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FAITH AND UNBELIEF

I am surprised that Katherine Dunn (“Faculty Faith,” July-August, page 15) does not refer to the main historical source of the higher percentage of “nonbelievers” among faculty than in the general public. It derives, like the secular university itself, from the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century and its embarrassment about and hostility toward religion. Harvard historian Crane Brinton has stated, “The spirit of the Enlightenment is hostile to organized religion... The corrosiveness of the Enlightenment is nowhere clearer than in its attack on Christianity.” The result is the continuing embarrassment about religion in the academy and the fact that divinity schools in secular universities are usually at the bottom of the status hierarchy. I speak as one raised by fine atheist parents in Greenwich Village and with graduate study in physics and the philosophy of religion.

Owen C. Thomas
Berkeley, Calif.

Academics’ belief or nonbelief in God is only one part of their views on religion. Organized religion provides powerful rituals and supportive communities for the like-minded, which help to stave off anxiety and despair at the present state of affairs by connecting participants to rich heritages of music, architecture, liturgy, and ethical activity. For just such reasons, one can be an agnostic and also an adherent of an organized religion.

David C. Balderston
New York City

It may not take “a longitudinal study over decades” to find out why nonbelievers are overrepresented among professors of psychology and biology. A simple question such as, “When did you become a nonbeliever?” might reveal that disbelief predated the choice of discipline. If so, maybe it wasn’t that psychology and biology made these professors into nonbelievers, as the article suggests, but rather that their disbelief contributed to their chosen career path.

Jorge Colapinto
Wynnewood, Pa.

Statements appear in Dunn’s report supposedly giving varied percentages of those who are “agnostic”; I beg to disagree. In fact, 100 percent of college professors are agnostics; so are 100 percent of college professors who are “agnostic”; I beg to disagree. In fact, 100 percent of college professors are agnostics; so are 100 percent of college professors who are “agnostic.” The most basic definition of “agnostic” is someone who does not know. No one has ever known where this cosmos/existence originated, why it is here, or how it will all end up. It seems highly unlikely that anyone will ever know. Obviously, many people pick a faith-fable of their
OVERSEAS CHRONOGRAPH

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THEY DON’T TRY TO USE IT TO CONTROL MY LIFE.

THERE IS NO GREAT ONS TO BEING AGNOSTIC,
OTHER THAN THE OBVIOUS FACT THAT YOU
WILL NEVER BE ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED STATES. AND CONSIDER THE MOST
CHARMING AND ENDARING QUALITY OF AGNOSTICS: THEY DO NOT SEND MISSIONARIES!
LYLE R. DAVIDSON, M.A.T. ’68
SAN DIEGO

LE PROFESSEUR
CONGRATULATIONS TO CRAIG LAMBERT
ON HIS ARTICLE ABOUT INTERNATIONAL-RELATIONS
Scholar STELLIN HOFFMANN (“LE
Professeur,” July-August, page 32).
I STUDIED AT HARVARD FROM 1969 TO 1971
BEFORE JOINING THE BRITISH DIPLOMATIC
SERVICE (FROM WHICH I RECENTLY RETIRED), AND
MY MEMORY OF THE HOFFMANN COURSES I TOOK OR AUDITED (NOTABLY “WAR”) IS ONE OF MY STRONGEST FROM THAT TUMULTUOUS TIME—MARKED AS IT WAS BY THE STUDENT “CONTESTATION” OF THE PERIOD ABOUT VIET-
NAME. EXPERIENCING IT FIRST HAND WAS A POLITICAL EDUCATION IN ITSELF. I WAS FASCINATED BY HIS BLEND OF EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN SENSIBILITIES.

ALL MY PROFESSIONAL LIFE I HAVE BENEFITED FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF HIS TEACHING AND INSIGHTS (AND THOSE OF KARL DEUTSCH), AND I AM DELIGHTED TO READ THAT HE IS STILL SO HALE AND ACTIVE AT HARVARD.

CHARLES DE CHASSIRON, M.P.A. ’71
LONDON

AS COEDITOR AND COAUTHOR OF THE HOFFMANN FESTSCHRIFT, I READ WITH PRIDE AND PLEASURE THE LONG-OVERDUE PROFILE OF HARVARD’S BEST PROFESSOR, STELLIN HOFFMANN. YOU CAPTURED HIS HUMANITY AS WELL AS HIS BRILLIANCE, HIS LOYALTY TO FRIENDS AS WELL AS HIS SKEPTICISM OF CANT. HARVARD IS RICHER FOR HIS HALCYON OF PATHBREAKING SCHOLARSHIP, HIS INSPIRING CAREER AS A PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL WHOSE LIFE, AT LEAST IN MY CASE, HAS DEMONSTRATED THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER IN THE CLASSROOM AS WELL AS OUTSIDE IT. HARD THOUGH IT IS, I AM STILL TEACHING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, ESPECIALLY AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY, TO THE NEXT GENERATION!

LINDA B. MILLER ’59
ADJUNCT PROFESSOR, BROWN UNIVERSITY
SOUTH WELLSFLEET, MASS.


FIX GLOBAL WARMING, DEFICITS
IT WAS PAINFULLY GRATIFYING TO READ IN JONATHAN SHAW’S “DEBTOR NATION,” (JULY-AUGUST, PAGE 40) THAT NEARLY ALL THE EXPERTS AGREE ON HOW SERIOUS A PROBLEM ARE OUR COMBINED NATIONAL BUDGET DEFICITS AND TRADE DEFICITS. IT WAS DISAPPOINTING, HOWEVER, NOT TO SEE ANY MENTION OF THE BEST SOLUTION.

GLOBAL WARMING HAS ENCOURAGED SOME OF US TO CONSIDER ENERGY CONSERVATION AND ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY IN AN EFFORT TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GASES. THOSE SOLUTIONS ARE ALSO THE BEST WAY TO ADDRESS THOSE DEFICITS.

MOST OF THE TECHNOLOGY IS ALREADY IN PLACE TO REPLACE EVERY DROP OF IMPORTED PETROLEUM BY BIO-FUELS (NOT ETHANOL, BUT ARTIFICIAL PETROLEUM, PRODUCED VIA PYROLYSIS FROM PLANTS), ANIMAL CARCASS WASTE, AND “POOP,” COST-EFFECTIVE WHEN THE PRICE OF PETROLEUM IS AT OR ABOVE $50 A BARREL, BUT SO FAR THE POLITICAL WILL TO MAKE THAT A PRIORITY IS MISSING. IT HAS BEEN ESTIMATED THAT IF WE OWE OUR PETROLEUM EXCLUSIVELY FROM PLANTS, THEY COULD BE SUSTAINABLY GROWN IN APPROXIMATELY 30 PERCENT OF OUR ARABLE LAND, WHICH IS AN AMOUNT NOT CURRENTLY NEEDED FOR FOOD PRODUCTION ANYWAY.

IF THE UNITED STATES WERE TO STOP IMPORTING PETROLEUM IN FAVOR OF ARTIFICIAL HOME-GROWN PETROLEUM, THE MAJOR PART OF THE TRADE DEFICIT WOULD DISAPPEAR. OUR MILITARY BUDGET CURRENTLY EXCEEDS THE COMBINED TOTAL OF ALL THE MILITARY BUDGETS OF ALL THE OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD, BUT WITHOUT NEEDING TO “PROTECT”...
our foreign sources of oil, we could drastically reduce the military budget to a sane level. If the rest of the world were to join such a program, Middle Eastern terrorism aimed at us would dry up overnight without the Saudi oil money to fuel it, freeing up more of our national budget. And, somewhere along the way, we would reverse the greenhouse-gases problem. It’s a win-win-win situation. When do we start?

John Fitzhugh Millar ’66
Williamsburg, Va

CERTIFIED BY HARVARD
In his Class Day address (“I See You,” July-August, page 55), Bill Clinton reminded the Harvard community that all humans are 99.9 percent identical in our genetic makeup. He urged us to think more about our similarities and less about the differences arising from one-thousandth part of our genetic material. Since we are so nearly alike, it seems probable that most of the vast differences in people’s life circumstances can be attributed to the accidental factors of birth environments and early education, rather than innate ability.

However, the premise of our academic system is that our innate differences are overwhelmingly important. A Harvard degree is supposed to identify its holder as extraordinarily smart, and to certify his or her contribution as uniquely valuable to public discourse. The tremendous power of the Harvard brand helps to sustain the belief that the only knowledge worth having is that certified by an academic degree, and the only people worth consulting on any question are those with academic credentials. Even though we know that brilliant academics can be clueless in areas outside their specialties, and that most of the useful knowledge and wisdom of humanity is gained and passed along outside the walls of the ivory tower, we tend to accept academic certification as the sine qua non of human achievement.

In another of this year’s Commencement speeches (page 57), Bill Gates asked for what purpose “one of the great collections of intellectual talent in the world” was gathered at Harvard. He indicated that he thought it was to solve the complex problems facing humanity, especially the problem of how to reduce inequity. If the Harvard community believes that the

FOR ME, GIVING BACK IS PRIMARY, AND THE RETIREMENT PLANNING IS A HAPPY CONCOMITANT.”

-Michael Cooper AB ’57, LLB ’60

For more information, please contact:
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academy alone can provide the answers to this problem—not to mention the problems of nuclear proliferation, environmental devastation, war, and global pandemics—we will fail to deliver what Gates said “the world has a right to expect from us.” Much of the knowledge we need to solve these problems must be sought outside academia.

Only poor people, for example, really understand poverty. All the world’s academic experts on poverty put together can never solve this problem unless they are willing to learn from the poor. One impoverished mother who has raised bright and healthy children could tell us more about education than many a professor of child development. If it wishes to help our species survive into the next century, Harvard needs to find the humility to act as a convener of all necessary parties, rather than as the repository of all necessary expertise.

Given that people really differ very little in general intelligence, Harvard has had to erect many barriers to keep out most people and so maintain the value of its brand. These barriers include not only money but the ability and willingness to blend with, charm, or impress the tiny class of people who run the world. People who refuse to pretend that they are significantly smarter than non-Harvardians need not apply. Harvard people are self-selected to over-value our differences and under-value our common humanity.

Such self-selection might be good for individual survival and yet counter-productive for the survival of the species. It will take the combined genius of all humankind to get us through the dangers we now face. Harvard will have to learn—and to teach—the value of wisdom with or without the proper credentials, if it is to play its optimal role during the challenges ahead.

JANE COLLINS ’71
Medford, Mass.

WRONG-HEADED ON EMPIRE
IT IS ASTONISHINGLY wrong-headed, anachronistic, and oblivious for an historian of the stature and scholarship of Niall Ferguson to be promoting empire in the twenty-first century, as reported in “The Global Empire of Niall Ferguson” (May-June, page 33).

Post World War II history clearly shows that each and every effort at colonial domination has been a costly and abject failure, fraught with death, destruction, misery, anger, resentment, blowback, and significant loss of strength and stature for the aggressor nation. Modern improvements in communication have made ethnic and national cohesion a much stronger and more potent force against an occupying foreign military than in the days of Queen Victo-

ADDENDUM: DEATH WISHES
IN HIS “Vita” on Wendell Phillips (May-June, page 38), Castle Freeman cited but was unable to name an elderly gentleman who made the observation that “he did not plan to attend the funeral of Wendell Phillips [but] wished it known that he approved of it.” Classmates Gretchen Becker ’63 and William C. Waterhouse ’63 have informed the editors independently that the speaker in question was Judge Rockwood Hoar, A.B. 1835, of Concord, Massachusetts. The reference appears on page 145 of Memories and Experiences of Moncure Daniel Conway, an 1854 graduate of Harvard Divinity School.

CURRICULAR REFORM
REPORING ON THE DEBATE about curricular change in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (“College Curriculum Change Completed,” July-August, page 65), you say that I “voiced the concern that the curriculum, by emphasizing the connection between students’ studies and the rest of their lives, was insufficiently scholarly, perhaps even anti-intellectual.” This account is highly misleading.

I have no objection to the idea that a general-education requirement should be composed of subjects that will be of particular value to students in their lives after Harvard. What I was objecting to were clauses in the legislation specifying that all courses qualifying for general-ed-

ERRATA
DUE TO AN editing error in “Debtor Nation” (July-August, page 40), President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s actions during the Suez crisis were inaccurately described. Although he did block the International Monetary Fund from stabilizing the pound sterling, he did not direct the Federal Reserve to orchestrate a run on the currency. The run originated in the private sector. The correct version of the text may be found on-line and in a PDF available for download at www.harvardmagazine.com/2007/07/debtor-nation.html.

With a news note about the election of Bayles professor of medicine Michael B. Brenner to the National Academy of Sciences (July-August, page 64), the editors ran a photograph of Michael P. Brenner, Glover professor of applied mathematics and applied physics. Michael B. appears here.
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ucation credit must connect their subject matter with issues of practical concern to students now and later, as distinct from whatever specific intellectual interest they may have in the subject matter. Contrary to what the general-education legislation passed by the Faculty demands, any course that ensures a broad understanding of (say) fundamental physics should qualify for general education credit in science, whether or not it relates the physics it deals with to other matters of broad concern. The same is true for general education courses in other areas.

To be sure, science courses must be available that appeal to non-scientists, as well as literature courses for non-poets, philosophy for non-philosophers, and so on. Drawing connections with issues of broad and practical concern is one way to design such courses. But the aims of general education do not require that all students, whether they are scientists, poets, or philosophers, must take courses of this kind.

Thomas M. Scanlon Jr., Ph.D. ’68
Alford professor of natural religion, moral philosophy, and civil polity
Cambridge

REUNION UNION
The July-August issue has an obit for Edward A. Meany ’48. We won’t forget him. He arrived at our thirty-fifth reunion in 1983 with a charming woman he wished to wed. Someone who knew his way around local government convinced Ed and the lady to marry as part of our reunion. On June 6, during a boat tour of Boston Harbor, the captain headed the boat into the wind, the bride clutched a bouquet of plastic flowers from the dining area, and one of the three ministers in our class performed the wedding ceremony in the open on the main deck, greeted by cheers of classmates and wives. A union at the reunion, one never to be forgotten.

Justin Fishbein ’48
Highland Park, Ill.
Many women fantasize about it: a male birth-control pill. After all, most existing contraceptives place sole responsibility for preventing pregnancy on the female partner. And hormone-based options such as the pill, though effective, also come with potential side effects, including an increased risk for life-threatening blood clots in some women. But recent discoveries about sperm made in the lab of David Clapham, Castañeda professor of cardiovascular research, could now make this fantasy real.

Clapham says he never set out to unlock the mysteries of sperm; his research focuses not on reproduction, but on the ion channels found in heart and nerve cells. These gateways in cell membranes allow charged molecules to flow in and out. “Ion channels are basically the transistors of cells,” Clapham explains. “All cells are batteries, and ion channels are like the switches on those batteries.” He’s particularly interested in calcium channels, which play critical roles in the body by coordinating heart contractions and allowing nerve cells to secrete neurotransmitters.

In 1999, Clapham’s team was combing the then-new database of human genes, looking for any that would yield previously undiscovered ion channels. That’s when they stumbled upon a gene that appeared to create a calcium channel in the testes alone.

“If we were narrow-minded, I guess we would have stopped there and said, ‘Well, that’s not our field,’” Clapham says. “But I always think you learn something when you go new places, so we decided to pursue it.”

The fact that this calcium channel appeared to be so specific intrigued him. “Rarely do you find ion channels that [exist] only in one place,” he explains. They discovered that this channel developed only in the tails of mature sperm, and named it CatSper (short for “cation channel of sperm”). To understand how CatSper works, Clapham’s team engineered so-called “knock-out” mice that lacked the CatSper gene. Deleting it had no effect on female mice, but male mice without it “were 100 percent infertile,” Clapham reports.

He then turned to two researchers known for their work on sperm: the late David Garbers of the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, and Donner Babcock of the University of Washington in Seattle. Subsequent work in their labs revealed that CatSper helps the sperm prepare for the final leg of their journey to the egg.

Once ejaculated, sperm ordinarily swim with “a sort of sinusoidal motion,” Clapham says. “The tail moves back and forth in this symmetric motion.”
way that’s very beautiful, actually. It’s like a pennant flapping in the breeze.” But as sperm approach the egg, they undergo a process called hyperactivation. The CatSper channel conducts calcium, sending sperm “into a sort of hyperdrive. Their tails make an asymmetric motion that’s best described as like cracking a whip,” Clapham says. This gives sperm up to 20 times the force of normal swimming, enabling them to penetrate the cumulus, a protective coating of cells around the egg. Without CatSper to spark this extra force, the sperm and egg can’t join.

A new contraceptive based on these findings makes sense, Clapham says. Ion channels are common drug targets because they’re located on the easy-to-access surface of cells. Researchers could develop a molecule to bind to the channel, preventing calcium from entering the sperm tail. A man might take the drug before intercourse, but Clapham adds that it could work in women, too, because fertilization occurs in the female reproductive tract: “If what we’ve seen in mice is true in humans—and we think that’s the case—it would block fertility.”

Yet such a contraceptive may be a long time coming. One pharmaceutical firm expressed interest, but company executives subsequently halted all work on new contraceptives. Clapham says other major pharmaceutical companies have done the same. They have several reasons. To begin with, existing contraceptives work, so there’s little motivation to develop new ones. Furthermore, the enormous expense of drug trials, which can cost hundreds of millions of dollars, means pharmaceutical companies feel pressure to develop wildly popular drugs with large markets to cover their costs, and they’re also leery of potential litigation. “Drug companies want low risk,” Clapham says. “A drug with severe side effects is accepted by society for serious, life-threatening diseases, like cancer. When the alternative is death, one is willing to accept problems.” Contraceptives, on the other hand, are generally used by young, healthy people, so society is less tolerant of side effects. Clapham also notes that anticontraception attitudes now run strong in the United States. “Few public companies,” he says, “want political liability in any form.”

~ERIN O’DONNELL

david clapham e-mail address: dclapham@enders.tch.harvard.edu

From Anecdote to Equation

The idea seems simple enough: Get detailed information about the participants in a given social program—public-housing residents, say, or applicants for organ transplants. Then, given that we live in a world of limited resources, use that information to remove individuals on whom the program’s resources aren’t well spent, either because the program is unlikely to help them or because they behave in ways that hurt other participants.

Efforts to put that idea into practice in the United States, however, have been far from perfect. Numerous factors—many now ingrained in the programs’ own institutional culture—interfere with the goal of precisely targeting government spending, for example, toward those individuals who stand to gain from it the most. In Targeting in Social Programs: Avoiding Bad Bets, Removing Bad Apples (Brookings Institution Press, 2006), Ramsey professor of political economy Richard Zeckhauser and coauthor Peter Schuck, J.D. ’65, A.M. ’72, a law professor at Yale, propose some remedies.

Consider the U.S. system of allocating kidneys for transplant. Organs that become available go to those who have been on the waiting list the longest—and are consequently the sickest (and therefore the least likely to recover). Although fairness seems to dictate this chronological approach, Zeckhauser and Schuck espouse giving at least some of the kidneys to people further down the list.

Instead of policymaking by anecdote—spending large sums on the most heartrending cases—the authors argue for policymaking by equation. They advance a rational framework for analyzing the benefit to society of a given policy, using quality-adjusted life years (QALYs: a unit of measurement first posited in a 1976 paper cowritten by Zeckhauser). In terms of QALYs, the transplant recipient who lives for decades—working, raising children, paying taxes, but perhaps even more

bad apple good apple

quality of apple quality of bet

resources should be targeted to programs that benefit society the most, argues political economist richard zeckhauser.
On every block of every neighborhood, breast cancer takes its toll. This year alone, nearly 200,000 women and men in the U.S. will be diagnosed with the deadly disease. But, they will not face the journey alone. Until we’ve reached our goal of a world without breast cancer, Susan G. Komen for the Cure promises to be there for those touched by the disease.

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important, living in good health and happily—is a better investment than the person for whom a kidney transplant may mean only a few additional years of poor health. Cruel as it may seem, the authors call the people at the top of the kidney waiting list “bad bets”—cases in which the money spent is “wasted” in the sense that it could bestow greater benefit on society if spent elsewhere.

The authors analyze problems in numeric terms, assigning dollar values to lives and plotting people as points on graphs: anyone to the left of a given line is a bad bet, anyone to the right a good bet. The approach may seem cold and impersonal, but the authors argue that it will actually lead to the kindest and most humane outcomes, given that every dollar spent on medical treatment, education, or another social program for one person denies that same dollar to someone else.

Zeckhauser and Schuck also discuss “bad apples” who commit abuse or fraud, or simply behave badly and so detract from a social program’s goal. One example: those who run drug-dealing operations out of their homes in public-housing developments, but aren’t kicked out—either because of apathetic law enforcement or because the eviction process has so many built-in safeguards for tenants that using it becomes a long and expensive task. Meanwhile, the criminal activity diminishes the other tenants’ quality of life and gives the entire community a bad name, making the general public less likely to support future expenditures for public housing. The authors advise low tolerance for such bad behavior, but also emphasize the importance of an accessible appeals process to protect “good apples” who’ve been excluded in error.

Will policymakers heed this call to action? It wouldn’t be the first time Zeckhauser has been out in front of major policy change. Another Zeckhauser-Schuck collaboration—the 1970 article “An Alternative to the Nixon Income Maintenance Plan”—put forth ideas that, according to Zeckhauser, bear an uncanny resemblance to the Earned Income Tax Credit enacted by the federal government five years later. More recently, The Early Admissions Game: Joining the Elite, which Zeckhauser wrote with Christopher Avery and Andrew Fairbanks, turned a critical eye on colleges’ early-admissions practices (see “Entering the Elite,” May-June 2003, page 15). Three years later, Harvard, Princeton, and other institutions announced plans to eliminate the programs.

The new book’s main premise may not be palatable to those who believe that maligning any beneficiaries of a social program calls the virtue of the entire program into question. For their part, the authors avow repeatedly that they are not questioning such programs’ fundamental value, but instead offering a way to make them affordable—and therefore sustainable—in the face of daunting projections: if current conditions continue, funding for Medicare will be exhausted before 2020, and for Social Security around 2040. “We don’t think of the purpose of this book as just saving resources,” Zeckhauser says. “We think of it as putting resources to their best use. Unless we prioritize correctly, we will lop off some programs that should be preserved.”

~ELIZABETH GUDRAIS

BIOLOGY AND BELIEF

Foundations of Faith?

Public debates about evolution frequently pit science against religion. But work by professor of mathematics and of biology Martin Nowak adds a surprising twist to that age-old argument. Evolution, he says, might actually lead to religious beliefs.

Nowak, the director of Harvard’s program for evolutionary dynamics and author of a recent, prizewinning book on the subject, has worked for the last decade on questions of cooperation in biology. Although evolution is commonly understood as competition played out in mutation and natural selection, “You don’t really get very far in biology without co-
operation,” he says. “The evolution of multicellularity and the evolution of eukaryotic cells which have a distinct nucleus—the big steps—seem to be based on cooperation” and lead to “the emergence of something completely new in biology. You get cooperation on a lower level and then you get the emergence of a higher level: single cells cooperating to form multicellular organisms.”

Researchers have long studied cooperative strategies for evolutionary success among their fellow human beings by using game theory. The classic “prisoner’s dilemma” involves the hypothetical case of two suspects arrested by police and held in separate cells. Each is offered the same deal: confess and reduce your own sentence, but in doing so, implicate the other prisoner. The best outcome for both prisoners is for neither one to say anything (a form of cooperation), but when neither prisoner knows what the other will do, the incentive to defect (or plea bargain, in this case) is strong.

Nowak runs a variant of this game using money, and has discovered that the most successful players start by cooperating with each other—paying a dollar, for example, so the other player receives two dollars—and then continue to cooperate until someone defects. This tit-for-tat strategy, in which players cooperate when others cooperate with them, but defect when their opposite number has defected in a previous round, proved the most successful in a well-known computer tournament that pitted various strategies against each other. But in the real world, Nowak points out, mistakes or misunderstandings (which weren’t part of the computer simulations) can destroy cooperation just as surely as true defection: “If you have two tit-for-tat
RIGHT NOW

players playing against each other and one defects by mistake, the other will retaliate, and then the first will retaliate, and so on.”

Nowak has shown mathematically that in an error-filled world, a more generous variant of tit for tat—in which if one player defects, the other “for-gives” and still cooperates a certain amount of the time—is more successful. (Players who are too forgiving, or always cooperate, however, are exploited by others.) In other words, says Nowak, “To win the prisoner’s dilemma in a world of errors, you must know how to forgive. Natural selection leads to forgiveness.”

This simple form of interaction, known as direct reciprocity, relies on repeated encounters between two people. But direct reciprocity fails to explain a whole range of observed “cooperative” or altruistic human behaviors in which individuals perform selfless acts for others without apparent expectation of a reciprocal act. Nowak wanted to explain such ad hoc actions, and in 1998, he formulated a much more powerful mechanism, “indirect reciprocity,” by which evolution can lead to cooperation.

Indirect reciprocity relies on reputation. Observers watch the game and tell others what they’ve seen. “Indirect reciprocity is powerful because I gain experience even without playing,” Nowak explains. Humans “are obsessed with finding out about each other and...monitoring the social network of the group. There are empirical studies of what people actually talk about on British trains, for example, or in small-scale societies, sitting around fireplaces. Sixty percent of the conversations deal with interactions with others.

When indirect reciprocity is incorporated into Nowak’s game, cooperative players tend to find each other and form clusters, because a single defector can exploit and “pop” a bubble of cooperation. The ability to communicate about reputation thus becomes extremely important to a cooperative player’s success.

Nowak, in fact, has demonstrated mathematically how indirect reciprocity provides selective pressure for the development of human language, which he calls the most important invention of the last 500 million years. “Prior to the invention of language, evolution was based on genetics only,” he explains. “With human language, we have the machinery for unlimited cultural evolution.”

Religion is a form of social behavior that Nowak studies as part of a joint-research project with the Divinity School on the “Evolution and Theology of Cooperation.” Religion, like language, is a human universal, he points out: every civilization has discovered it. And he finds it remarkable that the winning cooperative strategies in both direct and indirect reciprocity require players to be hopeful, generous, and forgiving, traits often encouraged by religions.

“Hopeful, because if we haven’t met prior to the first time we interact, the winning strategy must actually assume the best of the other person. Generous, because the winning strategy is happy with a somewhat smaller piece of a pie: the strategy wins not by getting a bigger slice of any one transaction, but by cooperating successfully in many transactions. “Forgiving, because if I’m in a relationship and someone defects, and always I hit back—that’s a losing strategy. I have to have a mechanism to forgive a failure to cooperate.”

“Religions want to understand what causes suffering and they also want to help people. When you study their prescriptions for how to live one’s life, what is formulated is how to live the best possible life right now. The work on cooperation shows which kinds of behavior are important for human evolution,” he explains, and it “seems that religion actually helps people to behave accordingly: to cooperate with each other.”

~Jonathan Shaw

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GETTING IT RIGHT ON THE RIG

Manhood Reconsidered

As a professor at Harvard Business School, Robin J. Ely has had her share of experience with how men (who constitute 80 percent of the school’s faculty) conduct themselves in the workplace. But her research on how a work environment can influence masculine norms took place far from the campus, at two oil platforms in the Gulf of Mexico. Before her first trip to the rigs, in 2001, Ely thought she knew the type of men she’d encounter there. After interviewing some of the workers, though, she was stunned: “I called my colleague and said, ‘Where’s the masculinity??’”

“I just didn’t see it, not in the traditional
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way,” she recalls. “Some of [the men] were big and burly; many drove Harleys and were into hunting and fishing; and their humor—while never mean-spirited—could be gross in that ‘peculiarly male’ way, such as farting and then laughing about it.” But the workers on the two rigs (which were dubbed Rex and Comus) surprised her by how openly they expressed their vulnerability, in terms of both physical limitations and emotional concerns. The typical image of masculinity, she explains, is one of impenetrable infallibility: manly men don’t like to say they don’t know, or need help, or are scared. The men at Rex and Comus were quick to do just that.

Ely, who focuses on organizational behavior, had not explicitly studied masculinity before, and when she first set off for the oil platforms, neither she nor her coauthor, Debra E. Meyerson, an associate professor of education and organizational behavior at Stanford University’s School of Education, knew what shape their project would take. Ely’s initial reaction prompted them to investigate why the workers were so unexpectedly in touch with their emotions and shortcomings. In their paper, as yet unpublished, they argue that the soft side the workers displayed was a by-product of organizational features the parent company had put in place to make the workplace safer.

As part of an initiative called “Safety 2000,” the rig workers were trained to put safety above image and to speak up when they were unsure about something. Because safety was such an easy goal to support, the men took the program to heart, Ely noticed, even when that meant breaking masculine norms. During a bumpy helicopter ride, for instance, one man said, “I don’t feel safe.” Rather than mock him, the other men took his concern seriously and worked to rectify the problem.

Fear wasn’t the only emotion workers on Rex and Comus communicated openly. Because any outside issue could be a distraction, and any distractions could be dangerous, they stayed closely attuned to each other’s emotional states. One worker spoke to the researchers about a team member who returned to work only a few days after his daughter had been shot at: “He told us, ‘This is what I’m dealing with at home. If you all would please keep me focused and understand if I’m a little distracted, I’d appreciate it.’ And people were very supportive of him for that.”

The work environment for these men, who ranged in age from about 21 to 58, wasn’t always so touchy-feely. When Ely voiced surprise at how far they were from the macho prototype, the older men invariably responded, “Oh yeah, it used to be like that.” One 27-year veteran spoke of the old days on drilling rigs, when “the guy that was in charge was the one who could basically outperform and out-shout and out-intimidate all the others.” But by creating policies and norms that shifted the men’s focus from proving their masculinity to engaging in larger goals—ensuring safety, building a community, and advancing the company’s mission—their employer was able to reshape their previous notions of what a manly man should look and sound like.

Ely and Meyerson plan a comprehensive follow-up survey of a broad sample of oil platforms, to test in a more varied population their hypothesis that certain organizational features can break down employees’ need to project a macho image. Meanwhile, their work adds an interesting case study to gender literature, which tends to focus only on women. But Ely notes that further research is needed to determine how generally applicable their findings are.

After hearing about her research, she says, an executive from another oil company expressed interest in having her team observe his firm’s corporate headquarters and suggest ways to break down the masculine norms there. She believes it might be difficult to replicate the oil-rig situation, where workers live, eat, and sleep on the rigs for two-week stints (which makes them a captive audience for organizational-change efforts), and where their work is so dangerous. “Not dying, not blowing up, not losing legs—that meant a lot to them,” Ely says. “In the corporate environment, you don’t have that compelling incentive to change.”

