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# HARVARD

MAGAZINE

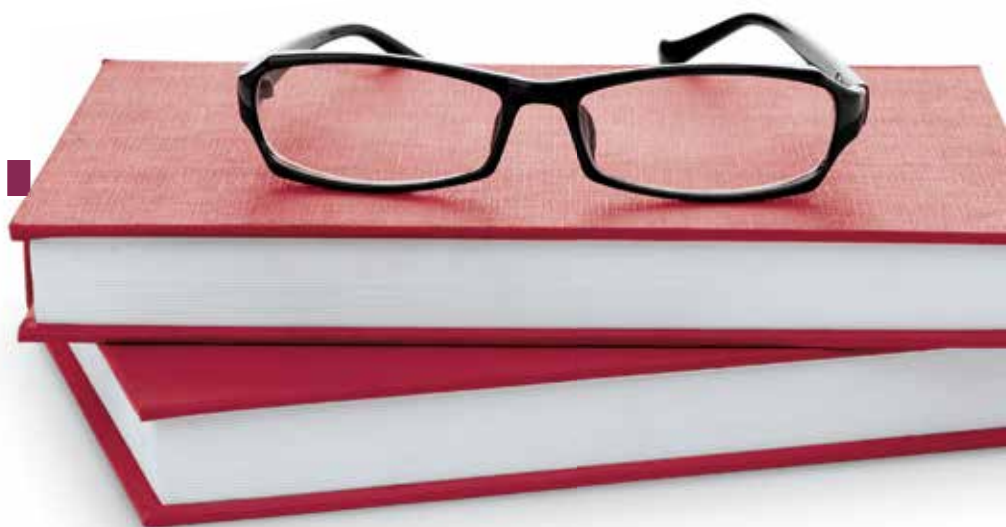
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## Sex, Gender, Science

Sarah Richardson's  
critique



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# HARVARD

MAGAZINE

## FEATURES

- 34** The Science of Sex | *by* BENNETT MCINTOSH  
Historian of science Sarah Richardson questions scholarly assumptions about sex and gender
- 40** Vita: William Monroe Trotter | *by* KERRI K. GREENIDGE  
Brief life of a black radical: 1872-1934
- 42** Made Visible | *by* MARINA N. BOLOTNIKOVA  
An exhibition on migration and borders
- 48** The Way of the Critic | *by* CRAIG LAMBERT  
A.O. Scott watches, and reviews, lots of movies

## JOHN HARVARD'S JOURNAL

- 18** Community discourse and free speech, a mapper of "social geography," the College's admissions policies upheld, more moderate endowment investment returns, how Memorial Church's bell is rung, handling sexual harassment and other news, new University Health Services director and public-service personnel, the Undergraduate undertakes sensitive research, and football kicks off

## DEPARTMENTS

- 2** Cambridge 02138 | *Letters from our readers—and observations about athletics*
- 3** The View from Mass Hall
- 12** Right Now | *The setting for successful teaching, analyzing liberal political philosophy, local zoning and climate change*
- 16A** Harvard<sup>2</sup> | *Autumn events, ballet photos, jazz in Boston and beyond—and a jazz documentarian, Nigerian conceptual art, Latin-Caribbean food, a Somerville market, and more*
- 58** Montage | *From magic to stand-up, Jimmy Hoffa, a book warehouse, traditional Pakistani music, splendid seaweed, law and forgiveness, and more*
- 68** Alumni | *Colin Cabot renews old New England crafts, alumni interviewers and honorands, and more*
- 72** The College Pump | *Life lessons circa the 1860s, the 1960s, and now*
- 88** Treasure | *Beautiful Byzantine textiles, in a new context*
- 73** Crimson Classifieds



p. 32



p. 48



p. 42

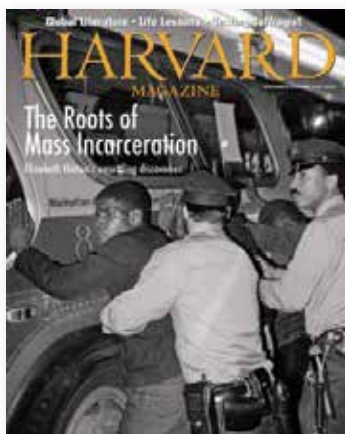
On the cover: Photograph by Stu Rosner

## Cambridge 02138

*Angela Davis, Bureau of Study Counsel, climate change*CRIME AND  
INCARCERATION

THE ARTICLE about Elizabeth Hinton ("Color and Incarceration," by Lydialyle Gibson, September-October, page 40) included an observation by Hinton when she visited a loved one inside a California prison and saw "all these black and brown families." I work for the Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC), dedicated to helping incarcerated men and women successfully transition back into society and reform our criminal justice system. I have walked into numerous prisons in California, which has one of the world's largest prison systems. Each time I step into one of these institutions, my breath is taken away by the image of a sea of black and brown bodies in oversized blue prison uniforms, slowly pacing these prison yards in a fog of hopelessness.

I've also seen how education can help break through this fog. Sam Lewis, ARC's



executive director, often speaks with me about how education dramatically changed his life during his 24 years of incarceration in a California prison. I applaud and second Hinton's call for Harvard to invest in prison education. Education is and will continue to be critical in developing the leadership of those most impacted by our justice system. As an alum, I would love to see Harvard lead in this effort.

BIKILA OCHOA, PH.D. '09  
Los Angeles

HINTON'S CRITIQUE of our criminal justice system, and her call for policy reform, are compelling and convincing. But aside from a few casual references, the article ignores an essential dimension of the story: the victims. It is as if none of the incarcerated had committed an offense graver than possession of recreational drugs. Yet in many if not most cases, the victims of crime are from

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We hope that readers and others who are interested in faculty members' research will enjoy the new "Ask a Harvard Professor" podcast. To learn more and to subscribe, go to [harvardmag.com/podcast](http://harvardmag.com/podcast). If the initial season, now under way, finds an audience (please spread the word!) and attracts support, we will make this effort a regular part of our service on readers'—and listeners'—behalf.

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# Allston in Focus

**R**ECENTLY WE dedicated the new ArtLab in Allston. Located on North Harvard Street between the Business School and Western Avenue, this jewel of a building is a microcosm of what I envision for Allston: a hive of creativity and collaboration, where Harvard students and faculty join community members to do research, teach and learn, and—in the case of the ArtLab—create stunning art. The ArtLab is already holding classes, hosting exhibits and performances, and drawing visitors from both sides of the river.

It is my hope that Allston will be a place where art, culture, engineering, science, and industry are part of the fabric of the community. Just as Kendall Square has energized East Cambridge, we hope that the lively 24-hour neighborhood we are building in Allston will generate research, provide stellar teaching and learning opportunities, and bring economic growth to the region.

For many years, Allston was just an idea, a vision of the future, but that future is rapidly coming into focus. The i-Lab, the Launch Lab X, and the Pagliuca Harvard Life Lab attract countless Harvard students, faculty, and alumni each day. About a third of all undergraduates spend time at the i-Lab during their four years at the College. At the Business School, Xander University Professor Doug Melton and Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Professor of Government Michael Sandel teach the largest undergraduate course at Harvard, “Tech Ethics,” and Paul Whiting Cherington Professor David Moss teaches a very popular undergraduate course on democracy. And, of course, our student athletes have been crossing the river for years to compete on the gridiron or in the pool.

Before long, the American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) will join the ArtLab on North Harvard Street. Thanks to a transformative gift from David and Stacey Goel, the beloved A.R.T. is finding a new home. Diane Paulus, Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director of the A.R.T., envisions the venue as something like a “teaching hospital” for theater, where students will work with faculty to create new dramatic forms for the 21st century.

And next fall the new Science and Engineering Complex will open, and another 20 percent of our students will cross the river each day to attend classes, do research, and push the boundaries of inquiry and discovery. It is fitting that a large portion of the Harvard John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences will be located in Allston. At the end of the 19th century, then-president of Harvard Charles William Eliot tried to acquire MIT! Eliot wanted to move it to Allston, close to where the Business School is now. More than a century later, we are realizing Eliot’s vision of a major Harvard engineering presence in Allston.

Beyond providing space for Harvard to grow, Allston also creates



opportunities for us to collaborate with industry and our neighboring universities in new and interesting ways. We are working with MIT and Boston University to explore housing options in the area for faculty and graduate students from all three institutions. Shortly we will name a developer to help us create office and laboratory space in our Enterprise Research Campus. We also plan to build a new hotel and conference facility to serve our growing need for executive education facilities.

Not least of all, I am excited by the opportunity to engage our neighbors from the community. For several years, students from the College have taught kids from the neighborhood through the Harvard Ed Portal. Later this fall we will re-dedicate William F. Smith Field, a collaborative project with the Boston Parks Department that gives kids better recreational opportunities. We are also working with the city and the neighborhood to create a new multi-use greenway that will extend from the library in Allston all the way to the Charles River.

For most of us, our college experience is tied inextricably to a sense of place. For future graduates of Harvard, that sense of place will likely meld iconic Cambridge with the vibrancy of Allston. I encourage you to come back to see our bold new campus taking shape.

Sincerely,

the same disadvantaged socioeconomic, racial, or ethnic groups as the perpetrators. Moreover, victim compensation, sometimes in lieu of incarceration, should be a key element of humane and effective offender rehabilitation.

In portraying the perpetrators as the victims, the author airbrushes the real victims out of the story. Truly, justice is blind.

ANDREW SOROKOWSKI, A.M. '75  
Rockville, Md.

THE ARTICLE was disappointing because it left out an important part of the story. Gibson overlooked James Forman Jr.'s book, *Locking Up Our Own*, subtitled *Crime and Punishment in Black America*, which won the Pulitzer Prize for general nonfiction in 2018. I am interested in the topic because I have been a criminal defense lawyer for most of my career, beginning in 1981.

The article sums up Hinton's book as: [telling] the story of how federal policies—shaped by presidential administrations and endorsed by Congress—ratcheted up surveillance and punishment in black urban neighborhoods from the 1960s through the 1980s, how criminalization was steadily expanded, and how all of this was driven by deeply held assumptions about the cultural and behavioral inferiority of black Americans.

Gibson overlooks the most important point of *Locking Up Our Own*: that “amid a surge in crime and drug addiction,” black mayors, judges, and police chiefs who took office in the 1970s, “fearing that the gains of the civil rights movement were being undermined by lawlessness, embraced tough-on-crime measures, including longer sentences and aggressive police tactics” (as the dust jacket puts it). Those officials responded to the demands of black people to do something about the crime in their neighborhoods.

There were big changes in the late 1980s

#### SPEAK UP, PLEASE

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with the advent of the federal sentencing guidelines. Drug cases, even for small amounts of illegal drugs, were prosecuted in federal court instead of state court to take advantage of long mandatory minimum sentences. While many black people were sentenced to prison for crimes involving crack cocaine in urban areas, white people were imprisoned for methamphetamine offenses in rural areas.

In effect, our country decided to treat illegal drug possession and sales as a criminal-justice problem instead of a public-health challenge. Many public officials, black and white, were making decisions with the best of intentions that resulted in what is now called mass incarceration. Fear of crime motivated all races to do something. I hope Hinton is telling the whole story to her classes about how we got to now.

PATRICK DEATON, M.P.A. '87  
St. Louis

THE STATISTICS are painfully clear: 50 percent of U.S. murders are committed by 6 percent of our population, black males. A very high violent crime rate in black communities requires police presence to (a) protect potential victims, mostly black, and (b) deter more serious crime. But Hinton concludes that history and white racism are to blame for black crime and imprisonment. Are we to believe that the black community bears no responsibility for its behavior?

RICHARD MERLO '57  
Elkin, N.C.

#### ANGELA DAVIS

*Harvard Magazine's* hagiographic paean to Angela Davis (“Revisiting Angela Davis,” the sidebar to “Color and Incarceration,” September-October, page 44) at least does touch on reality by noting a few of the details of her part in a horrible terrorist murder in the 1970s. Too bad the tone about that incident is so forgiving and low key.

However, to then pass off her totalitarian sympathies by simply saying she was a “member” of the Communist Party is an outrageous evasion. She was the vice presidential candidate of the American Communist Party twice, supported the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, and was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize in 1979 in Moscow. It's nice that Davis cares, or says she does, about prisoners in this country. However, when Czech dissident Jeri Pelikan publicly called

(please turn to page 6)

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## 7 WARE STREET

## About Athletics

AS IN OTHER REALMS—thousands of courses, hundreds of nonsports extracurriculars—Harvard offers undergraduates a cornucopia of athletic options: 42 varsity teams; nearly a million square feet of facilities in Allston (plus the boat houses, sailing center, and an equestrian venue), many buffed up courtesy of the Harvard Campaign. The Crimson sportsmen and -women are supported by scores of professional staff members, among them coaches with national reputations. Grateful graduates have endowed 28 positions (the athletics website lists 11 remaining opportunities).

This is a *big sports* program happily untainted by the defects of *big-time* collegiate sports. Crimson youth are not on athletic scholarships—which reduce many “student athletes” elsewhere to peonage. They do not enroll in junk classes and concentrations, with special tutors and free passes that constitute officially sanctioned cheating. They do not live in segregated dorms. Their coaches do not earn 10 or 20 times tenured professors’ pay.

All to the good. Nonetheless, the substantial athletic operation is a human enterprise, and so can find itself enmeshed in controversies. Harvard *athletes* are supposed to be *students* above all, so their experiences must be seen in the context of their educations. Both issues merit consideration.

HARVARD ATHLETICS in recent years has been buffeted by the problems evident in the larger society. There was the 2016 *Harvard Crimson* exposé of the men’s soccer team “rating” their female peers in crudely sexual terms (the men’s season, and chance at NCAA play, was canceled), and the self-reporting of similar behavior by the male cross-country runners (they were put on athletic probation). In 2018, the department had to adjust coaches’ compensation, reflecting persistent pay disparities between men and women (see [harvardmag.com/coach-pay-18](http://harvardmag.com/coach-pay-18)). The introduction of an Ivy basketball tournament meant more postseason play—and the schedule highlighted the unequal exposure given the men’s and women’s teams (see [harvardmag.com/ivy-scheduling-18](http://harvardmag.com/ivy-scheduling-18)). The enterprise is more commercial, with professional marketing and a proliferation of sponsor logos and tie-ins. The Crimson Pub in Dillon Lounge now serves alcohol. Although College admissions were not tainted by last spring’s Varsity

Blues scandal, the dismissal of fencing coach Peter Brand this summer (News Briefs, September–October, page 33) was a sharp reminder that financial conflicts of interest remain ever-tempting.

Some of these traumas were self-inflicted. Sexist youngsters apparently still need to grow up, and to learn the hard way about expressing themselves in a “scouting report”—and because one-quarter of them age out each year, such learnin’ sometimes needs repeating. Senior managers ought not to need equal-compensation laws to do the right thing by their subordinates. And so on.

Compounding the problem: whatever has been learned as a result of these experiences has largely been kept in-house. The discovery of problems and resulting reforms are communicated and effected internally. The larger community hears about them after the fact and by email or official statement, if at all: the responsible authorities are rarely available to discuss their findings.

That seems unfortunate for an educational institution: a missed chance to model behavior for the athletes, and, de facto, a determination that what happens in (athletic) Allston, stays in Allston. And isolating what student-athletes experience and learn deprives fellow students of the benefits of those life lessons. The opportunities forgone loom large for both cohorts.

THE STAKES ARE considerable. About 1,200 undergraduates, one-fifth of those enrolled, participate in intercollegiate sports. Their practices, games, and travel (many weekends for many sports; and to California for the footballers, and Hawaii and China for the hoopsters of late) impose significant demands on their time during semesters *and* breaks. About 15 percent of courses, by some estimates, are automatically out of reach for at least some athletes given those obligations. Practices that run into the evening mean that during part of the year, the affected students aren’t sharing meals with peers in their Houses. And not a few athletes note that in a community that prizes research and education, they stand out, and apart, and even feel stereotyped as (dumb) jocks.

Of course, the athletes, like fellow undergraduates, choose how to spend their time. They are disciplined about their days; they learn from coaches who are important mentors; they develop close friendships and identities (as other students do in their extracurriculars); they internalize aspects of

leadership; and they learn to absorb losses and rebound to compete again. For most, this is their last hurrah, and many athletes value their Harvard sports experiences very highly.

But in a community devoted to inclusion, dispelling some of those stereotypes and sharing some of those passions, emotions, and disciplines would seem to be reciprocally beneficial. A few “community” sports (night football; basketball and hockey contests) draw a crowd. But most don’t, so the athletes’ labors are often unheralded—and their schedules, in turn, prevent them from attending classmates’ plays and concerts.

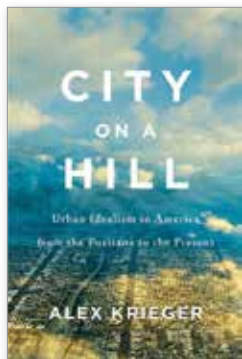
Male athletes in the bigger sports apparently still skew toward economics and are underrepresented in other concentrations. (Those ec grads, whose teamwork and will to win appeal to Wall Street, often end up in finance—to Harvard’s philanthropic benefit.) Given the rules on unrecognized single-gender social organizations, some athletes will have to choose between being team captains or belonging to a final club.

Some of these differences are matters of taste. But the object of a residential college is to expose students to unfamiliar ideas, activities, and disciplines. Simply enabling high-school athletes, or actors, to pursue that talent at a higher level, without encountering the other riches on offer, undercuts the premise of the place. Given the number of athletes, their potential (and real) separateness, and the expense of sustaining them, there is an obligation here to *make* all students’ experience more genuinely inclusive (perhaps even having nonathletes take phys-ed), for their learning and growth.

A GOOD BEGINNING would be articulating a vision for Harvard athletics congruent with the College’s academic aims. Conceiving that vision would have to engage faculty members and students broadly, and include steps to effect the resulting plan through the whole College. The Faculty of Arts and Sciences’ review of athletics (see page 25) may evolve into what is needed. The new leaders of the faculty’s standing committee on athletic sports—Xander University Professor Douglas Melton and Coolidge professor of history Maya Jasanoff—may bring fresh perspective, and the respect of their academic colleagues, to the committee’s “general oversight of...all the Faculty’s athletic programs.”

Why waste a new opportunity to enlarge Harvard’s vision? Time to play ball.

—JOHN S. ROSENBERG, *Editor*



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 from the Puritans to the Present*

**Alex Krieger**

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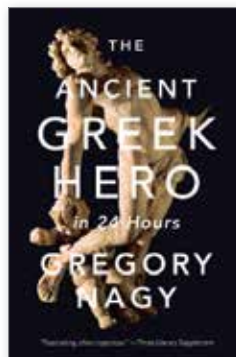
—Frederick Steiner,  
 University of Pennsylvania

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**LETTERS**

on her to defend his imprisoned dissident comrades, she refused. When Alan Dershowitz asked her to support Eastern bloc political prisoners, she told him that "they are all Zionist fascists and opponents of socialism." Which of course calls attention to her strong support for the anti-Zionist BDS movement, which aims to dismantle the Jewish homeland.

Angela Davis is a thoroughly reprehensible extreme leftist and a hypocrite when it comes to prisoners' rights. It is a shame that such a puff piece on her made it into your pages, and it is a disgrace for Harvard to have anything to do with glorifying or honoring her.

JONATHAN BURACK '64  
 East Lansing, Mich.

IN "Revisiting Angela Davis," on the exciting, upcoming exhibit from the papers of Angela Davis recently acquired by the Schlesinger Library, there is a questionable characterization of the "attack on the Marin County Courthouse" in 1970 that resulted in her arrest and trial on multiple charges related to this event.

Often referred to as the August 7 Revolt or Rebellion, the courthouse action was initiated by Jonathan Jackson, the younger brother of George Jackson, who was the most influential of the radical black prisoners referred to as the Soledad Brothers after being accused of the

murder of a guard in the California state prison of that name. The sidebar states that the courthouse action was "intended to free the Soledad Brothers but instead left four people dead...," a claim that was actually used by the prosecution in her trial to support the argument that Davis's personal relationship with George Jackson was the principal motive for her involvement with the incident. The prosecution could not present definitive evidence for this claim, as detailed in Davis's *Autobiography*, describing the cross-examination of chief prosecutor Albert Harris by the defense on that point. The implication that the four deaths resulting from the action were attributable to the brutality of Jackson and three militant prisoners during that incident was also contested in the cross-examination. Jonathan Jackson, prisoners James McClain and William Christ-



To read more letters on race and incarceration, climate change and divestment, and other topics, visit [harvardmag.com](http://harvardmag.com).



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#### 8pm - Curtains Up

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### *Saturday*

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Head downstairs to Corbu Spa & Salon for a mani/pedi - it's holiday party season, after all.



#### 12pm - Hot Chocolate Crawl

Shop your way across the city & turn it into a hot chocolate crawl! We recommend starting with L.A. Burdick.

#### 7pm - Fill Up

Wind down with a homecooked meal at Henrietta's Table, complete with gingerbread cheesecake for dessert!



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## LETTERS

mas, and Judge Haley were shot and killed inside a van by San Quentin guards in line with the policy at that time that all escapes must be prevented, even if the killing of hostages might be involved.

ANNA WEXLER, Ed.D. '98  
Jamaica Plain, Mass.

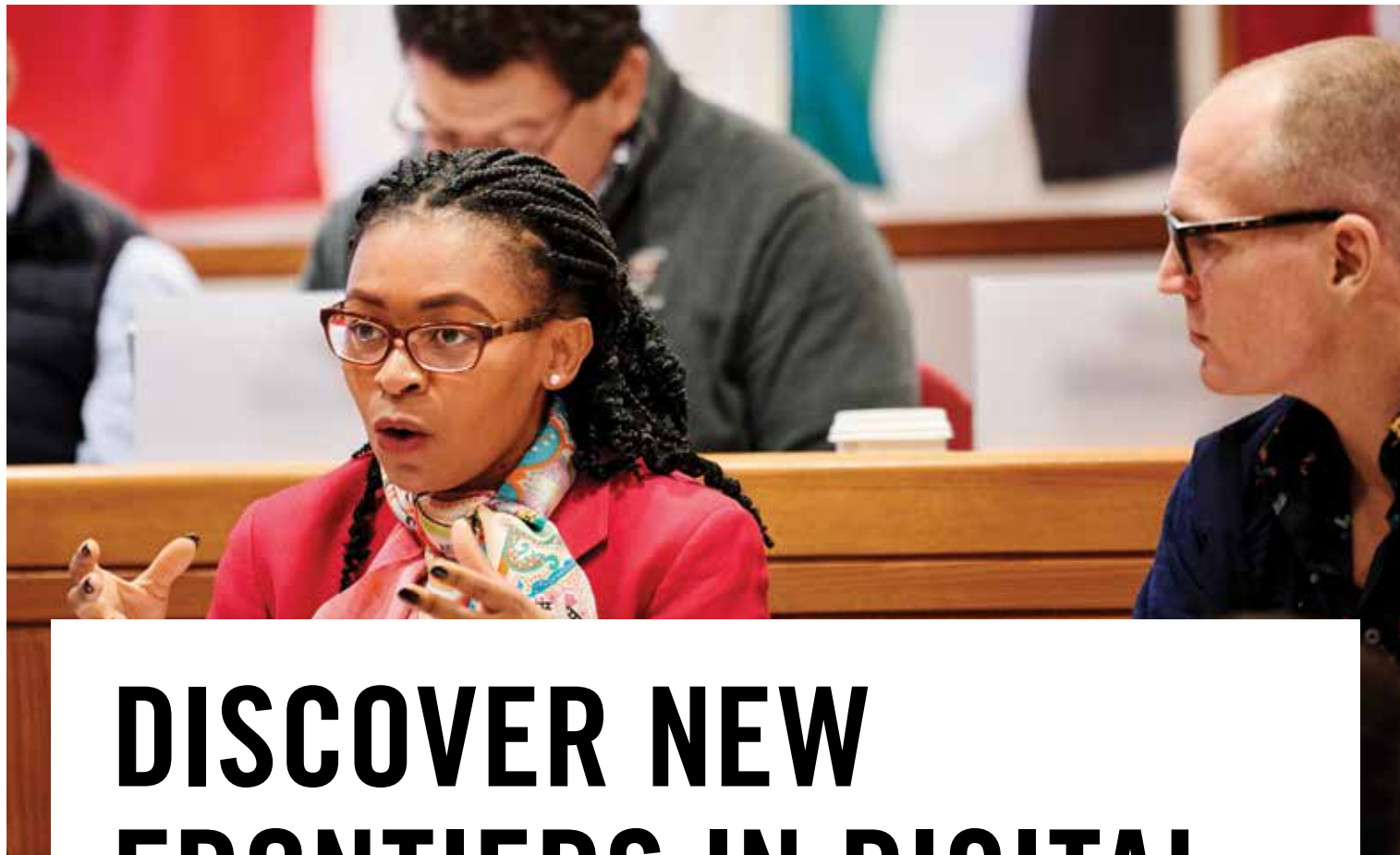
## BUREAU OF STUDY COUNSEL

WE ARE the five living former directors and associate directors of the Bureau of Study Counsel (BSC), representing nearly a half-century (1971-2019) of the BSC's existence since its founding in the mid 1940s. We are concerned about the characterizations of the bureau offered as justification for its closing ("Bureau of Study Counsel, R.I.P."; [harvardmag.com/bsc-to-arc-19](http://harvardmag.com/bsc-to-arc-19)). We appreciate the magazine's recognition that something important to students' educational experience will likely be lost ("A Chill in the Air?" September-October, page 5). In our direct and extensive experiences of the BSC, we know it as an office that is deeply committed to an educational mission and model and that has continuously evolved to support the learning and developmental needs of an ever-changing student population.

The primary mission of the BSC has always been educational. BSC services have helped students sharpen their academic skills (reading, time management, problem-solving) with the broader goal of helping each student develop an independent mind that can, among other things, take thoughtful perspective on sources of knowledge and authority; reckon with complexity and uncertainty; generate and evaluate new possibilities; engage difficult endeavors with rigor and purpose; and weigh choices and consequences against deeply considered values. These capabilities are central to the College's mission and the aims of a liberal arts and sciences education and are as relevant today as they were in the post-World War II era of the BSC's founding.

When the College hired a new director in 2005, it expressly reconfirmed the BSC's mission as an academic support office, not a mental-health service—a clarification that was necessary given that Harvard had moved oversight of the BSC to the University Health Services the previous year (a shift which the BSC counselors at that time cautioned against). In 2015, the staff welcomed the move back to the College as a renewed endorsement of the BSC's original and continuing focus on learning and development.





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## LETTERS

During the last few decades, at Harvard and beyond, the term "mental health" has slipped almost unquestioned into everyday parlance and has become overly applied to human experience, including the inherently personal and emotional aspects of education and learning. The best educational/developmental support welcomes the rich complex whole of students' experience of learning. Although such support—including that offered by the BSC—is appropriately informed by the fields of psychology and neuroscience, it is not mental-health treatment.

Listening closely to students' experiences of learning has helped the BSC staff identify and bring early attention to emerging educational issues and trends—often long in advance of these becoming College priorities—including diversity, inclusion, and belonging in the University; plagiarism and academic integrity; academic stress and resilience; the role of technology in the college experience; and the value of a holistic approach to learning and development. The BSC has a longstanding record of hiring diverse staff from the fields of education and psychology as well as a history of drawing upon and contributing to evolving models and materials in the field of student learning and development.

For over 70 years the BSC has provided an educational setting in which students from every background have found the practical support, illuminating perspectives, and personal courage needed to engage in transformational learning. We five educators who lived and led two-thirds of the BSC's long history are grateful to have been a part of such an innovative and inclusive learning service dedicated to promoting the intellectual and ethical development of our students.

SUZANNE RENNA, Ed.D. '88

*Former associate director and  
former acting director*

ANN FLECK-HENDERSON '64, Ph.D.

*Former associate director*

JEAN WU, Ed.D. '84

*Former associate director*

ABIGAIL LIPSON, Ph.D.

*Former director*

SHEILA REINDL '80, Ed.D. '95

*Former associate director*

## CLIMATE CHANGE

IN AN ESSAY on "Climate Change" [President Lawrence S. Bacow's regular letter to readers, September-October, page 3], it is stated that "The scientific consensus is by

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now clear.” Convenient, because there is not a word in the article to support this so-called science. Nor is there any mention that carbon dioxide, a small fraction of one-half of 1 percent of the earth’s atmosphere, is essential for plant life, and so for all life on earth—including us. One shudders to think how long life could “flourish” in this academically ideal “decarbonized future.”

Of course, the “scientific consensus” on the structure of the universe was settled by Ptolemy, creation by the Bible, gravity by Newton—until someone like Galileo, or Darwin, or Einstein, with the imagination and courage to challenge consensus, follow-the-crowd thinking came along. One hopes for something better from a major university. *Nullius in verba.*

WILLIAM J. JONES, J.D. ’60  
Warren, N.J.

*Editor’s note:* The nearly universal scientific consensus, worldwide and among Harvard experts, is that increased man-made emissions of heat-trapping gases such as carbon dioxide and methane are accelerating the warming of the planet and climate change—as has been scientifically predicted for decades. No one disputes that plants use carbon dioxide. Decarbonization refers to reducing man-made emissions from combusting fossil fuels, burning forests, and so on—not to changing the natural chemistry of the atmosphere. The magazine’s extensive coverage of these issues is searchable online at [www.harvardmagazine.com](http://www.harvardmagazine.com); the president’s letter is about University affairs from his perspective, not an article or a report summarizing the underlying science.

I READ WITH admiration and sadness the Undergraduate column by Isa Flores-Jones ’19, who writes of the disempowerment she felt as a climate activist trying, in vain, to convince Harvard to divest its holdings from oil and gas companies before her graduation (“Movement Ecology,” September-October, page 35). As Undergraduate columnist from 1985 to 1987, I well remember the “Divest Now” balloon tethered to my and many classmates’ graduation mortar boards—referring not to the University’s fossil-fuel assets, but to holdings in companies doing business with then-apartheid South Africa.

Then, as now, the Overseers made student activists feel they had no agency. As Flores-Jones describes: they listened politely, acknowledged stu-

(please turn to page 86)



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**TURN TO PAGE 53**  
to browse the Holiday Reading List

## LETTERS

(continued from page 11)

dents' quaint idealism, and disclaimed any power to change the status quo. Affirmation and moral conviction came, instead, from afar: a graduation-day phone call from Archbishop Desmond Tutu to student movement leaders, assuring them their efforts would matter in the end. And matter they did.

Although the lesson of history is that we don't learn from history, the denouement of the present divestment story seems particularly obvious. Couldn't Harvard simply cut to the finish, and show that America's most powerful institutions can occasionally be leaders rather than laggards?

CLAUDIA POLSKY '87  
Associate clinical professor of law  
and director, Environmental Law Clinic  
UC, Berkeley School of Law

## BASEBALL'S RULES

JACOB SWEET's baseball profile, "All Instincts" (May-June, page 32), states that a batter cannot steal first base. But a batter may attempt to steal first on a wild pitch when there are no on-base runners.

PAUL CORAN  
Rockville, Md.

*Jacob Sweet clarifies:* This is true in the independent Atlantic League as of July, but not in college baseball or MLB as of press time.

## ABOUT THAT VOLE

ALTHOUGH I greatly appreciated the article about me ("A New Way of Being in the World," September-October, page 67), there's something I would like to clarify. The article ends with a vole who is cornered on my porch by two of my cats. She knows she can't escape, she believes the end has come, and she covers her eyes with her hands. That part's okay, but I've had some criticism from readers for letting this happen, and the truth (which didn't appear in the article) is that I didn't let it happen. I ran toward the cats, shouting at them, they turned to look at me, the vole saw she had a moment to escape, and she dashed away to safety. That's in the book, and I'd appreciate your publishing this letter so readers won't think too badly of me.

ELIZABETH MARSHALL THOMAS '54  
Peterborough, N.H.

## KUDOS

THANK YOU and Nell Porter Brown for the "Explorations and Curiosities" series

(Harvard Squared). It's drawn our attention to all kinds of experiences we would have missed otherwise—just last week we spent a wonderful afternoon at the fascinating Public Health Museum in Tewksbury, which I wouldn't have known about without Porter Brown's article in the magazine.

TARA KELLY '91  
Gloucester, Mass.

I ENJOYED All in a Day about Worcester ("Purgatory—and Beyond," Harvard Squared, September-October, page 16N). But I was sorry it did not mention the great Korean restaurant Simjang. The food is outstanding, the staff welcoming; they even hosted a poetry reading where I had a chance to share some of my own dishes of poems about Korea. I hope others discover Simjang, too.

DAVID MCCANN  
Korea Foundation professor of  
Korean literature emeritus  
Watertown, Mass.

## ERRATA

THE FOURTH PARAGRAPH of the Vita on suffragist Adella Hunt Logan (September-October, page 54) contained inaccuracies in dating and other details involving Hunt Logan's interactions with Susan B. Anthony, which were pointed out by Anthony biographer Lynn Sherr. Details appear at [harvardmag.com/vita-logan-19](http://harvardmag.com/vita-logan-19). We regret the errors.

The profile of Elizabeth Marshall Thomas ("A New Way of Being in the World," September-October, page 67) reported that she had "three dogs and three cats"—but one of those dogs is her son's.

The report on a collection obtained by Radcliffe's Schlesinger Library ("Revisiting Angela Davis," September-October, page 44) indicated that Professor Elizabeth Hinton and two graduate students sorted and organized the materials for an exhibition. In fact, their selections for the exhibition were preceded by processing of the materials by Schlesinger staff archivists Jenny Gotwals, Amber Moore, and Jehan Sinclair.

As published, the letter from Robert H. Goldstein (September-October, page 6) omitted a significant word, rendering "my humorously intended comments incomprehensible," he notes. The letter should have read: "Among certain ethnic groups, the theological question of when life begins is reputed to be *answered*," "On graduation from law school," with the italicized word here restored.





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- explore the latest in scholarship and teaching under way at the University. See, for example, "The Science of Sex" in this issue (page 34),

about the research of historian and philosopher Sarah Richardson.

- cover Harvard faculty and alumni who are making a difference. See "Where Teachers and Students Thrive" (page 12) about efforts by Murphy research professor of education Susan Moore Johnson to demonstrate that when teachers find positive support in their workplace, students do better.
- hire Harvard undergraduates to report on the student perspective during the academic year and during the summer. See "Permission to Know," about the ethical and intellectual challenges of writing a senior thesis (page 29).

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# Right Now

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## LEARNING CULTURE

### Where Teachers and Students Thrive

BEGINNING IN 2009, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation funded a \$575-million effort to hire and retain “effective” teachers at large, urban, public-school districts around the country. The initiative sought to “reward and retain effective teachers while dismissing ineffective ones,” writes Murphy research professor of education Susan Moore Johnson in her new book, *Where Teachers Thrive: Organizing Schools for Success* (Harvard Education Press). Yet despite its

funding, the seven-year program failed to significantly improve student achievement or increase graduation rates.

