "Things like, 'This is where I tried to say hello to [pianist] Ursula Oppens ['65] but she didn't even notice me.' And teenaged kids of our classmates kept pointing to Wally and saying, 'Inconceivable!' [a tag line made famous by Shawn's character, the criminal Vizzini, in *The Princess Bride*—and that would make him wince all the more."

DURING THREE YEARS in the 1980s that included travel to Central America, Shawn came to espouse leftist politics: specifically, an analysis of power, economics, and institutions perhaps best represented in the writings of MIT linguistics professor Noam Chomsky, whom Shawn interviews in his 2010 book *Essays*. His only partially autobiographical play, *The Fever*, explores this political transformation in a dramatic monologue. The protagonist—who relives a traumatic night spent in a hotel in an anonymous country wracked by civil war—struggles with his own complicity in the world's misery, his inner turmoil illuminating the contradictions of the affluent urban liberal.

"There was a point when I crossed over from being a regular liberal supporter of the Democratic Party to being a leftist, becoming less in the Arthur Schlesinger Jr. category and more in the Noam Chomsky category," Shawn says. "It had to do with understanding that I and the people I knew were actually involved in the story. There are certain writers who specialize in saying, 'Oh, my God, the terrible things people do to each other in South America! It's absolutely shocking!' At a certain point I was able to face the fact that—Wow, it was the U.S. Army who did that, and: a) it was *my* taxes that paid for them to do it; and b) they did it to preserve the status quo in which I am leading a very pleasant life. These things are happening every day because of me and my friends, and we're not doing anything about it. You have murder and torture

going on—so, what does that make us?

"I happen to believe that the American elite has been a marauding monstrosity on the world scene in my lifetime," Shawn continues. "It has been unimaginably brutal in trying to preserve the status quo and unimaginably greedy in trying to bring the world's resources onto our continent. And unintentionally contributing to the possibility of destroying life on Earth, due to the damage that has been done to the en-



Top: Shawn on *The Cosby Show* in 1987, with Bill Cosby and Penni Penniman, and (above) astride a burro with actress Terri Hatcher for a 2005 episode of *Desperate Housewives*

vironment by our way of doing business. Harvard's role is mostly to service and to perpetuate and to create that elite, even though many, many wonderful people, and people who have *fought* the status quo, have come through Harvard. I'm a devoted reader of Harvard class reports, and of course, many of these people who do great harm are totally charming and delightful human beings. I've written an awful lot on

the topic of how it would be possible for charming and delightful human beings to do things that are very brutal."

His 1985 play *Aunt Dan and Lemon*, for example, is about an academic woman (Danielle, known as Aunt Dan), an appealing person whose idol happens to be Henry Kissinger '50, Ph.D. '54. The narrator of the story, Lemon, is a young woman who has been "horribly influenced by that delightful person," Shawn says, and she consequently has a "terribly sick, warped view of life." In Lemon's final monologue, among other disturbing things, she defends many of the Nazis' ideas. In a review of a 2003 production, Ben Brantley of the *New York Times* identified "...the play's extraordinary goal. That is nothing less than to make you experience sensually the allure of fascist governments and murderous regimes....Mr. Shawn is not so much setting up insidious political theories to be knocked down as suggesting how those theories can take root in susceptible minds."

In retrospect, says Shawn, "*Aunt Dan and Lemon* was making some rather radical points ahead of my own understanding of them. You could say I was deeply influenced by my own play, and driven to read more." Perhaps in a year, or a decade, the American theatrical audience will, like Shawn, catch up with his own work. "Very few people agree with me, but I feel I have a right to open the door to my own unconscious mind and walk in and see what's there," he says. "If I were someone who was respected, then everyone would agree I have a right—'Of course, he has a right—more than a right, an *obligation*, because what's going on in his head is going to turn out to be valuable to our society.' But in my case, other people are *not* saying that, except for a few cronies whom I have browbeaten into reinforcing my belief in myself. I try to pay back the world slightly [for my privileges] by occasionally saying things that could be truthful and might be well expressed in some of what I've written." Asked about an interpretation of one of his plays, he muses, "If I became a famous writer after my death....," and then breaks off before adding, in a tone that might be wry, sincere, ironic, or all three: "That is my plan." ▮

Craig A. Lambert '69, Ph.D. '78, is deputy editor of this magazine.



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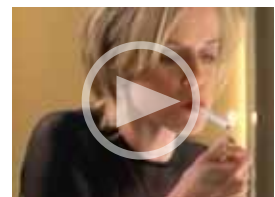
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Out of Place?

An exhibition asks the meaning of things.

IMAGINE you are curator-in-chief of all of Harvard's collections of tangible things and a donor gives you a 114-year-old Mexican tortilla. Where in your almost 50 collections do you put it?

Tangible Things, an exhibition on view through May 29, principally at galleries of the Historical Scientific Instruments Collection in the Science Center, brings together roughly 200 intriguing things—art works, specimens, tools—from troves throughout the University.

Around the periphery of the galleries, write the exhibition organizers, “are objects displayed according to categories used at Harvard and elsewhere since the nineteenth century, categories that were instrumental in creating the disciplinary boundaries that still define many of our undergraduate

other museums at Harvard, inviting viewers to go on a scavenger hunt to find them. A palette used by painter John Singer Sargent (1856-1925) is normally housed at the Harvard Art Museums, with paintings by the master. In *Tangible Things*, it is at the Science Center, shown as a tool along with items related to color and the brain.