~SAMANTHA HENIG

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Not long ago, Virginia Heffernan, Ph.D. ’02, who writes about television and on-line media for the New York Times, got an e-mail from her boss, culture editor Sam Sifton ’88. Heffernan had submitted a draft that contained the word chthonic, a term from classical mythology that refers to deities and other spirits living in the underworld. As a smiling Heffernan recalls, Sifton reminded her that “you can’t use words that would stop a reader on the A train.”

Heffernan is no lightweight: her hip, funny pieces bristle with fresh ideas. In the fall of 2004, for example, she began her review of the hit nighttime soap opera Desperate Housewives with a synopsis of a 1958 John Cheever short story, “The Housebreaker of Shady Hill,” a dark tale about a suburbanite who loses his job and eventually turns to burglarizing his neighbors’ homes. Heffernan then segued into Housewives, which had “boldly flung off prime-time’s imperative to topicality, and embraced an overtly literary mode. It is not an innovation, but a clever throwback, a work of thoroughgoing nostalgia and a tribute to Cheever’s war horse, the suburban gothic.” Later, she noted that “Desperate Housewives has succeeded because, like the best of reality television, it derives suspense by threatening its characters with banishment. All of the characters look as though they belong—but only for now.”

Heffernan says her doctoral training in English literature definitely affects her analyses of the video realm. “In the 1990s, we were taught that all texts—from self-help books to Tolstoy—are susceptible to critical methodology,” she says. “That became an article of faith with me. I bring everything I learned from [Harvard pro-
Like many others, Kissinger believed that the proliferation of nuclear weapons contributed to heightened dangers in war and increased rigidity in peace. When confronted with serious challenges short of full-scale war, citizens would have a tendency to think in terms of nuclear retaliation or nothing-at-all. With such extreme options, politicians would frequently err on the side of conflict avoidance, as Kissinger had personally witnessed during the 1930s, in a prenuclear era of “total war.” For the German Jewish émigré, saving democracy from the treachery of its adversaries and the weakness of its own constituents required self-conscious efforts to “rescue an element of choice from the pressure of circumstance”: “How to strive for both peace and justice, for an end of war that does not lead to tyranny, for a commitment to justice that does not produce cataclysm—to find this balance is the perpetual task of the statesman in the nuclear age.”

Leaders—including politicians, nuclear strategists, and policy advisors—had to create avenues for forceful action that were neither suicidal nor complaisant. They needed courage and creativity in this endeavor. Kissinger joined other strategists in decades of struggle to find effective uses for the “absolute weapon” as a symbol, a threat, and a source of destruction. Nuclear strategy involved the careful manipulation of horrific power for the needs of civilization. As Kissinger wrote in one of his earliest reflections on the topic: “the U.S. nuclear arsenal is no better than the willingness to use it…if we do not wish to doom ourselves to impotence in the atomic stalemate or near-stalemate just around the corner, it may be well to develop alternative programs.”

These lines, written only months after Kissinger’s thirty-first birthday and the completion of his doctorate, became the touchstone for his career as a strategist and a policymaker….Thomas Schelling, one of Kissinger’s colleagues at Harvard, chillingly observed: “The power to hurt is nothing new in warfare, but for the United States modern technology has drastically enhanced the strategic importance of pure, unconstructive, unacquisitive pain and damage, whether used against us or in our own defense. This in turn enhances the importance of war and threats of war as techniques of influence, not of destruction; of coercion and deterrence, not of conquest and defense; of bargaining and intimidation.” Schelling echoed Kissinger when he concluded: “Military strategy, whether we like it or not, has become the diplomacy of violence.”

The strategist in 1958, based at Harvard

It’s like doing literary analysis, with the added challenge that I get to use my eyes and ears.”
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too talky. You can see Marcel Marceau, or [Brazilian soccer star] Ronaldinho scoring this soccer goal in an incredible display of virtuosity. Forget Diana; on YouTube you can watch the coronation of the meek little Queen Elizabeth in 1953."

Heffernan's own tastes run to “very arcane and esoteric stuff,” she says. “And I like offbeat things like Christian and religious programming, and sci-fi.” But regarding YouTube, she is quick to empha-
size that it “isn’t just something for hipsters and teens, or people with exotic interests—pursue your existing interests. Like jazz? Try John Coltrane playing with the Miles Davis Quintet in Düsseldorf in 1960. Check out Yoko Ono's performance art. Scary tricks with knives and archery, or babies laughing. There’s film of Ernest Hemingway catching a man-size marlin. Interviews, in English, with Sigmund Freud. The second-most-viewed video on YouTube not too long ago was geriatric1927, a British World War II radar technician telling his life story in pieces. Such good oral history.”

Four days out of five, Heffernan works from home, where she says she watches the “national average” of five hours of television per day: “I sit on my couch like everyone else, and I try not to meet television stars or producers.” Her video iPod can download TV shows or on-line content, and she also digitally records programs. Recordings, not real-time viewing, are essential for doing “close readings”—a habit carried over from grad school—which require Heffernan to pause the video repeatedly to make notes. One window on her MacBook computer runs the video, while another has Word open for note-taking. “It’s like doing literary analysis,” she explains, “with the added challenge that I get to use my eyes and ears.”

Born in Hanover, New Hampshire (her father is an emeritus professor of English at Dartmouth), Heffernan recalls that when her parents limited their children’s television viewing to one hour per day, “My brother and I waited like The Passion of the Christ.” She took her undergraduate degree in English and philosophy at the University of Virginia in 1991 and then enrolled at Harvard. But a succession of media jobs in New York City interrupted her graduate education: fact-checking at The New Yorker, writing patter for hosts on MTV and VH-1, editing at Talk magazine and Harper’s, discussing television for Slate and The New Yorker. “Logistically, it was agonizing,” she says. “I was trying to build a career [in New York] and finish a Ph.D. at Harvard. There was a lot of Amtrak involved.” Yet she also found time to write stage plays and to collaborate with her friend Mike Albo on a 2005 comic novel, The Underminer. Heffernan had never worked for a daily paper when The Times hired her in 2003, “but the assumption was that having worked for Slate, with very quick turnaround, I could handle daily deadlines.”

Handle them she has. In one Screens column, after commenting on YouTube’s "slacker aesthetic," its “mush politics (the Free Hugs Campaign),” and its “chronic oscillation between absurdism (‘Ask a Ninja’) and emo (Say It’s Possible),” she wrote, “This value system is not intrinsically worse than the one that determines prime-time television’s crisp, white-collar aesthetic...”

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Part of that worldview, of course, is the truism that only one television critic really matters: the A.C. Nielsen Company, which generates the national ratings. Heffernan writes a different brand of critique. Her columns instruct readers not so much on what to watch or avoid, but on new ways of perceiving what they have already chosen to bring up on their screens. And Heffernan contributes something that many critics lack: a willingness to give the subjects of her reviews the benefit of the doubt. “If I can’t rise to understand why something is interesting,” she says, “it’s my failing.”

—CRAIG LAMBERT

**An Imperial American**

**The complex, contradictory Lincoln Kirstein**

by EUGENE R. GADDIS

Lincoln Kirstein ’30 combined a ferocious intelligence with manic energy, a belief that there was nothing he could not do, and a passionate conviction that if the arts and letters flourished, beauty might save the world.

Kirstein preferred a certain degree of personal ambiguity, if not mystery, which could be attributed to both an underlying shyness and a calculated slyness. In his College class’s senior album, he declined to list his field of study. (It was the fine arts.) During World II, he held the rank of private first class in the United States Army, but it was said that he delayed sewing the stripes on his custom-tailored uniform for as long as possible. Throughout his long tenure as president of the School of American Ballet and general director of the New York City Ballet, he was the formidable master-impresario, the creator and preserver of both institutions, but he seemed gleeful in pointing out that the uninitiated at Lincoln Center “have trouble figuring out who I am.” By the 1980s, however, public recognition of his contributions to literature, the fine arts, and dance had widened to the point that such anonymity was no longer possible. To John Russell, then chief art critic for the New York Times, he was “one of the most valuable of living Americans.” “A living national treasure,” declared Susan Sontag.

He appeared to dismiss such encomiums, yet Kirstein was intensely self-conscious in every sense of the word, and he had immortal longings. He documented...
He had his own image preserved in oil, tempera, gouache, ink, pencil, and bronze. Guests at 128 East 19th Street in the 1980s had the pulse-quenching experience of conversing with their host against a backdrop of his portraits by Lucien Freud (powerful but unfinished after fisticuffs between subject and artist), Pavel Tchelitchew (a tryptych, including the subject as a standing nude in boxing gloves), Jamie Wyeth (who moved in for months to hone his skill in portraiture, clocking 58 sessions to achieve a likeness in a style reminiscent of Sargent and Eakins), Michael Leonard (Kirstein in khaki with cats), David Langfitt (Kirstein as a retired German submarine commander), Fidelma Cadmus (Kirstein’s wife of 50 years, who depicted him as suspicious and vulnerable), and Martin Mower (his Harvard faculty mentor), as well as an eerie self-portrait done in sanguine on paper when he was an undergraduate. He could be contemplated three-dimensionally in portrait heads by Isamu Noguchi (commissioned by Kirstein while at Harvard) and Gaston Lachaise, who also did a striding nude. These icons kept company with sculptures of Abraham Lincoln, William Shakespeare, and Napoleon Bonaparte. Kirstein was not inaccurate when he told John Russell: “I’m an imperial American.”

Kirstein made sure that his homes and collections were elegantly photographed and his diaries and correspondence tucked safely into institutions that were likely to endure, particularly the Dance Collection, which he had founded in the 1940s (now part of the Library of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center). Plainly, he wanted future chroniclers of his life to have a comprehensive body of material to help them while they were “figuring out who I am.”

Such a task is not for the faint-hearted. As early as the 1950s, when his achievements were far from over, Kirstein himself had hinted that he might withdraw from the world and produce a five-volume memoir. By the 1980s, his admirers were tantalized when they heard that the working title of “a monumental autobiography” was Memoirs of a Sly Fellow. Instead, in 1986, he published Quarry: A Collection in Lieu of Memoirs, a record of his New York house and idiosyncratic acquisitions, photographed by Jerry Thompson and accompanied by an autobiographical narrative. In 1994, less than two years before his death, Kirstein produced Mosaic, a slim, revealing, but not entirely accurate volume that brought his life only to 1933, on the brink of his fateful encounter with Russian choreographer George Balanchine.

Now, in time for the centennial of Kirstein’s birth, Martin Duberman has written a revelatory biography, The Worlds of Lincoln Kirstein. Those worlds were remarkably disparate, yet Duberman has fully encompassed them in 631 pages, plus an additional 65 pages of notes. This is a tribute to his mastery of the archival sources, his interviews with Kirstein’s contemporaries, his grasp of the evolving American cultural scene, and his ability to construct a convincing psychological profile of a complex and contradictory arbiter of twentieth-century American culture.

Duberman, who is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of history at the City University of New York, brings to his elucidation of Kirstein’s life a long experience as a prizewinning biographer of other multi-layered American figures: Charles Francis Adams, James Russell Lowell, and Paul Robeson. A novelist and playwright as well, he is skilled at investing his story with drama, and his extensive research on homosexuality in America (he is the author of Left Out: The Politics of Exclusion), allows him to put in context Kirstein’s ever-present sexual adventures, which occasionally involved concurrent affairs with men and women.

The diaries Kirstein kept from the age of 12 into the mid 1930s, which have been made available for the first time, allow Duberman to provide Kirstein’s own voice as he lives through adolescence and into the period of his first significant achievements. Like
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many of his letters, the diaries are explicit; some readers may tire of Kirstein’s preoccupation with his own sexuality. Yet Duberman uses these sources effectively to shed light on the widespread homosexual activity—thoroughly liberated, though of necessity hidden—of the intellectual elite of Kirstein’s generation.

More enlightening, however, is what these sources reveal about his relentless artistic and literary pursuits. From the opening sentence about Rose Stein’s determination to marry Louis Kirstein against the wishes of her wealthy merchant family, Duberman keeps the narrative flowing. The prose—and even the notes—are dense with quotations, and the casual reader may not choose to linger over them all. But the book is a treasure trove for those who seek an intimate knowledge of how the brilliant, hypersensitive, occasionally enraged, and more often generous son of a self-made department-store magnate became an irresistible force—first among Harvard’s jeuness dorée and then on a more conspicuous stage.

As Duberman demonstrates in hitherto unpublished detail, Kirstein was congenitally independent and compulsively productive. In 1928, as a sophomore, he launched *Hound & Horn*, one of the most thought-provoking literary magazines of its era. As a junior, along with classmates Edward M. M. Warburg and John Walker III, he brought forth the Harvard Society for Contemporary Art, introducing many of the most significant twentieth-century artists to Boston for the first time. In significant ways, the Museum of Modern Art was its successor. At Harvard, Kirstein also concluded that the one perfect medium that would bring all the arts together was the dance. Three years after graduation, with the help of the Wadsworth Atheneum’s director, A. Everett “Chick” Austin Jr., and other modernists he had met at Harvard, he arranged for the immigration of George Balanchine to America. Through the School of American Ballet and its company, which evolved into the New York City Ballet, he and Balanchine created in the United States a renaissance in classical dancing. During Kirstein’s 88 years, he supported individual artists and museum exhibitions, served as an invaluable member of the Monuments Commission that retrieved much of the art looted by the Nazis, assisted in the creation of Lincoln Center and the American Shakespeare Festival, arranged the first American tour of the Japanese Grand Kabuki, marched with Martin Luther King Jr. from Selma to Birmingham, and published more than 15 books and 500 pamphlets, articles, and program notes.

Duberman’s book moves chronologically, but he wisely focuses each chapter on a distinct subject for clarity (“Nijinsky,” “The Museum of Modern Art,” “Japan”). As is often inevitable in a work of this magnitude, there are occasional inaccuracies: in my own field, I know that the Bushnell Auditorium in Hartford was not part of the Wadsworth Atheneum, nor was Hartford’s first significant collector of modern art, James Thrall Soby, connected with the Museum of Modern Art during the period in which he is first mentioned. But these are minor blemishes in what will surely be regarded as a definitive work.

Throughout the book, Duberman perceptively addresses Kirstein’s prodigious literary output on dance, painting, sculpture, photography, movies, biography, history, and poetry, acknowledging that his writing style ranged from lyrical clarity to language so compressed and arcane that it amounted to intellectual arrogance. As Duberman shows, the real Kirstein came through in his diaries and correspondence, never more authentically than in the two letters he wrote in the summer of 1933 when suddenly, with pulsating clarity, he saw Balanchine, the future of dance in America, and his own destiny coalesce and begged Chick Austin to help him: “This is the most important letter I will ever write you as you will see. My pen burns my hand as I write. Words will not flow into the ink fast enough. We have a real chance to...”
“Playing chamber music for a white, affluent audience that is experienced in this kind of music doesn’t light my fire nearly as much as bringing a college student into the concert hall,” says oboist and impresario Jennifer Montbach ’95. “I love to play for young people who put many different kinds of music onto their iPods, enjoy hanging out in bookstores, and like to see independent movies. Those people are ripe for the kind of experience that the Radius Ensemble offers.”

Montbach founded Radius (www.radiusensemble.org) in 1999 to play chamber music in a casual and welcoming environment. The group presents four concerts a year (the next is September 29), these days in Killian Hall at MIT, as well as a popular annual program for children. Radius embraces nine core members (their instruments include two violins, viola, cello, flute, clarinet, oboe, French horn, and piano) who are first-rate, and the repertory mingles standard classics by Beethoven, Mozart, and Schubert with adventurous contemporary works. Though Montbach doesn’t play in every piece, each program features music for oboe. Radius adds guest musicians as needed, like the New England Conservatory’s sole accordion major, who recently played in a piece by the contemporary Russian composer Sofia Gubaidulina.

Montbach says she’s proud that Radius has presented pieces by nearly a dozen living New England composers, including three, so far, who have served as composers-in-residence. A concert this spring featured a work by the Canadian composer Claude Vivier that required the musicians not only to play their instruments but to whistle complex additional parts.

Radius always offers a free pre-performance lecture, and members of the ensemble enthusiastically introduce each piece during concerts. At a recent program, clarinetist Eron Egozy pointed out that Beethoven’s Quintet for Piano and Winds was so popular that the composer later rearranged it into a quartet for piano and strings. Egozy’s preference was clear: “The winds contribute such a wide range of color,” he said. “If you listen to the version with strings, you don’t get that, so you’re missing the point.”

Afterwards players and public gather around a table with coffee and cookies (“Starbucks donates the coffee,” Montbach says, “and the cookies come from Trader Joe’s”). The musicians seem to enjoy sticking around to chat with their listeners. Surveys show that the average age of Radius’s audience is 31—a statistic most other Boston performing-arts organizations would kill for.

After completing her master’s degree at New England Conservatory, Montbach started freelancing as an oboist. To pay the bills, she worked in arts administration. “On the Boston Symphony staff, I was a tiny cog in a huge machine,” Montbach recalls. “But it got me to thinking: why is it that educated people who are so interested in developments in film, literature, the visual arts, and pop music are so ignorant about concert music, and especially about contemporary music? I hear all the time that classical music isn’t relevant anymore, but I can’t imagine life without it. So I created Radius as a little laboratory for me.” The ensemble operates on an annual budget that ranges between $18,000 and $20,000, which comes from a combination of donations and grants. “All of the money goes to the musicians, because we don’t have a staff, except for me,” Montbach explains. “We do have a board member who is a grant writer, but the buck stops with me.”

What’s stored on her own iPod? “Mostly rock music,” says Montbach, smiling. “My husband’s a drummer. I’ve recently discovered Pink Martini and I love them. I don’t listen to recorded chamber music all that much. To play and hear chamber music is such a joyous collaboration that I prefer to experience it live.” —RICHARD DYER

Richard Dyer, A.M. ’64, wrote about classical music for the Boston Globe for 33 years.
have an American ballet within 3 yrs. time... Do you know George Balanchine... the most ingenious technician in ballet I have ever seen... Please, please Chick if you have any love for anything we both do adore, rack your brains and try to make this all come true... We have the future in our hands...” [and later] “This will be no collection, but living art—and the chance for perfect creation.”

Duberman’s monumental story ends on a somber note when the failing, bedridden Kirstein loses all interest in looking at the books on art that he had loved. Yet readers will have no doubt that on certain nights—from his seat at the New York State Theater, as he watched the dancers materialize on stage and bring to life one of George Balanchine’s miraculous gifts to the world—Kirstein knew that he was in the presence of the “perfect creation” that would not have happened without him.


Rhythms of Race
African-American poet Kevin Young talks shop.
by SHAUN SUTNER

A t age 36, Kevin Young ’92 ranks among the most accomplished poets of his generation. The recipient of Guggenheim, Stegner, and NEA fellowships, he recently left Indiana University to become Haywood professor of English and creative writing at Emory University in Atlanta, where he is also curator of the 75,000-volume Raymond Danowski Poetry Library, believed to be one of the world’s largest private collections of English-language poetry.

Young was born in Lincoln, Nebraska, to Louisiana natives. As a child, he lived in Chicago, Syracuse, Boston, and Natick, Massachusetts. His late father was a physician; his mother, who has a doctorate in chemistry, is president and CEO of the Mattapan Health Center in Boston.

At Harvard, Young was one of the youngest members of the Dark Room Collective, an influential group of black Boston-area writers. Having spent his high-school years in Kansas, he writes poems that reflect his midwestern roots as well as his ancestral Southern heritage.

In January, Alfred A. Knopf published his most recent book of poems, For the Confederate Dead. His earlier Jelly Roll was a finalist for the National Book Award and the Los Angeles Times Book Prize, and won the Paterson Poetry Prize. He is the author of three other poetry collections—including Black Maria, recently adapted for the stage and performed by the Providence Black Repertory Company—and To Repel Ghosts: The Remix, a retelling of the life and work of the late New York graffitist artist and painter Jean-Michel Basquiat.

Young has also edited the Library of America’s John Berryman: Selected Poems and two other poetry and prose collections. He divides his time between Atlanta and Belmont, Massachusetts, where he and his wife, Catherine Tuttle, live with their two children.

Q. What made you want to become a poet?
A. I took a creative-writing summer course when I was 12 or 13. I wrote short stories and was into comic books. Suddenly I wrote a poem because we were supposed to, and the teacher liked it and passed it around. In retrospect, I don’t see why, because [my] poems were terrible. I still remember them, but they’re best left undiscussed.

Q. When he heard the title of your new book, an African-American colleague of mine responded: “[Bleep] the Confederate dead!” Are you expressing sympathy for the Confederate dead?
A. I thought long and hard about the title. It’s trying to deal with the ironies of Ameri-
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Off the Shelf
Recent books with Harvard connections

Philosophers without Gods: Meditations on Atheism and the Secular Life, edited by Louise M. Antony, Ph.D. ‘82 (Oxford University Press, $28). Twenty philosopher-atheists testify that atheists need not be elitist or hostile to religion to hold that morality is independent of the existence of God. Antony is professor of philosophy at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and nine of the contributors are Harvard alumni.

The Panic of 1907: Lessons Learned from the Market’s Perfect Storm, by Robert F. Bruner, M.B.A. ’74, D.B.A. ’82, and Sean D. Carr (Wiley, $29.95). Why and how do panics unfold? The panic of 1907, now celebrating its centennial, was managed by private bankers J.P. Morgan, Charles F. Baker, and others, but spawned the Federal Reserve System. The authors teach at the Darden Graduate School of Business Administration, University of Virginia, where Bruner is dean.

Wayne’s College of Beauty, by David Swanger, Ed.D. ’70 (BkMk Press, University of Missouri-Kansas City, $13.95, paper). This collection of poems has won the John Ciardi Prize for Poetry. Like the patrons of Wayne’s, readers will “have come at last to the right place.”

Lawrence and Aaronsohn: T.E. Lawrence, Aaron Aaronsohn, and the Seeds of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, by Ronald Florence, Ph.D. ’69 (Viking, $27.95). Two colleagues in British intelligence had conflicting obsessions that presaged the Arab-Israeli conflict. As the Ottoman empire faltered, one of the two (an archaeologist from Oxfordshire, later Lawrence of Arabia) promoted Arab nationalism. The other (a Jewish agronomist from Palestine) hoped for a Jewish state. Each was cocksure. Historian and novelist Florence tells their story well.


The Americano: Fighting for Freedom in Castro’s Cuba, by Aran Shetterly ’92 (Algonquin Books, $24.95). An American janitor from Toledo became a comandante in Castro’s army, the only foreigner other than Che Guevara with that rank, and a hero in Cuba. Then Castro had him shot. Exciting history, and the author has a movie deal.

Jack and Lem: John F. Kennedy and Lem Billings, The Untold Story of an Extraordinary Friendship, by David Pitts (Carroll & Graf, $26.95). From the time they were schoolboys together at Choate until the gunfire in Dallas, John F. Kennedy ’40 and Kirk LeMoyne “Lem” Billings were each other’s best friends, this despite the fact that Billings was gay. Pitts writes, “the nicest German they ever met.”

About Finding Relief and Keeping Your Back Strong, by Jeffrey N. Katz, S.M. ’90, M.D., associate professor of medicine, with Gloria Parkinson ’83, BF ’88 (McGraw Hill, $14.95, paper). Why does your back ache, and what’s the smartest way to treat it?

The Americano: Fighting for Freedom in Castro’s Cuba, by Aran Shetterly ’92 (Algonquin Books, $24.95). An American janitor from Toledo became a comandante in Castro’s army, the only foreigner other than Che Guevara with that rank, and a hero in Cuba. Then Castro had him shot. Exciting history, and the author has a movie deal.

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Billings were each other’s best friends, this despite the fact that Billings was gay. Journalist Pitts has written “a Kennedy book” with something new to offer.
history of poetry. The real special part of it, I think, is, when we’re talking about *Leaves of Grass*, I bring the students *Leaves of Grass*. We talk about Eliot and *The Waste Land*, and I show them first editions of it. I show them a first edition of “Prufrock” signed by Eliot. I show them the range of poetry, how it happened. I also acquire new books. So there are very few holes in the collection. I patch those. Some of it is quite fugitive. It’s not easily findable.

Q. How much fun is it, being able to go out and find and buy great books?

A. Oh, it’s great. I’m a book collector by habit and inclination.

Q. You’re a collector of everything, I hear, including comic books and baseball cards.

A. This is true. It’s not just by habit; it’s also [as a curator] by necessity. I really started collecting when I was in San Francisco and I had a Stegner fellowship. There were such great used bookstores there and there was such a history I saw in these bookstores that I didn’t see other places, whether it was for West Coast versions of poetry or anything else. I was in the Mission District, which had about 20 bookstores.

Q. Seamus Heaney [the Irish poet and 1995 Nobel Prize laureate] was one of your biggest influences in college. What was your relationship like?

A. He was great—very thoughtful, very hands-off. He’d give you suggestions and meet with you, but he wasn’t rewriting your poem or anything. But I remember his suggestions were always right. He was very generous.

Q. Who are some of your biggest influences?

A. People like Heaney and Yeats. Gwendolyn Brooks [the late black American poet]. Sylvia Plath. The poetry I really admire, say, is [John] Berryman. He’s

“You can’t just do misspellings for misspelling’s sake. It’s like a blue note. You have to use a kind of precision.”

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MONTAGE

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such a mix of high and low culture. I think poetry aspires to the best of both.

Q. Why do you write such long books? One reviewer called For the Confederate Dead “hefty.”

A. It’s not as long as my last book [Black Maria]! But those were short poems. I don’t like that image: the ‘slim volume of poetry.’ I think poetry has an intensity that’s not always served by length, but you have to say what you have to say. I’m just happy that Knopf has put out my work and has kept it coming out. I always admire long poems and the way they can take in a whole world, not just a slice of the world. Poetry isn’t meant to just be devoured in one sitting. It’s something you are meant to return to, something you can get lost in.

What I like about poetry is that it’s not like poetry is here and life is over here. To me, poetry feels at its best when it’s like life, which is fragmented, sometimes full of language and sometimes full of silence, but ultimately redemptive. I think that lyrical quality is important to our lives.

Shaun Sutner, a reporter at the Worcester Telegram & Gazette since 1992, has written for the Harvard Education Letter and Commonwealth Magazine.
Harvard square offers something for everyone this fall: saunter down to the Charles River and join an ad hoc community choir as they light up the Weeks Footbridge, learn the latest about animal sexuality at the Cabot Science Library, watch Olympic skaters cut the ice at the Bright Hockey Center, or simply let the words of Peruvian poet César Vallejo wash over you during an evening reading at Lamont Library.

SEASONAL

- September 23 at 5 p.m.
  www.revels.org
  617-972-8300, extension 22
  RiverSing 2007: Bridging the Charles with Voice and Light
  Join Revels Inc. for this free event on the Weeks Footbridge in Cambridge. The procession begins at Winthrop Park.
- October 7, noon-6 p.m.
  www.harvardsquare.com
  The twenty-ninth annual Oktoberfest features street performances, live music, dancing, and food from around the world, as well as wares from more than 250 artisans and merchants. New this year is the “Honk!” stage—traveling street bands—and a “Mamapalooza” pavilion showcasing moms who rock.
- October 12 at 8 p.m.; October 13 at 7 p.m.
  www.aneveningwithchampions.org
  617-493-8172
  Organized by Harvard undergraduates, the annual ice-skating show An Evening with Champions raises money for the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute’s Jimmy Fund. Bright Hockey Center.
- October 20-21
  www.hocr.org
  Trek down to the river to watch athletes from around the world race in the annual two-day Head of the Charles regatta.

LIBRARIES

- Continuing
  Family Album: The Roosevelts at Home features images from Sagamore Hill.
- Opening September 11
  A Celebration of Charts: Two Hundred Years of the U.S. Coast Survey highlights rare and exotic nautical documents.

EXHIBITIONS

Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology
www.peabody.harvard.edu; 617-495-1027
- October 5-7
  Storied Walls: Murals of the Americas is a weekend of lectures and tours related to murals found in churches, sacred grounds, and ceremonial rooms. Children’s programming is included.
- Opening October 25
  “A Good Type” showcases early Japanese photographs. Among them, tinted scenes of kimono-clad geishas, samurai warriors,
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and delicate cherry blossoms. A curator’s talk starts at 5:45 p.m.
• Continuing: Vanished Kingdoms: The Wulsin Photographs of Tibet, China, and Mongolia, 1921–1925.
• Continuing: The Ethnography of Lewis and Clark, with items such as bear-claw ornaments, a painted buffalo robe, women’s dresses, and a whaling chief’s hat.

Semitic Museum
www.fas.harvard.edu/~semitic/
617-495-4631
Continuing: Ancient Egypt: Magic and the Afterlife shows visitors some ancient views of life after death.
Continuing: The Houses of Ancient Israel: Domestic, Royal, Divine features a full-scale replica of an Iron Age (ca. 1200-586 B.C.E.) village house.

Harvard Museum of Natural History
www.hmnh.harvard.edu
617-495-1027
• Opening September 28
Looking at Animals: Photographs by Henry Horenstein offers a rich collection of sepia-toned close-ups of creatures from the land and sea.
• Continuing: Climate Change: Our Global Experiment is an insider’s look at the science of climate.
• Continuing: Nests and Eggs explores the world of birds’ eggs.

Fogg Art Museum
617-495-9400/9422
• Opening October 6
Kara Walker: Harper’s Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated). To commemorate the inauguration of University president Drew Faust, this exhibit includes Walker’s silhouettes silkscreened onto 15 prints from the 1866 publication.

Sackler Museum
617-495-9400/9422
• Opening September 22
Gods in Color: Painted Sculptures of Classical Antiquity displays full-scale color reconstructions of Greek and Roman figures juxtaposed with original statues and reliefs in the colorless state we find today.