The philosophy backing that intervention and reflected in organizations like Teach For America assumes that improving K-12 education is a matter of dropping good teachers into schools. But this ignores the larger school context in which teachers are working—and a lot of what it means to be a good teacher, Johnson argues, depends

on how well schools are organized. And in her view, what she calls the “egg-crate” model of schools, in which teachers work alone and have few formal opportunities to learn about what their colleagues are doing, is pervasive in U.S. schools, with deleterious effects for students and educators alike.

Johnson’s work as an education researcher began in the 1970s, after nearly a decade of teaching English at Brookline (Massachusetts) High School in an environment she

describes as ideal, where teams of teachers wrote curricula together and conferred about how their classes were going. When she started her doctorate, she assumed other former teachers had had similar experiences. They hadn’t. “That was the beginning of this inquiry,” she says. “That was a kernel of ‘Oh, this is very important and it’s largely ignored by researchers and the public.’ There was very little research and writing about the context of teachers’ work.”

At the turn of this century, Johnson says, economics research indicated that high-quality teachers (usually measured in terms of their students’ standardized test scores) are linked to better outcomes for their students, such as college attendance





and higher earnings. “Rarely, if ever, has academic research had such an immediate and far-reaching impact on education policy,” she writes. After 2000, policymakers aimed to increase schools’ “*human capital*—the sum total of their teachers’ qualifications, skills, and professional habits.” That not only produced costly failed programs, but also militated against the kind of ground-level, context-dependent research Johnson conducted.

*Where Teachers Thrive* is organized around the most important themes that have emerged from that research. It draws in part from the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, her Graduate School of Education program, initiated in 1998, seeking to understand the experiences of teachers in high-poverty urban schools. Using classroom interviews with 257 teachers and principals from 14 elementary, middle, and high schools in Massachusetts, the book maps out Johnson’s findings on some of the most contested aspects of the teacher experience, such as evaluations, pay, and responses to student conduct. She is not prescriptive about the merits of different educational philosophies, showing instead how varied approaches, like so-called no-excuses schools or progressive ones, can be successful if they apply systems that allow them to realize their values and goals (see “Rethinking the American High School,” May-June, page 11). Indeed, Johnson presents few categorical answers at all. Whether standardized tests are good or bad—or whether teacher evaluations are effective—depends, she holds, on how schools use them.

Part of what underlies her work, Johnson explains, is the demographic shift that took place among teachers at the turn of the century. After the liberalizing social movements of the 1960s and ’70s, Johnson says, “schools could no longer count on women and African-American men to become teachers”—they had other career options. Now, teachers are drawn from a broader professional class who can move to other professions if teaching doesn’t work out. Turnover has increased tremendously. This new cohort of teachers “didn’t expect to get rich,” Johnson explains. “They hoped that they could afford teaching, but if they couldn’t do the work that mattered to them [in their schools], they could and would and did leave. No one before that had ever thought about the problem of turnover.”

Suddenly, principals had to worry about making their schools appealing places to work, so good teachers would *want* to stay:



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making it possible for them to teach creatively, not just to the standardized tests; allowing them to assume leadership roles influencing their schools' values and practices; and implementing thorough, good-faith evaluation systems that help teachers improve, rather than look for ways to punish them. In schools where evaluation systems worked well, Johnson writes, "teachers appreciated receiving detailed recommendations that were grounded in thorough observations...to be effective, evaluators must have a deep understanding of instruction and, ideally, be able to demonstrate the skills they recommend."

Johnson says people often imagine "a trade-off between teachers and whether they like their jobs," on the one hand, and students, on the other. "The assumption...is that it's zero sum: what the teachers gain the students lose. But the research is pretty clear that [when] teachers report their workplace is a positive support for them, students do better," even controlling for demographic differences.

In her final chapter, "What Pay Means to Teachers," Johnson addresses one of the most publicly visible debates about how the Unit-

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ed States treats teachers. Those who are intrinsically motivated to teach, as she knows directly, aren't trying to get rich. But neither should citizens imagine that high-quality education can be done on the cheap. Cost-cutting schemes "can save only so much before they begin to compromise students' learning," she writes. "Only when our society ac-

knowledges and funds the costs of a first-class education system will our schools and teachers succeed in providing it."

~MARINA N. BOLOTNIKOVA

SUSAN MOORE JOHNSON WEBSITE:

[projectnrgt.gse.harvard.edu/people/susan-moore-johnson](http://projectnrgt.gse.harvard.edu/people/susan-moore-johnson)

## METAPHYSICAL FOUNDATIONS

# What Ails Modern Liberalism?

A CENTRAL TENET of modern liberal political philosophy is that individuals can be governed only by consent. But both the nature of this consent and the conditions under which it may be obtained have been debated for centuries. In his new book, *The Theology of Liberalism* (Harvard University Press), Beren professor of government Eric M. Nelson enters that debate, positing that liberalism took a "fateful wrong turn" in the 1970s. The problem, he argues, emerged because liberal thinkers forgot their metaphysical roots.

Liberal thought, Nelson writes, sprang from answers to a longstanding problem for Christianity: how can suffering and injustice exist in the world if God is both good and all-powerful? The orthodox position, which Saint Augustine championed, blames human sin. Humans cannot choose to be good, and

the world's ills follow from their unavoidable errors. A dissenting group, the Pelagians, asserted instead that "human beings are fully able to choose" to be good. In that case, humans can be held accountable for the results of their actions—but if they choose correct conduct, they can merit salvation. As Nelson explained in an interview, liberalism is "downstream of all that," hinging on the Pelagian concept of humans as freely choosing agents. From that point follow contracts, democratic political representation, and the notion of both accountability and reward for our decisions.

In the 1970s, John Rawls initiated a rejection of this brand of liberalism. Before becoming a philosopher, he had studied theology, planning to join the priesthood. His undergraduate thesis, which sparked Nelson's project, dealt explicitly with the question of how and whether humans can be redeemed in a

religious sense. An anti-Pelagian, Rawls first denied the possibility of meriting salvation, and then maintained this denial of merit, even after abandoning religion.

Modern, Rawlsian liberals, unknowingly drawing from this theological debate, hold that a person's actions are most often "arbitrary from a moral point of view" because they are contingent on circumstance. Humans do not choose their birth families or the traits they inherit, so how can they *deserve* any consequent benefits? A truly fair society, such thinkers claim, would eliminate all such unmerited differences. Only then could individuals be free to consent to liberal government.

The problem, Nelson argues, is that humans cannot claim to know what perfect equality would entail. "For what we are really asking," he expanded in the interview, "is whether a world characterized by the existing distribution of natural endowments among human beings is, from the point of view of justice, the best of all possible worlds." While most modern liberal philosophers would say no, Nelson writes that he sees no way to know for sure.

Religious faith, he says, can provide an answer: those Christians, for example, who believe their God is perfectly just, and the world



“What we are really asking is whether a world characterized by the existing distribution of natural endowments...is the best of all possible worlds.”

is decidedly fallen, can answer that a better world than this one must exist. But without such beliefs, the question is harder to answer.

Equally difficult is the problem of whether leveling advantages, as Rawlsian liberalism advocates, could alter someone's character unrecognizably. A man with brown hair may remain the same person if he dyes his hair red, or even if a pill turns his hair blond. But what if the government gave him a pill to change his personality, making him smarter and easier to work with? If he is not the same man, it seems difficult to say that the original individual has benefited.

Nelson worries that attempts to answer such questions breed illiberal attitudes, both in academic circles and in the general public. Intelligence pills may be an esoteric example, but he argues that many liberals advocate redistributing wealth or eliminating educational selectivity based on the same denial of merit. Such liberals, he has noticed, increasingly assume they know what is best for others. More pointedly, he offers, it seems counterintuitive to uphold free choice by forcibly redistributing wealth.

If these arguments read like veiled attacks on egalitarianism, Nelson insisted during the interview that they are not. “We can agree to distribute all kinds of ways, for all kinds of reasons,” he emphasized. If one accepts that economic inequality breeds political instability, for example, “that’s a very good reason to mitigate inequality.” His book

critiques the idea that liberalism *requires* redistribution, not redistribution itself. The two ideas can coexist, and often do, “but they needn’t.” Their exact relationship, absent a link of necessity, becomes “a matter of fine-grained judgment about what kind of society we want to live in.”

A modern, Rawlsian liberal might expect policy decisions to point toward a perfect equality in which all individuals can participate as equals in a liberal state. But as Nelson counters, “It’s not that there’s some kind of cosmic verdict that will tell us what tax policy should be.”

By returning to a Pelagian appreciation for human choice and accountability, he believes liberalism can avoid the difficulties of attempting to ascertain such a cosmic verdict.

Governments can compel egalitarian redistributions so long as their subjects consent to be governed in that way, even if an individual’s consent entails mere participation in the society the government administers. Consent need not be necessary for each action the government takes, Nelson suggests. The key lies in respecting the individual’s original consent to be governed.

~JOHN A. GRIFFIN

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#### TEMPERATE ZONING

## Land Use and Climate Change

“THE FIRST MAN who, having enclosed a piece of ground, bethought himself of saying, ‘This is mine,’ and found people simple enough to believe him, was the real founder of civil society.” So argued Jean-Jacques Rousseau in 1754. And so bemoans

anyone who wants to tackle the might of NIMBYism and local property rights in the global fight against climate change today.

To combat the polluting byproducts of civilization’s development, many environmental researchers agree that cities need to become denser. Very often, though, the

trickle-up politics of parochial interests and local sovereignty overpower broader societal needs. When environmental theory becomes zoning practice, few suburban homeowners want their neighbors to convert their garages into granny flats, or see tall, multifamily walk-ups replacing bu-

colic bungalows. Far-off hills are fitter for green initiatives.

In response, second-year Harvard Law student Grant A. Glovin argues that there could be a creative legal solution to this conflict of interests that keeps Americans living in sprawling developments and heavily dependent on cars. The winner of the 2018-2019 Environmental Law Institute's Constitutional Environmental Law Writing Competition proposed applying New Jersey's Mount Laurel zoning doctrine more broadly, to reduce suburban sprawl and combat climate change.

The Mount Laurel doctrine was the New Jersey Supreme Court's solution to a separate, but related, social problem: exclusionary zoning practices that promote inequality. The case began when low-income African-American communities started to get pushed out of the suburb of Mount Laurel, near Camden, in the 1960s, after the local government rejected plans for an affordable-housing project. A resulting pair of New Jersey Supreme Court cases, in 1975 and 1983, ruled that local governments could not create negative social externalities through their zoning policies.

According to the Mount Laurel decisions, the constitutional need for a fairer, more socioeconomically and racially diverse society outweighs a local government's prerogative to push affordable-housing obligations to neighboring townships. Mount Laurel argues that local regulation must promote the general welfare of the state as a whole, rather than welfare within a specific locality, and that adequate state-wide housing for people of all income brackets is part of the state's general welfare.

Glovin argues that climate change, like affordable housing, should be considered in the same way, and thus could be legally championed by using Mount Laurel as the precedent. He admits that this argument would shift power to local courts and put judges in activist roles, raising the fundamental question of whether the U.S. legal structure should be used in this way. But Glovin believes the environmental stakes are high enough to warrant such activism.

inherent conflict between NIMBYism and global environmentalism through existing political structures. For Glovin, this political problem warrants a legal workaround. He writes: "We are running out of solutions to an urgent problem, and judicial intervention appears to be the best remaining hope."

—CHERONE DUGGAN

GRANT GLOVIN EMAIL:  
[gglovin@jd20.law.harvard.edu](mailto:gglovin@jd20.law.harvard.edu)



The legal logic of Mount Laurel suggests that local regulation must promote the general welfare.

Otherwise, the status quo will never change: local citizens and their governments will quash zoning proposals for denser housing, thereby keeping greater metropolitan areas both too sprawling and too sparsely populated to support better public-transit systems, leaving commuters car-bound and carbon-dependent.

The legal logic of Mount Laurel has been heralded as both groundbreaking and highly controversial. It underpins New Jersey's Fair Housing Act and furnishes activists with a powerful legal argument for fairer zoning policies. But it has not been legally adopted beyond New Jersey's borders—and it has been legally and bureaucratically challenged by townships across that state for decades. (That includes Mount Laurel itself, where the construction of the original affordable housing project that launched the case was stalled for years.)

Glovin's legal arguments for widening the Mount Laurel doctrine's scope are logical and promising, but will likely be politically unpalatable to many. That buttresses one of Glovin's main points: the parochial entrenchment of local government structures makes it very difficult to solve the





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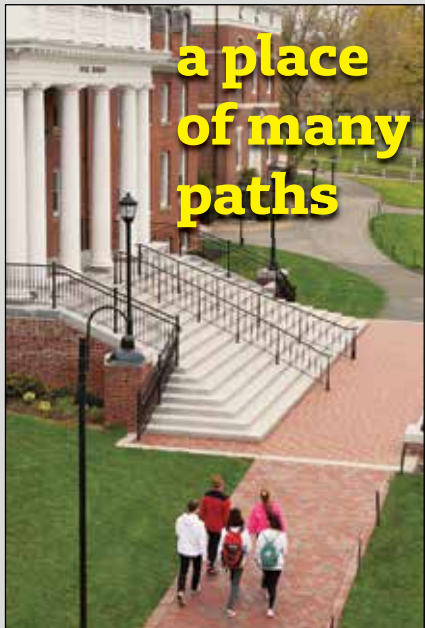
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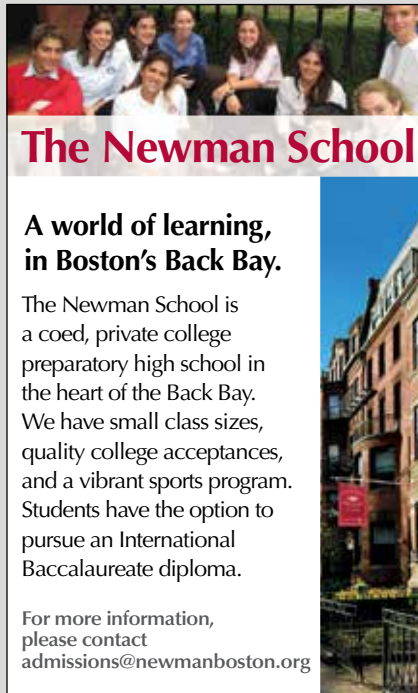
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Events on and off campus during November and December

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### The Game

[gocrimson.com](http://gocrimson.com)

The annual competition takes place in New Haven. (November 23)

### Winter Night Lights

[towerhillbg.org](http://towerhillbg.org)

Tower Hill Botanical Garden, in Boylston, Massachusetts, holds its annual “inclusive,

From left to right: From *Aliens*, part of the Harvard Film Archive’s series *Make My Day: The Cinematic Imagination of the Reagan Era*; flutist Claire Chase performs new works at Harvard; celebrating winter lights at Tower Hill Botanical Gardens

secular event, where visitors of all backgrounds can celebrate winter, light, and nature together.” Seasonal fare and spirits are available amid an enchanting landscape. (November 29–December 30)

### Ceramics Program Holiday Show and Sale

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FROM LEFT: THE HARVARD FILM ARCHIVE; COURTESY OF THE HARVARD MUSIC DEPARTMENT; COURTESY OF TOWER HILL BOTANICAL GARDEN



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## STAFF PICK: Images from the Ballets Russes

**Russian ballerina** Lubov Tchernicheva, pictured here for a 1920 production of *Cleopatra*, was ballet mistress of the Ballets Russes in the latter 1920s, and played a vital role

in promoting groundbreaking dance movements until her death in 1976. (Her papers are held at Harvard's Houghton Library.) This sensual shot is among the 73 platinum prints in **Emil Hoppé: Photographs from the Ballets Russes**, at the Museum of Russian Icons. Also featured are the legendary dancers Vaslav Nijinsky, Adolph Bolm, Michel and Vera Fokine, and Tamara Karsavina—and others who orbited impresario and Ballet Russes founder Sergei Diaghilev.

Hoppé, an internationally renowned photographer of the 1920s and '30s, fit right in. His London studio drew artists, intellectuals, couturiers, celebrities, literary stars, and members of the royal family. Thus, as the exhibit notes, he captured creative forces and dance performers that “shocked the senses and seduced the world into the modern era.” ~N.P.B.

Museum of Russian Icons  
museumofrussianicons.org  
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memorialchurch.harvard.edu

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### Candlelight Christmas

choruspromusica.org

An a cappella concert by **Chorus pro Musica** features an E.M. Skinner pipe organ and classic songs, new works, and a selection of audience-sing-along favorites. Old South Church, Boston. (December 13)

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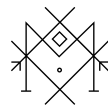
harvardfilmarchive.org

Film critic J. Hoberman, author of the new *Make My Day: Movie Culture in the Age of Reagan*, introduces the classic *Being There* on November 11, and appears November 12 for a book-signing at the Brattle Theatre (which

RUSSIAN BALLERINA LUBOV TCHERNICHEVA IN GEORGE BALANCHINE'S CLEOPATRA, 1920.  
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also screens other period films discussed in the book, November 5-14.) Meanwhile, the archive's separate month-long series, **Make My Day: The Cinematic Imagination of the Reagan Era**, includes *The King of Comedy*, *Back to the Future*, and *Blue Velvet*. (October 31-November 30)

French actress and director **Mati Diop**, a former Radcliffe Film Study Center fellow, will be on hand for a screening of her *Atlantique*, winner of this year's Cannes Film Festival Grand Prix award. The story melds supernatural fiction with an exploration of the global migrant crisis. (November 18)

## THEATER

### Harvard-Radcliffe Gilbert and Sullivan Players

hrfsp.org

Love lives, class lines, and patriotism converge in the comedic opera *H.M.S. Pinafore; or, The Lass That Loved a Sailor*. Agassiz Theatre (November 8-17)

### American Repertory Theater

americanrepertorytheater.org

**What to Send Up When It Goes Down**, produced by The Movement Theatre Company, employs "parody, song, movement, and audience participation to create a space for catharsis, reflection, cleansing, and healing." Written by Aleshea Harris, directed by Whitney White. Loeb Drama Center. (November 14-24)

The world-premiere musical reimaging of *Moby-Dick* follows Captain Ahab, Ishmael, and the crew pursuing their quarry, amid contemporary quandaries. Directed by Rachel Chavkin, with music, lyrics, book, and orchestrations by Dave Malloy. Loeb Drama Center. (December 3-January 12)

## POETRY

library.harvard.edu

Harvard English professor and poet **Stephanie Burt**, author of this year's *Don't Read Poetry: A Book About How to Read Poems*, introduces readings by **Jordan Davis** (*Shell Game*, and editor of *The Collected Poems of Kenneth Koch*) and **Ron Padgett** (*Big Cabin*), followed by book-signings and a reception. Lamont Library. (November 19)

**Reel Time: On Black Mountain and the Poets' Theatre**. Jonathan C. Creasy, editor of *Black Mountain Poems* (2019), ex-

amines both distinctive artistic/educational experiments. Barker Center. (December 4)

## LECTURES

### Mahindra Humanities Center

mahindrahumanities.fas.harvard.edu

Two 2019-20 postdoctoral fellows discuss their scholarship: **Javiela M. Evangelista**, assistant professor in the African American studies department at New York City College of Technology, reports on "**Denationalization and Xenophobia: Civil Genocide in the Dominican Republic**"

(November 13), and **Pelin Kivrak '11**, who earned a Yale doctorate in comparative literature earlier this year, explores "**Home-ly Exhibits: Artistic Representation of Hospitality and Hostility in the Twenty-First Century**." (November 20)

### Harvard Semitic Museum

semiticmuseum.fas.harvard.edu

Visiting Wellesley College assistant professor in anthropology Elizabeth Minor discusses "**Human Sacrifice and Power in the Kerma Kingdom**" (a Nubian civiliza-



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**Luminous works by the Panajachel, Guatemala-based artist Vivian Suter, at ICA/Boston**

tion that was located in present-day Sudan). Geological Lecture Hall, 24 Oxford Street. (November 19)

**Harvard Museum of Natural History**  
hmn.h.harvard.edu  
“**The Remarkable Nature of Edward Lear.**” Robert McCracken Peck, curator of arts and artifacts at the Academy of Natural Sciences, Drexel University, sheds light on the children’s writer—and accomplished painter of the natural world—who mysteriously abandoned a promising career in science. Geological Lecture Hall, 24 Oxford Street. (November 21)

**Radcliffe Institute**  
radcliffe.harvard.edu  
Francine Berman, RI ’20, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Hamilton Distinguished Professor in computer science, delves into “**Civilizing the Internet of Things.**” Knafel Center. (December 4)

**MUSIC**  
**Harvard Music Department**  
music.fas.harvard.edu  
Professor of the practice of music **Claire Chase**, a flutist, MacArthur fellow, and co-founder of ICE/International Contemporary Ensemble, ends a week-long residency with **Constellation Chor** vocalists with a performance of her *Density 2036 part vi* (2019), other new works, and a host of guest performers). Free, no tickets required. Harvard ArtLab, Allston. (November 7)

**Boston Philharmonic**  
boxoffice.harvard.edu  
The robust program offers Carl Nielsen’s *Helios Overture*, Ludwig van Beethoven’s Violin Concerto, and Sergei Rachmaninoff’s *Sym-*

phonic *Dances*, op. 45. Sanders Theatre.  
(November 14 and 17)

**Composer/Percussionist Susie Ibarra**  
gsd.harvard.edu

**“Listening and Creating Spatially: How do we hear in real life?”** The Graduate School of Design Rouse Visiting Artist lecturer shares her work, including: *Fragility*, *A Game of Polyrhythms*, and *Himalayan Glacier Soundscapes*, a collaborative project with the glaciologist and geomorphologist Michele Koppes that “maps and records memory and changes in the earth and its culture along the Ganges off of Satopanth Glacier.” Gund Hall.  
(November 19)

### Plucking and Playing

boxoffice.harvard.edu

Virtuoso mandolin-player **Sierra Hull** joins banjoist **Noam Pikelnny**, a founding member of the Punch Brothers, and bluegrass multi-instrumentalist **Stuart Duncan**, for a night of rockin’ folk music. Sanders Theatre.  
(November 22)

### Harvard Wind Ensemble

harvardwe.fas.harvard.edu

The student group performs its annual **Holiday Concert**. Lowell Lecture Hall.  
(December 6)

### Boston Baroque

boxoffice.harvard.edu

Celebrate the passing year, and new beginnings, with works by J.S. Bach and Arcangelo Corelli, among others—along with complimentary champagne and chocolates. Sanders Theatre. (December 31 and January 1)

## EXHIBITIONS

### Johnson-Kulukundis Family Gallery of Byerly Hall

radcliffe.harvard.edu

Dario Robleto’s installation **Unknown and Solitary Seas**, based on lengthy research, shows the “origins of the pulse wave as a graphic expression of internal life.” (November 4-January 18)



COURTESY OF PAUL DANIEL

### Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology

peabody.harvard.edu

A formal dinner for Harvard students in 1910 is the literal centerpiece of **Resetting the Table: Food and Our Changing Tastes**. (Opening November 16)

### Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts

https://carpenter.center

**An Introduction to Nameless Love**. Large text-based sculptures by Jonathan Berger reflect a range of “true love” relationships based on work, religion, community, and other realms not typically associated with romance. (Through December 29)

## Spotlight

**Child’s Play**, at the Society of Arts + Crafts, in Boston’s Seaport district, explores the whimsical, and sometimes adult, nature of toys.

Minneapolis artist Dean Lucker builds on the tradition of automatons and mechanical toys with contemporary folkloric compositions, like *Swinger* (2019). He and his wife, Ann Wood, are the ingenious duo behind Woodlucker studio, where they also produce paper botanicals, surreal scenes and dioramas, and interactive sculptures featuring both.

More provocative are works by Nathaniel Lewis. His

“Little Terrors” series features sturdy wooden toys—like the *Automatic Fun* (2018) rifle and *Playtime Camera and Monitor* (2016)—painted in bright primary colors. Not in the show because of prohibitive shipping costs, but worth checking out online, are Lewis’s renditions of child-scaled play structures. His “flea market” kiosk, with cheerful striped awning and lemonade-stand vibe, displays cute boxes of “Big Boy Ammo”

### ICA/Institute of Contemporary Art

icaboston.org

**Vivian Suter**. Her luminous hanging canvases, many created partly outdoors, swirl with colors and fluid forms inspired by the natural world. (Through December 31)

### Museum of Fine Arts

mfa.org

More than 45 intricate watercolors, drawings, and book illustrations from the Kendra and Allan Daniel Collection elucidate artist **Kay Nielsen’s Enchanted Vision**. (Through January 20)

Events listings are also accessible at [www.harvardmagazine.com](http://www.harvardmagazine.com).



COURTESY OF DEAN LUCKER

and big wooden guns. Another installation features the wooden framework and objects for a game of “airport-security check point.” Included is: a rainbow-hued baggage belt, hand-held metal detector, a play suicide-bomber vest, and an X-ray cubicle where kids can stand, feet apart, and raise their hands above their heads. Distinctly not for children—or not yet.

Following that, Paul Daniel’s kinetic metal sculptures—like the geometric *Aramis* (2017), at right, which is powered simply by the wind—are a welcome abstraction.

### Society of Arts + Crafts

societyofcrafts.org

November 21-January 18





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# Jazz and Boston: A True Combo

*A look at the live-music scene, from traditional trios to experimental student performers*

by JACOB SWEET



**Clockwise from upper left: Sheila Jordan performs with the Yoko Miwa Trio at The Mad Monkfish, in Cambridge; a low-key evening at Wally's, in Boston; Alita Moses and Steven Feifke at the Shalin Liu Performance Center, in Rockport; Ravi Coltrane has also made his way to Rockport.**

IT'S A FRIDAY NIGHT at The Mad Monkfish in Cambridge's Central Square and Yoko Miwa and her trio are performing their weekly set. The lights are dim and the Asian-fusion dishes are plated with style. For many, it's date night, and although it costs \$10 to sit in the Jazz Baroness Room—where the live performances take place—not everyone is completely tuned in. For some, music is part of the atmosphere, akin to the lipstick-red laminated seats; for others, it's *the* reason they came. Miwa, a Berklee associate professor of piano whose trio is a staple in Boston, plays with unpretentious grace and fluidity. The sound reaches the back of the room, but the closer you get to the ankle-high stage, the more the nuances stand out. Her breezy, articulate phrases

ers to turn away from their food and watch. Jazz is in the air.

The plate-glass storefront window behind the stage gives passersby a view of the trio, as external loudspeakers send Miwa's

roll into one another like waves pulsing along the shore, inspiring some din-

er rhythms into the street. Some people stand and listen; others have somewhere else to be. A not-insignificant number are musicians, who—juggling guitars, keyboards, saxophones, sound equipment, and even an upright bass or two—are off to their own gigs.

On any given weekend in Boston, there's plenty of jazz to be heard. This might surprise those who think jazz hubs mean New Orleans and New York City. "Boston doesn't have the reputation of being a great jazz

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: STU ROSNER; AGADIA MEZZOFANTI; ERIN SMITHERS; JANICE TSAI



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**Drummer Lenny White leads his band at the intimate Regattabar; percussionist Manolo Badrena performs at the same venue.**

ies made contributions as well, but Boston was unique in that it made major contributions to all of them."

Proximity to New York City was a blessing and a curse. Positively, many of the world's best artists frequently visited: Dizzy Gillespie, Artie Shaw, Glenn Miller, Duke Ellington, Thelonious Monk. Negatively, they often went home with some of

COURTESY OF THE REGATTABAR (2)

city," says Pauline Bilsky, president of the advocacy group JazzBoston. "It's really not recognized—even here." But those on the lookout know that Boston certainly has a part to play.

The local jazz scene began in the early twentieth century and took off in the late 1940s, as American soldiers returned from war. With support from the GI Bill, servicemen flocked to Boston's three major music

schools: the New England Conservatory of Music (NEC), Schillinger House (now Berklee College of Music), and The Boston Conservatory (now Boston Conservatory at Berklee). As Richard Vacca details in *The Boston Jazz Chronicles*, Boston was not just a hotbed of musical talent, but also "a training ground for jazz journalists, a magnet for music education, and a proving ground for new approaches in jazz presentation. Other cit-

Boston's most promising young musicians in tow. Other cities may have had a bigger pool, but Boston musicians could outschool anyone. "We sort of looked down on the musical knowledge of the New York musicians because they were all there before they were ready," said prominent avant-garde jazz artist and Boston Conservatory graduate Sam Rivers, according to Vacca. "They got on-the-job training. We waited and got ourselves to-

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gether first and then we went to New York.”

Many of Boston's most storied jazz institutions have faded away, but others have popped up. And although very few clubs and restaurants feature jazz exclusively, JazzBoston tallied 150 venues in the Greater Boston area (extending to Worcester and the North Shore) that book jazz acts with some regularity. Bilsky points in particular to the Shalin Liu Performance Center in Rockport, and Chianti Restaurant & Lounge in Beverly. Framed by floor-to-ceiling glass windows and a stunning view

of the ocean, the Shalin Liu stage provides a pristine visual, as well as auditory, experience, and features widely recognized artists who might also perform at Lincoln Center or Symphony Hall. Branford Marsalis visited this September, and Grammy Award-winners Ulysses Owens Jr. and Jack DeJohnette are on this season's docket. Chianti is a homier venue, with entertainment six nights a week, and solid Italian food. Guest artists tend to be of more regional than national acclaim, but there is plenty of talent—and no cover charge. Also of note is The Saha-

**Mike Rivard, strumming a North African sintir, leads Club D'Elf at the rose-tinted Lizard Lounge; Rachael Price sings with the Boston-based group Lake Street Dive.**

ra Club, set in a nondescript brown building on a suburban Methuen street: it offers Tuesday-night jazz series, featuring an array of crowd-pleasing, mostly local musicians, food and bar service, and cabaret seating.

Moving into Boston's South End, one classic club does remain: Wally's Café, which has been plugging away for more than 75 years. Even today, its audience skews young.

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On a Saturday night, an unbridled improvisatory energy hits you just as you enter through the club's distinctive red door. About the width of two bowling lanes, the venue lacks much room to stretch out, but the restrictions do nothing to curb the pas-

sion of the crowd or the performers. Solos are rewarded with instant applause, and riffs are extemporized emphatically, with minimal breaks in the action. You can get close enough to observe the tenor sax player's minor annoyance when a reed doesn't respond

properly, and watch as the bassist takes control during the bandleader's bathroom break. Some 80 people can pack inside this airtight jazz haven, seven nights a week. Stepping back onto the street, you wonder how such a little room could contain so much verve.

## Jazz Photographer Frank Stewart, at Harvard

**Capturing the energy** and spirit of jazz through still-image photography is a little like trying to bottle a tornado. Yet Frank Stewart has managed to do it by taking thousands of images across more than four decades, focusing on musicians in candid moments on- and off-stage. "What characterizes his photography, especially, is how intimate it is, and the access he gets to performers," notes Gabriella Jones-Monserrate, program director at Harvard's Cooper Gallery of African and African American Art, which features *The Sound of My Soul: Frank Stewart's Life in Jazz through December 13*.

The 74 images—mostly black and white prints, plus a selection of moody color shots—span the early 1970s through this year. Some of the earliest photographs came from traveling with pianist, composer, and bandleader Ahmad Jamal, not long after Stewart graduated from Cooper Union, where he studied with influential artists like Roy DeCarava and Garry Winogrand. Also reflected is Stewart's work as the lead photographer for Jazz at Lincoln Center ever since its inception in the early 1990s; he captures that orchestra, along with Wynton Marsalis, D.Mus. '09, and his musicians (with

whom he traveled between 1989 and 1992). There are numerous unposed portraits of revered jazz heroes: Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Rollins, Walter Davis Jr., Art Blakey, Max Roach, Joe Temperley. Stewart's "Miles in the Green Room" (1981) features the great trumpeter and composer leaning against a wall looking fierce, surrounded by an entourage and photographers, with a towel draped around his neck like a prize-fighter, or, as Stewart's own caption put it, the "Christ-like figure in Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center."

Contemporary and rising jazz stars also shine. "Etienne" (2017) features the versatile trumpeter/band leader Etienne Charles, who has reignited excitement over jazz's Afro-Caribbean roots; he's caught onstage in mid-percussive heat. The young multi-instrumentalist and singer Camille Thurman, whose album *Waiting for the Sunrise* won this year's best "jazz with vocals" Independent Music Award, is shown barefoot and grinning while warming up in "Before the Gig" (2018). In a close-up of vocalist Cécile McLorin Salvant, Stewart has captured her with head pitched back, nearly parallel to the floor, and mic in hand, eyes squeezed shut, in full-throttle, expressionistic mode.

He seems to have a sixth sense for what's sacred about those moments when per-

**Dizzy Gillespie and Dexter Gordon, c. 1976 (left), and Walter Blanding "demonstrating Coltrane," 2002.**



**"God's Trombones, Harlem," 2009**

formers pour their souls out in public.

Growing up in Chicago and Memphis, Stewart listened to gospel, blues, and jazz with his mother, Dorothy Jean Lewis Stewart, and her extended family, according to the exhibit catalog written by Ruth Fine, a former National Gallery of Art curator who organized this show and has collaborated with Stewart on others. "The emerging centrality of jazz," she notes, "may be tracked, in part, to his stepfather, the renowned jazz pianist Phineas Newborn Junior, with whom Stewart attended concerts in New York clubs in the 1950s, on 52<sup>nd</sup> Street, and in Greenwich Village." The show has a tender image of Newborn at the keys, with his childhood friend, Jamil Nassar, on bass, taken by Stewart in the 1970s. That personal tone, that profound depth of feeling and focus, carries through all of Stewart's photographs. It's even embodied in "God's Trombones, Harlem" (2009), the large-scale color print at the gallery's entrance: musicians in the foreground hold their instruments skyward, playing amid a faithful throng—everyone black-skinned, dressed in bright white—a celebratory scene that Stewart has captioned "Baptism in the Street."

—NELL PORTER BROWN



Regattabar and Scullers, both located in Cambridge hotels, may lack the same powder-keg excitement, but they draw better-known acts several nights a week. Yosvany Terry, an internationally acclaimed bandleader and Harvard senior lecturer in music, suggested both venues, although he admits that he himself performs in New York City most weekends. In November, Scullers hosts two 10-time Grammy Winners: legendary jazz trumpeter Arturo Sandoval (November 8 and 9) and pianist Eddie Palmieri (November 29). Regattabar's performances are booked through New York City's Blue Note Jazz Club, and feature a similar talent slate. Both offer pristine environments for undistracted jazz enjoyment. No jostling or fighting your way to the front of the room is required.

At Darryl's Corner Bar & Kitchen, a stylish soul-food spot in Boston's South End, some voice-raising might be necessary. The music rarely falls below forte, and the bass can be felt as well as heard. Servers wait for the briefest lulls in the action so they can hear the patrons' orders. What's fun is the funkier feel of the music at Darryl's—

a sharpness aided by the arguably overactive speakers—and guests dance in their seats, while standing in place, and in groups near the performers. Darryl's doesn't book just jazz, but the musicians are good, and the food is, too. One inebriated guest recommended Slade's Bar and Grill, a slightly cheaper soul-food joint down the block, which sometimes features live jazz. "Nothing's like Wally's, though," he clarified, before sauntering out. Also in the South End is The Beehive, a quieter and more bohemian restaurant with a nightly selection of live music. Depending on where you sit, the music could be more atmosphere than draw.