The floriform vase made by Louis Comfort Tiffany around 1900 is also usually at the Art Museums, but is for the moment a guest at the Harvard Museum of Natural History, where it sits among the celebrated glass flowers made by the Blaschkas, father and son. Visitors may wonder about the line drawn between art and science. Why were the Blaschkas' flowers considered scientific tools, while Tiffany's were art?

The walking plow, probably Massachusetts-made in the late eighteenth century, from Harvard's General Artemas Ward House Museum in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, is saved there because of its associations with the Revolutionary War general, A.B. 1748. It is now a guest at the Semitic Museum, near an Iron Age plow of similar design.

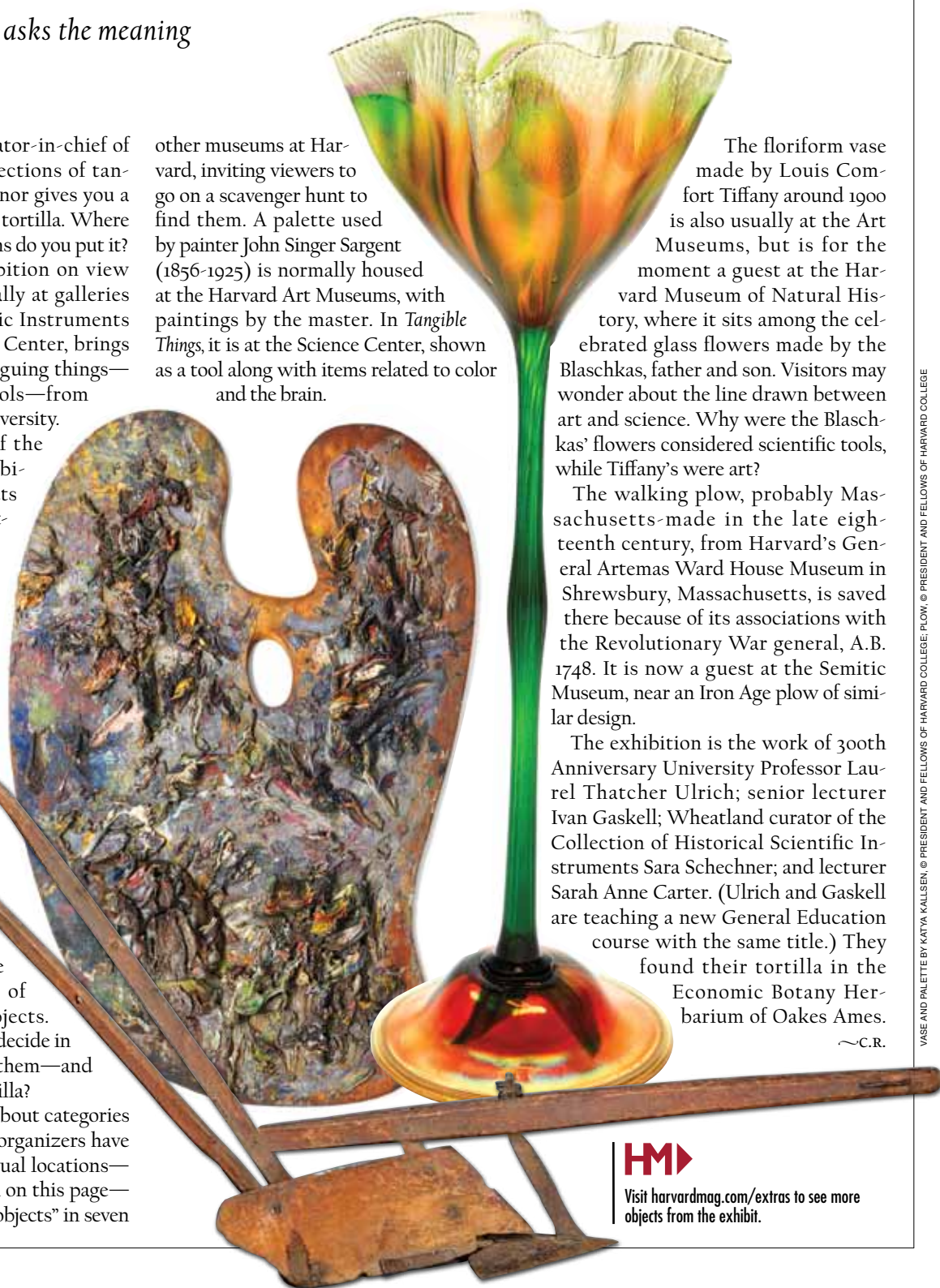
The exhibition is the work of 300th Anniversary University Professor Laurel Thatcher Ulrich; senior lecturer Ivan Gaskell; Wheatland curator of the Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments Sara Schechner; and lecturer Sarah Anne Carter. (Ulrich and Gaskell are teaching a new General Education course with the same title.) They

found their tortilla in the Economic Botany Herbarium of Oakes Ames.

~C.R.

concentrations and that still structure many of the world's museums.” In the middle of the space is an array of seemingly inscrutable objects. Viewers are challenged to decide in what collections to place them—and why. What about that tortilla?

To further their points about categories and meanings, exhibition organizers have taken things from their usual locations—including the three shown on this page—and placed them as “guest objects” in seven



Visit harvardmag.com/extras to see more objects from the exhibit.



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