Busch-Reisinger Museum
617-495-2317
• Through November 4: Light Display Machines: Two Works by László Moholy-Nagy offers the artist’s seminal kinetic sculpture, Light Prop for an Electric Stage (1930), and his
Cambridge...Revisit “Great-grandmother’s.” 6 room, 1 bath Victorian is unspoiled, with great bones. Worthy of TLC near The Divinity School. $649,000

Cambridge...Remarkable views of the Charles River and the skyline from this 2 bedroom, 2 bath condo with a 30-foot balcony. Prestigious Riverview building with concierge and parking. $1,125,000

Cambridge...Esplanade, sixth floor corner unit, views of Charles River, Zakim Bridge and Back Bay, beautifully renovated, formal dining room & eat-in kitchen, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 24-hour concierge, pool and fitness center. $1,495,000

Cambridge...Stunningly renovated oasis with 1,739 sf on one floor. 2-3 bedrooms, study, 2 full baths, fireplace, deck, parking. Traditional/contemporary combo. Near T and amenities. $925,000

Cambridge...Stroll to “Great-grandmother’s.” 6 room, 1 bath Victorian is unspoiled, with great bones. Worthy of TLC near The Divinity School. $649,000

Arlington...Charming, bright and located in a highly sought-after Arlington neighborhood. This four-bedroom, two-bathroom home is convenient to shops and a commuter’s dream. $545,000

Arlington...Babbling Winn Brook runs through prestigious property on Old Belmont Hill. Six bedrooms, 3.5 baths, studies, 2 fireplaces, sun porch, large basement office, 2-car garage. Large, lovely lawn. Near Habitat Conservation area. $1,975,000

Arlington...Gracious 10-room Mansard perched on a lushly landscaped hill. Grand rooms with period details merge with 21st-century amenities. $2,250,000

Cambridge...Charming one-bedroom, Back Bay-style brick rowhouse near Harvard Square. Many period details. Two fireplaces. Modern kitchen and bath. $415,000

Belmont...Gracious 10-room Mansard perched on a lushly landscaped hill. Grand rooms with period details merge with 21st-century amenities. $2,250,000

Belmont...Charming one-bedroom, Back Bay-style brick rowhouse near Harvard Square. Many period details. Two fireplaces. Modern kitchen and bath. $415,000

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- Continuing: *Making Myth Modern: Primordial Themes in German 20th-Century Sculpture*. Eight dramatic pieces by artists such as Max Beckmann, Joseph Beuys, and Gerhard Marcks.

**NATURAL AND SCIENCE**

The Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics

www.cfa.harvard.edu/events.html  
617-495-7461. Phillips Auditorium,  
60 Garden Street. Lectures and rooftop viewing (weather permitting).
- September 20 at 7:30 p.m. “Astronomy for Kids of All Ages.”
- October 18 at 7:30 p.m. “Fifty Years and Counting: The Dawn of the Space Age.”

**THEATER**

The American Repertory Theatre

www.amrep.org; 617-547-8300
- October 16-21  
*The Veiled Monologues*, by Adelheid Roosen, is based on interviews with Turkish women in Holland and their perspectives on intimacy, sexuality, and love.
- October 27 through November 18  
*Donnie Darko*. Directed by Marcus Stern, this is a new adaptation of the 2001 cult film classic about a troubled teenager who meets a giant rabbit who tells him of the world’s end during the 1988 presidential campaign.
- October 16-21  
*The Veiled Monologues*, by Adelheid Roosen, is based on interviews with Turkish women in Holland and their perspectives on intimacy, sexuality, and love.
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*Donnie Darko*. Directed by Marcus Stern, this is a new adaptation of the 2001 cult film classic about a troubled teenager who meets a giant rabbit who tells him of the world’s end during the 1988 presidential campaign.

**FILM**

The Harvard Film Archive

www.harvardfilmarchive.org  
Visit the website for complete listings.  
617-495-4700
- September 7-10  
*Ousmane Sembene–In Memoriam* looks at the work of this Senegalese filmmaker.
- October 19-29  
*Michael Haneke: A Cinema of Provocation* examines the Austrian director, whose works include *Cache* and *The Piano Teacher*.

**MUSIC**

Sanders Theatre

www.fas.harvard.edu/~tickets/  
617-496-2222
- October 19 at 8 p.m.  
The Harvard Glee Club joins the Princeton Glee Club and the Choir of St. George’s Chapel, Windsor, England, for a concert.
- October 26 at 8 p.m.  
The Harvard Jazz Band, Harvard University Band, and Harvard Wind Ensemble perform works commemorating the one-hundredth birthday of composer Leroy Anderson ’29, A.M. ’30.
- October 27 at 8 p.m.  
The Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra has chosen to celebrate its two-hundredth year with a program that includes Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony and Gustav Holst’s suite *The Planets*.

Events listings also appear in the University Gazette, accessible via this magazine’s website, www.harvardmagazine.com.
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617.495.4460
www.huecu.org
More than 500 people turned out in June for the inaugural gala picnic at Philip Johnson’s Glass House, in New Canaan, Connecticut. The long-awaited event raised $750,000 for further preservation of the most celebrated modern house in the Northeast. Public tours are sold out into parts of next year, as people from around the world plan pilgrimages to the site.

The deceptively simple transparent box, held up by slim steel pillars, was completed in 1949 and served as Johnson’s home, with the lush grounds his canvas, until he died in 2005. In all, the estate boasts 14 experimental structures unfettered by “clients, function, and money,” as Johnson ’27, B.Arch. ’43, once said, and is now operated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as a public monument and museum and a central “catalyst for the preservation of modern architecture, art, and landscape.”

The Johnson house may be the showiest example of modernism in New England, but it is far from the only one. The majority of modern residences are in private hands, but several are open to the public, including the one-story, red tile-roofed Zimmerman House in Manchester, New Hampshire, a late work by Frank Lloyd Wright; the eccentric Frelinghuy sen Morris House in Lenox, Massachusetts, built in the International style and lived in as a showcase for the collection of abstract art of its longtime owners; and two adjacent dwellings, Field Farm (open as a bed and breakfast) and The Folly, on pastoral acreage in Williams town, Massachusetts, which offer prime examples of one of modernism’s central tenets: that structures be designed in harmony with the surrounding environment.

The rising profile of these sites, and the work of preservation groups, can be seen as harbingers of a shifting perspective on modern aesthetics in a part of the country most identified with white-steepled churches, colonial village greens, and fabled red-brick universities (although even Harvard has its share of modern edginess; see page 50). “The average layperson does not see New England as a hotbed of modernism,” says David Fixler, president of DOCOMOMO/New England, a branch, founded in 1997, of the Paris-based group that advocates for modern architecture. “But in fact, all of the great, internationally recognized leaders of the modern movement did work in New England.” That includes Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius (who taught for years at the Harvard Graduate School of Design after leaving Nazi Germany), as well as Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier, Alvar Aalto, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. But Fixler is quick to note that modernist architects Edwin Goodell (who designed Field Farm) and Henry Hoover, M.Arch. ’26, built homes in New England that predate Gropius’s arrival. “Many people don't realize that the seeds of modernism were here before Gropius,” explains Fixler, who lives in a Hoover-designed 1949 home in Weston, Massachusetts. Yet it would be hard to overstate the influence of Gropius and his colleagues Marcel Breuer and Walter Bogner on a slew of younger Harvard-trained architects, including Edward Larrabee Barnes ’38,
CAMBRIDGE, MA
This impressive co-op is a short distance to Harvard Square and one of the largest available in a full-service building in Cambridge. Features of this elegant 9-room, 5 bath unit include a library with built-ins, multiple exposures and 2 large balconies with spectacular river views. $2,485,000

CAMBRIDGE, MA
This stately Shingle-style/Tudor, c. 1897 is a landmark on Brattle Street. It has 14 rooms, a grand foyer & staircase, 35’+ LR, 10 fireplaces, built-ins, leaded & stained glass windows, high ceilings, porches, balcony & stone terrace. 2-car garage with additional parking. $5,100,000

CAMBRIDGE, MA
Harvard Sq. Col. Revival side-by-side two-family, c. 1895, on almost 1/4 acre of landscaped grounds could be converted into a single family. Each unit has over 2,600 sq. ft., 2 fireplaces, eat-in kitchen, built-ins, high ceilings, hardwood floors, French doors, decks & central air. 2-car garage + additional parking. $2,600,000

CAMBRIDGE, MA
This splendid 14-room Queen Anne, c.1883, sits on over 1/4 of an acre of lovely grounds. It boasts an 18’ foyer, 32’ Living room, 22’ Dining room, 6 Fireplaces, 8 Bedrooms, 4 1/2 Bathrooms, bays, French doors, 35’ porch & 2-car garage + parking for 6. $2,600,000

CAMBRIDGE, MA
Just renovated Italianate-Bracketed home, c. 1853, situated on landscaped grounds near Harvard Square, has 12 rooms, 6 bedrooms, period details, front-to-back foyer with curved staircase, inlaid floors, 5 fireplaces, floor-to-ceiling windows, French doors to deck, garden, & garage. $5,350,000

CAMBRIDGE, MA
“One of the finest pieces of domestic architecture in Old Cambridge.” This landmark 13-room brick English Riding House is on well over 1/3 of an acre of landscaped grounds. Exquisite detailing includes fluted columns, paneling, moldings, grand curved staircase and five fireplaces. $4,100,000

CAMBRIDGE, MA
Elegant 11+ room Brattle Street Colonial - a short distance to Harvard Square & Charles River. This home has 4 fireplaces, 5+ bedrooms, floor-to-ceiling windows, a lovely wide front-to-back foyer with grand staircase, library with green house bay, a terrace, & 2 car garage. $2,500,000

CAMBRIDGE, MA
Set upon majestic gardens, this 15-room Colonial Revival, circa 1889, boasts a grand entrance and spacious entertaining rooms which flow graciously onto a 21’ deck. The period details, 5 fireplaces, au-pair suite and two-car garage make this an elegant home near Harvard Law School. $2,895,000
B. Arch. ’42; Ulrich Franzen, M. Arch. ’48; John Johansen ’39, B. Arch. ’42; Carl Koch ’34, M. Arch. ’37; Eliot Noyes ’32, M. Arch. ’38; I.M. Pei, M. Arch. ’46; and Paul Rudolph, M. Arch. ’47—all of whom went on to design buildings around New England.

Now that “modernism,” under the 50-year guideline, also means “historic,” some regional preservation groups have begun to grapple with how to treat the newest additions to the local historic landscape: the modernist homes built from the 1930s through the 1950s. “These houses tend to be isolated in their settings—like the Glass House—and are set pieces in a larger landscape,” notes Sally Zimmerman, preservation specialist at the nonprofit organization Historic New England. “There, the preservation is of a masterwork and the house is treated as an artifact. You don’t destroy it because it is a wonderful art object.” Historic New England archives artifacts and operates three dozen house museums, but one of its most popular destinations is the 1938 home of Gropius himself in Lincoln, Massachusetts, which attracts visitors from around the world. The organization is now developing a regional reference database showcasing residential works by selected modernist architects. “There is a strong research interest in our collections,” Zimmerman says, “and in our property holdings and in our archives.”

The Trustees of Reservations, a stalwart land-conservation group, operates not only Field Farm—the 1948 Bauhaus-era home built by the MIT-trained Goodell, which is complete with many original furnishings, artwork, and a sculpture garden—but also The Folly, designed in 1964 by Ulrich Franzen, which is now open as a museum only. “The whole property is a wonderful teaching tool, especially because we can compare the two buildings in discussions on postwar American architecture,” says the Trustees’ historic resources manager, Will Garrison. “And because the structures were built specifically for the landscape, and we are a land-conservation organization, we are interested in preserving them together.”

The group has also recently taken on a 1950 house in Concord designed by The Architects’ Collaborative (TAC), Gropius’s Cambridge firm, which is currently used as a rental property.

Newer grassroots groups such as the Friends of Modern Architecture in Lincoln, Massachusetts, are also educating their fellow residents and drawing attention to preservation issues around modern homes. In addition to the Gropius house, Lincoln has more than 100 private custom-built modern dwellings, and has been a hothouse for architectural development, says FOMA cofounder and president Dana Robbat, A.I.M. ’02, who is writing a book about European modernism and its impact on New England. The group sponsors receptions, private house tours, and panel discussions, such as an event last April on renovating and...
According to his younger daughter, Walter Gropius was no sentimentalist. What he would have thought of his family home’s current status as a world-renowned tourist site, is not clear. The boxy white structure built in 1938 was meant to be economical and comfortable—not “a monument to the Modern movement,” Ati Gropius Johansen wrote in a 2003 article for Historic New England Magazine. It was her mother, Ise Gropius, who continuously brought visitors into their quintessentially modern abode, built with efficiency under the architectural ethos, “form follows function.” And she gave it to Historic New England as a timeless testament to Gropius’s revolutionary philosophy.

Today, visitors can walk through the open rooms and look out plate-glass windows—meant to maximize passive solar heat and views of the landscape—and feel as if the family were returning at any moment. The furniture, much of it designed by Gropius’s fellow Bauhaus member and Design School colleague Marcel Breuer (who built his own home nearby), is beautifully intact, as are artwork, dishware, books—even Ise’s earrings, on a dressing table.

Note also how the home was set deceptively on the land to guard against the north winds, and take advantage of sunlight through a second-floor deck by Ati’s bedroom. Yet the living-room fireplace, not a great heat source, catered simply to familial pleasure, Johansen says, and “the delight my parents both took in sitting before an open fire.”

The Gropius House
Lincoln, Massachusetts
www.historicnewengland.org
781.259.8098

A most original luxury hotel.
maintaining a modern house, cosponsored with Historic New England. “Most people don’t like looking at modern homes; they are just not immediately aesthetically pleasing to a lot of people,” Robbat says. “It’s like looking at any piece of modern art. But once you understand what the artist had in mind, you can appreciate the work much more.”

Preservation interest centers primarily on one-of-a-kind, commissioned works by well-regarded architects and on some planned modern residential communities, such as the renowned cul-de-sac of flat-roofed, timber-sided homes called Six Moon Hill built by and for TAC architects in Lexington, Massachusetts. “In comparison to many contemporary suburban developments elsewhere, like Levittown, the emphasis was not necessarily on creating the largest possible number of houses, but rather on creating community of a certain scale and character,” says Cambridge architect Mark Mulligan, M.Arch. ’90, adjunct associate professor at the Graduate School of Design. “For me, there is something both more artistic and more civic-oriented [in Six Moon Hill] than the economic model that is suggested by ‘mass housing.’”

Any group eager to preserve modern structures still faces the problem Dana Robbat raises: the often dim awareness on the part of homebuyers, developers—or even local historic commissions—of the desirability of distinctive postwar homes. “In Oak Park, Illinois, the preservation perspective is Frank Lloyd Wright,” Mark Mulligan says. “Our focus in New England has been on colonial and federal styles, and nineteenth-century architecture.” DOCOMOMO’s David Fixler agrees. “We’ve had some victories, and some defeats,” he says of trying to save modern buildings. “The importance of New England to modernism is generally underappreciated.”

Several years ago the group helped preserve an especially innovative Edwin Goodell house built in 1934 in Weston, Massachusetts, by finding owners who wanted to live in the building rather than tear it down. “If we destroy these houses, then we will have lost an important part of our social and political history as well as our architectural history, and those stories will never be told,” says Boston architect Edwin “Ned” Goodell, M.Arch. ’98, the architect’s grandson. “This particular house is interesting because it marked a departure from the ‘historicist’ work of my grandfather’s early career and it is evidence that there was fledgling interest in new building types before the arrival of Gropius and the Europeans.”

The appeal of modern homes is timeless, Fixler says. “Modernism was about encouraging democratic ideas, including the idea that everyone can live well and live on a modest scale,” he explains. “The movement was about breaking down walls and opening up spaces and creating better communal environments, and the houses were meant to have a very light environmental impact on the land. There is something very liberating and uplifting about life in a modern house, and it is something we don't want to lose track of, especially given the general push toward sustainability.”

Mulligan sees the efficient use of space, modest footprint, and the opening to natural light and garden views—

The Freylinghuysen Morris House

Lenox, Massachusetts • www.frelinghuysen.org • 413.637.0166

Suzy Frelinghuysen and George L.K. Morris were prolific abstract artists at the forefront of the American art scene, starting in the 1930s. Known as the “Park Avenue Cubists,” both came from wealthy families and filled their Bauhaus-inspired white stucco home with their own animated frescoes and the works of cohorts A.E. Gal-
in essence using the natural world as extended outdoor rooms—as definitive lessons for homeowners living in today’s climate crisis. “A 1,200-square-foot mid-century modern house is the opposite of today’s 5,000-square-foot McMansion in terms of how space is valued and used,” he says. “It’s important for us as a society to keep these smaller modern houses, because they move us away from the culture of consumption. What makes them work is the cleverness of design and the number of built-ins.”

One of the best examples of these ideas is Gropius’s own home; Mulligan sends everyone he knows to see it. “The archetypal New England house is a painted, wooden, boxy structure,” he says. “Gropius absorbed the New England characteristics [wood, brick, fieldstone] but did something new with them. He used cedar-clapboard siding, but he uses it vertically on the interior. He is an historic figure and the house is a time capsule. Going out there also gets visitors into the forests and pastures around the house—all these things we think of as New England’s natural heritage.”

Six Moon Hill in Lexington still runs, as originally planned, as a consensus-based community with membership dues and some communal property, including a swimming pool and meeting grounds. “It’s
remarkable that the community has maintained the same spirit as long as it has,” says founding TAC architect John “Chip” Harkness ’38, M.Arch. ’41. “It’s more than just a typical suburb, it is a group of people who meet together and do more than be next-door neighbors who never speak to each other.” (He now lives in Maine, but his first wife, another TAC architect, Sarah Pillsbury Harkness, still lives at Six Moon Hill along with some other founding families.) Lexington also boasts five other subdivisions of modern homes from the 1950s and 1960s, including Five Fields, Turning Mill Road, and Peacock Farm. In Concord, Massachusetts, Carl Koch, a longtime MIT professor, produced the 1950s Conantum community, designed as convenient, affordable housing for university academics back when Concord was a 22-minute drive to MIT, notes Sally Zimmerman, of Historic New England, citing original promotional materials for the development.

Few would question preserving the Gropius house, or even those that comprise Six Moon Hill. But whether all modern houses should be saved as a matter of course is not always clear. “There is no canonical definition of what’s historically relevant or important,” Mulligan says. Market forces are hugely influential, as are potentially expensive problems related to restoration and maintenance, which, he explains, often require specially trained contractors and hard-to-find authentic materials. “A lot of mid-century houses are small and glassy and their new buyers value the land and location over the architect’s vision,” he says.

In July, for example, after long negotiations, a deal to save a flat-roofed 1956 Paul Rudolph house on a bluff in Watch Hill, Rhode Island, fell through over issues of timing and liability, according to a New York Times article. The owners had wanted the “Cerrito house,” as it was known, removed so they could build a larger vacation home, and two designers had hoped to move the dwelling to land upstate; instead, the structure was demolished in June. The “Micheels House,” a 1972 Rudolph dwelling on the waterfront in Westport, Connecticut, was demolished last January despite public controversy and legal action over its importance. “Things are changing so
The Harvard Club of Boston is family.

Tuck Rickards, MBA’91, Boston Area Manager, Russell Reynolds Associates, Inc.; President, HBS Alumni of Boston, 2006. Since we moved to Marblehead, my family and I have used the Harvard Club as our Boston home base. Where else can you extend a dinner for two into a relaxing evening with friends, or even an overnight stay in one of the Club’s hotel rooms? And our children Matt, Katie, and Andrew really enjoy their “Power Breakasts with Dad” (frankly, not as much as I do).

With our office located at One Federal Street, my colleagues and I use the Downtown Club as our company meeting place. You can’t beat the food, or the views of Boston Harbor. It is also a great way to keep in touch with fellow Alumni and friends.

Why not join my wife Kelly, my children, and me in making the Harvard Club of Boston a part of your family? Visit www.harvardclub.com and click on “Become a Member.” Or call Debbie Fiore at (617) 450-4492.
quickly [in the construction landscape] now that we cannot evaluate the significance of many modern houses before they are gone,” explains Sally Zimmerman. “We don’t have the luxury we do with an old Revolutionary-era home to determine how important it is to history.”

But opinions can vary within the architectural and design community. “There is an element, even among the surviving designers of these houses, that says, ‘No, they should not be preserved. The style is obsolete,’” Zimmerman adds. “There is such a rational philosophy behind modernism that some of the designers themselves say, ‘Go ahead, tear it down. If it’s not working now, then build something new.’” The emphasis does not have to be on traditional restoration or preservation, Fixler believes, but on sensitively adapting or enlarging these modern homes—as virtually all of the Six Moon Hill homes have been. Chip Harkness weighs in: “I think it’s very nice to preserve—maybe not the

Field Farm and The Folly

Williamstown, Massachusetts
www.thetrustees.org/pages/303_field_farm.cfm
413.298.3239

What other bed and breakfast offers an original Charles and Ray Eames chair for lounging by the fireside? Or a vintage Isamu Noguchi coffee table and a Vladimir Kagan couch? Field Farm, a 1948 Bauhaus-era home, has not only original furnishings but a wide array of modern and contemporary artwork, and an exquisite sculpture garden en route to an outdoor pool. Tours of the adjacent museum, a 1966 guest house called The Folly, are also available, as are extensive walking trails through the property’s 316 acres of conservation land, owned by the Trustees of Reservations. Lawrence and Eleanor Bloedel lived on the estate, which they had created, for decades before giving it to the Trustees in 1984. Five bedrooms, some with fireplaces and decks, draw design and architecture buffs from throughout the country. “It’s a combination of a modern B and B—with authentic furnishings people can use and sit on—with nature trails, and an interesting, historic house,” says the Trustees’ historic-resources manager, Will Garrison. What more could a cultured weekender want?
specifies—but the spirit of the original thing and, to the extent possible, preserve the building and not tear things down and build new ones. I’d rather adapt structures than see them torn down. But then, I’m an old man and I like to preserve what I can.”

The Trustees of Reservations faced an interesting problem when the organization inherited Field Farm and The Folly in 1984. “The owners [Lawrence and Eleanore Bloedel] themselves did not see the home as ‘historic,’ but they did consider The Folly to be important” from an architectural point of view, says Garrison, Trustees’ historic-resources manager. “So we treat the main house as an enterprise, but are sympathetic to its history.”

The Folly, which was used by the Bloedels as a guesthouse, is a curving shingled structure resembling a pinwheel. It’s set gracefully beside a spring-fed pond and a fringe of trees overlooking fields and woodlands with public walking trails. It also served as a gallery for some of the Bloedels’ considerable modern-art collection (which was largely divided between the Whitney Museum of Art and the Williams College Museum of Art after Lawrence Bloedel died in 1976). For Franzen, the architect, the environment dictated the design. “There’s a view of Mount Greylock from the large living room, a different view of the pond—on which the Bloedels held skating parties in the winter—from the kitchen, and other views of the fields and trees from the bedrooms,” says Franzen, who is now retired and living in New Mexico. “Larry Bloedel loved that guesthouse. It was meant to be a counterpoint to his rather prosaic modernist house, a plain old Jane” (a reference to the main house, designed by Goodell). When asked whether The Folly was meant to last forever, to be preserved in perpetuity, Franzen replies: “Of course. Any work of architecture with some merit and skill and artistry deserves to stand as long as it can. And that house, The Folly, has that, for sure. I’m glad that it is sort of an historic building now.” He pauses, then adds: “All architects have dreams of glory.”

Nell Porter Brown is the assistant editor of this magazine.
TASTES AND TABLES

Tiny Treasure

Eating out “at home” in Jamaica Plain

THE KITCHEN at Ten Tables is like none we’ve ever seen. Red-faced cooks don’t swear, or growl “Plate this!” at scuttling waitstaff. Nor do they sweat heavily amid grubby conditions. We know this because, as the name states, Ten Tables is very small. The diners, chef, and server share one good-sized room divided only by a slim aluminum counter which doubles as a table for two facing the kitchen.

That casual, at-home feeling is entirely by design. “I like customers to feel like they are part of the experience, not that the experience is happening to them,” says owner Krista Kranyak. “Everything is personal here.” She opened Ten Tables about five years ago, having worked in restaurants since she was 15—her first job was as a hostess with a “brother who was a cook in the kitchen yelling at me.” For the first two years as an owner, she waitressed every night, and took not one day off. Slowly she hired a competent, fresh-faced staff impassioned by the work of serving affordable, “high-quality food that is simple and tasty,” she explains. “I think everyone here feels like this is part of their own creative venture.

During our visit, the staff conducted its work to the rhythms of Thelonious Monk and Miles Davis; and the group’s easy, happy engagement couldn’t help but rub off on the rest of us. Our grinning waiter looked like a young Kevin Bacon, long bangs swept to the side, as he explained how the Mediterranean grain farro is cooked slowly to ensure a satisfyingly firm but chewy texture. At the end of the meal, chef David Punch came around to greet regulars and then, smiling and eager, asked how we had found the food.

The menu is selective: five appetizers, five entrées. We ordered, then sipped a 2004 Beaujolais and dipped bread into bright green olive oil while discussing other tiny eateries we have favored. (One gem is Cambridge’s Baraka Café, which serves authentic North African fare.)

At Ten Tables, the emphasis is on European tastes. The homemade charcuterie plate ($9) included a tangle of salty shredded pork slow-cooked in its own fat (known as rillettes), with two match-stick-sized pickled ramps, five golden raisins in sauce, and two buttery toast points. More side tidbits with the pork might be a good idea, but everything there was delicious. The mussels and spinach in cream saffron sauce ($7)—somewhere between soup and dip—offered comforting, if unidentifiable, flavors and could have used something crisp, raw, or zesty to offset an overall mushiness.

The entrées were sensational. Rubbed roasted pork loin ($18) came with celery, carrots, shallots, and fresh green fava beans in a broth, along with Punch’s outstanding (and sneakily hot) romesco, a traditional Spanish sauce he often makes with árbol chiles, crushed pine nuts, garlic, and sun-dried tomatoes. A cool, whipped, black-olive aioli topped the very fresh, slightly crusty bluefish ($20) that arrived with farro and perfectly wilted spinach. The winsome hazelnut brown-butter cake ($6) with homemade vanilla ice cream, blackberries, and sauce, clinched a delightful evening, though others may opt for the chic chocolate mousse with Chantilly ($6).

In the end, Kranyak’s vision reminds us that the best gifts often come in small packages wrapped by loving hands.

TEN TABLES
597 Centre Street
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Open daily for dinner.
Reservations recommended.

Above: The storefront at Ten Tables suggests European charm.
RAJASTHAN: OVER THE TOP
Feb 22 - Mar 9, 2008
WITH HOMI AND JACQUELINE BHABHA

Experience Rajasthan as the royal families did. Your journey traces the battles of medieval Rajput kingdoms with the Mughals, and highlights the resulting diversity of art, architecture, and culture. Spend 17 days in a landscape of desert and magnificent oasis towns. Discover forts and palaces, museums and marketplaces, each echoing with stories of the region’s vibrant past. Visit Jaipur, Jodhpur, and the majestic Taj Mahal at Agra, the epitome of the region’s splendor.
Peter Shaw Ashton stepped into his first Asian tropical forest 50 years ago last March. For what he has accomplished in those steamy reaches, he has been awarded the Japan Prize in the category of “Science and Technology of Harmonious Coexistence.”

He had his most formative harmonious encounter in the tropics just at the start of his career, with high-spirited forest-dwellers. “I was a fresh graduate of Cambridge University, and I wanted to be a grad student under my professor, naturalist John Corner,” says Ashton. “He told me, ‘Look, if you want to work in the tropics, you can’t go out for three months on a research grant and do something quick and come back and make some great generalization which will get you through a doctoral dissertation. You’ve got to get yourself a job.’ How was I going to do that? This was the end of the colonial era. I said, ‘The last thing they need is Brits out there at a time of all this change.’ ‘Don’t worry,’ said Corner, ‘every now and then a letter comes from someone who wants a botanist in some remote place in the world.’

“Meantime, I worked at a gas station,” Ashton continues, “where I was soon fired for technical incompetence. I then knew that forest botany was my sole ability, and fortunately the opportunity was not long in coming.” After about six months, Corner got a letter from the sultan’s government in Brunei. “They’re looking for a botanist to document the timber trees,” he told me. “Would you be interested?” Unbelievable! Forest botanist to His Highness, the Sultan of Brunei! It sounds like something from the nineteenth century, and indeed in a way it was. So I went off by ship and worked for His Highness Sultan Omar for five years. Those first years are always the best.”

Brunei, on the island of Borneo, is about the size of Rhode Island. At that time, says Ashton, “more than 70 percent of Borneo was covered in primeval, uncut, forest. Now, little remains, even to the mountain tops, except in the national
parks—themselves threatened by illegal harvesting—and inaccessible limestone peaks.” Yesterday’s forest, “with about 800 tree species and teeming with critters,” he says, “has been converted into a forest with a single tree species, most often oil palm, and the brown rat—and barn owls and king cobras.”

Ashton set about writing taxonomic accounts of the timber trees, particularly the dipterocarps: what used to be called Philippine mahoganies, huge trees that dominate the canopy. No one knew which or how many species were there. He ended up with descriptions of 156 dipterocarp species and rough records of many other species. “There are about 3,000 tree species in Brunei,” he says. “In other words, 10 times the number of species in the United States. So it was a huge task.”

In the process of doing the job, he spent 28 months in longhouses or under canvas with the indigenous Iban Dayak, a tribe once known for their headhunting achievements. “I learned my botany from them. I had no library, just a couple of books and no herbarium. I had four Dayak collectors and tree climbers. They didn’t have any English, and I jumped in at the deep end. They were wonderful people, good company, with a robust sense of humor and a theology close to my own. They would climb these trees—70 meters, you know—sit out on a branch, smoke a cigarette, speak to the gibbons, and possibly urinate on you if you were sitting close by on the ground.” A couple of these Dayak colleagues were in the audience when Ashton accepted his Japan Prize at a ceremony in Tokyo (see page 37). “They were totally marvelous, with tattoos down their necks, and I was in a wing collar.” He saluted these early masters in his acceptance speech.

Ashton made a major discovery in Brunei. Although no rigorous research into the matter had been done, the then current wisdom of John Corner and other leading tropical botanists held that the extraordinary coexistence of so many tree species in a tropical forest is the result of a random distribution process—that the mix of species changes with each new generation of trees as the image in a kaleidoscope changes with a twist of the barrel, and that the reason a few dominant species don’t take over the forest and drive diversity out is that the seeds of forest-tree species are not widely dispersed, but fall close to their parents. The random-mix theory implies that the species are ecologically complementary, which has implications for speciation and evolution, says Ashton. It also suggests that forest managers can’t do much to encourage one species over another. But Ashton began to realize that the forests he tramped through were not just a random mix. As he moved onto different soils—sandstone or shale—more than half the species changed. He noticed that each hill possessed a distinct species assemblage, repeated on other hills with similar soil nutrients and drainage. “I got permission from the forest service to put in some small study plots and analyze them by methods current at that time,” says Ashton. “I was accepted eventually as a graduate student and went back to Cambridge and clunked away with a hand calculator on my data. I showed quantitatively that indeed there was a relationship between habitat and the species composition of forests, and that was hugely important.”