Just north of Harvard Square, the Lizard Lounge, recommended by Ingrid Monson, Quincy Jones professor of African-American music, presents a cozy cabaret-like viewing and listening experience and low-key pub



Members of Aardvark Jazz Orchestra

grub. On a Saturday night, the crowd is noticeably relaxed as they listen attentively to the chilled-out headlining folk group. The featured jazz artists tend to be a bit more contemporary and experimental than those at older-school venues: Club d'Elf, a frequent Lizard Lounge performer with a steady, hypnotic sound, markets itself as a "Moroccan-dosed Psychedelic Dub Jazz Collective." On leaving a show, it's tough to estimate how much time has passed. The Lilypad, another Monson recommendation, is an Inman

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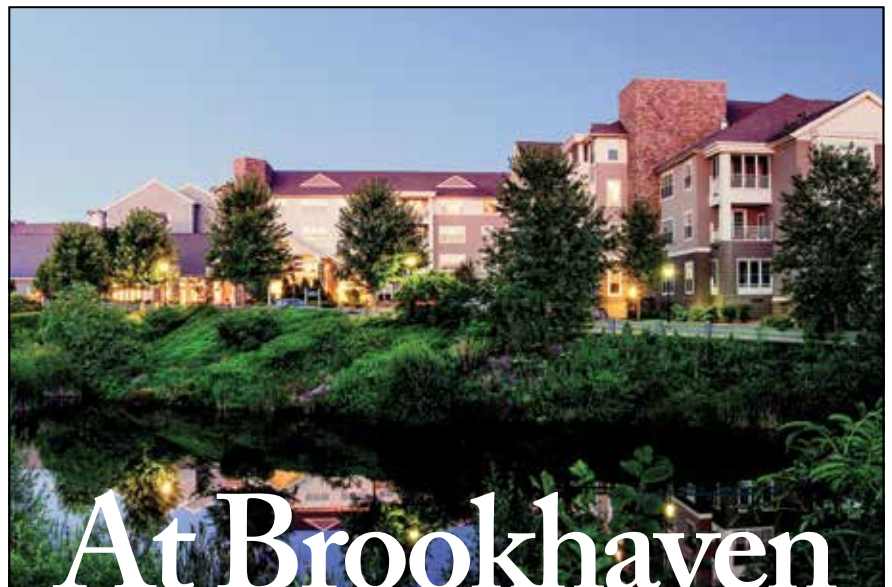
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Square hot spot for modern jazz and funk. Resembling an off-campus apartment's living room, the venue draws an audience that's mostly college-aged, or a bit older, with many attendees sporting creative facial hair and cans of Pabst Blue Ribbon. Avant-garde and bebop are the most represented genres on the calendar—a bit more raucous than smooth jazz. On one Saturday night, the ironically named dance-funk band Jeb Bush Orchestra, whose members wore short-shorts and sweatbands, had the crowd jaunty and loose. Just down the road, Outpost 186 offers an even smaller and more experimental setting. It would be wise to enter expecting less-than-traditional tonality. The room fits

only about three dozen people on metal folding chairs, and the walls are often covered in contemporary art installations. As local jazz musician and blogger Stephen Provizer has written “The skill level ranges from the competent to the ‘I can’t believe musicians as good as this are only playing for 10 people.’”

If many of Boston's historical jazz venues have fallen out, NEC, Berklee, Harvard, and MIT have helped fill the gap. A glance at the schools' schedules reveals numerous free, or inexpensive, concerts with some big names. NEC, with frequent free performances by faculty, students, and visiting artists, might be the top spot. At semesters' end, students often give recitals for a grade. You're in for

good performances; they need them to graduate. Presenting organizations like Global Arts Live, Celebrity Series, and Mandorla Music have picked up the slack as well, producing shows throughout Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville. As for seasonal jazz events, don't miss the Aardvark Jazz Orchestra's forty-seventh annual Christmas Concert, on December 14 in Emmanuel Church, on Boston's Newbury Street.

Boston might not have the jazz clout of New Orleans or New York City—or even of Kansas City, San Francisco, or Chicago—but that doesn't mean it's not a jazzy city. It's a matter of knowing where to look, and the desire to just get swinging.

## CURIOSITIES: Reflections of Fatimah Tuggar

**“Fatimah Tuggar: Home's Horizons,”** at Wellesley College's Davis Museum through December 15, offers 26 large-scale works by the Nigerian-born, Kansas-based conceptual artist. Given her trajectory, from roots in Africa to studying at the Kansas City Art Institute and earning a master's in fine arts from Yale in 1995, it's perhaps not surprising to read in the exhibit materials that her multimedia projects explore “systems underlying human interactions with both high-tech gadgets and handmade crafts.”

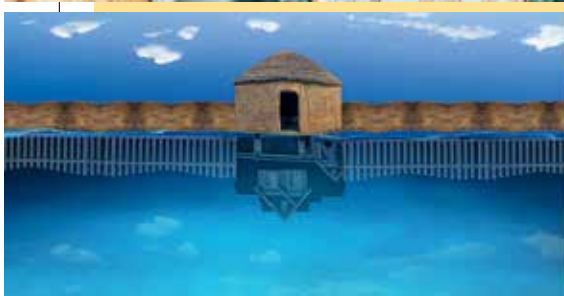
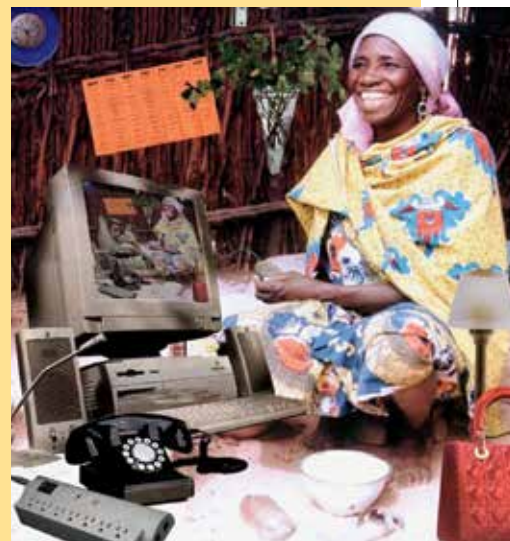
Her 1997 photomontage *Working Woman* features a grinning woman in traditional Nigerian dress sitting cross-legged on the floor, sheltered by a handmade wooden windscreen. She's also surrounded by a land-line telephone, power strip, wall clock, and desktop computer—displaying on its screen a duplicate image of the entire *Working Woman* montage. It's as if the woman is dialing in, or into her self, as she appears in the virtual, commercial brand-happy contemporary age. *Home's Horizons* (2019) is a computer montage diptych that also speaks to cultural bifurca-

tion. The images reflect nearly mirrored blue skies and oceanic water, separated along a horizontal plane, that splits images of what might be a traditional, ancestral home on one side, and a modern gabled house, with the proverbial American white-picket fence, on the other.

A 2019 Guggenheim Fellow, Tuggar has received many other major awards and exhibited works internationally since the 1990s. The Davis Museum show is a major solo exhibition, however, and conveys Tuggar's sense of humor and playfulness, along with her nuanced cultural commentary. The commissioned installation *Deep Blue Wells* combines textiles, sculptures, video, and augmented reality (an interactive experience in which real-world elements are digitally enhanced). It evokes the centuries-old indigo dye-wells in the ancient city of Kano, Nigeria (among the last of their kind in operation) and reflects on the intersections of history, virtual reality, and globalization. See the work in person, and/or—in the spirit of computer-enabled communications—

learn more, directly from Tuggar herself, by visiting the campus virtually via a free “Artist Skype Talk” on November 19. ~N.P.B.

**Clockwise from above:**  
*Working Woman*; *Home's Horizons*; and *Robo Entertains* (2001)





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# La Fábrica's Latin-Caribbean Flair

*Cambridge hot spot draws diners, dancers, and music-lovers from all over.*

by NELL PORTER BROWN



**A nightclub, restaurant, live-music venue, and bar/lounge are all rolled into one Central Square storefront at La Fábrica. Its Caribbean-Latino fare may include quail with Cuban rice and beans, shrimp in butter-rum citrus sauce, and desserts such as tembleque, a coconut pudding.**

**S**ANDWICHED BETWEEN Veggie Planet and the Central Square Theater, La Fábrica is the most exciting spot for Latin-Caribbean music, food, and dancing in Cambridge. Actually, it's one of the only such dynamic destinations in Greater Boston.

"We have some of the best salsa, merengue, and Latin jazz musicians here on

any given night," says owner Dennis Benzan, a Cambridge native, attorney, and former city councilor, whose parents immigrated from Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic in the 1960s. "This is a place where everyone feels safe and comfortable. You get to meet people from all

over Boston, and the world—and we get to demonstrate and show off not just Latin-Caribbean culture, but what it means to be Latin American, and American."

What sets La Fábrica apart is that it's a seamlessly fused restaurant/lounge, live-music venue, and nightclub. Authentic Latin-Caribbean food, with a twist, helps set that tone. Start with the shredded mango-papaya-green bean salad, with a zesty *aguachile* (blended peppers, garlic, cilantro, and lime) vinaigrette (\$8) and the crispy croquettes (\$6)—fried balls of mashed yucca and provolone cheese dipped in “mayo-ketchup” sauce. Larger plates include the paella-like “fisherman’s rice,” with shrimp, calamari, and lobster tails (\$25), and the succulent whole red snapper in a coconut Creole sauce (\$30). Order a pitcher of sangria, with berries and citrus, for the whole table (\$40), or sample other potions, like a classic piña colada or the “Smokey Paloma,” made with mezcal, the aperitif Lillet, and lime and grapefruit juices (\$13).

Dinner is served in two spaces: a front dining room, with a more sultry atmosphere, bar, and stage; and the larger back room, decorated by a wall-length photographic mural of workers in sugarcane fields. La Fábrica, Spanish for “factory,” also refers to those fields, represented by a mill wheel as the restaurant’s logo—and by the nearly 450-pound steel trapiche, a mill for crushing sugar cane (from a Dominican *fábrica*) that hangs on one wall. Choose a table in the back if you want



to converse. The live music—Tuesdays, open mic; Wednesdays, reggae; Thursday through Saturday, Latin jazz—generally starts around 8 P.M. and floods the front room, making it far easier to dance than be heard.

On weekend nights around 10:30, the entire space transforms into a nightclub. Wednesdays are reserved for *bachata*: lessons in the Dominican Republic dance style start at 9:30 P.M.—followed by social dancing until 1 A.M. Weekend “Latin Nights” feature rotating deejays and a mix of Latin and salsa rhythms, from traditional Afro-Cuban beats to reggae-

ton and Top 40. “In the nightclub, we tend to get a younger crowd, 21 to 40, in the back room, and an older crowd, that doesn’t want to be in a ‘nightclub’ [scene] but still really wants to dance, up front,” Benzan says. Many patrons dress up—stilettos, spangles, and flashy ties—and are seasoned, talented salsa dancers, so even those who don’t get out on the floor themselves can order drinks, groove in their seats, and enjoy the spectacle. “The best part of La Fábrica,” he adds, is that all kinds of people are “assembled together, with positive vibes.”



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# Bow Market

*Somerville's latest creative spot to shop, eat, and drink*

by NELL PORTER BROWN



**B**OW MARKET, in Somerville's Union Square, is very likely the only place on the planet where you can shop for vintage furs, tuck into platters of pierogis and poutine, catch a comedy act, and then chill out all night with pints of Exquisite Corpse. "It's a vibrant marketplace that does not fit the norms of a typical mall or traditional market setting," says Brittany Lajoie, manager of Remnant Brewing, which offers the "chewy, deep, and dark" Corpse stout (flavored with Taza chocolate), among other rotating drafts—and doubles as a day-time java café. "Here, there's more of a personal touch."

Remnant opened when Bow Market did, in mid 2018, and is now one of the 30-odd arts-oriented niche shops and food outlets that line the pentagonal, open-air courtyard.



Tucked back from busy Somerville Avenue, the market occupies two levels: downstairs is food, like the vegetarian upstairs Saus (try the poutine topped with shallots and kimchi) and JaJu (get the cabbage and mushroom pierogis), and upstairs are the small-scale retailers, most of whom are artists or designers selling their own creations.

The largest store, at just under 400 square feet, is We Thieves. Owner Sandra Rossi says that for a vintage-fashion store, "it was



**Bow Street's festive courtyard lit up at night; poutine with kimchi and scallions at the vegetarian Saus; one of the many pop-up musical and other events; Remnant Brewing/coffee café; and the Comedy Club, featuring everything from newcomers and open mic nights to national acts**

imperative to be in a location where I was ensured I'd have the right psychographic of my clientele: independents, creatives...



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**From left: Peruse art supplies at Make & Mend, or vintage fashion at We Thieves and Blue Bandana Relics, or pick up handmade gifts and home goods at 9000 Things. Vinyl Index has one of the best curated record selections around.**

people who appreciate the fringe, appreciate what is not expected or predictable.” Her constantly changing inventory includes global fashion and goods by local designers; this season, Rossi highlights furs and glitzy festive garb, and is expanding her supply of “self-care, all-natural, hard-to-find” bath and beauty products. “Also, I had hoarded a lot of jewelry,” she adds, “and items from estate sales—including a great collection of vintage Chanel earrings—so I am going to put all that out for the holidays.”

We Thieves’ eclectic goods pair well with the Americana antiques, and wearables for men, found next door at **Blue Bandana Relics** (also a presence at SoWa in Boston). Down the way is **Filomena Dimarco**, a shop full of eye-catching jewelry with Southwestern flair, made by artist Ashley Vick; her pendants and bracelets look great with the bold, hand-crafted leather boots for sale at **Adelante Shoe Co.** Gifts and home goods are the focus at **9000 Things**, where designer Ali Horeanopoulos sells her own rainbow-hued pendants and wall art, made from upcycled materials. Steps away, **Home Slice** features handmade graphic art, embroidered and crocheted goods, and plant hangers. At **Make & Mend**, embroiderer and owner Emily Tirella collects “gently used” art supplies—like paints and brushes, drawing tools, papers, yarns, and fabrics—which can be prohibitively expensive bought new. “People donate leftovers and supplies, and we sell it at reasonable prices,” she says (see how to donate at [makeandmendsomerville.com](http://makeandmendsomerville.com)), and even though she doesn’t offer classes in the small place, she urges everyone to stop in, get inspired—and to “just start making things” on their own.

“It’s a really good community with a lot of people who are just starting out—so we’re all kind of in it together,” reports

We Thieves’ Rossi. The vendors all tend to help plan and put on events throughout the year, and, essentially, cross-pollinate a growing, like-minded customer base. Remnant’s Lajoie, for example, organizes market events, from courtyard yoga and movie or trivia nights to block parties and a pot-luck dinner co-hosted with the Somerville Public Library. “We do get a wide demographic of patrons,” she says, “from student groups or work-from-home types during the day, to larger friend groups, writing workshops...a good variety of [people] of all ages and colors finding comfort in our space.”

The emphasis is clearly on the arts—and artisanal food. All purchases support the work of these young artists and entrepreneurs, and the courtyard space, which is open to the public, whether patronizing the restaurants or not.

“The market’s popped up pretty quickly, and it’s already a gathering place,” says Eiden Spilker, kitchen manager of the **In Season Food Shop**, where everything, from toffee-dipped potato chips and basil-infused soda to noodles and coffee, is produced in New England or New York. Its café also serves wholesome smoothies, grain bowls, and soups. Like many who work at Bow Market, Spilker is also engaged in the arts; he’s a musician and appreciates the inspiring connections fostered by and within the market community. On the second level, he points out, is **Vinyl Index**, home to one of the best collections of new and used records around; it’s co-owned by revered local DJ George “7L” Andrinopoulos. Next door, in the storefront production studio and tech shop **Union Sound**, beat performers and music-lovers crowd inside for events, or check out equip-

ment and clothing, or take workshops. Spilker says Bow Market is a “cool place because there are really creative people—artists, painters, and musicians”—working and

learning in close quarters.

That’s all by design. In developing the small, manageable retail spaces—with relatively affordable rents and short leases—Bow Market’s creators have intentionally fostered those synergistic energies, and aim to support the riskier, homegrown products and ventures. “Our goal is to make sure that this is always a positive step for a business,” says co-owner Zachary Baum, “whether they start here and graduate to larger space, or they figure out something about their business or model that they couldn’t have without moving into a brick-and-mortar space.” Baum is part of the trio—with Matthew Boyes-Watson and his father, Mark Boyes-Watson, an architect with a long-time office in Union Square—who bought and began transforming the former storage building in 2017. “We do expect,” he adds, “that some of our businesses are not ultimately going to work out, for one reason or another.” That’s an understandable aspect of any worthy enterprising process.

Baum holds political science and theory degrees from Tufts and the London School of Economics, and met the younger Boyes-Watson, who was at work turning a graffiti haven in Central Square into a pop-up market, through mutual friends. They shared “a sense of the importance of small-scale retail to urban life,” Baum reports, “and really connected around that similar love of wanting to see these kinds of businesses thrive.”

The Bow Market space, which abuts the rear of Mark Boyes-Watson’s office, consisted of garage bays on the ground floor

FROM LEFT: EMILY TIRELLA; ELLA PINALDO; COURTESY OF BLUE BANDANA RELICS



FROM LEFT: COURTESY OF 9000 THINGS; ELLA RINALDO

and a second level of warehouse-like rooms—all of which faced a worn asphalt lot. The trio looked past these homely conditions and were instead inspired by the property's potential as a public-focused, urban-renewal architectural project. Rather than roof over the entire structure, framing in generic interior retail space and sectioning out other units based on development-industry commercial formulas, they took a different approach. Three mantras guided the design process:

**Don't mess it up:** "We have a really great space!" Baum explains. "Even though it was a little bit dingy and paved and the building had these strange brown/tan cinder-like blocks—it had this incredible view of the open sky."

**Maintain a really human scale:** The numerous tiny storefronts, accessed by an outdoor walkway that rims the courtyard, arcade-style, enable shoppers to dip in and out of stores while still staying in touch with the courtyard action below. "It's not so crowded that it's chaotic between the shops, and each owner can map their individual personalities onto the space," according to Baum. "The whole space feels large, but also intimate. In the courtyard, for instance, you're not listening to other people's conversations, but you're also not alone."

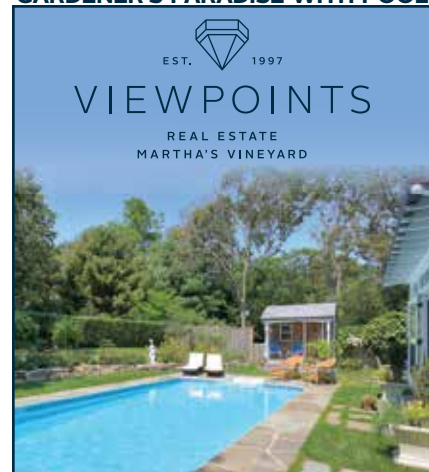
**Cheap and cheerful:** For reasons related to aesthetics, affordability, and practicalities, they kept the industrial materials and resulting architectural tone of the storage facility. And because all the walkways and columns are galvanized steel, they never need to be painted. Ditto the granite blocks in the courtyard that serve as seating, and also help divide the space geometrically and visually into varying planes. That granite, in line with the project's sustainability goals, was left over from recent renovations of the Longfellow Bridge. And, Baum adds, the vertical post in the center of the court-

yard was originally used to hold the trolley wires overhead when the Red Line was not powered by third rail.

The trio also lined the courtyard with simple gray pavers, installed corrugated tin roofs over part of the second-floor walkway, and planted trees and vines. The look and feel of Bow Market suit the distinctly unfancy tenor of Union Square—which has, so far, avoided the homogenization of chain stores and other similar influences.

Working with city officials, and the Somerville Arts Council, has helped Bow Market ensure a balance of interests is met. A council venture, Nibble, has even leased market space that features chefs and cuisine from local immigrant communities. In August, Create Boston—a festival project by chef Louis DiBiccari that spotlights local chefs, mixologists, visual artists, and musicians—moved in and opened its first permanent venue, CREATE Gallery & Cocktail Lounge. "We're excited about this," Baum says, "because it brings in another new connection to the art—and especially the bar and food—worlds."

As Bow Market moves into its second winter season, check [bowmarketsomerville.com](http://bowmarketsomerville.com) for special events, pop-ups, and gatherings being planned—even for the courtyard, where the chairs and tables will stay put. As a native Northeasterner, Baum relishes being comfortable outside in the winter—"it feels good to be hardy." He believes that, given the opportunity to be in a lively space where things are happening, people will spend more time outside, as they do in Europe and Canada at popular winter festivals. Heat lamps, and maybe blankets, will help. "We've also tested out igloos for folks who want a little more of a windscreen," he adds. "But our biggest thing is to decorate the heck out of this place, making it feel really festive—and unique." ▽

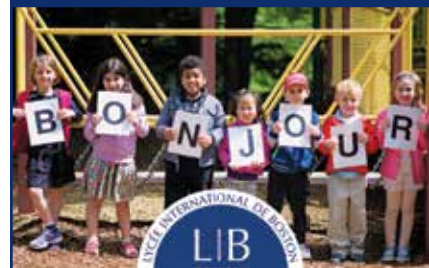


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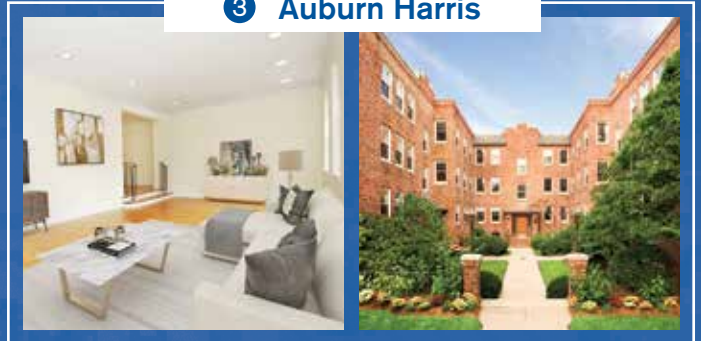


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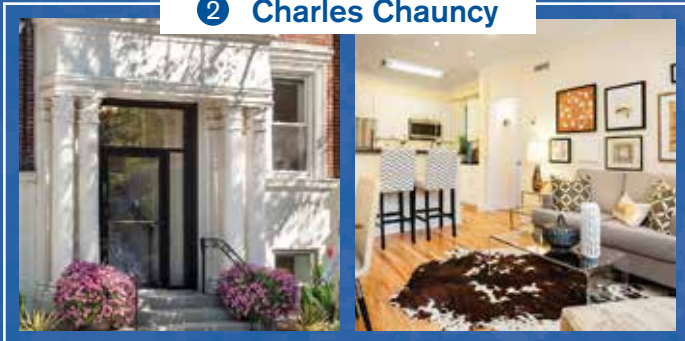
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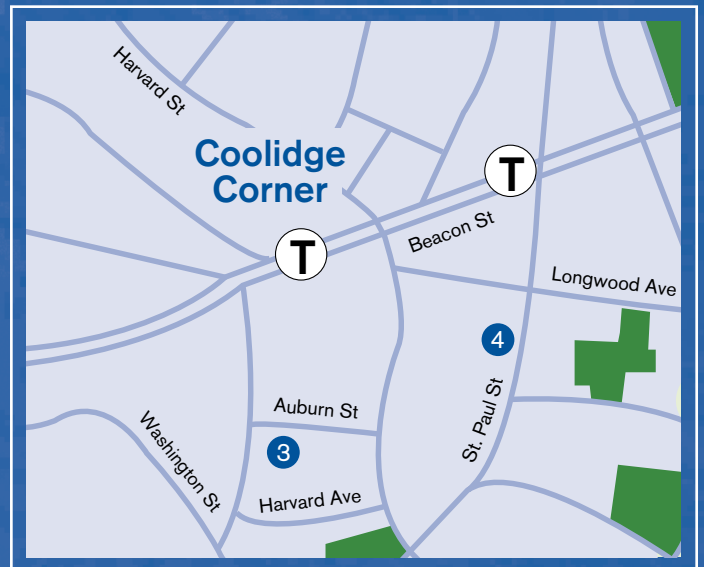
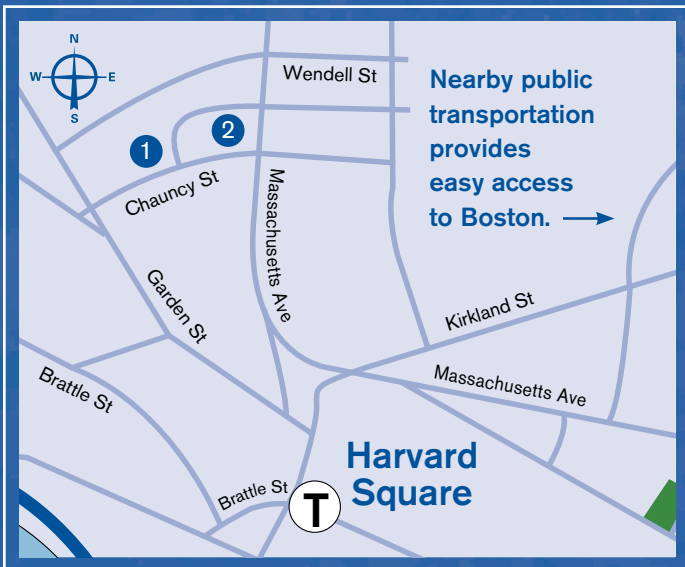
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# JOHN HARVARD'S JOURNAL

Admissions  
policy upheld,  
page 21

President Lawrence S. Bacow  
at Morning Prayers

## The Community's Conversations

TO A STRIKING degree, the speeches and welcoming messages to students at the beginning of the fall semester touched on a common theme: the importance of civil discourse and the centrality to the University's mission of open debate in search of understanding and truth.

Perhaps that should not have been surprising. Pragmatically, in the current overheated, polarized environment, heading into a divisive election year, any campus incident that could be interpreted as repressing speech on ideological grounds risks becoming grist for political attacks on colleges and universities, at a time when much of the public is already skeptical about the

value—and values—of higher education. Institutionally, Harvard's leaders have historically made the case for free speech within academia, as essential to its purpose—and President Lawrence S. Bacow has done so often and forcefully, throughout his career (as reported in "The Pragmatist," September-October 2018, page 32). And on a purely personal level, Bacow was dismayed by the rare violation of those principles when student advocates of divesting endowment investments in fossil fuels and private prisons prevented him from speaking at a scheduled Harvard Kennedy School event last April (see [harvardmag.com/divest-disruption-19](http://harvardmag.com/divest-disruption-19)). In a subsequent op-ed essay published in *The Harvard Crimson*, titled "What Kind of Community Do We Want to Be?" he decried the "heckler's veto."

Harvard College dean Rakesh Khurana introduced members of the class of 2023 to these community norms in a letter that noted:

At Harvard, you will be joining a lively intellectual community where debate is an important part of learning. Hearing each other's points of

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 21 Harvard Admissions Process Upheld
- 22 A Middling Year
- 24 Yesterday's News
- 25 News Briefs
- 27 Brevia
- 29 The Undergraduate
- 32 Sports



view, having our own assumptions challenged, and interrogating our own values are experiences central to Harvard's liberal arts and sciences education. When we gather to address difficult questions, we may disagree, and we may encounter ideas that make us uncomfortable. The temptation to drown out those ideas can be strong. At the same time, we need to be open to different ways of knowing and understanding, and to the possibility that our perspective will change when we encounter new evidence and better arguments. And we must remember that even in difficult moments, we are deserving of each other's respect and compassion.

He then pointed the students to the faculty's free-speech guidelines, and observed, "These guidelines acknowledge the tension between maintaining a civil and respectful campus and remaining open to a wide range of views, and discuss both individual rights and responsibilities in our context. Allowing someone to speak does not mean we condone what they are saying, and it does not absolve that person or group from consequences. At the same time, we all share the responsibility for creating a community in which we interact with respect, integrity, and compassion—and with an openness to the possibility of changing our minds."

Welcoming those students returning to campus, Khurana nodded toward last spring:

I've been thinking about how we can advocate for change, both on-campus and more broadly, in a world where common ground so often seems elusive.

Last year at Harvard we saw robust debate about a variety of issues, which we appreciate at an institution committed to pursuing knowledge and educating global citizens. When we gather to address difficult questions, we will often disagree. While I am proud that so many of you fiercely advocate for your beliefs, I am also concerned that sometimes on this campus we see those with differing opinions as undeserving of our attention, our respect, or our compassion. Hearing each other's points of view, having our own assumptions challenged, and interrogating our values are experiences central to Harvard's

## HARVARD PORTRAIT



Ryan Enos

**When** government professor Ryan Enos was growing up, gifts always came wrapped in a map. His father was a navigator for the U.S. Air Force, who used a sextant and paper map to help him fly around the world. "Subconsciously, I think this fascination with maps filtered into me," Enos says. As a political scientist, he studies "social geography," or the way that different racial or ethnic groups are organized in space (intermingled, segregated, or completely removed from one another), and how that affects politics. After graduating from Berkeley in 2001, Enos taught with Teach For America on the South Side of Chicago, a city that "in many ways was defined by segregation," he says. "Segregation was this overwhelming experience in my kids' lives." It felt dramatically different from his hometown of Merced, California, "an incredibly diverse place, where you had this big influx of immigrants from Southeast Asia and Latin America." Enos was struck by that contrast. How do such different social environments come to be, and how do they shape what people think about themselves and each other? When he started graduate school at UCLA, he thought he would study institutional politics: things like why Congress does what it does. But when it came time to begin serious research, he realized his real interest was the intersection of geography and race. His timing was auspicious: his career has coincided with a renewed interest in race in political science. Newly tenured, Enos says, "All of a sudden I've got my whole future ahead of me....How does that change what I work on? I'm still sorting that out." And though he's finally switched to GPS, he still keeps giant stashes of old maps, to wrap gifts for his students.

—MARINA N. BOLOTNIKOVA

liberal arts and sciences education.

Addressing the public servants of the future, Harvard Kennedy School dean Douglas Elmendorf wrote about the serious challenges on any public agenda (gun violence, refugees from war and poverty, the environment, bigotry and persecution), and outlined the human qualities essential to addressing them:

The right values for public leaders like us begin with a commitment to serving others rather than serving ourselves. That means being trustworthy—meeting high standards of honesty and integrity, in what we say and what we do. It means serving all others and not just people who are like us in their demographic characteristics or ideological views. So, public leaders should not promote division, but should build connection; they should not inflame hostility and encourage violence against people who are different in some way, but should instill understanding and encourage respect of others. To that end, he counseled, “The right val-

ues for public leaders also include engaging in civil discourse with people with whom you disagree, even if those disagreements seem insurmountable....I am not suggesting that you should always compromise or be morally neutral....On the contrary, I believe that public leaders should make moral judgments. But I am suggesting that you should be open to the possibility that different judgments from yours have value as well.”

Bacow emphasized those themes directly and personally on the formal occasions that signal the beginning of the school year. At the Freshman Convocation on September 2, he recalled the traumas of his freshman year, at MIT, in 1969, during the national convulsions over the Vietnam War and urban unrest. In that context, he urged the newest members of the Harvard community to work to improve society and the world, and to do so in an intellectually open spirit: “The more you learn, the more you see, the more you understand what needs to change,” he said. “Harvard is not perfect. Massachusetts is not perfect. This country is not perfect, and neither is the world in which we live.” No one—“liberal or conservative, Democrat

or Republican”—would disagree with that sentiment, he continued. “It’s necessary for all of us to stand up and speak for the causes in which we believe.” Bacow also said that in learning about and improving both themselves and the world, students need to hold onto one of Harvard’s most important traditions: “intellectual maturity”—the willingness to adjust beliefs in the face of new information or a better argument.

The next day, at Morning Prayers in Memorial Church, Bacow was not only aspirational, but blunt, about the stakes. Reflecting on what he had learned about Harvard since becoming president, he said, “The year past brought this extraordinary place’s strengths and weaknesses into greater focus for me, and I wanted to share with you today an area in which I think we are at risk of failing one another—and failing this University to which all of us belong.”

He then asked:

How can we profess to be seekers of *Veritas*, seekers of truth, if we shame and shun those who disagree with us? How can we urge forbearance and generosity in others if we are unwill-

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### The Upside to Urban Life

Cities are an integral part of Earth’s future: by 2050, 68 percent of the world’s population will be living in an urban area. Solutions to social problems, from climate change to poverty, will therefore be tied to the fates of cities. In this episode, Glimp professor of economics Ed Glaeser explains why he is overwhelmingly optimistic about urban growth and how cities confront problems.

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ing to practice it ourselves? How can we have any hope for the wider world if we cannot model in our community the reasoned debate and discourse we wish to see elsewhere?

Yes, the issues we are confronting today—as a University, as a nation, and as a planet—need our urgent attention. Yes, they are deserving of our thoughtful consideration. Yes, they are worthy of impassioned argument. But we cannot allow them to create in each of us a righteousness that abhors concession and compromise. When

we succumb to the lure of moral certitude, when we stifle disagreement in our community by ignoring and ostracizing dissenters, we lose our ability to make meaningful change.

Bacow ended on a note of optimism about the community's ability to bring people together (including people whose journey to Harvard from other nations is being impeded by current visa and immigration policies, the subject of a message he emailed to the community the same morning): people “who care deeply about the search for truth—and who want to sincerely improve our world.

May we all see one another in that light....”

By invoking “intellectual maturity” and “forbearance and generosity” in defense of effective discourse, Bacow addressed the community's head and heart. Speaking in Memorial Church's Appleton Chapel, where his remarks drew upon the wisdom of his own Jewish faith tradition, and cautioning against misplaced “righteousness” and “moral certitude,” he was, perhaps, also appealing to Harvard's soul.

A report on these messages, including links to the full texts, appears at [harvardmag.com/bacow-freespeech-19](http://harvardmag.com/bacow-freespeech-19). ~JOHN S. ROSENBERG

## Harvard's Admissions Process Upheld

FEDERAL JUDGE Allison Burroughs, who presided over the lawsuit arguing that Harvard College's use of race in admissions discriminates against Asian-Americans, upheld the University's admissions program as constitutional on October 1.

“Harvard's admissions program has been designed and implemented in a manner that allows every application to be reviewed in a holistic manner consistent with the guidance set forth by the Supreme Court,” her decision reads. The plaintiff in the case “did not present a single admissions file that reflected any discriminatory animus, or even an application of an Asian American who it contended should have or would have been admitted absent an unfairly deflated personal rating.”