He moved his attention to Sarawak, next door to Brunei, and conducted similar studies in a much bigger area, about the size of New England. “I was doing a lot of field work, but I was married by then and had small children and education priorities and so forth, and so
I started looking for other jobs. I began to realize to my great disappointment that my only choice might be to go into academia, kicking and screaming—into the ivory tower as opposed to the green forest, to lose the smell of resin in the air, other than from the waxing of the floor. And that’s how it worked.”

Ashton truly loves the tropics. He gave an interview to U.S. public radio after he won his Japan Prize and was asked to recall his favorite moment in the forest. “Just to go along those ridges at about 3,000 feet in Borneo day after day, with a basket with your food on your back,” he replied, “and to listen to the water cascading down in those valleys, to look at the clouds accumulating on the ridges, knowing that it’s going to pelt with rain by midday and that you’ll strip off everything but your sneakers and your underwear, put all your clothes in a plastic bag, and walk on with that streaming rain all over your body until it stops an hour or two later, then put your clothes back on again and think, ‘Wow, this is the tropics, and there’s no better place in the world.’”

Ashton gave up capsizes in the rapids, pit-viper encounters, and camps pulverized by storms to take a steady job as a lecturer in botany within the ancient stone walls of the University of Aberdeen in Scotland. During the following 12 years there, he trained many Asian students who would inherit stewardship of their countries’ forest resources—in India, Sri Lanka, Burma, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

In 1978, he came over to New England with his wife, Mary, and their three children to take on the posts of director of the Arnold Arboretum and Arnold professor of botany. The arboretum, established in 1872, is an oasis of 265 acres in the Jamaica Plain section of Boston, landscaped by Frederick Law Olmsted in collaboration with its first director, Charles Sprague Sargent. It has a mission to be schizophrenic. First, it was founded to grow every tree and shrub, indigenous or exotic, that can be grown in the open air in hard-climate Boston. Such a living museum collection was for many years considered by botanists to have great research value. Second, through a creative leasing arrangement, the arboretum became part of Boston’s park system, although Harvard remains in control of the collection. The park is open to the public, free of charge, from dawn to dusk every day of the year; the public has always loved it.

When Ashton came, the arboretum was in the grip of financial hard times. Among the vigorous remedial initiatives he launched was a spot of truck farming: a scheme to grow squash, melons, corn, and raspberries for profit on the Case Estates, Harvard land in nearby, prosperous Weston. “Endowment income goes down with inflation,” he told this magazine at the time, “but the price of raspberries goes up.” He told the dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences that he looked forward to creating a Raspberry Professorship at Harvard. Alas, he recalls, “The raspberries were a failure.”

He had another problem more difficult to quantify than the state of the exchequer. In essence, it was that the arboretum’s collection, unquestionably a horticultural treasure, was no longer so greatly valued by the botanists of the day, in part because if they wanted to study dawn redwoods, they wanted to go where dawn redwoods grow wild, to see them as part of a forest.
ecosystem. While the public ardently continued to stroll the arboretum's leafy lanes and came in droves on Lilac Sunday, many academics had turned their backs. In her history of the arboretum, Science in the Pleasure Ground, Ida Hay remarks that in each time of marked change in the institution's affairs (there have been several), “the fear was voiced that the arboretum would become ‘a mere park,’ that science would desert the pleasure ground...” Ashton talked up the place to Harvard scholars in other biological departments. And he brought new interest to the arboretum's tradition of doing research in Asia.

**Into the Tropical Forest**

There came in the early 1980s a challenger. “I am a dirt forest botanist,” says Ashton, “look at my fingernails.” (They look respectable.) “At the University of Iowa, later at Princeton, I was a theoretician, a Stephen Hubbell, who mathematically demonstrated the plausibility of sustaining 1,000 tree species in mixture over time because of constraints in how far their seeds will disperse. He got his data from a really big plot for this sort of demographic work on, on Barro Colorado Island in Panama, a research island of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute. Steve came out with a conviction opposite to mine. He said that in fact the old boys were right, a tropical forest is a random mix. There was a meeting in Leeds, England, on tropical ecology. He gave a lecture; I was scandalized and invited him out to a pub for a few pints. We fought it out. We were both right. He had studied a rather uniform piece of terrain, whereas I had looked at a heterogeneous one. If I had chosen one habitat within my Brunei landscape, I would have come to the same conclusion as he. In the pub, we decided that we needed much more data. That was the good part. We resolved to go to the National Science Foundation and try to get some money to establish a plot in the Far East that was a replica in size of his plot in Panama. I negotiated with the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia. I have always tried to keep an umbilical cord of collaboration, as an equal, with former Asian graduate students of mine—I correspond with them, write papers with them—to foster science in these areas vital for the conservation of the world’s resources. It was a relatively easy thing to say, ‘We’ve got this new idea. If I help raise funding, would you provide in-kind support—people, space, so forth? Would you be interested?’ They agreed enthusiastically.”

In 1984 Ashton and the Malaysians marked out a big study plot (50 hectares, about 124 acres) in the forest at Pasoh. His aim was to inventory all the trees in this plot that were as thick at breast height as his thumb, or thicker—to measure, identify as to species, and tag them; to map the area and to repeat the inventory every five years to see how the trees fared—which had died, which had prospered; and consider the lessons all this would teach.

One plot led to another. In 1990 Ashton and Hubbell co-founded the Center for Tropical Forest Science (CTFS) of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute. Today, CTFS manages 20 so-called Forest Dynamics Plots in 15 countries across the tropics in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. They hold a whopping four million catalogued trees of 6,000 species. Ashton coordinates work at the 11 Asian plots.

Although tropical forests account for just 12 percent of the earth’s total land area, they may be home to more than 50 percent of all forms of terrestrial life. Each research plot is a living library of plants and animals, like a Library of Congress where most of

Peter Shaw Ashton, Bullard professor of forestry emeritus, went to Tokyo in April to collect his Japan Prize in the presence of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan and about a thousand others at a grand event. The honor came with a certificate of merit, a commemorative medal, and 50 million yen (about $450,000).

The Science and Technology Foundation of Japan, a privately funded organization, awarded the prize last January in the category of “Science and Technology of Harmonious Co-Existence.” Ashton “highly deserves” it, said fellow botanist Kunio Iwatsuki, chairman of the panel that chose him, “for his long-term contribution to solving the conflict between humanity and tropical forests through his tremendous research activities.” He “brought us enormous biological and ecological knowledge, indispensable for establishing the technology of the conservation and restoration of tropical forests.”

Of Ashton’s work with the Center for Tropical Forest Studies (CTFS), which he cofounded, the scientists of the foundation wrote in an appreciation, “To undertake such a major research project requires passion, dedication, and leadership—qualities that Dr. Ashton possesses in abundance. Since the late 1980s, he has worked tirelessly convincing the world of the need for an effective survey [of tropical forests], collecting funds to finance the survey, getting the survey up and running, nurturing young researchers, and devoting himself fully to the project.”

On his way back home to England after the celebration in Japan, Ashton stopped at the Arnold Arboretum for a gala thrown by his colleagues there. They took the occasion to announce that they will raise a major endowment fund “to permanently secure the future of the arboretum’s cutting-edge Asian Tropical Forest research program.” Specifically, the Mary and Peter Ashton Fund for Asian Tropical Forests—launched by a gift from the Ashton’s—will support research training in Asian forest biology at the sites of the CTFS Asia network for in-country students and students from Harvard, Yale, Kyoto, Osaka City, and Aberdeen Universities. (Of the Ashton children—Mark, Mellard, and Rachel—Mark is professor of silviculture and forest ecology at Yale, a chip off the old block.)

“I was so happy that it wasn’t just humanity and nature the Science and Technology Foundation spoke of,” the old block told this interviewer, “but it was myself as an individual and my Asian colleagues who were harmoniously coexisting. The last sentence of the foundation’s statement was very touching to me: ‘He has gained a glowing reputation among fellow Japanese researchers as “the most trustworthy of all fellow scientists....”’

The leadership for which the Japanese honored Ashton was in two things: developing the network of forest plots through collaboration with his colleagues in the tropics, and encouraging the open sharing of data among researchers. In his short, sweet speech accepting his prize, Ashton made clear, “What successes I have had have always been as part of a team....”

**Harmonious Coexister Honored**

Peter Shaw Ashton, Bullard professor of forestry emeritus, went to Tokyo in April to collect his Japan Prize in the presence of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan and about a thousand others at a grand event. The honor came with a certificate of merit, a commemorative medal, and 50 million yen (about $450,000).
Ashton moved on from the arboretum’s directorship in 1987. He was professor of dendrology until 1991, when he became Bullard professor of forestry. He took emeritus status in 2004 but has yet to grasp the concept of retirement. Among his current undertakings, he is writing a book about rain forests for the nonspecialist, based on a lifetime’s learning about them close up in all but three of the nations of tropical Asia. He says it will be profusely illustrated with evocative color photographs that will portray his rain forests better than his words can do. He spends each fall semester at the Harvard University Herbaria in Cambridge, studying tropical forests with the aid of its vast library and more than five million specimens. The rest of the time, he lives in England. “Not for nationalistic reasons, I promise you that,” he says. “I’m strongly antinationalistic. I live there for two reasons. In England, you can go up on a hill and look down and see the palimpsest of human activity going back to the Neolithic. I live in the old traction-engine shed of a farm in Somerset that is in the Domesday Book.” When he’s working on tropical forestry at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, he lives in London, in Chiswick, where he has a small garden “with a wild banana growing and a

the books have yet to be opened. Each elucidates the wondrous biological diversity of tropical forests, so variously populated that one imagines that the forces of natural selection and survival of the fittest have been revoked. Together, the plots form the only natural-ecosystem global network of any kind in existence and promise to yield beneficial insights into some of the world’s big problems.

Kenneth J. Feeley, an ecologist and postdoctoral fellow at the Arnold Arboretum, is the lead author of a paper published last spring in Ecology Letters that reports on a study of data from the first two Forest Dynamics Plots established by CTFS, on opposite sides of the planet—one at Barro Colorado Island, Panama, the other at Pasoh, Malaysia. Commenting on his and his colleagues’ findings, Feeley says that “slower tree growth in tropical rain forests will have very important implications for both the global environment and economy.”

Global biodiversity may be diminished. All the animals that live in tropical forests “depend on plant productivity as a source of energy,” says Feeley. “Decreased growth will reduce the amount of energy available, which could reduce the number of animal species that these ecosystems can support.”

Slower growth may reduce timber available for logging, and logged forests may take longer to recover. “In order for loggers to maintain current yields,” says Feeley, “they will have to increase either the intensity of the logging or increase the area of forest that they log.”

Feeley imagines an unfortunate environmental spiral: “Reductions in tree growth may result in reduced rates of carbon uptake from the atmosphere, which, coupled with the extra emissions of CO2 from associated increases in logging and deforestation, could accelerate the increase of atmospheric CO2 and global warming, causing even further reductions in tree growth, and so on and so on.”

Another Harvard scholar who may find surprises in CTFS data is Paul R. Moorcroft, professor of biology and a maker of terrestrial biosphere models. Such models indicate that human-induced increases in surface temperatures and rising levels of atmospheric CO2 during the coming century will cause profound changes in tropical forests around the globe and, indeed, says Moorcroft, “will cause a collapse of Amazonian tropical forests in the middle of this century.” The biosphere models used to make such predictions contain detailed mechanistic representations of biological processes that govern the composition and functioning of ecosystems, but, says Moorcroft, their ability to represent such things accurately—to predict key empirical metrics such as the dynamics of tree growth, for instance, or the rates at which carbon and water are exchanged between the tropical forest canopies and the atmosphere—have, so far, remained largely untested. “The measurements collected by
We are beginning to compensate forest owners for their carbon sequestration, but remain free riders for their genetic information.

tree fern, can you believe it, and that is largely because of energy wastage in the great city." The second reason he lives in Britain is because—as observed, he thinks, by expatriate American violinist Yehudi Menuhin—it has such a soft climate.

Much primeval tropical forest has been lost to logging, "so our efforts are now focused," says Ashton, "on strengthening general theory in order to actively manage those remaining islands in which most of Asia's biodiversity is becoming confined." He and his colleagues have come far, he believes, in understand-

CTFS researchers during the past two decades," he says, are providing his lab “with a unique dataset for testing the abilities of terrestrial biosphere models to correctly capture the current composition, structure, and functioning of tropical forest ecosystems. We will be able to determine the accuracy of current model formulations and thus know how seriously we have to take their predictions about the long-term future of tropical forests?"

Much terra incognita remains to be explored. What accounts for the slowing of growth that CTFS data revealed to Feeley and his colleagues? Even though increases in atmospheric CO2 provide fertilizer that can stimulate growth by aiding photosynthesis, they found that over the period of the study, the number of rainy days had increased at both sites, meaning that less sunlight was available to fuel photosynthesis. Moreover, nighttime temperatures had increased at the sites, and higher temperatures mean higher respiration rates. When trees have less energy coming in and more going out, they have less for growth, as appears to have happened in these two forests.

“Temperature and CO2 may operate in opposite directions on tree growth,” says Stuart Davies, Ph.D. ’96, a coauthor of the paper. “That’s what we’re arguing, but we have to be honest and say that we don’t know the answer yet.”

Davies is the director of CTFS. (Heretofore headquartered in Ancon, Panama, the center and Davies move this September to the Harvard University Herbaria in Cambridge. The Asian operations of CTFS are overseen by the Arnold Arboretum.) A former graduate student of Bullard professor emeritus Peter Ashton, Davies is a tropical ecologist and taxonomist who has done fieldwork in the tropics and was associate professor at the Institute for Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. He has studied the factors that control the regeneration of tropical forests after logging and agriculture and, in collaboration with Malaysian and U.S. ecologists and economists, he has worked to develop new techniques to assess and value biodiversity.

“We don’t yet know,” he says, “whether or not this slowing of growth is a global process, whether or not the Amazon might operate differently from other forests, how long present conditions will last. We don’t have enough information. But the beauty of having 20 CTFS research plots is that they will give us unparalleled power to learn more.”

Christopher Reed is executive editor of this magazine.
The first and perhaps the most important requirement for a successful writing performance—and writing is a performance, like singing an aria or dancing a jig—is to understand the nature of the occasion. This particular occasion, the Gordon Gray Lecture, is unusually gratifying, since I am called on to talk about something I care passionately about—writing—and, indeed, about that aspect of the subject to which I have given the most sustained practical attention: my own writing.

Under most other circumstances, so self-centered a focus would seem fatuous, and I would fear to cut what Italians call a brutta figura. In the sixteenth century, a famous behavior manual by Baldassare Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier, counseled what it called sprezzatura, or “nonchalance.” The successful courtier must cunningly hide all signs of practice, calculation, and effort, so as to make everything he or she does seem spontaneous and natural. But the Gordon Gray Lecture is an invitation to lift the curtain and reveal the calculation that underlies the appearance of effortlessness.

So let me begin by reading you something I wrote last summer, something that, as it happened, turned out also to be self-centered. It is short piece for a volume being put together in honor of a friend of mine. Such volumes are called Festschriften—literally, celebration-writings—and the German name, used even in English, somehow suggests their nature: these are honorific books that are almost never read, even by the person who is being honored. As the summer waned, the last thing I wanted was to stop working, even for a day, on the book on which I am currently engaged, a study of the loss and miraculous recovery of the manuscript of Lucretius’s great philosophical poem, On the Nature of Things. But the person being honored by the Festschrift, a Stanford professor of comparative literature named Sepp Gumbrecht, is an old friend of mine, and I could not refuse. So I sat down to write something about a recent book by Gumbrecht on the aesthetics of sports, published by the Harvard University Press.

The book was controversial. It had been sharply attacked by the historian Hayden White and others who thought that, in focusing so sharply on the beauty of sports, Gumbrecht had almost entirely ignored the sociological dimension. The aesthetic ap-
preciation of sports, White argued, is not innocent: it serves as an excuse, one among several, for a grotesque over-expenditure of money for team sports, and particularly male-dominated sports, at many universities, universities that could be using this money for financial aid, teaching, and research. More broadly, Gumbrecht’s critics charged, the aestheticizing of sports conceals the actual motives that draw people to invest their time, money, and passion in spectatorship. What is needed, instead is a disen-chanted analysis of the kind that the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu had offered for “the love of art,” a love that Bourdieu revealed to be merely a piece of the cultural capital by which people attempt to secure their class distinction.

These critiques had, I felt, considerable force, but their weakness was their inability to register the aesthetic dimension—of sports or of art—as anything but a screen, an ideological cover for something else. My overarching strategy, I decided, would be fairly simple: I would at least obliquely rehearse the theoretical objections to Gumbrecht’s book, objections centered on rival sociological and psychological accounts of sports, and then I would assert the validity, even within such a framework, of the aesthetic claim. I would not argue that this claim had priority, but I would refuse to let it disappear altogether into functionalism. Yes, being a sports fan is not pure aesthetic appreciation: it is deeply enmeshed, as Bourdieu and others could easily show, in social, psychic, economic, and political strategies. But, if the aesthetic dimension that Gumbrecht praises is ignored, it is difficult even to understand these strategies or to grasp why they are attached to this set of human activities and not another.

A short Festschrift essay was hardly the occasion to grapple directly with these arguments. I tried to think how I could amuse myself and at the same time do something slightly unexpected with the genre of the celebratory essay. I decided to write about Gumbrecht’s book and its critics almost entirely indirectly, by describing an event in my life, an occasion whose nature I had grossly misunderstood.

Here is what I wrote:

Sepp Gumbrecht’s *In Praise of Athletic Beauty* (2006) came along about fifty years too late for it to have had the practical effect on my life that it might have had: namely, to have gotten me into Harvard. My parents passionately wanted me to go there: the children of poor immigrants, they regarded Harvard with something like awe. As for me, growing up in the vicinity of Cambridge, Massachusetts, I imbied with everyone else the conviction that it was an immensely desirable fate.

I was near the top of my large graduating class in high school, quite good at standardized tests, and frenetically busy in activities like the literary magazine, the drama club, and the newspaper, so I at least stood a chance to be admitted, but no one in my world had a clue how the whole admissions business worked.
My older brother Marty was commuting to Brandeis, but he wasn't happy there and had no advice to give me. Neither of my parents had gone to college, nor (with a single exception) had my many aunts and uncles, so there was virtually no family lore, and though my high school had a few guidance counselors, they did little more than urge the students to apply to a “safety school” or two.

There was certainly nothing equivalent to the professionals that some parents now hire to “package” their children for college applications, a practice that recently made the news in a charge of plagiarism brought against a gifted Harvard undergraduate who had published a popular “chick-lit” novel that bore a suspicious resemblance to another novel in the same genre. The parents of the undergraduate in question turned out to have employed such a professional to help their daughter gain admission. The packager remarked casually, when she was interviewed, that the parents had not chosen the most expensive option—the Platinum service costing something like $30,000—but had opted for somewhat less elaborate assistance.

I suppose, looking back at the 1950s, that there were such services, after a fashion, but they were simply called prep schools, whose students stood a much better chance to satisfy whatever it was that the admissions officers were looking for. In any case, places like Exeter or Choate were far outside my parents’ ken or their wishes, not to mention my own. Since public education was free (and in my town quite good), they would have regarded the cost of private school as what they obsessively called, in Yiddish, “aroysgevorfene gelt,” that is, money thrown away. And, after all, students were regularly admitted to Harvard from my high school, so my parents were not wrong.

Since I was applying to Harvard from the Boston area, I was expected to have an interview, and my parents grew increasingly apprehensive. “Stevie, put down that book. You’ll ruin your eyes,” they would constantly nag at me. Usually, their urgings were an invitation to watch television with them on the little black-and-white set of which they were so proud. But as the date for the interview approached, their words were more often the earnest prelude to what they conceived of as a strategy session. The interviewer doesn’t want to see an “egghead,” my father would say, looking askance at whatever it was I was reading—Everyman or Anna Karenina or Camus’s The Stranger; “he wants to see a regular fella, someone who doesn’t always have his nose buried in books.”

“Well, what should I talk about, Dad?” I asked, preparing for my Harvard interview.

“You have to talk about sports,” my father said.

no idea where in his immediate life-world my father’s advice was coming from. He himself was no athlete, and had never been one, though I remember that he would occasionally throw a ball in the backyard to my brother and me and complain that my brother threw “like a girl.” In Maine, he generally stayed out of the water, even when it was steamy, or at most only waded in up to his waist, since he had not learned to swim. He certainly never skied, or picked up a tennis racket, or played golf. And though he was a vigorous walker, I never once saw him actually exercise. And, as for me, though I had learned to swim and to play tennis and though I occasionally played softball at the playground, I hardly had any athletic prowess to speak of, let alone to turn into an intriguing conversational gambit.

Perhaps my father had read somewhere—in The Saturday Evening Post, it could have been, or the old Boston Herald—an article that claimed that college interviewers wanted more than anything else to talk about sports. More likely, he was speaking out of his own sports mania, which was genuine and intense. He would watch sports on television for hours on end, any sports at all—baseball, football, basketball, and hockey, of course, but also boxing, candlepin bowling, even (if there were nothing else) tag-team wrestling. Often while he watched these contests, he would listen to another game on the radio, pressed to his ear. On Yom Kippur, which frequently happened to fall during the World Series, we were not allowed in our house to turn on lights, switch on or off appliances, or do anything else that constituted “work,” according to the rabbinical interpretation my synagogue followed, so my father would leave the television on at sundown, before the beginning of the holiday, in order to be able to look at the game on the following afternoon, when we walked home for a few hours between the Musaf and Ne’ilah services.

This sports obsession had, as I’ve said, no roots in any personal skills of my father’s, but it did have deep roots in his identity. It was, as I early on understood, bound up with a kind of cultural insecurity. On the one hand, though he was born in Boston, he defined his entire existence through the lenses of his Jewishness, secretly distrusted most Christians, and adored speaking Yiddish as the language of privacy, intimacy, and fun, and, on the other hand, he was eager to be thought, as he constantly put it, “100 percent American.” Being a sports fan—not only a public, vocal role but also a genuine passion in the privacy of his home, when his guard was down—was for my father a way to feel truly American, as if some mocking voice were always calling his Americanness in doubt. And not only truly American but also truly a man: that is, I presume, why none of the women in my extended family took more than a polite interest in those games that occupied so many hours of my father’s time and that of my uncles and others in his circle. They were all only one generation removed from the sheitl and from those men with the long curled earlocks and kaftans who represented in the conspicuously nar-
row view of mid-twentieth century America the opposite of everything manly.

But I—I who would never have uttered the sentence “I am 100 percent American,” because it would not have occurred to me that I wasn’t; I who had been strongly dissuaded by my parents from learning Yiddish; I who was baffled by my parents’ preoccupation with who on television or in the movies was Jewish and who wasn’t—had no comparable identity-stake in being a sports fanatic. And though I certainly worried about my masculinity—I can still recall my intense junior-high-school embarrassment when I was teased for holding my books “like a girl”—it did not, for some reason, occur to me that the solution lay in watching the games on television. Or rather, I doubted that memorizing the batting average of every Red Sox player for the last hundred years would compensate for the fact that I had difficulty hitting the ball out of the infield.

Still, I was in fact a baseball fan, an enthusiasm no doubt inherited from my father, confirmed by my friends, and cemented in the summer of 1957, when I was fourteen, by a piece of great good fortune: someone offered my father a season ticket to Fenway Park, or at least for the mid-week day games there. I was home that summer, I wasn’t working, and I was old enough to take the MTA to the park by myself, without my mother, who had a nervous disposition, being thereby driven to call the police. This was a time in which a preponderance of games was still played in the afternoon and in which Fenway Park had plenty of unsold seats—something that hasn’t happened for years—so that several days a week I could quietly slip down from my perch in the grandstand to a box seat near the field, close enough to hear the umpire shouting “strike” or the first-base coach’s hoarse voice when he urged the runner to take second base or to hold up.

The 1957 Red Sox were not a great team—they finished third in the American League, 16 games behind the first-place Yankees—but they had a 16-game winner in Tom Brewer, a fine new third baseman in Frank Malzone, a strong right fielder in Jackie Jensen (a golden athlete hobbled as a professional baseball player by a crippling fear of flying), and a capable, though mentally ill, center fielder in Jimmy Piersall. But most of all they had my hero Ted Williams. Though he was nearing the end of his astonishing career—he turned 39 that summer—and was thickening around the waist, Williams was and remains the greatest athlete I have ever seen.

Most games are built around some condition of great difficulty, often enhanced by the rules—the prohibition against using your arms and the off-side rules make it almost impossible to score a goal in soccer; the fierce charge of menacing 300-pound linebackers makes it almost impossible to concentrate enough to throw a football with pinpoint accuracy; the fundamental structure of the heart and lungs makes it almost impossible to pedal a bicycle at high speed over the Alpe d’Huez. In baseball, the difficulty is simply hitting a small, hard ball hurled toward you, often with a wicked spin, at speeds close to 100 miles an hour. To decide, between the moment the ball leaves the pitcher’s hand and the moment it arrives over the plate, when to swing and when to hold off, and then, if you decide to go for it, to time the swing perfectly is, again, almost impossible. A major-league player who can hit a ball successfully one in four times, or a bit more, is handsomely and deservedly well-paid; a player who can steadily do it one in three times is a star. In 1957 Williams’s batting average was .388; his slugging percentage (a measure of his power, calculated by dividing his total number of bases by his at bats) was .731, and his on-base percentage was .528. To a baseball fan, these statistics, along with his 38 home runs that season (including homers in four consecutive at bats) and a streak of reaching base 16 straight times, are phenomenal.

I was completely under the spell of the magic. Sitting near the on-deck circle, in my purloined place, I would repeatedly shout his name, “Hi Ted,” hoping that he would look around and catch my adoring eye, but he never did. His concentration was lethal, his timing uncanny, his physical grace breathtaking. He would stand at the plate, not hunched over as hitters sometimes are, but straight and poised; and then the perfect swing would uncoil, and the ball would rocket off his bat. He was like a god.

This image of Ted Williams was the only thing that came to me, when I sat with the Harvard interviewer, trying my best to hijack every question and take it back to sports. No matter what I was asked, I contrived somehow—often with a subtlety and indirectness worthy of the narrator’s elderly aunts in Remembrance of Things Past—to conjure up the athletic genius of the Red Sox’s number 9. No doubt the interviewer was increasingly perplexed and annoyed.

And here, of course, is where Sepp Gumbrecht could have saved me. For I was not only following my father’s injunction and I was not simply displaying my sports ardor to hide the fact that I was a hopeless egghead: I was in fact trying to describe what was, to that point in my life, my most intense aesthetic experience. But I did not have the language for it; indeed, I did not know that I had had an aesthetic experience.
decisive moments in a competition, the flux of time seems to be suspended”; if only I had had his description of the way that rapt fans “immerse themselves in the realm of presence”; if I only had had at my command the words of the Olympic gold medalist Pablo Morales that Gumbrecht richly analyzes—“lost in focused intensity”—I could perhaps have persuaded the impatient, skeptical interviewer that I was not merely wasting his time.

When I was put on the waiting list at Harvard, I said to myself that it was the interview that did me in. After all, students with much weaker records than mine were accepted. Years later—when I had already begun to teach at Harvard—I told the story to a friend who worked in the admissions office. He laughed and urged me to read the spate of books that have recently appeared documenting the anti-Semitic admissions policies that were in place at the time I applied. Did I by chance, he asked me, remember the last names of the students who were admitted? I got the point. Still, Yale, where I went (happily, as it turned out) to college, was certainly at that era as anti-Semitic as Harvard, if not more so; the difference was that I did not have to go to New Haven for an interview and therefore did not try to convey to anyone my aesthetic admiration for Ted Williams.

I will not belabor this essay, which is very slight, but I will quickly note several small rhetorical features.

1. If the piece is to work at all, and of course I am not sure that it does, I need to separate the language of Gumbrecht’s analysis from the personal anecdote. The analysis has to enter—like a deus ex machina—to provide (but only too late) the conceptual framework that I sorely lacked back in my interview.

2. This means that I need to keep my own anecdote simple, humorous, and above all localized and concrete, in order to highlight the contrast with the largely abstract, theoretical terms that Gumbrecht employs. I use various devices to situate my own account and to give it the air of authenticity: the names of the largely forgotten baseball players; the riff of statistics; the flourish of Yiddish; the Hebrew words for the afternoon and evening Yom Kippur services, and so forth.

3. I need, however, to be sure that Gumbrecht’s theoretical terms seem reasonably transparent and effective—otherwise, the piece would become a satire on the very person I am trying to honor. I have had, therefore, to choose carefully and to break up some rather heavy Germanic sentences in order to elicit their nuggets of clarity.

4. Finally, while representing my own adolescent naïveté, I have to suggest lightly that I am now one of the initiated; that is, I want to contrast the past with the present. But I do not want to sound self-satisfied. That’s the purpose of the sentence in which I comically invoke the elderly aunts in Proust’s Remembrance of Things Past: the allusion is (or hopes to be) at once sophisticated and self-mocking. Moreover, Proust serves as the very epitome of the aestheticism that I want through my personal anecdote at once to affirm and to analyze as a social strategy.

I do not by any means hijack everything that I write into the service of personal memoir. In fact, I used to begin many of my essays with an historical fact, often attached to a date:

In 1531 a lawyer named James Bainham, son of a Gloucestershire knight, was accused of heresy, arrested, and taken from the Middle Temple to Lord Chancellor More’s house in Chelsea, where he was detained while More tried to persuade him to abjure his Protestant beliefs.

* * *

In his notorious police report of 1593 on Christopher Marlowe, the Elizabethan spy Richard Baines informed his superiors that Marlowe had declared, among other monstrous opinions, that ‘Moses was but a Juggler, and that one Heriot’s being Sir W. Raleighs man Can do more than he’.

* * *

Between the spring of 1585 and the summer of 1586, a group of English Catholic priests led by the Jesuit William...
Weston, alias Father Edmunds, conducted a series of spectacular exorcisms, principally in the house of a recusant gentleman, Sir George Peckham, of Denham, Buckinghamshire.... Or—one more—

In September 1580, as he passed through a small French town on his way to Switzerland and Italy, Montaigne was told an unusual story that he duly recorded in his travel journal.

The advantage of these beginnings—which became a bit too familiar in my writing, so I had to stop—is precisely that they take you away from the self, the self of the writer as well as the reader. You do not have to write the dreary sentences that say “In this essay I intended to explore the theme of transvestism in Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night. My goal will be...blah, blah, blah.” Instead you plunge the reader into a story that has already begun, and you create—or at least try to create—the desire to know more. Did Thomas More persuade the heretic to abjure? Why did Marlowe call Moses a “juggler”? Exorcisms in Buckinghamshire? And what exactly was the story that Montaigne was told? (It was the story of Martin Guerre.)

But I am certainly not afraid of the personal voice and not averse to personal anecdotes, provided that they are good and that I can make good on them in constructing a piece of literary analysis. Here, for example, is how I begin a recent essay on the world and ambition has “an ethically inadequate object”:

I was astonished by the aptness, as well as the quickness, of this comment, so perceptively in touch with Macbeth’s anguished brooding about the impulses that are driving him to seize power by murdering Scotland’s legitimate ruler. When I recovered my equilibrium, I asked the president if he still remembered the lines he had memorized years before. Of course, he replied, and then, with the rest of the guests still patiently waiting to shake his hand, he began to recite one of Macbeth’s great soliloquies: If it were done when ‘tis done, then ’twere well It were done quickly. If th’ assassination Could trammel up the consequence, and catch With his surcease success: that but this blow Might be the be-all and the end-all, here, But here upon this bank and shoal of time, We’d jump the life to come. But in these cases We still have judgement here, that we but teach Bloody instructions which, being taught, return To plague the inventor.

There the most powerful man in the world—as we are fond of calling our leader—broke off with a laugh, leaving me to conjure up the rest of the speech that ends with Macbeth’s own bafflement over the fact that his immense ambition has “an ethically inadequate object”:

I have no spur To prick the sides of my intent, but only Vaulting ambition, which o’erleaps itself And falls on the other [side].

But I am certainly not afraid of the personal voice and not averse to personal anecdotes, provided that they are good and that I can make good on them in constructing a literary analysis.
I am suggesting only that you should try to write well—and that means bringing to the table all of your alertness, your fears, and your desires. And every once in a while—say, every third paper—tell yourself that you will take a risk.

I am currently writing three lectures on Shakespeare for an academic occasion in Germany. [The lectures were delivered in Frankfurt on November 27-29, 2006.] They are called the Adorno Lectures—after the important twentieth-century philosopher Theodor Adorno—and are a source of some anxiety to me, for German academic audiences tend to be extremely demanding, and even scholarly lectures have an unnerving way of being reported in detail in the national newspapers. Two of the three lectures as I drafted them began very cautiously. Here is the opening of the first, a lecture on the status in Shakespeare of the concept of aesthetic autonomy:

“Aesthetic autonomy,” that will-o’-the-wisp that haunted Theodor Adorno, was not a phrase that Shakespeare, who had a passion for rare expressions, could possibly have encountered. If the Oxford English Dictionary is to be believed, “aesthetic”—which, as the term for a science or philosophy of taste, first emerged with Baumgarten’s *Aesthetica* in the mid-eighteenth century—did not appear in English until the nineteenth century, and then only with many reservations. “There has lately grown into use in the arts,” wrote the English architect Joseph Gwilt in 1842, “a silly pedantic term under the name of Aesthetics.” It is, Gwilt added, “one of the metaphysical and useless additions to nomenclature in the arts in which the German writers abound.”

I thought it would serve my purposes to start by introducing a central concept and marking out with gentle irony some distance between my subject, Shakespeare, and Adorno, so that the listener would not expect an easy fit. (I also want to point out to you the fantastic usefulness, in writing virtually anything, of the Oxford English Dictionary, which as a Harvard student you can consult on line. This is an historical dictionary which tracks the evolving meanings of words and provides key examples of the first known written use of each of these meanings. You can in effect watch the moment when every word, and hence every concept, in our language emerged into the light of public discourse, and you can ask yourself why then, and not a hundred years earlier or later.)

My second Adorno lecture, on the status in Shakespeare of normative Renaissance concepts of beauty, also begins cautiously:

Beauty, the great Florentine architect Leon Battista Alberti writes in an influential passage of the *Art of Building*, “is that reasoned harmony of all the parts within a body, so that nothing may be added, taken away, or altered, but for the worse.” The cunning of this definition is its programmatic refusal of specificity. It is not this or that particular feature that makes something beautiful; rather it is an interrelation of all the parts in a whole. The key qualities are harmony,
inherence, economy, and completeness. There is nothing superfluous and nothing wanting. As in Alberti’s façade for S. Maria Novella in Florence, which dates from the 1450s, the pleasure derives from the sense of symmetry, balance, and the elegant ratio of the constitutive elements.

Once again I want to get a clear, memorable definition of terms out in front, so my audience will know what I am talking about and follow me while I gradually reveal Shakespeare’s profound departure from an aesthetic ideal he officially endorses. I move from Alberti’s abstract definition of beauty to a specific instance of what, as an architect, he created, that I can draw upon my astonishment, many years ago, when I stepped for the first time out of the train station in Florence and saw before me the marble façade of Santa Maria Novella. Ten minutes in the Widener library took me to a translation of Alberti’s tract on architecture and 15 minutes more turned up the quotation that I needed. And because Alberti’s vision of beauty had actually reached me, I knew it was not merely a straw man that I would have Shakespeare easily overturn, but a magnificent and coherent achievement in itself. I could use it, in short, to get at something weird and uncanny about Shakespeare’s alternative vision, one that led to the dark lady, to Cleopatra “wrinkled deep in time,” and to the wild structure of plays like Hamlet and The Winter’s Tale.

Still, as you have seen, there is something defensive about both of these opening gambits: you do not step onto the lecture platform in Frankfurt with your shirt sticking out of your pants. But on the principle I have already articulated, I am going to try in my third lecture, on the topic of negation in Shakespeare, to take a risk. This is how I propose to begin:

Here is the situation. We have, living in our midst, an alien population who hate us, as the saying goes, with a vengeance. To hate us with a vengeance means that, despite the fact that we tolerate their presence here and allow them the benefits of our civic order, these aliens feel that they have been injured by us, and this feeling of injury justifies any hostile measures that they might choose to take. Since we are fully at home here and are stronger than they are—we embody the dominant values, embrace the dominant beliefs, and control the dominant institutions—the hostile measures to which their hatred of us drives them will almost invariably be slyly and covert. When they see us, they bow obsequiously, as if they were courting our friendship, but the pretense is almost comically unconvincing.

I go on in this vein for several long, unnerving pages. Only after I have fully mimed a voice of fear and hatred, do I turn in the direction that some of you may have anticipated. For, as you may have noticed, I have already begun to conjure up the situation of Shakespeare’s Merchant of Venice. I have tried to do so in a way that enables me to suggest the play’s uneasy contemporary relevance, a sense at once fascinating and disagreeable that it is playing with fire. All my life I thought of the combustible material as anti-Semitism—or, to put the matter more carefully, Christianity’s Jewish problem. But the queasiness of Western cities no longer centers on the synagogue. It takes only a small substitution for the word “synagogue” to tap into current fears: “Go, Tubal, and meet me at our mosque. Go, good Tubal; at our mosque, Tubal.”

To learn how my argument comes out, I’m afraid you will have to read the lectures when they are published (and to do so, since they will be published in translation, you will have to learn German). But I hope I have done enough to suggest that you approach your writing not only as if it were a performance but also as if it constituted, for the moment, an ethically adequate object for your deepest ambition. It does not finally constitute such an object—a few, though mercifully not many, of the best writers in the world have been moral monsters—but it is a promising start.

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Gordon McKay

Brief life of an inventor with a lasting Harvard legacy: 1821-1903

by HARRY R. LEWIS

ONE DAY in 1858, Gordon McKay paid cobbler Lyman Blake $70,000, mostly in promises, for the patent on a machine Blake had devised to stitch the uppers of shoes to the soles. Shortly afterwards, a group holding a prior option appeared with $50,000 cash and contested the sale. The matter was litigated for years before being settled in McKay’s favor.

McKay’s name today graces 40 Harvard professorships, numerous fellowships, and a building. He made a fortune in shoe machinery and gave it all (now grown to half a billion dollars) to support applied sciences at the University. His inventiveness, shrewdness, cultural ambitions, and complex love life all helped shape the foundations of the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences.

McKay was born in Pittsfield, in western Massachusetts. He was a fine violinist as a boy, and his taste for high culture stayed with him for life, but he was trained as an engineer. He worked on a railroad and on the Erie Canal before acquiring a machine shop. His first patented invention perfected Blake’s stitching machine.

Ingenuity is good, but nothing beats good timing. When the Civil War began, the government suddenly needed lots of cheap, sturdy boots. In 1862, McKay filled an army order for 25,000 pairs. McKay's machines by the late 1870s produced half of their output, and manufacturers had to buy stamps to match, reducing the nation’s shoes—120 million pairs, yielding $500,000 a year.

Yet he realized the real money lay in shoe machinery. From 1862 to 1890, alone and with others, McKay patented some 40 sewing, nailing, tacking, lasting, and pegging machines for mass-producing shoes. Rather than sell his machines, he leased them for royalties—a few cents on every shoe made (anticipating the way Bill Gates supplied Microsoft’s operating system to computer manufacturers, with payments per unit shipped). The shoe machines kept tallies of their output, and manufacturers had to buy stamps to match, redeemable for shares in McKay’s company. Later they had to buy his nails and wire, too. Thanks to such anticompetitive (and now illegal) practices, McKay’s machines by the late 1870s produced half the nation’s shoes—120 million pairs, yielding $500,000 a year.

McKay lived on Arrow Street, near Harvard Square, and got to know Nathaniel Shaler, the eminent geologist, who interested him in Harvard’s scientific affairs. Shaler also advised him to invest in a Montana gold mine, a venture that in time contributed about 10 percent of McKay’s wealth. (He never visited Montana, but his last patented invention was a mining dredge.) Thanks to Shaler’s friendship, and his own hopes for broadly educated engineers, McKay left his fortune to Harvard, rather than to MIT.

But his millions did not come all at once. Because his will provided lifetime payments to various individuals, the principal was not fully Harvard’s until 1949, when all annuitants had died.

And so we turn to McKay’s women.

McKay first married in 1845. That marriage ended 22 years later in a messy divorce. To counter an allegedly libelous pamphlet, he published his own 30-page account of his wife’s desertion, his payments and gifts to her, and her mother’s meddling.

Later he married Minnie Treat, reportedly his housekeeper’s daughter. She was 21; he 57. A week before the wedding, he told a cousin that Minnie was “the prettiest and sweetest young lady the world has produced.” They moved to Florence, bought a palace, and lived the high life. Minnie bore two sons, in 1886 and 1887.

Three years later the marriage was over. McKay was publicly gracious, but his 1887 will was blunt. After providing for his wife, he gave each boy $500 per year until age 21, stiffly referring to them as “her two children.” A draft has more detail than McKay’s lawyer apparently thought appropriate: they “are not my children—but are the result of the infidelity of my wife with Arturo Fabricotti of Florence, Italy.” He had had “no sexual intercourse” with his wife for some time, and had “incontestable proof” of Fabricotti’s paternity. Minnie, in turn, alleged that her health had been injured by the strain of frequent posing so McKay could admire her beauty. She charged him with adultery and divorced him.

McKay’s will provided for Minnie, the boys, and 13 others—all women. Cousins to whom he was close got nothing, to their surprise. His wife’s mother and sister were beneficiaries; the others seem not to have been relatives. Six codicils added seven more women to the list and crossed off five. An 1897 letter to “My Dear Edith” suggests how such business was done. “You asked me,” wrote McKay, “to let you know what I could do for you, and you asked me not to write you a terribly cruel note.—I’ll try to do the one and avoid the other... You will remember when this commenced I asked you how much you would require a month. And your mother answered (you being present and not dissenting) $300. This was about the undertaking I thought I was engaging in.”

“Of his personal character all his friends speak in highest praise,” said one obituary. But in 1900 an anonymous letter, decorated with skull and crossbones, warned, “You are a disgrace to the community and they don’t propose to stand it much longer, you miserable old whore master. Why don’t you take some poor little waif and educate them—do some good in this world instead of filling your house with loose women under the noses of respectable people?”

McKay’s machines transformed the manufacture of shoes, and his grand bequest still renews engineering education at Harvard. However he may have lived, his life can be remembered with thanks for what it has made possible.

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every year, on a hot summer day, 10 Boston-area architects pile into a van together and drive around for hours looking for beauty. Lately, at least, they haven’t been finding it at Harvard.

They are members of a jury assembled annually by the Boston Society of Architects to award the Harleston Parker Medal, a prize given to the recent building judged to be “the most beautiful.” It’s not the biggest, fanciest award in the world, or even in the world of architecture (that distinction belongs to the Pritzker Prize, sometimes referred to as “the Nobel of architecture”). But the Parker Medal is a good gauge of how architects—who are both the toughest critics and greatest appreciators of one another’s work—view the aesthetic quality of what’s being built around Boston.

Since 2000, juries have recognized buildings on the Welles-
ley campus twice, at Northeastern University twice, and at MIT once. The last time a Harvard building was chosen was in 1994: the Law School’s Hauser Hall, designed by Kallman McKinnell and Wood.

The aim here is not to compare institutions in a ferocious, competitive, why hasn’t America won more gold medals in these Olympics sort of way, but rather to point out that, for much of the twentieth century, Harvard was perceived as a leader in modern architecture, so the absence of its newest buildings from the list of what architects consider “most beautiful” is surprising.

Harvard’s modern architectural vision began when Walter Gropius was brought in to lead the architecture program at the Graduate School of Design (GSD) in 1937, and arguably reached its peak with the Carpenter Center, completed in 1963, the only building Le Corbusier ever designed in the United States. The campus also includes work by Alvar Aalto, Josep Lluis Sert, James Stirling, Robert Venturi, and Ben Thompson. Architects who studied or taught at the GSD—including I.M. Pei, Henry Cobb, Paul Rudolph, Philip Johnson, Hugh Stubbins, and Frank Gehry—have had an unparalleled impact on American architecture since World War II. Ada Louise Huxtable, the former architecture critic for the New York Times, wrote: “Harvard led an architectural revolution in the 1930s...that was virtually responsible in this country for the breakthrough for modern architecture” (see “The Forgotten Modernist,” page 58.)

So why isn’t Harvard still hiring amazing architects to design amazing buildings?

In fact, the University has tried. During the past decade Harvard has given commissions to a couple of architects who are not just well-regarded but generally revered: Renzo Piano and Hans Hollein, both of whom have won the Pritzker Prize. Piano, best known for his museum work—the Pompidou Center in Paris, designed with Richard Rogers; the Menil Collection in Houston; and the recent addition to New York’s Morgan Library—was hired in 1999 to design a new museum for Harvard’s modern art collection. And Hollein, whose buildings in his native Vienna are described by design critics as masterpieces of urban contextual architecture (the adjective “jewel-like” comes up repeatedly) was asked to design a small building for the Harvard libraries.

Ultimately, neither design was built.

Meanwhile other buildings, including Robert A.M. Stern’s neo-Georgian Spangler Center for the Business School, have enjoyed smoother processes—though that building has also engendered debate about architectural taste. As George Thrush, head of the architecture program at Northeastern, says, “There are many problems a university can run into when it comes to getting things built—and Harvard usually runs into all of them.”

Peabody Terrace has always been admired by architects, but is generally...

No matter whom you talk to—architects, people within the University, Cambridge residents—three things are clear. First, there are a lot of fights about Harvard architecture. Second, many of them aren’t really about architecture at all. And third, they are won not by the group that makes the most persuasive argument, but by the group that has the most leverage in the particular situation.

The politics of site: Who gets to say what Harvard does with its land?

The defeat of the Renzo Piano art museum on the Charles River began 40 years before the museum itself was even conceived.

The parcel of land on which Harvard proposed to build the museum was adjacent to Peabody Terrace, the complex of low- and high-rise buildings constructed in the 1960s to house graduate students and their families. Designed by then GSD dean Josep Lluis Sert, Peabody Terrace has always been admired by architects (Leland Cott, an architect and a professor at the GSD, calls it “one of the world’s canonical housing projects”), but is generally disliked by those outside the profession, who find it cold and oversized. The neighbors hated it.

The Riverside neighborhood was (and still is) a patchwork of small streets and modest clapboard houses. Peabody Terrace’s three 22-story towers cast a long shadow, both literally and figuratively. For years, front-yard fences in Riverside displayed, alongside the climbing roses, signs deploiring Harvard expansion. Riverside activist Saundra Graham (who went on to become a Massachusetts state representative) famously disrupted Harvard’s 1970 Commencement with a protest against further development.

In 1999, James Cuno, then director of Harvard’s art museums, announced plans to de-
have enduring cultures,” says Kathleen Leahy Born, an architect who was a member of the council at the time. She remembers seeing pen-and-ink sketches of the Piano project. “You couldn’t tell much about it, but it was low. I thought it would have been a nice and very fitting use of the land along the river.” The neighbors were concerned about traffic, and proposed that the University scrap the museum and use the site for a public park. That proposal recalled what had happened 25 years earlier when a citizens’ group foiled plans to build the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum at the edge of Harvard Square. The I.M. Pei–designed project was eventually sited at the University of Massachusetts, Boston campus in Dorchester, and a park was built on the Harvard Square site instead, along with the Kennedy School of Government.

The neighbors’ opposition to Piano’s museum also reflected their antipathy toward the new Harvard building that was going up directly across the river in Allston—a building Globe architecture critic Robert Campbell ‘58, M.Arch. ’67, described by coin ing the term “hate-object.” One Western Avenue (see cover), a 15 story graduate-student residence designed by GSD faculty members Rodolfo Machado and Jorge Silvetti, was intended as a gateway for the University’s new Allston campus. Boston mayor Thomas Menino publicly criticized the architects’ proposal, and the building’s tower was shortened and re-oriented as a result. And when the building finally opened in 2003, Campbell commented, “In 30 years of writing about architecture, I’ve never heard so many expressions of outrage over a new building.”

Cambridge responded to the Riverside neighbors by imposing an 18-month development moratorium on Harvard’s proposed museum site. As Born explains, “A moratorium isn’t the same as a simple delay. It’s enacted with the understanding that the time will be used for a planning process.” Eventually, a compromise was announced. Harvard decided not to build a museum, and new zoning was put in place that would allow housing between three and six stories tall on the site. As a concession to the neighborhood, Harvard agreed to build approximately 40 units of affordable community housing nearby, and to donate $50,000 to neighborhood groups.

The neighbors had done what they’d been powerless to achieve 40 years before with Peabody Terrace: they had stopped Harvard from building what Harvard wanted to build. (There are rumors that some within Harvard had wanted all along to use the proposed museum site for University housing. It’s possible that external pressure from the neighbors accomplished what internal politicking could not.)

“Exhilarating,” one Riverside activist told the Globe in 2003, after the compromise was announced. But had the neighborhood really benefited? Instead of a two-story museum in a park-like setting, they ended up with taller student dorms and a small public park adjacent to heavily traveled Memorial Drive.

Born suggests that what was at stake was more than just building heights, or even the symbolic David-and-Goliath drama of the neighbors versus the University, but also two opposing ideas of what constitutes the public good. “When I became a city councilor, there was controversy about a supermarket chain wanting to build along the river. I thought the idea was ap-
to say. The reaction was, “Don’t make your institutional problems into our neighborhood crisis.” The project was finally completed in 2006—on a different site, with its program split between two buildings (it was originally conceived as a single structure) on opposite sides of a busy street, and without the underground tunnel that Cobb and Harvard wanted to connect the buildings.

Yet the University’s senior director of community relations, Mary Power, points to many successful aspects of the CGIS process. “The dialogue produced many changes that were acceptable to the University and responsive to the community,” she says. Harvard preserved the green space behind the GSD; planted 200 trees; decreased proposed building heights; and moved old wood-frame houses to the edge of the site, where they were renovated as University office space—a practice which Harvard frequently employs, both as a way to rescue old structures and to mediate between the scale of residential and University buildings.

Power also cites two current projects where the public process has been going smoothly: the northwest corner of the law school, now in site preparation; and a group of new science labs bordered by Oxford and Hammond Streets, currently under construction. The latter project includes a building by Rafael Moneo, whose work, like that of Piano and Hans Hollein, other architects admire hugely.

“The strategy we’ve found successful in working with the neighbors is a culture of collaboration with a focus on mutual benefits,” Power says. “And we try to begin the dialogue early.”

The politics of urban context: Who gets to judge whether a building fits in?

Nobody, in the recorded history of the doomed Piano art museum, ever said, “I hate the building.” The aesthetic issue hardly came up: the battle was over siting and Harvard’s perceived encroachment into the neighborhood.

In contrast, the controversy around Hans Hollein’s design for 90 Mount Auburn Street was, right from the beginning, a fight over aesthetics. The design was presented: some people loved it, some people hated it, and the question became not “Who’s right?” but “Who has the power to prevail?”

The story began in 1999, when Harvard Planning and Real Estate announced it was going to tear down a couple of old buildings on Mount Auburn Street between J. Press and the Fox Club. The retail tenants—the Harvard Provision Co., Skewers restaurant, and University Typewriter—left cordially, but they were the kind of quirky small retailers whose passing dismays Cambridge residents (and Harvard alumni) who’ve lamented the gradual loss of the “old” Harvard Square to glossy chain stores and banks.

Because one of the buildings on the site, an undistinguished clapboard triple-decker, dated from 1895, the University could not demolish it without permission from the Cambridge Historical Commission. Furthermore, the site was within a conservation district, so any new design would have to navigate a narrow Scylla-and-Charybdis set of requirements encouraging “creative modern architecture” that must also “complement and contribute to its immediate neighbors and the character of the District.”

Harvard hired Austrian architect Hans Hollein to design an office building for the University libraries. Nazneen Cooper, assistant dean for campus design and planning for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, was involved with architect selection. “The University wanted something visionary,” she says. “This was a building with no pressing criteria. The scope was small and the risk was small, so we thought, ‘Great! Let’s get someone we otherwise wouldn’t get.’”

Other architects considered were Rafael Viñoly, designer of the sleekly aggressive new Boston convention center; and Toyo Ito, whose work Cooper describes as “avant-garde, ephemeral, extremely beautiful. They just eat him up in California.” In some ways, she feels, “Hans Hollein was the most conservative of the three.”

For the Mount Auburn Street site, Hollein designed a five-story building whose façade was a sloping, undulating metal mesh screen overhanging recessed ground-floor shop fronts. He presented his design at a hearing before the historical commission in April 2001.

Lee Cott, whose firm Bruner/Cott was affiliated with Hollein on the project, remembers the evening as “awful.” Cooper calls it “embarrassing.” The commissioners grilled Hollein on basic issues of aesthetics and functionality. Why did the building curve? What was the “goal or intent” of the sloping façade? Had he thought about the snow that would collect in the screen? Did he understand what Cambridge winters were like? Hollein, visibly tired and jet-lagged, replied that he had considered all these issues, that he’d made many models and used his judgment in the design process, that he had designed buildings in the mountains of Europe where there was far more snow.

When the meeting was opened to public comment, a Cambridge resident stood up and gave a lengthy lecture and slide show about contextual architecture. “Hans Hollein is one of the world’s leading experts on contextual architecture,”
Cooper says. “He doesn’t need someone to explain to him what ‘contextual’ means.”

In a memo to the commissioners several days earlier, the commission’s executive director, Charles Sullivan, had called the building “inappropriately scaled” and “incongruous because of its aggressive indifference to its surroundings.” At the hearing, after a brief discussion, the commission voted 7-0 to reject Hollein’s design because it did not “complement and contribute to” its urban context in Harvard Square.

Contextual architecture, like beauty, can be subjective and difficult to define. At its simplest, it has to do with a response to the size, scale, and style of the surrounding environment. But as Cooper points out, that doesn’t mean just replicating what’s already there. “Is context in Harvard Square a big parking garage which has no architectural merit but is red brick? Is that context?” Sometimes, she says, an architect’s response to context might be “juxtaposition. Look at Norman Foster’s Carré d’Art in Nîmes—he’s saying, I respect the beauty of this very old architecture, so I’m going to respond to it by opposing it.”

There is also the question of a building’s symbolic and visual importance within the larger urban scene. Kathy Born says, “In a place like Harvard Square, you need buildings that fit in, but you also need punctuation. Some of Harvard’s greatest buildings are the oddballs: Memorial Hall, the Lampoon.” How does one decide whether a certain site needs an attention-getting “object” building, or a well-mannered backdrop? Some architects, for instance, believe Le Corbusier’s Carpenter Center would have worked better as a stand-alone building on a more prominent site (“Observatory Harvard’s greatest buildings are the oddballs: Memorial Hall, the Lampoon.”
Hill,” suggests one), while others feel that the building’s excitement and energy come from the way it’s jammed in between the serene red-brick Fogg and the Faculty Club.

Ultimately, arguments about context boil down to taste. For everyone who says, “Yes, it’s contextual,” there’s someone else who says, “No, it isn’t.” In the case of the Hollein building, the power to decide rested solely in the hands of the Cambridge Historical Commission, which originated in 1963 partly in response to Harvard’s modern building projects (notably the Holyoke Center, whose “harsh exterior contrasted sharply with the comfortable brick vernacular of Harvard Square,” according to the commission’s website). Again, a public regulatory process trumped Harvard’s ability to build on its own land—and again, the public process had grown up partly in reaction to what and how Harvard built in the 1960s, the University’s single most explosive period of growth.

Among architects, no one is waxing nostalgic over the good old days of arrogant, autocratic development. But they do worry about the impact all this public process has on the quality of architecture. Says one designer: “There’s now so much community review that it’s hard to build a building that hasn’t been pushed and massaged and changed.”

So how good was the Hollein building? Nazneen Cooper found it “unusual and poetic.” Lee Cott, who calls the University’s choice of Hollein “a wonderful event,” believes the design was killed too early. “It was only a schematic design. It would have changed and gotten better if the process had been allowed to continue.” Before the commission met, critic Robert Campbell had written that the design seemed to “thrust and preen,” but also hoped it would be allowed to evolve in a way that was “feisty and inventive.”

A year after the historical commission rejected Hollein’s approach, they unanimously voted to approve a design for the same site by Andrea Leers of Leers Weinzapfel Associates. In some ways, the Leers building, completed in 2006, echoes Ben Thompson’s classic 1970 Design Research building on Brattle Street, which now houses several retail stores. It is elegant and austere: a carefully detailed modern glass box. No one could fault it aesthetically. Some people might feel a pang for the funky old buildings and stores it replaced, although the ground floor provides a home for another independent retailer forced from the other side of the Square by a steep rent increase a year or two earlier: the Globe Travel Bookstore. Among architects, admiration for the Leers Weinzapfel building is widespread but muted; and the mutedness seems to come from a wishful sense of what might have been. What they miss is not so much the Hollein building but the symbolism of it, the fact that it would have been a bold, provocative piece of art. As Cott says, “It could have been the beginning of a new kind of architecture in Harvard Square.”

The politics of branding: Who gets to define a “Harvard building”?

Mention the Spangler Center to an architect familiar with Harvard, and two subjects will come up: the building, and the speech.

The Spangler, a student center at Harvard Business School (HBS), was designed by Robert A.M. Stern. Currently dean of the Yale School of Architecture, Stern was a leading architect of the Shingle-Style Revival of the 1980s and is a respected architectural historian as well as a versatile designer whose work also includes modern buildings.

Spangler Center is a neo-Georgian red-brick building with white trim. Located on one of HBS’s great lawns, rather than in a residential neighborhood, it was built without a lot of conflict, opposition, or drama. It looks like a very nice country club—which to some people might sound like praise and to others an indictment. But to Stern—and many would agree with him—the building is unmistakably Harvard.

In his speech at the Spangler’s dedication in January 2001, Stern argued that a university needs to have its own brand, just as a corporation or product does; and that in an era when competition for students and resources is fierce, Harvard’s venerable red-brick-Georgian look is an important marketing asset which the University ought to be perpetuating. In other words, the brand already exists and it ain’t broke, so don’t try to fix it. (Interestingly, Stern’s speech fudged the issue of whether he was advocating for the future of brick neo-Georgian branding at Harvard as a whole, or just at the business school. Stern is currently working on the new building at the northwest corner of the Law School—a modern Beaux-Arts-influenced design whose façade calls for pale limestone.)
to have its own brand, just as a corporation or product does.

Former Harvard president Lawrence H. Summers feels that, “With the exception of the business school, Harvard architecture has tended very much towards eclecticism, with many different styles juxtaposed in close proximity. Reasonable people differ, but I think Harvard has in general erred more on the side of variety than on the side of coherence in its architectural choices.”

The reason the branding question is so important right now is, of course, Allston. The University’s plan to build an enormous new campus on the other side of the river has everyone wondering what it’s going to look like. As Lee Cott says, “Allston is the Harvard of the future.”

University insiders acknowledge that Harvard first turned its sights on Allston in response to the increasing difficulty of getting things built in Cambridge. The grass looked greener over there (but as has been reported in this magazine, the process has already hit a Cambridge-like snag, as neighbors objected to plans for a new art museum because they disliked its height and size and had not yet reviewed an overall master plan; see “Off the Fast Track,” May-June, page 64). The scale of the Allston campus—more than 200 acres, and up to 10 million square feet of construction—ensures it will provoke the same political questions that have dogged Harvard in Cambridge: the politics of site, the politics of urban context, and the politics of branding and style. In addition to the many voices within the University, there will be neighbors, civic groups, and city agencies, all of whom will use available planning and zoning tools as leverage to achieve their own ends.

As Kathy Born points out, “Harvard is up against pressures an ordinary developer doesn’t face. First, it’s here to stay. Every project is one of a series, and the repercussions from any given project last a long time. Second, there’s a perception that it’s a wealthy liberal institution and everything it does should benefit the public good. And third, pretty much everyone in the Boston area has a connection with Harvard. They went there, or didn’t get in, or worked there, or know someone who was fired. It’s personal. There’s no one who doesn’t have an attitude about Harvard.”

George Thrush acknowledges the importance of public input and says that understanding how to navigate it is key to the success of both an architect and a university. “Architects need to treat the public process with as much attention as they treat the composition of a façade.”

Tim Love is an architect who teaches at Northeastern and has done work for Harvard; he also worked as a designer for Machado and Silvetti on the Boston Public Library’s new Allston branch, sited on land provided by Harvard—a building that is praised as often as the firm’s One Western Avenue graduate-housing project is reviled. “The best architects know how to listen, and how to synthesize,” he says. “They hear different things from different stakeholders, and then come up with a design that gets it all in. The key is to do it democratically without moving a Ouija board around the community. Nor do you want to fall in love with a design concept and then have to defend it. It’s more like surfing—you watch carefully and wait, and then pick the right wave and ride it in.”