Stakeholders have been waiting for Burroughs's decision since February, when the parties presented their closing arguments. The plaintiff, Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA), alleged in the case filed in 2014 that Harvard discriminates against Asian-American applicants in admissions. Part of SFFA's case rested on Harvard's practice of assigning applicants subjective “personal” ratings, which the group argued disadvantaged Asian-American applicants. According to Burroughs's decision, “[T]he Court is unable to identify any individual applicant whose admissions decision was affected and finds that the disparity in the personal ratings did not burden Asian-American applicants significantly more than Harvard's race-conscious policies burdened white applicants.”

“Today's decision unequivocally affirms that Harvard does not discriminate on the

basis of race in its admissions process, and that Harvard's pursuit of the diverse student body central to its educational mission is lawful,” said Harvard Corporation senior fellow William Lee '72, who served as Harvard's lead lawyer in the case. “It represents a significant victory not merely for Harvard, but also for all schools and students, for diversity, and for the rule of law.”

“The consideration of race, alongside many other factors, helps us achieve our goal of creating a diverse student body that enriches the education of every student,” Harvard president Lawrence S. Bacow said in a message to the University community. “Everyone admitted to Harvard College has something unique to offer our community, and today we reaffirm the importance of diversity—and everything it represents to the world.”

Edward Blum, SFFA's founder and president, said in a press release that the group plans to appeal the decision. “Students for Fair Admissions is disappointed that the court has upheld Harvard's discriminatory admissions policies,” he wrote. “We believe that the documents, emails, data analysis and depositions SFFA presented at trial compellingly revealed Harvard's systematic discrimination against Asian-American applicants.” Blum, an opponent of affirmative action, previously initiated *Fisher v. University of Texas*. In that case, ultimately decided in 2016, the Supreme Court upheld that university's affirmative-action program. Many legal analysts expect that the makeup of the current Supreme Court would mean that the use of race in college admissions could be struck down or significantly curtailed if *SFFA v. Harvard* were heard before the court.

Burroughs drew extensively on the *Fisher* decision in her ruling in *SFFA v. Harvard*.

“Ultimately, the Court finds that Harvard has met its burden of showing that its admissions process complies with the principles articulated by the Supreme Court in *Fisher II*,” she wrote. In the *Fisher* case, the Supreme Court specified that college affirmative-action programs had to be tailored narrowly and show that they accomplish a specific goal, and also that colleges must prove that race-based admissions policies are the only way to meet diversity goals.

Burroughs ruled on four separate counts at stake in the case:

- that Harvard intentionally discriminates against Asian-American applicants;
- that Harvard engages in illegal racial balancing, or a quota;
- that Harvard places too much emphasis on race so that it is a determinative factor in admissions; and
- that Harvard hasn't adequately explored whether there are race-neutral means to reach its diversity goals.

On each of these counts, she ruled in the University's favor. “[T]here is no evidence of any racial animus whatsoever or intentional discrimination on the part of Harvard,” she wrote.

Although Harvard looks at the projected racial makeup of each class in making admissions decisions, to ensure that it reaches diversity goals, Burroughs wrote, it does not impose quotas or quota-like “target levels” for different racial groups. Having minimum goals for minority enrollment, she added, is not tantamount to a quota: “Every applicant competes for every seat.”

On the third count, alleging that Harvard puts undue emphasis on race, she wrote that colleges that use race as more than just a “plus” factor tend to use either a quota system or “assign some specified value to appli-

cants' racial identity." Harvard does neither: it uses race on an individualized, context-dependent basis for each applicant, and not as the "defining feature" of any application.

And on the fourth count, Burroughs sided with Harvard's position that no feasible race-neutral alternatives would achieve its diversity goals: options like eliminating early-action admissions, admitting more transfer students, increasing outreach to potential applicants, and offering more financial aid, she wrote, "would likely have no meaningful impact on racial diversity." One proposal, considered in this case and more broadly in discourse about college admissions, would be to give preference to low-income students instead of considering race. But this would result in a significant decline in African-American enrollment, she wrote.

Burroughs's decision acknowledged that there are problems with Harvard's admissions system. Asian-American applicants may have a more difficult time getting into Harvard, she wrote—and part of that may have to do with admissions officers' implicit bias. "Overall, the disparity between white and Asian American applicants' personal ratings has not been fully and satisfactorily explained," she wrote.

"The disparity in personal ratings between Asian American and other minority groups," she continued, "is considerably larger than between Asian American and white applicants and suggests that at least some admissions officers might have subconsciously provided tips in the personal rating, particularly to African American and Hispanic applicants, to create an alignment between the profile ratings and the race-conscious overall ratings that they were assigning. It is also possible, although unsupported by any direct evidence before the Court, that part of the statistical disparity resulted from admissions officers' implicit biases that disadvantaged Asian American applicants."

While implicit bias is a possible explanation for the evidence she evaluated, Burroughs concluded, it hasn't been shown for certain. (This is, of course, inherent in the concept of implicit bias: it is subconscious, hard to untangle from other factors, and rarely possible to prove through direct evidence.) "Notwithstanding the fact that Harvard's admissions program survives strict scrutiny, it is not perfect," she wrote.

"The process would likely benefit from

conducting implicit bias trainings for admissions officers, maintaining clear guidelines on the use of race in the admissions process, which were developed during this litigation, and monitoring and making admissions officers aware of any significant race-related statistical disparities in the rating process," she continued. "That being said, the Court will not dismantle a very fine admissions program that passes constitutional muster, solely because it could do better. There is always the specter of perfect, but strict scrutiny does not require it."

Since Harvard and SFFA made their opening arguments before Burroughs last October, public discussion of the massive trove of admissions statistics released in the case has been fierce. In September, a much circulated paper co-authored by economist Peter Arcidiacono, one of the experts who provided evidence for SFFA, found that 43 percent of white students admitted to Harvard are so-called ALDCs: recruited athletes, legacies, children of faculty, or those on the dean's interest list (many of whom

are children or relatives of donors to the University). Among admitted minority students, that number was less than 16 percent. "Removing preferences for athletes and legacies would significantly alter the racial distribution of admitted students, with the share of white admits falling and all other groups rising or remaining unchanged," the study concluded.

Burroughs's decision accepted Harvard's argument for why it needs to give preference to ALDC candidates. Eliminating athlete preferences, she wrote, would make Harvard "far less competitive in Ivy League intercollegiate sports," while eliminating tips for faculty children, legacies, and students connected to top donors would "adversely affect Harvard's ability to attract top quality faculty and staff and achieve the desired benefits from relationships with its alumni and other individuals who have made significant contributions to Harvard." For now, those preferences remain intact.

The full court decision can be read at: [bit.ly/2nI4ktz](http://bit.ly/2nI4ktz). ~MARINA N. BOLOTNIKOVA

## A Middling Year

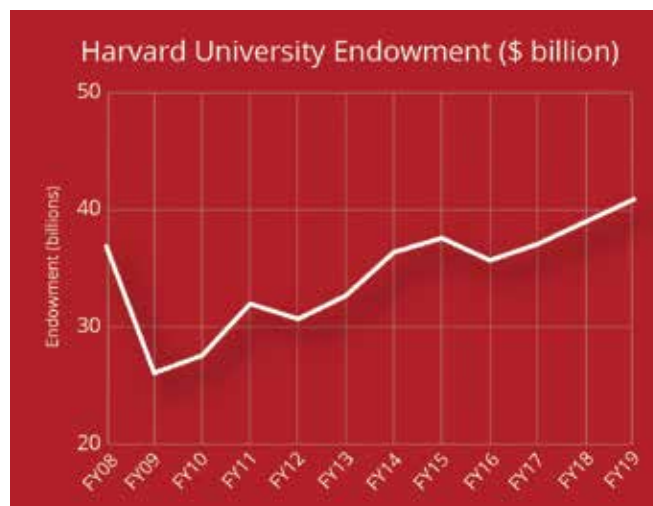
HARVARD MANAGEMENT COMPANY (HMC) reported a 6.5 per cent return on endowment assets for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2019. The endowment's value on that date was \$40.9 billion: up \$1.7 billion (4.3 percent) from \$39.2 billion a year earlier. In a year of more modest results for most university endowments (see below), HMC's rate of return, which is net of all investment expenses, trailed the 10.0 percent it realized in fiscal 2018.

In his brief statement accompanying the announcement on September 27, N.P. Narve-

kar, the management company's CEO, said, "We are now halfway through our five-year transition of both the structure of HMC and the University's investment portfolio. I am encouraged by the progress our team has made to date, but we are mindful that there is much left to accomplish in the years ahead to resolve legacy issues and position the endowment for long-term success."

Detailed results await publication of Harvard's annual financial report (after this issue went to press), but Narvekar's optimism may reflect his outlook for the HMC investments shifted from past real-estate

and natural-resources holdings toward new private-equity and other assets—leavened by continued poor performance in, or further write-downs of, some of the remaining natural-resources investments such as timberlands. It was also a difficult year for investors in emerging markets. Including endowment and other assets, HMC had \$4.8 billion invested in





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## Yesterday's News

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

**1914** Lionel de Jersey Harvard '15, the only member of the founder's family ever to attend the College, speaks at exercises held at the Harvard statue on November 25 commemorating the 310th anniversary of his ancestor's birth.

**1924** In the largest presidential straw vote taken at Harvard to date, faculty and students give Calvin Coolidge a landslide victory over John Davis (Democrat) and Robert La Follette (Progressive).

**1934** The "dial method of signaling" for telephones has arrived, and the old exchanges University and Porter have been replaced by Kirkland, Trowbridge, and Eliot. Unfortunately, note the editors, that requires dialing "Eli" to speak with Harvard parties on the Eliot exchange.

**1944** Enrollment figures for the term beginning November 1 are roughly 1,800 for civilians and about 5,500 for military men.

**1954** After 311 years of being rung by hand, the principal bell in Memorial Church that calls students to prayers and class will soon be operated electronically. The editors report that there will be no detectable difference for listeners.

**1969** The Faculty of Arts and Sciences approves a spring-term experiment in coeducational living in which 150 volunteers from Adams, Winthrop, and Lowell will move north to the Quad, and an equal number of Radcliffe students will take their places in the Houses.

**1974** FBI agents recover almost half the ancient Greek and Roman coins stolen from the Fogg Art Museum the previous year. The approximately 3,100 coins are found buried in a bowling-ball bag in a rural wooded area in Lincoln, Rhode Island. In a second find, 843 coins are discovered in a Montreal bank's safe-deposit vault.

**1999** WHRB has begun broadcasting over the Internet, which will make its forthcoming January reading- and exam-period Orgy® offerings available to listeners far from Cambridge.

**2009** The editors report that 17 of Harvard's 114 varsity football players are wearing new helmets intended to help insulate their brains from sudden movements during impact that can result in concussions.

natural resources and emerging markets at the end of fiscal 2018.

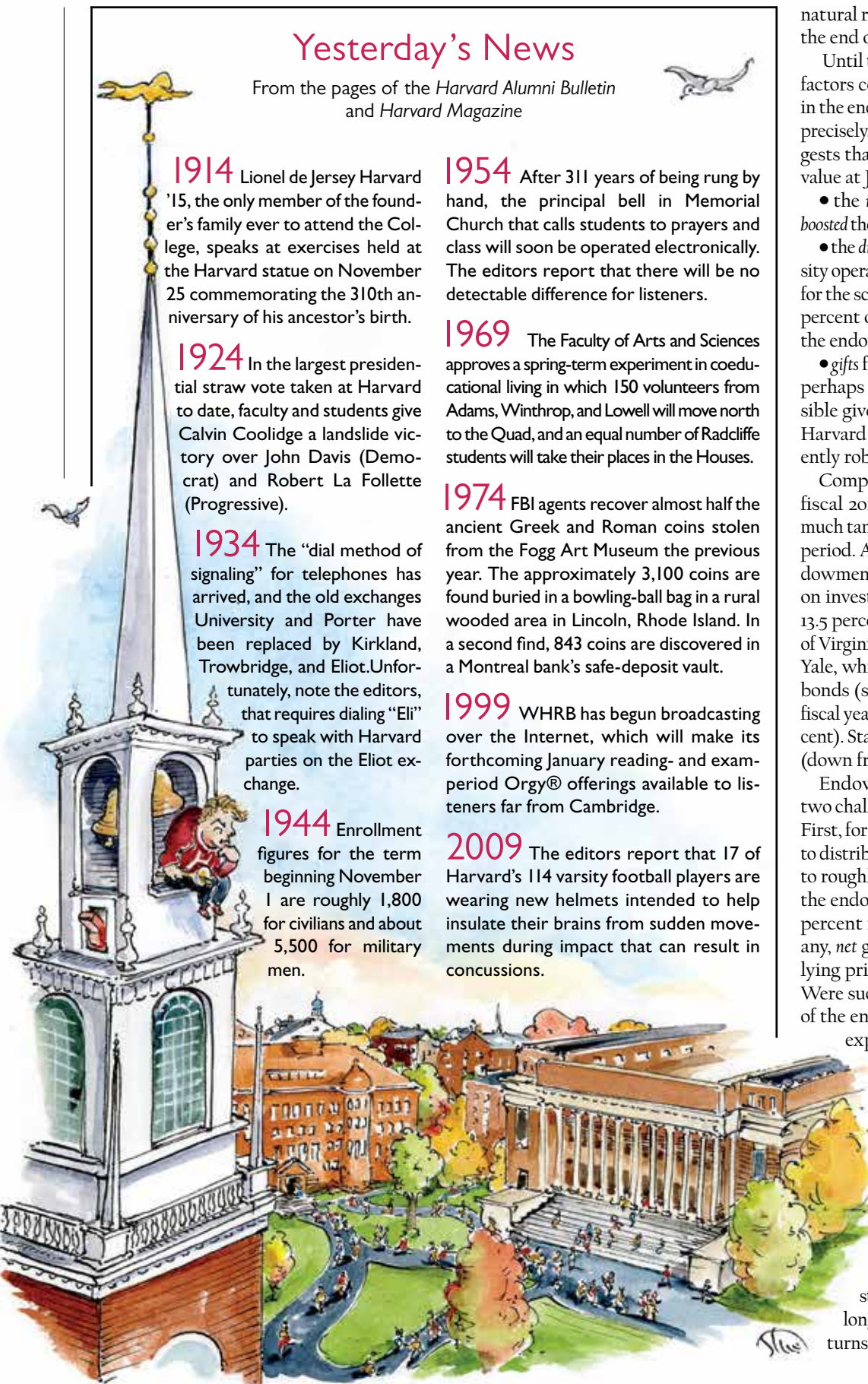
Until the University issues its report, the factors contributing to the 4.3 percent rise in the endowment's value cannot be known precisely. But a rule-of-thumb estimate suggests that beginning from the \$39.2-billion value at July 1, 2018:

- the *investment return* during fiscal 2019 *boosted* the endowment by roughly \$2.6 billion;
- the *distribution* of funds to pay for University operations (the largest source of revenue for the schools and administration, about 35 percent of income in recent years) *decreased* the endowment by roughly \$1.9 billion; and
- *gifts* for endowment *increased* its value by perhaps \$1 billion—a large sum, but plausible given pledges outstanding from The Harvard Campaign and continued, apparently robust, philanthropic support.

Compared to the very strong results in fiscal 2018, other institutions reported a much tamer performance in the most recent period. Among the perennial leaders in endowment returns, MIT earned 8.8 percent on investments in fiscal 2019 (down from 13.5 percent the prior year); the University of Virginia, 5.8 percent (vs. 11.4 percent); and Yale, which eschews nearly all stocks and bonds (strong performers during the past fiscal year), 5.7 percent (down from 12.3 percent). Stanford reported a 6.5 percent return (down from 11.3 percent).

Endowment managers and deans face two challenges in the current environment. First, for institutions like Harvard that aim to distribute investment earnings equivalent to roughly 5 percent of the market value of the endowment each year, a 5 percent to 6 percent investment return yields little, if any, *net* growth in the value of the underlying principal (excluding gifts received). Were such results to persist, the real value of the endowment, and thus the academic expenses it could support, would be eroded by inflation. The Higher Education Price Index for fiscal 2019 was 2.6 percent. Thus, investment returns of 6.5 percent, and distributions equal to 5 percent of market value, mean the endowment's future purchasing power is *reduced* by more than 1 percent.

Second, Harvard and similar institutions therefore typically aim for long-term endowment investment returns of about 8 percent, allowing for the





annual distribution and additional returns to maintain real future purchasing power. Academic plans and long-term budgets that assume such returns over time are vulnerable if they cannot be achieved sustainably. Given persistently low interest rates, some of the largest public pension funds have reduced their assumed rates of return to 7 percent or so.

Both HMC and Harvard are considering what long-term rate of return the investment managers can be expected to earn. A lower expected return would have obvious implications for the academic operations the endowment supports. For example, income derived from the endowment accounts for about half of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences' operating funds. If Harvard's current expected long-term endowment returns are too high, given the investment outlook (and the labor-intensive processes of teaching and research do not somehow overcome habitual inflationary pressures), the effect on a faculty like FAS from lower future distributions could be enormous.

As if these problems did not loom large enough, fiscal 2019 was the first year in which Harvard, and a few dozen well-endowed peers, incurred the federal excise tax on endowment earnings enacted in late 2017. At last estimate (not updated for U.S. Treasury guidance on how the tax will work, nor for HMC's latest results), the University faced a tax bill of \$40 million or more—effectively, a reduction in the investment returns available to distribute to the schools, at a time when realizing planned-for rates of return already appears daunting.

A detailed report on HMC's initial announcement of results appears at [harvardmag.com/endowment-19](http://harvardmag.com/endowment-19). Check back at [www.harvardmagazine.com](http://www.harvardmagazine.com) for analysis of the University's annual financial report, expected toward the end of October. ~J.S.R.

## News Briefs

### How Harvard Handles Harassment

IN THE WAKE OF the charges of persistent sexual harassment brought against Jorge Domínguez, former Madero professor for the study of Mexico and Harvard's first vice provost for international affairs, a committee will review factors that inhibit reporting of such misconduct or deter an effective response. President Lawrence S. Bacow announced the committee on September 6, appointing Susan Hockfield, MIT president emerita; Kenji Yoshino, Warren professor of constitutional law at New York University and a past president of Harvard's Board of Overseers; and Vicki Magley, professor of psychology at the University of Connecticut, whose research focuses on individual and organizational coping with sexual harassment and interventions to address workplace incivility. Bacow asked them to examine:

- What characteristics of organization or culture might have inhibited those who had suffered (or were aware of) misconduct from reporting it?

- When misconduct was reported, were there characteristics of our organization or culture that inhibited an effective response?

- How do we vet candidates for leadership positions to assure that we are aware of any allegations of misconduct, including sexual harassment, and how might we do this?

They will conduct interviews and review materials and policies this fall, as they “examine factors that may undermine our University's ability to prevent or address incidents of sexual harassment,” Bacow wrote. But they will not “re-investigat[e] the allegations, nor [review] the investigation of

those allegations. In addition, we are not asking the committee to review the behavior or decisions of individual members of the Harvard community in regard to the Domínguez matter.” The committee will issue a report to the University community.

Additional details appear at [harvardmag.com/harassment-reporting-issues-19](http://harvardmag.com/harassment-reporting-issues-19). The decision to remove Domínguez's emeritus status and Harvard privileges was reported in May at [harvardmag.com/dominguez-19](http://harvardmag.com/dominguez-19).

### Epstein Exposure

In a September 12 message to the community, President Lawrence S. Bacow revealed that Jeffrey Epstein—accused of being a serial sexual predator who continued to prey systematically on underage women even after a 2008 plea arrangement for sex offenses, and who died in prison, reportedly by suicide, while awaiting trial on further charges—had cumulatively donated \$8.9 million to Harvard. The gifts include \$6.5 million in 2003 to support a research program on evolutionary dynamics (previously disclosed); and \$2.4 million in miscellaneous other current-use gifts. As of the date of his note, Bacow wrote, Harvard had found no gifts after Epstein's guilty plea—and “[W]e specifically rejected a gift from Epstein following his conviction in 2008.” The University continues to examine its records, he wrote; it is also investigating further Epstein's appointment as a visiting fellow in psychology in 2005. The unspent balance of \$186,000 from the gifts will be directed to organizations that “support victims of human trafficking and sexual assault”—an unusual step reflecting Epstein's “repulsive and reprehensible” crimes. Bacow has convened a working group to examine how the University vets donors, and on September 20, general counsel Diane E. Lopez wrote to the community, asking for help (anonymously, if preferred) in identifying information on “Jeffrey Epstein's donations or other interactions” across the decentralized University. Separately, *The Harvard Crimson* reported that while Epstein helped arrange the major gift that paid for construction of Harvard Hillel's building, completed in 1994, he did not himself donate the funds.

### Sports in the Spotlight

FACULTY of Arts and Sciences (FAS) dean Claudine Gay has chartered a comprehensive review of Harvard athletics, aiming to “engage our community to learn about our student-athlete experience, the culture



### HM Explore More

The Harvard ArtLab, a flexible space in Allston dedicated to artistic collaboration across disciplines, opened in late September. Flutist and professor of the practice of music Claire Chase called it a place “to gather and make noise together and ideate and argue and create a community.” Read more at [harvardmag.com/artlab-opens-19](http://harvardmag.com/artlab-opens-19).

of our programs, and the structure of our department. This important work will inform strategic planning for Harvard Athletics over the coming decade, drawing on the proud history, traditions, and the values of athletics at Harvard.”

The study is explicitly supportive: Gay wrote about “set[ing] our aspirations for the support of athletics at Harvard”; and the effort is overseen by a committee who will be well positioned to make the case for resources for the program. Members include: Bob Scalis, Nichols Family director of athletics; Jack Reardon, senior adviser for alumni affairs and development, a past director of admissions and of athletics, and former executive director of the alumni association (and a current director of this magazine); College dean Rakesh Khurana; FAS dean for administration and finance Leslie Kirwan; and FAS’s new dean for development, Armin Afsahi. They will be assisted by Mercer consultants.

Although Gay’s note touched on “the culture of our programs” (see 7 Ware Street, page 5), the context is on strategic planning: presumably investments in the extensive athletics facilities (some recently refurbished, but many aging), particularly as Allston campus development nearby or on some of those venues proceeds; and in programs and the connection between athletes and other undergraduates. In an interview apart from the September 5 announcement, Gay expressed admiration for student athletes’ tenacity, commitment to their teammates, and immersion in and exposure to leadership—and her interest in seeing those lessons and experiences shared across the undergraduate body.

A report on the committee’s findings is expected in the spring. Whether it considers the weighty matters of staffing, per-

sonnel, or the consideration of athletics in admissions, fans will have to wait and see. Further details are available at [harvardmag.com/ath-review-19](http://harvardmag.com/ath-review-19).

## Who Gets In

FRETTING—or boasting, or litigating—about who is *admitted* to Harvard and other selective institutions is a major industry. But now the issue surrounding the community’s composition has broadened in an ominous way.

In July, President Lawrence S. Bacow wrote to U.S. Secretary of State Michael Pompeo, J.D. ’94, and Acting Secretary of Homeland Security Kevin McAleenan to “share my deep concern over growing uncertainty and anxiety around issues involving international students and scholars.” While supporting “the fundamental role of your agencies in ensuring that those who come to the United States do so with appropriate and honest intentions that meet the goals and requirements of our laws,” he pointed to visa delays that increasingly impede the arrival of international students and scholars, and to security reviews that pose mounting threats to the conduct of “open and collaborative” academic science.

The late-August news that Palestinian student Ismail Ajjawi, from Lebanon, was denied entry at Logan Airport after he traveled to the United States to join the College class of 2023—apparently because immigration officials objected to phone and laptop social-media postings from his friends—only heightened those fears. (He was subsequently cleared to enter the country, in time to begin classes.)

Bacow amplified his concern in a community email sent on the morning of September 3, the first day of the semester. Invoking a 1957 observation by predecessor Nathan Pusey about Harvard “as a kind of island of light in a very widespread darkness,” Bacow was at pains to assert that the University *cannot* be a special place of learning and discovery if it is an island kept apart from the best minds in the world. “Various international students and scholars eager to establish lives here

on our campus,” he wrote, “find themselves the subject of scrutiny and suspicion in the name of national security, and they are reconsidering the value of joining our community in the face of disruptions and delays.” Acknowledging public officials’ “necessary obligation to weigh issues of national security, I profoundly hope they will do so with full recognition of the ways that our country’s universities greatly benefit from the presence and participation of talented people from around the world, and the ways that U.S. national interests are served by a system of higher education whose strength rests on a willingness to transcend barriers, not erect them.”

Writing personally, as the son of refugees from the Holocaust, he turned to those today, who like “countless people from different parts of the world have long looked to [this country’s] shores with hope—for the chance to learn, for the chance to contribute, for the chance to live better and safer lives.” On their behalf, he continued, “I am disheartened by aspects of the proposed new criteria for people seeking to enter our country. They privilege those who are already educated, who already speak English, and who already have demonstrable skills. They fail to recognize others who yearn for a better future and who are willing to sacrifice and work hard to achieve it.”

In remaining open to talent from any source, Bacow concluded, “Harvard is, indeed, no island. We must devote ourselves to the work of illuminating the world through word and deed, and we must continue to affirm and safeguard the values that underlie the finest traditions of this extraordinary nation, especially in turbulent times. I hope you will take up that important work with me in the coming months.”

Indeed, in mid-September, Harvard joined 600-plus colleges and universities—under the auspices of the American Council on Education—in writing to the leaders of the U.S. Congress, urging permanent protection for undocumented immigrant students (the “Dreamers” remaining in the country under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program). Bacow also signed a letter to the Massachusetts congressional delegation, from 42 presidents of institutions in the Commonwealth, urging action to reverse visa delays and other heightened barriers to foreign-born students and other participants in higher education here.

—JOHN S. ROSENBERG



HARVARD ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS

**A spirited moment for the women's lacrosse players. Harvard athletics plays an important role in the lives of the nearly one-fifth of undergraduates participating in intercollegiate sports.**



## Helping Housing

The Harvard Local Housing Collaborative—involving \$20 million in revolving University loan funds used to support affordable housing in what remains one of the nation's most expensive residential real-estate markets—has been renewed. Created in 2000 and previously renewed, it has enabled partners—the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, BlueHub Capital, and the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust—to preserve and create 7,000-plus units of affordable housing.

## Social-Club-Sanctions Lawsuit

Harvard's motion to dismiss a December 2018 lawsuit challenging as discriminatory on the basis of gender the 2016 policy that sanctions students for belonging to unrecognized single-gender social organizations (final clubs, fraternities, and sororities), has been effectively denied. In an August opinion, U.S. district judge Nathaniel M. Gorton found that three plaintiffs lacked standing, but that the remaining litigants were entitled to proceed. In his opinion, the judge observed that "it is impossible for Harvard to apply its policy without considering both the sex of the particular student and the sex of other students with whom he or she seeks to associate." The plaintiffs "have alleged a plausible claim for associational discrimination under Title IX" and "have alleged facts sufficient to state a plausible claim under a theory of gender stereotyping," justifying a trial of the issues—and suggesting at least some problems for Harvard's defense.

## The Public Pulse

Pollsters continue to plumb polarized opinions about higher education. The Pew Research Center's August survey reported "an undercurrent of dissatisfaction—even suspicion—among the public about the role colleges play in society, the way admissions decisions are made, and the extent to which free speech is constrained on college campuses" (on the latter, see page 18).

# Brevia



**DOCTOR AND DIVERSITY:** Giang T. Nguyen has been appointed executive director of Harvard University Health Services (HUHS), which provides care to students and to faculty and staff members who choose it for their health benefits. A family-medicine practitioner, he has been executive director of the Student Health Service and clinical associate professor of family medicine and community health at the University of Pennsylvania. The Harvard announcement emphasized Nguyen's role in forming collaborations to focus on "racial and ethnic minorities, immigrants, and LGBTQ populations, particularly transgender people," and noted that an early priority in his new post, which he assumes November 18, will be working with schools to effect the work of the University-wide task force on student mental health. He succeeds Paul Barreira, who remains at Harvard working on graduate-student mental health.

Those views are highly polarized, with 59 percent of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents saying higher educa-

tion has a negative impact on society. From 2012 to 2018, reflecting rising Republican antipathy, the share of Americans saying colleges and universities have a negative effect increased from 26 percent to 38 percent; the views of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents have remained stable and "overwhelmingly positive." Pew also found majority support (52 percent) for more federal spending on scientific research, with Democrats more favorable than Republicans—but greater support across the spectrum compared to the recession-recovery year of 2013. And a New America survey found general support for postsecondary education, especially as a preparation for work, but with ideological differences in how the cost is borne: Republicans emphasized individuals paying their own way; Democrats favored public financing of what they see as a social good.

## Ratings Game

The annual *U.S. News & World Report* beauty contest again ranked Princeton as the top university, followed by Harvard and a three-way tie among Columbia, MIT, and Yale. Williams again was the magazine's top liberal-arts college, followed by Amherst and a tie between Swarthmore and Wellesley. The top three campuses in its new "social mobility" ranking were the University of California's Riverside, Santa Cruz, and Irvine campuses. *The Wall Street Journal* crowned Harvard, MIT, and Yale as its top three schools. Separately, *The Boston Globe* noted that private institutions' sticker prices (total cost of attendance) now exceed \$70,000—a deterrent to many applicants, even though financial aid reduces the average cost per student dramatically.

## Around Academia

MIT's The Engine—a longer-term venture-capital firm for difficult-to-build enterprises (in fields like energy from fusion, which need lots of capital and time to progress)—is leasing a 200,000-square-foot space, aiming to host 100 or more companies. MIT has invested \$25 million in the

COURTESY OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES

**PUBLIC-SERVICE PAIR:** Deepening its investment in broader and more academically connected public-service programs, the College has appointed Warren professor of the history of American education Julie Reuben the inaugural faculty director of the Phillips Brooks House Center for Public Service and Engaged Scholarship (PBHC) and Travis Lovett the assistant dean of civic engagement and service. Much student public volunteering has traditionally been channeled through extracurricular-service activities, in Boston and Cambridge, conducted under the Phillips Brooks House Association's (PBHA) aegis. The faculty directorship points toward student involvement in faculty members' service-oriented research, and courses with service experiences. The assistant deanship encompasses the many, diverse service opportunities throughout Harvard, beyond PBHA. Read a full report at [harvardmag.com/publicservice-leaders-19](http://harvardmag.com/publicservice-leaders-19).



for-profit venture, now capitalized at more than \$200 million....The College Board has pulled back from its single-factor "adversity index"—intended to give colleges more information about applicants' background, alongside their SAT scores. Instead, it will provide data about their high schools and neighborhoods: separate gauges of socioeconomic status....Among the members of Yale College's class of 2023 are 20 New Haven students—13 of them from public schools; 11 of the 20 had participated in its "pathways" programs, which immerse high-school students in on-campus science or arts and humanities learning experiences with faculty members and Yale students....Separately, that university, in the quiet phase of a capital campaign, reported \$826.8 million in gifts and pledges during the past fiscal year, its second-highest fundraising total ever....Moody's Investors Service maintained its negative outlook for higher-education finances, as competition for students and the costs of making attendance affordable keep pressure on revenues.

### Nota Bene

**FENCING'S NEW FACE.** Daria Schneider has been appointed head coach of the men's and women's fencing programs. The position was vacated when Peter Brand was dismissed for violating the conflict-of-interest policy (News Briefs, September-October, page 33). Schneider fenced sabre at Columbia, and began her coaching career there in 2010; she was head coach at Cornell for three years, before her move from the Big Red to the Crimson.



**Daria Schneider**

COURTESY OF CORNELL ATHLETICS

**MINISTER FOR THE MOMENT.** Stephanie Paulsell, Swartz professor of the practice



**Stephanie Paulsell**

[harvardmag.com/paulsell-19](http://harvardmag.com/paulsell-19).

**MACARTHUR FELLOWS:** The MacArthur Foundation's 2019 "genius grant" recipients include Baird professor of science Jerry X. Mitrovica, a geophysicist whose research focuses on climate change; philosopher Elizabeth Anderson, Ph.D. '87; attorney and restorative-justice practitioner Sujatha Baliga '93; marine scientist Stacy Jupiter '97; and urban designer Emmanuel Pratt, a 2017 Loeb Fellow at the Design School (see [harvardmag.com/macarthurs-19](http://harvardmag.com/macarthurs-19)).



**Jerry X. Mitrovica**

COURTESY OF THE JOHN D. & CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION

**TOP TEACHERS.** Star associate professor of stem cell and regenerative biology Yachieh Hsu and assistant professor of studies of women, gender, and sexuality Durba Mitra (Harvard Portrait, September-October 2018, page 17) have been named this year's Roslyn Abramson Award winners, conferred on junior faculty members for excellence in undergraduate teaching.

**ARCHITECTS OF RECORD.** Among the five winners of *Architectural Record's* 2019 Women in Architecture Award are the Graduate School of Design's Sharon Johnston, professor in practice of architecture, and Toshiko Mori, Hubbard professor in the practice of architecture.

**PLANT HUMANITIES, URBAN LANDSCAPES.** Dumbarton Oaks, building on its research and collections in Byzantine, Pre-Columbian, and landscape-architecture studies (see page 88), has launched Plant Humanities Fellowships, supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, to encourage scholarship melding science, art, history, and digital humanities, drawing on rare books and manuscripts, herbaria specimens, and scholarly literature. Separately, Mellon has funded a three-year program on democracy, race, and difference, broadening a Dumbarton Oaks research initiative on urban landscape studies and environmental histories.

**MISCELLANY.** Harvard Law School has formally launched its **Animal Law and Policy Clinic**; some of the legal issues in the field and scholars involved were addressed in "Are Animals 'Things'?" (March-April 2016, page 40)....Concluding 31 years of service in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences' Office of Gift Planning, executive director Peter Kimball retired in early October. He handled gifts including a Stradivarius violin, oriental carpets, polo ponies, and a Frank Lloyd Wright house, along with, you know, financial assets....Dartmouth paid \$14 million to settle a sexual-harassment lawsuit brought by nine current and former students who alleged misconduct by their former psychology professors, whose tenure and appointments were terminated in 2018. The payment is among the largest paid in such cases by a higher-education institution....Nancy J. Brown, M.D. '86, chair of the department of medicine at Vanderbilt, has been appointed dean of Yale School of Medicine, effective February 1; she studied molecular biophysics and biochemistry as a Yale undergraduate.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEIL REUBEN (REUBEN) AND JEN DEAN (LOVETT)



# Permission to Know

by JULIE CHUNG '20

**L**AST SUMMER, during my third week of senior-thesis fieldwork in Honolulu, I visited a *kalo* (taro) patch, Ka Papa Lo'i O Kānewai, at the Hawai'i inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge. Our group had spent only a few minutes shuffling single-file along the narrow mountain trail before our guide stopped us. As we settled into a silence, the rest of the scenery came alive. I could hear the freshwater stream tumbling downhill beside me, and I watched hundreds of frantic ants, emboldened by my stillness, scramble over my exposed feet and legs. Until that point, my eyes and senses had been fixated on the rocky path, which had tested the limits of my foam flip-flops.

After our guide had arranged us in a large circle, she asked, "I would never go into your house without knocking, right?" I shook my head, unsure why we were discussing this. "No, that's trespassing," she reminded us.

She continued, "We are in the same situation here. Just because there aren't any doors or walls, doesn't mean that anybody can come and enter this mountain. We need to introduce ourselves to the *āina* (land)."

We would normally introduce ourselves with an *oli*, or chant, but given we did not have enough time to learn one, our tour group each shared our first and last names, our genealogy, our family's place of origin, and our educational pursuits. I welcomed the change of pace from the standard "Harvard introduction" of name, year, House, and concentration.

Even after a greeting as simple as an "Aloha, my name is..." our guide told us, "The land will tell you if you have permission. You might hear the sounds of a songbird or maybe you just get a bad feeling inside telling you not to go farther." She pointed to

her *na'au* (gut), which is the center of thought, intellect, and instinct for Hawaiians.

WHEN I ARRIVED in Honolulu on May 31, I had a bad feeling in my gut. I was conducting my 10 weeks of fieldwork at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Department of Native Hawaiian Health (DNHH), the only medical-school department devoted to researching indigenous health disparities in the United States. The department hosts an interdisciplinary team of psychologists, public-health researchers, physicians, and bench scientists from both Native Hawaiian and non-native backgrounds with the common purpose of addressing the striking burden of disease in Native Hawaiian communities that stems from generations of historical and cultural trauma. Intrigued by the DNHH's emphasis on cultural revitalization and community engagement, I initially planned to interview Native Hawaiian

community members about their experiences participating in health research, and their opinions of the integration of Western biomedical and Native Hawaiian healing traditions.

On my second day at DNHH, I sat on the third floor of the medical school overlooking skyscrapers and the gorgeous blue skies of Honolulu and reflected on my relationship to the place. All 10 undergraduate interns had gathered for two introductions: of ourselves and of the land. After giving a brief history of the colonization of Hawai'i and the mission of the school of medicine, our DNHH presenter pulled up a slide on the projector screen. "O Wai Au? Who am I? The slide had images of various natural landscapes in Hawai'i. Our presenter asked us to introduce ourselves "the Native Hawaiian way": "My name is... My mountain is... My river/ocean is... My rain is... My wind is... I am from..."

As my turn approached, I was nervous. The six interns before me had all given the Hawaiian names of places around them, while two of them had spoken their entire introductions in Hawaiian. I was the only student who did not grow up in Hawai'i. My mountain, my river, my ocean, my valley, and my wind were all scattered across California and New England. What was my place in Hawai'i?

My unease about my initial plans had actually begun six months before, when I sat with other juniors in the anthropol-



ogy department's weekly ethnographic-methods tutorial. That concentration requirement, besides teaching us the nuts and bolts of ethnographic research, aims to "[engage] students in the intellectual and ethical questions at stake in designing a research project." The first day of class, we discussed Michel-Rolph Trouillot's classic text on the "savage slot," a critique of anthropology's role in placing certain peoples and cultures in imperial categories of non-Westerness, otherness, and the "primitive." In our weekly sessions, we reckoned with anthropology's collusion with nineteenth- and twentieth-century colonialism, a time when many anthropologists served as cultural informants to colonial officials. Anthropology isn't the only discipline rooted in colonialism, but given its particularly notorious history, we devoted much more time than many other concentrations to grappling with the power dynamics and ethics of our research. After dismantling many of the original premises of our discipline that semester, some students questioned, in our last meeting, whether they should write senior theses at all.

Ethical qualms also emerged from our discomfort with the particular power and validity often granted to Harvard-approved knowledge, which at times has legitimized and reinforced harmful ideas, including eugenics (see "Harvard's Eugenics Era," March-April 2016, page 48). Early in the past century, Harvard administrators and alumni were at the

forefront of that movement, writing academic and popular eugenics articles and lobbying government to enact eugenics laws. Prominent faculty members in fields ranging from economics and genetics to psychology all "proved" a racial hierarchy in their research.

Given these power dynamics, a major ethical debate for undergraduate anthropology concentrators focuses on questions of permission and consent, especially when working with marginalized communities, where anthropologists historically have gained unbounded access to traditions, practices, secrets, knowledge, and worldviews. But like many indigenous peoples, Native Hawaiians have become aware of their fraught history and present relationship with the often excessive, extractive investigations of Western academics. Always positioned as the study subjects, never the researchers, many indigenous peoples have complained about being "researched to death." DNHH faculty and staff members frequently talked about the harm done by "helicopter research," in which academics literally or figuratively fly into such communities, conduct their study, and disappear. During the summer, a resident of a Hawaiian homestead talked to the interns about her experiences as a "guinea pig," including the innumerable times her family had provided blood samples, survey responses, and hours of interviews to researchers—and never learned anything about the benefits or results of those studies.

When I relayed my plans to interview Native Hawaiians to my internship adviser, she warned me that representations of Native Hawaiians by Westerners have often resulted in harmful consequences for the group. That reminded me of a tutorial reading describing how Captain James Cook's eighteenth-century account of indigenous Australians as uncivilized because they lacked a land-tenure system later became the legal basis for seizing their land—a decision overturned in the Australian High Court only in 1992. During my time in Hawai'i, I learned how academics in the mid 1900s "proved" the theories of early European explorers, who believed humans first reached the Pacific islands by passively drifting on currents. These theories fed into prevailing stereotypes about the inferiority of Native Hawaiians—until the revival, starting in the 1970s, of knowledge about ancestral Polynesian navigational techniques—wayfinding—as used on traditional double-hulled canoes.

After talking to several people at DNHH, I rethought my initial research plans. My internship adviser had told me, "In Native Hawaiian culture, there is a sense that this knowledge is knowledge that is not for everyone. You are chosen to be given knowledge, rather than simply seeking it." In other words, I had to question whether I was even allowed to know what I was seeking. I decided to exclude all Native Hawaiian lay people from my study, and to focus instead on how health professionals at DNHH have reshaped their scientific practices as a result of navigating their roles as scientists and individuals accountable to Native Hawaiian communities.

As I conducted my fieldwork, I learned the importance of transparency and long-term engagement with consent. Permission relied on a robust self-introduction to the people I worked with, especially given the political stakes of my academic work. As the American Anthropological Association states, the consent process is "necessarily dynamic, continuous and reflexive." Several times, my oral-history participants forthrightly asked, "I want to know who you are. Why are you doing this project?" In anthropology, we often discuss how we cannot enter our fieldsites or write our pieces as "objective" researchers. Our identity markers, our gender, race, and political views, all influence the ways in which we interact with our interlocutors and collaborators. When we sit down to write, these same identities, life experiences, and educational backgrounds all shape how we perceive and therefore represent the communities, cultures, and histories we are studying—just as occurred in Australia, where colonial academics failed to recognize how their culturally inscribed assumptions about property warped the way they understood indigenous land relations.

## HM Explore More

The renewed Lowell House—the largest project to date in the serial renovation of undergraduate residences—reopened in time for fall semester. Familiar spaces and amenities (the library and dining hall, for instance) were meticulously refurbished, while the complex was made accessible and augmented with new facilities like a tiered screening room and dance studio. Take a guided tour, with illustrations, at [harvardmag.com/lowell-renewed-19](http://harvardmag.com/lowell-renewed-19).



JIM HARRISON (2)



Rejecting any thin veil of objectivity, I therefore introduced myself as Julie Sunyoung Chung, a Korean American from Los Angeles who supports current Native Hawaiian political movements, the niece and granddaughter of Korean traditional medicinalists, and an undergraduate at Harvard. One of my first interviewees, a Native Hawaiian researcher and activist, generously offered to provide feedback on my work and reached out to her own contacts to encourage them to work with me as well. Although I do not yet fully trust myself, I'm reassured that such advisers will guide me in the right direction.

This year, I also plan to share copies of all my thesis drafts with my oral-history participants. They will have full liberty to redact parts of it and give me feedback. I was partly inspired to do this by stories told by my ethnographic-methods instructor, postdoctoral fellow Kaya Williams. In her own process of sharing dissertation drafts with her interlocutors, she sometimes had to remove quotes and anecdotes that might have been the strongest pieces of evidence for her argument. If consent is more than a bureaucratic checkmark, it demands long-term commitment.

THIS SUMMER, I also joined hundreds of Native Hawaiian activists to protest the construction of the Thirty-Meter Telescope (TMT) on the sacred Maunakea Summit on Hawai'i Island. Adding TMT to the existing telescope array there poses potentially damaging environmental consequences and would further deny Native Hawaiians access to areas used for cultural and spiritual practices on the mountain. Meanwhile,

intrinsic and universal benefits of scientific knowledge. Scientific progress seemed to be taking precedence over all other concerns. News accounts depicted the controversy as "science versus religion," casting Native Hawaiians aside as backward and superstitious. Rather than automatically agreeing, "The more knowledge, the better," I listened to people questioning: Whom will this knowledge actually benefit? Upon what

**Whom will this knowledge actually benefit?  
Upon what kinds of values should that knowledge be built? Who decides what kinds of knowledge to seek, and will that involve the indigenous people of this land?**

some University of Hawai'i administrators and government officials argued that the telescope would advance science and therefore benefit all the people of Hawai'i and the world. In their view, permission to use the sacred summit for TMT stemmed from the

kinds of values should that knowledge be built? Who decides what kinds of knowledge to seek, and will that involve the indigenous people of this land?

At Harvard, it can sometimes seem that I have unbounded permission to seek out all

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the knowledge in the world. As I step through their endless bookshelves, the stacks of Widener Library illuminate, quietly inviting me to explore. No research question seems too far-fetched or impractical, given Harvard's wealth and resources. My curiosity is compounded by academia's constant demand to publish: a criterion of individual and institu-

tional success. Even in the College's mission to "educate the citizens and citizen-leaders for our society," the power to influence our world too often seems to lie only in our effort to build up vast reservoirs of knowledge and establish our expertise.

In my summer thesis research in Hawai'i, however, I found a bit more of my role in

changing this world—not in the knowledge that I uncovered, but in the knowledge that I chose not to seek. ▢

*Berta Greenwald Ledecy Undergraduate Fellow Julie Chung '20 is a social anthropology concentrator living in Adams House. She is currently venturing into the world of fiction writing.*

## SPORTS

# Reload and Fire

*In the early season, an infusion of new talent and a hot quarterback buoyed the Crimson football team.*

**I**N TIM MURPHY'S 25 years as Harvard's football coach, every four-year player has won or shared at least one Ivy League title. So far, this year's seniors, the class of 2020, have been championshipless. The early part of the 2019 season—which featured a 31-23 loss to the University of San Diego and a 42-7 blowout win over Ivy rival Brown—showed that it would be a challenge to extend the streak, but perhaps not impossible.

During the first half of this decade, Harvard was the bullyboy of Ivy football, winning or sharing four titles in five years. But in the past three seasons the Crimson slipped back into the pack, going 7-3 in 2016, 5-5 in '17, and 6-4 in '18. A major cause: parity has engulfed the Ivies. Every game is a dogfight. The results in the conference's preseason media poll had the Crimson fourth, probably justifiably, behind Yale, Dartmouth, and last season's undefeated champion, Princeton.

As he approached his twenty-sixth season on the Crimson sideline, Murphy needed

to restock his roster. He had lost 30 seniors from his '18 team, including howitzer-armed quarterback Tom Stewart and many stalwarts from the powerhouse offensive and defensive lines. To compound Murphy's task, two star offensive players—running back Aaron Shampklin, the Ivy League's rushing leader in 2018, and speedy wide-out Tyler Adams, who scored a sensational long touchdown on an end-around against Yale—did not enroll in school for the fall semester.

Harvard was not without weapons. Senior defensive back and captain Wesley Ogsbury was one of the league's top ballhawks, with six interceptions in 2018. Junior Jordan Hill was one of the Ivies' best linebackers. On offense, with Shampklin

absent, his backfield mate, junior Devin Darrington, was capable of running over or jetting past defenders. Even without Adams, the receiving corps was deep, featuring senior speedsters Jack Cook and Cody Chrest. Senior Jake McIntyre was a trusted placekicker from 40 yards and in. Back for another stint at quarterback was junior Jake Smith, who had many good moments as a freshman and sophomore before ceding the starting job to Stewart early last year. How much Smith had matured would be crucial to the Crimson's progress.

In an intriguing twist, Murphy decided to begin the season by inserting into the defensive-line rotation a quartet of promising but inexperienced sophomores: Truman Jones, Anthony Nelson Jr., Jacob Sykes, and Chris Smith. The coach knew it was a gamble, at least as far as the 2019 season was concerned.

IN THE OPENER against San Diego, which was playing its third game of 2019, the Crimson showed its flaws—and its rust. Twice previously a Harvard football team had traveled to southern California, which has become fertile recruiting territory (see Tidbits). In 2013, the Crimson had thrashed the Toreros 42-0 (and also beat them again in

Cambridge, in 2014 and '18). But the more memorable appearance came 100 years ago, on January 1, 1920, when Harvard, the 1919 national champion, played in its only bowl game, defeating Oregon 7-6.

This time, in sunny 70-degree conditions, the Toreros didn't even give the Crimson defenders time to apply their sunscreen. Harvard was playing the first half without Ogsbury, who was serving out a suspension as a result of being called for a target-



TIMOWEARA/THE HARVARD CRIMSON

**Tag team:** Harvard senior captain and defensive back Wes Ogsbury Jr. (1) and senior linebacker Joey Goodman (59) doubled up on Brown end Dan Gemmell.



ing penalty in last year's season-ending win over Yale (see [harvardmag.com/thegame-18](http://harvardmag.com/thegame-18)). So on the first play from scrimmage, San Diego quarterback Reid Sinnett took full advantage. He dropped back and threw downfield to star receiver Michael Bandy, who was running an inside route from right to left. Bandy gathered it in and outran the Harvard defenders into the end zone. Eight seconds into the season—stung!

What ensued was one of the most dreadful first halves in recent Crimson annals. At its conclusion the Toreros led 24-0 and had outgained the Crimson in total offense, 305 yards to 70. Murphy's youthful defensive linemen received a brutal baptism of fire on San Diego's second drive, which consumed 19 plays and more than 10 minutes before the Toreros had to settle for a field goal.

The second half brought a turnaround—and hope. On the first play from scrimmage from the Harvard 25, Smith dropped back and saw Chrest running deep down the left—open. Smith threw and hit him in stride. The lanky senior took it all the way to the house. McIntyre converted. San Diego 24, Harvard 7.

After the Toreros restored their 24-point margin with a 68-yard touchdown drive, Smith went to work again. At the end of the third quarter, he launched a drive from the Harvard 23 highlighted by completions to junior tight end Ryan Reagan and to Cook, and by a darting 15-yard run by Darrington. In the beginning of the fourth quarter, on second and nine from the San Diego 14, Smith found sophomore tight end Kyle Klink in the end zone. San Diego 31, Harvard 13. On its next possession Harvard took over on its 20. On first down, Smith dropped back. Cook streaked on a fly pattern along the right side. Whoosh! Smith's pass sailed through the air and into Cook's outstretched hands. He ran the rest of the distance into the end zone. At 80 yards, it was tied for the fourth-longest touchdown pass in Crimson history. McIntyre kicked the point. San Diego 31, Harvard 20.

Moments later the Crimson defense forced a fumble that was recovered by Hill at the Harvard 36. Helped by two San Diego penalties, Smith moved the ball down to the

**Against San Diego, Harvard senior wideout Jack Cook snared a team-high seven passes from junior quarterback Jake Smith, including an 80-yard pass-and-run connection, tied for fourth-longest scoring toss in Crimson history.**

Torero 13. On fourth-and-five, McIntyre kicked a 20-yard field goal—the thirty-first of his career, snapping his tie for most all-time with Matt Schindel '08. San Diego 31, Harvard 23.

There was one last gasp for the Crimson, but Smith, pressured, had a pass picked off by the Toreros' Daniel Tolbert. Smith finished with 22 completions in 39 attempts for a career-high 325 yards and three touchdowns. "Jake was solid," was Murphy's verdict.

A SCANT six days later Harvard was at the Stadium, under the lights against Brown in both the home and the Ivy opener. The start was again a catastrophe. On the first play, Bears running back Allen Smith ran 53 yards; on the third, going right up the gut, he rumbled the remaining 22 to the end zone. A few minutes later Brown had reached the Crimson five when quarterback EJ Perry, fading back to pass, mysteriously dropped the ball. Harvard junior defensive lineman Nasir Darnell recovered—and the Bears never did.

Six unanswered Harvard touchdowns ensued. The first four came on Smith passes. (The quartet of scoring tosses was another personal best for Smith.) On the first, Smith nimbly evaded the Bears rush, ran to his left, and zipped a difficult throw across his body to Chrest in the left corner of the end zone. The second was an eight-yarder in which Smith lobbed one that six-foot-seven junior tight end Adam West leaped to snare in the end zone. The third, coming with 13 seconds in the first half, was a 34-yarder to Cook, who had beaten his defender on a post pattern. The fourth, on the first possession of the second half, was a flip over the middle to junior wideout B.J. Watson, who ran toward

the left sideline, then looped back across the field and weaved through opponents to the end zone. Later on, Darrington scored on a 19-yard bolt up the middle, then freshman running back Aidan



BROCK SCOTT/COURTESY OF HARVARD ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS

Borguet barged in from five yards out. Smith felt he had progressed since last year. "I'm able to see the defense faster and process information and see my reads quicker," he said. "It makes the game slow down for me." All the while, the Crimson defense, led by Hill (five tackles) and Sykes (five tackles and a sack), bottled up Brown's Perry.

Even as the better part of the Ivy steeplechase loomed, there was a palpable sense of relief that the Crimson had surmounted the first jump.

**TIDBITS:** Defensive back Ben Abercrombie '21 ('23), who was paralyzed below the neck in the opening game of 2017 at Rhode Island, has returned to Cambridge this semester and resumed his academic career as a freshman. Abercrombie is living in specially designed quarters in Weld Hall....Defensive lineman Brogan McPartland '20, of Stephens City, Virginia, and Leverett House, has been named one of 185 semifinalists for the William V. Campbell Trophy. The honor, presented by the National Football Foundation, recognizes academic success, on-field performance, and exemplary leadership. An applied mathematics concentrator, McPartland led the Crimson in 2018 with 4.0 sacks....Massachusetts has contributed the most members—13—to the 2019 Harvard football roster. California is next with 11, followed by Georgia (eight), Florida, New Jersey and Pennsylvania (seven each), and Texas (six)....Three players from last year's Harvard roster, all of whom are from the class of '19 and have football eligibility remaining, are continuing their football careers for other college teams as so-called graduate transfers. Wideout and punt returner Justice Shelton-Mosley, healed from leg injuries suffered against Cornell that cut short his brilliant Harvard tenure, is playing for Vanderbilt. Quarterback Tom Stewart and running back Charlie Booker are suiting up for Rice. ~DICK FRIEDMAN

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# The Science of Sex

Historian and philosopher Sarah Richardson interrogates the science of sex and gender.

**T**HE “SINS OF THE MOTHER,” trumpets a headline in the journal *Science*, warning of a “maternal assault” against children. Another headline calls mothers “smoking guns,” the source of incalculable harm. What wrongs have these mothers committed? Not any sort of physical violence: these articles describe a series of subtle, poorly understood chemical changes, passed from mother to child during pregnancy, that cause obesity and other long-term impairments.

But such charges stand on shaky ground, declares Sarah Richardson in her forthcoming book, *The Maternal Imprint* (University of Chicago, 2020). The author, professor of the history of science and of studies of women, gender, and sexuality, has spent her career researching the history of scientific ideas: where they come from,

and what happens once they are unleashed in the public sphere. Historians of science like Richardson are interested not just in the idealized

process of empirical discovery, but in the ways its all-too-human participants are guided and misguided by their scientific tools and the cultures and institutions that support them. *The Maternal Imprint* is a history of the idea that a woman's actions or environment during pregnancy can affect her children's and even grandchildren's health and welfare throughout their lives.

It's an idea that dates back to Aristotle, who declared that mothers had merely to glance at an object to imprint some quality of that object on her child. But in recent decades, scientists using the tools of epigenetics have examined the molecular basis for such claims as never before. Epigenetics (literally meaning “on top of” genetics) is concerned with chemical modifications to DNA that *don't*

**by Bennett McIntosh**



change its sequence, but can still be perpetuated as cells divide, affecting genes' function in complex but profound ways. It's a field of compelling possibilities, demonstrating that DNA sequence is not destiny—and putting forward specific chemical explanations for why events during gestation might manifest as health problems later in life.

"I was drawn to it," says Richardson about epigenetics' holistic view of human development, but "I pretty quickly became deeply ambivalent." While *in utero* exposure to specific dangers like the chemical thalidomide or diseases like rubella and syphilis has well-documented effects, those exciting early results seemed to give momentum to far-reaching claims about the dangers (or advantages) of everything from chocolate to the traumas of World War II. These claims routinely reach the public as scientific truth despite their origins in small studies and the even smaller effects they report, and despite study designs that have taken as a given that *in utero* effects—rather than genetic or postnatal effects—were the only effects worth considering.

"Some of these studies don't even include fathers," Richardson says—"and this includes mouse studies, so it's not a question of having access to the fathers." She worried that this bias became self-reinforcing: scientists looking for the epigenetic origins of disease examined primarily maternal effects, because that's where much of the knowledge, funding, and publicity were. As the influence of the father, and of life after birth, are left underexamined, she says, pregnant mothers must bear "fierce, punishingly harsh" blame for their children's ill fortune from scientists, doctors, policymakers, and the media.

"My book doesn't offer pregnancy advice," Richardson is quick to say. What it does offer, she writes, is "insight into how and why claims about the long reach of the womb are at once beguiling, challenging to validate, stubbornly persistent once launched, and beset by scientific controversy."

Her critique gained circulation among fellow scholars years before her ideas became the book. "It's changed my whole outlook, on everything I do," says Gemma Sharp, a lecturer (professor) in molecular epidemiology at the University of Bristol in England, who met Richardson in 2017. The two soon collaborated on a pair of papers examining the "looping effect" caused by assuming the mother's influence is paramount: they urged researchers in Sharp's field not to let previously discovered correlations—or the hype surrounding them—bias what they considered in future studies. "I got a grant last year [2018] that I wrote trying to incorporate a lot of these ideas," in studying the prenatal origins of infant health, Sharp adds. "I built into the grant from the start that I would look at mums and dads." She also specified that the research would be guided by a panel—including Richardson and expecting couples—to help her understand what knowledge gleaned from the study would matter most to parents.

"KNOWLEDGE THAT MATTERS," Richardson says, is her mantra. Throughout her career, such knowledge has come from carefully considering the fraught overlap of sex, gender, and science.

Though "gender," in popular use, is often simply a synonym for "sex," for the scientists and scholars who study them, they are distinct. "Sex" is the biological category: the coalescence of genes, hormones, and anatomy shaped by eons of evolution to differentiate males and females. "Gender" is the cultural category: the "mascu-

line" and "feminine" behavioral expectations and social roles commonly expected of the sexes.

How did the X and Y chromosomes come to be seen as the essence of biological sex? What does that history mean for the researchers who study them—and everyone who carries them in their cells? How can medical research account for the distinct but entangled influences of sex and gender? For Richardson, these questions cannot be answered without interrogating the assumptions embedded in the very words used to ask them.

Much of this questioning now happens during meetings of the GenderSci Lab, a research group that Richardson officially established when she gained tenure in 2017, but which grew from a reading group that began in September 2010, just weeks after Richardson arrived at Harvard as an assistant professor. That group was started by Meredith Reiches, Ph.D. '12, then a doctoral student in the department of human evolutionary biology (HEB), who had just returned from fieldwork in The Gambia. She had all the samples and data she needed to write her dissertation on how adolescent girls' bodies balance the energy demands of growth and puberty. But she had left The Gambia with lingering questions about the unintended impact of work like hers on the women and girls she was studying.

Reiches invited other students and trainees in her field and related areas to a reading group that would discuss the history of their field and of its assumptions about gender and sexuality. She invited Richardson as "a bit of a Hail Mary," she says, expecting a faculty member in a distant department would have other things to do, but "to my astonishment and delight, she showed up." At first, Reiches was more dismayed than delighted at the focused intensity of Richardson's questions throughout the discussion, until "we actually sat down together and talked about our intellectual training, [and] I understood that she was trained as a philosopher and this mode of questioning was a way of conveying interest and respect."

It's a habit Richardson was introduced to as a philosophy major at Columbia, thanks to the happy concurrence of a class taught by philosopher of science Philip Kitcher, which taught her to question the assumptions scientists make, and one taught by the feminist psychologist Lila Braine, which showed her, she says, that when it comes to investigating scientific ideas about sex and gender, "there are so many low-hanging fruit." As a Ph.D. student in Stanford's interdisciplinary Modern Thought and Literature program, she learned as well to study the history of ideas, mining archives, publications, and interviews to try to understand what coincidences of culture, ideology, empirical fact, and pure luck give rise to these assumptions.

The GenderSci Lab now meets in Richardson's basement office in Boylston Hall. Though the only beakers are held by a Marie Curie bobblehead on her desk, the focused and collaborative inquiry on display in lab meetings would be familiar to any scientist. At a July meeting, conversation moved rapidly between a practical task and a high-level theoretical discussion as the lab juggled edits to a soon-to-be-published paper on women in STEM jobs and talk about a nascent project to study how online communities associated with the white nationalist "alt-right" use and abuse ideas from evolutionary theory to prop up their ideology. Lab members discussed their own research projects, ranging from probing large epidemiological data sets to understand whether health outcomes stem from the cultural influences of gender factors (such as high

heels, employment disparities, or discrimination) or sex factors (hormones, genes, and biochemical development)—or both—to a review of *amicus curiae* briefs to understand how scientific ideas about gender become translated—and mistranslated—into policy. And they congratulated Reiches, now an assistant professor of anthropology at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, for winning an international award for feminist scholarship with the publication of a paper on that research in the Gambia all those years ago.

“There isn’t any other space like this operating in the U.S. right now,” says Heather Shattuck-Heidorn, Ph.D. ’17, who also met Richardson at the reading group’s first session. “Where you have a group of scientists and feminists who explicitly are supportive of empirical science, coming together...to ask what’s the science-savvy feminist take on X, Y, or Z?”

THE X AND Y chromosomes were at the center of Richardson’s first big foray into the history of sex and science. The story told in introductory biology textbooks is relatively simple: each set of parents confers 23 chromosomes on each child—22 of which are matched pairs and two of which, the X and the much shorter Y, determine sex. Males have an X and a Y, while females have two Xs, and from this all the other hallmarks of sex—gonads, hormones, genitals—follow. It’s a more complicated story than that, of course: a wide variety of intersex and related conditions exist, for reasons from atypical hormone exposure during development to extra, missing, or atypical X or Y chromosomes. But these exceptions aside, the X and Y chromosomes have for decades been seen as the expression of one’s “true” sex or of “sex itself.” It’s the job of a science historian to uncover where these stories come from, and why.

Richardson’s doctoral dissertation, published in 2013 as *Sex Itself: The Search for Male and Female in the Human Genome*, does just this, tracing the history of the idea that sex is centered on the X and Y chromosomes. Early in the twentieth century, she shows, it was controversial even to refer to them as “sex chromosomes” because they don’t always correspond with anatomical sex. But the fact that sex chromosomes are visible under a microscope (unlike the genetic markers for essentially any other trait) made them useful enough to two groups of scientists—those working to establish the role of chromosomes in heredity and those working to untangle the role of hormones in sex determination—that the association between chromosomes and sex solidified for decades. Since then, scientists have projected not only *sex*-related but *gender*-related expectations on them: some call the X chromosome “she” and the Y “he,” (though men, too, have an X chromosome); others speak of “defend[ing] the honor” of the “vigorous” Y chromosome against competing scientific theories that slander it as “wimpy” and “pathetic.”

Such characterizations, writes Richardson, may be tongue-in-cheek, but equating “sex” with “the sex chromosomes” has serious consequences, such as the “criminal chromosome” theory, the hypothesis popular throughout the 1960s and ’70s that males with one X and two Y chromosomes (a rare disorder whose subjects are taller, and more likely to be arrested, than average) were hyperaggressive “supermales” driven by that “criminal” extra “Y.”

In fact, more “Y” doesn’t mean more male: it’s now widely accepted the tall XYY stature derives from growth-promoting genes found on both X and Y chromosomes, and the arrest rates are driven by intellectual difficulties common to many chromosomal disorders. But the “supermale” theory held sway for two decades against

mounting evidence that males with one Y and two X chromosomes had similar stature and arrest rates to the XYY males. To discount that evidence, some researchers even relied on the widely accepted gendered expectations to explain away the similarities in arrest rates between XXY and XYY males, postulating that problems for XXY males resulted from “hyperfeminine manners...passivity, emotionality, and subpar intelligence.”

The “supermale” theory was finally discredited by the 1980s, but in *Sex Itself*, Richardson argues that it made the Y chromosome the star of sex-difference research in a way that still reverberates. She points to scientists like David Page, M.D. ’84, a geneticist at MIT, whose search for the genes that determine sex meant a laser-like focus, from the late 1980s through the early 2000s, on mapping the Y chromosome and discovering which part of it led to the development of the testes. Such a focus was not inevitable, Richardson writes: from the 1920s to the 1950s, based on evidence in fruit flies, researchers saw the X as the driver of sex-determination. And scientists now understand sex differentiation, in mammals as in other species, as the result of numerous interconnected genetic “switches,” some on the X and Y and others on the other 22 pairs of chromosomes. But from the mid 1980s, Page and his colleagues studying mammals focused on the Y and the testes.

WHEN A HISTORIAN like Richardson turns her critical examination from people long dead and events safely past to those whose participants are still-living experts in their field, they can—and often do—dispute her accounts. Page’s reaction to Richardson’s narrative in *Sex Itself* is illustrative: He agrees there was a focus, even an over-focus, on the Y and the testes in research of that era, he said over the phone. But he does disagree with Richardson’s answer to why the focus on the Y.

In Richardson’s history, the XYY research looms large in later researchers’ decisions to focus on the Y, but Page responds that research on XYY males “did not interest me, it did not impress me, it did not look to be the foundations of a path forward.” Mapping the Y, he says then, was not inspired by the popular image of a masculine Y that XYY research built, but was the most “tractable” research path, and “was very much grounded in the strength of the empirical data.”

Richardson’s intent, she says, was not to disparage the motivations of individual scientists: instead, she shows that, at the start of Page’s career in the 1980s, the structures of sex-determination research were focused on the Y, whatever Page’s personal motivations. XYY research played no small part in this. “What inspires some resistance to these ideas,” says Richardson, “is the assumption that it implies that the work is not scientific. But the tradition that I come from suggests that all science is social, that we use the resources around us to reason about the world.” Science is not motivated solely by *either* empirical reasoning *or* gendered bias. “It can be both!”

As she writes in *Sex Itself*:

XYY studies... represented the primary work on the human Y chromosome for two decades. XYY spurred interest [in the Y]..., prepared the ground for future Y chromosome research, and rallied researchers and resources to the study of the Y. XYY research also helped to cement a working model of the Y chromosome as the chromosome for maleness that... remained extremely influential in the coming decades.



# “The tradition that I come from suggests that all science is social, that we use the resources around us to reason about the world.” Science is not motivated solely by *either* empirical reasoning or gendered bias.

“That’s the cool thing about the history of science,” she says. “This is where I get very happy, when I’m in that space of trying to hash out the causal story.”

IT COMES EASILY to Richardson to think of science as a human endeavor inextricable from other human forces driving it. Her maternal grandfather, pioneering molecular biologist Martin Rodbell, helped discover G proteins: molecules that help pass signals between and among cells. Richardson recalls his sharing the “genuine joy” he took not only in his research, but also in its wider context: “He constantly talked about the practice of science, the things he valued about it, and about the changes in the field that bothered him. He worked at the [National Institutes of Health] for all his career on basic science, and bemoaned the corporatization of science, bemoaned the need to constantly produce applied findings.”

That commitment to basic science paid off in perhaps the biggest way possible: Rodbell shared the 1994 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine for his role in discovering the G protein. “I lay claim to picking up the telephone on the day that he received the call, on my little Garfield telephone,” says Richardson. “I was 14, and he happened to be visiting us, so we were together when he won the prize.”

But Richardson’s family had also been touched by one of the most horrific chapters in the history of science. “My grandma, my Oma, was born in Berlin in 1925,” she explains. “At the age of eight, she and her family moved to the Netherlands—they were a Jewish family—and at the age of 15 or so she went underground. Her family was deported, and ultimately murdered at Auschwitz. Her mother, her father, her sister, her grandmother, and many other aunts and uncles.” Barbara Ledermann escaped to the United States, where she met and married Rodbell, but her experience reverberates today: “The unbearable, unspeakable loss, to imagine my mother growing up with no relatives on that side of the family,” says Richardson. “I think it’s foundational.”

She opens *The Maternal Imprint* by contemplating how the consequences of such unfathomable horror can be passed down from one generation to the generations thereafter. She cites research on Holocaust survivors and their descendants from neuroscientist Rachel Yehuda, who argues that mothers who survived the Holocaust may have children more susceptible to trauma, because elevated stress hormones in utero can result in chemical modification of fetal DNA. If these children are female, their own egg cells, developed while they were still in utero, may pass this molecular legacy of tragedy on in turn. “As the matrilineal granddaughter of a Holocaust survivor,” Richardson writes: “I could not help but be curious about these claims.”

*The Maternal Imprint* is written in the context of this eagerness to understand intergenerational connections. Richardson may have come away from her research skeptical of particular claims, includ-

ing Yehuda’s, of the past’s imprint on our genes. But she sees clearly the imprint of her grandmother (now 94 years old and still “bright-eyed” and “formidable”) in her own work. The Nazi state, Richardson points out, guided and justified its murders with the logic of eugenics, an international scientific

movement—supported by Harvard president emeritus Charles W. Eliot, his successor A. Lawrence Lowell, and alumni including Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. and Henry Cabot Lodge—that resulted in the forcible sterilization of as many as 70,000 people (see “Harvard’s Eugenics Era,” March–April 2016, page 48). “This for me is part of my grounding in a very fierce tradition of social-justice work,” she says. “From a very, very early age, I understood that great wrongs can occur, even by those who purport to be the most educated, the most developed, so to speak, and that what needs to be cultivated is intellectual courage, the ability to speak out, the ability to resist.”

For Richardson and the GenderSci Lab, speaking out means challenging harmful uses and misuses of science, whether by white nationalists or by well-intentioned biologists who might benefit from a fresh look at seemingly fundamental ideas, such as the nature of sex itself.

WITH THE COMPLETION of *The Maternal Imprint*, Richardson has returned to the deep question that animated *Sex Itself*, which she feels remains unanswered: what, actually, is sex?

The “sex essentialist” view interprets sex as a fundamental category that divides humans and other sexually reproducing organisms—whether plant, animal, or fungus—neatly into two types. Evolution may tweak its trappings—hormones, chromosomes, anatomy—between species and over time, but sex itself remains constant.