But the Allston campus also, inescapably, raises questions of architectural style, taste, and beauty. As Robert Stern says, many university campuses have a brand: think of Yale’s Oxford-inspired Gothicism, or Stanford’s Californian Mission-inspired sandstone, or the lean steel I-beams and glass of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe’s Illinois Institute of Technology. Should there be a Harvard brand in Allston? If so, what should it be? And what should be the

The View from down the River

How do Harvard’s experiences with architecture and community process compare with those at MIT? Certainly MIT has erected some eye-catching buildings during the past few years: Frank Gehry’s exuberant Stata Center and Steven Holl’s jittery gridded Simmons Hall dormitory. Robert Simha, who for 40 years was MIT’s head of planning, points to the very different physical situations of the two schools. “One major advantage MIT had, in the past, is that it was surrounded by industrial land uses.” As a result, he says, MIT’s relations with its neighbors were “cordial but remote.”

In addition, Simha says, both MIT’s central administration and its planning officers were encouraged to become involved in Cambridge city affairs, as university representatives and as individuals. Simha once counted that he was a member of 15 different local boards and groups. “We had better eyes and ears on the street,” he says. “The institute had a human face, not just an institutional one.”

He suggests that Harvard’s decentralized organization creates difficulties when it comes to community relations. Because each Harvard school is financially self-sustaining, the University can be reluctant to reveal plans for a specific site until the money is in hand and the project is viewed as “real.” But in the meantime, he adds, information about a project usually leaks out, increasing the distrust of community groups who may be affected.

Yet the differences between the two institutions may be narrowing. Simha points out that as MIT’s residential neighbors have become more sophisticated, and as the Cambridge Historical Commission has taken more interest in the old industrial buildings around the MIT campus, MIT now faces the same kinds of constraints on university expansion that Harvard does.
interplay between the background buildings of the new campus (branded, or not) and its signature monuments?

“The Allston site isn’t hemmed in by tradition,” Cott says. “It’s not historic. What Harvard has to do is build responsibly and wonderfully.”

Cott, whose firm’s work includes the critically and popularly praised Mass MoCA, a contemporary art museum housed in the shells of a cluster of old mill buildings in North Adams, Massachusetts, dislikes the idea of a neo-Georgian—or indeed, neo-anything—campus in Allston. “We’ve got to get past thinking of architecture in terms of style. We don’t think of cars as modern or not; they are modern, they’re of this time. Once I said to a client who wanted a Colonial design, ‘I’ll make a deal with you. If you’re wearing leather underwear, I’ll design you a more traditional-looking building. But if your underwear is made of some modern material, then I’d like to ask you to keep an open mind about the design.’”

Tim Love, like Stern, acknowledges the use of architectural branding as a corporate marketing tool, citing Frank Lloyd Wright’s 1937 Johnson Wax building in Racine, Wisconsin, and Eero Saarinen’s New York TWA terminal: “Those buildings really said something about the patron. They were brand-specific.”

But Love thinks that the recent trend of universities hiring superstar architects is a different, and troubling, kind of branding. “Instead of the architect getting deep inside the culture of a university and customizing the expression of the building, as Saarinen might have done, the new model is more prêt-à-porter. By selecting architects with pre-established and media-validated styles, universities are perpetuating the architect’s own brand at the expense of the cultural insights and unique solutions that might be gained in a more open-ended and innovative design process.” Though Love agrees with Stern that branding is important, he thinks that neo-Georgian is a “cowardly” way to go about it. Like Cott, he feels that “buildings should look like what they are. The exteriors should give cues about what goes on inside.”

In a sense, this is the old form-versus-function debate. Many architects would argue that aesthetic style—whether the approach is familiar and traditionalist, or spectacularly innovative, à la Frank Gehry—should not drive design. “Gehry does it responsibly, but when it’s handled irresponsibly, as it so often is, that kind of pure formalism goes too far and becomes meaningless,” says Hubert Murray, president of the Boston Society of Architects. “It’s spiritually empty, divorced from anything human. It has no connection with people and how they feel and live.”

But it would be disingenuous to imply that function alone can design a good building. Says George Thrush: “People think modern buildings are transparent and honest about their functions. Wrong. All buildings lie. The question is, how beautiful is the lie?”

Harvard’s choice of Behnisch Architects of Stuttgart to design the first Allston buildings, a science complex, signals that whatever the overall look of the new campus, sustainability will be a priority. The Behnisch firm is renowned for expertise in “green” design. Their Genzyme corporate headquarters building, near the MIT campus, is a shimmering modern interplay of reflective surfaces and energy-efficient technology.

Great design at Harvard in the twenty-first century may result from a sensitive balancing of public process, the University’s needs, and an architect’s aesthetic vision. Inevitably some buildings will be dumbed down on their way to being built, and others will be killed outright. And still others will get built and be controversial. As Lawrence Summers observes, “It takes at least a decade before a building can be fully evaluated.” Yet at the same time, he says, “The buildings that the University erects are its longest-lived investments. Nothing is more important than getting architectural choices right.”

Nazneen Cooper speaks of the idea of architecture as legacy. “We create a campus. It tells a story. Edmund Burke says that buildings aren’t just buildings—they are memories. One root of the word ‘architecture’ is ‘tectonic.’ It’s the making of an artifact: something that can tell us about cultures, civilizations, and time. The question is always: What do we want to leave behind?”

Joan Wickersham’s column “The Lurker” is a regular feature in ArchitectureBoston magazine. Her memoir, The Suicide Index, will be published by Harcourt next year.
MOVING ON: To accommodate Harvard Law School’s large new building, an existing garage and dormitory had to be razed. But three historic wooden buildings were saved, making a gingerly trip up the closed Massachusetts Avenue on the weekend of June 23-25—their weight carefully distributed to avoid collapsing the Red Line subway tunnel underneath. For more on summer campus construction, see page 62.
On Monday morning, July 2, those members of the Harvard community who weren’t taking a pre-holiday vacation were greeted by an e-mailed “Invitation from President Faust.”

“I sit here in my new office in Massachusetts Hall, amid boxes to be unpacked, letters to be answered, and books to be shelved,” wrote Drew Faust in her capacity (officially, for 32 hours) as University president. “But the computer works just fine, and so I take this moment to write. My message, for now, is very simple. I look forward to our future adventures together with immense anticipation. I can imagine no higher calling than doing all I can to serve this great university—and helping it, in turn, to serve the world. And I feel singularly fortunate to have the opportunity to do so in concert with all of you—the faculty, students, staff, and others without whom there could be no Harvard.

“Each of us brings something different, and something significant, to our shared enterprise,” she continued. “We teach, we study, we discover, we create, we make sure the lights go on and the bills get paid. We are individual members of a collective whose opportunity to contribute to the future of learning, and the improvement of the human condition, knows few equals and few bounds…”

After thanking all, in advance, “for all that I know we will undertake together,” the president then invited the entire community to her figurative new home, for “some summertime refreshments and for leisurely conversation”—an afternoon ice-cream social in Harvard Yard.

That welcoming, outward gesture was accompanied by plenty of internal work during the president’s first weeks. Faust was photographed during her first day in the office conferring with Christopher M. Gordon, chief operating officer of the Allston Development Group, on plans for the new campus. She named an acting vice president for alumni affairs and development (see page 66), and on July 11 a new Harvard Medical School (HMS) dean, one of her most important academic appointments (opposite).

Shortly thereafter, the president and the deans convened their first retreat, discussing how to conduct academic planning within each school and among them—and so to proceed on University priorities involving growth in the sci-
ences, expansion in Allston, and, ultimately, a capital campaign to pay for everything. A significant guest was Lawrence University Professor Michael E. Porter, of Harvard Business School, perhaps today’s foremost scholar of strategy for businesses and nonprofit organizations alike. As medical-school dean Jeffrey S. Flier later told HMS colleagues, on July 16, Porter had helped the deans think about clarifying their schools’ goals and strategies, measuring performance, and evaluating relative positions—all suggestive of a realistic and tough-minded approach as Harvard makes its case to friends for support now and in the future.

Specifying the elements of that future will take time: Faust’s team of deans and senior administrators is still being assembled. But the outlines and guiding principles (some sketched in “A Scholar in the House,” July-August, page 24) will become clearer soon, beginning with her remarks this fall to the entering College freshmen and their parents on September 9, at the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences’ inaugural celebration on September 20 (see page 65), and in her own installation address in Tercentenary Theatre on October 12.

Dr. Dean

JEFFREY S. FLIER, M.D., becomes dean of Harvard Medical School (HMS) on September 1; President Drew Faust announced his appointment on July 11. Flier, the Reisman professor of medicine, is an expert on the molecular mechanisms involved in the production and use of insulin (fundamental to understanding diabetes) and on obesity. He succeeds neuroscientist Joseph B. Martin, who stepped down at the end of the academic year, on June 30, after a decade of service (see “Medicine Man,” January-February, page 64). In the interval, Barbara J. McNeil, M.D. ’66, Ph.D. ’72, Watts professor of health care policy and professor of radiology, served as acting dean at Faust’s request; a faculty member since 1983, McNeil founded and chairs the department of health care policy.

Faust called Flier, who joined the Harvard Medical community in 1978 (after earning his M.D. from Mount Sinai, he joined the faculty in 1983), a “visionary, a leader, and a colleague.” To meet the medicine school’s “rigorous, research-intensive standards of excellence” Faust needed a dean who had “experience leading a world-class medical school.” Flier, who was the unanimous choice of Faust’s search committee, had served on the faculties of both the Sloan-Kettering Institute for Cancer Research and the Institute of Molecular Biology and as an associate director of the National Institute of Mental Health. His appointment won the praise of one of Faust’s predecessors, effective dean John H. Wheeless III, who called him a “distinguished neuroscientist and leader, who has already demonstrated his ability to inspire and lead.”

As a psychologist, Howard Gardner is best known for his theory of multiple intelligences, first propounded in 1983 in one of his two dozen books, Frames of Mind. Intelligence, he posits, isn’t a single faculty that can be measured with a standard IQ test. Instead, humans have several forms of this commodity, some of which show up in nonacademic pursuits—music-making, for instance. Gardner is also a founder and now senior director of the educational think tank Project Zero. The Hobbs professor of cognition and education at the Graduate School of Education, he has made signal contributions to the study of child development, leadership, creativity, and fulfilling work. Now, in the role of public intellectual, he is speaking out on policy matters. His newest book, Five Minds for the Future, is prescriptive. We should cultivate five ways of thinking—disciplinary, synthesizing, creating, respectful, and ethical minds—for personal success and to make the world a world one wants to live in. In the magazine Foreign Policy, he argued in the spring for upper limits on the amount of income an American should be allowed to keep and the amount of wealth that can be passed on to beneficiaries ($4 million a year and $200 million, respectively). “It makes sense to be moderate politically only if there are two sides willing to engage,” he says. “The right wing isn’t just taking over the country, it’s shanghaiing all our values. If there’s a Republican administration after the next election, I would join in efforts for some sort of secession. It’s not the same country anymore.”
Scaffolding and Science

Scenes from the summer construction season on campus

Byerly Hall (below) is known to tens of thousands of would-be Harvard College students as the home of undergraduate admissions. No longer. Those offices having been relocated, the building is undergoing stem-to-stern renovation, from which it will emerge in the fall of 2008 as offices and meeting space for the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study’s fellows, making Radcliffe Yard a compact, unified space for interdisciplinary research.

The Laboratory for Integrated Science and Engineering (at the center, above), one of two new, major Faculty of Arts and Sciences laboratory buildings, neared completion. Below the new courtyard, once a capacious hole (see the September-October 2005 issue, page 54), lie the LISE clean rooms and sensitive equipment (shown at right).
The cavernous Malkin Athletic Center (below)—home to several sports teams, a swimming pool, and fitness facilities—is the most heavily used venue for exercise on the Cambridge side of campus. It is being refitted with new systems, a new gym floor, reconfigured stairways, and a visitor-friendly lounge. Workers filled the central court with a forest of scaffolding.
School of Medicine in New York City in 1972, training in internal medicine at Mount Sinai, and serving as a clinical associate at the National Institutes of Health for four years), “an outstanding academic leader, scientist, and medical educator.” She underscored the intersection of his “collaborative instincts” and his combination of “exceptional intelligence with an admirable ability to bring people together around issues of academic and institutional importance.” And Faust also cited Flier’s attempts to “strengthen cooperative efforts within the broader Harvard medical community [and] to pursue important new opportunities for fruitful connections with other parts of the University.”

Even more than the leaders of other Harvard schools, the HMS dean requires that blend of experience and attributes. The school educates future physicians and biomedical researchers; its faculty members do science of fundamental importance; and in pursuit of those missions, it is tightly interwoven with the affiliated hospitals, which of course face not only the financial challenges common throughout the healthcare system, but also the costs to academic medical centers of managing both clinical training and large applied research enterprises. Contemporary research raises the stakes still further, as HMS and hospital-based faculty members apply new tools—genomics, advanced imaging technologies, systems biology (the costs of which exceed what any individual laboratory can support)—and as multiple disciplines are brought to bear, for example, on the range of cancers. The multiyear leveling-off of the budget of the National Institutes of Health (the principal source of research funds) exacerbates competition for support just as the costs of biomedical science have risen significantly.

Flier has exposure to all these challenges. He has run a large research operation (in remarks to the HMS community on July 16, he cited the past and current 100-plus associates in his laboratory). He has been based at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, which ranks in the top tier of affiliated hospitals in providing clinical education for HMS M.D. candidates, and during the past five years he has served as both chief academic officer and Harvard faculty dean for academic pro-

The Calendar, Changed

Harvard’s anomalous academic calendar will more closely resemble those of other institutions—starting just after Labor Day and ending with Commencement in late May—beginning in the 2009-2010 school year. The new order was unveiled on June 6, just before this year’s Commencement, when President Derek Bok announced that the University’s Governing Boards had just approved his recommendation. Bok solicited community opinion on the proposal in early May, and signaled in his annual report (see “Developing Deans, Calendar Consensus,” July-August, page 60, and associated articles) that such decisions were properly the central administration’s to make on the University’s behalf.

The calendar Bok sketched would:

- have each school begin the fall semester in early September, typically right after Labor Day;
- conclude the term, and examinations, in December;
- begin the second semester in some coordinated fashion, during a period from mid to late January;
- coordinate Thanksgiving and spring breaks; and
- bring the year to a close at Commencement by the end of May.

Schools such as the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS), which has discussed a January “J” term for experimental learning experiences (perhaps one intensive, ungraded class), would be free to decide what use to make of the period after New Year’s and before the beginning of the second semester.

The rationale for adopting this scheme University-wide is principally academic. As matters stand now, with the professional schools’ and FAS’s schedules as much as a couple of weeks out of kilter, students are effectively precluded from cross-registering for classes elsewhere at Harvard, and faculty members who want to teach in a different school—say, to offer a College freshman seminar—face unneeded obstacles in doing so. The earlier end to the academic year would make it easier for undergraduates to find summer jobs, internships, and opportunities for study or service abroad. And undergraduates overwhelmingly expressed their preference for exams before the winter holiday, giving them time to relax without the pressure of then gearing up for tests after New Year’s (and after an extended reading period that could result in some finals falling as much as five weeks after a last class meeting).

The recommendations adopted, and the rationale supporting them, had been largely spelled out in 2004 by a committee chaired by Pforzheimer University Professor Sidney Verba. Implementation was postponed during the comprehensive review of the undergraduate curriculum then being pursued by FAS. With the new curriculum now fully legislated (although not yet implemented), and with the academic and other advantages available from a coordinated calendar outweighing objections to the change, Bok proceeded. Two years hence, freshmen will report to Cambridge by late August, and Commencement will lure parents and reunion-bound alumni back to campus the following May—when the local flowering shrubs are still putting on a show that has typically faded by the time of the June festivities.
grams there. One of his early priorities will be to continue implementing HMS’s new course of study, which aims to improve medical education by having students stay with patients for an extended period, and by immersing them more deeply in modern, complex hospitals and other healthcare settings, rather than rotating them from place to place too rapidly (see “The Pulse of a New Medical Curriculum,” September-October 2006, page 64).

Beth Israel was hardest hit among the University’s principal affiliates when academic medical centers nationwide had financial problems (or in its case, crises) earlier in the decade; Paul F. Levy, then HMS executive dean for administration, moved over to the hospital as president and chief executive officer in January 2002 to perform a radical financial restructuring that by all accounts saved the institution—so Flier has some immediate sense of the affiliates’ problems and needs. Levy appointed Flier as chief academic officer during a time when the hospital’s teaching mission was severely tested.

Finally, Flier was also a member of the University Planning Committee for Science and Engineering, in which Provost Steven E. Hyman brought together Harvard schools and affiliated hospitals to investigate how to organize and fund interdisciplinary research and teaching. He then became a founding member of the implementing body for those recommendations, the Harvard University Science and Engineering Committee. That work helped acquaint Flier and other scientific leaders from across the University and beyond with each other and with the most exciting opportunities for collaborative research (see “For Science and Engineering, New Life,” March-April, page 65). The committee’s initial concrete fruits are the first multischool academic department (of developmental and regenerative biology, a formal home for research, faculty appointments, and teaching in stem-cell science and related fields), a $50-million commitment from the Corporation for start-up support, and a very large scientific research facility now in advanced stages of planning as the first new building to be constructed as part of the Allston campus.

Not are such issues all external to HMS, at the boundaries among schools and hospitals. As President Derek Bok pointed out in his report to the community published in June, there are significant differences of opinion within HMS about how best to conduct biomedical research and teaching in the future. Bok described how the school “has built a series of highly distinguished departments of preclinical science of which the University can be justly proud,” but added that “few of the preclinical scientists teach medical students and...many of them do research that is more closely related to the work of scientists in Cambridge than it is to medicine or human health. Only recently, after the number of preclinical faculty had grown to more than 100 scientists, did the question of their relationship to the rest of the Medical School become clearly visible when all of the preclinical chairs announced a desire to move en masse to Allston.” No such massive relocation of staff from HMS and the Faculty of Arts and Sciences appears in the offing, but the faculty debate suggests just how significantly biomedical research may change.

In sizing up the dean’s responsibilities and strengths at the July 16 HMS reception, Faust, an historian, recalled President Charles William Eliot’s centennial remarks to the school in 1883. She quoted him as saying that the school had “no thought of resting contented with its present condition,” and that medicine itself was a “fresh and boundless field of unimaginable fertility.” Accordingly, Eliot noted, “a medical school must always be expecting new wonders.”

She also cited another speaker that day, Oliver Wendell Holmes, who said of an eminent HMS professor that he was “a man who forgot himself in his care for others and his love for his profession”—a description she said suited Flier perfectly.

In his own remarks—which included thanks to Beth Israel’s Levy (for his example of how to “transform an institution” through the force of character and insight), and to his own mother and daughters—Flier revealed an energetic and open style, as well as a willingness not to take himself too seriously. He had forgotten to acknowledge his wife, Dr. Eleftheria (Terry) Maratos-Flier, associate professor of medicine, who is also a research colleague, he told the crowd. Therefore, anyone who thought their new dean would not make mistakes had just seen a definitive counter-example—a “whopper,” which he moved promptly to remedy with warmth and grace.

**Engineering Renewed**

Celebrating its own nifty bit of reengineering, the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS), elevated from the status of a division of the same name, will unveil its new identity and mission publicly on Thursday, September 20. The “celebration of the past, present, and future,” and official launch of Harvard’s newest school—ratified in February by the Corporation—has been dubbed “Engineering a Renaissance.” Through presentations by Dean Venkatesh Narayanamurti, President Drew Faust, prominent outside speakers, and faculty members, the event aims to focus on new opportunities to enhance education, advance research, and better society.

Engineering and applied sciences are not new disciplines at Harvard. The Lawrence Scientific School, founded in 1847, was incorporated into the University in 1906 and emerged as the Division of Engineering and Applied Sciences in 1946. The division has been embedded within the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS), which will continue to admit both the undergraduates (through the College) and Graduate School of Arts
and Sciences applicants who study in the school. But its new status underscores SEAS’s autonomy in finances, research administration, and other operational matters, and confers a stronger identity for attracting faculty and students.

A booklet prepared for the September 20 gala outlines several of the school’s ambitions. In education, SEAS aims to maintain the virtues of being a part of a liberal-arts institution by offering a new foundational course for all undergraduates, and perhaps a new concentration covering the fundamentals of science and engineering and their connection to society. For concentrators, the school emphasizes increasingly experiential learning—using new teaching laboratories—and interdisciplinary knowledge. The latter is grounded both in SEAS’s nondepartmental structure and in the connections its faculty members maintain to other departments: one-third of its professors hold joint appointments.

Recent and planned growth in the faculty ranks underpins SEAS’s research and teaching goals. During Narayananmurti’s deanship, begun in 1998, SEAS has renewed its faculty ranks, currently numbering 69 people, with more than 40 new members, including about 20 additional positions. In the coming decade, the school hopes to grow another 50 percent, bringing its faculty to around 100 members, with significant expansion in fields related to biomedical and chemical engineering (see charts), and related growth in computing, nanotechnology, and bioengineering infrastructure.

Enduring Deans, Acting Executives
Alan A. Altshuler, Harvard Graduate School of Design dean since early 2005, has agreed to continue to serve during the fall semester at the request of President Drew Faust; he had intended to step down at the end of the academic year, in June. Robert Cashion, director of development for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS), began serving as acting vice president for alumni affairs and development on July 2, succeeding Donella Rapier, whose departure was announced during the winter (see “Fast Start,” May-June, page 54). Faust is conducting searches for both positions. Graduate School of Arts and Sciences dean Theda Skocpol, who had planned to depart in June, has also agreed to serve until her successor is named.

Prime Mathematicians
The Shaw Prize Foundation, Hong Kong, has awarded its $1-million Shaw Prize in Mathematical Sciences for 2007 to Robert P. Langlands, of the Institute for Advanced Study, and Smith professor of mathematics Richard L. Taylor. The two were cited for jointly “initiating and developing a grand unifying vision of mathematics that connects prime numbers with symmetry.”

Departing Professorial Pair
Freed professor of economics Caroline (Minter) Hoxby (a leading researcher on educational policy, also honored for teaching excellence as a Harvard College Professor) and her husband, Blair G. Hoxby, associate professor of history and literature (both members of the College class of 1988, and then Rhodes Scholars together), have accepted tenure offers from Stanford. Their move highlighted problems facing academic couples (Blair Hoxby taught for years at Yale; the couple had two homes and long commutes) and also represented a high-profile loss for the economics department, where Caroline Hoxby was one of only three tenured women.
That planned growth would support continued education in SEAS’s degree programs (applied mathematics, computer science, and the engineering sciences subfields: biomedical engineering, electrical engineering, engineering physics, environmental sciences, and mechanical and materials sciences), as well as further work in related areas of public policy. Among the areas identified for focused research are surface chemistry, quantum computation, biologically inspired engineering, nanotechnology, and energy and environmental technologies.

Those aspirations will be given tangible form by the completion and occupancy of FAS’s towering Laboratory for Integrated Science and Engineering, linking the historical SEAS campus complex centered in Pierce Hall and its associated buildings with the McKay Laboratory. Those attending the September 20 events will be able to tour the result before or after the welcome and dedication speeches by Narayanamurti and Faust, on the Pierce lawn at 2:00.

Other public addresses will be made by Charles M. Vest, MIT president emeritus and now president of the National Academy of Engineering (and a newly minted recipient of the National Medal of Science in technology); Harvey V. Fineberg, former Harvard provost and now president of the Institute of Medicine; Susan Graham, Chen distinguished professor of electrical engineering and computer science at Berkeley and past president of the Board of Overseers; and Thomas E. Everhart, president emeritus of California Institute of Technology, who was also an Overseer. An afternoon panel will be moderated by FAS dean Michael D. Smith, who is McKay professor of computer science and electrical engineering in SEAS. For a detailed schedule on their presentations and the panel discussions on engineering education, engineering research, and engineering in the wider world, visit www.seas.harvard.edu/highlights-celebrations.html.

Yesterday’s News

From the pages of the Harvard Alumni Bulletin and Harvard Magazine

1912. Larz Anderson ’88 proposes to build a new bridge across the Charles River to replace the inadequate wooden structure connecting Cambridge and Brighton. Meanwhile, Mass. Ave. is being paved with wooden blocks from Quincy Square to Harvard Square to reduce the noise of traffic.

1927. Play-by-play accounts of all Harvard football games will be transmitted by the Westinghouse station of New England (WBZ-WBZA), thanks to a special line running from the press stands on the field to the transmitter in Boston.

1937. The University announces that it will begin providing pensions and group life insurance for regular members of its nonteaching staff, as it does already for its teaching staff.

1942. The first class of U.S. Army chaplains—“Sky Pilots”—to be housed at Harvard graduates. The program aims to turn out 450 chaplains a month.

1957. Harvard Student Agencies is founded “to assist financially needy students... by...helping to organize student-conducted business enterprises....”

The admissions committee’s newsletter notes the continuing decline in the proportion of public-school boys entering the College: they will make up exactly 50 percent of the incoming freshman class.

1962. As Harvard’s football and soccer teams go down to defeat across the Charles, members of GUTS, the College’s Gargoyle Undergraduate Tiddlywinks Society, squidge and sqop their way to a 23-12 victory over Holy Cross to win first place in NUTS, the National Undergraduate Tiddlywinks Society. (The victors later appear on I’ve Got a Secret and stump the panel.)

1972. As an economy measure, the University is considering leasing space in Holyoke Center to professional firms.

1987. “Ambitious plans are afoot to wire the University for the information age.” The Corporation has been asked to authorize a new Harvard network that will introduce, among other things, “state-of-the-art telephone service.”
Scholarly Sale

The $50-million challenge fund established by the University Development Office in February 2006 to stimulate the endowment of professorships has, through early July, yielded 16 endowed professorships and 6 faculty-development funds—about double the usual level of such support. Beyond that “heartening” absolute result, Robert Cashion, acting vice president for alumni affairs and development, said the challenge fund has benefited many parts of the University, as its founders intended.

Under the terms of the challenge, donors who give $3 million toward an endowed chair can have that sum matched with $1 million from the fund, meeting the price for naming a Harvard professorship. Donors who give $1.5 million toward a faculty-development fund (which schools can use for junior-faculty salaries, research support, the expense of fitting up a laboratory, graduate-student support, or other essentials of maintaining a faculty position) can qualify for $500,000 of matching money. The hope, over time, was to encourage endowing as many as 40 new professorships and perhaps half that many development funds; the experience so far is tracking that projection.

Among the chairs funded, according to Cashion and Sarah Clark, deputy director of the University Development Office, are a professorship in South Asian studies, a joint appointment in child health and development at the schools of education and of public health, and a neuroscience chair at Harvard Medical School. Development officers at the schools are “pleased,” Cashion said, because the challenge fund represents “an enormous opportunity to talk to their donors about the importance of the faculty and the teaching and research they undertake” as a principal University priority.

Named financial-aid funds do not require such large gifts, Cashion said, and of course many supporters are already attracted to making a Harvard education more accessible to qualified students. By focusing attention on professorships, he said, the challenge fund provides another way to talk about “investment in the human capital of the University—pairing the best faculty and the best students.”

The timing and scope of the fund may have proved especially important. It was announced five days before the resignation of President Lawrence H. Summers—the culmination of a period of turmoil that has delayed Harvard’s next capital campaign. The budget of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) has already fallen into the red, in large part because of the aggressive expansion of its professorial ranks (long a strategic goal that is critical to teaching and to growth in the sciences and engineering), making it more urgent to attract support for those new positions. Although Harvard Business School has just completed a $600-million campaign, and Harvard Law School is engaged in a slightly smaller drive, most of the other schools have needs and ambitions similar to FAS’s. The challenge fund, for which all schools except business and law are eligible, is thus an important focus for fundraising while President Drew Faust assembles her new team of deans and vice presidents and makes broader capital-campaign plans.

Among the commitments made so far are 10 professorships in FAS, one in divinity, two each in education and medicine, and the joint education-public health chair. Clark said the Kennedy School of Government and the Graduate School of Government and the Graduate School of

**Arsenic and Old Lead**

The Arnold Arboretum anticipated closing a deal last December to sell the Case Estates, its 62.5-acre property (complete with barn and two other structures) in Weston, Massachusetts, to the town of Weston for $22.5 million. But first the town “decided they needed to test some soils,” says Robert E. Cook, Arnold professor and director of the arboretum. “What they discovered is that there are significant concentrations of lead and arsenic in the soils. It was farmland—in particular, orchards—before it was given to Harvard in 1946. Between 1900 and about 1940, the prevailing pesticide in use was lead arsenate, particularly in orchards.” Its staying power is proven by its existence in the soils today.

The town put off the closing. Harvard conducted a detailed assessment of the location and severity of contamination. In a draft decontamination plan submitted to the town’s Board of Selectmen in July, the arboretum proposes to remove about 8,500 cubic yards (13,600 tons) of contaminated soil and replace it with clean fill. The town and Harvard had until August 31 to decide whether the plan is acceptable. “It is our hopeful expectation,” selectman Michael H. Harrity was reported early in the month as saying, “that they will clean up the site appropriately, and that we will buy a clean site when it’s done.”

The plan’s intent is to make the now-contaminated land suitable for unrestricted future use, including making safe seven single-family house lots that the town hopes to sell, along with three others, to recoup some of the purchase cost of the entire parcel. The rest of the land, about half the property, would be retained as open space for public use. It is safe to walk on.

The contaminated soil would be hauled to an out-of-state treatment facility in covered trucks. Vehicles leaving the site would be hosed down with water to prevent bad soil in tire treads from moving elsewhere. The work would take two to three months to complete.

The arboretum decided to sell the Case Estates, says Cook, because “we no longer had a use for it with respect to our mission, and an internal review at Harvard revealed no other use at the University. As an asset, we felt it would perform better as money than as land. Also, the town has long indicated a desire to purchase it.”