Yet nature is full of examples that defy this pat view. Plants and some snails are mostly hermaphrodites, many reptiles develop sex based not on genetics but on temperature, female bees have twice as many chromosomes as male drones, and fungi can have dozens, or even thousands of sex-like “mating types.” In the lab, samples of human cells—many of which have been reproducing asexually for years—have been known to spontaneously lose their Y chromosomes or double their X chromosome, raising the question of whether such cells can be rightly said to have a sex at all.

Research into the extent of these differences continues: in July, David Page, the MIT geneticist, published a study of five different mammalian species that compared the sex-related genes that occur on all their chromosomes (not just on X and Y). Even though all these mammals use the same XX/XY sex-determination system, he found that the genes on the other chromosomes that determine *other* sex differences—from brain development to stature disparities—vary greatly from species to species, even between *Homo sapiens* and close cousins such as macaques. In many cases, genes that were amplified in the *males* of one species were amplified in the *females* of other species.

In contrast to “sex essentialism,” then, Richardson proposes a mind-set of “sex contextualism.” Instead of seeing chromosomes (or anatomy, hormones, or some yet-to-be discovered biomarker) as

## Scientists need to be extremely careful about applying to humans their results about sex differences gleaned from lab animals or even human cell samples.

“sex itself,” she encourages seeing each of these categories as “sex-linked variables”: they are *related* to sex, but in a changing, contextual way. Biologists generally acknowledge that the biological variables related to sex vary greatly across space, time, and species, but Richardson says this variability must be treated not as a tacked-on caveat, but as central to how the study of sex is conducted.

Thus, she says, scientists need to be extremely careful about applying to humans their results about sex differences—whether in the effect of a drug to a behavior—gleaned from lab animals or even human cell samples (which don’t experience puberty, let alone misogyny). When the NIH promulgated a policy urging scientists to report their findings about male and female test subjects—worm, rat, or human—separately, Richardson and other GenderSci Lab members published opinions everywhere from the *Journal of Neuroscience* to the *Washington Post* urging scientists not to expect those reported differences to generalize to humans. “I’m actually arguing that...a requirement to include both types and to report and compare by sex type [is] inadequate to address the stated goals. You want to address gender inequalities in medical outcomes? It’s inadequate to just study male versus female. You

want to understand how sex is operating in a particular animal or tissue model? It’s inadequate to just compare the two. Sex is working at multiple levels and in different ways.”

Richardson hopes the idea of sex contextualism will be

useful not only to biologists, but also to transgender and intersex people fighting for legal recognition against sex essentialist laws that try to fit them into categories that simply don’t apply. That’s “Knowledge that matters,” from the lab bench to the state house.

Page, the subject of so much of Richardson’s first book, says he’s eager to see how her newest ideas—on sex contextualism—apply to his newest research on sex differences. “The next chapter” of that history, he says, “is currently being written,” in his lab and others around the world, and in Richardson’s own research.

It will take some time, says Richardson, to turn sex contextualism into a fully fledged philosophical theory, thanks in no small part to the countless ways that sex matters for biology, scientific research, and culture. “All of these implications,” she says, “will be fun for me to work out. And then someone can critique it, once it is out there as a fully thought-out, positive system for thinking about what sex is. Then we will really get a debate going.”

*Bennett McIntosh, a freelance writer living in Boston, covers science for this and other publications.*



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Participants in Radcliffe Day 2019 engaged directly with organizations that address injustices in our food system. Pictured: the labor and civil rights activist Dolores Huerta; Dean Tomiko Brown-Nagin of the Radcliffe Institute; and two representatives from Fresh Truck, which brings healthy food to communities in need.



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# William Monroe Trotter

*Brief life of a black radical: 1872-1934*

by KERRI K. GREENIDGE

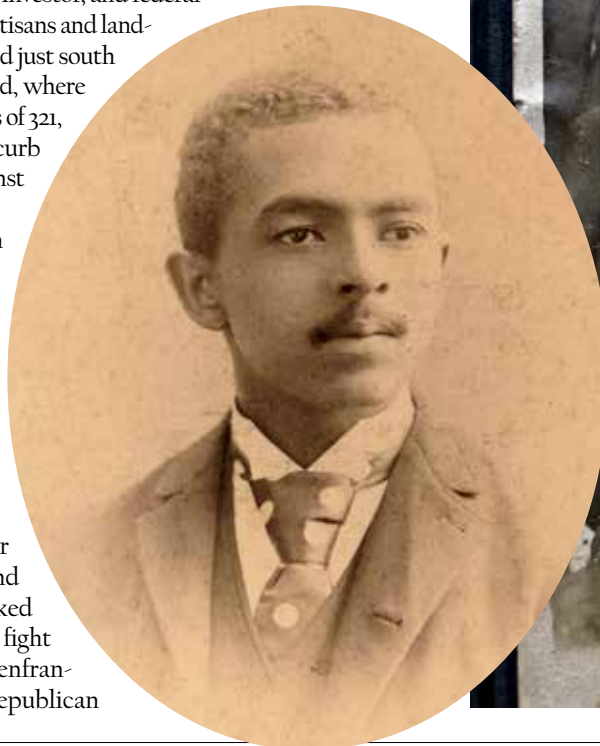
ON AUGUST 28, 1919, William Monroe Trotter, A.B. 1895, sat before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations to urge inclusion of the “rights of colored people” in the U.S. peace treaty with Germany. He spoke for the Liberty League, which he helped found in 1917 in the spirit of the political activism and militant protest that spread across the African diaspora during and after the Great War; the league sought political equality for African Americans and a “guarantee of self-determination for darker nations” across the globe. Using the league’s language of black liberation, Trotter demanded the following change to part 16 of the treaty: “In order to make the reign of peace universal and lasting, and to make the fruits of the war effective in the permanent establishment of true democracy everywhere, the allied and associated powers undertake, each in its own country, to assure full and complete protection of life and liberty to all the inhabitants, without distinction of birth, nationality, language, race, or religion, and agree that all their citizens, respectively, shall be equal before the law and shall enjoy the same civil and political rights without distinction as to race, language, or religion.”

By then, Trotter had been a radical newspaper editor and activist for nearly two decades. He was part of W.E.B. Du Bois’s “talented tenth”: his father was a Union Army officer, real-estate investor, and federal appointee, and his mother a descendant of free artisans and landholders in Charlottesville, Virginia; he was raised just south of Boston, in the town of Hyde Park. At Harvard, where Trotter never ranked lower than third in his class of 321, he started the first Total Abstinence Club (to curb student drinking) and led his first protest—against segregated barbershops in Cambridge.

In founding the *Boston Guardian* newspaper in 1901, Trotter was determined to use his relative privilege to challenge the denial of civil rights and the proliferation of anti-black violence that flourished in Reconstruction’s aftermath. The *Guardian*’s goal, he said, was to do as “the press ought to do: hold a mirror up to nature” by exposing the consequences of white supremacist policy. As Supreme Court rulings weakened the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, and southern states rewrote their constitutions to segregate, disenfranchise, and marginalize African Americans, Trotter invoked the militancy of antebellum radical abolition to fight back. With 90 percent of southern blacks disenfranchised, and northern blacks being told the Republican

Party was “the ship and all else the sea,” he forced northern, enfranchised, and “thinking members” of his race to “agitate, agitate, agitate” for rights being denied through federal neglect, counseling readers and supporters that “Only the colored people themselves can determine their political, social, and economic future.”

In Massachusetts, Trotter used the *Guardian* to confront white progressives who insisted “the Negro” was a southern problem, that New England’s abolitionist history absolved it of racial sin. In 1902, for instance, he organized massive protests against the extradition of a North Carolinian, wrongly accused of insubordination and arson, who had fled to relatives in Massachusetts and sought help from Boston’s black community. The *Guardian*-promoted effort failed, but highlighted white ignorance of, and reluctance to acknowledge, racial injustice in the Jim Crow South.





Even as many leaders, both black and white, insisted that slavery, Reconstruction, and blackness itself rendered African Americans “incapable of intelligent and reasonable democratic engagement,” in the words of film director D.W. Griffith, Trotter organized what contemporary political pundits called the “New England example”—black communities using their power as swing voters to elect “principles, not parties.” In 1915, he relied on this strategy to launch a national protest against Griffith’s racist film *Birth of a Nation*. By 1920, black voters in Michigan, Ohio, New York, New Jersey, and New England consistently voted with the Democratic party, not with the Republicans, in local and state elections.

Trotter had become “the stormy petrel of the times,” declared the black radical magazine publisher and editor Cyril V. Briggs: “the most significant voice of radical Negroes (for the man on the street anyways) in a generation.” Radicals across the African diaspora had donated money for his trip to Paris for the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, where he presented the Liberty League’s demands to the French public.

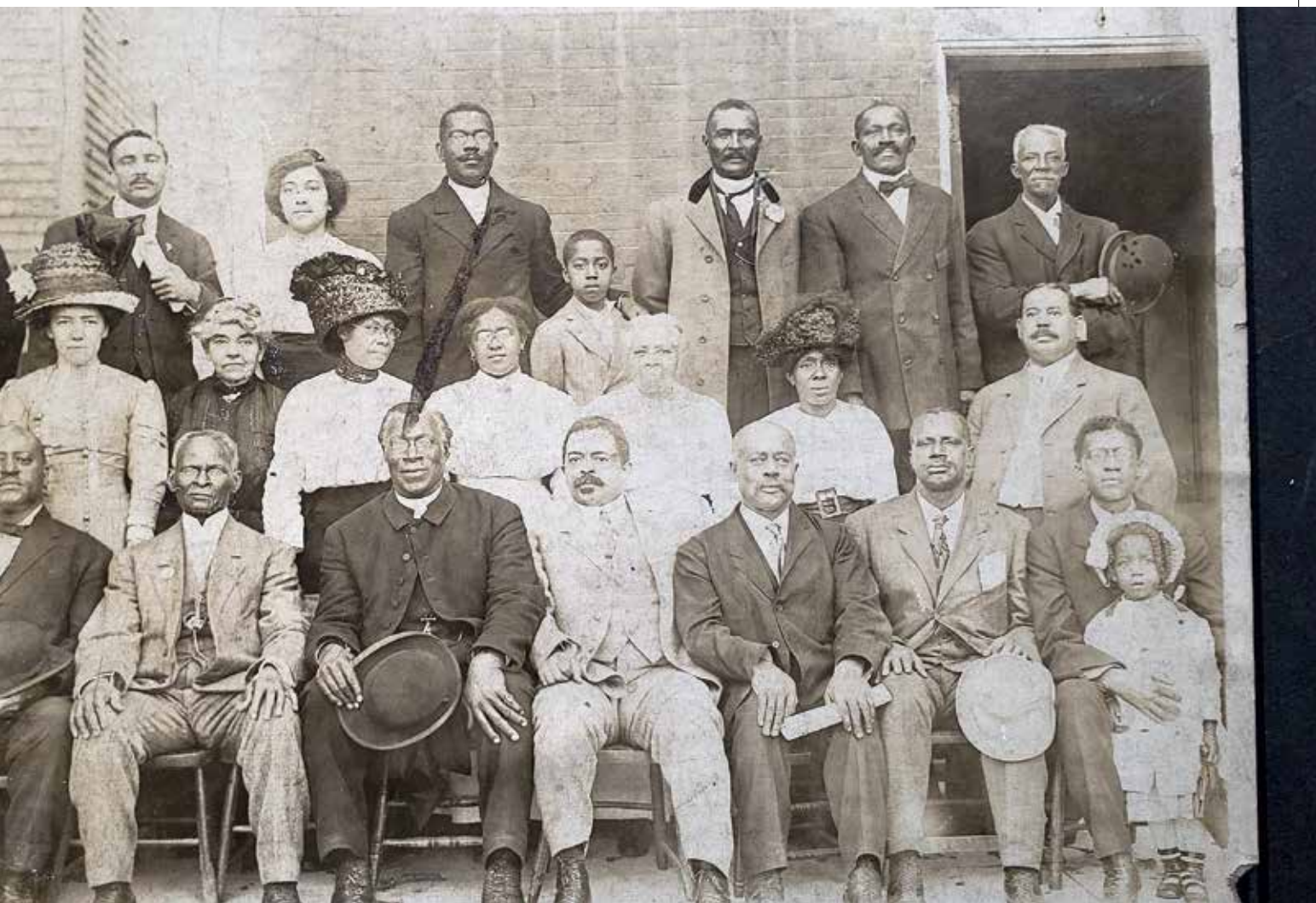
**William Monroe Trotter as a high-school senior (below left) and at a gathering, circa 1918, of leaders of the Liberty League (in the first row, fifth from right)**

The trip cemented Trotter’s role as the populist hero of the black working class. He returned from Europe determined that “the colored people of the world” define

democracy and freedom on their own terms. Throughout the 1920s, he continued his crusade against Boston’s segregated public hospital, supported congressional efforts to pass an anti-lynching bill, and founded the African Blood Brotherhood, to mobilize armed black self-defense against racial violence. But newer black weeklies like the *Chicago Defender* were eroding the *Guardian’s* popularity, its viability already sapped by the death in 1918 of Trotter’s activist wife, Geraldine “Deenie” Pindell Trotter, whose editing and bookkeeping skills had helped sustain it. By the early 1930s, Trotter was broke, and many of the causes for which he’d fought seemed lost. He jumped to his death from a Boston apartment building the morning he turned 62.

Radical activists across two generations were inspired and challenged by Trotter and the black Boston politics he cultivated. At a time when the black press was owned and operated by racial conservatives, black and white, who stifled black dissent for the sake of white comfort and racial respectability, Trotter galvanized black working people to recognize and embrace their political power. ♡

Kerri Greenidge, Ph.D., director of the Program in American Studies in Tufts University’s department of race, colonialism, and diaspora, is the author of the forthcoming *Black Radical: The Life and Times of William Monroe Trotter (Liveright)*, the first book-length biography of Trotter in half a century.



# Made Visible

The ubiquity of movement across man-made borders

by Marina N. Bolotnikova



**Above:** Adál Maldonado's *The Passport*, 1995, from the series *The Spirit Republic of Puerto Rico*. **Opposite:** Richard Misrach's "Border Patrol Target Range, Near Gulf of Mexico, Texas," 2013. Bill McDowell's "Untitled (approaching the border, Roxham Road)," 2018, from the series *Almost Canada*

IN THE UNITED STATES and throughout the world, migration is a newly urgent issue—more people are displaced today than has ever been recorded. Yet migration has also shaped and reshaped the world for as long as humans have lived. A new Harvard Art Museums exhibition, spanning media, places, and times, explores these two dimensions of human movement, and the space in between. Its images and objects—of people, but also of landscapes, things left behind, ghostly traces—present a vision of migration that, however contested today, is central to world history. Walking through the gallery, one is confronted with the sense that migration is not a special or marginal part of the human experience. It is a constant, pervasive consequence of human conflict and disaster—a reflection of the will to survive, and humans' capacity to make their world anew.

"Crossing Lines, Constructing Home: Displacement and Belonging in Contemporary Art," which runs through January 5, begins with a passport. Walk up closer to it, and it becomes clear the passport is a fabrication, a Spanglish document created by Puerto Rican artist Adál Maldonado for his imaginary country, El Spirit Republic of Puerto Rico. "The longer you look at it, the more it breaks up your sense of what is real," says Mary Schneider Enriquez, a curator of modern and contemporary art. Puzzling over the document, the components of a passport appear surreal, silly. In place of the nation-

al seal usually found on passports is a domino: a trick, a roll of the dice that determines who leaves and stays, and, often, who lives and dies.

The symbolism of passports echoes the exhibition's larger interest in borders—such a focal, contested part of today's discourse on migration. What are borders, and what do they mean? They don't merely come into existence: they are constructed, and reflect choices about how to carve up places and landscapes. A large back wall of the exhibit displays images of the southern and northern U.S. borders. An oversized photograph of a Border Patrol target practice range in Texas, by Richard Misrach, is unforgettable, with nine human-shaped decoys shot through with bullets, and the foreground littered with gun casings. In a photo of the U.S.-Canadian boundary by Bill McDowell, taken from the dashboard of a car, the border barely exists. "You can just roll up in your car," says co-curator Makeda Best, who leads the museums' photography curation. "There's no line; it's not militarized." The photo looks like it could have been taken on anyone's smartphone. The southern and northern border photos, Best explains, each enact a kind of looking: the "militarized gaze" of the Border Patrol,

TRANSFER FROM THE DAVID ROCKEFELLER CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES, HARVARD UNIVERSITY, GIFT OF THE ARTIST, 2012/13. © ADAL



GIFT OF THE ARTIST, 2018.112. © RICHARD MISRACH, IMAGE COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND FRAENKEL GALLERY, SAN FRANCISCO.



FUND FOR THE ACQUISITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS, 2019.82. © BILL MCDOWELL, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.







**Above, left to right: Jim Goldberg, “Home, Hyderabad, India,” 2008, printed 2019. Lili Almog, “Muslim Girl #14,” from the series *The Other Half of the Sky*, 2009. Images from this series focus on women belonging to ethnic and religious minorities in China, like female imams and Muslim leaders who lead women-only mosques. Facing page: Zarina, *Home Is a Foreign Place*, 1999 (complete work), and two details, *Rain* (above) and *Sky*. Serena Chopra, “Kalsana Dorjee” (right) and “Karma Tsetan,” from the series *Majnu Ka Tilla Diaries*, 2009, printed 2016. Chopra’s series documents the lives of Tibetan exiles in the colony of Majnu Ka Tilla, in New Delhi. The community was established in the 1950s, yet these images reflect its still marginal status.**

and the perspective of someone driving up to Canada, from the safety of their car.

“Crossing Lines” is only the most recent contribution to Harvard’s campus-wide conversation on migration and displacement. This summer, the Harvard Global Health Institute hosted a panel on the emergency at the U.S.-Mexico border, where lawyers and public-health professionals reported that children and families were being abused and irrevocably harmed by the current administration’s policies toward immigrants. In April, Masha Gessen’s distinguished Tanner Lectures on Human Values invited listeners to question what it even means to restrict human movement—a question that resounds alongside an exhibition photo that shows the southern border as a vast, empty desert landscape, cut in half by a rusty barrier.

Most of the works in the “Crossing Lines” are new acquisitions commissioned by Enriquez and Best. These contemporary pieces, Best says, reflect how photographers today think about their work: not merely documenting some fixed version of reality, but also as participants who shape the way their subjects are looked at. Another piece by Bill McDowell, a photo of the fragments of an asylum seeker’s testimony found at the U.S.-Canadian border, reveals incomplete glimpses of who this person was: a refugee forced to leave Nigeria because of sexual orientation. Says Best, “These slower methods of working speak to how contemporary photographers are interested in a slower process and layered process that recognizes their own position as producers—and not just the idea that photography can offer some sort of evidence.”

Photography may have moved beyond a “view from nowhere” idea

of objectivity, but the images chosen for the exhibit still serve a documentary role, with the ability to reveal and surprise. Beside well-known symbols of migration—passports, the southern border—are others that visitors may never have heard of, or may not have registered as a type of migration. A 2008 photograph by Jim Goldberg shows a family living at a waste-management facility on the outskirts of Hyderabad; rising temperatures have forced families like these to abandon their farms, a reminder that the climate crisis is now reality. Another photo from Bill McDowell’s “Almost Canada” series shows the open entrance to a narrow Underground Railroad tunnel, inviting viewers to imagine climbing inside—another kind of migration.

The flip side of boundaries and borders—the coercion and control exercised over movement—is the idea that migration gives rise to new cultures that are always remaking the world. “Crossing Lines” considers these “hybrid spaces, identities, languages, and beliefs,” from the perspective of an individual’s psychology as well as from that of the greater culture.

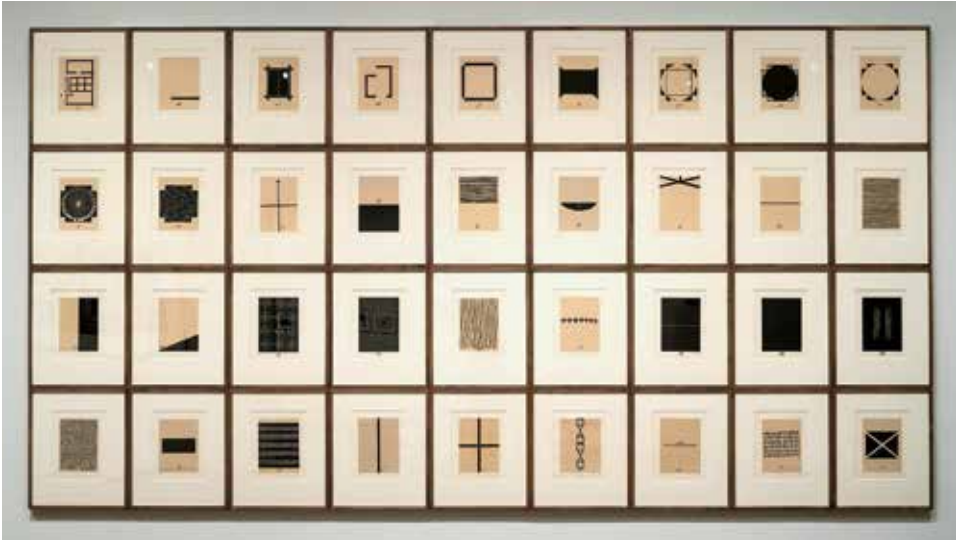
A woodcut print by Indian artist Zarina shows 36 abstract, geometric representations that bring to mind parts of homes she has lived in—a door, the night sky—with Urdu and English inscriptions under each. After the partition of India, Zarina’s family and millions of others were displaced and became refugees in their own countries. Her work, titled *Home Is a Foreign Place*, reflects the idea that returning home means going to a place that is not hers.

Zarina’s work is an evocative mediation on how immigrants see themselves—but what about when they are looked at, seen from the outside by their host culture? A large slide show displays a set of 80 photos by Candida Höfer of Turkish families in Germany in the

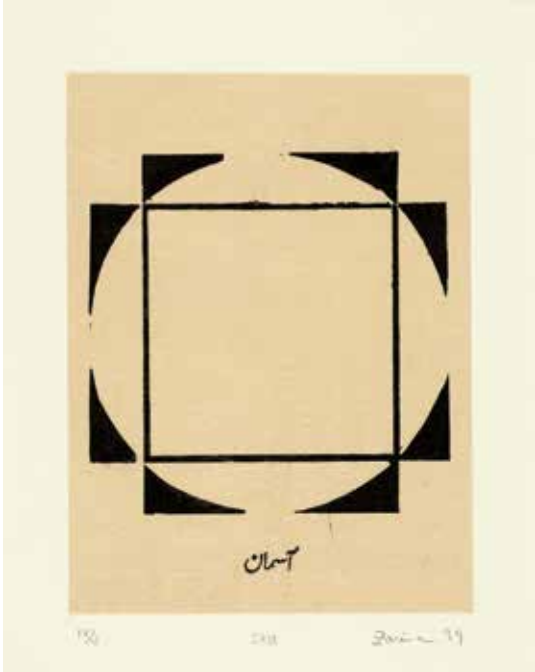
ABOVE LEFT: FRANCIS H. BURR MEMORIAL FUND, 2019.10.4. © JIM GOLDBERG, COURTESY PACE/MACGILL GALLERY, NEW YORK. ABOVE RIGHT: FUND FOR THE ACQUISITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS, 2018.80. © LILI ALMOG, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.



These contemporary pieces reflect how photographers today think of their work: not merely documenting some fixed version of reality, but also as participants who shape the way their subjects are looked at.



MARGARET FISHER FUND, 2018.309. © ZARINA HASHMI



RICHARD AND RONAY MENSCHER FUND FOR THE ACQUISITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS, 2018.258 AND 2018.259. © SERENA CHOPRA COURTESY SEPIA EYE.





Germany's supposedly temporary Turkish migrants, Candida Höfer's photos seem to announce, were here to stay.



FUND FOR THE ACQUISITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS, 2019.87 © GRACIELA ITURBIDE

GIFT OF MR. AND MRS. JOHN COWLES, BY EXCHANGE, 2019.114 © EMILY JACIR



SCHNEIDERMAN PRINTER'S PROOF COLLECTION, PARTIAL GIFT AND PARTIAL PURCHASE THROUGH THE MARGARET FISHER FUND, 2011.400 © GILLES PERESS/MAGNUM PHOTOS

1970s. The immigrants are captured in intimate portraits in their homes, and in candid shots on streets and in shops and public parks. "Turks in Germany" was taken while the country was ending its postwar foreign-labor program, but, as an exhibit label explains, this series "contradicted the then-widespread notion that 'guest workers' were temporary. By the mid-1970s, Turks were the largest immigrant population in the country and, as Muslims, the least accepted." Höfer's series represented the immigrants in a German visual discourse "from which they remained otherwise conspicuously absent," a label explains. These new Germans, the photos seem to announce, were here to stay.

The final works that visitors see in "Crossing Lines" are a set of six photos taken by Dylan Vitone in 2001, representing working-class residents of historically Irish South Boston; and *REMAINS*, a film by Irish artist Willie Doherty describing his and his son's kneecapping during the Troubles in Northern Ireland. Playing on a loop in a black box offset

**Above:** Graciela Iturbide, "Teno-sique, Mexico," 2015. At a shelter in Tenosique, near the border with Guatemala, a man stands by a mural marking violent attacks against migrants. **Right:** Emily Jacir, *La mia Roma (omaggio ai sampietrini)*, 2016 (complete work above; detail below). White casts of cobblestones taken from the streets of Rome evoke the movement of migrants. They also double as symbols of protest: cobblestones torn from the street were used as weapons by working-class Europeans during times of unrest. Gilles Peress, "Bus depot. Qom," 1979, from the series *Iran*. A bus dominates this photo, taken during the Iranian Revolution, while the people nearby seem to be making their decision: will they stay or leave? **Opposite:** Eugenio Dittborn, *2nd History of the Human Face (Socket of the Eyes)*, Airmail Painting No. 66, 1989. These "airmail paintings," showing criminal mugshots and photos of indigenous people, were printed on fabric during Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship in Chile, then folded up and mailed outside the country—an exploration of how art can persist and be seen under state repression. Dylan Vitone, "friday night," 2001, printed 2019. From the series *South Boston*

announcing their place in their homes and communities: a reminder that migration, past and present, is all around us. ▽





**I**n 2012, *New York Times* film critic Anthony “Tony” Scott ’87 (writing under his byline, A.O. Scott) reviewed a big Hollywood release, *The Avengers*. He praised some aspects of the movie and bemoaned others, specifically “its sacrifice of originality on the altar of blockbuster.” Scott called *The Avengers* “a snappy little dialogue comedy dressed up as something else, that something being a giant ATM for Marvel and its new studio overlords, The Walt Disney Company.”

Disney’s giant ATM worked flawlessly. The movie quickly took in more than \$1 billion in box-office receipts globally. But

after Scott’s review ran, Samuel L. Jackson, who starred in *The Avengers* as Nick Fury, tweeted that “AO Scott needs a new job! Let’s help him find one! One he can ACTUALLY do!” This kicked off an Internet brouhaha, with Jackson’s followers retweeting the salvo and even adding their own colorful suggestions as to what Scott was qualified to do with himself. It became international news before the fracas burned itself out. But it had raised issues, even timeless issues, about the place of the critic in culture.

In his 2016 book *Better Living Through Criticism*, Scott wittily recounts this dustup and explains that it surfaced well-worn objections to critics: they lack joy; they rain on everyone else’s parade; they are haters, squares, snobs, or nerds. Scott pushes back at these stereotypes and argues that criticism remains integral to the process of creation in the arts.

Certainly, over the centuries, critics have been a beleaguered lot—esteemed among small, sophisticated circles of readers, but widely disparaged, especially by those whose work they criticize. Yet critics have somehow survived the insults and objections. Today they actually occupy a crucial leverage point in the culture. Economic, social, and technological evolution have made the critic’s function more, well, critical than ever.

Scott’s book ventures far beyond cinema and deals with fundamental questions of art, audiences, and commentary. His background in literary criticism, for example, informs a close reading there of Rilke’s sonnet, “Archaic Torso of Apollo.” He extracts the poet’s view of how readers should let the power of art affect them. “You are opened up, exposed to the universe, which sends

you a message, through the ventriloquism of ancient marble and modern literature,” Scott writes, setting up a quote of the poem’s famous last line: “*You must change your life.*”

Scott’s film reviews, which have appeared in the *Times* for nearly 20 years, make an even stronger argument for the value of criticism. They offer articulate, well-reasoned, and informed viewpoints on new movies, rendered in a highly readable style. In an Internet era of random, unmediated commentary on entertainment, Scott’s essays, built on evidence and under the imprimatur of *The New York Times*, offer readers a reliably intelligent viewpoint anchored in objective data as well as opinion.

Occasionally he also produces an essay casting new light on an older work like the 1999 Matthew Broderick-Reese Witherspoon film *Election*. And not infrequently, Scott folds in humorous flour-

ishes, as in a recent review of *Yesterday*, a comedy built on a fanciful premise about the Beatles. His review straightforwardly includes numerous quotes of Beatles song titles and lyrics, all *sans* attribution but perfectly seamless in context. “She’s carrying a torch for him visible from across the universe,” he wrote of the film’s female lead, before adding, “With a love like that, you’d think he would be glad.”

“I inhale Scott’s reviews because he champions the foreign and independent movies I like,” says screenwriter Jesse Kornbluth ’68, editor of *HeadButler.com*. “But the reason I read even his re-

views of the fifth sequel of some Hollywood dreck is because he’s a hard-wired humanist who actually cares about the relationships in a movie. As a critic, he’s a writer—he matters.”

COMMENTING on a 1973 *New York Review of Books* essay, Scott notes that “Joan Didion cut down critics for not getting it—not understanding that the highest form of art in Hollywood is the deal memo. The industry’s creative output, she says, is actually products and deals. Maybe the movie didn’t get made—but ‘we had some fun along the way.’”

“Yet the paradox is that some really marvelous works of art have emerged from this capitalistic, cutthroat, greedy system,” he continues. “One reason movies are so interesting to write about is the possibility of art and the attempt to make art. Movies require enor-

# THE WAY OF THE CRITIC

A.O. Scott on watching and reviewing a *lot* of movies

by CRAIG LAMBERT



SPECIAL THANKS TO THE QUAD CINEMA, 34 WEST 13TH ST., NEW YORK, NEW YORK





mous outlays of capital up front. A poem or a painting does not. And in film, the creative people are not using their own money.”

The saying has it that a painter needs a palette, a composer needs a piano, but a filmmaker needs an army. The cost of making a studio feature is indeed exorbitant. In 2017 the *Hollywood Reporter* pegged the average production budget at between \$70 million and \$90 million, but the studios’ bigger bets typically came in at \$200 million to \$300 million. These giant outlays certainly shape how studios and creators see film critics: as people of great power who can have a profound effect on how their immense investment fares in the marketplace.

“Movie studios are trying to market these things and create media circumstances that get people to see them,” Scott explains. “Critics can throw a certain amount of cold water on this, and they aren’t controllable. We are independent, and that drives them crazy.

“You do have to be fair,” he continues. “I try not to be cruel, although you can be harsh. You don’t want to have too much fun at the expense of someone else’s money, labor, and creativity. Nobody is *trying* to make something bad. It used to be that every bad movie—especially things that were cynical, dishonest, or pandering—I saw as a personal insult to be avenged. Now it takes a little more to make me mad.”

Critics’ power over the marketplace varies greatly in different media. In Broadway theater, for example, the lead drama critic of *The New York Times* still wields an influence approaching that of the Roman emperors’ thumbs up/thumbs down verdict on a gladiator’s fate. A harsh pan can doom a play, while a rave might launch a hit. At the opposite extreme, television criticism may make interesting reading, but its effect on a show’s success is virtually nil. Traditionally, the TV business has listened to only one critic: the Nielsen market-research company, which produces viewer ratings. (That may be changing now in this era of streaming; Netflix doesn’t release its viewing data.)

Film reviewers fall in between these antipodes of influence. “I’m sort of relieved to be in the middle,” Scott says. “Unlike a theater or restaurant critic, my review doesn’t mean life or death. What I say about any *Avengers* or *Star Wars* movie will not change its success in the marketplace. But with a smaller movie, a review can make a difference.

“That’s partly because the sheer quantity—millions of hours of scripted film and television content each year—that critics and audiences now deal with is overwhelming,” he continues. “There is no way anyone can process it all. It can be paralyzing and confusing, and there is a danger of work falling through the cracks.”

Part of a critic’s job, Scott believes, is to prevent that from happening—to say, in essence, “Wait a minute, here’s something special.” He did as much for the 2016 film *Moonlight*, a coming-of-age story with an all-black cast centered on a poor, gay, male. Scott’s review called it an “at times almost unbearably personal film and an urgent social document.”

“I’m proud to have championed *Moonlight*,” he recalls. “I saw it at the Telluride Film Festival. It was a quiet movie with no stars, and wasn’t necessarily destined to catch on the way it did. The big final scene was two guys drinking tea together. It shows the influence of European and Asian work. I felt it deserved more than just modest success. I told readers to go out and see this one. I did a short interview with Barry Jenkins, the director, and worked really hard on the review, writing it by hand in a café in Rome. It ran under the head, ‘Moonlight: Is This the Best Movie of the Year?’” Four months later, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences agreed that it was; *Moonlight* won the Oscar for Best Picture, becoming the picture with the second-lowest budget ever to do so.

THE SON OF two academics, Scott grew up in a scholarly home. By the time he got to college, “Most of the adults I’d ever met were college professors,” he says. His father, Donald Scott ’62, an American historian, is dean of social sciences emeritus at Queens College.

His mother, Joan Wallach Scott, has been professor of social sciences at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, since 1985; her uncle was film, stage, and television actor Eli Wallach. Scott grew up in Chicago, Chapel Hill, and Providence, and recalls being “very literary and bookish as a kid. The point of life

“It used to be that every bad movie...I saw as personal insult to be avenged. Now it takes a little more to make me mad.”

was to read as many books as I could.”

At Harvard, he concentrated in literature, a small department since absorbed by comparative literature, and was interested in “what was called ‘theory’”—a type of literary criticism derived from Continental philosophers such as Derrida, Foucault, and Barthes. “I was monastically serious about academic work,” he recalls. “I would close down the library.”

His senior year, he moved into the Dudley Co-op on Sacramento Street, a.k.a. the Center for High-Energy Metaphysics, as the legend above its entrance proclaims. “It was great,” he says. Residents shared the housekeeping and could earn maximal work points by cooking dinner every two weeks. Scott learned to cook there, and has pursued cuisine avidly ever since; he is an excellent amateur chef. In the co-op kitchen, he also met his wife, Justine Henning ’88. (“My friends were cynical, punk-rockers, cigarette smokers,” he recalls. “She was a vegetarian, a classic hippie into Indian philosophy and Judaism.”) They married in 1991 and have a son, Ezra, a recent Wesleyan University alumnus—and film-studies major—and a daughter, Carmen, an undergraduate at Wesleyan. Scott himself has taught a film-studies course at Wesleyan for the past few years.

Two years after college, Scott entered a doctoral program in English at Johns Hopkins. “It was a very small department—rigorous, competitive, you might even say sadistic,” he recalls. He took his orals but foundered when it came to writing a dissertation. “You had to specialize, and I was too much of a dilettante,” he explains. “My attention would wander. I didn’t want to be a professor. My heart wasn’t in it.”



Meanwhile, Justine began a doctoral program in history and Judaic studies at New York University, so the couple moved to New York City. Scott felt “miserable, stuck in a thing I had no desire to do.” He got his foot in the door as a book critic when the arts editors of *The Nation*, John Leonard ’60 and his wife, Sue, assigned him to review two books by then Porter University Professor Helen Vendler (now emerita). The assignment paid 10 cents per word, but Scott did his homework thoroughly and “threw everything into it.” He followed this with another on John Updike’s 1996 novel, *In the Beauty of the Lilies*. It ran as *The Nation*’s lead review and Scott says he “just loved doing it. It felt very liberating to be writing for non-academic readers—you can say what you like. With academic writing, everything had to be justified, cited. But here it was possible to have an opinion and just state it. It was also possible to make a joke.”

He adopted the byline “A.O. Scott” when he began writing for *The Nation*. “There were already several famous Tony Scotts,” he explains. “It was not a distinctive byline.” He chose “A. O. Scott” as a homage of sorts to his great-grandfather, an English immigrant on his way to San Francisco who stopped in Ohio, set up shop as a mason, and never left. The family business was “A.O. Scott & Sons.”

A good break arrived in the form of a job at *The New York Review of Books* (NYRB), where Scott spent just over a year working directly for co-founder and editor Robert Silvers. “*The New York Review of Books* has a place in my heart,” he says. “It was a very unusual, intense, literary, and intellectual atmosphere. Bob [Silvers] worked 16-hour days, seven days a week. He didn’t behave like a mentor, but I learned more in one year of looking over his shoulder than I did in all my years of graduate school. I learned about writing, thinking, and the importance of criticism and critical thought. The first half of the 1990s felt like 20 years to me; the second half seemed like six months.”

While working at the NYRB, Scott continued to freelance book reviews, for *The Village Voice* and *The New York Times* as well as *The Nation*. Eventually, Silvers assigned him to write an essay on Cormac McCarthy’s novel *Cities of the Plain*. When it ran, “seeing my byline alongside a David Levine caricature of McCarthy was a thrill,” Scott recalls.

But advancement was impossible at the NYRB, which had no senior editors. Scott therefore moved to *Lingua Franca*, an irreverent, gossipy review of academic life, while continuing to contribute to the NYRB. Eventually he left *Lingua Franca* to write a Sunday column in *Newsday*, and also became a regular contributor to *Slate*.

One of Scott’s *Slate* pieces focused on film director Martin Scorsese. “In my way, I wildly overdid it,” he recalls. “I laid out my grand theory of cinema. It was a good piece that included a cheap shot or two, prompting a grudge that the Scorsese people held for a long time. Years later, Miramax tried to persuade the *Times* that I

shouldn’t be allowed to review [Scorsese’s film] *Gangs of New York*.”

By 1999, he was the father of two children with a burgeoning freelance career. Then *New York Times* editor John Darnton invited him to lunch. Janet Maslin was stepping aside as a film critic at the paper, and, over a chatty meal, Darnton confided that the *Times* was looking for a film critic or two. “I wasn’t going to say no,” Scott remembers, “but I also thought, ‘This is completely crazy.’ I had written one piece of film criticism, and with two young kids, I hadn’t gone to the movies at all that year.”

Nonetheless, he wrote two audition pieces, and soon enough realized that he really wanted the job. In December 1999, he got the offer, and was amazed to find himself with a position at a level he had dreamed of achieving in perhaps five or 10 years’ time. He was not alone in his amazement. When word of his hire got out,

a *Variety* reporter phoned him to ask, in essence, “Who the hell are you?”



**“I’m proud to have championed *Moonlight*,” Scott says. “It was a quiet movie with no stars, and wasn’t necessarily destined to catch on.”**


IN JANUARY 2000, Scott acceded to the job of *New York Times* film critic, joined there by Elvis Mitchell, who got the other critic job. When Mitchell left the *Times* in 2004, the newspaper named Scott co-chief critic with Manohla Dargis, an arrangement that has worked smoothly ever since. (Dargis lives in Los Angeles, Scott in Brooklyn, with escapes to a Maine island retreat in Penobscot Bay.) The two take turns at having first pick of new film releases each week. They alternate movies by the same director. “We make it so the distribution of significant films is pretty equal,” Scott says. “Manohla is a very good writer and very smart. We’re good friends. If I read something of hers that’s terrific, I feel I have to step up and do better than I would if I were the solitary chief critic.”

He watches 200 to 300 films per year and reviews 100 to 150 of them, an average of two or three per week. In the darkness of screening rooms around Manhattan, where he sees about 95 percent of the

films he reviews, he has compiled, he says, “hundreds of notebooks filled with illegible notes.” But big commercial releases frequently hold “all-media” screenings in multiplex theaters: essentially sneak previews with a few rows of seats reserved for critics. “It’s useful, and fun, to see a comedy, a horror movie, or an action movie with a civilian audience,” Scott says.

In constructing a review, “the only data you have that you are sure about are your reactions,” he explains. “But to report on your taste is not necessarily useful to anybody else. They might like different kinds of movies than you do. The key is turning your response into an argument that will somehow connect with your readers’ interests.” A basic technique involves linking the reviewer’s reactions to elements in the film that provoked those reactions. “What I’m trying to do is persuade people to think about it,” he says.

“The most important aspect of the relationship between a critic and a reader isn’t agreement, but trust,” he declares. “A few months



ago, a reader who had seen *The Souvenir*—a movie I loved—sent me a note with two ticket stubs enclosed. I don't think he really wanted his money back, but he was making a point that I hear a lot, which is that I had let him down or betrayed his trust. On the flip side of that, sometimes people say, 'We never go see a movie unless you recommend it,' which is meant as a compliment, of course, but which is kind of a terrifying thing to hear. That's a big responsibility.

"I'd say that it's not so important to like things, or to experience only what we like," he continues. "If we didn't sometimes see movies we hated—or were bored by, or didn't understand, or found offensive—we would know a lot less about movies, our tastes, and the world. There are a lot of movies I've found unpleasant or that I've had various aesthetic or other problems with—*White Ribbon*, *The Color Wheel*, *The Wolf of Wall Street*, *Gangs of New York*—that I've found it interesting and challenging to think about. My hope is that my readers are open to that kind of experience as well, and that I can sometimes nudge them toward it. Taste isn't a settled fact; everyone should see their taste as a work in progress."

If Scott's reviews have a polemical thread, it's his distaste for the use of algorithms to predict and control audiences' reactions and tastes—"the notion that 'Netflix will tell me what I like,'" he says. "That is really dystopian. It turns everything into a manipulation of the public."


The *Times* does have a few rules to protect the objectivity of reviewers. Even though other critics do so, Scott and Dargis aren't allowed to sit on film-festival juries or any awards-giving bodies, where they would have a voice in dispensing things of value to filmmakers. At festivals, he has met filmmakers and shaken hands with them. "I might feel I want to be friends with this person," he says. "But then I couldn't do my job. You can't be vicious to your friends when the occasion calls for it. All the movie people have more money than you do, and the vast majority are better looking! You are *not* in the film industry, and you can't fool yourself into thinking that you are."

Still, occasional connections with the creators can be fun. Scott has met director Alexander Payne a handful of times at film festivals and parties. That didn't stop him from writing a 2005 pre-Oscar piece titled, "The Most Overrated Film of the Year" about Payne's celebrated 2004 hit *Sideways*, which won more than 40 awards. "I wrote about the way it was particularly embraced by film critics," Scott explains. "They seemed to identify heavily with the [male lead] Paul Giamatti character." The following year, at the Cannes Film Festival, Scott was standing next to the Palais checking his schedule when a voice came over his shoulder. It was Payne. "You know, I think you're right," the director said. "It was overrated."

"The thing that has surprised me is how much freedom there is with this job," Scott says. "People think you operate under constant rules and taboos. But I have been here through seven culture editors and five or six executive editors, and lived through the *Times*'s transi-

tion from a national print newspaper to a global digital medium, and I have always been able to write what I thought and what I care about. If there is an obscure film that I think deserves attention, I can give it that attention. Now I am working on an essay about Susan Sontag, who looms large in my own work and intellectual life. I've felt immeasurably free to experiment with my own voice and perspective."

THE FUTURE OF film criticism, even for a polished practitioner like Scott, remains uncertain, linked as it is to the future of film



**"The audience is used to the alibi, 'We are giving people what they want,' but audiences will embrace alternative fare."**

itself, as well as that of newspapers and other media. "Along with the collapse of a lot of daily newspapers, many of them have shed their arts critics," he says. In addition, consumer-review websites like *rottentomatoes.com* have brought either a populist voice or a haphazard flood of

uninformed—and perhaps sponsored—opinions into the fray.

"Sometimes I worry that Hollywood as we know it—the seven major studios and various independent players—may disappear," he says. "We will wake up one morning and there will just be Disney and Netflix. Disney just swallowed Fox. They are very good at the exploitation and monetization of longstanding brands—Marvel, *Star Wars*, Pixar. They are armed with a global audience and the Disney name. The sequels and remakes out there leave less room for other kinds of movies. The audience is used to the alibi, 'We are giving people what they want,' but audiences *will* embrace alternative fare. Jordan Peele's movies like *Get Out* and *Us* didn't come from a cookie cutter."

Another danger is the threat that online streaming poses to going to the movies, which might become "a niche, or specialized activity like reading a print newspaper," Scott says. "There's a loss of communal experience. You also lose an aesthetic quality you have with the big screen. Streaming could induce a kind of passivity on the part of the audience, which may get used to 'watching Netflix,' just like 'watching TV.' If things go onto the platform and disappear into an algorithm, I wonder how they can enter the cultural bloodstream."

As of now, though, the ritual in the dark still remains available. Returning to that final scene in *Moonlight* of two characters drinking tea, Scott recalls the silence that hung in the air of the screening room once the movie had faded to black. "You just can't get that, looking at a phone," he says.

Such cinematic moments sustain his belief in the future of film, despite current—and emergent—challenges. "I try not be pessimistic about the 'death of movies and decline of Hollywood,'" Scott says. "My book was written in a spirit of defiant optimism about criticism and human creativity: our drive to create, and to experience those creations." ▢

Craig A. Lambert '69, Ph.D. '78, was a staff writer and editor at this magazine from 1988 to 2014. His most recent book is *Shadow Work: The Unpaid, Unseen Jobs That Fill Your Day*.



# Montage

Art, books, diverse creations



- 60 Open Book: "The Luckiest Books"
- 61 "A Melodic Being"
- 62 Off the Shelf
- 64 Forgive, but Don't Forget
- 67 Chapter and Verse



TODD SEIDENBERG

## Comedy Is Magic

*For Harrison Greenbaum, it began with "Pick a card...."*

by LYDIALYLE GIBSON

**H**ARRISON GREENBAUM was five when his father pulled out a deck of cards and told him to pick one. Greenbaum did, and then watched his dad riffle the rest of the deck beside his own ear, saying the cards would tell him which one his son had chosen. With a flourish, his father named the card. Greenbaum doesn't remember what it was, just that his father got it right.

"But he wouldn't tell me how he did it," says Greenbaum '08, now a comedian and magician. And that's when the fixation

took root. "I became super serious about trying to figure out how this trick worked. I used to go to the library and check out magic books. And we'd go to magic stores in New York" from the family home in Long Island. "Those are some of my favorite memories." He started attending magic camp every summer and discovered a whole world of other weird kids as nerdy and magic-obsessed as he was. By the time he solved his father's trick—he says now it was probably the only one his father knew—Greenbaum's fascination was deep and wide.

**Harrison Greenbaum's *What Just Happened?* (left) combines his two creative obsessions: comedy and magic. And Greenbaum, who performs more than 600 stand-up shows a year, is a regular at clubs like the Comedy Cellar in New York.**

Magic led him to comedy. As a freshman, he joined the Harvard Magic Society ("It had, like, three members—I very quickly became president") and started spending Tuesday nights at the Mystery Lounge, a weekly magic show held above the Hong

BRODY BRODO

Kong Restaurant in Harvard Square. “My apprenticeship,” he calls it. The magic show was hosted by the stage’s main tenant: the Comedy Studio. “So that started rattling around in my head, the idea of stand-up.” Later that same year, he tried it out, performing a few jokes in a student-organized campus show.

He was hooked immediately. Partly it was the adrenaline: “Doing stand-up is like jumping out of a plane without a parachute,” he says, “and you hope you can build a parachute while you’re falling.” Partly it was the stripped-down purity: “That’s what makes it almost a blood sport. You remove so much, until it’s just you and a microphone. It’s very raw and visceral—you feel everything.” But even more exciting was the freedom. He was used to performing magic in a blazer and khakis. In stand-up, the dress code, and the expectations, were wide open.

He spent his college summers in New York City, working an internship at MAD—“comedy boot camp”—and barking comedy-club customers in off the street in exchange for a little stage time. Back on campus, he helped found the Harvard College Stand Up Comedy Society (HCSUCS; “To Harvard’s credit,” he says, “once they figured out the acronym, they never made us change it”) and wrote a prize-winning senior thesis on the effect of racial humor on prejudice. After graduation, his parents implored him to take the LSAT, but instead he leapt into performing full time. He moved to New York and gave himself two years to make it work.

Eleven years later, “work” is the operative term. Greenbaum performs more than 600 shows a year, locally and internationally, headlining at places like Carolines on Broadway and the Comedy Cellar. In 2010, he won the Andy Kauffman Award, given to promising comics doing unconventional material. In 2015, he reached the semi-finals on *Last Comic Standing* and later appeared on *America’s Got Talent* and *Conan*. More recently, he created a Web series for the United States Tour Operators Association, called *Recalculating*. It’s kind of a video travelogue with a quirky comic touch: Greenbaum samples Aztec mosquito-egg pancakes in Mexico City, drives a dog-sled outside Vancouver, eats fire at a Coney Island sideshow, and rappels down a wall in Slovenia in search of aquatic salamanders said to be the offspring of dragons. “My career has been a bunch of random, crazy jobs,” he says. “I like to say yes as much as I can.”

Last August, he debuted *What’s Your Prob-*

O P E N B O O K

## Hoffa and Harvard Law

new book, *In Hoffa’s Shadow: A Stepfather, a Disappearance in Detroit, and My Search for the Truth* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, \$28). From the introduction:

**One evening** in early December 2003, I found myself alone in a brightly lit cavernous office on the fifth floor of the United States Department of Justice, reading a stack of Supreme Court decisions about the Fourth Amendment’s prohibition on unreasonable searches and seizures. At the time I was serving as the assistant attorney general in charge of the Office of Legal Counsel, a position that made me a senior legal adviser to the attorney general and the president. A few weeks earlier, I had concluded that President George W. Bush’s secret two-year-old warrantless surveillance program... was shot through with legal problems....

My thoughts that stressful December evening began with a crisis about national security and presidential power but soon veered to a different turbulent period of my life. One of the cases in my “to-read” pile was a 1967 Supreme Court decision... that restricted the government’s use of electronic bugs to capture private conversations by stealth. As my tired eyes reached the end of the opinion, two citations leapt off the page like ghosts: “*O’Brien v. United States*, 386 U.S. 345 (1967); *Hoffa v. United States*, 387 U.S. 231 (1967).”

...The *Hoffa* case involved the pension fraud conviction of James Riddle Hoffa, the autocratic leader of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, who would later vanish, on July 30, 1975, in what remains one of the greatest unsolved crimes in American history. The *O’Brien* decision concerned the conviction of Charles “Chuckie” O’Brien, also a Teamsters official, for stealing a marble statue of St. Theresa from a U.S. Customs warehouse in Detroit Harbor Terminal. The Supreme Court vacated both convictions so that lower courts could determine if

**Jack Goldsmith** is Shattuck professor of law. As such, he is known for his work on the legal aspects of terrorism, national security, and other fraught topics in international law. But like all faculty members, he has a life beyond the classroom and his scholarship. In his case, the complications of that personal life are the subject of the



**Close to home:** Jimmy Hoffa (foreground) and Chuckie O’Brien near the federal courthouse, March 1, 1964, after Hoffa’s trial for jury-tampering

the government had eavesdropped on Hoffa and O’Brien in possible violation of a new governmental policy and developing Supreme Court jurisprudence....

After reading the decisions, I immediately saw their connection to each other, and to me. In the 1950s and 1960s, Jimmy Hoffa was the nation’s best-known and most feared labor leader.... Chuckie O’Brien met Hoffa at age nine and later served as his most intimate aide for more than two decades. Chuckie helped Hoffa bulldoze to the president of the Teamsters. He was Hoffa’s trusted messenger to organized crime figures around the country, and was by his side during his seven-year battle with Bobby Kennedy that ultimately sent Hoffa to prison....

But in 1974, he and Hoffa had a falling out.... Soon after Hoffa vanished, Chuckie became a leading suspect.... Based on a slew of circumstantial evidence, the FBI quickly concluded that Chuckie picked up Hoffa and drove him to his death.

I knew this history well because Chuckie O’Brien is my stepfather.

ROBERT W. KELLEY/THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION VIA GETTY IMAGES





**Greenbaum samples local culture in Vancouver and Mexico City in *Recalculating*.**

posterous prescription.

That's how Greenbaum comes across in his stand-up routines, too: easy, relaxed, full of gentle bemusement. He takes obvious, dis-

lem? a series of improvisational Facebook videos in which he plays a "comedian therapist" to unsuspecting passersby. Dressed in a cardigan, and trailed by a small entourage carrying an upholstered couch and a framed diploma, Greenbaum, who gradu-

ated summa cum laude in psychology, stops New Yorkers on the street and invites them to sit and talk (and joke) about their money woes and dating quandaries and, in at least one case, "a cat issue." Each "session" ends with a hug and a hastily written, mostly pre-

arming delight in bantering with the audience, including (maybe especially) hecklers. Partly that's a comedian hitting his stride after years of practice and study; he recently gave an interview to a comedy podcast that amounted to a two-hour master class

## O P E N B O O K

# "The Luckiest Books"

In an era of omnipresent digital media (and distractions), Leah Price '91, RI '07, is an anti-alarmist about the future of reading and of tangible books. The former Higginson professor of English, an expert on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature and on book history, recently decamped to Rutgers, where she is Henry Rutgers Distinguished Professor and founding director of the Rutgers Initiative for the Book. In *What We Talk About When We Talk about Books: The History and Future of Reading* (Basic Books, \$28), Price reassures: "One constant in the history of books is their power to take new forms, and to prompt new ways of reading as a result." In the course of making her case, she describes a class visit to a venue where *lots* of old-fashioned books await their next users:

**One blustery** February afternoon, the class...took a field trip. A school bus whose bright yellow looked like something out of a Richard Scarry illustration ferried us to an exurb an hour west of Boston, where a climate-controlled Home Depot-

books in Harvard's depository also inhabit a scale incomprehensible to human minds. As tall as five people stacked on top of one another, the sublime crags of the depository's 30-foot-high metal shelves produce the same vertigo as a stark cliff face. On campus, books are shelved by subject; here, by height. Arriving at the depository, each volume encounters a sizing tray....Also on arrival...each book's title is replaced with a bar code readable by a pistol-grip Motorola scanner: prisoner without a name, cell without a call number.

The ticket to this Siberia isn't always one-way. At some point in their exile, the luckiest books will be released at the request of a catalog user. If that user requests hard copy, the volume will be zapped by a scanner in the grippy-gloved hands of a fluorescent-lumbar-support-clad worker riding a cherry picker, bundled into a plastic bin, shunted onto a metal hand-truck, and loaded into an 18-wheeler to trundle past the sentry box and the nearby Kwik Print to the highway leading to campus, and finally into the reader's hand. When books do make the trip down the highway...they travel...11 million times slower than a packet of digital information. More often, therefore, the catalog user requests page images—meaning that the lucky volume will be scanned without ever escaping the building.

**Where there are still plenty of real books: the Harvard Depository**

style hangar refrigerates Harvard Library's 10 million least-loved volumes in off-site storage. A clang drew our gaze upward: 20 men were shoveling snow from three acres of roofs. Beyond the fumes of the loading dock, neither leather spines nor wood shelving lay in sight. Instead, my students encountered fluorescent lights, linoleum floors, metal carts, plastic bins sold by the thousand-count, an eyewash, and a stenciled hard-hat reminder. Climbing on the cherry picker for a high-tech hayride, the students looked about as credible as politicians posing in a tank.

Stored at a temperature inhospitable to human bodies, the

STEPHANIE MITCHELL/HFAC



**In *What's Your Problem?* he stops New Yorkers on the street and invites them into his roving "office" for some comedic talk therapy.**

battle-tested jokes is about Roy Sullivan, a park ranger who set the world record for surviving the most lightning strikes: seven times, between 1942

10 years and recently began touring: *Harrison Greenbaum's What Just Happened?* It combines the rhythm of stand-up—a laugh every 10 or 20 seconds—with the suspense of a magic show, weaving in original tricks that connect to the jokes. The show bears out a conviction Greenbaum often preaches when he speaks at magic conventions: tricks, like stand-up jokes, should *start* with an idea. “Comedians come up with an idea first, and then figure out a funny way to say it,” he says. “In magic, a lot of people go out and buy a trick and just jam it into their act.” But if magic is an art form—and Greenbaum believes it is—then its practitioners, he says, should strive for originality and self-expression, should be willing to push the envelope in ways that feel political or personal. “When I give lectures on magic, I always encourage people to break stuff. Just break stuff and see what happens. You’ll figure out how to put it back together.” After all, it’s magic.

on joke structure. But it’s also the fact that his jokes—observational, narrative, sometimes playfully political—often arise, he says, from a feeling of love. “For a lot of comedians, the motivating emotion is anger, but for me it’s more like, ‘Isn’t this amazing? Isn’t this insane? Let me show you.’” One of his

and 1977. Greenbaum ambles around inside the joke for several minutes, building digressions, unearthing absurdities, detonating little moments of surprise, before finding his way back for the final flourish.

His favorite project right now is a comedy-magic show he’s been developing for the past

## “A Melodic Being”

*Singer Ali Sethi finds his voice in classical Pakistani music.*

by LYDIALYLE GIBSON

“THE DRUMS are calling out your name,” Ali Sethi ’06 exhorted the gyrating audience in Sanders Theatre, as he and his bandmates wound toward the climax of the night’s final number, a song with roots stretching back to the medieval period in what is now Pakistan. Some listeners were already on their feet, and a handful of students were dancing on stage. Behind Sethi, the tabla player’s fingers flew across the drums, pounding out a rhythm that was intricate, ecstatic, irresistible.

It was the headlining concert at Harvard’s ArtsFirst Festival last May, and the song, “Dama Dam Mast Qalandar,” is a South Asian favorite, with a melody composed in the 1960s and lyrics drawn from a thirteenth-century poem honoring the Sufi saint Lal Shahbaz Qalandar. The work is often performed at Qalandar’s shrine in southeastern Pakistan, where pilgrims commune with the divine by taking part in *dhamal*, a whirling, pounding, trancelike dance. Inside the song’s feverish rhythms, Sethi told the

audience, traditional boundaries among worshippers—class, caste, gender, geography—break down.

Something similar seems to happen with Sethi’s music: boundaries fall away—between past and present, earthly and transcendent, between art and religion and politics. “We are many and we are one,” he says. A singer classically trained in Pakistani traditional music, whose voice can shift from plaintive to raw to warmly intimate, Sethi (pronounced *say-tee*) has become a star in (and, increasingly, beyond) Pakistan. Since 2012, when he appeared on the soundtrack for the film *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (directed by Mira Nair ’79), he has toured internationally and become a regular presence on *Coke Studio*, Pakistan’s popular live-music television show. This past April he made his debut at Carnegie Hall as one of three soloists in *Where We Lost Our Shadows*, a multi-



**Ali Sethi brings the Sanders Theatre crowd to its feet during a concert last spring. His Harvard mentor, Ali Asani (right, in suit and tie), joined him on stage.**

media orchestral work co-created by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Du Yun, Ph.D. ’06, about human migration and the flight of refugees. And for the past several months, he has collaborated with Grammy-winning musician and producer Noah Georgeson on an album, to be released by summer 2020, that combines classical South Asian music with his own songwriting.

Born and raised in Lahore, Pakistan, he is the son of dissident journalists; his father has been jailed repeatedly, and in 2011 the family fled the country for more than a year after receiving death threats. Sethi



arrived at Harvard in September 2002, exactly a year after 9/11. “Everywhere I went, people were kind of cagey about Muslims,” he recalls. “Like, ‘Ooh, what do Muslims *really* believe?’” Even as he felt pressure to explain, a part of him was searching, too:

“There was this wanting to have a narrative that fit”—about his home and culture, and himself—“and not quite having recourse to one.”

He found it in a class on Islamic culture in contemporary societies, taught by profes-

sor of Indo-Muslim and Islamic religion and cultures Ali Asani. For the first time, Sethi learned about the role the arts had always played in Muslims’ understanding of their faith. He learned that Islam was not only politics and theology but what Asani called

## Off the Shelf

Recent books with Harvard connections

**Democracy and Imperialism: Irving Babbitt and Warlike Democracies**, by William S. Smith (University of Michigan, \$70). Harvard, widely known as a liberal bastion, was not always and is not only so. Smith, managing director of Catholic University’s Center for the Study of Statesmanship, plumbs the *political* thought of Babbitt, Harvard’s long-serving comparative-literature scholar. In assessing “the ambiguity of imperialism in democracies”—and Babbitt’s link between that problem and his essential understanding that (in Smith’s phrase) “the quality most required for a successful political order is high moral character in leaders”—the author performs the dual service of rehabilitating an important idea undergirding genuinely conservative thought, and demonstrating its unmistakable application to twenty-first-century America.

**The Curious World of Seaweed**, by Josie Iselin ’84 (Heyday, \$35). The author-artist, who has made readers really *look* at beach stones and seashells, here goes to town on seaweeds and kelps. The helpful

texts, historical images, and her own riveting portraits of their beauty may help readers appreciate their biological importance, too.

**The Cosmopolitan Tradition: A Noble but Flawed Ideal**, by Martha C. Nussbaum, Ph.D. ’75, RI ’81 (Harvard, \$27.95). It is a *long* way from philosophical discourse on Cicero, the Stoics, Adam Smith, and their successors to “America First” as a campaign-rally slogan. That makes the distinguished University of Chicago philosopher’s engagement with the ideas of world citizenship and universal human dignity—and their practical limits in a material life—timely and urgent, if not light reading.

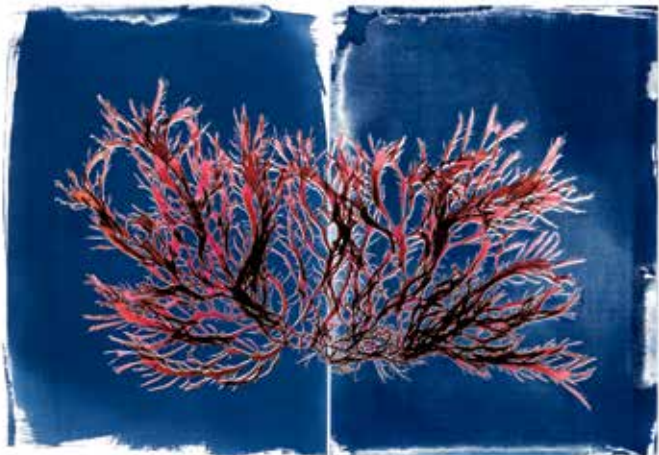
**The Education of an Idealist**, by Samantha Power, Lindh professor of the practice of global leadership and public policy and Zabel professor of practice in human rights (Dey Street Books, \$29.99). The human-rights scholar-activist (author of *A Problem from Hell*, on America and genocide, reviewed in September-October 2002) was schooled in diplomatic practicalities as National Security Council leader for multilateral affairs and human rights, and then as ambassador to the UN, in the Obama administration. Her memoir details that work (historians will hash out controversies like those arising from U.S. intervention in Libya), overlaid with her personal priorities (IVF and creating a family with husband Cass Sunstein, Walmsley University Professor, profiled in “The Legal Olympian,” January-February 2015). A useful reminder of the role of diplomacy—and of the challenges faced by those who conduct it.

**Sublime seaweed: nature photographer Josie Iselin’s cyanotype of *Pikea californica***

**Choosing College: How to Make Better Learning Decisions Throughout Your Life**, by Michael B. Horn, M.B.A. ’06, and Bob Moesta (Jossey-Bass, \$25). An education strategist and innovation consultant of the Clayton Christensen “disruption” school (the professor provides a foreword), Horn and co-author Moesta offer a consultant-like approach to figuring out whether to go to college and if so, why, and then, how applicants might attend their “best school.” The book’s chief value may be its operating assumption that its readers are *not* confined to the tiny minority of 18-year-olds seeking admission to highly selective liberal-arts colleges and universities.

**The Empowered University**, by Freeman A. Hrabowski III, LL.D. ’10, Philip J. Rous, and Peter H. Henderson, M.P.P. ’84 (Johns Hopkins, \$34.95). The flip side of college choice is what choices colleges make. Here the president, provost, and senior advisor to the president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, reflect on how they transformed a run-of-the-mill local institution into a nationally acclaimed powerhouse, distinguished for educating minority and disadvantaged students in STEM disciplines. The spirit of chapter 12, “Looking in the Mirror,” seems useful generally—for educators, but also for trustees, civic leaders, and others.

**Dangerous Melodies: Classical Music in America from the Great War through the Cold War**, by Jonathan Rosenberg, Ph.D. ’97 (W.W. Norton, \$39.95). The Juilliard-trained author, now a twentieth-century U.S. historian at Hunter and the Graduate Center of CUNY, has composed a breathtaking exploration of the intersection of international relations and classical music, from the patriotic dismissal of German music during World War I to the embrace of Shostakovich during the Nazi siege of Leningrad and the politics of Van Cliburn’s



CYANOTYPE BY JOSIE ISELIN

“heart-mind knowledge”: that before it was codified into scripture, the religion had begun as an aesthetic tradition that sought “to explain God through beauty.” The class unlocked something in Sethi.

He began to see the old folksongs he’d

grown up with in a new light—*ghazals* (love poems) and *qawwalis* (devotional songs) handed down by the Sufis, Islamic mystics whose practice emphasizes pluralism, tolerance, and an inward search for the divine. He’d heard them embedded in mov-

ies and advertisements and jingles on the radio—“just a part of our cultural DNA”—but they’d always seemed separate from religion, and lesser; now he understood they were neither.

He abandoned his planned economics fo-

apothecosis in Moscow during the Cold War. Original, and bracingly written.

**Cold Warriors: Writers Who Waged the Literary Cold War**, by Duncan White, lecturer on history and literature (Custom House/Morrow, \$32.50). As sweeping in scope and ambition as *Dangerous Melodies*, but in the different medium of literature. As capitalism and communism vied for hearts and minds, and their spies engaged one another, friendships and enmities changed and metastasized, from George Orwell and Stephen Spender to Richard Wright, John le Carré, and Václav Havel: a worldwide engagement of politics and prose.

**The Confounding Island**, by Orlando Patterson, Cowles professor of sociology (Harvard, \$35). The preeminent sociologist (profiled in “The Caribbean Zola,” November-December 2014) here returns to “Jamaica and the postcolonial predicament”: the subtitle, and his birthplace. Democratic but mired in poverty, religious but plagued by violence, lifted up by its indigenous music, the Connecticut-sized island becomes a lens for Patterson to examine globalization, development, poverty, and postcolonial politics in ways that resonate far beyond a place whose inhabitants say (in creole), “We are little but so mighty.”

**The Cigarette: A Political History**, by Sarah Milov '07 (Harvard, \$35). The author, assistant professor of history at the University of Virginia (tobacco country!), rereads the narrative of smoking, from early farmer-government promotion of the habit and product, through the rise of activist citizen nonsmokers who waged a fight for clean air. It is more than tempting to draw analogies from this careful analysis of interest-group politics to such contemporary challenges as, say, controlling greenhouse-gas emissions to secure the larger atmosphere and the life it blankets on Earth—what she

**Capturing the cosmos: a comet reported in 1527, from the Augsburg Book of Miracles**, by an unknown artist

calls, in the context of her research, “the confidence to believe in a different future.”

**The Age of Living Machines**, by Susan Hockfield (W.W. Norton, \$26.95). MIT’s president emerita, a neuroscientist with many Harvard ties, is a clear guide to the emerging synthesis of biology and engineering, resulting in entirely new technologies, with promise for fighting cancer, feeding an ever-hungrier (and -hotter) world, and so on.

**Cosmos: The Art and Science of the Universe**, by Roberta J.M. Olson and Jay M. Pasachoff '63, Ph.D. '69 (Reaktion Books/University of Chicago, \$49.95). Wheaton College art historian emerita Olson and Williams College professor of astronomy Pasachoff join strengths felicitously in a large-format tour and celebration of images of the cosmos, from ancient and fine art through scientific illustrations to the (literally) out-of-this-world observations made by the Hubble Space Telescope and other modern instruments.

**How the Brain Lost Its Mind**, by Allan H. Ropper, professor of neurology, and Brian David Burrell (Penguin Random House, \$27). With medical constructs for understanding mental illness now very much contested (see “Misguided Mind Fixers,” May-June, page 73), the authors re-examine the nineteenth-century’s simultaneous experience of neurosyphilis (very much organic) and of epilepsy-like hysteria (with no bodily cause). The contending narratives of psychoanalysis and of psychopharmacology, they suggest, trace to

those earlier paradigms—and reformulating them might help in addressing mental ailments today.

**Dispossessed**, by Noell Stout, Ph.D. '08 (University of California, \$29.95 paper). The author, associate professor of anthropology at NYU, dug into the housing foreclosures that ravaged the Sacramento Valley (and much of the country) in the wake of the 2008 Great Recession. Loan servicers, call-center representatives, and homeowners themselves became enmeshed in a toxic bureaucracy, transforming a financial contract into a moral relationship that colors the lives and views of millions of Americans still. Her account of the “administrative violence” homeowners encountered, instead of debt relief, is an imaginative, informative use of anthropology.

**All Blood Runs Red**, by Phil Keith '68 and Tom Clavin (Hanover Square Press, \$27.99). A brisk life of Eugene Bullard, a slave’s son who made his way from Georgia to Europe; rose in boxing as the “Black Sparrow”; enlisted in the French Foreign Legion and became the first African-American fighter pilot during World War I; mastered the Paris club scene; served as an Allied spy in the next world war; and found his way back to the United States and the civil-rights movement.