The arboretum priced the property at its value for residential development, and then gave the town first refusal. The cost of the cleanup has yet to be determined, but Cook says it will be very substantial: “It means a lot less money for the arboretum than the $22.5 million we had anticipated.”
College Chief Concludes Service

Harvard College dean Benedict H. Gross, Leverett professor of mathematics, left his decanal post on August 31. He was appointed dean for undergraduate education in 2002, and then dean of the College in mid 2003, when the positions were combined, ostensibly to unify the oversight of students’ academic, extracurricular, and residential life as the review of the undergraduate curriculum began. With the new course framework enacted (see “College Curriculum Change Completed,” July-August, page 64), and implementation set to begin, Gross fulfilled his expressed wish to limit his administrative duties to five years. Along with changes in academic life (encouraging study abroad, deferred concentration choice, enhanced advising, and other measures, plus the new general-education program), Gross’s tenure saw significant investment in facilities: a Lamont Library café, the new pub in Memorial Hall’s basement, new dance facilities, the renovation of Hilles Library to make offices for student organizations, the inflatable roof over the Harvard Stadium field, and the reconstruction of the Hasty Pudding building as the New College Theatre. (Even as he acknowledged his faculty and staff colleagues in the June 20 statement announcing his departure, he cited students as the College’s “greatest strength.”) Gross said his successor—to be chosen by Faculty of Arts and Sciences dean Michael D. Smith—faces an agenda ranging from the curricular changes to a pending renovation of the undergraduate River Houses. The new College dean will also need to appoint several new House masters. All but one of the incumbents were recruited by Gross’s predecessor, McKay professor of computer science Harry R. Lewis (and Quincy House master Robert P. Kirshner, Cloewes professor of science, and his wife, Jayne Loader, the co-master, resigned August 1).

Hedge-fund Hemorrhage

Sowood Capital Management, a hedge fund founded in 2004 by Jeffrey B. Larson, formerly a top-ranked foreign-equity portfolio manager at Harvard Management Company (HMC), collapsed during the last weekend in July and sold its assets at distressed prices when it could no longer meet the demands of lenders who had supported its highly leveraged bond portfolios. Consistent with past practice, HMC and other University officials declined comment on the situation. Reported estimates of Harvard’s losses in Sowood funds (HMC invested assets with it and other investment-management firms founded by other former employees) ranged as high as $350 million—perhaps 1 percent of the endowment’s value. Endowment returns for the fiscal year that ended on June 30 are expected to be reported in late August, and further clarification about Sowood may be forthcoming then (visit www.harvardmagazine.com for updates). Sowood’s assets were sold to a hedge-fund complex, the Citadel Investment Group, founded and run by Kenneth C. Griffin ’89.

Curriculum Chief

Wolfson professor of Jewish Studies Jay M. Harris, master of Cabot House, will chair the new general-education standing committee of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS). Harris, who chairs the department of Near Eastern languages and civilizations and teaches a Moral Reasoning course in the Core curriculum, has been heavily involved in the College’s efforts to revise the undergraduate curriculum during the past four years. He and his faculty and student committee colleagues, to be appointed by FAS dean Michael D. Smith, must implement the eight-course successor to the Core: encouraging professors to create new interdisciplinary courses, and determining which departmental classes will count for general-education credit.

Biomedical Gold Rush

As Harvard proceeds toward construction of its first life-sciences complex in

Brevia

HARVARD COLLEGE

Dean Benedict H. Gross completed his five-year tenure, as work concluded on the New College Theatre and other enhanced student facilities.

Curriculum Chief

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Biomedical Gold Rush

As Harvard proceeds toward construction of its first life-sciences complex in
Allston, planned for occupancy at the end of the decade (see “An Allston Metamorphosis?” November-December 2006, page 66), with substantial investments in biomedical research and engineering to follow, other institutions are pursuing similar goals at a hectic pace. In June alone, Cornell’s Weill Medical College announced a $400-million gift from three donors to build research centers and to recruit scientists, plus a $50 million gift to the university for genomics and associated research. The University of California, San Francisco, a medical-research and training institution, received a $150-million gift for clinical work on cancer and therapies. The University of Michigan received a $50-million gift to support clinical care, research, and education at its new cardiovascular center. And Yale acquired a 136-acre facility from Bayer HealthCare in the communities of West Haven and Orange, reportedly for about $100 million; it includes 550,000 square feet of laboratory space (a significant fraction of the size of Harvard’s proposed Allston building) plus other structures, thus securing an immediate, large expansion of its medical-research capacity at a fraction of new construction costs.

**Sudan Stocks**

The Corporation Committee on Shareholder Responsibility announced on June 29 that it would not require the University to divest indirect investments (for example, pools of securities in exchange-traded funds and mutual funds) that hold stakes in companies whose shares Harvard Management Company cannot own outright. The committee had previously directed that shares of Sinopec and PetroChina, whose oil activities in Sudan are seen as helping to underwrite the conflict in Darfur, be divested from University portfolios; in June, it proscribed direct investment in a third enterprise, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, which is under the control of the government of India. The committee also instructed that third-party fund managers be advised of Harvard’s direct divestment decisions. For the full report, see www.news.harvard.edu/gazette/2007/07.19/99-ccsr.html.

**Nota Bene**

Faculty diversity developments. The 2007 report of the senior vice provost for faculty development and diversity (see www.faculty.harvard.edu) describes the results of a survey revealing that women faculty members are “significantly less satisfied than men” with Harvard overall and their specific school, and that junior-level faculty are much less likely than tenured professors to feel they have a voice in departmental decisions. While the results are being analyzed further, the office’s priorities for this academic year include new programs and policies on recruiting and retaining dual-career families; child care; and mentoring for junior faculty members.

**Patent portfolio.** The University has licensed a portfolio of more than 50 patents for nanotechnology to Nano-Terra Inc., a company cofounded by Flowers University Professor George M. Whitesides, in whose laboratory the discoveries were made. The company will explore commercial applications of the technology with business and government partners; Harvard will receive royalties and holds an equity interest in the company. Other patents, for discoveries with life-sciences or biology applications, were previously licensed to other established and start-up companies affiliated with Whitesides.

**Miscellany.** Effective November 1, Rosenfield professor of obstetrics, gynecology, and reproductive biology Benjamin P. Sachs, chairman of the department at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, will become senior vice president and dean of Tulane University School of Medicine, one of many New Orleans institutions damaged by Hurricane Katrina. “[I]t will be a real privilege to help lead the recovery,” Sachs stated....Associate provost for arts and culture Sean T. Buffington ’91 has been named president and CEO of the University of the Arts, a 2,300-student visual and performing arts institution in Philadelphia. Buffington had led the planning for arts and cultural facilities in Allston, and oversaw the American Repertory Theatre, Harvard University Art Museums, and Villa I Tatti.
Design are both engaged in discussions to support new professorships using the challenge fund. The faculty-development funds have been created in FAS (three), public health (two), and divinity (one).

Major supporters of the challenge fund include Charles J. Egan Jr. ’54 and Mary Bowersox Egan ’55 and the Stanley H. Durwood Foundation; Alphonse Fletcher Jr. ’87; J. Christopher Flowers ’79 and Mary H. White; University treasurer James F. Rothenberg ’68, M.B.A. ’70, and Anne Fitzpatrick Rothenberg; Brian D. Young ’76 and Anne T. Young; and an anonymous donor. At least three of these supporters had previously seen first-hand the value of endowing a professorship.

Fletcher created a University Professorship now held by African-American studies scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr. Flowers and White created a University Professorship named in honor of his parents, now held by chemist George M. Whitesides. And the Rothenbergs had created two humanities chairs.

Reporting to the Harvard Alumni Association at Commencement on June 7, in his capacity as Treasurer of the University, Rothenberg noted in passing that the professorship challenge was proving successful. He did not dwell on the details, nor hint of his personal involvement. But no doubt his long career in finance (he is president of Capital Research and Management, adviser to the enormous American Funds group of mutual funds) gave him an appreciation of this new demonstration that even when it comes to a $4-million professorship, people love a bargain.

THE UNDERGRADUATE

Homes Away from Homes

by Emma Lind ’07

Though I have two years left before I bid farewell to Harvard, I stayed through Commencement this past June to write for the Crimson and volunteer during reunion events. The day after graduation, I was frenetically removing my life from the fifth-floor room in Dunster House where I had lived during the two weeks after exams. The weather was sweltering, my parents had just driven in from Illinois, and I was seriously contemplating throwing all of my clothes into garbage bags and chucking them out the window when my computer chimed. A desperate e-mail had popped into my inbox: “Tour guide needed at 3 pm for alumni in town for their 30th reunion.” Hastily I replied, “Sure, I got it covered.”

I find showing visitors around Harvard a rewarding and often hilarious experience. From the moment a tourist’s hand shoots up to demand, “Where’s Cape Cod?” in the middle of my spiel, to my all-time favorite—“How many squirrels are there at Harvard?”—the hour I spend with strangers makes me look at my school with fresh eyes.

As corny as it sounds, I love giving tours because I love being someone’s “face” of Harvard: a formerly intimidating establishment that is now my home. When I give tours, I talk about the school the way a proud mother might talk about a slightly misguided but well-intentioned child. Because I give tours through Harvard’s information office, not through the admissions office, my usual audiences are tourists, not prospective students. Thus, my chief responsibility is not to “sell” the school, but to give a well-rounded account of its history and modern idiosyncrasies.

I chattered on and on to the thirtieth reunioners about what it was like to go to Harvard in the twenty-first century. I talked about the birth (and impending death) of the Core curriculum and elaborated on the socioeconomic diversity fostered by the Harvard Financial Aid Initiative. When they asked how the resignation of former President Lawrence H. Summers was received on campus, I spoke about the pro-Larry protest I witnessed outside Mass. Hall, articulated my frustration with the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and showed them the new Harvard College Women’s Center in the basement of Canaday. We had a long talk about how the Internet has shaped modern college life, and they were surprised when I told them that their own high-school kids probably had accounts on Facebook.com.

I felt empowered merely by my status as a 20-year-old College student. As I explained how the housing system had changed radically since they had left Harvard, I joked about the former stereotypes each undergraduate House and the holdovers from that era that continue today.

Yet even though I was feeling rather pleased with how well-informed I was, I realized that, despite being able to use the word “blockmate” with relative ease and speak about randomization, I wasn’t really any more knowledgeable than the alumni I escorted. Though I am well versed in speaking about Harvard—my home today—so were they 30 years ago. And by the time I come back for my thirtieth—or by the time their youngest kids are filling out a FAFSA and a common app (the ubiquitous financial-aid and admissions forms required for Harvard applications)—I will be long past the era when I can call Harvard home.

All college students have that moment that surprises them and demoralizes their parents: the moment when they first refer to going back to school as “going home.” I remember my mother looking at me like a wounded animal. “How could you call that place home?”
she asked. Yet Harvard’s idiosyncrasies—including my double bedroom (the size of a moderately generous closet), the cockroach that jovially followed me into my common room one night this year, and beef fajita fettuccini (that culturally ambiguous culinary experience served every so often in the dining hall)—have somehow come together to make this place feel comfortable and natural. Despite all of the patently un-homey things about Harvard, it is where I live. In the two years since I left Illinois, Harvard has shifted from being my school to being my home away from home.

This summer, I am working in New York City at a finance magazine. I research and write about billionaires, people who have homes across the country and around the world. Some of these people jet from house to house, with or without their families. My research has caused me to wonder: If all the money in the world can buy you a penthouse in Manhattan, a ranch in Colorado, and a beachfront villa in Palm Beach, can all of these places be home?

I was reluctant to move to New York, mostly because it felt cold and unfriendly when I visited in January. But after three weeks here, I already feel it growing on me. “See, before you know it,” one of my fellow interns told me, “New York is going to be your home away from home.”

His use of the phrase startled me. “Home away from home” implies that there is some place that reigns first in our consciousness, some primary establishment that wins out in the home hierarchy, and that every place we come to call home after that original abode is only second, or third—and so on to infinity—compared to it.

I assured him that Illinois was my home, and Harvard was my home away from home. He asked what New York was. And it hit me: It was my home away from home away from home.

If Harvard is my home away from home, then I am scared to see what happens when I am forced to move on. If the place I am supposed to call home no longer feels like home, and every other place is my home away from there, then maybe it’s true: you can’t go home again.

As students in the global age, we are encouraged to travel, to explore, to plant roots and sow seeds and make connections wherever we land. But the idea that we can have homes away from homes away from homes by the time we’re 20 is terrifying. How many degrees of separation can we put between ourselves and our places of origin before our concept of home becomes so diluted that no place is ever really home, but at most a fraction?

Last week, my best friend from high school came to visit New York. She still lives in our hometown. I was telling her about how it felt to be midway through college and what I wanted from the next few years of my life: to keep working in New York through this summer, to spend next summer researching in Africa, and to become a journalist in New York after graduation. She leaned across the table and said, “You’re never coming home again.”

Sometimes I wonder if it bothers me more that I am drifting away from my home, or that my home is drifting away from me. As hard as it was to imagine myself without my home before I left for college, it was even harder to imagine my home continuing to exist without my presence there.
The typical narcissism of a teenager barely fades when we get to college: visiting my freshman-year dorm room as a sophomore, I couldn't help but fume silently at the four current occupants for intruding on my life. That must have been the way those members of the class of 1977 felt as I led them around Harvard Yard, showing them the places they used to live, telling them about the myriad ways in which my school was now different from theirs. Had I been those men following me around the paths they had walked on a decade before I was born, I might have asked myself what on earth this little girl was doing, giving me a tour of my own house.

I chose to go straight from Harvard to New York this summer without spending time in Illinois. Although this was my own decision—and something I was ultimately happy about—I was jealous when my cousin Rachel visited my parents, went to “my” movie theater, shopped at “my” mall, slept in my bed. When my mom confided that she had let Rachel “take a few things she liked” from my closet, I snapped. The idea that another five-foot, three-inch, 20-year-old brunette who shared half of my relatives might actually replace me was crushing. Selfishly, I thought home was supposed to be waiting for me whenever I wanted it: never did it occur to me that things might change if I weren’t there.

My experience with the class of 1977 marked the halfway point of my time at Harvard. And however comfortable I feel most of the time, there are still days when I feel as though I have just arrived and, frankly, just want to go home. As I wandered around campus early in June writing about graduation, it was hard to ignore the fact that the grins of the class of 2007 often masked apprehension and fears about the future.

What are they scared of? What am I scared of? I’m scared that I’ll end up alone in a big city, feeling as if I’m stuck somewhere in between the places I’ve lived. I’m scared that I’ll get back to Illinois and not recognize the person sleeping in my bed, that I’ll go back to Harvard and not recognize the people writing for the Crimson, or the mascot of Winthrop House.

I wish I had answers to some of the questions I’m asking. But I know that I’m already nostalgic for things I still have, and to be a 20-year-old yearning for the good ol’ days may be unhealthy, if not downright twisted. More important than the physical places I’ve lived will be the people and moments I take home (away from home away from home) with me. In “The Ballad of Frankie Lee and Judas Priest,” Bob Dylan sings, “What kind of house is this…where I have come to roam?” He answers himself, reassuring the scores of young college students nostalgic for music from before their time: “‘It’s not a house,’ said Judas Priest, ‘It’s not a house, it’s a home.’”

Berta Greenwald Ledecky Undergraduate Fellow Emma Lind ’09 is a history and literature concentrator in Winthrop House. She guesses that there are about a thousand squirrels at Harvard.
Deep into the second half of the NCAA soccer playoff game against SUNY Binghamton last fall, with the score tied 1-1, Harvard forward André Akpan ’10 took a pass from fellow freshman Chey Im at the top of the Binghamton penalty area. Loosely guarded for once, Akpan turned and sprinted onto goal, but as a defender closed down to his left, and the goalie covered the severe angle, the scoring chance appeared to be lost. But Akpan wheeled quickly, shot low and hard, and the ball found its way beneath the defender, past the goalie’s hand and foot, to carom off the far post and into the net: 2-1, Harvard. Six feet tall, with an ebullient head of hair, Akpan trotted up the sideline in a long victory run, arms spread wide, grinning broadly at the ecstatic Harvard fans and a suddenly silent contingent from upstate New York.

Several minutes later, a Binghamton forward appeared poised to level the score, with only the goalie to beat from 12 yards out. But Kwaku Nyamekye ’10 came up swiftly from behind to knock the ball out of bounds and the Binghamton forward to earth, ensuring a Harvard victory. It was the Crimson’s first NCAA playoff win since 2001, sending the team to southern California—where they lost, 3-0, to UCLA, the eventual runner-ups for the national title.

During the 2006 season, in the centennial year for men’s soccer at Harvard, the Crimson captured its first Ivy League Championship in a decade, and the first one for coach John Kerr, now in his ninth year at the helm. Harvard was the top-ranked offense in the country during the regular season, averaging 2.58 goals per game, and had the three highest scorers in the Ivy League, as league Player of the Year Charles Altchek ’07, Akpan, and speedy playmaker Mike Fucito ’09 combined for 32 goals. Freshmen Nyamekye and Akpan were standouts, two of only four players to start all 19 games. “I think the new guys [the eight freshmen] integrated really well,” says Nyamekye, “And that showed on the field and really produced good results.”

This year, despite having lost six seniors, including Altchek, to graduation, the team nonetheless looks well-equipped to defend. Akpan and Nyamekye will rejoin Fucito, midfielder John Stamatis ’09, and senior co-captains Matt Hoff, a forward, and goalkeeper Adam Hahn.

Nyamekye grew up in Geneva, Swit-
Rockey Akpan, had emigrated from his home in Nigeria to Wisconsin to attend the University of Wisconsin at Au Claire, for raising soccer players. His father, Rockey Akpan, had emigrated from his native Nigeria to Wisconsin to attend the University of Wisconsin at Au Claire, and later moved with his American wife, Bette, to Texas to raise their sons, André and Adrian. There, under their father’s guidance, the two boys learned the game. (Adrian went on to play at Bowling Green State University.)

“My dad owns an indoor soccer arena and, when I was younger, he would set up boxes as defenders, and I would dribble in and out, shooting,” Akpan says. “Unless there was someone to play goalie, I would just take shots from different angles. As a forward, I practiced finishing [scoring] all day.”

He scored 111 goals—including three in his last game—for Oakridge High School, and starred for the Dallas Texans soccer club, which won two national championships. “We had a pretty solid team,” Akpan says: they also won the Dallas Cup, beating the under-19 teams of Manchester United and Real Madrid, two of the strongest sides in the world.

The Greater Dallas area is home to a diverse international community with a large population of Mexicans, Nigerians, and other recent immigrants, and its style of soccer play is dictated, in part, by the climate. “It’s very dry, very hard, so you keep the ball on the ground a lot” because it’s easier to control that way, Akpan says. It’s a style that requires short, precise passes to players’ feet, rather than the long, aerial attacks of many English and American teams.

“Coach Kerr is one of the few coaches who play that [short passing] way,” Akpan notes. Compared to Texas style, that of the Ivy League is “more physical, and more long-ball,” he says. “I think because the grass grows much thicker up here, so there’s not as much [play] on the ground.”

On the pitch, Akpan evokes his favorite player, French star Thierry Henry—combining great skill with speed and power, drifting and gliding with the play, making angled runs and receiving passes with a soft touch, and then moving onto goal with effortless acceleration, looking to shoot or pass back for midfielders. “André can make chances for himself and for others, hence his 11 goals and 12 assists,” says Kerr. “He also has the ability to hold the ball in critical situations and allow other teammates into the final third [the offensive end] of the field. He has the uncanny ability to be calm under pressure when there’s a lot of chaos in front of goal.”

National team coaches have taken note, inviting Akpan to try out for the U.S. under-20 team. Not only was he the fastest player at last January’s tryouts in Florida, running the 40-yard dash in 4.6 seconds, but he scored three goals in his first game, against Haiti. Later, he took two Harvard final exams in Panama. “It was a tough semester,” Akpan says, with a self-deprecating smile, but his schedule has hardly lightened; this past summer’s “job” involved playing in the under-20 World Cup
in Canada. (The U.S. team beat Poland, Brazil, and Uruguay before losing to Austria in the quarterfinals, 2–1.) There also looms the possibility of turning professional before his college career is over. But Akpan and his family value his education highly, and it would have to be something “very special” to lure him away from Ohiri Field (named for Chris Ohiri ’64, the Harvard soccer and track star, who, like Akpan’s father, immigrated to the United States from Nigeria to attend university).

Akpan’s personal highlights for the season? Winning the Ivy League title, of course, plus his two goals against Yale and the game-winner against Binghamton. As he remembers it, “There was a cross, and the ball was headed out, and Chey passed it to me in the middle of the box. I took it in too far, but I shot it ‘far post’ and it went in off the post. I guess it was more of a prayer shot than anything else. I just kind of got lucky.” Perhaps not; with great scorers, prayer shots have a sublime way of coming to a peaceful rest in the back of the net.

—DAVID UPDIKE

David Updike ’79, who played soccer at Harvard from 1975 to 1977, teaches English at Roxbury Community College in Boston.

Rugger Mothers

The muddy, bloody, glorious origins of rugby at Radcliffe

I was a hooker at Harvard. It wasn’t what I expected from college, but I fell in with a crowd of foul-mouthed girls who spent Saturdays brawling and trying to score. In September 2002, I joined the Radcliffe Rugby Football Club, playing prop, flanker, and finally, hooker—the player who taps the ball to her team’s side of the scrum. It was an opportunity I owed to the 1982 Radcliffe team.

This year, Radcliffe rugby celebrates its silver anniversary, which encouraged me to look up some of its founding mothers. The idea was actually conceived on the sidelines of a men’s game in 1981. “I got frustrated that women couldn’t play, because it looked like such a fun game,” says Ingrid Jacobson Pinter ’83. “I was moaning on the sidelines to a friend, and he said, ‘Since when did you take no for an answer?’ ”

The friend was tutor Paul Erickson, Ph.D. ’84, a graduate student in English and a rugby player. Jacobson Pinter, soon to be Radcliffe Rugby’s first president, drafted Erickson as faculty sponsor and then posted the campus with flyers promising free beer to interested athletes. Louy Meacham ’85 recalls, “Word was out on the street that they were looking for people who had one or two screws loose.”

Meacham says they drew “people who were a little off the beaten track, but with an incredibly fierce competitive instinct.” Merry Ann Moore ’84 recalls, “People were interested in women’s athletics, and stretching the limits of what women’s athletics meant.” Funded in part by Radcliffe and eager not to be seen as (in Jacobson Pinter’s words) the “Ladies Auxiliary of the men’s team,” they wore Radcliffe red and black.

Most had never touched a rugby ball. Mindy Fener of the local Beantown club became the coach and assigned positions, designating a “pack” of contact-hungry forwards and a “line” of speedy, evasive backs. In rugby, forwards attempt to win possession by forming a “ruck” and driving opponents off the ball, or by securing the ball in a knot of players called a “maul.” The “scrumhalf” directs traffic in the pack and sends the ball out to the back line. The backs then try to gain territory by “skipping” the ball out wide, “crashing” back inside, changing direction with switches, and faking their defenders with dummy passes. It is often said that the forwards decide who wins, while the backs decide by how much. Jeanne Demers ’83, who grew up playing full-contact games like “murderball” with her brothers, was eager to play a tackle sport. “Some women didn’t know how strong they could be,” she says. While the backs practiced dummies and switches, long “skip” passes and on-the-run pop kicks, forwards fine-tuned their scrum, a formation in which opposing packs “bind” (hold tightly to teammates in order to hit and push as a unit), crouch, and hit one another to win a clean ball. With spring thaw, the team took the pitch, and on April 17, 1982, Radcliffe was surprised to win its first match, defeating MIT 10 to 6.

Louy Meacham credits coach Fener with the winning “try” (score) versus Tufts the following week. “We had no idea what we were doing, but we were faking it pretty well,” Meacham recalls. “Mindy was refing. We were all the way down, practically in the try zone. The pack was rucking the ball, basically moving it right up to the line. Mindy was staring at me, and I realized she was saying something out of the corner of her eye.”
mouth." For a football touchdown, the ball need only break the plane of the goal line; a rugby try requires that a player actually touch the ball down. As scrumhalf, Meacham was handling the ball when the forwards drove over. "Just touch it down," Fener was whispering to her clueless scrumhalf, "just touch it down!" Meacham, so caught up in the still-novel game that she’d forgotten that basic rule, at last got the point and, as the ball rolled over the line, scored her first try.

The women improved, and despite some memorable losses—in one thrashing, Radcliffe underestimated their manicured, mascara-wearing Bridgewater opponents—chalked up several wins their first season, and enjoyed doing so. (Radcliffe has since qualified five times for the collegiate national tournament, and won the national championship in 1998.) "My God, it’s so freeing for a young woman to have an opportunity to run and tackle and breathe that kind of aggression and release and exuberance," Meacham says. "To me, rugby is such an exuberant sport."

"It was exhilarating and it was terrifying," recalls Jacobson Pinter, who played flanker—a position for a quick, ruthless tackler. "It’s something you can do at 1,000 percent," adds eight-man Sheryl Wilkins Pardo ’84. "And tackling, for women, when you’d never been allowed to tackle—it was just a blast for me." Rugby remains the sole team contact sport in collegiate women’s athletics—and unlike hockey or lacrosse, men’s and women’s rugby share the same rulebook.

The physicality breeds a particular intensity of teamwork. Like soccer, rugby is played continuously, without downs, so the ball is live after a tackle. This demands both improvisation and communication, and means that a ball-carrying must trust her teammates to run "in support," ready to receive a pass, or ruck if she gets tackled. Furthermore, club-status independence brought the Radcliffe team closer. "The piratical, not-in-the-varsity-harness feeling was certainly something that a lot of us enjoyed about the experience initially," says Meacham. "It was nice to be captains of our own leaky and scary ship."

Rugby is a sport of traditions, of post-match socials and songs, so Radcliffe needed a team culture. Bruised and muddy, they adapted men’s rugby’s chauvinist lyrics while hanging around the sideline keg of beer. Radcliffe began every drink-up with a chant called "We’re All Bastards." That song would later be replaced by "I Don’t Wanna Be a Housewife," an anthem that rejected dishwashing and child-rearing in favor of the world’s oldest profession. Although some team members objected, Pardo considered singing a chance to appropriate some "not okay" concepts. "It was a chance to say, ‘Screw it, I’m just going to not be good.’"

"Screw it, I’m just going to not be good."

Merry Ann Moore directed debauchery as social chair. "We were big into rituals and chants," she says. "We were constantly making hachimakis [Japanese headbands] out of toilet paper." Moore organized a lobster boil to rival the rugby men’s pig roast and held fundraisers at the Piccadilly Filly, in Harvard Square, which allowed Radcliffe to host beer-drinking contests at the bar and peeing contests in the ladies’ room.

Not everyone approved. Historian Barbara Tuchman ’33 wrote this magazine, in response to a piece about the new women’s club, "Is this imitation of the foolish physical violence of men’s team sports what young women come to Radcliffe to learn? To find this activity to be the mood of Radcliffe today at a time said to represent the supposed ‘liberation’ of women is a development that leaves me as an alumna of Radcliffe very unhappy." For the most part, however, the first Radcliffe ruggers found remarkable acceptance and support. "[Tuchman] completely missed why we were attracted to it, the team aspect," says Pardo. "It creates a cohesive, supportive community."

None of the founding mothers still plays, though Jacobson Pinter recently taught her 12-year-old son to tackle, and Meacham cheers her 9-year-old boy, a scrumhalf like his mother. She’s proud "to see that fire in his eyes and to see the joy in his being as he makes a tackle—and to think, ‘I know exactly how you’re feeling.’"

"I know exactly how you’re feeling."

The future? "We have plans for the Radcliffe Rugby retirement home," Meacham assures me, "with on-site masseuses and rocking chairs." I tell her I can’t wait.

"I can’t wait."

Jenny Davis ’06 is a freelance writer and club rugby player who lives in Manhattan.

Jenny Davis ’06 is a freelance writer and club rugby player who lives in Manhattan.
Editor's note: More people than ever before seem to be seeking the U.S. presidency. Rather than profile alumni who are running for office, we asked Garrett Grañon ’03 to talk with two Harvard graduates who have decided to step back from front-line politics—at least for the moment—about the challenges facing the nation and what the 2008 elections may bring.

Baltimore native Kenneth Mehlman, J.D. ’91, sees the complicated politics facing the United States every time he visits his beloved Chesapeake Bay. Once polluted and dying, the bay now teems with boats and aquatic life. “It’s alive,” explains the Karl Rove protégé and former head of the Republican National Committee. “The left doesn’t want to admit it because they want to say the sky is falling, and the right doesn’t want to admit it because they don’t want to admit that regulation got it there. This is an example of how our public policy—the back and forth—sometimes is like sausage-making. It’s ugly, but oftentimes it works.”

And herein lies an essential conundrum of the early twenty-first century. The Democratic and Republican parties, Mehlman argues, have solved some of the most pressing issues of the last generation, but haven’t yet outlined their future paths. The GOP saw its central mission as defeating the Soviet Union, reducing tax rates and crime, and reforming welfare. Democrats focused on preserving the tenets of the New Deal, protecting the poor, and expanding civil rights. The uncertainty both parties face in forming new goals helps fuel what Mehlman sees as alarming levels of partisanship in Washington. “This ought to be a period of incredible optimism for America,” he adds. “Both parties in their modern form have accomplished what they set out to accomplish. Now they’re fighting, yet there are a lot of new things they have to accomplish.”

As Mehlman sees it, the political focus should be on winning the war against terror and Islamist fascism; achieving energy independence for both environmental and national-security reasons; revamping the healthcare system built during the industrial era; and dealing with the problem of skyrocketing entitlement costs, such as Social Security and Medicare. “Those are four huge challenges that are all amenable to bipartisan consensus,” he says. Whether U.S. leaders will be able to build that consensus is an open question, but one that he works on steadily today.

Mehlman traces his interest in politics to some of his earliest memories. Born in 1966, he came of age under Ronald Reagan; he found inspiration in the former actor and wrote him letters offering advice. After graduating from Franklin and Marshall, on whose board he now sits, Mehlman attended Harvard Law School, where he jokes that he made a lot of enemies when Michael Dukakis’s 1988 presidential campaign engulfed the largely liberal-leaning school.

After law school, he got a job at a Washington, D.C., firm known for its bipartisan ties at the highest levels of politics, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, where he practiced environmental law, specializing in cases in which property lost value because of environmental restrictions. “I’ve always been interested in public service and policy,” he says, “and I wanted to find a place to go that would expose me to a serious law practice and also allow me the chance to serve in government at some point, and this was the perfect place to do that.”

He found, though, that he was spending an increasing amount of time volunteering on political campaigns, including William Weld’s Massachusetts gubernatorial run and George H.W. Bush’s 1992 reelection bid. After only three years at Akin Gump, Mehlman joined the legislative staff of a Texas congressman, the first of several jobs on Capitol Hill. He joined the George W. Bush campaign in 1999 to work in the Iowa caucuses. He joined the George W. Bush campaign in 1999 to work in the Iowa caucuses, and quickly rose to work closely with Karl Rove. He was named White House political director after Bush was inaugurated in 2001, and later was tapped to head the 2004 reelection campaign.

Well-known as highly organized, detail-oriented, and “on message” at all times, Mehlman by nearly everyone’s ac-
count put together perhaps the most formidable campaign apparatus ever assembled in American politics. Working closely with Rove, he relied on technology and on pioneering “micro-targeting” work by the GOP—the use of readily available consumer data to locate possible Republican voters. By combining that research with extensive volunteer networks and millions of voter “contacts,” he helped push Bush’s reelection victory total to more popular votes than had ever been cast for a president before. “We built a 1.4-million-volunteer database so that teachers knocked on the doors of teachers to talk about education,” he says. “That’s far more effective than any television ad.”

After the election, he became chair of the Republican National Committee (RNC). Yet his party was plagued by the worsening war in Iraq, the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and repeated corruption scandals in Congress. “The biggest thing I hope [the GOP] learned from ’06 was that we don’t have an entitlement to power,” he asserts. “Campaigns are 5 percent of it. The other 95 percent is what you do in office.” For his part, Mehlman strove to widen the party’s appeal, even convincing Bush to address the annual convention of the NAACP for the first time in his presidency. “We’re too reliant on white guys,” Mehlman explains. “We need to be a party that welcomes all, that goes out of the way to welcome all.” (This philosophy of inclusion may be related to the allegations, heard since his White House career began, that he is gay; Mehlman himself has repeatedly stated that he does not feel obliged to address such questions.)

Earlier this year, he voluntarily stepped down as RNC chair and returned to Akin Gump, mixing private practice and public policy once again. Although neutral thus far in the 2008 presidential race, he’s giving confidential advice to friends on all sides. Two doors down from his office in the firm’s Dupont Circle building is founding partner Robert Strauss, who served as chair of the Democratic Party during the 1970s. Mehlman and Strauss have regularly lunched together in recent years and Mehlman even introduced Strauss to a rising star in the Democratic Party: his law-school classmate Barack Obama.

Just as Mehlman hoped to experience politics and public service when he first arrived at Akin Gump some 15 years ago, much of his work today in both sectors is focused on addressing changes needed for the country’s future. He’s involved in Ed in ’08/Strong American Schools, a non-partisan campaign backed by Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors and the Broad and Gates Foundations that will pour $60 million into the 2008 race to focus on education. He’s also working with the Hope Street Group, an organization of business and political leaders focused on creating economic opportunity. There are major challenges ahead, Mehlman says, but nothing that the U.S. political system can’t solve given time, inspiration, and leadership. “Washington will be able to solve these problems”—the question is whether the current people in Washington can,” he asserts. “If they can’t, they’ll be removed and others will.”

Mehlman also sits on the board of the Washington, D.C., Martin Luther King Jr. National Memorial Project Foundation, which plans to put a monument to the civil-rights leader on the National Mall, near where King delivered his 1963 “I Have a Dream” speech. He cites King as one of the most influential and inspiring leaders of the twentieth century for forcing America to confront its history of racial bigotry. “Our nation was never a perfect nation and still isn’t, but what is so great about America is that we don’t believe we’re perfect,” Mehlman says. “We realize we constantly have to improve, evolve, and make ourselves better.”

Former Virginia governor Mark Warner, J.D. ’80, has always been a big-ideas guy. After law school, he made a fortune in the emerging cell-phone industry and then spent much of the 1990s as a venture capitalist in northern Virginia’s technology corridor. Today, with the presidential election little more than a year away—and continued speculation that he will be tapped as a vice-presidential nominee—he wants to see some new big ideas. Voters, he says, are looking for “a leader who’s willing to do not the incremental fix, but the big fix, the Rooseveltian fix. They want a leader who won’t be afraid of the future.”

At one time, Warner might just have been that figure. But a year ago he chose not to run for president, placing time with his family—his wife and three teenage daughters—above his political ambition. As he sought the counsel of others who had faced similar decisions, he says he was told, “If you can live with yourself not doing it, you should probably not do it.” Still, stepping back was hard for a man who has always sought to be at the center of political debate—and for whom the current crop of candidates often falls short.

Politics has been Warner’s focus ever since an eighth-grade teacher inspired him to work for social and political change during the turbulent year of 1968.
Ringing in the New

As a new presidential administration moves into Massachusetts Hall, the Harvard Alumni Association (HAA) is also taking on challenges under its new president, Jonathan L.S. Byrnes, D.B.A. ’80. “The theme of this coming year will be ‘Creating a New Era,’” he notes. The University itself has new deans coming on board, is busy building the Allston campus, and is increasing coordination among its many “tubs,” he notes. In addition, he points to Harvard’s changing student demographics and says the HAA must analyze both its current and its future alumni base and develop better ways to engage an increasingly diverse group of people living throughout the world. “As with any organization, there are an infinite number of worthy things to do, but you can only do so many things and you have to find the sweet spots,” he explains. “We’re trying to enrich our offerings, so we can offer more things to attract more people to Harvard.”

It is the perfect task for Byrnes, who enjoys a career that “combines teaching, research, and direct involvement in business innovations.” The senior lecturer at MIT teaches courses such as “Case Studies in Logistics and Supply Chain Management” and has guided major companies through large-scale organizational changes and strategic repositioning. He also runs a consulting firm, Jonathan Byrnes & Company, in Lexington, Massachusetts, where he lives with his wife of more than 30 years, Marsha (their two sons are grown). “My specialty is...helping [businesses] understand what customers want and how to fulfill [those needs],” he explains. “And that ties into what we’re trying to accomplish this year at the HAA.”

To better position itself for the future, the HAA has already ramped up traditional alumni access points, such as Harvard clubs, class and reunion activities, and its continuing education and travel programs. It will also continue to develop more sharply targeted alumni activities, in line with the rapidly growing number of shared interest groups (known as SIGs); the newest groups include Harvard Student Agencies Alumni, Women’s Leadership Project Alumni Network, Native American Alumni of Harvard University, Harvard South Asian Alumni Alliance, and Harvard Veterans Alumni Organization (see “Radcliffe and Other Shared Interest Groups,” January-February, page 82, or visit http://post.harvard.edu/harvard/clubs/html/SIGdir.html for details).

Two other initiatives are also underway, according to Byrnes. First, the HAA will develop more systematic information about what kinds of programming and activities appeal to which segments of the alumni population. This has entailed some organizational changes. One of the HAA’s three vice presidents will now be in charge of “engagement and marketing,” and two committees have been redefined to report to that person: the Graduate Schools Committee, which Byrnes has chaired, will become the University-wide Alumni Outreach Committee, and the Communications Committee will become the Engagement and Marketing Committee.

Also on tap are efforts to bring Harvard’s history and “shared alumni experience more directly to the student body on campus,” he explains. “As Harvard draws increasingly from new demographic segments to enrich and diversify the student body, it is increasingly necessary to communicate to students earlier the lifelong benefits of being an engaged, active alumna or alumnus.”

He began this process with his younger son, Steven ’07, whom he addressed, with his classmates, as imminent alumni during a speech on Class Day in June. “For the rest of your life you will not just be from Harvard, you will be a part of Harvard,” he told members of the senior class. “And there is something very deeply meaningful about being part of something larger than yourself that will endure beyond your years.”

He spoke from personal experience. In addition to his work for the HAA, he has served more than 15 years as a Harvard Business School (HBS) class secretary, for five years on the HBS Alumni Association’s board of directors, as vice president of the Harvard Club of Boston, and as a member of Harvard’s Advisory Committee on Shareholder Responsibility. Harvard, he says, helped him develop a deep knowledge base and offered up a circle of “friends for life….What could be better?”

—N.P.B.
He grew up in Indiana and Connecticut, but applied only to colleges in Washington, D.C. While attending George Washington University (he was the first in his family to graduate from college), he interned on Capitol Hill, riding his bike over early in the morning to open mail for a series of Connecticut representatives.

Next came Harvard Law School (HLS), where classmates remember him as everybody’s friend and where he was recruited to coach the school’s first women’s intramural basketball team. The school for him was less about lawyering—he jokes that he was not a natural lawyer and so was the only member of his class not to receive a job offer from either firm he worked for one summer—and much more about forming friendships. “Our class was more cohesive than others, and in part that was really Mark’s influence,” explains Helen Marinak Blohm, J.D. ’80, who played on that basketball team. “He would often be the one planning the party, getting the group together, or doing social things that made us seem more connected to each other.” To this day, some of his closest friends, including top adviser Howard Gutman, now a partner at Williams & Connolly, are old HLS classmates.

Back in Washington after graduation, working for the Democratic National Committee as a fundraiser, Warner observed the plight of candidates burdened by large campaign debts and decided to secure his financial future before entering public life. His first two ventures failed, but his third, buying and trading spectrum licenses—the airwaves upon which cell-phone calls are transmitted—earned him an estimated $200 million.

His reentry into politics, managing a gubernatorial bid for Virginia’s Douglas Wilder, came just months after he nearly died of a burst appendix while he and his wife, Lisa Collis, were on their honey-moon in 1989. Wilder won the race and Warner took over the state party, making more friends and building a network that launched him into the 1996 U.S. Senate race against the popular Republican incumbent, John Warner. Warner versus Warner was not particularly close, but Warner still laughs about the time he was campaigning in southern Virginia with signs that read “Mark not John,” and a driver pulled over to ask, “Is that a bibli-cal reference?”

Following the loss, Warner retired to his Alexandria venture-capital firm, Columbia Capital, and got involved in projects around the state that kept his contacts and networks alive for another campaign. Among other things, he set up programs to help students learn computer skills and, as the dot-com boom of the late 1990s took off in Northern Virginia, he developed a website to help senior citizens navigate healthcare choices.

In 2001, stepping into a political void, Warner ran for governor at a time when Democrats did not hold a single statewide office. To the surprise of nearly everyone, he won by a narrow margin, thanks to aggressive outreach to sportsmen and rural Virginians in the south-western corner of the state, where he was helped by a bluegrass theme song and a NASCAR truck sponsorship. The nation was grappling with the recent shock of September 11; Warner had watched the Pentagon burn from the roof of his campaign headquarters.

Because Virginia allows its governors to run again, but not to succeed themselves, Warner knew from the moment he entered office that the clock was ticking down on his four-year term. He confronted a softening economy and financial chaos, including a state deficit that soared from $700 million to $3.8 billion. He soon became known as the “Power-Point governor” for his tireless jawboning across the state with charts, graphs, and presentations. His efforts resulted in a budget deal with the Republican-dominated legislature that raised taxes and added reforms to close the deficit without severe budget cuts. The money, he asserted, preserved the state’s coveted AAA bond rating and paved the way for record-setting investment in the state’s K-12 educational system.

By the time he left office in 2006 (leaving matters to his hand-picked successor, Timothy Kaine), Warner was wildly popular across the state. He had helped to install a massive broadband network for rural areas and to revitalize the state’s economy and government; during his

Aloian Scholars

Matthew Drazba ’08, of Kirkland House, and Ana Vollmar ’08, of Dudley House, are this year’s David Aloian Memorial Scholars. They are to be honored at the fall dinner of the Harvard Alumni Association in October.

Established in 1988 in honor of David Aloian ‘49, a former HAA executive director and master of Quincy House, the scholarships are awarded to two seniors who have made unique contributions to their Houses and to undergraduate life.

Drazba, of Pinole, California, was a House liaison officer to the department of athletics and organized Kirkland’s entries for the College’s annual intramural competition, leading the House to win the Straus Cup. His work in the theater prompted a revival of Kirkland’s annual “Shakespeare Night.” And his involvement with the Institute of Politics helped bring speakers to the senior common room events.

Vollmar, of Hamden, Connecticut, was a liaison to the Dudley Faculty Fellows program, which brings undergraduates closer to faculty members outside the classroom, largely through dinners. As maintenance steward at the Dudley House Cooperative in Cambridge, she put in extra hours to help restore operations there following a fire last fall. Moreover, she took a lead role in creating a fully productive vegetable garden at the co-op, purchasing seed and topsoil and offering instruction to housemates on tilling and planting.

Photograph by Justin Ide/Harvard News Office
tenure, Virginia was named one of the two best-managed states in the country by Governing magazine.

He had also set himself up for presidential-level politics. Much of 2006 was spent on his undeclared campaign, which included building a staff of 40, raising some $10 million, and traveling extensively: throughout small towns in Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada, and South Carolina, and to fundraisers in New York and California. But the thought of the road ahead and the time away from his daughters was daunting, he says now, and in the end, he decided he could live without the presidency.

A year later, he is not sure he made the right decision. The scope of the presidency is so huge, he said in a recent interview, the challenges and decisions made in the Oval Office so monumental, that “I’m not sure that you don’t want someone with some ambivalence or some question in their minds. If you’ve got so much confidence that you think you’re absolutely the right person, absolutely capable, I’m not sure that’s the best criterion.”

These days, Warner has again retreated from front-line politics to figure out his future. Back at Columbia Capital, he is involved in a myriad of causes, committees, and task forces looking at the emerging challenges of this century. He has been weighing whether to run for the U.S. Senate in 2008 (which would likely take him out of the vice-presidential running, because it would be hard for Virginia Democrats to find a new Senate candidate just months before the election), or possibly to run for governor again in 2009.

Whatever the next year or two may bring, Warner’s not ready to exit the political debate. He’s anxious to see the nation’s leaders address the looming issues of globalization and technology, and knows that major changes will be needed to ready the country for the future. “The political class in this country has gotten institutionally conservative about being willing to offer challenging ideas, big ideas, but I think people are ready for a bigger idea,” he explains. “They expect national leaders to call them to some greater purpose—in conjunction with government—to see if we can get some of our problems fixed. We need a win. The country needs a win. They need to feel proud of the direction our country is going.”

Garrett M. Graff ’03 is editor at large at Washingtonian magazine, where he covers media and politics. His first book, The First Campaign: Globalization, the Web, and the Race for the White House, will appear this December. In 2002-2003, he served as one of this magazine’s Berta Greenwald Ledecky Undergraduate Fellows.

Justice, On Line

Starting September 19, alumni around the world can log onto one of the College’s most popular courses: Moral Reasoning 22, “Justice,” with Bass professor of government Michael J. Sandel. This unprecedented, distance-learning project was organized by the Harvard Alumni Association (HAA). “Justice Online” offers webstreamed video of the semester-long course (24 lectures) from last year, which may be viewed at home, along with “interactive elements, including an on-line discussion blog, in-person discussion groups in cities around the world, and, we hope, some video-linked discussions among alumni participants and Harvard College students taking Justice here in Cambridge,” Sandel notes. “If the technology works, we may be one step closer to creating a global classroom.”

For further information on the course and information about registration, visit http://post.harvard.edu/sandel. In Boston, the HAA plans to launch the first class with Sandel in person at “Justice Online: Reconnect with Harvard” on September 19 at Sanders Theatre. A second, similar event with Sandel is also planned for September 27 at the Harvard Club of New York. For further details, visit the website or call 617-495-1093.

More than 20 alumni clubs are participating, including those in Australia, Mexico, India, and Hong Kong. “It’s like taking a class together throughout the world,” says Philip Lovejoy, the HAA’s director of University alumni affairs. “It’s also an experiment, and it will be interesting to see what kind of response we get.”

Alumni in Southern California are already registering for the class, according to Cynthia Torres ’80, M.B.A. ’84, president of the Harvard-Radcliffe Club of Southern California. “Our alumni could not be more excited about this opportunity to have distance learning,” she reports. “In addition to taking the class on line, registrants will gather three times this fall to attend sessions conducted by trained facilitators or by Harvard teaching fellows flown out from Cambridge to foster class discussions with alumni,” she explains. “It’s an exciting initiative and one we hope to see many more of. We hope other Harvard professors will be interested in broadening their educational mission to include a wider group of alumni.”
Hiram Hunn Awards

Six alumni are to receive this year’s Hiram S. Hunn Memorial Schools and Scholarships Awards, presented by the Harvard College Office of Admissions and Financial Aid. Hunn, a member of the College class of 1921, recruited and interviewed prospective students for more than 55 years in Iowa and Vermont; this year’s winners, who are recognized for their work on schools and scholarships committees worldwide, have collectively performed more than 165 years of service. They are to receive their awards at an October ceremony.

Gerald Maslon ’45, LL.B. ’50, of Greenport, New York. Maslon has helped young people from Long Island find their way to Harvard for more than 25 years. He has interviewed countless undergraduates from foreign countries and diverse backgrounds, as well as different generations of candidates from the same local families. His interviews are characterized by warmth and care, as evidenced by his invitation to this year’s Commencement by the family of a senior whom he had interviewed.

Peter Strauss ’54, M.B.A. ’58, of Scarsdale, New York. As a volunteer for more than three decades, Strauss has interviewed many hundreds of applicants from dozens of New York City schools. He enjoys the range of backgrounds he encounters, is gratified by what the students he knows go on to achieve as alumni, and appreciates the fact that his work allows him an insider’s glimpse into the city’s schools and their personnel.

Claire Pirani Russell ’55, of Marion, Massachusetts. As a veteran member of the executive board of the Harvard Club of New Bedford-Fall River, Russell has been an active interviewer since 1981. She represents the College at numerous fairs and community events throughout Southeastern Massachusetts and has had outstanding success in broadening the pool of applicants from that region. She credits former dean of admissions Fred Jewett ’57, M.B.A. ’60, with inspiring her to work with prospective students.

Cynthia Morss Travis ’59, of San Francisco. Travis has sought out talented Californians for two decades and was chair of the Harvard schools and scholarships committee for a decade. She strives to make the interview process comfortable for every candidate, and has helped to train novice interviewers in student-friendly approaches.

Miriam Gerber Kaplan ’67, of Memphis. Kaplan began interviewing in 1991 and a year later became chair of the local schools and scholarships committee, a position she still holds. She has also made valuable contributions to college admissions in general by creating (with Ann Indingaro ’68 and former senior admissions officer John Harwell) a videotape for high-school guidance counselors on writing effective college recommendations.

Edward E. Poliakoff ’67, of Columbia, South Carolina. Upon settling in South Carolina in 1975, Poliakoff created a Harvard Club (of which his son, Eli ’00, is now president). Throughout the years, Poliakoff has been active at all levels of schools and scholarships work—from interviewing and presenting Harvard Book prizes to hosting young admissions officers visiting the region. In addition, he has helped his original mentor, former dean of admissions Fred Glimp ’50, Ph.D. ’64, with the Harvard Campaign and the Harvard College Fund.

Roderick MacLennan of Truro, Nova Scotia. Honored not as an alumnus, but as the unofficial ambassador to the Canadian Maritime Provinces, MacLennan has helped make it possible for young Maritimers to aspire to higher education and has often provided generous support and supplies where needed. (MacLennan’s own son, Bruce, is in the class of 1990.)

Alumni Colleges

The Harvard Alumni Association offers numerous opportunities for alumni to stay in touch with their alma mater. Among them are a series of lectures, workshops, and educational/social events. For additional information on these “Alumni Colleges,” or to register for an event, call 617-495-1920, e-mail haa_alumnieducation@harvard.edu, or visit http://post.harvard.edu/travel and click on “Alumni College Program.”

The Vernacular

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

Betty Vorenberg recalls stumbling over a “Harvard shibboleth” in the 1970s when her late husband, James ’49, LL.B. ’51, former dean of the Law School and Pound professor of law, was master of Dunster House. “Jim and I had left Dunster for the summer, arranging that the courtyard be renovated with new plantings and circular paths,” she says. “We returned to find that no work had been done. Jim called the planning office and was told that ‘circular paths were not in the Harvard vernacular!’ A hasty re-drawing with straight paths allowed the work to begin, but the returning students had to slog through mud and around bulldozers. Jim was furious.”

Robert LaMont ’49, of Lacey, Washington, had his own brush with Harvard regularity as an undergraduate. In the May-June issue (page 67), this magazine reproduced the shield of the new School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, which elicited a letter to the editor from LaMont. “The shield took me back some 58 years,” he wrote, “when I was studying cartography under Dr. Erwin Raisz at the Institute of Geographical Exploration. He was making a revision of his map of Harvard, and had been asked to make a border showing the insignia of the schools and Houses. I was asked to collect and draw up these insignia. The material that I was able to collect varied greatly in format, and as some uniformity obviously was necessary, I went over to Widener and looked at some books on heraldry. These told me that Radcliffe ought to be on a feminine lozenge and the Divinity School in a pointed oval, which I did. This lack of complete uniformity apparently did not please someone in Massachusetts Hall, however, and we had to change them.”

LaMont discloses that “someone also wanted a drawing of a student in the corner of the map (Harvard did not have so many buildings then). I posed for this in a borrowed gown, holding a stadia rod. A fancy finial on the rod and a mortarboard cap were drawn on. I probably appear, in this drawing, on as many Harvard publications as anyone!”

Sharp-eyed reader: J. Linzee Coolidge ’59, of Boston, had his head snapped back by a “Personals” advertisement in the May-June issue. “Bks” wrote in her ad that she is “Drawn to Vinylhaven, Positano, Lake Sevan.” Coolidge sent her an e-mail advisory, which he showed to Primus for the typographical record. “Dear Bks: The spelling error jumped out at me from the page and, please forgive me, I feel compelled to bring it to your attention,” he wrote. “The Maine island is Vinalhaven, not Vinylhaven. Ouch! This is like wearing brown shoes to dinner at 770 Park Avenue. This seemingly inconsequential mistake may cause a certain type of New England Anglo-Saxon male reader to pass quickly to the next personal ad. This would be the pinch-nosed variety of Anglo-Saxon, whose nostrils can discern the 29 kinds of fog that prevail in the waters east of the Cuckolds bell. Included here would be members of the Cabot and Saltonstall families, and anyone descended from President Eliot of Harvard. I agree with you, though, for choosing Vinalhaven. We all long to be, to exist, in Vinalhaven; it is a place for the more rugged of spirit, where the eagles soar over long-abandoned granite quarries.”

~PRIMUS V
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73-year-young man seeks female companionship. Likes chamber music recitals, symphony concerts, opera, the Huntington Theatre and the Red Sox. Also, art museum visits and travel to Italy, France and Spain. 617-242-3449.

Striking good looks—smart, sophisticated and very poised. Tall and sensuous, accomplished, highly-regarded, professional, Boston- based. Civic-minded, in tune with what’s current in the world. Fanc- es life optimistically, finds humor in almost anything. Adaptable, ac- cepting, adventurous, great traveling companion (Rockies to Barce- lona, Barbados, Bitter End Yacht Club). Can be taken anywhere, car- ries no excess baggage. Culturally aware, classy, interested in all arts. Foodie, gracious hostess, knows how to have a good time, makes the “world’s best margaritas and killer guacamole.” Engaging, comp- etent, yet amusingly non-mechanical. Punctual for Maine harbors, animals, seashore paintings. Seeks bright, active, thoughtful, finan- cially self-sufficient, 5’10” man 46-60s who enjoys friends, music, the outdoors and being near the water. isabellas2007@yahoo.com.

Smart, sophisticated and strikingly pretty with athletic trim figure, great legs and beautiful shoulder-length dark hair – very reminiscent of Jacqueline Bisset. Body-confidence and cultural, local and na- tional. Worldly, articulate and curious live wire, gracious hostess. Un- abashedly loyal, very able to poke fun at herself, believes nothing is better than a good laugh. Divorced, Jewish. Open and fun, good cook, passionate gardener, speaks lousy French. Music-lover, dog person. Enjoys Beethoven, Haydn, Mahler’s 1st and B & S’ biographies, hotels that pamper, politics, ice cream. Seeks nonsmoking man 50-70 – af- fectionate, well-groomed, successful, comfortable in his own skin. minir29@yahoo.com; 917-716-4276.

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Believes humor is essential. Slim and very pretty with great legs and inscrutable Irish wit. Considered by male friends to be a “10”. Known for inquisitive mind, easy laugh, gorgeous turquoise eyes, calm approach to life: Adventurous, supportive, sometimes reserved at first. Adores travel that combines learning, beauty, history. Loves Rome, Sydney, Fox Glacier, Smugger Cove BVI, Mediuc Medicine, anywhere I haven’t been. Music-lover (especially Clapton, anything Blues, Beethoven). Resourceful writer, working on collection of essays. Interested in bicycling, kayaking, cooking – makes a mean chicken cordon bleu and pistol roses. Accomplished sailor, now investigating golf. Fascinated by history English, Chinese, Civil War. Seeks nonsmoking, liberal-leaning, man 54-60s with broad range of interests who enjoys people, keeping fit. 617-967-1684; julie5798@hotmail.com.


Sensible, successful, architect. Award-winning career yet completely unpretentious and down to earth. Classic Garboesque good looks, contemporary style, great looks, great legs. Outdoorsy, outdoorsy lover. Loves Gaudi, gardens, buildings, Mozart. MFA exhibits, history, good food, Red Sox, Patriots, Celtics. Believes nothing beats cooking beautiful countryside: USA, France, Spain, Italy. Adores reading on airplane, working in perfect gravity, Vau- le-Vicomte, Zimmerman House, meadows with views. Seeks easygoing, friendly man with inquiring intellect–late 60s to early 70s, in good shape. roxane472@yahoo.com; 617-547-4821; HM BOX 94242.

Art foundation director – Chicago/Paris-based. Dark hair, slender figure, sparkling eyes, worldly intellect. Think classic ’40s movie star look for a guy, charming, warm, character, light-heartedness. Excellent fun, humor central to her nature. Values openness, lack of guile. About as far from devi- ous as anyone can get. Very real, yet feminine, sensual – never hand- edged, cares about people. Adores Venice, Giorgio to Turandot, Vivaldi to Angkor Wat, looking at architecture, movies, days off, long dinners with lots of talk, spending time at home in Santa Fe, with family in Texas, friends in the More Mandarin Oriental or Montale, rather than Hilton, more offbeat small museum than crowded block- buster, more sunny days than ice and snow. Average cook, great sous-chef. Seeks successful, good-looking man who can laugh at himself. 49-67. sophia345@gmail.com.

Approaches life with ease, passion and an explorer’s spirit–be it exploring, around the corner or the world. Classically pretty, ath- letic, gracious, Southerner transplanted to New Boston, Boston- based. International in outlook, successful, highly accomplished, very likeable and classy with ever-present touch of fun and self- deprecating humor. City lover yet adores everything else and Italian hill towns. Caring, understands what is relevant and im- portant. Outdoorsy, hiking, boating, cycling, gardening. Enamored of world music, driving with the top down, sitting on my dock, photo- graphy, European novels, American nonfiction, farmers’ mar- kets, cooking fresh food, improving rusty French and Spanish, let- ting the day unfold when traveling. Wyoming, the Mediterranean pace of life. Seeks smart, successful, fit, attractive man (50s-60s) who enjoys people, traveling, adventuring. a3331@comcast.net; 207-512-0776 (Maine cell # but resides Boston).

Sure to be noticed. Striking MD with real presence. 38. Extremely attractive, dark hair, good figure, robust humor that comes from deep within. Be all of “Car 7” intense, works one day a week in Cambridge. Smart, tactful and good-natured with twinkle in her eyes. Dedica- ted to work, gives 100%, yet really good at chilling out. Cultured, socially conscious, well-informed. Enjoys the finer things without being materialistic. Warm Midwestern heart, more urban than sub- urban with interests both intellectual and low brow: politics, spicy Thai food, Hawaii, Nantucket, Vivaldi at the gym, Symphony, bik- ing on the Cape. Seeks accomplished, kind, respectful man, 28-49. mt176@yahoo.com.


Sensible, smart and warm-hearted. Quick wit and quick mind. Out- door photographer with passion for Big Sky and the Southwest, just returned from wonderful shoot in Vermont. Tall, good-looking and in great shape with experiencing sophistication, gift for laughter. Loves to bake but main course is best when cooked together with someone. Adventurous–drawn to a sense of curiosity and an engaging open ap- proach to life. Prefers Science Museum over MFA. Johnny D’s over BSO, enjoys being argued by biking, ocean anything, Brazi- lian music, Truro, Costa Rica, Italy. Seeks divorced or widowed man age 45-60, active, thoughtful, happy with himself and available for lasting relationship. sue4324@yahoo.com; 617-947-3220.

DWF aromatic, gorgeous gams, stylish, well-read, fun-loving, great sense of humor, infectious laugh, easy going, wise, thought- ful, great listener. Looking for man over 55, to share same inter- ests. dwfattactive@yahoo.com.
Space Invaders

Aliens, robots, spaceships: Pulp sci-fi goes to Harvard

The world's first magazine devoted to science fiction, Amazing Stories, was born in 1926, a year before Frederick I. Ordway III '49. The Ordway family maid one day left a copy of Amazing Stories on a dining room chair when Ordway was a sprat; he spotted it, devoured it, and straightaway was hooked. He joined the American Rocket Society at age 11 and went on to become an actual rocket scientist, working for Wernher von Braun at the Army Ballistic Missile Agency and later at NASA. He has written, coauthored, or edited more than 30 popular books about rocketry and space travel. As a youngster, Ordway began in earnest to collect pulp-magazine science fiction. As a grownup collector, he shifted from fiction to astronomy and from magazines to rare books. “I moved beyond them,” he told Harvard College Library staffer Jennifer Tomase, “but I always loved the pulps.”

He gave his collection of about 900 sci-fi pulps to the library in 2002. They are a rich cache of popular culture that will be of unpredictable but undoubted value to researchers, and they pose bracing preservation problems. They are called “pulps” because their inside pages are rough, wood-pulp paper, unlike the “glossies” or the “slicks,” and ordinarily they are not long for this world.

As acid breaks down the molecular structure of paper, it darkens and weakens. Cheap wood-pulp paper is very acid to begin with, and age makes it even more so. Malloy-Rabinowitz preservation librarian Jan Merrill-Oldham explains that the Ordway pulps have undergone the so-called Bookkeeper mass deacidification process. Technicians dip small batches of decaying pulp sci-fi into a bath of magnesium oxide, which is alkaline. The potion circulates for two hours and coats the paper evenly. It is waterless, and so the paper fibers don’t swell. After its bath, the paper is nicely alkaline, with a pH between 8.0 and 9.5 (7.0 is neutral). In the following weeks, the magnesium oxide particles on the paper combine with moisture from the air to form an alkaline magnesium-hydroxide buffer that will absorb and neutralize acids in the paper for the remainder of the pulps’ days. Tests indicate that the treatment extends paper life by three to five times, a stay of execution for Captain Future.

The covers of the April 1926 first issue of Amazing Stories and of Future Fiction, November 1940, were by pulp artist Frank R. Paul, the major force in defining what sci-fi art should look like. Howard V. Brown did the covers of Startling Stories, May 1939, and Thrilling Wonder Stories, January 1940. Super Science Stories, May 1940, was by Gabriel Mayorga. The cover for the winter 1940 Captain Future was by [George?] Rozen.
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