COURTESY OF THE GEORGE ABRAMS COLLECTION





Sethi performs on *Coke Studio*, a popular live-music TV show in Pakistan that he says “gives young people something to hold onto” amid religious and political strife.

a transgender person,” Sethi says. “They’re all residents of Lahore, people who embody the multiple interpretations of this poetry and music.” Three days after the video was released on YouTube last February, an unexpected skirmish flared up between Pakistan and India, and the two countries seemed briefly on the verge of war. The video’s comment section flooded with listeners writing from each side of the border, preaching peace and togetherness, praising the song’s message of love. “It became kind of an anthem,” Sethi says. “It felt genuinely miraculous.”

A similar spirit animates a concert series that Sethi and Asani present together in cities around the world, “The Covenant of Love”—from a Quranic phrase describing God’s relationship with humanity. Sethi and his band perform songs by legendary Sufi poets, while Asani, seated onstage, explains their history and symbolism. This was the show Sethi brought to Sanders last spring, and before the musicians played “Dama Dam Mast Qalandar,” Asani told the audience about a 2017 suicide bombing at the shrine that killed 90 worshippers. “But the next day, people were back, dancing,” he said, a testament to poetry’s power to give courage and spiritual solace. And then he invited students to their own version of *dhamal*. “If the spirit moves you, just dance.”

cus and began pursuing music and creative writing, concentrating in Sanskrit and Indian studies (and shortly after graduating, published a well-received, semi-autobiographical novel, *The Wish Maker*, about politics and family in Pakistan). He acquired a harmonium and during summers in Lahore began apprenticing under classical singers Ustad Naseeruddin Saami and Farida Khanum, embarking on the rigorous art of singing *ragas*, a complicated structure for melodic improvisation in which shifting notes can sound almost molten. “The music is never fixed,” he says. “A *raga* is almost like a melodic being. You have to breathe life into it, and every rendition, every performance, may be different.”

In traditional music, he has found room for musical experimentation and an avenue for his own “language of dissent.” Sufi songs, in particular, lend themselves to multiple interpretations; the same verses, Sethi says, may be read as the story of a love affair, or a heartbroken letter to an unjust society, or a dialogue with the divine. For centuries, Sufi poets have dealt with topics like gender identity, sexuality, cultural difference, and political strife. “The poems are so extremely inclusive,” he says. “And the appetite for Sufi music in Pakistan allows people like me to get away with a lot of potentially subversive stuff through the metaphors of Sufi poetry—these beautiful, deliberate ambiguities.”

“Chandni Raat,” a single from his forthcoming album, illustrates what he means.

Sung in Hindi, it takes its refrain from a *ghazal* by Saifuddin Saif: “This moonlit night has been a long time coming / The words I want to say have been a long time coming.” “The implication is of something half-veiled, half-visible,” says Sethi, who added his own lyrics gesturing toward an unspecified union, and set the song to a soft, slow melody adapted from two *ragas*. The music video shows a spectral, ruined train station and a collection of stranded passengers who gradually warm to each other across differences in age, religion, ethnicity, sexual identity, and walks of life. “There’s

## Forgive, but Don’t Forget

...and don’t always forgive

by LINCOLN CAPLAN

THE FIRST PERSON President Donald Trump pardoned, in August 2017, was Sheriff Joe Arpaio. He was infamous for being brutal to undocumented immigrants and others in his shameful jails, and cheered on by neo-Nazis. The month before, a federal judge had found Arpaio guilty of criminal contempt, which carried a jail sentence of up to six months, for “flagrant disregard” of a court order. He had refused to stop harassing and arresting Latinos without any basis for suspicion

that they had committed a crime. In the 2016 elections, Arpaio lost his race for a seventh term in Maricopa County, Arizona, apparently because the county no longer wanted a sheriff who engaged in what the Justice Department called “unconstitutional policing.” But in the presidential election, Arpaio helped push the county and the state for Trump, who advanced his own anti-immigrant cru-

*When Should Law Forgive?*  
by Martha Minow  
(W.W. Norton, \$27.95)

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sade by saying Arpaio was in legal trouble for doing his job—rounding up people who were in America illegally.

In *When Should Law Forgive?*, 300th Anniversary University Professor and former Harvard Law School dean Martha Minow reckons with a list of ways the pardon was wrong: it rewarded a crucial campaign supporter; it signaled to current and former Trump aides that they should refuse to testify against the president—and, if they were convicted, the president would pardon them, too; it went to a man known for his racist ranting and haughty defiance of law; and it reveled in that defiance. As a result, Minow emphasized, that pardon was and “is a direct invitation for disobedience.” Appalling as Arpaio’s contempt was, Trump’s was even worse as an abuse of constitutional authority: “to pardon a law enforcement official who so thoroughly disdained the law is to excuse or honor that attitude of disrespect for law and for the courts.”

Minow’s book is full of similarly sharp answers to the hard question of its title. It is a compact yet panoramic addition to the literature about restorative, sometimes called reparative, justice—an old practice recently revived by a growing movement in American criminal justice. In matters involving young people, wrongful conviction, and other circumstances where fresh starts are possible for criminal offenders or defendants, victims and/or their families, and others in affected groups, this approach to justice focuses on *repairing harm*, not on *meting out punishment*. It brings these people together to work out a shared understanding of what happened and its consequences. The approach is restorative in being able to help everyone let go of grievances, overcome resentment, and resolve conflict, and to give victims the chance to ask for an apology or compensation. Minow ends her book with a piece of contemporary folk wisdom: “Forgiveness does not change the past, but it does enlarge the future.”

The account of

## There are “acceptable and unacceptable grounds and circumstances” for granting presidential pardons and forgiveness.

Trump’s pardon of Arpaio shows what is different and notable about *When Should Law Forgive?* There are “acceptable and unacceptable grounds and circumstances” for granting presidential pardons and for other kinds of forgiveness, Minow writes, and she identifies and elaborates on both. What Trump did is not the only corrupt exception to a fresh, uplifting norm. The book is fundamentally a brief for forgiveness, but it presents tempering counter-examples that explain why forgiveness is sometimes an indefensible assertion of power, not an act of benevolence: some wrongs are unforgivable.

In three substantive chapters—“Forgiving Youth,” “Forgiving Debt,” and “Amnesties and Pardons”—Minow explores a humane vision of justice and law, without saying exactly how to fulfill it systematically. The book reflects what I have described previously for this magazine (see [harvardmag.com/minow-17](http://harvardmag.com/minow-17)): her disposition as a reformer, not a rabble-rouser; her encouragement of skepticism about law, including new fashions in reforming it; and her passion for exposing inequities embedded in it. In *When Should Law Forgive?* she addresses “why a fresh start is permitted in some cases but not others, and when and how forgiveness can be compatible with law’s demands of predictability and equal treatment.”

DURING THE CIVIL WAR in Sierra Leone, in West Africa, from 1991 to 2002, more than 50,000 people were killed; according to the United Nations, the combatants included about 10,000 child soldiers. Minow focuses on one she calls Emmanuel: abducted at seven years old and, for four years, used by his captors for the mundane (chores) and the savage (spying, fighting, and killing). Adults involved in such bloody conflicts turn children into soldiers “because they are more easily conditioned into fearless killing and unthinking obedience.” As many as 40 percent of child soldiers in some conflicts are girls, many forced to become sex slaves and prostitutes as well as killers. After the war, Emmanuel’s mother and grandmother forgave him. His uncle did not. Others in his community beat him. Minow: “He dropped out of school, became involved in theft, and fell into a cycle of social rejection.”

Child soldiers are victims, but also perpetrators. Some abduct other children. Some join a side without being abducted, “drawn by the ideology, or by chances for action and responsibility, or even by the thrill of the violence or being part of a political effort that could offer better opportunities.” Yet those who make that choice don’t have the same level of accountability and blame as competent adults, because “growth toward adult

maturity takes time” and “adolescents under the best of circumstances can both think like adults and be gripped by impulses and fears.” Minow continues, “There are problems with viewing former child soldiers or child sexual slaves” as suitable recipients of forgiveness, because “forgiveness by definition first

**President and supporter: Maricopa County sheriff Joe Arpaio, pardoned by President Trump**



SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES

**Fourteen-year-old Abu Kamara, a child soldier for the Sierra Leone Army, holding a self-loading rifle, May 23, 2000**

needs acknowledgment of wrongdoing” and child soldiers may lack “the degree of psychological and moral responsibility to be treated as wrongdoers.”

As victims and perpetrators, Minow writes, child soldiers make conventional legal mechanisms for dealing with them “overly simplistic blanket assertions of innocence or overly stringent assignments of blame.” She regards restorative justice as a valuable alternative for them, “some kind of public process to acknowledge their participation in violence and lawlessness” and “help individuals forgive themselves and construct new and productive chapters in their lives.” Through this nuanced case study of children caught up in distant wars of other nations, Minow makes it easier to see the similar dual nature of “American youth involved in gangs,



ADAM BUTLER/ASSOCIATED PRESS

drug trafficking, and other criminal activity,” who can’t evade legal responsibility as child soldiers often do.

In both instances, she observes, “legal forgiveness should be less concerned with particular victims than with remaking the rules and institutions that constrain the choices and opportunities of young people.” Child soldiers and gang members “may not be entirely innocent, but neither are they responsible for the social conditions in which they make their choices.” Minow expands this point in her chapter about forgiving debt—of individuals with consumer and other debt or student loans, and of nations and cities in debt, too. Forgiving gang members who ravage a convenience store may seem morally different from forgiving the hospital debt of a family buried financially by the cost of a breadwinner’s catastrophic illness, but the “spirit of second chances embedded in bankruptcy shows a long-standing legal and cultural embrace of forgiveness.” She writes, “Each is to blame when they violate promises to pay back loans or laws against violence, but each also is embedded in larger social patterns that construct limited and often poor options.”

A PREMISE OF Minow’s book is that while bad things happen when people flout the law, they can also happen when the government strictly enforces it. The most regular result of American criminal justice is punishment, whose main product is more crime. Recidivism—a relapse into criminal behavior—is a national disgrace. The Justice Department’s Bureau of Justice Statistics found that of 401,288 inmates released from state prisons in

2005, 68 percent were arrested within three years and 83 percent within nine years—with almost two million arrests among the inmates released, an average of five arrests per inmate. Retributive justice, the retaliatory, dominant form in the American legal system, as Rachel Elise Barkow, J.D. ’96, explains in her new book *Prisoners of Politics* (Harvard University Press), is a dual failure in not improving public safety

and in not preparing prisoners for sustainable re-entry into the world outside. Or as Minow puts it, “Fully enforced criminal laws produce much punishment but not necessarily better people or a better society.”

The promise that the restorative-justice movement has been realizing is helping perpetrators, victims, and others shaken by wrongdoing find their way to a better future. It has been helping “law grow toward justice,” in Minow’s words. But her book teaches that forgiveness will contribute its full potential—without overstepping its bounds—only if justice grapples with the requirements of law.

One effort she proposes is developing a jurisprudence of pardons, including “a needed check against abuses and unequal treatment.” The worst abuse would be for a president to pardon himself (which Donald Trump, in June 2018, tweeted that he has the power to do).

The Constitution explicitly limits the president’s pardon power “in Cases of Impeachment,” which arguably bars a self-pardon. But the prospect of a disgraced president forgiving himself, Minow warns, underscores the need for defining the limits of forgiveness in this now-prominent field. Otherwise, self-forgiveness would be the ultimate denial of wrongdoing. It would ridicule the idea of law providing meaningful forgiveness. ▢

*Contributing editor and journalist Lincoln Caplan ’72, J.D. ’76, assessed the importance of Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. in “America’s Great Modern Justice” (May-June 2019). He works with Minow on the American Academy of Arts & Sciences project called Making Justice Accessible.*

## Chapter & Verse

Correspondence on  
not-so-famous lost words

**Frank Wagner writes:** “Years ago, I saw an early scene in a British (probably) movie in which a young barrister must cross-examine a witness at a trial because his Queen’s Counsel is suddenly indisposed. The young man uses his experience with betting on horses at the track to expose the witness’s lies and win the case. Can anyone identify the movie?”

Send inquiries and answers to Chapter and Verse, Harvard Magazine, 7 Ware Street, Cambridge 02138, or via email to [chapterandverse@harvardmag.com](mailto:chapterandverse@harvardmag.com).





**Colin Cabot takes heart in the traditional skills, like woodworking, that are preserved at Sanborn Mills Farm.**

the original grist mill, and the old blacksmith shop, and the water-powered sawmill," he says. "Those are what hooked us, because there's no other place that I know of that has those three industrial/preindustrial structures all in one place, and in working condition."

They weren't entirely "working" when Cabot and his actress wife, Paula Dewey Cabot, bought the dilapidated property in 1996. What started with a few restoration and renovation projects—stabilizing the mills, rebuilding both dams, and clearing a site for "The Red House," an antique saved from destruction in a fire-department training exercise in Maine, and for a second barn

moved 20 miles from Northwood, New Hampshire—has led to wholesale re-booting of the working farm. Both mills are now operational, fields are cultivated, and a new, fully equipped teaching blacksmith shop has five forge stations.

This past year, the focus was on revamping the largest barn (it once incorporated a milking shed), and the abutting "New Carriage Barn." There's also a new addition on the main house, where Cabot and his wife live when in residence. (They spend about half the year in Key West, and also visit his family's estate Les Quatre Vents, on the Saint Lawrence River north of Quebec City.)

CABOT'S ARTISTIC VISION for Sanborn Mills Farm knows almost no bounds, making it a boon for those who care deeply about

## ALUMNI

# Back to the Future

*Promoting craftsmanship and agrarian skills  
in an idyllic New Hampshire setting*

by NELL PORTER BROWN

**S**TRIDING THROUGH the newly rebuilt barn at his Sanborn Mills Farm, in Loudon, New Hampshire, F. Colin Cabot '72 explains his plan: to develop a center for learning and preserving traditional crafts and farming skills, like blacksmithing and ox-yoke-making.

In the barn's teaching kitchen, visitors will cook and can the farm's produce, and they'll gather in the dining room, for which a carpenter is busy creating Shaker-style tables and chairs from the property's ash trees; decimated by the emerald ash borer, they are now milled and kiln-dried on site, using eighteenth- and nineteenth-century tools and techniques.

"Making things by hand and creating art are so undervalued in today's world," says Cabot, "that I suppose I want to provide access to a different way of living than what, for lack of a better term, is often called 'the rat race.'"

A tall, prepossessing man who's retained his boyish grin, Cabot was a theatrical producer in Milwaukee for two decades, before diving into rural life. His days at Sanborn Mills Farm, beautifying the landscape and overseeing a team of employees, are not unlike producing live theater. He laughs cheerfully at the thought of this, and doesn't disagree.

Upstairs, he leads the way through seven dorm rooms and shared baths. "The view is better over here," he calls out, directing attention through one window to a hilly pastoral scene. The dirt road winds past the main house (built in 1875), two dams, and a scattering of outbuildings. "There's

**The new blacksmith shop's five forges are used in workshops ranging from basic techniques to hardware- and tool-making.**



## Miller-Hunn Alumni Interviewer Awards

**This year**, the newly renamed Miller-Hunn Awards—the original award, which recognized the work of Hiram S. Hunn, A.B. 1921, now also honors recently retired admissions officer Dwight D. Miller, Ed.M. '71 (see “Admissions, through the Ages,” September-October, page 30)—went to eight alumni for their volunteer efforts to recruit and interview prospective undergraduates.

**David Babin '56**, of Falmouth, Massachusetts, has served as an alumni interviewer since 1972. He has also served as president of the Harvard Club of Cape Cod (2005-2007), and is now the club's “vice president for schools.”

**Michael Cominsky '80**, of Old Forge, New York, began interviewing for the Harvard Club of Syracuse as a law student in 1982. After graduating, he returned to Utica, New York, where Arthur Freedman '37 (his College interviewer), asked him to keep it up. He now chairs the schools and scholarships committee of the Harvard Club of Mohawk Valley. (His son Manuel '14 is now an alumni interviewer for the Harvard Club of New York.)

**Katie Williams Fahs '83**, of Atlanta, has led the Harvard Club of Georgia's schools and scholarships committee for 11 years, coordinating more than 800 applicants and 200 interviewers per year, and is a former director of the national schools and scholarships committee.

**Daniel “Bud” Kelly '43, M.B.A. '48**, of Santa Fe, has long been familiar with the admissions process: his father, Daniel T. Kelly, was a member of the class of 1908. The elder Kelly subsequently served as the office's New Mexico representative, a role later assumed by his son, who has served for more than 40 years.

**Carlos Mendoza '88, M.P.P. '90**, of Panama City, has been an interviewer, and chair, for the local schools and scholarships committee since 2001. He also founded the Harvard Club of Panama, serving as its first president, and then as director and



David Babin



Michael Cominsky



Katie Williams Fahs



Daniel “Bud” Kelly



Carlos Mendoza



Marjorie Murstein



Frances O'Leary



Susan St. Louis

treasurer, and directed the Clubs and Shared Interest Groups for Latin America between 2008 and 2012.

**Marjorie Murstein '71**, of Boca Raton, has interviewed candidates for the Harvard Club of the Palm Beaches since 1982. During her service, she has met students from Palm Beach and Boca Raton to the crop fields of Belle Glade and Okeechobee. She currently serves as both vice president for the schools and scholarships committee and as area chair.

**Frances O'Leary '54**, of Cambridge, has served the Wellesley area since her son, Mark '81, was admitted to Harvard. Within her first years as an interviewer, she became chairman of the area, and only recently retired as committee co-chair.

**Susan St. Louis '81**, of Mirage, California, has been an alumna interviewer since 1998 in Riverside and San Bernardino counties, and has chaired the committee for 15 years.

craftsmanship, as well as artisans working on-site, including six woodworkers/carpenters, three farmers/teamsters, two millwrights, and a gardener. Cabot also aims to foster self-sufficiency in the age of climate change. When a tool or piece of vintage equipment breaks, he points out, you don't need to go to a store to replace it: you can learn how to fix it—just as you can learn how to grow food, forge tools, and weave cloth: “It can be done!”

Inside the New Carriage Barn, a multi-purpose space to be used for gatherings and workshops, Cabot had challenged carpenters to construct a free-standing, wooden spiral staircase. Also made from wood on the property, it required, among other labors, steam-bending, kerfing, and laminating six layers of white pine, and an underside covered with steam-bent and twisted tongue-and-groove ash wood strips. That section would “nor-

mally be all made of plaster—but I forbade it!” he says, in a mock-tyrant voice. “The idea is to remember how to do this stuff because nobody knows how to do it anymore, and these skills and crafts are dying out.”

The scheduled yoke-making workshops may seem more anachronistic. But they're of “vital interest to anyone who wants to work with oxen,” Cabot explains: yokes aren't commercially available anywhere, and they must be hand-made to custom-fit specific animals. The long process involves cutting, drying, and carving the yoke from green wood—and requires knowing which trees are strong enough to withstand the pressure of the workload, and when and how they should be harvested. The farm currently buys its oxbows from Amish communities in Ohio, because, he reports, “We do not have any hickory in our forest, and because we haven't taken the trouble to

build a jog to bend the bows after making them bendable in a steam box.”

Employees at Sanborn do work with teams of oxen and two Percheron draft horses to plow, plant, and till. Sheds also house two pigs (raised for meat), a dozen layer chickens, and occasional batches of meat chickens. Down the dirt road, adjacent to an additional small farmstead that Cabot also owns, are several acres of vegetable gardens and fields of corn, wheat, hay, and flax.

With its dams, mills, and non-motorized practices, the farm operates somewhat as it did when the Sanborn family, which first settled there in 1770, developed it as the community's critical locus of agrarian technology from the early 1800s to the early 1900s. The footprint of Cabot's farm—with its 10 buildings, arable land, and managed forests—is 540.5 acres, smaller than the Sanborn operation. But it's also surrounded by nearly 2,000





**Workers employ draft horses and oxen at Sanborn Mills Farm.**

COURTESY OF SANBORN MILLS FARM

contiguous acres held in conservation easements placed by a group of property owners in the 1980s.

Sweeping views and majestic rural beauty suit the single-minded, visionary projects that run in the family. His father, the late Francis H. Cabot '49, a financier and self-taught horticulturist, spent decades creating extraordinary landscapes. Stonecrop Gardens, a plantsman's haven and horticulture school in the Hudson Valley, is open to the public; Les Quatre Vents, and the elder Cabot, star in *The Gardener*, a 2018 documentary. "He explains how he got into gardening: because he'd had business reverses and then he found out he loved this and he could do it—and do it right," Cabot says of his father, who also founded the Garden Conservancy and helped preserve old mills. "His art involved setting up liminal spaces, preparing for transporting surprises: 'Aha! Moments.'"

Although Cabot never spoke with his father about the concept of the numen "as a prereligious divinity," he says they both felt

their living creations with that aesthetic in mind, he adds: through a "making process [as] a piecemeal development without a master plan: letting the site speak to us over time." Sanborn Mills Farm, though, also has an externalized purpose: "I strive to find a vocation—making a craft school, using the mills as practical machines—whereas he was making an intensely private expression of his personal vision."

CABOT FOLLOWED his father to Harvard, where he concentrated in English literature and immersed himself in theater, participating in more than 40 productions, and served as president of the Harvard (now Harvard-Radcliffe) Dramatic Club. In hindsight, though, he says he feels that he "wasted" his Harvard education, and was "scarred" by that tumultuous period on campus; he felt angry and disillusioned by the University's actions during student protests (see "Echoes of 1969," March/April, page 52). He then spent two "miserable" years at the

Business School, failing to graduate, and left Harvard for Milwaukee with his then-wife and fellow theater practitioner, Marie Kohler '73, to be closer to her family.

There, he served as assistant to Clair Richardson, the brilliant, erratic co-founder of the Skylight Opera Theatre, before spending a year abroad working for another larger-than-life personality, the opera composer Gian Carlo Menotti. He then returned to Milwaukee to become the Skylight's managing director, and for 12 years built the company, expanding both the staff and the annual budget (from \$150,000 to \$1.8 million). "I loved the theater. We had a wonderful time, it was a family—a community of people and we worked hard and made things happen," he says. In 1989, however, feeling burned-out, he "retired" to take a volunteer post, chairman of the campaign to build the Skylight's new performance space. The grand 358-seat Cabot Theatre, a replica of an eighteenth-century European opera house, opened in 1993.

By then, he and Kohler (they have two grown daughters) had divorced and he had married Dewey; the two met through the theater and periodically performed as a cabaret duo: she sang and he accompanied her on the piano. Because the theater-building had ended and because "artistic people and nonprofits need change," he and Dewey in 1996 began eyeing a move to Boston to pursue graduate degrees (urban planning for him, Celtic studies for her), and second careers. Then a friend showed them the fateful real-estate listing for Sanborn Farm. Resurrecting pre-Industrial Revolution machinery ("as a tribute to the



COURTESY OF THE HARVARD ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

## Aloian Memorial Scholars

**The Harvard Alumni Association (HAA)** has recognized Michelle Walsh '20, of Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, and Benjamin Roy '20, of Haverhill, Massachusetts, as the 2019 David and Mimi Aloian Memorial Scholars for enriching the quality of life in their Houses.

Walsh produced and directed Cabot's "Housing Day" video, co-led development of the House peer-advising program, and organized the "Sophomore Retreat." As the House Committee's Stein Club chair, she broadened the appeal of happy hours by offering more group activities and non-alcoholic drinks. And as 2019 captain of the intramural squash team, she recruited members and led them to victory over an undefeated Lowell House squad, clinching Cabot's first inter-House squash championship.

As a sophomore, Roy guided the Classics Club in writing a new, more accessible translation of Sophocles's *Antigone*, and organized a group to stage a free public performance at Harvard Stadium, drawing an Arts First audience of nearly 5,000. He has also performed in Kirkland Drama Society shows, and has been an enthusiastic participant in (and recruiter for) intramural athletics.

achievement of water power”) and renting it out for use, captured Cabot’s imagination.

Twenty-three years later, he is still enthralled, still “having fun” fashioning buildings and landscapes with artistic flourishes. Next year, he plans to re-assemble the town of Loudon’s former grange (removed to make way for new town offices) and erect a donated 1919 Lord & Burnham greenhouse on the farm.

Alongside all that, he’s also addressing the realistic matter of the farm’s sustainability. Cabot has established the nonprofit Sanborn Mills Inc., with its own executive director, and plans are under way to design a long-term business model that identifies more sources of revenue, and an endowment, to cover operating costs and further develop the center. A slate of weekend workshops, including fiber arts and draft-animal handling, are scheduled to run from April through early November. And part of the plan entails expanded public

programming and training partnerships (apprenticeships already exist with North Bennet Street School, in Boston, and the Guild of New Hampshire Woodworkers). There’s also the possibility that other academic, architectural, and trade organizations, like the International Molinological Society, Society for the Preservation of Old Mills, and the Timber Framers Guild, could use the farm for conferences and educational events.

Cabot allows that he’s “guilty of succumbing to the concept of ‘If you build it, they will come.’ Perhaps I devote so much energy to creating things of beauty that function in a pleasing way because I want others to experience what I think is meaningful, inspiring, and, most of all, restorative.” He idealizes the Jeffersonian agricultural ideal—sans slaves—of sustainable community farms, because he believes “that modern industrial agriculture has made it almost impossible for people to connect with nature and the

land.” He points to other influences, such as the writer, activist, and farmer Wendell Berry, Land Institute founder Wes Jackson, and environmentalist Bill McKibben ’82: “In reading the work of these modern conservationists, and the writer Michael Pollan [RI ’16], you realize we *have* to do this.”

“This” is succinctly captured in a quotation that Cabot has had meticulously painted over a bank of windows in the large common room of the main house: “The Life So Short, the Craft So Long to Learn.” This Chaucerian version of Ovid’s *Ars longa, vita brevis* (itself originally from Hippocrates) means, Cabot explains, that “if you take the ‘making part’ of art seriously—like growing hickory trees for oxbows—you will run out of time before you get the job done,” he adds. “The only way to keep art—craft—alive is to have a community of artisans continually transmitting knowledge across generations—to those who will follow them.” ▢

## 2019 HAA Award Recipients

SIX ALUMNI were recognized with HAA Awards, for their outstanding service to the University, during the alumni association’s fall meeting.

Salvo Arena, LL.M. ’00, of New York City, has served in various roles since 2004, including as president of the worldwide Harvard Law School Association. He is now president of the New York City chapter, co-chair of the HLSA International Committee, and a graduate-school director on the HAA board of directors. Arena has spearheaded alumni events that blend law with other disciplines, drawing record attendance from across Harvard’s schools.



**Salvo Arena**

Paul L. Choi ’86, J.D. ’89, of Chicago, is a former Harvard Club of Chicago president, and has served as a reunion leader



**Paul L. Choi**

for his College and Law School classes, as elected HAA director, and as HAA president (2015–16). As president, he promoted University-wide citizenship and the strengthening of Harvard’s global

alumni community; he also led a review process resulting in changes to the HAA board’s structure and approach to work.

Katie Williams Fahs ’83, of Atlanta, is a former Radcliffe Club of Cincinnati president who has been a member of the Harvard clubs of New York, London, Cincinnati, and Georgia, and held board positions in the last two. In Georgia, she initiated the use of Facebook to connect alumni with current local undergraduates and chaired the schools and scholarships committees. In 2011, she was elected to the HAA board, where she has chaired the University-wide schools and scholarships committee and advised the Harvard College Fund.



**Katie Williams Fahs**



**Kevin Jennings**

As the first college-bound person in his family, he also founded the First Generation

elected director, co-chair of the fundraising campaign for Harvard’s first endowed chair in LGBT studies. He is the former co-chair of the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus (now the Harvard Gender and Sexuality Caucus). As

Harvard Alumni SIG, which earned the 2017 HAA Clubs & SIGs Committee Award.

Patrik Johansson, M.P.H. ’01, of Omaha, became an HAA elected director in 2006, and has also served on the School of Public Health’s alumni council and the Harvard Club of Sweden’s board. Of African-American, Cherokee, and Swedish descent, he completed the Harvard-affiliated Commonwealth Fund Fellowship in Minority Health Policy and was integral in ensuring the representation of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, the Nipmuc Nation, and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head Aquinnah in ceremonies commemorating the 350th anniversary of the Harvard Indian College.



**Patrik Johansson**

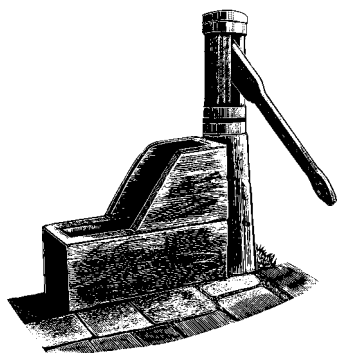
Rev. Gloria White-Hammond, M.Div. ’97, of Boston, joined the School of Public Health’s Children’s Health Advisory Council after graduation, and has spoken at campus gatherings about her work with two fellow Divinity School (HDS) alumnae in aiding the liberation of thousands of enslaved Sudanese women, and the subsequent founding of My Sister’s Keeper, a humanitarian and human-rights initiative. She has also served as a graduate-school director on the HAA board.



**Rev. Gloria White-Hammond**



# Life Lessons



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

ONE SUMMER’S DAY, the (terrestrial) mail brought, unbidden, a package from East Middlebury, Vermont, containing both a warm letter from Catherine Nichols ’66, who’d purged her shelves for a charity book sale, and one of the evicted volumes: the handsomely published, if somewhat acidified, *Life of Amos A. Lawrence, with Extracts from his Diary and Correspondence*, by his son, William Lawrence (Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1889).

Amos A. L., A.B. 1835, had an extraordinary life—even by today’s standards, when such adjectives are overblown. He prospered as a mill owner, was an active and ardent abolitionist, and as a progenitor of educational institutions was unexcelled. He financed the founding of the University of Kansas, in Lawrence (named after him) and founded Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, on 5,000 acres of land he purchased. (And Boston College ultimately purchased his local land in 1907.) He was Harvard’s treasurer from 1857 to 1862 (subscribing funds to “Agassiz’s museum,” seeing to the interior of the original



Appleton Chapel, arranging the famous 1861 photograph of past and current presidents Quincy, Everett, Sparks, Walker, and Felton), and an Overseer from 1879 to 1885.

Strikingly, the chapter on his College years notes: “A man may be honest, active, brave, moral, and religious, and still no scholar,” is the true but dangerous text with which the diary of his college life opens.” Observing the boy’s development, President Josiah Quincy wrote to his father, “I have thought it best to advise to take him away a short time, say until next commencement, and let him study under some fellow master....I think...the obligation to study, which an instructor, particularly attentive to him, might impose, would be very useful to his future habits.” Apparently it was. He lived to enjoy his fiftieth reunion.

Nichols is no slouch, either. In her fiftieth reunion report, she writes, “At Harvard we learned to think—about facts, about trends, about ideas, all of what academia offers. But to think for ourselves? To be aware of the conventions that defined our role in life? Heck, no! Not in the mid sixties. At least not me.” She unspools her dawning recognition that a

“girl” could be a minister—and her subsequent deeds: first woman canon in the Diocese of Texas; preaching at Coventry Cathedral; “officiating at the civil union of the gay couple who sued...Vermont for the right to marry”; and “watching with delight as my Radcliffe classmates stormed the doors” of law, medical, and business schools “to enter professions formerly closed to them.”

Two different lives in

three different centuries, but a common, expansive attitude toward living expansively.



FIFTY-FIFTH reunioner Peter H. Gibbon ’64, an educator and humanist scholar, has shared the substance of his talk to classmates when they gathered in May. His point of departure, too, was Harvard’s role in “imparting knowledge” and in “purport[ing] to teach us to think critically and to grow in wisdom.” In that spirit, he offered some insights from life *not* learned at the College. Among them:

“[B]elief is a slow process. It requires a great deal of time to form opinions. Harvard encouraged the arrogant and confident, the quick generalization. I envied the *Crimson* writers who held such strong opinions.”

“Remember your strengths. Surrounded by achievers, it is easy to dwell on your deficits.”

“Listen and inquire. Be interested in what other people have to say. Talking at length and constantly interrupting becomes the norm in narcissist America, particularly among ambitious, egotistical males. If you doubt this, listen in at a gathering of strivers—in Washington, D.C., Manhattan, Cambridge.”

“Read more science. When we were freshmen, C.P. Snow warned us...about the split between two cultures, the literary and the scientific....[A]n emphasis on the liberal arts left us adrift in a STEM society, an omission I am now trying to correct.”

Complaints aside, Gibbon reports: “I am enormously grateful to Harvard College for emphasizing high culture, individuality, excellence, and service....I am as well for professors, such as Walter Bate, David Owen, Bernard Bailyn, and I.B. Cohen and for the four years surrounded by original, interesting, and stimulating classmates.” ~PRIMUS VI

# Byzantine Beauties

*Textile treasures from Dumbarton Oaks*

How can one understand people, and a civilization, who perished centuries ago? The jewelry and textiles they wore “are some of the most intimate objects to survive,” observes Elizabeth Dospel Williams. “We can relate to them today. We understand immediately how they function. It closes the gap of time.”

And gorgeously so, in “Ornament: Fragments of Byzantine Fashion,” drawn from the Dumbarton Oaks collection of Egyptian funerary textiles from the fourth to the fourteenth centuries, on display through January 5. Assistant curator Williams co-organized the exhibition, and a concurrent one on household textiles (at George Washington University’s Textile Museum), with Gudrun Bühl, director of the Museum für Lackkunst, Münster. This first exhibition of one-quarter of the D.O. collection had to overcome not only the frailty of the materials, but formidable



obstacles to understanding. Williams has devoted the past seven years to cataloging the holdings, organizing this display (postgraduate fellow Samuel Shapiro ’18 assisted), and creating the dazzling online version invaluable to scholars and the curious alike ([www.doaks.org/resources/textiles](http://www.doaks.org/resources/textiles)).

As the samples shown here attest, “the Sunday best of the deceased,” as she puts it, survived burial surprisingly well, the plain-woven linen backgrounds and tapestry-woven woolen details intact. Then they were discovered, largely in nineteenth-century excavations, and—like the illuminated manuscripts torn apart by book “breakers” to sell the prized bits—were cut up by dealers. (A dealer’s album, with specimens, is on loan from the Metropolitan Museum of Art.) “Tons of context are lost,” Wil-



liams laments. But the surviving fragments are “categorically beautiful.”

The tunic clavi (the decorative vertical bands above at left) depict multiple figures, in beige, red, light green, light blue, blue, dark blue, purple, several shades of tan, and brown—a dazzling rainbow of dyes (not yet analyzed, but mostly derived from plant sources). The rectangular tunic fragment (above) depicts faces and vegetal patterns beneath a border, perhaps of gemstones; more gems descend to a pendant face, and frame a gem-studded cross. The intricate medallion (left) surrounds a human bust with geometrical shapes, vegetal motifs, and indeterminate quadrupeds.

A few complete tunics, and replicas, are on display, including a toddler-sized one. Unlike architectural antiquities, these are “human-sized,” Williams says. “We connect immediately to the people of the past”—as she, with two young children, connects to the unknown wearer of that tiny tunic from ages ago.

—JOHN S. ROSENBERG







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